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Saturday, May 27

Groton School: State Track at Sioux Falls

Sunday, May 28

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m.

United Methodist Church: Conde worship, 9 a.m.; coffee fellowship time, 10 a.m., Groton worship, 11 a.m.

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

First Presbyterian: Bible Study at 9:30 a.m., Worship at 11 a.m.

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

Monday, May 29

MEMORIAL DAY

Tuesday, May 30

United Methodist: Bible Study at 10 a.m.

Senior Menu: Tater tot hotdish, green beans, orange half, sugar cookie, whole wheat bread.

Wednesday, May 31

United Methodist: Wednesday Coffee, 9 a.m.

James Valley Telco annual meeting at Groton Area High School, 12:30 p.m.

Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, macaroni salad, squash, pineapple strawberry ambrosia,

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

The cardboard/paper
recycling trailer at the school is **Open**



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SD Fire Departments Awarded Almost \$300,000 in Grant Funding

RAPID CITY, S.D.— The South Dakota Department of Agriculture's (SDDA) Wildland Fire Division has awarded almost \$300,000 in grant funds to volunteer fire departments across the state for the state's 2018 fiscal year.

Funds for the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant program come from the U.S. Forest Service to help volunteer fire departments obtain needed training and equipment in order to provide fire protection to the rural areas of South Dakota.

"This year, we received almost 100 applications for assistance totaling over \$717,000 in project costs," said assistant chief Jim Burk. "Available funding this year allowed us to award \$298,000 towards 82 projects with a total value of over \$717,000. One project is for training. The remaining 81 projects are combination projects for equipment, personal protective equipment and communications."

The Wildland Fire Division receives an average of 75 applications for VFA funding with around 35 being funded each year. A scoring process is used to rate each application. Factors considered include such things as annual budget, protection area size, Insurance Services Organization rating, training attendance and number of certified personnel.

"Many of the departments in South Dakota have annual budgets of \$10,000 or less making it very difficult for them to keep equipment in working order and keep their members trained," said Burk. "The Volunteer Fire Assistance program is well received by the departments as it helps the recipients acquire needed equipment or training to provide fire protection safely and efficiently to their communities."

The following area communities received grants:

Aberdeen Rural Fire Protection District, PPE, Equipment, grant of \$3,918, total cost \$7,836.

Claremont Area Fire Protection District, PPE, Equipment, grant of \$2855, total cost \$5709.

Columbia Area Fire District, PPE, grant of \$4,000, total cost \$8,052.

Hecla Area Fire Protection District, Communications, grant of \$3,400, total cost \$6,800

Hosmer Rural Fire Protection District, PPE, grant of \$4,000, total cost \$9,140.

Ipswich Volunteer Fire Department, equipment, grant of \$4,000, total cost of \$9,891.

Leola Volunteer Fire Department, PPE, grant of \$4,000, total cost of \$9,901.

Roscoe Volunteer Fire Department, equipment, grant of \$2,128, total cost of \$4,257.

Stratford Community Fire Department, equipment, grant of \$3,880, total cost of \$7,760.

Waubay Fire Department, equipment, grant of \$4,000, total cost of \$9,837.

SD Wildland Fire, 2017 Academy, grant of \$12,500, total cost of \$25,000.

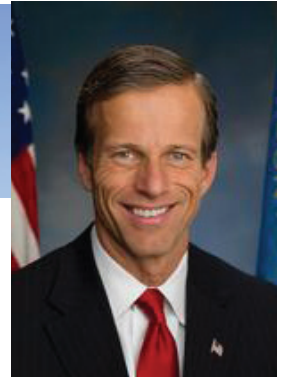
Governor Requests Flags At Half-Staff On Memorial Day Morning

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard asks that flags be flown at half-staff on the morning of Memorial Day, Monday, May 29, in observance of fallen military service members.

President Donald Trump has proclaimed Memorial Day as a Day of Prayer for Permanent Peace and has called on governors of the United States to request flags at half-staff from 8 a.m. until noon and then at full-staff from noon until sunset.

The President has designated the hour beginning at 11 a.m., local time, to unite in prayer. He also urges Americans to observe a National Moment of Remembrance beginning at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Fighting for South Dakota's Farmers and Ranchers

If I've said it once, I've said it a hundred times: it's never too early to start working on the next farm bill. That's why earlier this year, I decided to get a head start on the 2018 farm bill by introducing several marker bills well before the current legislation expires. I've already written three farm bills during my time in Congress, and with the help of farmers and ranchers throughout South Dakota, I'm eager to hit the ground running on my fourth.

In March and April, I unveiled several modifications to the conservation title of the farm bill, including creating a new income protection program for farmers. The Soil Health and Income Protection Program – or SHIPP, for short – would provide farmers greater flexibility with their land by giving them the opportunity to enroll in this new short-term conserving use program. Another proposal I've introduced would increase the Conservation Reserve Program acreage cap by 25 percent to 30 million acres.

Most recently, I've proposed several updates to the commodity title of the farm bill, specifically the process by which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) allocates commodity assistance for grain farmers. First, I codify a common-sense payment method for the Agriculture Risk Coverage-County (ARC-CO) program, which was designed to be a safety net for farmers and ranchers. Under my proposal, ARC-CO payments would be determined by the payment rate for the county in which the participating land is physically located, instead of USDA's current inequitable payment process that for some farmers can result in higher and unearned payments than Congress intended.

I also included a provision that would update hundreds of millions of base acres in the United States – portions of land that have been planted or were considered planted at one time or another. Based on old rules, farmers could use base acres that were calculated as far back as 1991 to determine commodity payments they receive in 2017. Essentially, a farmer who hasn't planted his or her land to a commodity crop in 26 years could still receive a payment for that land today. I think we need to update this payment process with more recent data, which would likely save taxpayers more money.

Fighting for farmers and ranchers doesn't end with the farm bill. I also think we need to reform our tax code so it does a better job of working for, rather than against the hard-working people who make agriculture South Dakota's top industry. I recently introduced a major tax reform proposal that would help farmers and ranchers recover investment costs – tractors, combines, or even the farm's pickup truck, for example – more quickly. Accelerating cost recovery means farmers and ranchers have more money to keep the operation running, which helps them stay on their land and hopefully pass it from one generation to the next.

Agriculture policy is always important to farmers and ranchers, but particularly now in today's weak agriculture economy. These farmers and ranchers know their stuff, and they aren't afraid to share their opinions either. That's why I was glad USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue recently joined me in South Dakota so he could hear directly from the folks who help feed South Dakota and the rest of the world. They had a lot of great ideas on how to improve agriculture policy, and I know the secretary left with a better understanding of what South Dakota farmers want and need.

The hard work and dedication that farmers and ranchers tirelessly invest in their operations is not entirely understood by folks who've never tilled the land, cared for livestock, harvested a crop, or prayed for a rainy forecast. We can all learn a thing or two from what they do for our country, and I will never tire in my mission to defend them in Congress.

