

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 1 of 80

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Schultz Construction Ad
- 2- Middle/High School Spring Concert
- 6- Weekly Vikings Roundup
- 7- FCCLA Style Show - Part 2
- 30- Elementary Spring Concert
- 34- Middle School Talent Show
- 40- Today in Weather History
- 41- Local Weather Forecast
- 42- Yesterday's Groton Weather
- 42- Today's Weather Climate
- 42- National Weather map
- 43 - Daily Devotional
- 44 - News from the Associated Press



The equipment has arrived as the pouring of concrete on US12 is expected to be done this week.

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

© 2017 Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 8

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, broccoli, garlic toast, orange sherbet.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, tri tater, romaine salad, fruit, bread sticks.

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

Groton Schools: Girls golf meet in Groton at 10 a.m., 7th/8th grade track at Aberdeen Central HS at 4 p.m., School Board Meeting at 7 p.m.

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

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

Tuesday, May 9

Senior Menu: New England ham dinner, fruit cocktail cake, ice cream, whole wheat bread.

School Lunch: Submarines, sweet tots, fruit.

School Breakfast: Bosc's stick, fruit, juice, milk.

Groton Schools: Track at Britton, 2 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Church Council, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 10

Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, peas, peach crisp, whole wheat bread.

School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, broccoli and dip, mixed vegetables, fruit.

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

United Methodist: Wednesday coffee time, 9 a.m.; Finance meeting, 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: League at 6:30 p.m.; Confirmation at 7 p.m.

Thursday, May 11

Senior Menu: Turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, baby glazed carrots, cheesecake with

CARPENTRY • CONCRETE

Check out our portfolio on Facebook at [Schultz-Construction-LLC](#)

~ New Construction and Remodeling- renovations, additions, and carpentry work

~ Concrete- foundations, flatwork, decorative concrete surfaces.

605-380-1717

www.shawnshultzconstruction.com

Middle/High School Spring Concert



The high school band, under the direction of Austin Fordham, had several selections including the finale of "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," which included a lighted baton given by Thane Henschel. Nathan Fjelstad came up with the ideas at the beginning of school to do a Star Wars song. It also turned out that May 4th, the day of the concert, was "Star Wars Day." The other selections were "El Capitan," "Into the Storm," and "Lead On, O King Eternal."



The sixth grade band performed, "Extreme," "Abide With Me," "The Avengers," and "Lips Are Movin'."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 3 of 80



The junior high band featured, "Fury of the gods," "A Call for Peace," "Gateway March" and the percussion section was featured in "Junkyard Jam."



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 4 of 80



The junior high choir sang, "Sikiliza! (Listen!)" and "All Night, All Day."



The sixth grade choir sang, "The Crawdad Song," and "Don't Worry, Be Happy."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 5 of 80



The high school choir sang, "Festival Sanctus," "Poor Wayfarin' Stranger," "Requiem," and "Worthy To Be Praised."



The Chamber Choir sang, "Now Let Me Fly."



Janene Harry's Art Class had many pieces of art on display at the spring concert.

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Last week, we covered the Vikings' first six draft picks. This week, we'll take a look at the other five draft picks, as well as the rookie free agents the team signed right after the draft was over.

In the sixth round of the 2017 NFL draft, the Minnesota Vikings selected tight end Bucky Hodges from Virginia Tech. Hodges – 6'6", 257 pounds – is an athletic tight end who can stretch the field and make plays in the passing game. Hodges is big enough to tower over any corners or safeties who try to cover him, and he is fast enough to run past linebackers. I expect the Vikings to line Hodges up at multiple positions to create mismatches. He wasn't asked to block at Virginia Tech, so he could improve in that area. The Vikings were looking for another pass-catching tight end in free agency, so I'm sure the team was excited to get one in the sixth round of the draft.

With the first pick in the seventh round, the Vikings selected Stacy Coley, a wide receiver from Miami. Coley – 6'0", 195 pounds – is a speed demon who will be asked to contribute on special teams until he's ready to become the team's slot receiver. Coley is raw, but extremely athletic. He will be hard pressed to make the team this season due to the depth of the Vikings' receivers, but if he can prove his worth on special teams, he could make the active roster sooner than anticipated.

With the second pick in the seventh round, the Vikings picked Ifeadi Odenigbo, a defensive end from Northwestern. Odenigbo – 6'3", 258 pounds – is another raw prospect who has the strength to play in the NFL. He will need to work on his technique, but he has some skills in place that Mike Zimmer can work with to help him mold into a productive player in the league. Odenigbo will likely be a practice squad player for his first year or two in the NFL.

With their third pick in the seventh round, the Vikings drafted Elijah Lee, a linebacker from Kansas State. Lee is one of my favorite picks that the Vikings made throughout the entire draft. Lee – 6'3", 228 pounds – is an undersized linebacker who will make his money in pass defense. He has the speed to play sideline to sideline and has shown impressive ball skills throughout his college career. He will need to bulk up to play in the NFL, but if he can do that without sacrificing his speed, he could develop into an eventual starter in the league.

With their final pick in the draft, the Vikings selected Jack Tocho, a cornerback from North Carolina State. Tocho – 6'0", 202 pounds – has good size to match up and be physical against NFL caliber receivers. He was asked to press a lot in college, which fits what Mike Zimmer likes to do. He has good ball skills and is good at jamming receivers at the line of scrimmage, but he doesn't have the speed required to play man-to-man coverage in the pros. I don't expect him to make much of an impact in the NFL, but hey, anything is possible.

After the draft was over, the team immediately got on the phone with their favorite players who didn't get drafted in the hopes of signing them as rookie free agents. The team was busy, and ended up agreeing to terms with the following rookie free agents:

Tashawn Bower, defensive end, LSU. Dylan Bradley, defensive tackle, Southern Mississippi. Aviante Collins, offensive tackle, TCU. Nick Fett, offensive tackle, Iowa State. Caleb Kidder, defensive end, Montana. Wes Lunt, quarterback, Illinois. Sam McCaskill, defensive end, Boise State. Terrell Newby, running back, Nebraska. Josiah Price, tight end, Michigan State. Horace Richardson, cornerback, SMU. R.J. Shelton, wide receiver, Michigan State. Shaan Washington, linebacker, Texas A&M. Eric Wilson, linebacker, Cincinnati.

FCCLA Style Show Part 2



First up in this group is Hannah Jensen. She made a soft, plush, comfy blanket in FACS III class. Her blanket is made with a super soft and fuzzy off- white minky paired with an adorable, teal polka dot minky, providing a stunning contrast of colors. Hannah loved making this fun project and she did a great job! Thanks Hannah!



Up next is Nicole Fey. Nicole has been in FACS for three years now, so this was not her first sewing project. This project consists of sky blue minky on one side of the blanket and polar fleece fabric on the other side that features animal images. Nicole says the minky fabric made the blanket more difficult to sew because it stretched and pinched more than the polar fleece did. The struggle was all worth it in the end. She says the blanket is so soft and more comfortable than any blanket you could buy! Nicole's plans for the fall are to attend Lake Area Tech to become a welder. Great job Nicole!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 8 of 80



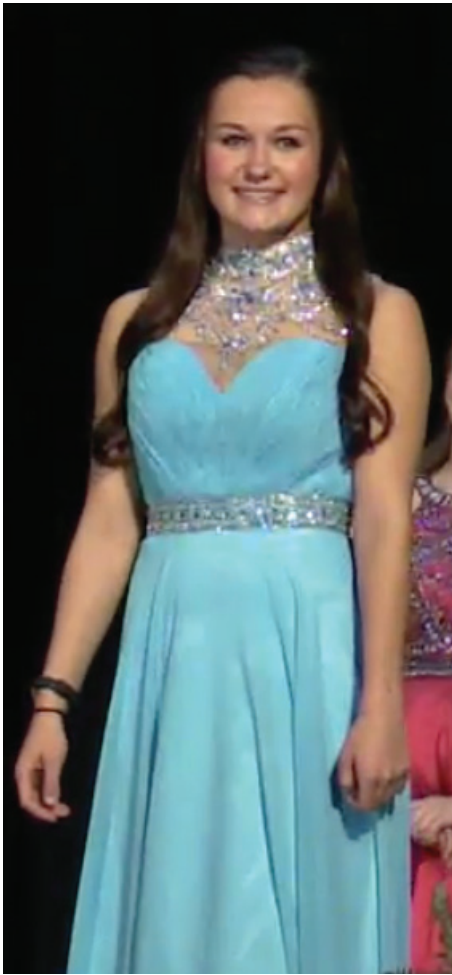
Next up is Gabrielle Kramer modeling her blanket. She used a smooth pink minky floral fabric for the back of her blanket and for the front, she chose a combination of a pink polka dot flannel and black minky with raised dots giving her blanket a very special and unique look. She decided to make her blanket very large to make it more comfortable. She loves how warm it is, and she uses it every night. Looks superb Gabbie!



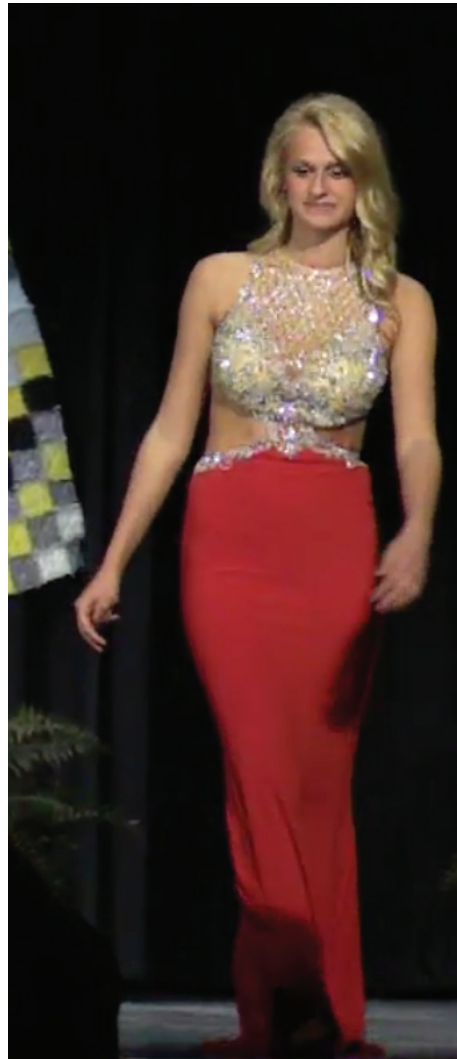
Up next is Katie Koehler with the quilt she made in FACS IV. Katie chose the colors of her quilt based off her two favorite colors, grey and pink. She picked this pattern based on the advice from the clerk at the quilting store who said it was quick and easy. This is Katie's fourth sewing project in FACS, so it did prove to be a breeze for her! The quilt features an inner border made up of all the different fabrics of her quilt, creating a patchwork effect. She chose to do the optional second border to add more pink to her quilt, it really frames the finished product nicely. The back of the quilt is a light grey heavenly flush fabric that is very soft. Katie plans to attend NSU next year to double major in Elementary Education and Special Education. Katie cannot wait to cuddle up next fall with her roommate, Heather Lone, in their new quilts. Super cute quilt Katie!

Groton Daily Independent

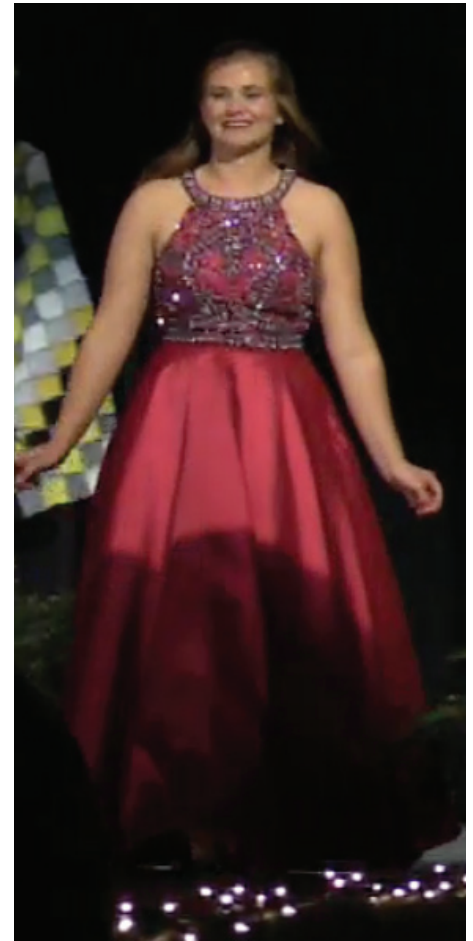
Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 9 of 80



Up next is senior, Heather Lone, modeling the dress she wore to Groton's prom earlier this month. She also wore this dress at the State Snow Queen Contest in January where she represented Groton. The chiffon dress features a sweetheart neckline accented with beautiful blue ornate beading and crystals on a mesh that creates a choker collar. The beading on the mesh continues to the back and uniquely cuts over her shoulder blades. The waistband is also beaded and along with the shoulder beading, creates a very elegant cut out look to the back the dress. This shade of blue is perfect for Heather as it compliments her skin tone. You look gorgeous Heather!



Here comes junior, Harleigh Stange in her prom dress she wore to her sophomore year prom. Harleigh bought her dress at Brides N Belles. The top of her dress is her favorite part because it has a lot of beading, which adds a sparkle that trails down to line the top of the skirt attaching to the top. She says that this is her favorite dress because she likes the color red. The back of the dress features a diamond shaped cut out and the same beautiful bead work that accentuates her waistline. In addition to FCCLA, Harleigh is involved in soccer, basketball, and track. You look gorgeous Harleigh!



Another stellar dress is coming your way courtesy of Madison Sippel. She is wearing a two-piece gown that has intricate beading on the bodice, and beading at the waistline as well. One thing she really enjoys about her dress is how it came with pockets! Madison is our current FCCLA President and will return next year in the same office. You look gorgeous Madison!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 10 of 80



Our next quilter is Emily Locke who chose to make two baby quilts because her grandma was going to be making a big quilt for her as a graduation gift. She did not think she needed to make a big one like everybody else, so instead she made two baby blankets, one for a girl and one for a boy. The feminine quilt features lavender, gray, and white patterned fabrics. For the masculine quilt, she went with a cream color fabric with teddy bears on it with a soft blue-gray backing. Each quilt was hand tied by Emily giving them each an heirloom look. Emily's original plan was to give the little quilts as gifts. She stuck with this plan for the teddy bear quilt, but has decided to tuck the lavender quilt away to be used for her own baby girl someday. In the fall, Emily hopes to attend Southeast Tech. and major in Vascular Technology. Good job Emily!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 11 of 80



Next up is Lexie Harder, a four year FCCLA member, with her floral rag-time quilt. She designed this quilt for her mom, who picked out the fabrics for her. It is made of 7 different patterned fabrics, all of 5x5 squares that consist of yellow, black, white, and gray. She found her quilt to be a little less work as she was the only student who used pre-cut squares, but it all evened out in the end as her quilt consists of 630 squares, 315 per side! Each square is made sandwich style, the front, batting in the middle, and then the back, secured by sewing an "X" through each square. Her plans for the future are to attend South Dakota State University to major in Psychology. Looking good Lexie, I bet your mom will love it!



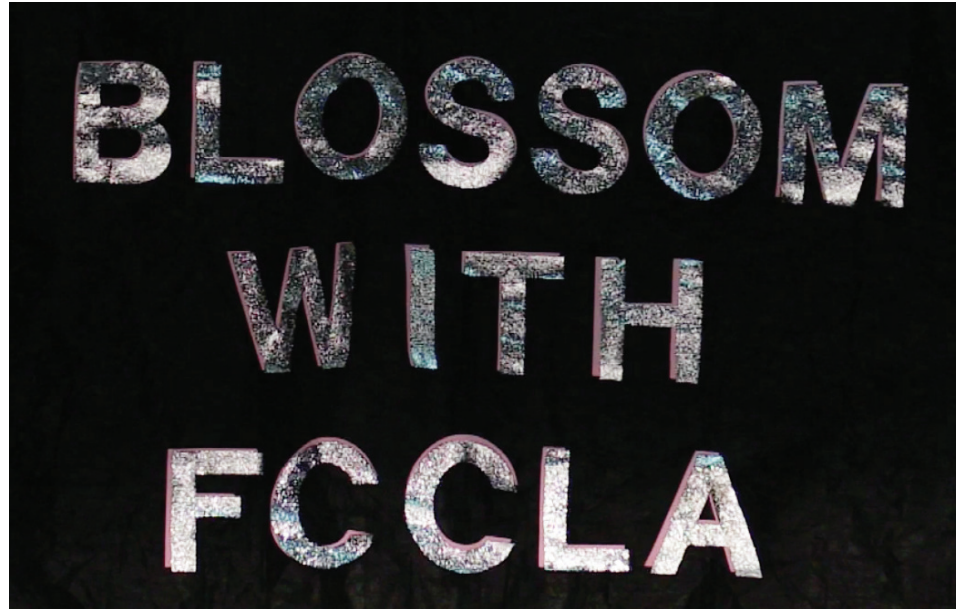
Our final quilter of this half the show is, FCCLA Secretary, Kellyn Fluke, who is showing off her new quilt, she made herself, she is proud to say! She decided to use the basket weave pattern after doing days of research on quilt patterns. In the beginning, Kellyn struggled with the whole quilting process, but soon got the hang of the whole thing. She used light pinks, mint, and gold fabrics to make the quilt unique and beautiful. Kellyn plans to use her quilt next fall at SDSU and major in English Education. Beautiful quilt, Kellyn!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 12 of 80



For your pre-intermission entertainment, we have the talented Miss Macy Knecht performing "Remedy". Now without further ado we would give you Macy Knecht.



Kellyn Fluke
Year in Review

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, May 07, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 297 ~ 13 of 40



Every year we select one member to receive the FCCLA'er of the Year and Officer of the Year awards. We assign a certain number of points to each activity our chapter is involved in and the member and officer with the highest number of points at the end of the year is awarded the honor of being our FCCLA'er and Officer of the Year.

*This year's FCCLA'er of the Year is Nicole Marzahn. Congratulations Nicole!

*This year's Officer of the Year is Madison Sippel. Congratulations Madison! The awards were presented by Hannah Lewandowski.



There is a special group of women here tonight that have given their time and energy keeping us girls in line this year at our regional and state FCCLA meetings. Our chapter moms volunteer as judges, volunteers, chauffeurs, and chaperones. We are so grateful for their encouragement and the time they spend with us! Our Chapter Moms this year are Lisa Adler, Michelle Mullenburg, and Sandi Sippel.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 14 of 80



Advisor Lindsey Tietz presented a "thank you" gift to Chuck Padfield for all of his work in the food preparation.



These 11 seniors were recognized by Advisor Lindsey Tietz. From right to left, they are Heather Lone, 3 years; Macy Knecht, 2 years; Emily Locke, 3 years; Hallie Yarborough, 4 years; Tage Taylor, 4 years; Keri Pappas, 4 years; Katie Koehler, 4 years; Shelby Hjermastad, 4 years; Lexi Harder, 4 years; Kellyn Fluke, 4 years; Jessica Adler, 4 years; Nicole Fey, 4 years. She also presented the FCCLA Service Award. In order to earn this award, seniors must have sold 40 boxes of fruit over their entire membership, which could be 1-4 years, and achieved involvement points through the point system. Involvement points come from things like attending meetings, participating in activities such as volunteering at OST and the food drive, and also from being involved in district and state meetings. The following members have earned the FCCLA Service Award: \$300 each were Adler, Fluke, Harder, Koehler and Taylor; \$200 each were Hjermastad, Lone and Yarborough.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 15 of 80



Lexi Harder, Jessica Adler and Kellyn Fluke recognized their advisor, Lindsey Tietz, on behalf of the seniors.



Hi, I'm Lexie Harder (left) this year's FCCLA Treasurer.

Hi, I'm Kellyn Fluke (right) this year's FCCLA secretary. We will be the emcees for the remainder of the show. To kick off the second half of our show is a group of girls showing off some more snuggly blankets.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 16 of 80



Now coming down the runway is Kaycie Hawkins. Kaycie's blanket is a purple minky with a white contrasting minky on the back. She loves to snuggle up with her blanket on cold days. Kaycie's cat Sonny loves to come and snuggle up with Kaycie, but only if she is laying with her blanket. The sewing process was fun; especially memorable was singing throwback songs with her sewing buddy Nicole Marzahn. Kaycie also participates in volleyball, basketball, track, softball, FBLA, and FCCLA. Fantastic job Kaycie!

Here comes Kaycie's sewing buddy, Nicole Marzahn, with her navy blue hexagonal and white blanket, that contrast very nicely together. Nicole's favorite part of making her blanket was turning it right side out after sewing all the layers together. She was very nervous about sewing a big tuck into it, but luckily, no tucks were sewn! Nicole has sewn for 4-H for many years, so her experience must have played a role in how beautifully it turned out! Another favorite for Nicole was jamming out to "Livin' on a Prayer" by Bon Jovi with Kaycie while pinning and sewing their blankets. Nicole likes to cuddle up with her blanket and watch her favorite sitcom, Friends. In addition to FCCLA, Nicole also participates in Volleyball, Basketball, Track, and likes to golf, camping with her family, and sewing for 4-H with her grandma. Fantabulous job Nicole! You will be seeing more of Nicole and Kaycie at the end of the show as they are both inducted into next year's officer team.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 17 of 80



Here is FACS I student, Rylee Rosenau, with her fleece blanket that features a blue minky fabric on one side and has a super soft polka dot printed fabric on the other. After struggling with a few seam ripping incidents, she is living happily ever after with her comfortable blanket that she sleeps with every night. Rylee enjoys sleeping, cuddling with her dog, and crying while watching Korean dramas. Rylee participates in Oral Interp, Student Congress, and Destination Imagination. Super Duper amazing job Rylee!