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Groton Area Fourth Quarter Honor Roll

Seniors

4.0 GPA: Thane Henschel, Erin Smith, Nathan Fjelstad, Keri Pappas, Landon Marzahn, Megan Malsam, Trey Wright, Macy Knecht, Kate Helmer, Whitney Voss

3.99-3.50: Paityn Bonn, Patrick Gengerke, Alexis Harder, Braiden Craig, Turner Webb, Jessica Adler, Heather Lone, McClain Lone, Katelyn Koehler, Shane Simon, Sean Schuring, Tage Taylor, Emmalea Watje, Kayde Wiedrick

3.49-3.00: Kellyn Fluke, Nicklos Menzia, Trevor Pray, Colton Hokana, Wyatt Kurtz, Emily Locke, Tevin Abeln, Mark Leonhardt, Truitt Rogers, Dillon Freeman, Halie Yarborough, Peyton Jondahl, Hai Ku, Willow Seurer, Audrey Wanner, Nicole Fey, Tyler Richards, Bennett Shabazz, Franklin Wuestewald

Juniors

4.0 GPA: Jenifer Fjelstad, Madilyn Wright, Alexis Gustafson

3.99-3.50 Marshall Lane, Jackson Oliver, Alexandra Stange, Madison Sippel, Hattie Weismantel, Erika Herr, Brandon Keith

3.49-3.00: Gia Gengerke, Hunter Monson, Anthony Sippel, Insa Deden, Harleigh Stange, Luke Thorson

Sophomores

4.0 GPA: Ashley Garduno, AnneMarie Smith, Emily Thompson

3.99-3.50: Cassandra Townsend, Shyla Larson, Alexis Simon, Micah Poor, Kylie Kassube, Jillian Barton, Kaitlyn Kassube, Kaitlyn Anderson, Payton Maine, Taylor Holm, Tylan Glover, Samantha Menzia, Jennie Doeden

3.49-3.00: Shannon Wiedrick, Maggie Crosby, Miranda Hanson, James Cranford

Freshmen

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Kaycie Hawkins, Kayla Jensen, KaSandra Pappas, Payton Colestock, Nicole Marzahn, Indigo Rogers, Madeline Schuelke, Katlyn Kyar, Kya Jandel

3.49-3.00: Kaylin Kucker, Noah Poor, Tadya Glover

Eighth Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Isaac Smith, Erin Unzen, Grace Wambach, Samantha Pappas, Alexa Herr, Sage Mortenson, Tanae Lipp, Jasmine Gengerke, Regan Leicht, Steven Paulson, Grace Wiedrick, Alexis Hanten, Lucas Simon, Hailey Monson

3.49-3.00: Tessa Erdmann, Trey Gengerke, Brooklyn Gilbert, Hunter Kassube, Chandler Larson, Alyssa Fordham, Braden Freeman, Tiara DeHoet, Eh Tha You Say, Gabriella Merkel, Alex Morris, Lee Iverson, Chloe Crosby, Kenzie McInerney, Dragr Monson, Kale Pharis, Paxton Bonn

Seventh Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Jackson Cogley, Madeline Fliehs, Allyssa Locke, Stella Meier, Megan Fliehs, Jordan Bjerke, Hannah Gustafson, Pierce Kettering, Seth Johnson, Trista Keith, Julianna Kosel, Lane Krueger, Kaden Kurtz, Travis Townsend, Riley Gengerke, Madisen Bjerke, Andrea Davidson

3.49-3.00: Kennedy Anderson, Jace Kroll, Kansas Kroll, Rease Jandel, Trey Johnson, Macine McGannon, Jayden Zak, Al-Isaiah Williams, River Pardick, Emilie Thurston

Sixth Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Ethan Clark, Caleb Hanten, Cole Bisbee, Jackson Dinger, Andrew Marzahn, Kaleb Antonsen, Jacob Lewandowski, Aspen Johnson, Jackson Bahr, Kamryn Fliehs, Carter Barse, Brooke Gengerke

3.49-3.00: Cade Larson, Ava Tunheim, Tate Larson, Cole Simon, Elliana Weismantel, Dylan Anderson, Shalynn Foertsch, Brenna Carda, Porter Johnson, Shaylee Peterson, Marlee Tollifson, Cadance Tullis, Jace-lynn Gleason, Tannor McGannon, Chase Gackle, Ethan Gengerke



By Knowing and Telling Their Stories

Bill Bianchi may not have been born in South Dakota, but he became like an adopted son when in 1936 he began attending SDSU to earn an animal science degree. Bianchi kept busy in school playing football and participating in ROTC, and not long after graduating, Bianchi, a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army, was sent to the Philippines to train new soldiers.

Today, Bianchi is known as a compassionate patriot who played a critical role in weakening the Japanese in the Battle of Toul Pocket.

On Feb. 3, 1942, Bianchi voluntarily led a group of soldiers with the mission of taking out two enemy machine gun nests. Early in the mission, he was shot twice in his left hand, forcing use of his handgun instead of his rifle. After he silenced one of the machine gun nests with grenades, Bianchi was wounded again by two more bullets to his chest. He somehow kept moving and managed to climb to the top of an American tank to man the gun. He fired at enemy strongholds until he was knocked off by a blast from a grenade.

Two months later, Bianchi was taken prisoner. He and other men being held were forced to make a brutal 65-mile trip on foot – a journey which became infamous as the Bataan Death March. They went from camp to camp – each one progressively worse than the last. Sleeping on the soaked floors of mud huts, many weakened, exhausted prisoners grew ill.

Throughout his imprisonment, Bianchi cared for other prisoners by bartering with their captors for food and medicine. He was put in charge of allocating the food portions, and he ensured everyone shared equally. He never gave himself a greater portion. When they were forced to march, Bianchi would walk up and down the line to encourage the other men and help with their burdens.

Bianchi never made it back to South Dakota or to his boyhood home in New Mexico. In January of 1945, when he had been held prisoner for two years and nine months, he was placed in an unmarked prison ship. Tragically, the vessel was destroyed by Allied troops, unaware Americans were onboard. Bianchi was 29 years old.

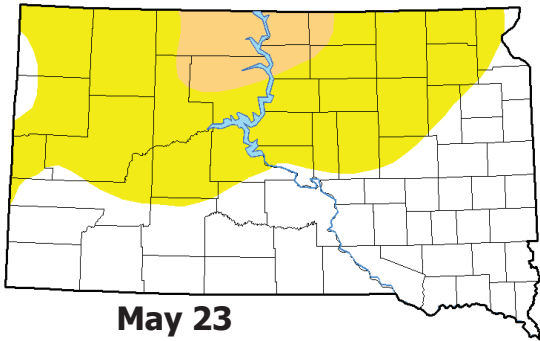
This Memorial Day week, we will commemorate Bianchi and the other South Dakotans who received the Medal of Honor by dedicating a new Hall of Honor in the Capitol Building in Pierre. Along with Bianchi, we will honor Patrick Brady, Michael Fitzmaurice, Joe Foss, Isaac Fry, Woodrow Keeble, Herbert Littleton, Arlo Olson, Charles Roberts and Leo Thorsness.