Here is Hannah Lewandowski showing her soft minky blanket she made in FACS III. She used a yellow dotted minky on one side, and a patterned grey and white minky on the other side. Hannah made her blanket very quickly because once she starts, she just cannot stop! Hannah is this year's FCCLA vice president and enjoyed sewing her blanket very much. Looks good Hannah!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 18 of 80



Next is Lexi Gustafson with her soft and cozy sheep print blanket. She made this cozy blanket in FACS 3 out of a soft, gray minky fabric, and the other side is a heavenly plush fabric with a cute pattern of sheep. This blanket is perfect for taking a cozy nap on the couch and watching a good movie. This is Lexi's first time ever using a sewing machine and she enjoyed making her blanket. She is looking forward to making other new things in FACS in the future! Terrific Job Lexi!



Up next is Madison Sippel modeling her beautiful blanket she made in FACS 3. This is not her first go around working with the FACS sewing machines; she has been in FACS for 3 years now. Tonight she is showing off her blanket made of two styles of minky fabric. The first side is a purple and white quatrefoil fabric. This side adds a pop of color and is super soft and cozy! The backside of her blanket is a Gray dotted minky fabric that keeps her nice and warm while watching Netflix. Fantastic Job Madison!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 19 of 80



Here comes sophomore Maggie Crosby with her blue and grey fun, geometric patterned reversible bag. Maggie is the FCCLA Historian, an FBLA officer, does cross country and track stats, and is on the show choir tech crew. Her favorite part of making the bag was picking out the fabric, and sewing all the pieces together. Overall, she is very happy with how her bag turned out and will be using it while camping and hanging out with friends this summer. Fantastic job Maggie!



Up next is Kaitlyn Kassube who is showing off her new reversible bag that she sewed. The outside features a turquoise and white cotton print and on the inside is a light blue-grey, also a cotton but has a cloudy, washed out look to it. The two pockets on the inside of the bag are the same grey-blue color. Kaitlyn can tell you that there was a lot of pressing involved in making the bag to give it a crisp, professional look. Her favorite part of making the bag was getting it done so she can use it! She plans to use this bag a lot, especially this summer going to the lake and doing other fun things. Excellent work Kaitlyn!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 20 of 80



Our next model is Kylie Kassube with her reversible satchel bag. She had a lot of fun picking out the fabric and sewing the bag. On the outside is a light gray and white moroccan quatrefoil pattern fabric and the inside is a solid pink-salmon color. Kylie says her favorite part of making the bag was pulling the entire bag through the interior opening and seeing go from not looking like to a bag, to looking like an awesome purse she will use all summer at the lake! She chose a decorative stitch to sew the two handles together. Looks good Kylie!

Emerald Sturdevant, a sophomore at Groton High School, is modeling her reversible purse that she made as her project in FACS. The outside of the purse has a chevron pattern that gives pizzazz to the inside that is a solid black made of very lightweight cotton fabric. You can turn it out to the other side to use the pockets which are the same chevron pattern. She plans on using it during the summer. Emerald says it was a little difficult at first because she hadn't sewn before, but got easier as she went along. She liked getting the chance to be in this FACS class and learn about child development and do fun projects like this purse! Sensational job Emerald!

Groton Daily Independent

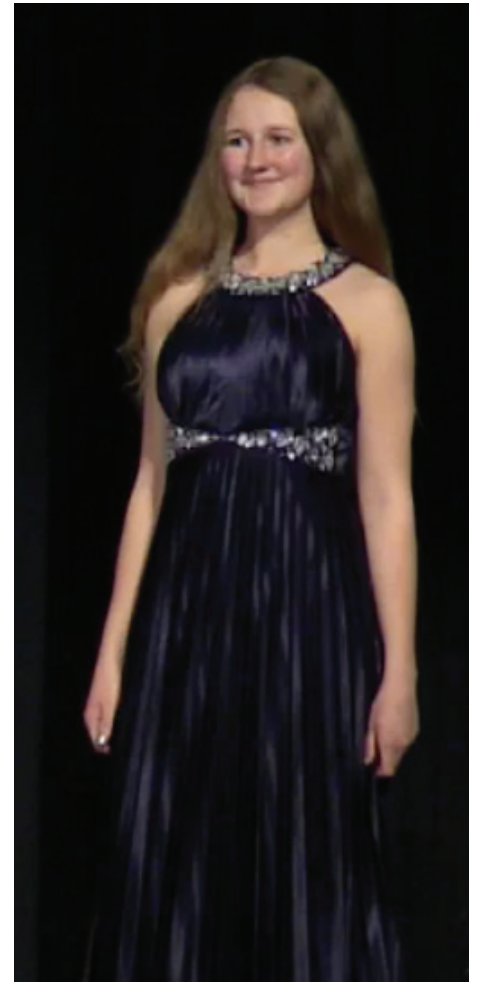
Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 21 of 80



First up is FCCLA Vice President, Hannah Lewandowski, her beautiful dress is a light mauve color featuring a connected train. This mermaid style dress is form fitting at the top and middle and slowly flows out from the knee. The top of her dress has a mesh netting covered with diamond jewels. The sweetheart neckline dips down in the front with an open back covering the mesh and diamonds. She is looking forward to her Senior year where she will serve as the FCCLA Vice President once again. Looking gorgeous Hannah!



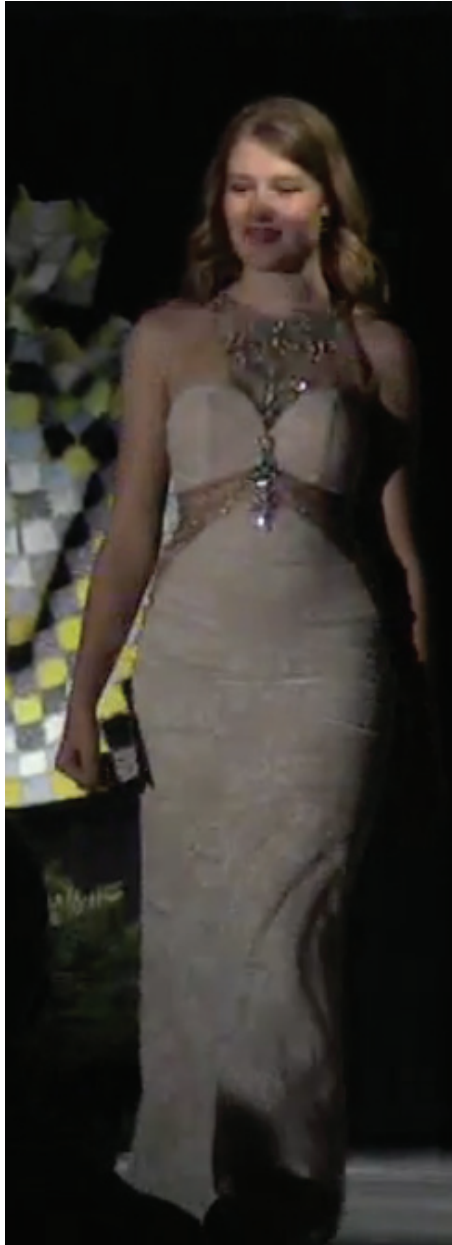
Our next model is Jeni Fjelstad in her super fun two piece prom dress that looks to be the newest style to hit the runways. This gorgeous dress features an off the shoulder ruffled crop top in a rose pink hue. It pairs beautifully with the A-Line skirt that is patterned with large pink peonies. The skirt also has pockets that Jeni loves. To complete the look, Jeni chose to accessorize her dress with a delicate tiara, earrings, and her gold converse shoes. She had a great time at prom dancing the night away! You look stunning Jeni!



Here comes Insa Deden modeling her beautiful prom dress that she recently wore to Groton's Prom. Insa's navy blue satin gown features a round jeweled collar that creates a necklace effect. The collar also attaches to the straps on the back the dress, creating a cool cut out effect. The matching jewels at the waistband accentuate her waist giving an hourglass look to the otherwise flowy dress. Insa had a great time at prom and will cherish this unique experience when she returns to Germany at the end of May. Breathtaking Insa!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 22 of 80



Our next model is senior Gabrielle Kramer modeling the dress she purchased at Brides and Belles. She wore this beautiful off-white lace gown to last year's prom when she was a junior. She also wore it to her Dad's wedding, which happened to be on the same day! The slightly A-lined dress features a jeweled bodice that trails her waistline and is accentuated with glimmering beadwork. Jewels also frame the sweet heart neckline and create the illusion of necklace. Gabbie says her favorite thing about the dress is that it has an antique look to it. Very pretty Gabbie!



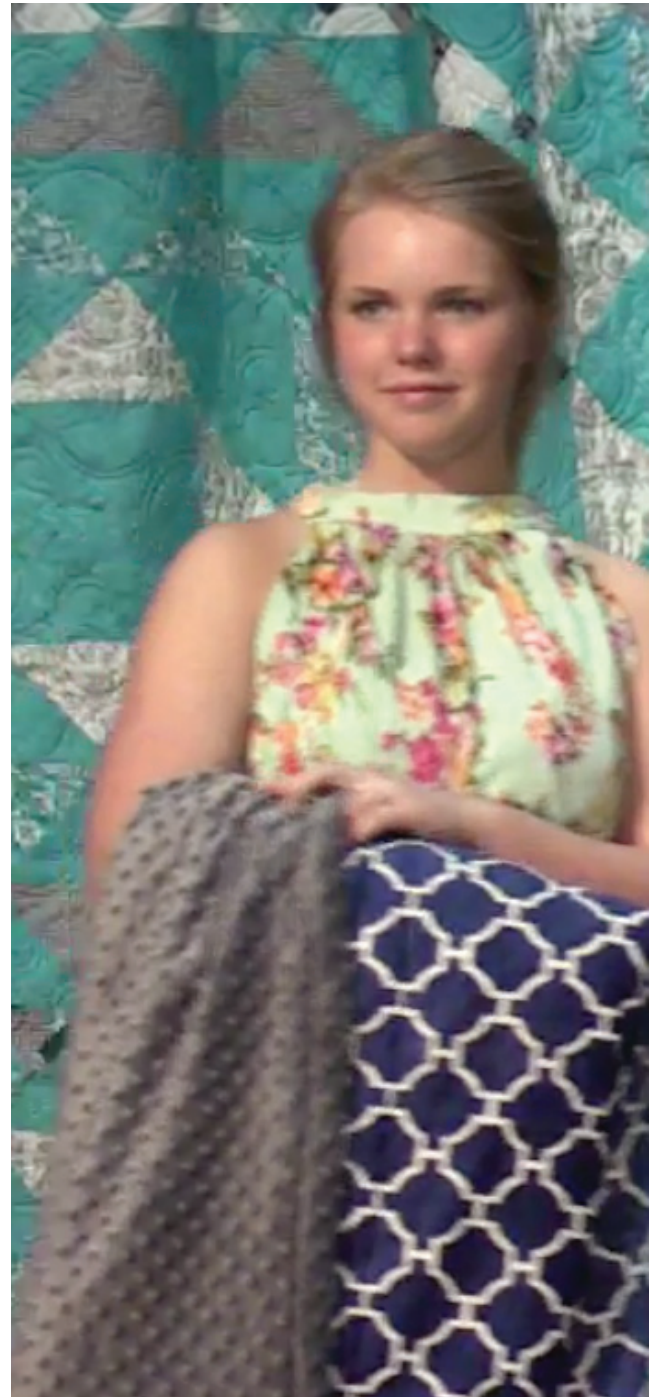
Here comes Miss Harleigh Stange as she models her blanket that she had a blast making with her FACS III class. She chose purple and white as her two colors that contrast very nicely. Both of her fabrics are the ever so popular minky fabric. Harleigh has been in FACS for three years now and she says that this was her favorite sewing project so far. In addition to FCCLA, Harleigh is also involved in soccer, basketball and track. Fabulous job Harleigh!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 23 of 80



Up next is Jasmine Schinkel. Jasmine's blanket is super soft with a light blue minky fabric that mimics a floral design on one side and a soft colorful print heavenly plush fabric on the other. She said the soft fabric was hard to sew and even harder to seam rip, but with lots of time and effort put in her blanket, she had a good outcome. Looks awesome Jasmine!



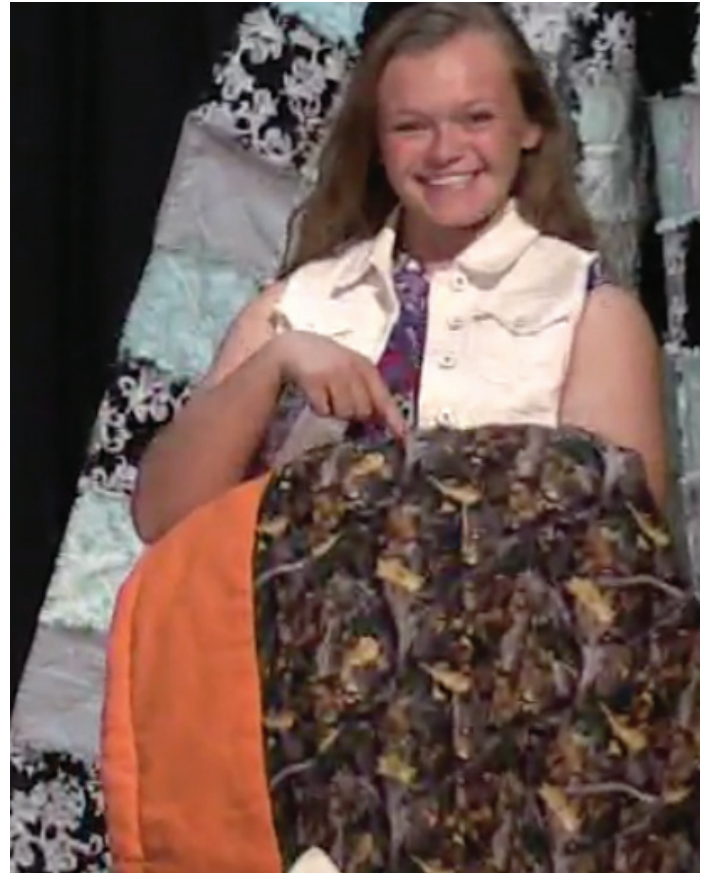
Now here is Erika Herr! Erika is the reporter for our FCCLA chapter. Her blanket is a gray minky with a soft raised dot pattern on one side and a colorful blue and white geometric pattern on the other side. Erika will use her blanket at home watching Netflix or for long car rides to visit family. The blanket has a binding stitch around the outside and two straight lines across the middle of the blanket to ensure that the batting inside stays in place. Erika thought the stitching the middle of the blanket was the hardest part, but it turned out great. Erika enjoys playing soccer, piano and being a cheerleader. Fabulous job Erika!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 24 of 80



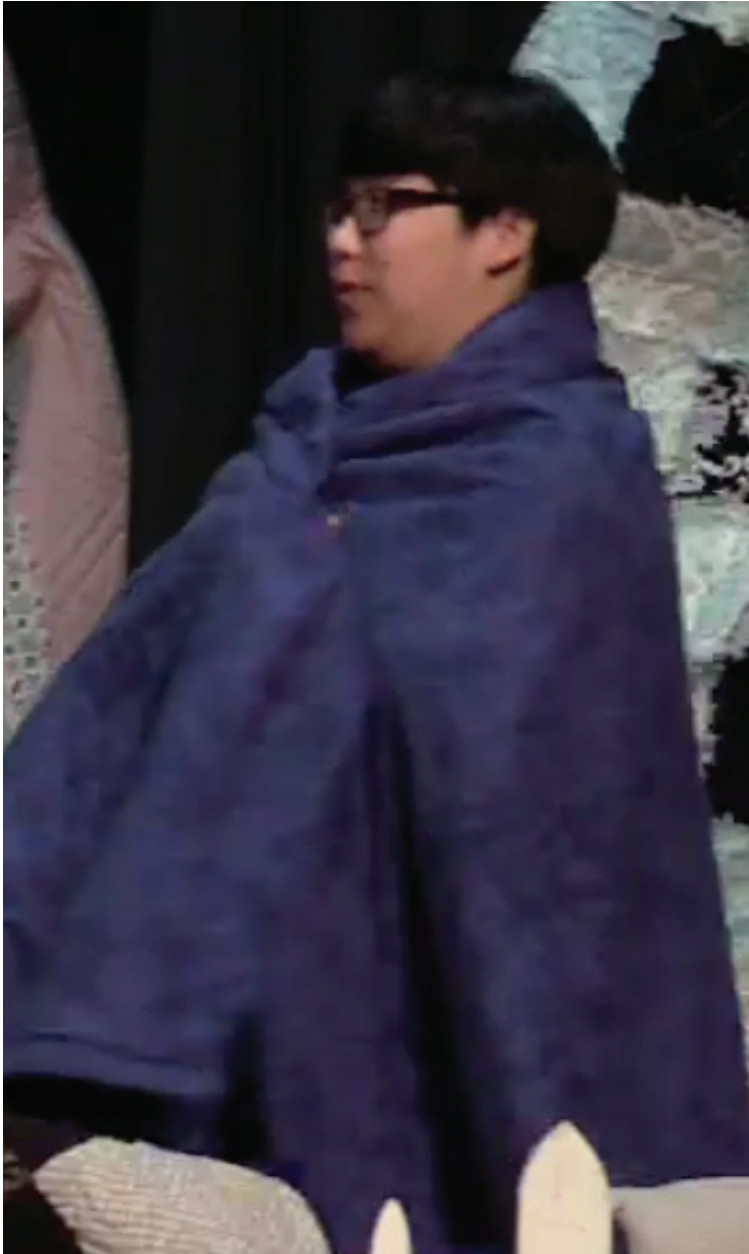
Welcome Kayla Jensen as she walks in with her soft white blanket she made in FACS I. Kayla's blanket was the only blanket that was the only one made with the same fabric for the front and the back. She spent many class periods working on this blanket. It was tough because of the thickness of the fabric became greater and greater, but the finished product was worth it. Her cats use it almost as much as she does! Besides school, Kayla participates in DI and Oral Interp. Sensational job, Kayla!



Up next we have Kaylin Kucker, a freshmen in the FACS I class. Kaylin's blanket is made from a camo flannel fabric with an amazing contrasting fabric in a blaze orange flannel and a black minky fabric on the backside. Kaylin went through some struggles when it came to sewing and having to seam rip, but Kaycie Hawkins came to the rescue and helped her out – what are friends for!?! Outside of school, Kaylin enjoys playing sports and going hunting. Awesome Job, Kaylin!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 25 of 80



Look who is coming up next, Mugel See! This is Mugel's first attempt at sewing and he did a FANTASTIC job! He chose dark colors for his blanket because he did not want it to show dirt. He also chose to do a cotton fabric, as it was easier to wash and not as heavy to work with as fleece. Mugel also chose to do just one solid color on the front and another solid color on the back of the blanket. This made the job of sewing the blanket quick and easy! Mugel really enjoyed this sewing project and will probably sew another one if he can get some help again. He says the hardest part about sewing is making a straight line for a seam. It is not as easy as it looks! Awesome job Mugel!



At this time, we would like to welcome our final talent performer of the night to the stage. Tylan Glover, sophomore here at Groton and will be sing "Go the Distance".

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 26 of 80



Jodi Hinman has been enrolled in FACS classes for 2 years now. Last year she made a blanket and this year she made this reversible satchel bag. She had a little trouble sewing the fabric together but in the end, her satchel turned out great! She will be using her satchel when she goes to the pool with her little niece or just using it to put things in. Outstanding job Jodi!



Our next model is sophomore, Sam Menzia. Sam is in FACS 2 this year and is modeling her reversible satchel bag. The fabrics she chose are perfect for summer, a bright yellow and gray nautical print, complemented by yellow and white morrocan quatrefoil print fabric that was a popular choice amongst our sewers this year. Sam says that this project was quite easy since she had learned how to sew last year in FACS 1. She plans to use her bag this summer when she goes to the pool and when she hangs out with friends. Sam was our top fruit saleswoman this year, selling over \$1200 worth of fruit! Stupendous job Sam!



Up next is sophomore, Shannon Wiedrick. Shannon enjoys hanging out with her friends and family. She finds sewing fun. She thought the most exciting thing about the sewing project was picking out the fabric. The fabric she chose was a map design in muted colors for one side and gold arrows on white fabric for the other side, the two fabrics complement each other very nicely. She loves to travel so the fabrics were perfect for her. Great job Shannon!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 27 of 80



Here comes Heather Lone with her classic T-shirt quilt that she customized with all her soccer shirts from over her years of playing soccer. She cut twenty of her soccer T-shirts and strategically placed them on the quilt for a very balanced look. She then brought them together with a cute black and white polka dotted fabric, that complements all of the shirts nicely, that she used for the sashing. The back of the quilt is a soft black minky fabric. Heather is super excited to use her quilt and cuddle with her roommate, Katie Koehler next fall at NSU while she majors in Elementary Education. Super-duper Job Heather!