I invite you to visit the Hall of Honor when you are in Pierre. Originally located in the Soldiers and Sailors World War Memorial building, the display has been redesigned and relocated to the first floor of the State Capitol. Come see it for yourself. Read the incredible stories of each of these men and take a moment to reflect on the cost of freedom.

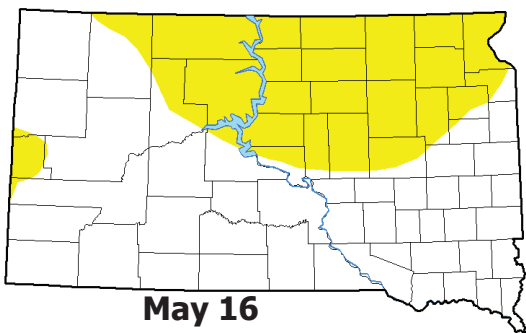
For it is by knowing and telling their stories that we can best honor their sacrifices.

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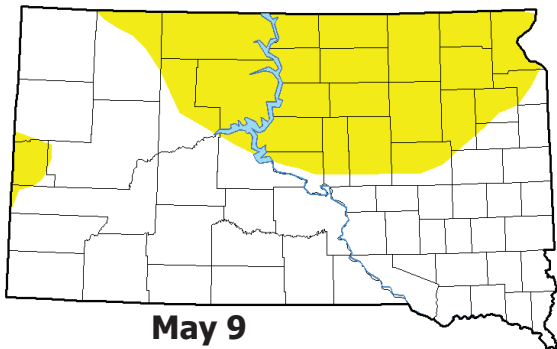
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May 23



May 16



May 9

Drought Monitor

A stripe of heavy precipitation from the central Rockies into the upper Midwest erased pockets of abnormal dryness (D0) in Nebraska and reduced coverage of dryness and moderate drought (D0 and D1) in Colorado. Rain also trimmed D0 coverage in the eastern Dakotas. However, precipitation mostly bypassed the remainder of the Dakotas, leading to further expansion of D0. In addition a new area of moderate drought (D1) was introduced in the vicinity of the Missouri River. On May 21, South Dakota led the entire northern U.S. in topsoil moisture rated very short to short (29%), as well as rangeland and pastures rated very poor to poor (19%), according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Week	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current 2017-05-23	49.79	50.21	6.79	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 2017-05-16	65.78	34.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 2017-02-21	61.17	38.83	26.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 2016-12-27	61.22	38.78	26.01	6.20	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 2016-09-27	47.50	52.50	20.95	4.93	1.09	0.00
One Year Ago 2016-05-24	91.69	8.31	0.53	0.00	0.00	0.00

Estimated Population in Drought Areas: **12,777**

[View More Statistics](#)

Intensity:

- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)



Groton Pool Opens Today

The Groton Swimming Pool will be opening today at 1 p.m. The second umbrella was replaced due to it being destroyed by a storm last year. The water is 82 degrees. The only thing not operational yet is the big water slide as that pump is in being repaired for a second time.

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There is a lot of concrete that has been poured on the US12 project. Once the concrete has been cured, traffic will shift to then new concrete and the south side will then be done. Engineers have said that the south side of the project will go much faster as there are fewer utilities that need to be dealt with. The photo below features the stockpiling of material for the SD37 and US12 project in the lot behind the Groton Dairy Queen.



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The work on the new addition to the Groton Area Elementary School continues to move along. Meanwhile inside the main building, the demolition crew has been very busy removing the ceiling and walls. Check out the video we did the morning inside the elementary school at GDILIVE.COM.



Today in Weather History

May 27, 1942: One barn was destroyed, and 27 trees were uprooted by a short estimated F2 touch-down on the western edge of Bryant in Hamlin County.

May 27, 1996: On May 26th, anywhere from 4 to 6 inches of rain fell in a 24 hour period over the lower Bad River Basin. Also, 3 to 5 inches of rain fell over much of Western South Dakota. This runoff caused the Bad River at Fort Pierre to crest at 26.25 feet or about 5 feet above flood stage late on the 27th before falling back below flood stage on the 30th. The entire length of the Bad River Road from U.S. Highway 83 near Fort Pierre to U.S. Highway 14 near Midland was closed to all except local traffic on the 27th. Twenty-five to 35 volunteers were filling sandbags all day on the 27th around two homes along the river. Most of the damage was associated with flooding of agricultural land and some county roads. One resident along the river said the river was the highest it has been in 32 years.

1771: In Virginia, a wall of water came roaring down the James River Valley following ten to twelve days of intense rain. As water swept through Richmond, buildings, boats, animals, and vegetation were lost. About one hundred fifty people were killed as the River reached a flood stage of forty-five feet above normal. A monument to the flood was inscribed by Ryland Randolph, of Curles, in 1771-72: " ... all the great rivers of this country were swept by inundations never before experienced which changed the face of nature and left traces of violence that will remain for ages."

1896: A massive tornado struck Saint Louis, Missouri killing 306 persons and causing thirteen million dollars damage. The tornado path was short but cut across a densely populated area. It touched down six miles west of Eads Bridge in Saint Louis and widened to a mile as it crossed into East Saint Louis. The tornado was the most destructive of record in the U.S. at that time. It pierced a five-eighths inch thick iron sheet with a two by four-inch pine plank. A brilliant display of lightning accompanied the storm.

1997: An F5 tornado killed 27 people in Jarrell, Texas. Although tornado warnings were issued 30 minutes in advance and local sirens were sounded, there were few places to go for safety. Most homes were on slabs, with no basements. Houses were swept clean off their foundations, with little debris left behind. Total damage was \$20 million dollars. The same thunderstorm complex produced a wind gust to 122 mph at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio.

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Memorial Day	Monday Night	Tuesday
Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance Showers then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms and Breezy	Slight Chance T-storms and Breezy then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Showers and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy and Breezy then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 75 °F	Low: 47 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 47 °F	High: 66 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 67 °F

Rain Showers Moving East This Morning Mainly Across Southern SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen National Weather Service Aberdeen SD Updated: 5/27/2017 5:41 AM Central

Published on: 05/27/2017 at 5:46AM

Radar imagery from approximately 530am this morning shows an area of showers across central South Dakota. Activity is moving eastward and expect mainly the southern two-thirds of the state to be affected by showers through the morning hours. Otherwise, afternoon high temperatures will be pleasant once again, with readings mainly in the lower to mid 70s. Redevelopment of afternoon showers or thundershowers are forecast today, although coverage will remain widely scattered.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 69.7 F at 4:56 PM

Low Outside Temp: 47.7 F at 5:43 AM

High Gust: 21.0 Mph at 4:45 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 98° in 1934

Record Low: 28° in 1907

Average High: 72°F

Average Low: 48°F

Average Precip in May: 2.71

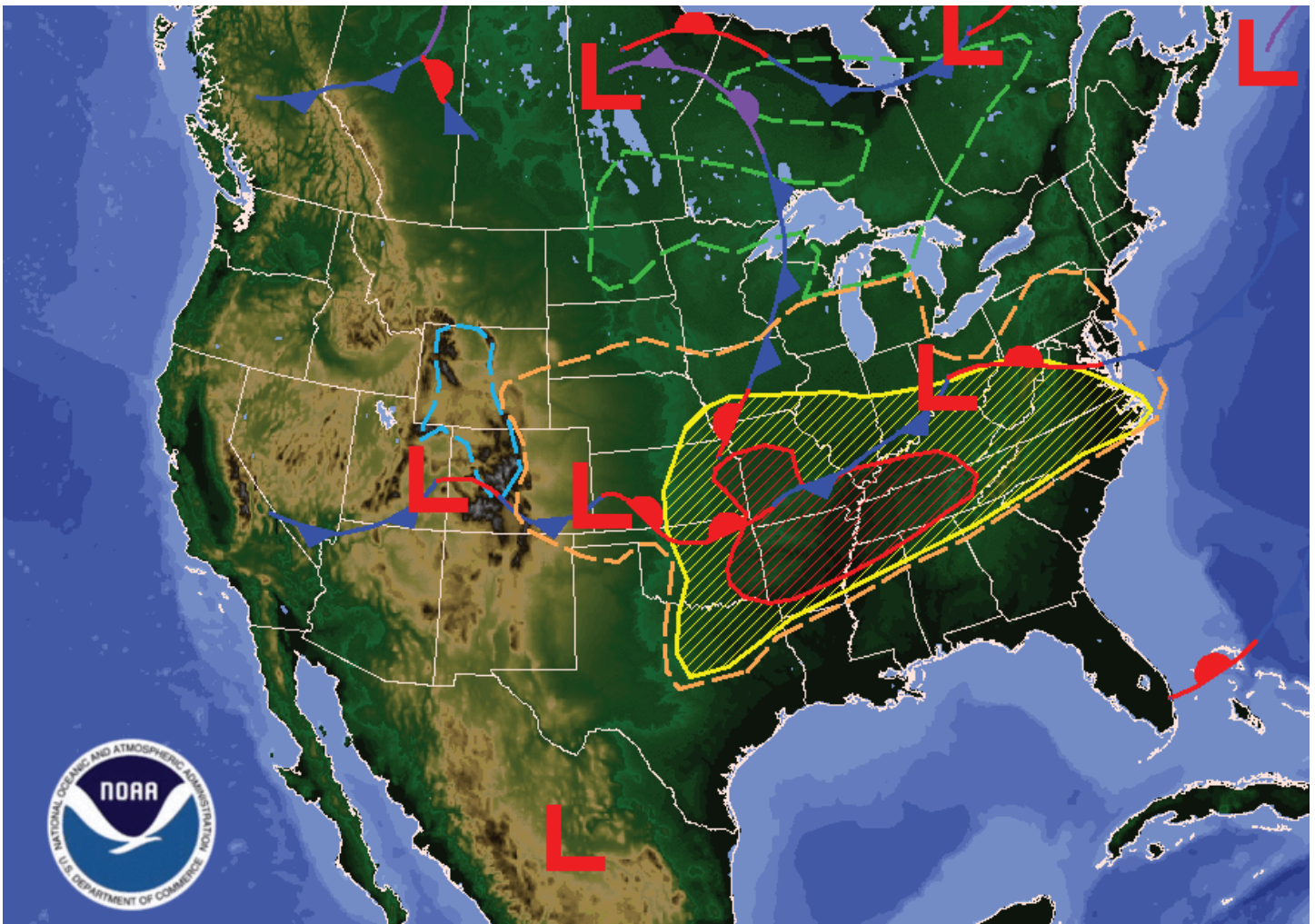
Precip to date in May: 1.21

Average Precip to date: 6.74

Precip Year to Date: 3.19

Sunset Tonight: 9:10 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:50 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, May 27, 2017, issued 4:43 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE

A raging sea, a violent storm, a broken mast and a twenty-foot swell capsized the small ship. A survivor in a small rowboat was struggling for his life - looking for a hope. Suddenly, through the dark clouds he sighted a lone star shining brightly. Rowing with all his might, he said to himself over and over, "If I lose that, I'm lost!"

What an appropriate scene for us to visualize when all seems lost and storms of life refuse to give way to calm seas. Wave after wave rises and falls while the wind grows stronger and the night darker. We strain and we struggle against all odds, to survive. Is the sun gone from my life forever? Will I never see another blossom? Will the clouds never allow the stars to shine again?

Often, we fix our eyes on things that give us no hope or people who do not care for our best. The "immediate" is right here right now, and that's all that matters! So we "reach out" and grab anything that is available.

However, there is a better way to respond when life has turned us upside down. The Psalmist wrote, "The eyes of all look to You in hope." There are those who "wish" for better days when things are bleak and black. And then there are Christians who have hope!

The difference between a "wish" and "hope" that comes from faith in Christ is quite significant. A wish is a "desire" or a "dream." But when we who belong to God say we "have this hope," it means that because of His faithfulness we have the confident assurance that we can trust the Lord to save us and sustain us in life's darkest hours.

Prayer: Lord, as unworthy and undeserving as we are, we know that You will rescue us if we have faith in You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 145:15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

News from the Associated Press

People seek doomsday shelters in South Dakota city

By **SETH TUPPER**, Rapid City Journal

IGLOO, S.D. (AP) — They came from Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Indiana and New York, all for the chance to put \$5,000 down on one of the hundreds of concrete bunkers in a cow pasture on the remote southern edge of the Black Hills.

Kenneth Young drove his Mercedes Benz from Rockaway Beach in Queens. When he stepped out of his car on the deserted grounds of the former Black Hills Army Depot, his iPhone and cigars fell in the mud.

Though he looked out of place in his yellow cardigan, his designer ball cap and his green cargo pants, he came prepared with an umbrella and mud boots, which proved useful on a cold, rainy and muddy day on the plains of southwestern South Dakota.

But why was he there?

"I believe the government is in contact with aliens, and they're lying to us," he told the Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2qNsaU8>).

His wife, meanwhile, never got out of the car as he drove around the sprawling complex, got out to inspect a bunker labeled B-201 and talked to other early attendees at xFest, a three-day gathering for people who want to convert the site's bunkers, which formerly housed bombs, into shelters for protection against tyranny, anarchy, nuclear war, the end times or any other calamity that might befall civilization.

The project is the brainchild of Robert Vicino, a California entrepreneur who has an agreement with a local ranching company to offer 575 of the site's estimated 830 bunkers for lease. The price is \$25,000 upfront, and then \$1,000 a year thereafter, plus \$99 in monthly dues to cover security, well water and other services. The work and the cost of converting the barren, earth-covered bunkers into livable spaces will be the responsibility of the tenants.

Vicino figures he needs 50 to 100 clients to reserve bunkers with \$5,000 deposits before he can start turning the abandoned former military installation into a community. People will not be allowed to live there full-time, at least initially, but Vicino said they will come for periodic stays to work on their bunkers. He wants to provide a medical clinic, a general store, a bring-your-own-beverage bar and other facilities and amenities, both to serve the tenants when they visit and to be ready for their full-time use if doomsday ever arrives.