Our next model is the FCCLA Public Relations Officer, Jessica Adler. Jessica's king-size quilt is made up of seven different fabrics that are eight by eight square blocks. It is a traditional ragtime quilt that consists of two solid fabrics and five damask fabrics. She loves the colors of her fabric which are teal, grey, and black, she choose these colors because they are the colors of her bedroom. Jessica was glad that she decided to do a ragtime quilt, as she was very happy with how it turned out! Jessica plans to save this quilt as a keep safe to use in her future home one day! In the fall Jessica plans to attend SDSU where she will be majoring in Human Biology/Pre-Med. Great job Jessica!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 28 of 80



Next is Insa Deden, our foreign exchange student from Germany. Her quilt is in her favorite colors maroon, black and white. She found a picture of a beautiful quilt on the internet, but she couldn't find a pattern. So dimensions were figured, she used the picture as a guide, and came up with the instructions in order to produce her own beautiful quilt. This was her first sewing experience and enjoyed it very much. Insa can't wait to bring her quilt home to Germany and to snuggle with it in her room that perfectly matches the quilt.

ausgezeichnet or großartig job Insa! (German words for excellent :)



FCCLA Officers

The new and outgoing officers are pictured above. Left to right, they are Nicole Marzahn taking over as Secretary/Reporter, replacing Kellyn Fluke; Hannah Lewandowski, vice-president; Madison Sippel, president; Lexi Harder handing over the treasurer's position to Kaycie Hawkins; Maggie Crosby, historian; and Erika Herr taking over as public relationist from Jessica Adler.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 29 of 80



Madison: Lights red candle as other lights are dimmed, and says: "This candlelight represents the light of Family and Consumer Sciences Education as it radiates throughout the world. It is the light of our ideals, our purposes—for we know as FCCLA members, we have an opportunity to strengthen individual, family, and community life."

Hannah: Lights the first candle from the red candle. "This candle symbolizes our first purpose—to provide opportunities for personal development and preparation for adult life."

Lexie: Lights alternating candle from the red candle. "This candle symbolizes our second purpose—to strengthen the function of the family as a basic unit of society."

Kellyn: "This candle symbolizes our third purpose—to encourage democracy through cooperative action in the home and community."

Maggie: "This candle symbolizes our fourth purpose—to encourage individual and group involvement in helping achieve global cooperation and harmony."

Erika: "This candle symbolizes our fifth purpose—to promote greater understanding between youth and adults."

Jessica: "This candle symbolizes our sixth purpose—to provide opportunities for making decisions and for assuming responsibilities."

Lexie: "This candle symbolizes our seventh purpose—to prepare for the multiple roles of men and women in today's society."

Kellyn: "This candle symbolizes our eighth purpose—to promote Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations."

Madison: "At this time we would like to focus our attention on leadership. Good leaders are special people; they view the situation, recognize the need, and encourage the necessary action. They understand the importance of teamwork and cooperation and the fulfillment of responsibilities."

Hannah: "Each year symbolizes one more step in the process of individual growth. The installation of newly elected officers is both a joyful and solemn occasion. We congratulate them and look forward to their new vision."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 30 of 80

Elementary Spring Concert



The fifth grade band performed, "Bugler's Dream" and "Ancient Hunters."



"The Bees are Buzzing" performed by the kindergarten class.

The first graders performed, "Itsy Bitsy Spider."



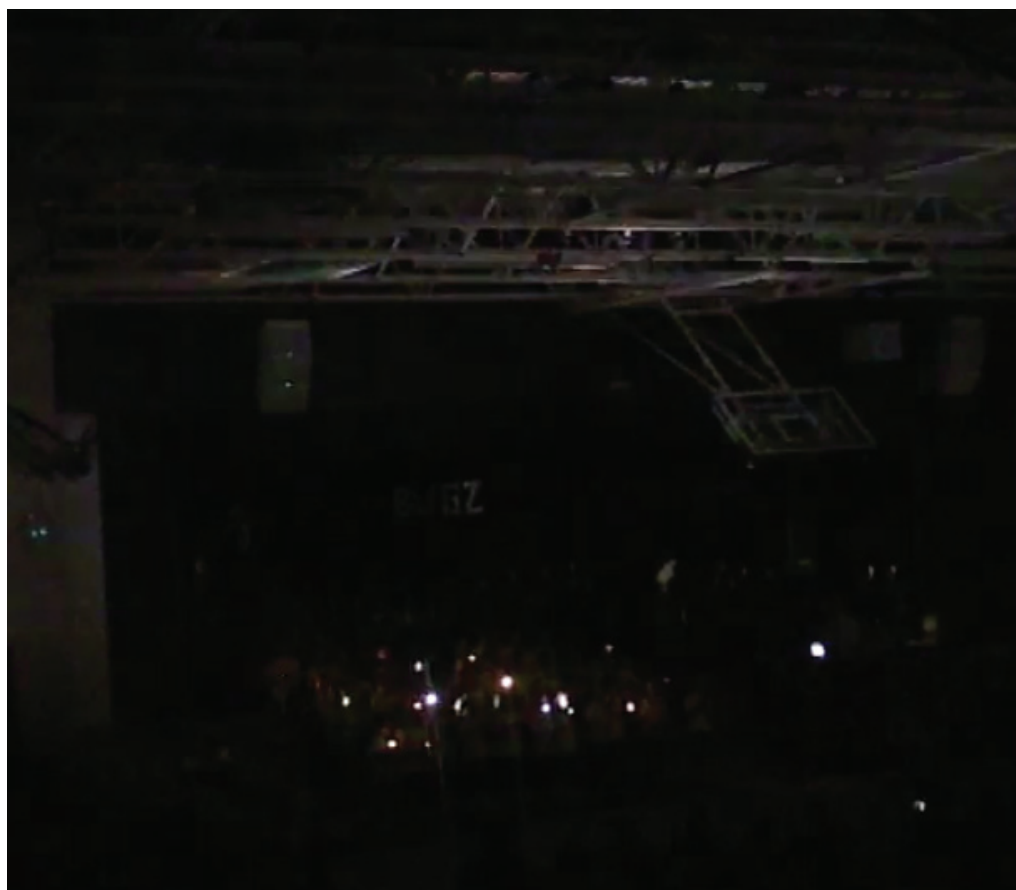
Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 31 of 80



The third and fourth grade girls performed, "Be A Lady."

The second graders used flashlights while they performed, "Firefly."



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 32 of 80



The third and fourth grade boys performed, "March of the Army Ants."

The Junior Kindergarten performed the Caterpillar Song/Flutter, Flutter Butterfly."

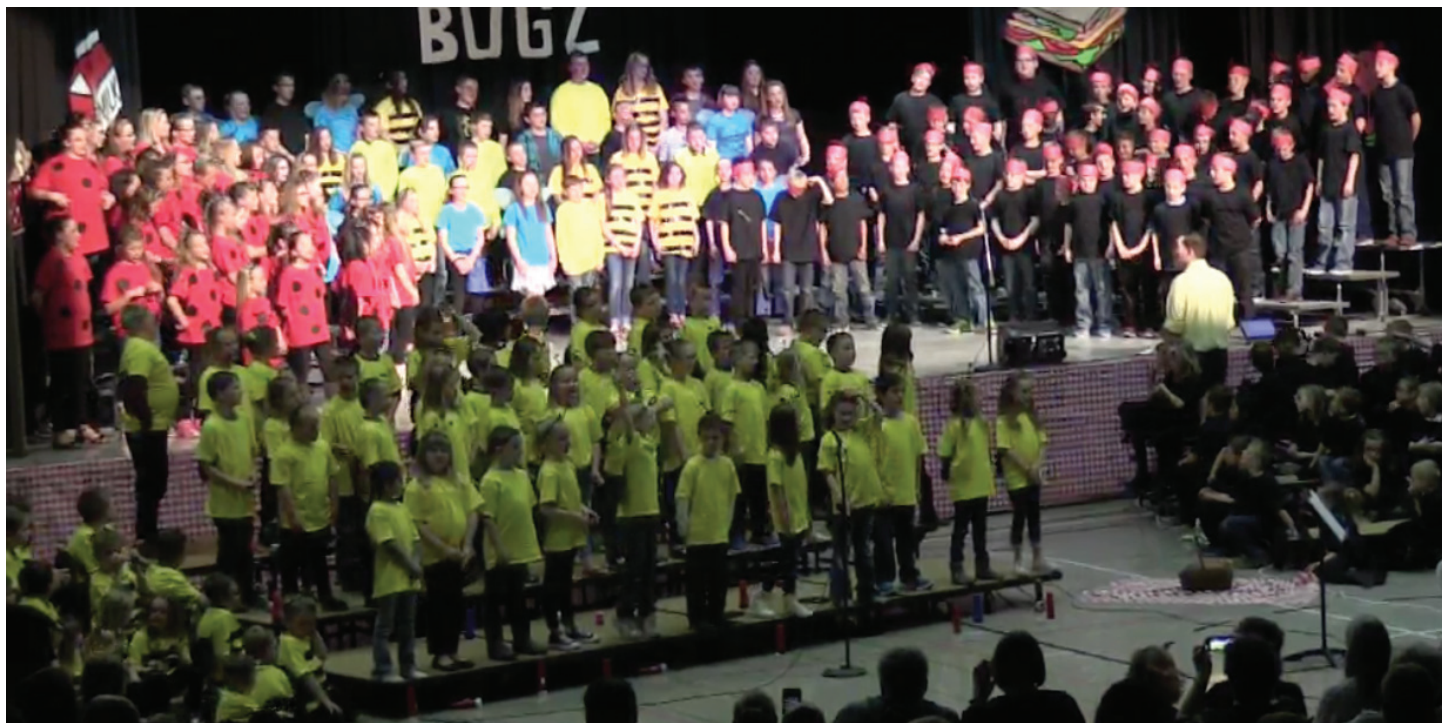


Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 33 of 80



The elementary students, as a group, performed "Going' On A Picnic."



The second, third, fourth and fifth graders sang a song entitled, "Things Change."

Middle School Talent Show



Nevaeh Pardick and Tucker Carda were the masters of ceremony at the Groton Area Middle School Talent Show.



The sixth grade band performed, "A Blues Medley."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 35 of 80



Alexis Hanten had a vocal solo entitled, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."



Stella Meier did a piano solo entitled, "Danza Espanola."



Eh Tha You Say, Grace Wiedrick and Hailey Monson had an instrumental trio entitled, "Can You Feel the Love Tonight."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 36 of 80



Hattie and Ellie Weismantel had a piano duet entitled, "Heart and Soul."



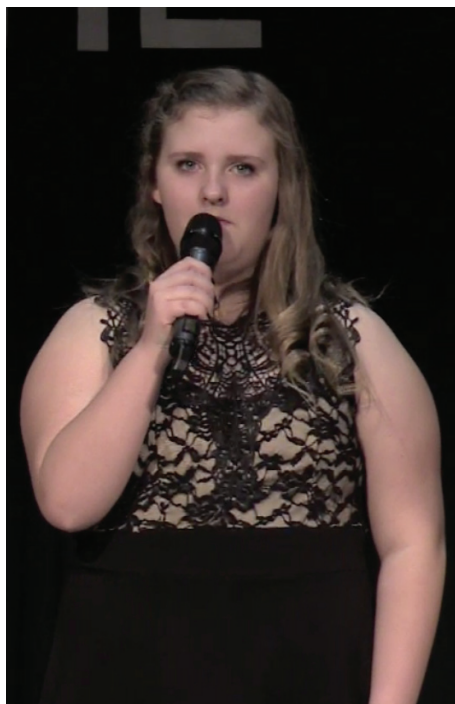
Ethan Clark had a spiritual medley, "Swing Low," "Ode to Joy," and "Amazing Grace" as a baritone solo.



The junior high band did a neat piece without instruments entitled, "Me Tarzan."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 37 of 80



Left Photo: Candance Tullis had a vocal solo entitled, "Dancing On My Own."

Right Photo: Megan Flihs had a vocal solo entitled, "A Thousand Years."



Caleb Hanten had a piano solo entitled, "Presto."



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 38 of 80



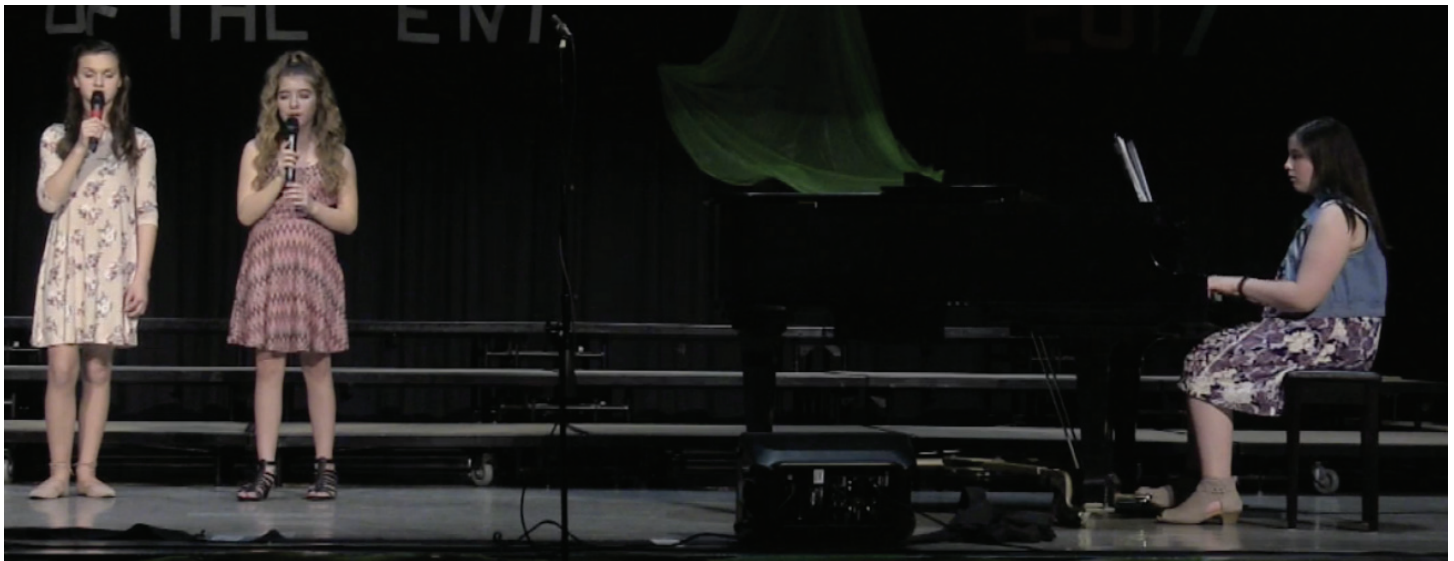
Alyssa Fordham and Samantha Pappas had an oral interp piece entitled, "It's Not About the Hair."

Isaac Smith did a piano solo entitled, "Fandango."



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 39 of 80



Sierra Ehresmann and Shaylee Peterson, accompanied by Ellie Weismantel, had a vocal duet entitled, "Lost Boy."



The junior high show choir performed, "Good Time."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 40 of 80

Today in Weather History

May 8, 1934: Pierre recorded its' earliest 100 degrees when the high temperature reached 103 degrees. Mobridge also reached 103 degrees, which is the earliest yearly date for the city Mobridge.

May 8, 1965: The strongest tornado recorded in South Dakota tracked across eastern Tripp County. It was part of a larger tornado outbreak in Nebraska and South Dakota during the afternoon through late evening hours.

May 8, 1986: Thunderstorms produced torrential rainfall of two to four inches over much of central and eastern South Dakota. The very heavy rains caused extensive flooding with Walworth and Potter Counties reporting the most damage. In those counties, most roads were under water. Several bridges and roads were also washed out in that area. The heavy rain washed out the dam at Lake Byre in Lyman County, which produced water waist deep in Kennebec. The city of Kennebec lost their sole source of water when the dam broke. Cow Creek in Lyman County also flooded and broke a part of a dam, causing minor property damage. Rain continued to fall into the morning hours on the 9th. Some two-day rainfall totals include; 4.33 inches in Kennebec; 4.21 in Shelby; 3.91 at 4 miles west of Mellette; 3.30 in Gettysburg; 3.06 in Blunt; 2.99 in Eureka; 2.75 at 2 NNW of Mobridge; 2.70 inches 2 miles south of Ashton and in Britton.

May 8, 1995: Flooding caused by snowmelt from two significant snowstorms in April continued throughout May. The flooding was aggravated by widespread torrential rains, especially from the early morning of the 8th through the early morning of the 9th. Rainfall amounts ranged from one to four inches. Some higher rainfall amounts include; 5.50 inches at Wakpala, 4.50 at Chelsea and Leola, 4.20 at Ipswich, 4.10 inches 12 north of McLaughlin, and 3.91 inches at Aberdeen. A worker was injured near Claremont when the train derailed due to the weakening of the rail-bed caused by high water. The extensive flooding continued to cause road damage and many road closures.

1784: Deadly hailstorm in South Carolina hits the town of Winnsborough. The hailstones, measuring as much as nine inches in circumference, killed several persons, and a great number of sheep, lambs, and birds.

1902: On May 7th, Martinique's Mount Pelee begins the deadliest volcanic eruption in the 20th century. On this day, the city of Saint Pierre, which some called the Paris of the Caribbean, was virtually wiped off the map. The volcano killed an estimated 30,000 people.








1979: Widespread damage occurred in the Tampa Bay area. The 19 tornadoes reported are the most in one day in Florida history. Three people drowned in Pinellas County where flooding was most severe. Rainfall amounts of 18 inches in 24 hours were reported with 12.73 inches falling at Tampa, FL; with 7.84 inches of that in just six hours. Worst hit was the Polk County community of Auburndale where a tornado made a direct hit on the Auburndale School. Only eight students were hurt by flying debris. An 83-year-old woman was killed as she hid in an unreinforced concrete block storage shed. 98 trailers were damaged or destroyed, and 40 people were injured.

2003: This was the second of three consecutive days with strong to violent tornadoes around Oklahoma City. A violent F4 tornado that affected Moore, Oklahoma City, Midwest City and Choctaw took on a path very similar to the 5/3/1999 devastating tornado. This particular storm back in 2003 affected areas from Newcastle and Moore to Del City and Choctaw. Although over 130 people were injured, there were no fatalities.

2009: A deadly derecho squall line crosses far southern Illinois at midday devastating the Carbondale area on its way across a 1,200-mile swath of terrain covering sections of nine states. Hundreds of homes and businesses are damaged or destroyed in Kansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri. The wind gusts to 106 mph in the Carbondale area with sustained winds measured at up to 90 mph. In southern Illinois, the storm system peels siding and roofs off homes and other buildings, blowing out car windows and tearing up trailer parks.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 41 of 80

Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
						
Chance T-storms and Breezy	Decreasing Clouds	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 77 °F	Low: 50 °F	High: 69 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 45 °F	High: 72 °F

Unsettled Day Ahead

Scattered Showers and Thunderstorms



What

Windy

Strong winds shifting out of the northwest and isolated thunderstorms

When

Central SD this morning then mainly E SD and WMN this afternoon

Impacts



Unsecured items will blow around



Dangerous lightning



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

www.weather.gov/abr

GRAPHIC CREATED:
5/8/2017 5:21 AM

Published on: 05/08/2017 at 5:23AM

An unsettled day is upon us, with scattered showers and thunderstorms associated with a low pressure system sliding west to east across South Dakota. Any showers and thunderstorms that develop will be able to create dangerous lightning, brief heavy rain, and small hail. The low pressure system will cross into eastern South Dakota late this morning. As a result, winds will increase out of a northwesterly direction, and become quite windy west of the James River this morning. Wind gusts of 30 to 40 mph will be possible through early afternoon.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 42 of 80

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 85.5 F at 3:58 PM

Low Outside Temp: 52.0 F at 6:25 AM

High Gust: 31.0 Mph at 2:26 PM

Snow: Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1934

Record Low: 22° in 1945

Average High: 67°F

Average Low: 41°F

Average Precip in May: 0.81

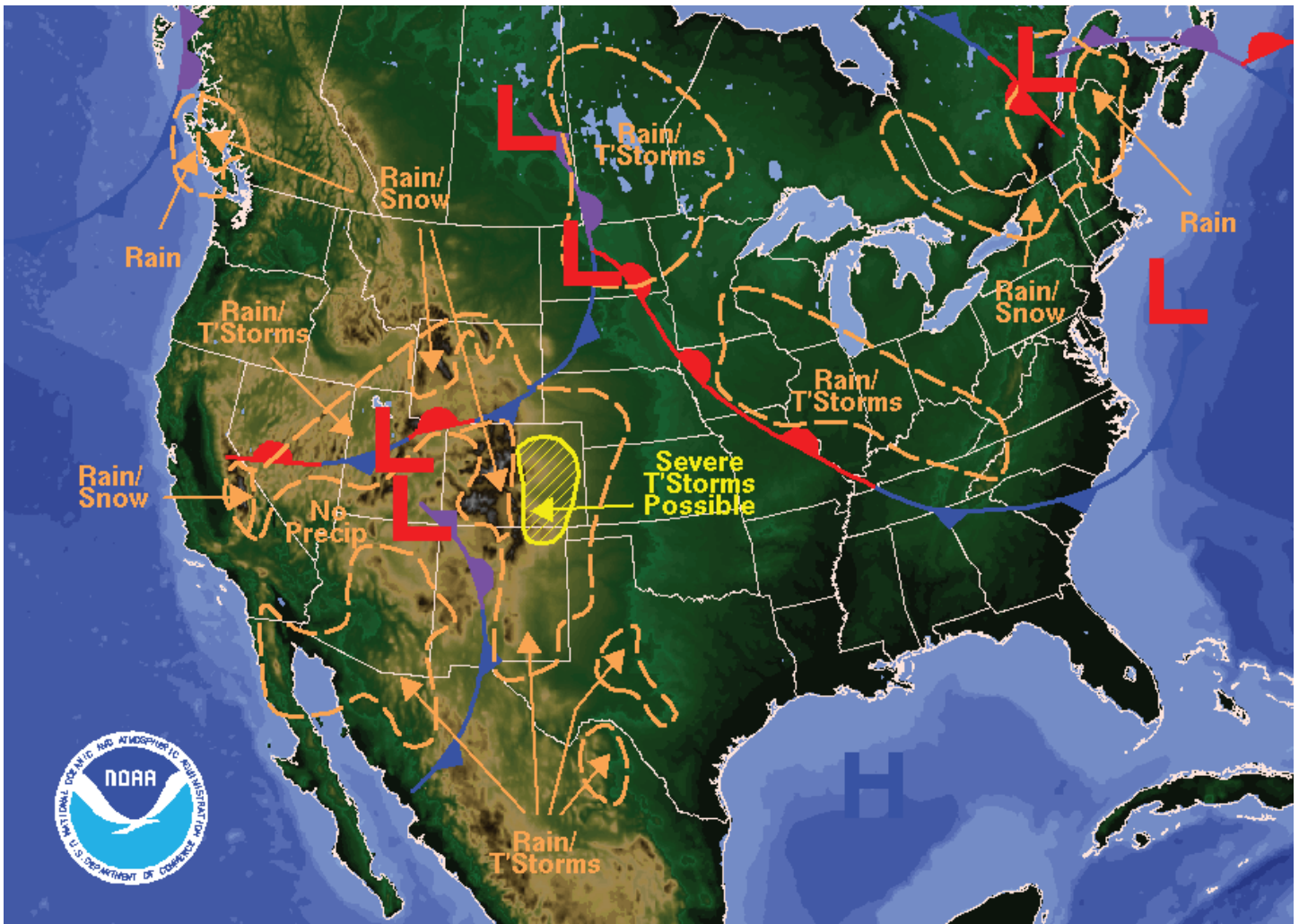
Precip to date in May: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 4.84

Precip Year to Date: 1.98

Sunset Tonight: 8:49 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:10 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Mon, May 08, 2017, issued 4:33 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Mcreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 43 of 80



HELP WANTED NOW!

It is easy for us to imagine that someone who was a king, especially King David, had everything he wanted right at his fingertips. But that image is incorrect according to Psalm 141. David appears to be in trouble.

Hear his cry: "O, Lord, I call to You, come quickly to me; hear my voice when I call to You. May my prayer be set before You like incense."

David was not hesitant to request and receive an immediate audience with God. "I call to You...so...hear my voice." There was no doubt about God's availability or that someone would be ahead of him for one reason or another waiting for an audience with God. God is always available to hear our voice and attend to our needs whenever we call on Him at any time from anyplace.

David also knew that there was nothing or no one that could stop God from helping him. "Come quickly to me." No doubt he had gone to others for help and they were either unable or unwilling to help him. His situation was critical and he needed God's assistance. Obviously, he had turned to others with no results. Now it was time for him to turn to God.

David was also aware of God's acceptance of him and his needs. "May my prayer be set before You." He had no doubt that God was there for him. He was not afraid that his concerns would embarrass God or surprise God or be of no interest to God or be beyond His power. He knew that whatever he needed would get God's attention!

Prayer: How blest we are, Father, to know that we all have equal standing before You and every need is acceptable. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 141:1, 2 1 I call to you, Lord, come quickly to me; hear me when I call to you. May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

News from the Associated Press

South Dakota city looking to approve casino gaming

RANDY DOCKENDORF, Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — They stand 400 miles apart, but Yankton and Deadwood share Old West history, beautiful scenery and a draw for tourists.

Within two years, the two communities could share one more bond — casino gambling.

South Dakota voters passed a constitutional amendment in 1988 permitting limited gaming for Deadwood. The change also affected American Indian casinos in South Dakota, which can offer the same games allowed in the state.

Now, Yankton may seek gaming for its proposed Port Yankton project. Plans call for a hotel, restaurant, entertainment site, convention center and a casino. Promoters are also discussing the possibility of Missouri River cruises.

However, Yankton — or any other South Dakota location — would face a number of hurdles to win approval for casino gaming.

“The state constitution now contains exemptions for video lottery (around the state) and for the City of Deadwood,” said Larry Eliason, executive secretary of the South Dakota gaming commission.

“Right now, it’s only for the City of Deadwood. If another town wanted to have Deadwood style (gaming), they would have to go for a South Dakota constitutional amendment. It would need to be decided on a majority vote of the people in a (statewide) general election,” he told the Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan (<http://bit.ly/2oUGw5o>).

In that respect, the clock is ticking for Port Yankton supporters to place the measure on the November 2018 ballot.

Petitioners would need 27,741 valid signatures by 5 p.m. Nov. 6, 2017, to make the 2018 general ballot, according to South Dakota Secretary of State Shantel Krebs.

Petition circulators must use a standard form and cannot create their own document, Krebs said. The attorney general would provide voters with an explanation of the ballot measure.

In addition, all petition signers must be registered voters in South Dakota.

If the measure didn’t make the 2018 ballot, or was defeated, it would likely need to wait until the 2020 general election.

In seeking to offer limited gaming, Port Yankton can look to Deadwood’s journey through the years. The process has brought rewards but has also required continued hard work, according to Mike Rodman, executive director of the Deadwood Gaming Association.

Compared to Deadwood’s timetable and experience, Yankton would need to move on the fast track to meet the Nov. 6, 2017, deadline for the 2018 ballot.

“The Deadwood, You Bet! Committee initially approached the state Legislature and asked them to put the issue of a change in the constitution to allow limited gaming on the ballot,” Rodman said. “They were turned down and spent the next year and a half gathering signatures from across South Dakota to put the issue on the ballot.”

Deadwood was breaking new legal and political ground at the time, not only in South Dakota but also nationally, Rodman said. “We became the third gaming jurisdiction at the time, behind Nevada and Atlantic City,” he said.

The Deadwood, You Bet! Committee was formed to win statewide support for a constitutional amendment allowing limited gaming in the Black Hills community, Rodman said. The committee consisted of

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 45 of 80

the mayor at the time, business people and other community members.

"They had this vision, and they had the determination and drive to put together the story," he said. "I think they were pioneers and really did change the image of gaming that spread across the whole state."

However, gambling opponents argue, because of Deadwood, gaming has spread across the state in ways not imagined 30 years ago. They argue the state should not promote gaming, including video lottery, multi-state lottos and scratch tickets.

In addition, opponents note the accompanying growth of gaming through American Indian casinos and the creation of more South Dakota Lottery products.

Port Yankton supporters counter that the project would create jobs by stimulating the visitor industry and economic development. Port Yankton would provide amenities currently not found in the community, making it more attractive for conventions and tournaments and as a tourist destination, they say.

In addition, the supporters argue that gaming already surrounds Yankton on all sides. They point to Grand Falls Casino and Golf Resort near Larchwood, Iowa; Hard Rock Hotel and Casino at Sioux City; Fort Randall Casino near Pickstown; and the Ohiya Casino and Resort and the Tatanka Golf Club near Niobrara, Neb.

Port Yankton would make the community more competitive — particularly in keeping dollars in South Dakota — and lead to more riverside development, the supporters add.

The proposed project has created wide discussion in Yankton on all sides. Some residents worry about the possible increased crime and social problems. Others say the project is needed to move the community forward.

Those taking a middle ground say they support the project without the gaming. However, casino supporters believe the gaming provides a key part in ensuring the project's success.

But first, Port Yankton needs to win approval of a constitutional amendment before it can proceed any further with gaming, Eliason said. In seeking its own gaming, Port Yankton — or any other location — could just attach itself alongside Deadwood in the constitution, he said.

"Right now, you could insert the name of an additional location in the amendment allowing gaming in Deadwood, but you would need to stick with those games," he said. "Also, the constitution right now allocates money for Deadwood and Lawrence County. If you wanted to keep the money in your local community and county, you would need to win approval for it or your money would go to Deadwood."

The creation of more gaming locations in South Dakota would likely require a change in state law, Eliason said.

"Right now, part of the state law says our commission has authority to regulate Deadwood and Lawrence County," he said. "Without a change in the constitution, you could have unregulated and untaxed gaming in Yankton or anywhere else in South Dakota."

The legal issues wouldn't end with passage of a constitutional amendment, Eliason said.

"Another issue would be the licensing process for the casino, its owners and the people who work with the gaming," he said. "This wouldn't cover the employees in non-gaming areas such as the restaurant and hotel areas."

Casino owners would determine policies about the presence of minors in certain areas, Eliason said. Those issues include crossing through the casino to reach other areas such a hotel or restaurant. However, Port Yankton or any other venue could be designed so minors and others can take other entrances or paths through the building, he added.

"There is no age limit to enter the casino. There is an age limit of 21 to play," he said. "Some casinos have a house policy that no one under 21 can be on the casino game floor."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 46 of 80

Through the years, Deadwood gaming supporters have won higher bet limits, Rodman said.

"Higher bet limits were a long process, as our original attempt to move from \$5 to \$25 was rejected. Another initiated measure years later got us to \$100," he said. "The Legislature in 2011 moved the limit to \$1,000. Then, 2012 — the first full year of higher bet limits — was our best year in gaming, and revenues have steadily fallen each year since."

In 2016, the income from gaming revenue finished just below \$100 million — down from the high of \$107 million in 2012.

In recent years, Deadwood has sought to add more types of games in response to visitor requests, Rodman said.

"In 2014, in response to the increasing competition, with gaming options not available to us, in Colorado and Iowa, we asked the citizens of South Dakota to allow us to more favorably compete with the games of craps, roulette and keno," he said of the successful ballot measure. "This has slowed the overall revenue losses as we watch slot revenues continue to drop precipitously."

Rodman expects gaming to introduce new technology to meet customer interest and demands.

"The industry has always evolved. We've seen when it was mostly slot machines, and now it's changing," he said. "The millennials are used to a lot of interactive games. They grew up with Xbox and a lot of those games. They are more and more attracted to those types of things."

Deadwood itself has seen increased competition for casinos during the past 30 years, Rodman said.

"We took the city limits of Deadwood in 1988 (for the constitutional amendment), and that's the area that can have gaming, even as the Deadwood city limits have grown," he said. "The competition (for gaming dollars) can be as fierce within the Deadwood city limits as outside it."

Gaming remains a major draw, but Deadwood has sought to offer a much wider experience for families and all ages, Rodman said. Those offerings include dining, shopping and entertainment.

"Deadwood Mountain Grand was a shot in the arm," he said. "We have the entertainment level that we would never have had before. It's been very important to us."

In addition, Deadwood is considering a plaza which could offer ice skating in the winter and a splash pad in the summer, Rodman said. "We're looking at something like the Main Street plaza in Rapid City, which has been phenomenally successful. It would offer a real opportunity for us," he said.

The community is also considering ways to showcase Deadwood Creek, including a new visitor/events center and walking paths. A number of gaming venues have reverted back to retail businesses, offering more shopping choices for both residents and visitors, he added.

Deadwood works to promote its local and regional attractions, Rodman said.

"The majority of marketing dollars have come from local businesses taxing themselves through BID District assessments," he said. "Deadwood tries to market in conjunction with other regional marketing efforts as part of the Black Hills and Mt. Rushmore tourism season. (This effort) also includes visitors passing through to Yellowstone and points west."

In addition, Deadwood promotes its Old West heritage, Rodman said.

"Deadwood has a vibrant events schedule, such as the Days of '76 Rodeo and parades, which has been part of our heritage long before the advent of gaming," he said.

"The focus of Deadwood Chamber marketing is the events, history and natural beauty of the area. Most of the gaming marketing is done by individual casino marketing efforts."

Deadwood officials are updating the city's comprehensive plan, Rodman said. The plan will look at needed restoration work and set goals for the next 25 years.

"Most of the buildings are privately owned, so most of the preservation comes from private entities,"

he said.

Deadwood has used gaming as a way of preserving many of its historic buildings, Rodman said. The City of Deadwood's historic preservation office handles the historic aspect, in and out of Deadwood, funded by Deadwood gaming revenues, he said.

The annual local budget of Deadwood Historic Preservation Funding is submitted to the South Dakota State Preservation Office for approval and must comply with federal guidelines, Rodman said.

Deadwood has prided itself on maintaining high standards for its gaming operations, Rodman said. "You have to work very hard to keep your promise to the people of South Dakota. We try to keep gaming squeaky clean," he said.

The gaming issue has remained an uphill battle for Deadwood in many ways during the past 30 years, but it has brought positive changes, Rodman said.

"The gaming business is a business, and it's every bit as competitive as other businesses," he said.

"We have a balance of entertainment, retail and convention space. Really, what we're working on in Deadwood is still turning and evolving."

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

Powerball ticket sold in Martin worth \$150K

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Officials of the South Dakota Lottery say a Powerball ticket sold in Martin is worth \$150,000 after Saturday night's drawing.

The owner matched four of the five white ball numbers and Powerball on one line of the ticket to win \$50,000. The owner matched only the Powerball on another play line for an additional \$4, but because the ticket holder purchased the Power Play option and the Power Play was 3, the prize tripled to \$150,012.

The winning Powerball numbers drawn Saturday night are 11, 21, 31, 41, 59, Powerball 21, Power Play 3. Winners have six months to claim their prize. There were no jackpot winners Saturday night, so the Powerball jackpot grows to \$165 million for Wednesday night's drawing.

Motorcyclist dies in crash with pickup in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A 37-year-old man is dead after crashing his motorcycle into a pickup in western South Dakota.

The South Dakota Department of Public Safety says the motorcyclist was eastbound and trying to pass a van in a no-passing zone on Nemo Road near Rapid City late Saturday afternoon when he collided with a Ford pickup that was westbound.

The motorcyclist died at the scene. Authorities say he was not wearing a helmet.

The pickup driver and his passenger were not hurt. Both were wearing seat belts.

The name of the cyclist was not immediately released. The South Dakota Highway patrol is investigating.

Boy hurt in fall from Sioux Falls apartment window

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a child was hurt when he fell from a third-story apartment window.

Someone saw the child fall just before 9:30 p.m. Saturday and called 911. Police say the boy suffered broken bones but is expected to survive. He was taken to a hospital.

Investigators say the boy had crawled onto a toy box and pushed on the screen, which gave way.

South Dakota veterans park to feature memorial wall

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A city in southeastern south Dakota will add a wall honoring veterans who were killed in action to its veterans park.

The Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2pJzPA3>) reported the 6- by 5-foot wall will be located in the center of the park in Mitchell and is expected to cost \$11,000.

Organizers have discovered more than 30 veterans who were killed in action from Mitchell and the surrounding area. They expect as many as 75 names will be on the wall.

“Our big goal is we don’t want to miss anybody for this KIA wall,” said Joel Reinesch, a veterans park committee member. “If there was somebody that was killed in action, we want to make sure they get on this wall.”

The wall will be a stand-alone feature, with the goal of it being simple and impactful, Reinesch said. There will also be room left on the wall in case more names need to be added.

“We really want to be respectful and do it the right way the first time around,” Reinesch said.

The hope is to complete the \$360,000 veterans park by mid-August. The park will also include a wall recognizing project donors, landscape work and a water feature.

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

South Dakota college gives renovated hillside Lakota name

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — University officials at a college in western South Dakota have named a renovated hillside on campus “Oyate Wicaka Wita,” a Lakota name meaning “People or Nation Gathering Place.”

The Black Hills Pioneer (<http://bit.ly/2p0s9IJ>) reported that Black Hills State University President Tom Jackson Jr. said naming the hillside connects the school to the Spearfish community and to the Lakota heritage of the Black Hills.

“It’s a special gift to get and give a name,” said Jace DeCory, associate professor of history and American Indian Studies. “As the name Oyate Wicaka Wita is in reference to a place that pulls the people or nation to it, like a magnet, and they feel good about being there, we hope this hillside will pull the people here to spend time at this university and in this place.”

During a ceremony last month, some of DeCory’s relatives smudged and purified the area with sage in a traditional Lakota blessing. Tobacco and water was placed at the base of a tree on the hillside to represent life, thanksgiving and blessings.

Spearfish Mayor Dana Boke praised the university for creating access points to the world by providing experiences and growth opportunities to students.

The new sidewalk and landscaping added a walkway and bike path to the university entrance.

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

French President-elect Macron gears up for challenges ahead

By SYLVIE CORBET and LORI HINNANT, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French President-elect Emmanuel Macron laid the groundwork Monday for his transition to power, announcing a visit to Germany and a name change for his political movement and appearing

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 49 of 80

with his predecessor at a solemn World War II commemoration.

Macron handily defeated far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen in Sunday's presidential runoff, and now must pull together a majority of lawmakers for his year-old political movement to run in the mid-June legislative election.

His party is changing its name to La Republique En Marche (Republic on the Move) as it prepares a list of candidates. Macron has promised that half of those candidates will be new to elected politics, as he was before his victory Sunday.

Macron won the presidency with 66 percent of votes cast for a candidate. But a high number of blank or spoiled votes and unusually low turnout are signs of an electorate dissatisfied with its choices.

Le Pen says she will lead the opposition to Macron.

On Monday, a French national holiday, the president-elect joined President Francois Hollande in commemoration of the end of World War II. The holiday marks the day of the formal German defeat in World War II.

It was the first time the men had appeared in public together since Macron resigned in August 2016 as Hollande's economy minister to run for president — a decision that was received coldly by the French leader at the time, according to French media.

On Monday, though, Hollande gripped Macron's arm before the two men walked side by side and then announced the transfer of power would take place on Sunday, a week after the election.

Monday also marked decades of peace in Western Europe, something Macron made a cornerstone of his campaign against Le Pen's brand of populism. Le Pen called for France to leave the European Union and drop the euro currency in favor of the franc.

Sylvie Goulard, a French deputy to the European Parliament, said Macron would make Berlin his first official visit, with perhaps a stop to see French troops stationed abroad as well.

The National Front, meanwhile, is also gearing up for a name change — if not a makeover of its ideas — after Le Pen's decisive loss. In interviews Monday, National Front officials said the party founded by her father would get a new name to try and draw in a broader spectrum of supporters.

"The National Front is a tool that will evolve to be more efficient, bring even more people together after the number of voters we reached last night. And so we have an immense responsibility vis-a-vis the French people, who trust us," said Nicolas Bay, the party's secretary-general.

Michael Roth, Germany's deputy foreign minister, applauded Macron's win but said the result was marred by the fact that 11 million people in France voted for Le Pen.

"It mustn't become normal that right-wing extremists and populists achieve such strong results," said Roth, whose portfolio includes relations with France. He suggested relaxing European Union rules on state spending to allow France to boost its economic growth.

"If Macron fails, then the next president will be Marine Le Pen and we need to prevent this at all costs," he added.

On the financial front, European stock markets edged down in early trading as investors had been widely expecting Macron's victory.

Though Macron's victory is considered positive for the region's economy and the euro currency, stocks had risen strongly in the previous two weeks on expectations of his win. France's CAC 40 index, which last week touched the highest level since early 2008, slipped 0.8 percent to 5,391 on Monday.

Germany's DAX was down 0.3 percent at 12,683 and Britain's FTSE 100 was up 0.1 percent at 7,301.

The euro, which had risen Sunday night in the wake of the news of Macron's victory, edged back down 0.5 percent to \$1.0943.

Helena Alvez in Paris and Carlo Piovano in London contributed.

Ousted Obama official to speak on Trump aide's Russia talks

By ERIC TUCKER and EILEEN SULLIVAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Obama administration official who warned the Trump White House about contacts between one of its key advisers and Russia is set to speak publicly for the first time about the concerns she raised.

Former acting Attorney General Sally Yates is testifying Monday before a Senate Judiciary subcommittee investigating Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

The highly anticipated hearing — it is Yates's first appearance on Capitol Hill since her firing in January — is expected to fill in key details in the chain of events that led to the ouster of Michael Flynn, President Donald Trump's first national security adviser, in the early weeks of the administration.

The February resignation followed media reports that Flynn had discussed U.S.-imposed sanctions on Russia with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the presidential transition period, which was contrary to the public representations of the White House.