The people Vicino wants to attract are often called "preppers," or "doomsday preppers," terms that have become shorthand for anyone who is unusually devoted to preparing for disasters. On the more than 20 square miles that comprise the old Black Hills Army Depot, Vicino has found a prepper haven.

The site's unusual history dates to 1942, when the U.S. government selected a big patch of rolling western wheat grass and buffalo grass about 10 miles southwest of the small town of Edgemont — about 85 miles southwest of Rapid City — for what was then called the Black Hills Ordnance Depot. Until 1967, the military stored, maintained and destroyed ammunition at the complex, including bombs, grenades, mines and rockets.

The government built more than 800 concrete ammunition storage bunkers across the sprawling site and covered them with sod. Because the bunkers resemble igloos, the town full of military and civilian personnel that sprang up next to the depot became known as Igloo.

For the past 50 years, the depot has been abandoned and Igloo has been emptied of all but perhaps a dozen residents. One of those is Robert Chubb, who was putting some finishing touches on a large shed he built recently to store military surplus and survival gear. He has started a business selling the stuff, and he hopes to pull some customers out of the stream of preppers that could soon be passing his way.

In Igloo and on the depot grounds, hundreds of administrative buildings and other structures have been reduced to ruins by the passage of five decades, but the igloo bunkers remain as sturdy as ever. They are now under the control of local owners who pasture their cows in and around them.

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Vicino has an agreement with one of the local entities, S&S Land and Cattle Co., and its partner corporation, Fort Igloo Bunkers. The agreement covers 575 of the 830 bunkers and allows Vicino to market them for lease through his own company, called Vivos. His plan for a massive prepper community, which he is calling Vivos xPoint, has attracted worldwide attention.

The 6-foot-8-inch Vicino was on site in a camper with several helpers for the beginning of his xFest gathering, a meet-and-greet for potential lessees. Perhaps half-dozen prospects had arrived despite a heavy fog, a steady mist, temperatures that rose only into the 40s, and an abundance of thick and sticky mud that clung to tires and shoes.

Vicino said he expected as many as several hundred people to tour the xPoint grounds by the end of the weekend. The initial arrivals were a diverse mix of personalities.

Besides Young, the alien-fearing New Yorker in the Mercedes Benz, there was Mark Bowman, a working-class, plaid shirt-wearing tradesman from Indiana who came in a pickup with a trailer full of tools and gear. Bowman said he has visited other potential doomsday shelter sites and immediately liked this one better. As he walked in and around one of the igloo bunkers, he talked rapidly and excitedly about his plans to convert it into a living space.

His reason for wanting a doomsday shelter?

"Something's gonna happen," he said while sweeping his arms wide, indicating a world full of potential catastrophes.

There was also an older, well-dressed couple who grew up in Columbia and now live in Pennsylvania. The husband, who requested that his name not be published, said it was his wife's idea to look at the bunkers. He formerly worked in New York City, he said, and was five blocks away from the World Trade Center towers when they were attacked and felled by terrorists on Sept. 11, 2001.

The trauma of witnessing that event, and of being cooped up in a congested city while the world seemed to be crumbling around them, led the couple to seek less-crowded confines in Pennsylvania. The husband alluded to their 9/11 experience as one reason his wife grew interested in the psychological and physical insurance against disaster that a doomsday bunker represents.

The visitors were struck, as all visitors to the site are, by the eerie silence and isolation of a place that once bustled with activity. The bunkers sprawl across the area, each one with a small ventilation pipe that sticks out of the top like a sentry.

Inside, the bunkers have semicircular ceilings like a Quonset hut. They are 13 feet tall at their highest interior point, their width is nearly 27 feet, and their lengths alternate between 60 and 80 feet, which means the floor space ranges from about 1,600 to 2,100 square feet.

Vicino has published a schematic drawing that depicts a bunker outfitted with all kinds of luxurious modern amenities, but there is nothing in the bunkers now — no water, no electricity and no restroom facilities, let alone beds or furniture. Vicino said the site has two deep wells that provide water for cattle but will eventually be used to bring water to the bunkers. He also envisions wind power for electricity and composting toilets instead of septic systems.

Some symbols of modernity were already on site in the form of two food trucks that Vicino's company convinced to travel down from Rapid City for the event. The cooks inside the trucks were hoping for more customers over the weekend, as was Vicino, whose determination to succeed was obvious.

"Others have thought of things to do here, but nobody else has made it work," Vicino said. "We will."

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

South Dakota working to be among first to get 5G technology

By JEREMY J. FUGLEBERG, Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — When Scott Sandal is talking to potential clients, he seems to always get the same question about the speed and bandwidth of the internet he relies on for his business.

"They're like, 'in South Dakota?'" he said.

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Sandal is Sunbird Software's director of service and support. From Sioux Falls, Sandal runs a team monitoring the power needs of data centers all over the globe.

It's a job that requires a lot of bandwidth. But in Sioux Falls, Sandal's got it. Same in Lennox, where he lives, connected online via a fiber optic line.

The quality internet connection helps Sandal recruit South Dakotans who might otherwise look for information technology jobs elsewhere but find themselves seriously considering a big-bandwidth job here.

"Just the idea of being able to work from home to support this global customer base," Sandal told the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2rjcG7V>).

The future of broadband in South Dakota is increasingly the future of business here, and the challenges are many, especially in a largely rural state.

While South Dakota is relatively well equipped with broadband internet access and an expanding network of fiber optic lines, the next step is close on the horizon.

Wireless providers are working now to build out dense-network, small-footprint cell technology that will prove crucial for what's next: fifth-generation mobile data, or 5G. South Dakota's senior U.S. senator, John Thune, is spearheading federal legislation to speed up 5G deployment before 2020.

"I think 5G really does represent the not-too-distant future, it's not just an incremental step in mobile speed," Thune said.

Business' hunger for bandwidth is growing. Remote IT assistance, data backup and cloud storage are no longer new, and their growing importance for firms large and small has expanded business demand for bandwidth.

High-speed mobile data is the future for many business sectors, including agriculture, telemedicine, virtual reality, internet-connected appliances and driver-free vehicles.

Mobile data is increasingly how we live. Increasingly, it's how business gets done.

"The devices have changed, the bandwidth has changed, and how we use it in our lives have changed," said Mark Shlanta, CEO of Sioux Falls-based SDN Communications.

South Dakota isn't entirely connected by fiber optic cable that allows for speedier broadband, but it is surprisingly good at a problem in many parts of the United States: the rural-urban digital divide. This could prove a crucial key to unlocking the future of 5G wireless data access.

Cities, with their concentration of customers, are natural targets for communications companies in terms of the biggest and best broadband access, and any maps of broadband access will show South Dakota's cities are well served by one or more broadband providers with strong speeds.

So how about the rural areas? Broadband is, for the most part, carried by wires. And just as with electrification and paved roads, rural, less-populated parts of the country are sometimes last in line to connect to the rest of the world.

But not in South Dakota. There might even be room to brag a little bit.

"In other states, and you might hear a little bit of that in the national discourse, there's a 'rural digital divide,'" said Shlanta, whose SDN Communications was founded by independent telephone companies in the state that interconnected their networks in 1989. "I would argue (in South Dakota) it might be the inverse. That parts of our more urban communities may be lagging than some of the rural deployments."