Yates is likely to testify Monday that she warned White House counsel Don McGahn on Jan. 26 that Flynn's contacts — and the discrepancies between what the White House said happened on the calls and what actually occurred — had left him in a compromised position, according to a person familiar with her expected statements. The person was not authorized to discuss the testimony by name and requested anonymity.

White House officials have said publicly that Yates merely wanted to give them a "heads-up" about Flynn's Russian contacts, but Yates is likely to testify that she expressed alarm to the White House about the incidents, according to the person.

Trump has said he has no nefarious ties to Russia and isn't aware of any involvement by his aides in Moscow's interference in the election. He's dismissed FBI and congressional investigations into his campaign's possible ties to the election meddling as a "hoax" driven by Democrats bitter over losing the White House. He's also accused Obama officials of illegally leaking classified information about Flynn's contacts with Kislyak.

Also scheduled to testify is former National Intelligence Director James Clapper, who attracted attention for a March television interview in which he said that he had seen no evidence of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia at the time he left government in January. Republicans have seized on that statement as vindication for the Trump campaign, but investigations are ongoing.

The Associated Press meanwhile reported last week that one sign taken as a warning by Obama administration officials about Flynn's contacts with Kislyak was a request by a member of Trump's own transition team made to national security officials in the Obama White House for the classified CIA profile of Kislyak. The revelation came after interviews with a host of former U.S. officials, most of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to discuss sensitive national security information.

Marshall Billingslea, a former Pentagon and NATO official, wanted the information for Flynn, his boss. Billingslea knew Flynn would be speaking to Kislyak, according to two former Obama administration officials, and seemed concerned Flynn did not fully understand he was dealing with a man rumored to have ties to Russian intelligence agencies. When reached by the AP last week, Billingslea refused to comment. Last month, Trump announced his intention to nominate Billingslea to serve as assistant secretary for terrorist financing at the Treasury Department.

Obama aides also described Flynn as notably dismissive of the threat Russia posed to the United

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 51 of 80

States when discussing policy in transition meetings with outgoing national security adviser Susan Rice and other top officials.

Yates's warning about Flynn in January capped weeks of building concern among top Obama officials, the officials told the AP. President Barack Obama himself that month told one of his closest advisers that the FBI, which by then had been investigating Trump associates' possible ties to Russia for about six months, seemed particularly focused on Flynn.

Yates, a longtime federal prosecutor and Obama administration holdover, was fired Jan. 31 by Trump after refusing to defend the administration's travel ban. She had been scheduled to appear in March before the House intelligence committee, but that hearing was canceled.

The subcommittee meeting Monday is one of three congressional probes into the Russia interference, along with House and Senate intelligence panels. Yet questions remain about whether the Republican-led committees can conduct truly independent investigations.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican and chair of the Senate Judiciary crime and terrorism subcommittee, has been outspoken about Russia's interference in the 2016 election and called for a stronger U.S. response than the sanctions currently levied.

Graham and top Democrat Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island promised a bipartisan probe, but last week it was revealed that Graham independently invited Rice to testify, without Whitehouse's sign-on. Rice, a longtime target of Republicans, declined because her attorney said the invitation came late and without bipartisan consent.

White House Correspondent Julie Pace contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. FRANCE'S MACRON PREPARES TO TAKE THE REINS

The centrist defeated far-right leader Marine Le Pen handily in the presidential vote, and now must pull together a majority for his year-old political movement by mid-June legislative elections.

2. AP: SEX ASSAULTS IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS MINIMIZED AS 'HAZING'

Sexual battery in boys' sports are embedded in team culture and persist for years, and coaches fail to halt it or, worse, try to cover it up, an AP investigation finds.

3. TRUMP'S TRAVEL BAN GETS DAY IN COURT

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia, will examine a ruling that blocks the administration from temporarily barring new visas for citizens from six predominantly Muslim countries.

4. OUSTED OBAMA OFFICIAL TO SPEAK ON FLYNN'S RUSSIA TALKS

Former acting Attorney General Sally Yates is expected to illuminate before a Senate panel what led to the ouster of Trump's first national security adviser.

5. AP: CHINA LAWYER'S FAMILY SAYS AMERICA HELPED THEM FLEE

The wife of a human rights lawyer held in China for inciting subversion tells the AP of how she and her two daughters fled to Thailand, where they were nearly deported back to China before the U.S. stepped in.

6. NORTH KOREA APPEARS TO BE ON HIGH ALERT

Two arrested Americans and allegations of a thwarted CIA-backed assassination plot: It's been quite the week for North Korea's state security operatives.

7. RISE OF AN UNLIKELY POLITICIAN IN IRAQ

Qasim al-Araji, a former militia commander and prisoner of American forces in Iraq, is now pushing Western ideals as the country's new interior minister.

8. WHERE SETTING IS STAR OF NEW THEME PARK

At Disney World's new Pandora-World of Avatar, plants glow and sounds of animals abound throughout the new 12-acre attraction inspired by the 2009 film, "Avatar".

9. WHO WON BIG AT MTV MOVIE & TV AWARDS

Film hit "Beauty and the Beast" and Netflix newcomer "Stranger Things" took home two trophies apiece.

10. CAVS SWEEP WAY INTO EAST FINALS

LeBron James is averaging 34.4 points, nine rebounds and 7.1 assists per game in this year's playoffs as Cleveland awaits the Boston-Washington winner.

Appeals court to weigh challenge to revised Trump travel ban

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — After a series of stinging legal defeats, President Donald Trump's administration hopes to convince a federal appeals court that his travel ban targeting six-Muslim majority countries is motivated by national security, not religion.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday will examine a ruling that blocks the administration from temporarily barring new visas for citizens of Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. It's the first time an appeals court will hear arguments on the revised travel ban, which is likely destined for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Pointing to the Republican's promises on the campaign trail to bar Muslims from entering the country, a federal judge in Maryland found in March that the policy appeared to be driven primarily by religious animus.

Attorneys for the U.S. Justice Department say the court shouldn't rely on Trump's statements, but on the text of the policy, which they say is necessary to protect the country from terrorism. The banned countries represent just a fraction of the predominantly Muslim countries worldwide, they note.

"The court should have focused on official acts, not perceived subjective motivations," the attorneys say in court documents.

The American Civil Liberties Union and National Immigration Law Center say Trump wants the courts to "blind themselves to the ample, public, and uncontested evidence" that the policy targets Muslims.

"The basic question in this case is whether the mountain of evidence that exists as to the improper motive is going to be looked at by this court or swept under the rug," said Omar Jadwat, director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, who will argue the case Monday.

In an extraordinary move signifying the importance of the case, the 4th Circuit decided to bypass the three-judge panel that typically first hears appeals and go straight to the full-court hearing.

While the 4th Circuit was long considered one of the most conservative appeals courts in the country, it moved to the center under President Barack Obama, who appointed six of the 15 active judges.

Now, nine judges are Democratic appointees and five judges are Republican appointees. Chief Judge Roger Gregory was given a recess appointment to the court by President Bill Clinton and was reappointed by President George W. Bush.

It will likely be weeks before the 4th Circuit issues a decision. And even if the court sides with Trump, the travel ban will remain blocked unless the president also wins in another appeals court.

A federal judge in Hawaii has also blocked the six-country travel ban as well as the freeze on the U.S.

refugee program. A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will meet next Monday to hear arguments in that case.

Audio of the 2:30 p.m. EDT 4th Circuit will be broadcast live on C-SPAN. The court will also provide a link to the audio feed on its website.

Follow Alanna Durkin Richer at <http://twitter.com/aedurkinricher>

Read more of her work at <http://apne.ws/2hIhzDb>

White House: Republicans to be rewarded for health care vote **By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican Party will be rewarded for doing “what’s right” by voting to overhaul a “failing and collapsing” health care system, a top aide to President Donald Trump asserted as Democrats and at least one outside group began laying the groundwork to challenge the GOP for control of the House in the 2018 midterm election.

The health advocacy group Save My Care on Monday announced the launch of a six-figure TV and digital advertising campaign beginning this week, targeting 24 Republican House members who voted last week to repeal the health care law enacted under President Barack Obama.

But White House chief of staff Reince Priebus scoffed at the notion that Republicans will lose control of the House in 2018. He said the bill that narrowly cleared the House last week and which faces significant revision by the Senate will be an improvement over the current system of limited choice and rising costs.

“There are some times in life you have to do what’s right, not what’s politically expedient,” Priebus said Sunday. “We’re going to do something better and we’re going to do our job as legislators to get this thing done. I think that the Republican Party will be rewarded.”

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said he was not concerned about political fallout because of the vote.

“We’re keeping our word,” Ryan said. “People expect their elected leaders, if they run and campaign on doing something, they expect them to do that. And that’s what we’re doing.” Ryan argued that “we would spell disaster for ourselves, politically ... if we go back on our word.”

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., gleeful at the prospect of potentially reclaiming the House gavel in 2018, told Republicans they will “glow in the dark” over the vote.

The party that controls the White House traditionally loses seats in Congress in the election that follows a presidential inauguration. Unknown at this point, 18 months before the election, is how the health care vote could complicate that.

Among the lawmakers being targeted by Save My Care’s campaign is Tom MacArthur of New Jersey, the moderate Republican who helped revive the bill. MacArthur wrote an amendment that satisfied some lawmaker’s concerns about how the bill would treat people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Another target is Rep. Dave Brat of Virginia, a member of the House Freedom Caucus, the group of conservative Republicans whose objections to an earlier version of the bill helped scuttle a House vote scheduled for late March.

Save My Care says it will emphasize the lawmakers’ support for a bill that congressional auditors have said will cause 24 million people to lose coverage over 10 years. The campaign is slated to run in congressional districts in 15 states.

A political group with ties to the House Republican leadership, American Action Network, said Sunday it was buying \$500,000 in television time to promote the health care bill. The ad will focus on key

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 54 of 80

elements of the American Health Care Act and thank Ryan and fellow Republicans for “keeping their promise” on the health care issue, the group said.

As the focus of the health care debate shifted to the Senate, Trump on Sunday urged Senate Republicans to “not let the American people down.”

Some senators have already voiced displeasure with the bill that cleared the House last week by a vote of 217-213, with all the “yes” voted supplied by Republicans, citing concerns over potential higher costs for older people and those with pre-existing conditions along with cuts to Medicaid. Democrats oppose the effort to dismantle Obama’s health care law.

Obama defended his signature achievement in Boston Sunday night while accepting the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award.

“I hope that current members of Congress recall that it actually doesn’t take a lot of courage to aid those who are already powerful, already comfortable, already influential,” he said. “But it does require some courage to champion the vulnerable, and the sick and the infirm.”

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, a moderate who also has concerns about the GOP bill and whose vote will be critical, said the Senate will “start from scratch” and not consider the House bill.

“We’re going to draft our bill, and I’m convinced we will take the time to do it right,” she said.

Trump, eager to deliver on a top campaign promise, sought Sunday to pressure Senate Republicans on the issue.

“Republican senators will not let the American people down!” he tweeted from his home in central New Jersey, where he spent a long weekend. Trump has said “Obamacare” is failing as insurers pull out of markets, forcing premiums and deductibles to rise.

The House bill would eliminate fines on people who don’t buy policies and erase taxes on health industry businesses and higher earners. It would dilute consumer-friendly insurance coverage requirements, like prohibiting higher premiums for customers with pre-existing medical conditions and watering down the subsidies that help consumers afford health insurance.

Major medical and other groups, including the American Medical Association, opposed the House bill. Some Senate Republicans, including Rob Portman of Ohio, Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, Cory Gardner of Colorado and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, object to cutting \$880 billion from Medicaid.

The ACA expanded Medicaid with extra payments to 31 states to cover more people. The House bill halts the expansion, in addition to cutting federal spending on the program.

Collins and Ryan appeared on ABC’s “This Week” and Priebus was on “Fox News Sunday.”

Associated Press writer Hope Yen contributed to this report.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

Despite high mileage, James showing no signs of slowing down

By IAN HARRISON, Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — In his playoff rematch with the Toronto Raptors, LeBron James proved even more lethal than last time.

In fact, James may be more lethal now than ever.

James averaged 26 points per game as Cleveland took down Toronto to win last year’s Eastern Conference Finals in six games. This year, James is averaging 34.4 points, nine rebounds and 7.1 assists per game in eight playoff encounters.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 55 of 80

Such a stat line has never been accomplished by anyone over the course of an entire postseason.

"I think he understands the moment," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said Saturday. "I think he's chasing Michael (Jordan). I think he's chasing rings. That's what a guy at his level does."

Asked to compare the James he faced this year to the player he opposed last spring, Raptors guard DeMar DeRozan said he noticed a definite difference.

"He seems a lot faster and quicker this year from last year," DeRozan said Saturday. "That extra hop step, everything out there on the court. You look on the scoresheet after the game and he's still playing 42 minutes a game. It's incredible for somebody with that amount of mileage on him to be able to come back and seem faster and quicker than next year."

That mileage isn't insignificant. Now 32, James has already accumulated 10 full seasons and more than 40,000 career minutes. Nevertheless, it seems he's speeding up, not slowing down.

"I'm very impressed," Cavs coach Tyronn Lue said. "Since the second half of the season, he's really gone to another level. It started in the second half of the regular season and carried over to the playoffs. We're just riding him right now. The way he's been playing is phenomenal. He's carrying this team and everyone is chipping in and trying to help him as much as possible."

For his part, James insists both he and the Cavaliers still have room for improvement.

"We have another level," James said after scoring 35 points in Sunday's Game 4 win that clinched Cleveland's second straight series sweep. "We're going to work on our habits this week and see what happens. Even though we won this series, there's some things we can clean up. We have another level and we believe we can get there."

Dating to last season's rally in the NBA Finals, the Cavs have won 11 consecutive playoff games, two shy of the NBA's record set by the Los Angeles Lakers over the 1988 and 1989 postseasons. No one has played a bigger role in that run than James.

"He's just been on another level," injured Raptors guard Kyle Lowry said. "He's just raised his game."

Toronto's Serge Ibaka, who played with Oklahoma City when the Thunder lost to James' Miami Heat in the 2012 Finals, said he's never seen LeBron better than right now.

"This is the best I've seen him play," Ibaka said. "He's just the motor of that team. He does everything. He creates, he helps on defense, he does everything."

With James and the rest of his teammates burying opponents with a barrage of 3-pointers, Casey said it will take "a Herculean effort" to unseat the defending champs.

"You're going to have to have very flexible defenders," Casey said, "and you're going to have score 117, 118 points a night."

James made a team-high five 3-pointers Sunday, and went 8 for 9 at the free throw line. He also made it clear to Lue that he didn't want to take time off with a series win, and a chance at rest, on the line.

"He tries to go as far as we need him," Lue said. "In that fourth quarter, I tried to get him out for a couple of minutes, but he said, 'No, I'm fine, just get me a timeout and I'll be OK.'"

Unfortunately for Cleveland's opponents, there's no such option.

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/tag/NBAbasketball>

Texas stokes immigration debate with 'sanctuary cities' ban

By PAUL J. WEBER, Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas charged to the forefront of the national debate over immigration as Republican Gov. Greg Abbott signed a so-called "sanctuary cities" ban that lets police ask during routine

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 56 of 80

stops whether someone is in the U.S. legally and threatens sheriffs with jail if they don't cooperate with federal immigration agents.

The new Texas law was blasted by opponents as the nation's toughest on immigrants since Arizona's crackdown in 2010. Opponents vowed to challenge it in court.

Abbott signed the measure on Facebook Live Sunday evening without advance notice, which critics said was to avoid protesters. Abbott spokesman John Wittman said they chose to sign the bill on social media because that's "where most people are getting their news nowadays."

The law allows police to inquire about the immigration status of anyone they detain, a situation that can range from arrest for a crime to being stopped for a traffic violation.

It also requires police chiefs and sheriffs — under the threat of jail and removal of office — to comply with federal requests to hold criminal suspects for possible deportation. Republicans have a strong majority in the Legislature and shoved aside Democratic objections, even as President Donald Trump's efforts to withhold federal funding for sanctuary cities have hit roadblocks in federal courts.

"Let's face it, the reason why so many people come to America is because we are a nation of laws and Texas is doing its part to keep it that way," Abbott said.

Democratic state Rep. Cesar Blanco said it looked like Abbott "wanted to get ahead" of any protests by staging the signing on Facebook Live.

Texas is nation's second most populous state, and opponents say Hispanics will now be subjected to racial profiling and predicted the law will have a chilling effect on immigrant families.

The bill won't take effect until Sept. 1. Terri Burke, executive director of the ACLU of Texas, said "we will fight this assault in the courts" and the ballot box. Abbott said key provisions of the bill had already been tested at the U.S. Supreme Court, which struck down several components of Arizona's law but allowed the provision permitting police to ask about immigration status.

The term "sanctuary cities" has no legal definition, but Republicans want local police to help federal immigration agents crack down on criminal suspects in the U.S. illegally. Some Democrats said the timing of the signing particularly stung after three recent federal court rulings that found intentional discrimination in Republican-passed voting laws.

"They did not connect the history of our culture or how closely that it is tied to Mexico," Democratic state Rep. Eddie Rodriguez said. "It's just extremely personal. There is a lot of disconnect. They don't really see this as affecting people."

The Texas and Arizona bills are not identical. Whereas the Arizona law required police to try to determine the immigration status of people during routine stops, the Texas bill doesn't instruct officers to ask. But it does allow Texas police to inquire whether a person is in the country legally, even if they're not under arrest.

Texas doesn't currently have any cities which have formally declared themselves sanctuaries for immigrants.

But Sally Hernandez, the sheriff of Travis County, which includes liberal Austin, has refused to honor federal requests to detain immigrants if the suspects weren't arrested for immigration offenses or serious crimes such as murder. Hernandez softened her policy after Abbott cut funding to the county, saying decisions would be made on a case-by-case basis. She said before Abbott sign it that she would conform to the ban if it became law.

Associated Press Writer Will Weissert contributed to this report.

Follow Paul J. Weber on Twitter: www.twitter.com/pauljweber

Trump pushes Senate Republicans to act on health care bill

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

BRANCHBURG, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump urged Senate Republicans on Sunday to “not let the American people down,” as the contentious debate over overhauling the U.S. health care systems shifts to Congress’ upper chamber, where a vote is potentially weeks, if not months, away.

Some senators have already voiced displeasure with the health care bill that cleared the House last week, with Republicans providing all the “yes” votes in the 217-213 count. They cited concerns about potential higher costs for older people and those with pre-existing conditions, along with cuts to Medicaid.

Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, a moderate Republican whose vote will be critical to getting a bill to Trump’s desk and who voiced similar concerns, said the Senate would not take up the House bill.

“The Senate is starting from scratch. We’re going to draft our bill, and I’m convinced we will take the time to do it right,” she said.

Mick Mulvaney, Trump’s budget director, also said the version that gets to the president will likely differ from the House measure. Such a scenario would then force the House and Senate to work together to forge a compromise bill that both houses can support.

Collins also complained that the House rushed a vote before the Congressional Budget Office could complete its cost-benefit analysis.

Eager to check off a top campaign promise, Trump sought Sunday to pressure Senate Republicans on the issue.

“Republican senators will not let the American people down!” Trump tweeted from his private golf course in central New Jersey, where he has stayed since late Thursday. “ObamaCare premiums and deductibles are way up — it was a lie and it is dead!”

Trump has said the current system is failing as insurers pull out of markets, forcing costs and deductibles to rise.

The White House on Sunday scoffed at Democratic claims that voters will punish the GOP in the 2018 elections for upending former President Barack Obama’s law. “I think that the Republican Party will be rewarded,” said Reince Priebus, Trump’s chief of staff. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California has threatened that GOP lawmakers will “glow in the dark” over their vote.

The House bill would end the health care law’s fines on people who don’t buy policies and erase its taxes on health industry businesses and higher earners. It would dilute consumer-friendly insurance coverage requirements, like prohibiting higher premiums for customers with pre-existing medical conditions and watering down the subsidies that help consumers afford health insurance.

Obama defended his signature achievement in Boston Sunday night while accepting the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award.

“I hope that current members of Congress recall that it actually doesn’t take a lot of courage to aid those who are already powerful, already comfortable, already influential,” he said. “But it does require some courage to champion the vulnerable, and the sick and the infirm.”

Major medical and other groups, including the American Medical Association, opposed the House bill. Democrats are also refusing to participate in any effort to dismantle Obama’s law, while some Republican senators — Rob Portman of Ohio, Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, Cory Gardner of Colorado and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska — object to cutting Medicaid, the federal-state health care program for the poor and disabled.

The ACA expanded Medicaid with extra payments to 31 states to cover more people. The House bill

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 58 of 80

halts the expansion, in addition to cutting federal spending on the program, which Trump's health chief argued is flawed and dictates too much from Washington.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price argued that states will get more freedom to experiment with the program and make sure that people who rely on Medicaid get the care and coverage they need.

"There are no cuts to the Medicaid program," Price insisted Sunday, adding that resources are being doled out to allow states greater flexibility.

Gov. John Kasich of Ohio questioned what would happen to the mentally ill, drug addicts and people with chronic illnesses under the changes proposed for Medicaid.

"They are going to be living in the emergency rooms again," potentially driving up health care costs, Kasich predicted.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., plans to move forward under special procedures that allow legislation to pass with a simple majority vote, instead of the 60 usually required for major bills in the Senate. That means McConnell can afford to lose just two senators; Vice President Mike Pence would vote to break a 50-50 tie in his constitutional role as vice president of the Senate.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., appeared resigned to the legislative reality that the bill he unveiled with great fanfare, after years of Republican pledges to replace what's become known as "Obamacare," will be altered as part of a "multistage process."

"We think we need to do even more support for people who are older and also more support for people with pre-existing conditions," Ryan acknowledged. "The Senate will complete the job."

A political group with ties to House Republican leadership, American Action Network, said Sunday it was buying \$500,000 in television time to promote the Republican health care bill. The ad will focus on key elements of the American Health Care Act and thank Ryan and fellow Republicans for "keeping their promise" on the health care issue, the group said.

On the other side, a health advocacy group is launching a six-figure advertising campaign this week targeting 24 Republican House members who voted to repeal Barack Obama's health care law. Save My Care says the campaign will include a mix of TV and digital advertising, costing more than a half million dollars.

Among those being targeted: Tom MacArthur of New Jersey, the moderate Republican who helped revive the bill by authoring an amendment on pre-existing conditions.

Some House lawmakers have been challenged by the public over the House vote.

Conservative Rep. Raul Labrador, R-Idaho, drew boos Friday at a public meeting for his response to a constituent who said the House bill tells people on Medicaid to "accept dying."

Labrador responded: "That line is so indefensible. Nobody dies because they don't have access to health care." The comment traveled quickly on social media.

Collins and Ryan appeared on ABC's "This Week," Price was on NBC's "Meet the Press" and on CNN's "State of the Union" with Kasich, while Mulvaney was interviewed on CBS' "Face the Nation." Priebus was on "Fox News Sunday."

Associated Press writer Hope Yen in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

This story has been corrected to reflect that House vote to pass the health care legislation was 217-213, not 217-214.

Obama urges Congress to show 'courage' on health care

By BOB SALSBERG, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Former President Barack Obama, in his first public comments about the ongoing debate over his signature health care plan, implored members of Congress on Sunday to demonstrate political courage even if it goes against their party's positions.

Obama briefly returned to the spotlight as he accepted the annual John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award at JFK's presidential library in Boston. The award is named for a 1957 Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Kennedy that profiled eight U.S. senators who risked their careers by taking principled though unpopular positions.

In his approximately 30-minute speech after accepting the award, Obama steered clear of partisan attacks and never mentioned his successor, President Donald Trump, who has often criticized the previous administration and has worked to undo many of Obama's initiatives, including the Affordable Care Act.

The former president recalled members of Congress who voted to pass the ACA during his presidency, only to lose their seat in later elections.

"They had a chance to insure millions," he said. "But this vote could also cost them their seats, perhaps end their political careers."

Obama made no direct reference to Thursday's House vote to dismantle much of the health care law, but declared that while it did not take courage to help the rich and powerful, it does require courage to help the sick and vulnerable.

"It is my fervent hope and the hope of millions ... such courage is still possible, that today's members of Congress regardless of party are willing to look at the facts and speak the truth, even when it contradicts party positions," said Obama, whose appeal seemed to focus on wavering Republicans.

Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake, one of the few Republicans to attend the dinner, told reporters the Senate would write its own version of the legislation and he did not expect the House bill to survive intact.

The former president focused much of his address on the legacy of President Kennedy, as the library prepared to mark the 100th anniversary of his birth later this month. Obama noted the Kennedys had long advocated for health care reform, and in particular, the late Sen. Edward Kennedy, who died of brain cancer before passage of the Affordable Care Act.

Among the guests who made their way down the red carpet into the library for the event were representatives of the Kennedy family, members of Congress, former Obama staffers and celebrities including former late-night talk show host David Letterman. Former Vice President Joe Biden and former Secretary of State John Kerry also were in attendance.

U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III, a Massachusetts Democrat, said Obama earned the award by meeting many challenges that faced him during his presidency.

"It's about understanding the challenges we face as a country and as a planet and mustering the political will to do what is right even if what is right at that moment isn't necessarily popular," said Kennedy, a harsh critic of the GOP health overhaul plan.

Caroline Kennedy, JFK's daughter who served as Ambassador to Japan, and Jack Schlossberg, Kennedy's grandson, presented the award.

Schlossberg, 24, and planning to attend Harvard Law School, said Obama inspired him the way an earlier generation was inspired by his grandfather.

"Without Barack Obama, I might still be sitting on my couch, eating Doritos and watching sports," he said.

While the former president has steered away from any involvement in U.S. affairs during his early months out of office, he forayed into the French political debate last week by posting a message of endorsement for centrist presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron, who defeated his far right rival Marine Le Pen in Sunday's election.

On Monday, Obama travels to Italy to give a keynote address on climate change and food security at Tuesday's Seeds and Chips Global Food Innovation Summit in Milan.

Pro-EU Macron wins France's presidency, Le Pen hopes dashed

By JOHN LEICESTER and SYLVIE CORBET, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Ripping up France's political map, French voters elected independent centrist Emmanuel Macron as the country's youngest president Sunday, delivering a resounding victory to the unabashedly pro-European former investment banker and dashing the populist dream of far-right rival Marine Le Pen.

Macron, who had never run for office before, celebrated with thousands of jubilant, flag-waving supporters outside the Louvre Museum in Paris on Sunday night.

The European anthem "Ode to Joy" played as he strode out to address the swelling crowd.

"France has won!" he said. "Everyone said it was impossible. But they do not know France!"

Marine Le Pen, his far-right opponent in the runoff, quickly called the 39-year-old Macron to concede after voters rejected her "French-first" nationalism by a large margin. Le Pen's performance punctured her hopes that the populist wave which swept Donald Trump into the White House and led Britain to vote to leave the EU would also carry her to France's presidential Elysee Palace.

Macron told the Louvre crowd that the Le Pen vote was one of "anger, disarray."

"I will do everything in the five years to come so there is no more reason to vote for the extremes," he said.

Earlier, in a solemn televised victory speech, Macron vowed to heal the social divisions exposed by France's acrimonious election campaign.

"I know the divisions in our nation that led some to extreme votes. I respect them," he declared, unsmiling. "I know the anger, the anxiety, the doubts that a large number of you also expressed. It is my responsibility to hear them."

The result wasn't close: With about 90 percent of votes counted, Macron had 64 percent support. Le Pen had 36 percent — about double what Jean-Marie Le Pen, her father and co-founder of their National Front party, achieved at the same stage in the 2002 presidential election.

Macron's victory strengthens France's place as a central pillar of the European Union, and marked the third time in six months — following elections in Austria and the Netherlands — that European voters shot down far-right populists who wanted to restore borders across Europe. The election of a French president who champions European unity could also strengthen the EU's hand in its complex divorce proceedings with Britain.

Parisians lined the streets outside Macron's campaign headquarters to see his motorcade whisk him away to the Louvre party. His wife, Brigitte, joined him on stage after his address.

Macron said he understood that some voters backed him reluctantly, simply to keep out Le Pen and her National Front party, which has a long history of anti-Semitism and racism.

"I know that this is not a blank check," he said. "I know about our disagreements. I will respect them."

After the most closely watched and unpredictable French presidential campaign in recent memory, many voters rejected the runoff choices altogether — casting blank or spoiled ballots in record numbers Sunday. Police sprayed tear gas and detained dozens of protesters holding running demonstrations

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 61 of 80

through eastern Paris after the election results came out.

Congratulatory messages poured in from abroad. Trump tweeted congratulations on what he called Macron's "big win" and said he looked forward to working with the new French leader. Macron has said he wants continued intelligence-sharing with the United States and cooperation at the United Nations and hopes to persuade Trump not to pull the U.S. out of a global accord fighting climate change.

Germany's foreign minister, Sigmar Gabriel, laced his welcome for Macron with a warning to the French, saying: "If he fails, in five years Mrs. Le Pen will be president and the European project will go to the dogs."

Macron becomes not only France's youngest-ever president but also one of its most unlikely. Until now, modern France had been governed either by the Socialists or the conservatives, but both of their candidates were eliminated before the runoff.

"France has sent an incredible message to itself, to Europe and the world," said Macron ally Francois Bayrou, tipped among his possible choices for prime minister.

Unknown to voters before his turbulent 2014-16 tenure as France's pro-business economy minister, Macron took a giant gamble by quitting Socialist President Francois Hollande's government to run as an independent. His startup political movement — optimistically named "En Marche! (In Motion)" — caught fire in just one year, harnessing voters' hunger for new faces and new ideas.

"I'm so happy, it feels so good! I lived the election of Donald Trump in New York, and now finally, after Brexit, after Trump, populism has been beaten in France," Macron supporter Pierre-Yves Colinet said at the Louvre party. "Today, I'm proud to be French."

Despite her loss, Le Pen's advancement to the presidential runoff for the first time marked a breakthrough for the 48-year-old and underscored a growing acceptance of her anti-immigration, France-first nationalism.

Le Pen immediately turned her focus to France's upcoming legislative election in June, where Macron will need a working majority to govern effectively. Le Pen said her "historic and massive" score turned her party into "the leading opposition force against the new president's plans."

"I call on all patriots to join us," Le Pen said. "France will need you more than ever in the months ahead."

Her supporters at a National Front election night gathering in Paris put on a brave face.

"Now we enter combat," said Didier Roxel, a National Front legislative candidate.

Le Pen said she won 11 million votes, which would be her party's highest-ever electoral score.

Macron and Le Pen offered polar-opposite visions: Le Pen's closed borders against Macron's open ones; his commitment to free trade ran against her proposals to protect the French from global economic competition and immigration. Her desire to free France from the EU and the shared euro currency contrasted with his argument that both are essential for the future of Europe's third-largest economy.

Macron also got lucky in the campaign. One of his most dangerous opponents, conservative former Prime Minister Francois Fillon, was vilified after allegations that his family benefited from cushy taxpayer-funded jobs for years. Fillon is facing charges in the case.

On the left, the Socialist Party imploded, its candidate abandoned by voters who wanted to punish Hollande, France's most unpopular president since World War II. Hollande himself decided not to run again.

Macron takes charge of a nation that, when Britain leaves the EU in 2019, will become the EU's only member with nuclear weapons and a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

But the vote also showed that France's 67 million people are deeply divided, riven by anxieties about terrorism and chronic unemployment, worried about the cultural and economic impact of immigration

and fearful of France's ability to compete against giants like China and Google.

Macron has promised a France that would stand up to Russian President Vladimir Putin but that also would seek to work with Putin on fighting the Islamic State group, whose extremists have claimed multiple attacks in France since 2015.

France has been in a state of emergency since then and 50,000 security forces were out to safeguard Sunday's vote.

Associated Press writers Angela Charlton, Samuel Petrequin, Lori Hinnant, Thomas Adamson, Philippe Sotto, Raphael Satter, Elaine Ganley, David Keyton and Nicolas Vaux-Montagny contributed to this report.

N. Korea detains another American over alleged hostile acts

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea has detained another American citizen accused of committing unspecified hostile acts against the country.

The country's official Korean Central News Agency said Kim Hak Song was detained Saturday and that "a relevant institution is now conducting detailed investigation into his crimes."

He worked at Pyongyang University of Science and Technology, the same workplace as another American, accounting instructor Kim Sang Dok, whose detention was announced last Wednesday. The KCNA didn't say whether the two cases are connected.

The university said in a statement early Monday that Kim Hak Song was doing agricultural development work at an experimental farm. It said his detention was not related to his work at the university and therefore it could not comment further.

In Washington, the State Department said it was aware of the report of the new detention and that "the security of U.S. citizens is one of the department's highest priorities."

Kim Sang Dok, the former accounting instructor at the Pyongyang university, was arrested at the Pyongyang International Airport on April 22, the KCNA said. It said he was "intercepted for committing criminal acts" to overthrow the North's government, but didn't elaborate.

The Pyongyang University of Science and Technology is the only privately funded university in North Korea and is unique for having a large number of foreign staff.

South Korea, the U.S. and others often accuse North Korea of using foreign detainees to wrest diplomatic concessions, which have sometimes involved high-profile Americans sent to secure the release of the Americans.

Two other Americans detained in North Korea are Otto Warmbier, serving a 15-year prison term with hard labor for alleged anti-state acts, and Kim Dong Chul, serving a 10-year term with hard labor for alleged espionage.

Warmbier, a University of Virginia student from suburban Cincinnati, made a tearful public confession to stealing a propaganda banner while visiting North Korea with a tour group last year. Kim Dong Chul, a South Korean-born U.S. citizen told CNN he was president of a trade and hotel services company in Rason, North Korea. In his public confession, he said he had spied for South Korean intelligence and had tried to spread religion among North Koreans.

Some foreigners have said after their release that their declarations of guilt had been coerced while in North Korean custody.

When an American citizen is reported detained, the U.S. works with the Swedish Embassy in the North

Korean capital, since the U.S. and the North do not have diplomatic relations.

North Korea's announcement of the detentions comes amid tensions over fears that Pyongyang is preparing another round of nuclear or missile tests and comments. U.S. President Donald Trump has further spiked animosity by saying he isn't ruling out military action against the North, although Trump has also said he would be willing to talk with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un under the right circumstances.

North Korea on Friday accused the U.S. and South Korean spy agencies of an unsuccessful assassination attempt on leader Kim Jong Un involving biochemical weapons.

Police: 2 doctors found dead in penthouse likely knew killer

BOSTON (AP) — Two engaged Boston doctors found dead this weekend inside the penthouse of a luxury condominium building most likely knew their killer, police say.

Dr. Lina Bolanos and Dr. Richard Field were found dead Friday night by police at the Macallen Building in South Boston and police say they believe the man suspected of their deaths knew them. Boston police have not said how the couple were killed or provided a motive in the case.

Bolanos, 38, was a pediatric anesthesiologist at Massachusetts Eye and Ear, according to its website, and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. Field, 49, also an anesthesiologist, worked at North Shore Pain Management.

Police had gone to the building on a report of a man with a gun. Police Commissioner William B. Evans said the suspect opened fire when officers confronted him at the door. He said police fired back and hit the man several times.

After the shootings, the suspect was hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries. The officers weren't hurt.

Authorities expect to file multiple charges against 30-year-old Bampumim Teixeira, of Chelsea. His arraignment is scheduled for Monday. The Suffolk County District Attorney's Office said Teixeira has a pair of larceny convictions on his record. In June of last year, Teixeira passed a note demanding money at a Boston bank. He committed the same crime two years earlier.

The office didn't know Sunday if he had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

On its Facebook page, North Shore Pain Management called Field "instrumental in the creation of this practice" and that his death "leaves an inescapable void in all of us."

Bolanos' godfather, Michael Gibbs, told The Boston Globe that she and Field were "good, kind, gentle people."

"Hopefully, this guy that they caught will be able to say who he is and why this was done," Gibbs said. "That's all we're hoping, is to get some kind of information. Why did this happen?"

On behalf of Massachusetts Eye and Ear, CEO John Fernandez expressed sadness over the deaths of both doctors.

"The entire Mass. Eye and Ear community is deeply saddened by the deaths of Dr. Lina Bolanos and her fiance," he said on the practice's website. "Dr. Bolanos was an outstanding pediatric anesthesiologist and a wonderful colleague in the prime of both her career and life."

Mets suspend Matt Harvey 3 days for violating team rules

By CHARLES O'BRIEN, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — No matter why Matt Harvey was suspended, it's certainly been a messy season for the New York Mets.

The star pitcher was banned for three days without pay by the team on Sunday for an undisclosed violation of team rules, the latest fiasco for a club beset by problems on and off the field this year.

General manager Sandy Alderson announced the suspension in a brief statement before the game, shortly before Harvey was scheduled to start against Miami. Alderson said the right-hander had been sent home, but declined further comment.

Multiple media reports indicated the penalty stemmed from the pitcher failing to show up at the ballpark Saturday.

Mets manager Terry Collins declined to comment on those reports, but infielder Jose Reyes noted that players "are employees and have to come to your job every day."

Harvey can appeal the suspension.

It's not the first time Harvey has been punished by the Mets for his behavior. He missed a mandatory team workout before the 2015 playoffs and was fined.

After showing up at the ballpark that day, Harvey apologized for his late arrival. He offered no public explanation for his tardiness, saying he simply "screwed up."

"We've all been a part of situations where guys break team rules," Mets second baseman Neil Walker said Sunday. "In every occasion I've been a part of, a guy has come back and he's learned his lesson and we've moved on. Hope Matt will be accepted back in here with open arms and we hope he's the best version of himself when he comes back and we believe he will be."

Coming off two straight playoff appearances, the Mets began this season with lofty expectations. Hampered by injuries, however, they've opened 14-16 against all NL East opponents.

The Mets said Harvey's suspension took effect Saturday. Collins held a closed-door meeting with his team before Sunday's game to talk about the penalty.

"We are going to keep it in house, the way it's supposed to be," Collins said. "We hope to put it behind us and move forward."

The suspension removed Harvey from the 25-man roster. The Mets transferred injured ace Noah Syndergaard to the 60-day disabled list to open a spot on the 40-man roster for left-hander Adam Wilk, called up from the minors to start Sunday against the Marlins.

New York also claimed lefty Tommy Milone off waivers from Milwaukee — he was 1-0 with one save and a 6.43 ERA.

In his first season after having a rib removed during surgery to treat thoracic outlet syndrome, the 28-year-old Harvey is 2-2 with a 5.14 ERA in six starts covering 35 innings. He is coming off two of the worst starts of his career, allowing 12 runs over 9 2/3 innings with eight walks in a pair of losses to Atlanta.

"I just hope that (Harvey) is fine and that he comes back ready to pitch and ready to help us win games," outfielder Jay Bruce said. "We will welcome Matt back when he gets back and continue moving forward."

Harvey started the 2013 All-Star Game on his home mound at Citi Field, then missed the 2014 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery. He came back the following year and went 13-8 with a 2.71 ERA, helping the Mets reach the World Series in his first postseason.

This year, New York already has dealt with several public relations problems. Syndergaard initially missed a start with what the Mets said was biceps and shoulder discomfort and then made his next

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 65 of 80

start against Washington after refusing to undergo an MRI. He was removed with the lat injury after 1 1/3 ineffective innings in a 23-5 loss.

Syndergaard issued an apology Saturday to Mets public relations director Jay Horwitz and members of the media for an outburst on April 27.

In another embarrassing development, the team tweeted a photo Friday night of T.J. Rivera wearing the star-of-the-game crown in the clubhouse after a victory over Miami — and the background included a clearly visible sex toy in backup catcher Kevin Plawecki's locker.

Plawecki described it as a prank by someone else. He said the toy was not his, it was gone by Saturday and he was not making an effort to find out who left it in his locker.

On the field, the Mets are missing Syndergaard (latissimus dorsi), outfielder Yoenis Cespedes (hamstring), first baseman Lucas Duda (elbow), catcher Travis d'Arnaud (wrist), left-hander Steven Matz (elbow), right-hander Seth Lugo (elbow) and third baseman David Wright (recovery from neck surgery).

Steady shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera left Saturday's game with an injured left thumb, but the Mets got some good news Sunday when an MRI showed no ligament tear. Cabrera will not need surgery and the team hadn't yet decided whether to put him on the disabled list, Collins said.

Wilk was brought up from Triple-A Las Vegas on short notice and little sleep. He made several stops en route to New York and took an overnight flight, arriving at Citi Field straight from the airport around 8:45 a.m.

In his first big league game since 2015, the lefty was hit hard, giving up six runs and eight hits in 3 2/3 innings. The Mets managed only one hit in a 7-0 loss and were shut out for the first time this season.

"Pretty tough situation to put him in, but it's what we had to do," Collins said. "There were rules here that weren't adhered to and we took a stance."

More AP baseball: <https://apnews.com/tag/MLBbaseball>

Banker, economic adviser and now youngest French president

By SYLVIE CORBET, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Emmanuel Macron has been a star student, a champion of France's tech startup movement, an investment banker and economy minister.

But the man who will become France's youngest president has never held elected office. After a campaign based on promises to revive the country through pro-business and pro-European policies, the 39-year-old centrist independent defeated far-right nationalist Marine Le Pen and her protectionist, anti-immigration party.

In his victory speech, Macron vowed to "rebuild the relationship between Europe and the peoples that make it." He pledged to open a new page for France based on hope and "restored confidence."

It won't be his first experience in the challenge of reforming France.

He quit his job as a banker at Rothschild to become Socialist President Francois Hollande's economic adviser, working for two years by Hollande's side at the presidential palace.

Then as economy minister in Hollande's government from 2014 to 2016, he promoted a package of measures, notably allowing more stores to open on Sundays and evenings and opening up regulated sectors of the economy.

Opponents on the left accused him of destroying workers' protections. Tens of thousands of people poured into the streets for months of protests, and the government had to force the law through parliament under special powers.

Last year, Macron launched his own political movement, En Marche, or In Motion, and quit the So-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 66 of 80

cialist government. He promised to shake up the political landscape by appointing a government that includes new figures from business and civil society.

His next challenge will be to get a parliamentary majority in an election next month to make major changes — with no mainstream party to support him.