About 80 percent of South Dakota's geography is served by independent telecommunications providers, many of whom have strong fiber networks in place even in rural areas and smaller cities. In a quick survey, SDN's Vernon Brown heard from 10 member companies. Six are 100 percent fiber networks and another four were at 50 percent or better.

The advantages for business in the state are clear. Like Sandal in Lennox, being able to do business from outside the state's largest cities pays dividends.

"It's advantageous for business to establish businesses anywhere in the state," said Denny Law, CEO and general manager of Golden West Telecommunications in Wall, which serves customers across western South Dakota and parts of the eastern side of the state.

"Certainly the populated areas are good," he said. "But the possibility of a 4-6 person shop in Phillip or

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Springfield or Dell Rapids is a potential game changer for them, I think.”

If South Dakota is to fully harness the future roll-out of 5G wireless data, with its dense network and blazing speed, it will require a strong backbone in both urban and rural areas.

“For 5G to be successful it will require a pretty phenomenal network to transport all of that data,” Law said. “And I think that’s the role a company like Golden West plays in that, to help facilitate 5G.”

And, a little legislative help.

John Thune took his 5G sales pitch to Dakota State University last month, and he didn’t pull any punches.

“We’re very interested in getting to 5G first,” he said. “We’re competing with the Europeans, with the Asians, everybody wants to get to fifth-generation technology when it comes to mobile first, and we have to win that race.”

South Dakota’s senior U.S. senator is the chair of the powerful Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, with oversight of the national telecommunications laws and regulations. In March, Thune introduced the Mobile NOW Act, a bill to open up spectrum to telecommunications companies and smooth the path for 5G technology, and moved it through his committee to the Senate floor. The generally accepted target date for 5G is 2020. Thune wants to beat it.

In an April 24 interview, Thune said he had talked to the Trump administration only informally about his bill. But he said the bill should get bipartisan support and gain Trump’s support as legislation that could add jobs and boost economy productivity.

“If they’re looking for victories, legislative accomplishments they can point to that are transformative for our economy and have bipartisan support, this is something that can accomplish that,” he said.

While the legislation awaits congressional approval and a Trump signature, others are fighting smaller, more local battles.

“I use the word ‘densification,’” said SDN’s Shlanta. “Wireless carriers, 20-25 years ago, were trying to establish coverage so people could complete phone calls. Today their bigger needs aren’t coverage, they’re capacity, and the way to accomplish that is greater densification of the networks.”

Verizon Wireless is working to build out what are known as small cells, mounting essentially mini cell units atop kiosks and light and power poles. The denser network adds capacity to Verizon’s 4G LTE service, and is a key stepping stone for 5G, which will require a fiber-connected, small-cell backbone.

Thune’s legislation, in part, is meant to address permitting concerns for small cells, which often face the same permitting hurdles as their much, much larger cell tower predecessors.

“Every South Dakota city is different and many local codes treat small cells the same as a larger traditional cell site,” said Meagan Dorsch, a Verizon spokeswoman. “This result can be lengthy and costly permitting that discourages new investment.”

“Providing a streamlined process that treats small cells as a permitted use and allowing the attachment of small cells to existing structures in the public right of way will allow companies to build the next generation of 4G LTE for its customers,” she said.

While 5G may be the future, and South Dakota’s networks are better positioned than some states to handle it, Law struck a cautionary note. Look for the rollout to follow the more traditional path from urban to rural, he said.

“It’s going to be an interesting urban application, but it’s going to take a while before neighborhoods have it, and before small communities have it and certainly before rural areas have it,” he said. “But I also think it will be cool when it gets here.”

In terms of 5G and South Dakota business, ‘cool’ means game-changing.

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

25-26-28-37-56, Mega Ball: 5, Megaplier: 3

(twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-eight, thirty-seven, fifty-six; Mega Ball: five; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$58 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$275 million

South Dakota faces decline in horse-racing industry

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A struggling horse-racing industry is forcing officials to question whether to hold future races in two South Dakota cities.

The Northeast Area Horse Races is this weekend in Aberdeen, but horse owners are seeing dwindling purse amounts, the Aberdeen News (<http://bit.ly/2r5mXan>) reported.

Purses are paid out on a point system that gives the winner of a race 10 points, with the number decreasing by place. A point used to be worth \$80 or \$90, but now it's closer to \$35 or \$40, said Jerry Oxner, president of the South Dakota Quarter Horse Racing Association.

"It's a double-edged sword," Oxner said. "The purse falls, the horses don't show up."

Purse money in South Dakota comes from simulcasts, but there's only one site left, in North Sioux City. He also said a fraction of the funds come from gambling, but there are a growing number of other options now in the state for people to place bets.

The South Dakota Commission on Gaming says money wagered on horse racing decreased nearly 13 percent during the last fiscal year, amounting to about \$170,000.

The only other city in the state that holds horse races is Fort Pierre. But Oxner said it's possible officials will have to consolidate races to just one city to continue business.

"It's getting down to a point where we're going to have to go to one race track, either Fort Pierre or Aberdeen, or we're just not going to get the horses," he said.

"There's been talk the last two years, but it seems nobody wants to make that motion in our meetings that we only want to run in Aberdeen or make a motion that we only run in Fort Pierre," Oxner added. "Nobody wants to do that yet. And I don't know how it would unfold."

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Sioux Falls man gets life without parole in 2016 slaying

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man convicted of killing another man outside of a casino in the city last year has been sentenced to life in prison.

Twenty-two-year-old Jared Stone was charged in the shooting death of 28-year-old Baptiste White Eyes April 22, 2016, following a fist fight. Stone became the subject of a multistate manhunt and was arrested five days later in Wyoming.

He was convicted in March of second-degree murder and first-degree manslaughter, along with drug and weapons counts. The jury found him not guilty of the most serious charge, first-degree murder.

Stone still was sentenced Friday to life in prison without a chance for parole. He declined to comment during the hearing.

Judge clears pipeline protester charged in drone incident

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A Dakota Access pipeline protester has been cleared of charges after being accused of endangering a police plane with his drone last September in North Dakota.

Aaron Turgeon, 32, of Rapid City, South Dakota, was found not guilty of reckless endangerment and physical obstruction of a government function after a one-day bench trial Thursday, The Bismarck Tribune (<http://bit.ly/2rGpfxh>) reported.

Prosecutors argued Turgeon endangered a pilot and the group protesting at a construction site in Morton County when he flew his drone on Sept. 6. Investigators also alleged Turgeon didn't cooperate with authorities.

Judge Allan Schmalenberger, who presided over the trial, ruled that Turgeon operated his drone in a "methodical manner," not in a manner that endangered anyone. Turgeon said he was filming the protest.

"The defendant did not fly the drone at the plane. He did not fly the drone in a reckless manner over either the people or at the plane," the judge said.

Turgeon said he was grateful for Schmalenberger's fairness and honesty.