The strong advocate of a free market and entrepreneurial spirit has called for France to focus on getting benefits from globalization rather than the protectionist policies advocated by the far right.

In his political rallies, he encouraged supporters to wave both the French tricolor and the European Union flags.

Le Pen, who has tapped into working-class anger at the loss of jobs and once-secure futures, called him the face of “the world of finance,” the candidate of “the caviar left.”

“I’m not under control of the banks. If that was the case, I would have kept working for them,” Macron answered.

Macron had an unexpected test of his political skills following the first round of the vote during what became known as “the battle of Whirlpool,” when Le Pen upstaged him at a Whirlpool factory in Amiens that is threatened with closure.

Le Pen’s surprise appearance put him on the defensive and prompted him to meet with angry Whirlpool workers later the same day. He was whistled and booed when he first arrived. But he stood his ground, patiently debating workers in often heated exchanges about how to stop French jobs from moving abroad.

In a country shaken by recent terror attacks, he pledged to boost the police and military as well as the intelligence services and to put pressure on internet giants to better monitor extremism online.

To improve Europe’s security, he wants the EU to deploy some 5,000 European border guards to the external borders of the bloc’s passport-free travel zone.

Macron did not campaign alone: His wife was never far away. Brigitte Macron, 24 years his senior, is his closest adviser, supporting him and helping prepare his speeches.

Macron and his wife have publicly described how their unusual romance started — when he was a student at the high school where she was teaching in Amiens in northern France. A married mother of three at the time, she was supervising the drama club. Macron, a literature lover, was a member.

Macron moved to Paris for his last year of high school.

“We called each other all the time. We spent hours on the phone, hours and hours,” Brigitte Macron recalled in a televised documentary. “Little by little, he overcame all my resistances in an unbelievable way, with patience.”

She eventually moved to the French capital to join him and divorced. They married in 2007. Emmanuel Macron says he wants to formalize the job of first lady, adding “she has her word to say in this.”

Following his victory speech in the courtyard of the Louvre, his wife appeared on stage by his side, with tears in her eyes.

AP video journalist David Keyton contributed to the story.

Nigeria leader meets Chibok girls, leaves for medical trip

By BASHIR ADIGUN, Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari expressed joy Sunday night at meeting with the 82 Chibok schoolgirls newly freed from Boko Haram extremists — then jolted the country by announcing he was leaving for London immediately for medical checkups as fears for his health

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 67 of 80

continue.

"We've always made it clear that we will do everything in our power to ensure the freedom & safe return of our daughters" and all captives of Boko Haram, Buhari said on his Twitter account.

Minutes later, the 74-year-old president startled Africa's most populous nation with the news of his departure. Buhari, who has missed three straight weekly Cabinet meetings, spent a month and a half in London on medical leave earlier this year and said he'd never been as sick in his life. The exact nature of his illness remained unclear.

"There is no cause for worry" about this latest medical leave, a statement from his office said, adding that the length of Buhari's stay in London will be determined by his doctors.

Photos released by the government showed the rail-thin president standing and addressing the Chibok schoolgirls at his official residence Sunday evening, a day after their release.

"The president was delighted to receive them and he promised that all that is needed to be done to reintegrate them into the society will be done," adviser Femi Adesina said. "He promised that the presidency will personally supervise their rehabilitation."

The young women have been handed over to government officials who will supervise their re-entry into society, Adesina said. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which helped negotiate the girls' release along with the Swiss government, said they would be reunited with their families soon.

Five Boko Haram commanders were released in exchange for the girls' freedom, a Nigerian government official said Sunday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to speak to reporters on the matter. Neither Nigeria's government nor Boko Haram, which has links to the Islamic State group, gave details about the exchange.

Parents of the schoolgirls were waiting for a government list of names of those who had been freed.

Some parents of the kidnapped girls gathered in the capital, Abuja, to celebrate the release, while others expressed anxiety over the fate of the 113 girls who remain missing after the mass abduction from a Chibok boarding school in 2014.

The Rev. Enoch Mark, whose two daughters have been among the missing, was still awaiting word if they were among those freed. He emphasized that he considered all 82 of the girls to be his daughters "because most of them worship in my church."

Some parents did not live long enough to see their daughters released, underscoring the tragedy of the three-year saga. And the recovery process is expected to be a long one for the girls, many of whom endured sexual assault during their captivity.

"They will face a long and difficult process to rebuild their lives after the indescribable horror and trauma they have suffered at the hands of Boko Haram," said Pernille Ironside, acting representative of UNICEF Nigeria.

Boko Haram seized a total of 276 girls in the 2014 abduction. Girls who escaped early on said some of their classmates had died from illness. Others did not want to come home because they'd been radicalized by their captors, they said.

Human rights advocates also fear some of the girls have been used by Boko Haram to carry out suicide bombings.

Last year, a first group of 21 Chibok girls was freed in October, and they have been in government care for medical attention, trauma counseling and rehabilitation. Human rights groups have criticized the decision to keep the girls in custody in Abuja, nearly 900 kilometers (560 miles) from Chibok.

It was not immediately clear whether the newly freed girls would join them.

They should be quickly released to their families and not be subjected to lengthy government detention, Amnesty International's Nigeria office said, adding that the girls don't deserve to be put through

a “publicity stunt” and deserve privacy.

Though Boko Haram has abducted thousands of people during its eight-year insurgency that has spilled across Nigeria’s borders, the Chibok mass kidnapping horrified the world and brought the extremist group international attention.

The failure of Nigeria’s former government to act quickly to free the girls sparked a global Bring Back Our Girls movement; U.S. first lady Michelle Obama posted a photo with its logo on social media.

The Bring Back Our Girls campaign said Sunday it was happy that Nigeria’s government had committed to rescuing the 113 remaining schoolgirls, and it urged the president to “earnestly pursue” the release of everyone held by Boko Haram.

Buhari late last year announced Boko Haram had been “crushed,” but the group continues to carry out attacks in northern Nigeria and neighboring countries. Its insurgency has killed more than 20,000 people and driven 2.6 million from their homes, with millions facing starvation.

Associated Press writers Haruna Umar in Maiduguri, Nigeria and Sunday Alamba in Abuja, Nigeria contributed.

Israel says Palestinian hunger strike leader ate in secret

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel’s Prison Service released footage on Sunday that it says shows the leader of a mass Palestinian hunger strike breaking his fast, a claim dismissed by the Palestinians as an attempt to undermine the open-ended strike, now in its 21st day.

Assaf Librati, a spokesman for the prison service, said strike organizer and Palestinian uprising leader Marwan Barghouti ate a candy bar on May 5 and cookies on April 27. He said surveillance was increased and Barghouti was caught on film eating.

Footage aired by Israeli media shows a prisoner sitting down fully clothed on a toilet unwrapping something and putting it in his mouth. Other footage shows a prisoner eating something near a sink.

Qadoura Fares, who heads an advocacy group for Palestinian prisoners, cast doubt on the footage, saying Barghouti is being held in solitary confinement and has no access to food.

“This is a fabrication,” Fares said of the footage released Sunday. “This is psychological warfare that we expected Israel to wage against the strike.” He said that “the prisoners will not buy this account from the Israeli side, and they will continue their strike.”

Barghouti, a leader of the second Palestinian uprising, is serving five life terms after being convicted by an Israeli court of directing two shooting attacks and a bombing that killed five people. Barghouti, who disputed the court’s jurisdiction and did not mount a defense, has been in prison since 2002.

Polls suggest that the 58-year-old Barghouti is the most popular choice among Palestinians to succeed 82-year-old Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Palestinians have held large rallies in support of the hunger strike since it began. After decades of conflict, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been imprisoned at one time or another for acts ranging from stone-throwing to carrying out attacks that wounded or killed Israelis.

Palestinians say the mass hunger strike is an attempt to improve conditions inside the jails and gain more family visits. Israeli officials have dismissed the strike as a bid by Barghouti to burnish his credentials in an internal Palestinian power struggle.

“This hunger strike was never about the conditions of the convicted terrorists, which meet international standards,” Israeli Minister of Public Security Gilad Erdan said. “Barghouti is a murderer and hypocrite who urged his fellow prisoners to strike and suffer while he ate behind their back.”

Fares said earlier Sunday that some of the hundreds of Palestinians participating in the hunger strike

began taking vitamin supplements on day 15. He said guards had punished the strikers by seizing all personal items and leaving prisoners "with nothing except their beds." He says the information comes from lawyers who recently visited the strikers.

Israel holds about 6,500 Palestinians on charges related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel says 890 prisoners are participating in the hunger strike.

Israel-Germany row shines spotlight on anti-occupation group

By **KARIN LAUB, Associated Press**

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Former Israeli combat soldiers who were thrust into the center of a diplomatic row between Israel and Germany say the sudden international spotlight has given them a bigger stage to speak out against Israel's 50-year rule over millions of Palestinians.

Breaking the Silence is a group of ex-soldiers-turned-whistleblowers who view Israel's open-ended occupation of lands sought for a Palestinian state as an existential threat to their country.

Since 2004, the group has collected testimony from more than 1,100 fellow soldiers who describe the dark side of that rule, including seemingly routine mistreatment of Palestinian civilians stripped of basic rights. The veterans hope such accounts by former fighters will carry weight and spark public debate about the moral price of the occupation.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and top officials in his nationalist government have a starkly different view. They have branded Breaking the Silence as foreign-funded subversives who are trying to defame Israel and its military.

Netanyahu even seemed willing to rattle Israel's relationship with key European ally Germany to score points against Breaking the Silence, which has 16 paid staffers, several dozen volunteers and an annual budget of about \$2 million.

Two weeks ago, he said he would not receive German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel if the visitor stuck to plans to meet with Breaking the Silence. Gabriel chose the soldiers instead. Netanyahu, who also serves as foreign minister, said that shunning visitors who meet with Breaking the Silence is now official policy.

The dispute cast a shadow over what would otherwise have been a routine visit to Israel by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier this week.

In a speech in Jerusalem on Sunday, Steinmeier did not refer to Breaking the Silence by name, but said that civil society groups "deserve our respect as democrats, also at times when they are critical of a government."

Steinmeier, who met with Netanyahu on Sunday, said he disagreed with the decision not to receive Gabriel. Steinmeier said he decided against canceling his Israel trip because it might have allowed relations to "move deeper into a dead end, which would have harmed both sides."

Yehuda Shaul, a co-founder of Breaking the Silence, said the recent attention has been a mixed blessing.

The focus on the diplomatic dust-up "diverts a lot of attention from the real issue, what goes on in the occupied territories," he said in an interview at the group's office, tucked away in an old walk-up in a grubby industrial area of Tel Aviv.

"On the other hand, it gives us more stages to speak about it," said Shaul, citing more media attention and public speaking invitations that draw larger audiences.

Israelis have been bitterly divided over what to do with lands captured in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Israel annexed east Jerusalem immediately after the war and retains overall control over the West Bank,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 70 of 80

with enclaves of Palestinian self-rule. Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005 and has enforced a border blockade since the Islamic militant Hamas seized power there two years later.

Many Israelis support Palestinian statehood in principle, but believe it's not safe to cede territories now. Fears were stoked by three Israel-Hamas wars since 2008 and an escalation of regional conflicts. Meanwhile, partition is increasingly difficult, with 600,000 Israelis already living on occupied lands and settlements expanding steadily.

Netanyahu has said he is willing to resume talks with the Palestinians, but gaps remain wide. A majority of his Cabinet opposes a two-state solution and some even call for annexing parts of the West Bank.

Shaul said he and his comrades are the true patriots.

"I believe Jews have a right to self-determination in the Holy Land. But I refuse to accept that the only way I will be allowed to implement my right to self-determination is if I strip my neighbors, the Palestinians, of the exact same right I demand for myself," he said. "A permanent occupation is the most anti-Zionist position one can ever have because it says we are doomed to live in a sin."

The beginnings of Breaking the Silence go back to Hebron, the West Bank's largest Palestinian city, where hundreds of troops guard roughly the same number of Jewish settlers in an Israeli-controlled center partly off limits to Palestinians.

Shaul, who grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home, served part of his compulsory military service in Hebron during an armed Palestinian uprising that erupted in 2000.

He became increasingly disillusioned with his mission, which he felt was largely aimed at making Palestinians fear Israeli soldiers. He said that while his parents and grandparents fought against armies to defend Israel, "the stories I can tell you about is breaking into houses in the middle of the night to intimidate people and seeing children crying and peeing in their pants."

In 2004, Shaul and dozens of members from his unit presented a photo exhibit about Hebron in Tel Aviv.

Since then, the group has collected recorded testimony from hundreds of soldiers, including veterans of recent wars.

More than 100 soldiers have gone on the record, while the rest remain anonymous, for fear of repercussions, but are known to the group's researchers, who check their stories, Shaul said. The research department was able to flag four false testimonies by right-wing activists trying to undermine the group's credibility, he said. All material is submitted to the military censor before publication to avoid inadvertent harm to Israel's security, he added.

Critics allege that the group is hiding behind anonymous testimony to smear Israeli soldiers and help Israel's enemies press future war crimes charges at the International Criminal Court. They say the group, which does not call for a boycott of Israel, nonetheless feeds into what many Israelis believe is a global trend of unfairly singling out and delegitimizing Israel.

Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely recently said her office is urging European countries to stop funding what she called "anti-Israel organizations," including Breaking the Silence. "We will ask our friends in the world to respect this red line," she said.

Researchers seek better ways to farm popular Pacific fish

By PHUONG LE, Associated Press

PORT ORCHARD, Wash. (AP) — The dark gray fish prized for its buttery flavor live deep in the ocean, so researchers keep their lab cold and dark to simulate ideal conditions for sablefish larvae.

A biologist shines his dim red headlamp and uses an ultrasound to scan the belly of an anesthetized

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 71 of 80

sablefish about the length of his forearm to tell if it's female and has eggs to collect. He gently squeezes out hundreds of tiny, translucent eggs into a glass beaker.

After the eggs are fertilized externally, they'll grow in large indoor tanks and some in floating net pens in Washington state's Puget Sound to be used for research.

At this federal marine research station near Seattle, scientists are studying sablefish genetics and investigating ways to make it easier and more efficient to commercially grow the fish.

It is part of a larger effort by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to support marine aquaculture as a solution to feed a growing demand worldwide for seafood.

People are consuming more fish than in previous decades, with average worldwide per capita consumption hitting 43 pounds (20 kilograms) a year, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Fish consumption is expected to grow even more in coming years.

NOAA says aquaculture can relieve pressure on fishing populations and promote economic growth.

Fishermen along the U.S. West Coast, mostly in Alaska, catch millions of pounds of wild sablefish each year but no commercial sablefish net-pen farming exists in the U.S.

Sablefish, also known as black cod or butterfish, are long-lived species that is native to the north-east Pacific Ocean and highly valued in Asia for its beneficial nutrients and delicate flavor. The fish are grilled, smoked, poached, roasted or served as sushi.

Michael Rubino, who directs the NOAA aquaculture program, noted that practices for farming fish in the U.S. meet very strict environmental regulations.

But some critics worry large-scale farms could harm wild fish stocks and ocean health, and some commercial fishermen worry about potential competition.

"This would be a big threat for us," said Robert Alverson, executive director of the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association, a Seattle-based group that represents about 95 commercial fishermen in Alaska, Oregon, Washington and California.

In 2015, fisherman harvested about 35 million pounds (16 million kilograms) of sablefish worth \$113 million in the United States, all along the U.S. West Coast.

Of that, nearly two-thirds, or about 23 million pounds (10 million kilograms), were caught in Alaska, with smaller amounts in Oregon, Washington and California. Nearly half of the sablefish caught in the United States is exported, with a majority going to Japan.

"Our fear is that science isn't going to stay in the U.S., and it will be exported to a Third World country where people work for a few bucks a day," Alverson said. "They'll raise it with low-valued labor and use our science to undercut our commercial fishery and coastal communities."

Alaska law prohibits finfish farming.

Rubino and others say wild harvests and aquaculture can complement each other, particularly during months when there are lower catch limits for wild sablefish.

"You always have this yin-yang problem between fisheries and aquaculture," Rick Goetz, who leads the marine fish and shellfish biology program at the Manchester Research Station, across Puget Sound from Seattle. "The big problem is allaying the fears of people that you can have both. You can have both of those things working, particularly because this fish is such a high-value product."

In recent years, NOAA Fisheries scientists have worked to reduce potential barriers to sablefish aquaculture. They have developed techniques to produce all-female stocks of sablefish that grow faster and much bigger than males in about 24 months. Ideal market size is roughly 5 ½ pounds (2 ½ kilograms).

They've also studied different ways to reduce the costs of feeding juvenile fish, increase larvae survival rates and decrease deformities.

One research project is replacing more expensive algae with clay that is used to help sablefish larvae better find their prey. Another looked at finding the optimal temperature to increase larval growth.

Wild fish are caught off the Washington coast and used to develop captive brood stocks, or mature fish that are used for breeding.

At the facility, the fertilized eggs grow in silos in dark, cold rooms before being moved to other indoor tanks where they're fed a steady diet of brined shrimp and other food. Large circular tanks hold fish in different growth stages.

The facility produces about 10,000 all-female fingerlings, or juveniles about an inch (25 millimeters) long, each year.

It has sent some fish to a Texas company that uses land-based recirculation tanks to grow fish, as well as others interested in sablefish aquaculture.

NOAA Fisheries also is working with a Native American tribe in Washington state to get a pilot project to grow sablefish in net pens outside the research facility at Manchester. The tribe and others have applied for a federal grant.

Kurt Grinnell, aquaculture manager for the Jamestown S'Kallam Tribe, said the tribe is very interested in sablefish aquaculture for many reasons.

"It's a native fish to our area. It's a very robust fish. It's very sought-after. It's got great market value," he said. "Over time, our country and other countries will have to get their protein source somewhere, and we believe this is one way to meet that demand."

Grieving dad runs for school board in gang-scarred suburb

By COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press

BRENTWOOD, N.Y. (AP) — Robert Mickens was just a regular dad who went to his daughter's high school basketball games in their New York town, worried about whether she studied enough and sometimes got on her case for spending too much time gabbing with her friends.

Everything changed in September. That's when his 15-year-old Nisa and her best friend, Kayla Cuevas, 16, were found beaten and hacked to death in the street, a killing authorities blamed on the violent gang MS-13, which has infested their school and gripped their Long Island community with fear.

Mickens is now turning his grief into action, running for the local school board to help change what he sees as a culture of gang violence that has claimed the lives of 11 people, mostly teenagers, in Brentwood and another neighboring town since the school year began.

"I just thought I needed to do something to make it better for other kids, to do more," said Mickens, a 39-year-old nurse's aide with a trade-school degree and no experience in education. He is among eight candidates on the May 16 ballot for three spots in the Brentwood Union Free School District, one of the state's largest districts, with more than 18,000 students.

The board does the usual tasks: manages a \$380 million budget, evaluates the superintendent and ratifies union contracts. But increasingly it has been grappling with how to handle the mounting MS-13 threat, which has made parents afraid to send their children to Brentwood High School and students fearful that any slight to the gang, particularly a refusal to join, could get them killed.

"You hear from students and parents, they have concerns over about what is going down at the school," Mickens said. "Me being a father who lost his daughter, I think I could probably help other kids and make a difference."

The 11 killings blamed on MS-13 in Brentwood and neighboring Central Islip have led President Donald Trump to weigh in, calling them the result of lax immigration policies that let too much criminal "scum" slip through. About a dozen suspected gang members were rounded up and arrested in March, but four more high schoolers were found dead in a park last month.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 73 of 80

Nisa's death last year was particularly tragic because, authorities say, she was not the intended target and was merely in the wrong place at the wrong time.

An entryway to the modest home Mickens shares with his wife and two stepchildren has become a kind of shrine to Nisa, with condolence cards, pictures of her playing basketball, and a framed photo of her as a young child displayed with a cross and a vial of holy water.

Mickens, who is running as part of a slate with two other candidates — a lawyer and a pastor who delivered the eulogy at Nisa's funeral — says he's not looking for votes in the election because his daughter died. He's looking for votes because people can believe in him and trust him.

A refrain from parents is that the district has done a poor job of providing enticing afterschool alternatives for children often left alone after school because parents work long hours.

"Nowadays with things being so expensive, a parent has to practically do a 12-hour shift just to survive," Mickens said. "Their child is coming home to an empty house and what's the first thing they're going to do? Leave."

Parents are also questioning why they pay so much in taxes — more than \$5,000 a year on a \$300,000 home — only to have their schools feel underfunded. They complain there are not enough social workers and guidance counselors. School officials did not return calls seeking comment.

Evelyn Rodriguez, Kayla's mother, said the high school social workers failed her daughter, who had been bullied for years.

"We need to bring programs into the school so we can catch them early, change their minds," she said. "So we can avoid this ever happening again."

Joseph Walsh, 58, a retired security guard at the high school who is running against Mickens, said the problem is both a lack of security guards and proper training for them against the gang threat. "What good is having more guards when they don't know what they're doing?" he asked.

Despite the public outcry over the deaths, a candidate's night this week drew only about 35 people, where hopefuls took turns answering questions on how to best address the gang violence.

"I want to get to the heart of the matter," said Bryan Greaves, the pastor on the slate with Mickens. "I don't want to bury another child. I don't want to have to counsel another family. I do not want to have to try to raise a GoFundMe for a family to bury a child."