"It's a call for other judges here in Morton County to understand that there might be things happening that you're not seeing," Turgeon said. "In my case, they tried to take my drone. If they would have taken my drone, I would not have video evidence that showed I never flew toward that plane."

The incident helped prompt the Federal Aviation Administration to impose a no-fly zone over the protest area.

Protests in southern North Dakota against the four-state, \$3.8 billion pipeline led to hundreds of arrests between August and February.

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

State trooper who fatally shot suspect cleared after probe

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Highway Patrol trooper who shot and killed a suspect in a Rapid City apartment standoff has been cleared of wrongdoing.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says a state investigation determined Trooper Michael Dale was justified in firing his weapon.

A report says Tim Holmgren called police to his apartment April 27, then pointed a pistol at the responding officer, who retreated.

The report says Holmgren refused to leave and told a crisis negotiator his door and windows were "wired." It says Dale was atop an armored vehicle and fired seven rifle shots after Holmgren pointed a handgun at the trooper. Holmgren was shot at least six times. He had alcohol and prescription drugs in his system.

Authorities found a CO2 cartridge pellet handgun in the apartment. No explosives were discovered.

Vivian man pleads not guilty to killing 7-week-old daughter

KENNEBEC, S.D. (AP) — A Vivian man accused of killing his 7-week-old daughter has pleaded not guilty to four felony charges including murder.

Thirty-six-year-old Gerald Brink is accused of hitting and throwing the infant, who died at a hospital May 4. An autopsy concluded the baby suffered four skull fractures and blunt force trauma to the head.

Brink entered his pleas Thursday, and a judge set his bond at \$500,000 cash. Brink could face life in prison if convicted.

South Dakota man pleads guilty in New Year's bayonet killing

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man accused of stabbing a man to death using a bayonet has pleaded guilty to second-degree manslaughter.

Twenty-seven-year-old Joseph Rich is accused of killing 21-year-old Juan Legarda Jr. on New Year's Day

in Rapid City. He's also accused of using the bayonet — a blade attached to the muzzle end of a gun — to attack two other men.

The Rapid City Journal reports (<http://bit.ly/2s2RbIj>) that Rich pleaded guilty on Thursday. He faces up to 10 years in prison when he's sentenced July 10.

Rich originally was charged with first-degree manslaughter, punishable by up to life in prison, as well as two counts of aggravated assault for injuring the two other men. Those charges will be dismissed as part of Rich's plea agreement with prosecutors.

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

OSHA probing Emery trench collapse that put man in hospital

EMERY, S.D. (AP) — The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is investigating a trench collapse in Emery that put a man in the hospital.

Area Director Sheila Stanley tells the Daily Republic (<http://bit.ly/2qjshb1>) that an OSHA crew was on the scene Thursday.

The inquiry comes after a Tuesday trench collapse that left a man almost totally covered in debris and dirt. It took crews about 30 minutes to free him.

The man was part of a construction crew working on a water line and sewer replacement project. Authorities haven't identified the man, who has since been released from the hospital.

Stanley says the investigation could take up to six months to finish. She says it could result in citations to Fort Pierre-based construction company First Dakota Enterprises if safety issues are discovered.

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

Global computer outage grounds BA Heathrow, Gatwick flights

By JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Airways canceled all flights from London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports Saturday as a global IT failure caused severe disruption for travelers on a busy holiday weekend.

The airline said it was suffering a "major IT systems failure" around the world. It didn't say what was causing the problem but said there was no evidence of a cyberattack.

BA said terminals at Heathrow and Gatwick had become extremely congested and cancelled all flights from those airports until 6 p.m. (1700GMT, 1 p.m. EDT). It urged passengers not to go to the airports.

Passengers at Heathrow reported long lines at check-in counters, flight delays and failures of BA's website and mobile app.

One posted a picture on Twitter of BA staff writing gate numbers on a white board.

"We've tried all of the self-check-in machines. None were working, apart from one," said Terry Page, booked on a flight to Texas. "There was a huge queue for it and it later transpired that it didn't actually work, but you didn't discover that until you got to the front."

Another traveler, PR executive Melissa Davis, said she was held for more than an hour and a half on the tarmac at Heathrow aboard a BA flight arriving from Belfast.

She said passengers had been told they could not transfer to other flights because "they can't bring up our details."

Passenger Phillip Norton tweeted video of an announcement from a pilot to passengers at Rome's Fiumicino airport, saying the problem affects the system that regulates what passengers and baggage go on which aircraft. He said passengers on planes that have landed at Heathrow were unable to get off because there was nowhere to park.

Heathrow said the IT problem had caused "some delays for passengers" and it was working with BA to resolve it. Some BA flights were still arriving at Heathrow Saturday afternoon, while many were listed as

“delayed.”

The problem comes on a holiday weekend, when thousands of Britons are travelling.

BA passengers were hit with severe delays in July and September 2016 because of problems with the airline’s online check-in systems.

UK lowers terror threat level to ‘severe’ as more arrested

By MSTYSLAV CHERNOV and JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press

MANCHESTER, England (AP) — Britain reduced its terrorism threat level a notch, from “critical” to “severe,” as authorities said major progress has been made in unravelling the plot behind the Manchester bombing. More arrests are expected.

Prime Minister Theresa May said “a significant amount of police activity” and several arrests had led to the level being lowered. But she urged Britons to remain vigilant and said soldiers would remain at high-profile sites throughout the current holiday weekend. The troops will gradually be withdrawn from Monday, May said.

A severe threat means an attack is “highly likely,” according to the scale set by Britain’s Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre. Until it was raised Tuesday, it had stayed at severe since mid-2014.

Police made two more arrests Saturday, bringing the number of suspects in custody to 11. All are men, aged between 18 and 44.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, Britain’s top counterterrorism police officer, said authorities have dismantled a “large part” of the network around bomber Salman Abedi. But he said there were still “gaps in our understanding” of the plot, as investigators probed Abedi’s potential links to jihadis in Britain, Europe, Libya and the Middle East.

Rowley said the investigation had made “rapid progress,” and police “are getting a greater understanding of the preparation of the bomb.”

“There is still much more to do. There will be more arrests and there will be more searches,” he said.

Greater Manchester Police said two men, aged 20 and 22, were detained early Saturday in the northwest England city on suspicion of terrorism offenses. Police used an explosive device to get into a property to make the arrests.

Investigators have searched 17 properties, including bomber Salman Abedi’s home in south Manchester and other houses in nearby districts.

Residents were evacuated from streets in the south Manchester neighborhood of Moss Side in what police called a precaution as one search was carried out Saturday. Photos showed an army bomb-disposal unit at the property.

One of the searches was at an apartment in a Manchester high-rise that British media say was rented by Abedi in the months before the attack. Mohammed El-Hudarey, a friend of the landlord, said after Abedi moved out about six weeks ago there was a strong smell of chemicals and debris including metal rods and cut-up fabric.

“We thought he must have been a drug dealer or doing witchcraft,” El-Hudarey told the BBC.

Abedi, a 22-year-old Briton of Libyan descent died in Monday’s explosion, which killed 22 people and wounded dozens as crowds were leaving an Ariana Grande concert.