Associated Press writer Sara Megan-Walsh contributed to this report.

Jared Kushner's sister woos China's 'golden visa' investors

By GILLIAN WONG, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The sister of President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner has been in China courting individual investors with a much-criticized federal visa program that provides a path toward obtaining U.S. green cards.

Kushner's sister Nicole Meyer promoted One Journal Square, a Kushner Companies' development in Jersey City, at an event Sunday at the Four Seasons Hotel in Shanghai, according to participants.

The pitch seeks to raise funds from Chinese investors through the U.S. government's EB-5 visa program, which allows permanent U.S. residency for those who finance projects that create a certain amount of jobs.

The event was organized by Beijing-based immigration services company QWOS and Kushner Companies, according to an advertisement on the Chinese company's website, which says the project is seeking \$150 million from 300 EB-5 investors.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 74 of 80

Kushner, a senior adviser to Trump, stepped down as chief executive of the Kushner Companies in January and has sold stakes in several properties to help allay concerns about conflict of interest. His family's promotional efforts in China come amid widespread criticism of the EB-5 visa program, which has grown popular among wealthy foreigners seeking to move to the U.S. but faces allegations of fraud and misuse.

Critics say many of the investments purportedly aimed at assisting poor areas of the U.S. have instead wound up going to projects in more affluent neighborhoods, while many programs have been badly hit by fraud scandals. U.S. lawmakers have been weighing proposed changes to the program, which would likely affect companies such as Kushner Cos. should it want to raise funds from such investors. Earlier this month, Congress extended the EB-5 program in its current form through Sept. 30.

Staffers at QWOS' offices in Beijing and Shanghai either refused to comment or did not answer repeated calls. The Kushner Companies declined comment.

Blake Roberts, an attorney at the law firm of WilmerHale, which is Kushner's personal counsel, said Kushner has no involvement in the operation of Kushner Companies.

Roberts said in a statement that Kushner has divested his interests in the One Journal Square project by selling them to a family trust of which he, his wife and his children are not beneficiaries, a mechanism suggested by the Office of Government Ethics.

"As previously stated, he will recuse from particular matters concerning the EB-5 visa program," the statement said.

Now led by Kushner's relatives, the Kushner Companies had earlier been negotiating with China's Anbang Insurance Group to provide what could be hundreds of millions of dollars in equity for redevelopment of a Manhattan office building. Those negotiations, which had drawn criticism from lawmakers and government ethics experts, ended in March. Critics saw it as a potential attempt by China to curry favor with the White House.

The Chinese company's advertisements for the Journal Square development described the project as "Kushner 1," with punchy subtitles declaring that it has "government support" and is "founded by celebrity developers," without elaborating.

Bi Ting, a 34-year-old woman who attended the Shanghai event, said having the name of the U.S. president's son-in-law associated with it was "a bonus for the project."

Bi said Kushner's sister Meyer spoke for more than 10 minutes, describing the history of the Kushner family and the highlights of the project. Meyer spoke to the audience in English, aided by a translator, and didn't take any questions, Bi said.

The proposed EB-5 investment would account for around 15 percent of the total investment of \$976 million required for the project. According to QWOS's advertisements, the development comprises two 66-story towers of 1,476 luxury apartments, as well as commercial and retail space.

Another person who attended the forum in Shanghai, who would only give her surname, Wang, said people in the conference said that Trump's son-in-law was a shareholder of the Kushner Companies, but "he has already quit."

"I don't know if the connection with the president is good or not, it's hard to say," added Wang, who is from Shanghai.

The other participant, Bi, who is pregnant, said she was considering immigrating to America to give her child an academic environment that is "more relaxing; where one can pursue real interests and where the child can do something that they really want to do."

Organizers prevented reporters from attending the event, saying it was a private function even though it is publicly advertised. On Saturday, Meyer spoke at a similar promotional conference in Beijing, de-

tails of which were first reported by the Washington Post and the New York Times.

Associated Press researchers Fu Ting in Shanghai and Henry Hou in Beijing contributed to this report.

AP: Sex assaults in high school sports minimized as 'hazing'

By REESE DUNKLIN, Associated Press

The Georgia school district said it was investigating the baseball players for "misbehavior" and "inappropriate physical contact." What it didn't reveal was that a younger teammate had reported being sexually assaulted.

Even after players were later disciplined for sexual battery, the district cited student confidentiality to withhold details from the public and used "hazing" to describe the incident, which it also failed to report to the state as required.

Across the U.S., perhaps nowhere is student-on-student sexual assault as dismissed or as camouflaged as in boys' sports, an Associated Press investigation found. Mischaracterized as hazing and bullying, the violence is so normalized on some teams that it persists for years, as players attacked one season become aggressors the next.

Coaches frequently say they're not aware of what's happening. But AP found multiple cases where coaches knew and failed to intervene or, worse, tried to cover it up.

The AP examined sexual violence in school sports as part of its larger look at student-on-student sex assaults. Analyzing state education records, supplemented by federal crime data, AP found about 17,000 official reports of sex assaults by students in grades K-12 over a recent four-year period. That figure doesn't capture the extent of problem because attacks are widely under-reported and not all states track them or classify them uniformly.

Nor does the data paint a detailed picture of specific incidents, revealed when the AP reviewed more than 300 cases of student-on-student sexual violence that surfaced through law enforcement records, lawsuits, interviews and news accounts. In those cases, the sports setting emerged as a leading venue for such attacks.

Teammate-on-teammate sexual assaults occurred in all types of sports in public schools, and experts said the more than 70 cases in five years that AP identified were the tip of the iceberg. Though largely a high school phenomenon, some cases were reported as early as middle school.

Boys made up the majority of aggressors and victims in teammate attacks, records show, and some suffered serious injury and trauma.

An Idaho football player was hospitalized in 2015 with rectal injuries after he was sodomized with a coat hanger. That same year, a North Carolina teen suffered rectal bruising when he was jabbed through his clothes with a broomstick. Parents of a Vermont athlete blamed his 2012 suicide on distress a year after teammates sodomized him with a broom.

"It's basically rape and sexual assault," said Hank Nuwer, a hazing historian at Franklin College in Indiana. "It's amazing to me that there hasn't been a public outcry on this to help stop it."

The acts meet federal law enforcement definitions of rape and sexual assault, but language shrouds the problem and minimizes its severity. It also shapes how coaches and schools respond, and can influence whether off-campus authorities hold anyone accountable.

"Language is everything," said B. Elliot Hopkins, a sports safety expert at the National Federation of State High School Associations. "If anyone knew that their kid was going to run the risk of being sexually assaulted to be part of a team, we wouldn't have anyone playing any sports."

PLAYING WITH WORDS

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 76 of 80

What really happened on the Georgia baseball team — compared to the school district's official statement — is outlined in graphic detail in state education, police and court records AP obtained.

The players from Parkview High School, in the Atlanta suburb of Lilburn, were playing in a tournament in South Carolina in June 2015. That year's squad would be defending the school's third state championship and second Baseball America High School Team of the Year title since 2011.

Over a pizza dinner, an upperclassman warned several freshmen to "sleep with one eye open tonight" and specifically threatened sexual violence.

At the team hotel later, with coaches nowhere in sight, five to eight upperclassmen barged into a room and ordered three freshmen out of hiding. Over shouts of "get his ass," they pinned down one boy, and through his shorts, he felt fingers shoved into his rectum. They pulled down another boy's shorts. He got them back up, but the attackers grabbed and punched his testicles. The third managed to flee.

To gain entry to a second room, one of the upperclassmen pretended to be a freshman and obtained a key from the front desk. Inside, the aggressors blocked the door and ganged up on one boy. Only when he broke free and threatened to tell the coach did the assault stop. "We don't want to be raped!" another terrified boy pleaded.

The upperclassmen didn't challenge the evidence in disciplinary proceedings, but described what they did to the freshmen as "wrestling and horse playing."

Targeting rookies for humiliating, and even risky, rituals is not new to sports. However, experts say the last 10 to 15 years have seen an escalation into sexual violence.

The reasons why aren't entirely clear, and research on sports hazing rarely addresses these assaults in depth. But players, perhaps influenced by sexualized pop culture, seem to be trying to one-up what was done to them, experts say.

Although many of the cases AP identified included anal penetration, grabbing crotches or grinding genitals into teammates, those who often first learn of incidents — coaches, school officials — routinely characterize them as hazing, bullying or initiations.

People don't want to think kids could act that way and chalk it up to jock behavior, said Danielle Rogers, who in 2011 prosecuted locker-room assaults by three athletes in Hardin, Missouri.

"If this had happened on the street, nobody would say this is hazing or bullying," she said.

Because of that mislabeling, such cases don't always show up in state education records or federal crime data as sexual assault, and no one specifically tracks or catalogs them in a systemic way.

School districts frequently won't divulge information about attacks, fighting public records requests or declining to answer basic questions. Sometimes that's because they're trying to be sensitive to students. Other times, experts say, it's about protecting school image.

"Does a school district really want it out that they're not protecting kids and kids are being sexually assaulted, and then turn around and ask you for money to build a new library?" Hopkins said.

In the Georgia case, a draft public statement from the Gwinnett County Public Schools initially said a player's family had reported he was "sexually assaulted," according to records AP obtained. But the final version referred only to "inappropriate physical contact." When asked, district officials said that wording was "more inclusive" of the "diversity of the types of misconduct alleged."

Months later, after several upperclassmen were disciplined in part for sexual battery or aggravated sexual battery, the district shared the public statement that described the ordeal as "hazing."

Officials argued they didn't have to report the incident in data the state collects on school violence because it happened in the summer. The Georgia Department of Education told AP the district was wrong and would need to correct its filing.

Georgia school administrators were not alone in their toned-down language. In South Carolina, where

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 77 of 80

the baseball tournament was held, police logged the incident as a "possible hazing" and "simple assault," despite its own report saying a freshman's father alleged players "sexually violated two other boys." There were no charges, and North Charleston police declined comment.

WHERE ARE COACHES?

Coaches serve as parental figures in many schools and communities, especially where sports are a source of civic pride. They are entrusted with the care of players at night, on weekends and during out-of-town trips. They call teams "family."

While many live up to that image, coaches in several cases AP examined fostered the opportunity for misconduct through poor supervision. Some coaches became aware of misbehavior but treated it as a team disciplinary matter. Others failed to do anything.

—A group of five Florida baseball players had allegedly penetrated two teammates, one with a Gatorade bottle, during an out-of-town tournament in 2016. One boy told the coach, who responded, "It's just baseball, keep it to yourself," according to a police report filed months later.

— In Texas, a teacher reported in 2011 that basketball players were putting their fingers in teammates' bottoms. The coach insisted the action was merely a joke and not hazing, and his assistant called the complaint a "misrepresentation" by a "disgruntled player and father," school records show. The district told AP the allegations were reported to authorities, but police said they were not notified.

— Two New Mexico football coaches walked in just after a player was sodomized with a broomstick in 2008. The boys laughed it off as an "initiation" and coaches took no action, failing to halt a subsequent attack, district records show. Seven victims later sued, settling for \$5 million.

Then there's a December 2015 case involving a Tennessee basketball team, investigated jointly by the prosecutor's and sheriff's offices in Chattanooga, along with an outside review the Hamilton County school district commissioned.

The law enforcement report shows that a freshman confided to a coach that upperclassmen had sexually assaulted him and others with a pool cue in a cabin during an out-of-town tournament trip.

Despite that warning, the upperclassmen continued unchecked. Two went on to pin another boy face down on a bed as a third thrust a pool cue into his rectum, shredding two layers of clothing and breaking off the tip inside him. The coaches, who were elsewhere in the cabin, heard him scream and drove him to a hospital after seeing him bleeding.

A nurse, not the coaches, contacted authorities. Back at the cabin, the head coach's wife cleaned up and threw the boy's soiled clothing into a garbage can, "essentially erasing evidence of the crime," investigators said.

The head coach called the boy's mother but "grossly minimized" his condition, so she allowed her son to remain with the team, authorities said. After his discharge from the hospital, the boy returned to the cabin, collapsed and had to be rushed into emergency surgery to repair a damaged bladder, colon and rectal wall.

The head coach instructed players at some point to keep quiet, investigators found. No school official — including an athletic director, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent — immediately called other parents. Another victim's mother found out the next day only because she called a coach to find out how the Ooltewah High School team's game went.

"If this boy had not gone to the hospital, had he not been bleeding, nobody would have known about this," said Eddie Schmidt, a lawyer representing the player's family, which did not respond to interview requests.

The head coach and other school officials said in legal responses they didn't know about the violence or seek to withhold information from parents. The coach and his wife, who was not charged, did not

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 78 of 80

respond to messages.

While the accused attackers were ultimately prosecuted, the adults ultimately escaped prosecution. A judge ruled that the failure-to-report laws didn't apply in player-on-player abuse, a gap that some state legislators want to close.

And while coaches in the Tennessee, Florida, Texas and New Mexico cases lost their jobs, some returned to work elsewhere. For instance, the Texas basketball coach — from the Dallas suburb of Flower Mound — is now at a private school. Charles Freet told AP that remarks he and his assistant made at the time “accurately explain what occurred and I have nothing more to add.”

LAWS IMPACT ACCOUNTABILITY

In many ways, what happened among high school basketball players in Leechburg, Pennsylvania, a small town outside Pittsburgh, is a microcosm of the problem.

Some Leechburg players were sodomizing teammates with a phallic-shaped piece of wood they called a “yoshi” stick, records and interviews show. If someone goofed in practice, players would yell, “You’re getting yoshied!”

After two boys’ parents complained in January 2016, the school investigated for half a day and the principal sent a one-page letter saying the boys simply were “harassed by three varsity players with a wooden stick.” The players were briefly suspended, but the district reported zero incidents in the 10 sex offense categories the state education department requires it to track.

Someone alerted authorities, and Leechburg police soon said they had unraveled additional assaults dating back 10 years.

In March 2016, Chief Michael Diebold announced “there may have been catastrophic failure within the school district.” But no charges were filed because Diebold said either victims declined to press for them or incidents hadn’t escalated enough to meet the legal standards for sexual assault or other charges.

Diebold said Pennsylvania’s hazing law also wasn’t available because it applied only to colleges at the time. He decided to leave the case open should a witness or other victim come forward.

Lack of serious consequences can raise doubts about allegations that already have been mislabeled by schools or coaches, said Susan Lipkins, a New York psychologist and author who specializes in sports attacks. And that can lead to backlash against victims, she noted, with communities uniting behind coaches or accused players.

The parents of one of the targeted Leechburg boys said his family is now afraid to dine out in public because of blowback.

“We’ve pretty much been ostracized from the community,” the boy’s father told AP.

Meanwhile, Leechburg Coach Damian Davies eventually lost his position, but many fans, parents and former players rallied in his support. He remains a teacher and unpaid coach for girls’ basketball and has sued the district for a copy of its internal investigative report, which he believes will clear him.

“No players have ever come to me,” Davies said. “As the players told me, either nothing happened or if it did it was a joke.”

CHANGING A CULTURE

Often in sports, a culture of acceptance sets in and enables further abuse.

Experts say players are indoctrinated when they’re new, transition into bystanders seeing others harmed and sometimes become attackers themselves, feeling a form of duty to uphold team “tradition.” Some players may even think enduring such acts builds team toughness.

But more often, Lipkins said, older players use sexual violence to exert dominance over newer or smaller boys vying for the roster.

“What’s worse for a young jock than to be emasculated to the lowest level, to be like a girl?” she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 79 of 80

Athletes who are sexually assaulted feel particularly pressured to stay silent, experts say. After all, speaking up could jeopardize a spot in the lineup they've trained years for, or risk team success by getting other players in trouble.

Amanda Jackson's son waited two years to tell her what he said he experienced as a freshman at Capital High School in Olympia, Washington.

After showering at a 2010 basketball camp, he was tackled by four upperclassmen who tried to penetrate him with their fingers, according to his deposition in the family's pending lawsuit against the Olympia School District. The boy said he didn't want to worry his mom, plus he was "afraid to tell on my teammates."

"I felt like if I told someone," he testified, "then I would have been, you know, excluded from the team and not able to play varsity basketball."

He finally spoke up after more boys were jumped at a similar camp, leading the district to investigate the school.

A psychological evaluation conducted as part of the lawsuit showed Jackson's son exhibited post-traumatic stress symptoms. He went on to play college basketball, but his mother still worries about him.

"I want to get everything out there so people understand this is not normal," she said. "I am sick and tired as a parent of running into individuals, professional individuals, who do this 'Oh, boys will be boys.'"

Peg Pennepacker, who specializes in legal issues for the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, said safety training would help alter those attitudes.

"If we don't make a cultural shift at the K-12 level, nothing's going to change," said Pennepacker, athletic director at Pennsylvania's State College Area School District.

Hopkins, the sports safety expert, said sexual violence could end "overnight" if schools stressed the dangers to players and coaches, encouraged speaking out and taught healthy team-bonding.

"We have the power and skill sets in schools to end it," he said. "But adults aren't saying the proper words to the kids and adults aren't saying the proper words to the coaches. And that's why it goes on."

AP correspondent Emily Schmall contributed to this report.

If you have a tip, comment or story to share about student-on-student sexual assault at K-12 schools, please email: schoolhousesexassault@ap.org

To follow or contact the reporters on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/reesedunklin> and <https://twitter.com/emilyschmall>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, May 8, the 128th day of 2017. There are 237 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 8, 1945, President Harry S. Truman announced on radio that Nazi Germany's forces had surrendered, and that "the flags of freedom fly all over Europe."

On this date:

In 1541, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto reached the Mississippi River.

In 1794, Antoine Lavoisier (lah-vwahz-YAY'), the father of modern chemistry, was executed on the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, May 08, 2017 ~ Vol. 24 - No. 298 ~ 80 of 80

guillotine during France's Reign of Terror.

In 1846, the first major battle of the Mexican-American War was fought at Palo Alto, Texas; U.S. forces led by Gen. Zachary Taylor were able to beat back Mexican forces.

In 1884, the 33rd president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, was born in Lamar, Missouri.

In 1915, Regret became the first filly to win the Kentucky Derby.

In 1921, Sweden's Parliament voted to abolish the death penalty.

In 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon was shoved, stoned, booed and spat upon by anti-American protesters in Lima, Peru.

In 1962, the musical comedy "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" opened on Broadway.

In 1973, militant American Indians who'd held the South Dakota hamlet of Wounded Knee for ten weeks surrendered.

In 1984, the Soviet Union announced it would boycott the upcoming Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

In 1987, Gary Hart, dogged by questions about his personal life, including his relationship with Miami model Donna Rice, withdrew from the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

In 1996, South Africa took another step from apartheid to democracy by adopting a constitution that guaranteed equal rights for blacks and whites.

Ten years ago: The Pentagon announced that it had notified more than 35,000 Army soldiers to be prepared to deploy to Iraq beginning in the fall. Bitter enemies from Northern Ireland's bloody past joined forces atop a new Northern Ireland government.

Five years ago: Six-term veteran Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar lost a bitter Republican primary challenge, his nearly four-decade career in the Senate ended by tea party-backed state Treasurer Richard Mourdock, who was defeated the following November by Democrat Joe Donnelly. North Carolina voters decided overwhelmingly to strengthen their state's gay marriage ban. Children's book author Maurice Sendak, 83, died in Danbury, Connecticut. Former U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, 90, died in Skillman, New Jersey. Josh Hamilton became the 16th player to hit four home runs in a game, carrying the Texas Rangers to a 10-3 victory over the Baltimore Orioles.

One year ago: London's newly elected Muslim mayor, Sadiq Khan, paid respect to the millions of Jews slain in the Holocaust as his first public engagement in office — and received a hero's welcome from London's Jewish community at the end. William Schallert, a veteran TV performer and Hollywood union leader who played Patty Duke's father — and uncle — on television and led a long, contentious strike for actors, died in Pacific Palisades, California at age 93.

Today's Birthdays: Naturalist Sir David Attenborough is 91. Singer Toni Tennille is 77. Actor James Mitchum is 76. Country singer Jack Blanchard is 75. Jazz musician Keith Jarrett is 72. Actor Mark Blankfield is 69. Singer Philip Bailey (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 66. Rock musician Chris Frantz (Talking Heads) is 66. Rockabilly singer Billy Burnette is 64. Rock musician Alex Van Halen is 64. Actor David Keith is 63. Actor Stephen Furst is 63. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio is 56. Actress Melissa Gilbert is 53. Rock musician Dave Rowntree (Blur) is 53. Country musician Del Gray is 49. Rock singer Darren Hayes is 45. Singer Enrique Iglesias is 42. Blues singer-musician Joe Bonamassa is 40. Actor Matt Davis is 39. Singer Ana Maria Lombo (Eden's Crush) is 39. Actor Elyes Gabel is 34. Actor Domhnall Gleeson is 34. Neo-soul drummer Patrick Meese (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 34. Actress Julia Whelan (WAY'lan) is 33. Actress Nora Anezeder is 28.

Thought for Today: "Always listen to experts. They'll tell you what can't be done, and why. Then do it." — Robert A. Heinlein, American science-fiction writer (born 1907, died this date in 1988).