Britain’s health service said Saturday that 63 people injured in the bombing remain hospitalized, 20 of them in critical condition. A total of 116 people were treated in hospitals after the attack.

Hundreds of soldiers have been sent to replace police at high-profile sites including Buckingham Palace and Parliament, and police armed with submachine guns are being deployed in city centers, transit hubs, tourist areas and major events.

Despite the alert, police have urged people to go out and enjoy themselves over the three-day holiday weekend.

More than 1,000 armed police are on standby as major events including the Football Association Cup Final and the Premiership Rugby Final are expected to draw tens of thousands of people.

Manchester is slowly returning to normal, though the damaged arena and adjacent Victoria train station remain closed.

Grande has promised to return to Manchester for a benefit concert. In a statement Friday, she said "I'll be returning to the incredibly brave city of Manchester to spend time with my fans and to have a benefit concert in honor of and to raise money for the victims and their families."

"Our response to this violence must be to come closer together, to help each other, to love more, to sing louder and to live more kindly and generously than we did before," she said. "We will not quit or operate in fear. We won't let this divide us. We won't let hate win."

Lawless reported from London.

G-7 source: US gets more time for climate pact answer

By DAVID McHUGH, Associated Press

TAORMINA, Sicily (AP) — Seven wealthy democracies have reached a deal at their annual summit to give the Trump administration time to say whether the United States plans to stay in the Paris climate agreement, a person familiar with the talks said Saturday.

Six members of the Group of Seven plan to stick with their standing endorsement of the 2015 Paris deal to fight climate change by reining in greenhouse gas emissions and await a decision from the U.S., said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the matter before the formal G-7 announcement.

U.S. President Donald Trump says he'll make a final decision next week on the Paris climate accord. Trump's surprise announcement, in the form of a tweet on the final day of his lengthy international trip, comes after he declined to commit to staying in the sweeping climate deal, refusing to give in to intense international pressure.

The source said G-7 members were still wrestling over a statement on trade and whether it would condemn protectionism, as previous G-7 statements have. The last G-7 meeting in Japan in 2016 agreed to "fight all forms of protectionism," — the use of import taxes and regulations to favor domestic producers over imports.

Trump has pushed back against such statements, arguing that trade must be balanced, fair and free. His Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, has said the United States reserves the right to be protectionist if trade arrangements are unfair to U.S. companies and workers.

The G-7 leaders already reached agreement on improving cooperation against terrorism in the wake of the bomb attack on a concert in Manchester on Monday night that left 22 people dead and dozens wounded.

As the two-day meeting in the seaside town of Taormina, Sicily, was drawing to a close, the leaders were also discussing whether to stay with the group's previous position that it could increase sanctions against Russia over its conflict with Ukraine if Russian actions make that necessary.

The G-7 is an informal gathering that meets every year under a rotating chairmanship. Its decisions are not binding as an international treaty would be, simply representing the leaders' political commitment to carry through.

The G-7 countries are: Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, the United States and the UK. The European Union also attends.

Islamic State claims responsibility for Egypt attack

By AMR NABIL and HEBA AFIFY, Associated Press

MINYA, Egypt (AP) — The Islamic State group on Saturday claimed responsibility for the attack on a bus carrying Christians on their way to a remote desert monastery south of the Egyptian capital, Cairo, which killed 29.

Egypt responded to Friday's attack by launching a series of airstrikes that targeted what it said were militant bases in eastern Libya in which the assailants were trained. On Saturday, the military said on its

official Facebook page that the airstrikes were continuing "day and night" and that they have "completely" destroyed their targets. It gave no details.

"What you've seen today will not go unpunished. An extremely painful strike has been dealt to the bases. Egypt will never hesitate to strike terror bases anywhere," President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi said in a televised address to the nation late Friday. He said the attacks on Christians aimed at driving a wedge between them and the country's Muslim majority.

He also appealed to U.S. President Donald Trump to lead the global war against terror.

The claim, published by the group's Ammaq news agency, takes to four the number of deadly attacks targeting Christians since December that the extremist group says it's behind. The claim put the death toll at 32, but there was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy.

In all, the four attacks — Friday's, two in April and one in December — killed at least 104, mostly Christian, people. El-Sissi declared a three-month state of emergency following April's twin attacks, which fell on Palm Sunday.

The Egyptian Cabinet, meanwhile, said 13 victims of Friday's bloodshed remained hospitalized in Cairo and Minya province, where the attack took place. The bloodshed came on the eve of the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

El-Sissi told Pope Tawadros II, spiritual leader of Egypt's Coptic Orthodox Church, in a phone call late on Friday that his government would not rest until the perpetrators of the attack were punished.

Egypt's government has been struggling contain an insurgency by Islamic militants led by an IS affiliate that is centered in the northern region of the Sinai peninsula, though attacks on the mainland have recently increased.

After a visit to Egypt last month by Pope Francis, IS vowed to escalate attacks against Christians and urged Muslims to steer clear of Christian gatherings and Western embassies.

Philippine forces hit militants; civilians wave white flags

By JIM GOMEZ, Associated Press

MARAWI, Philippines (AP) — Philippine fighter aircraft unleashed rocket fire against militants on Saturday, prompting villagers to hoist white flags to avoid being targeted as the military turned to airstrikes to try to end the siege of a southern city by Islamic State group-allied militants.

The predominantly Muslim city of Marawi, home to some 200,000 people, has been under siege since a failed army raid Tuesday on a suspected hideout of Isnilon Hapilon, who is on Washington's list of most-wanted terrorists.

Hapilon got away and fighters loyal to him took over parts of the city, burning buildings, taking cover in houses and seizing about a dozen hostages, including a Catholic priest. Their condition remains unknown.

At least 48 people have died in the fighting, including 35 militants and 11 soldiers, officials say, adding that an unspecified number of civilians are feared to have died.

While up to 90 percent of Marawi's people have fled amid the fighting, many who were trapped or refused to leave their homes have impeded military assaults, officials said. That has slowed efforts to end the most serious crisis President Rodrigo Duterte has faced since he took power nearly a year ago.

"In as much as we would like to avoid collateral damage, these rebels are forcing the hand of government by hiding and holding out inside private homes, government buildings and other facilities," the military said in a statement.

"Their refusal to surrender is holding the city captive," it said. "Hence, it is now increasingly becoming necessary to use more surgical airstrikes to clear the city & to bring this rebellion to a quicker end."

The violence prompted Duterte on Tuesday to declare 60 days of martial law in the southern Philippines, where a Muslim separatist rebellion has raged for decades. But the recent violence has raised fears that extremism could be growing as smaller militant groups unify and align themselves with the Islamic State group.

Hapilon's group has received a "couple of million dollars" from the Islamic State group, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told reporters without elaborating Friday.

As air force planes and rocket-firing helicopters pounded militant positions on Saturday, fleeing residents waved white flags or hoisted them on their roofs to signify that they are not combatants.

"I saw two jets swoop down and fire at rebel positions repeatedly," Alexander Mangundatu, a security guard, told The Associated Press in Marawi as a plume of black smoke billowed from a distant commercial area that was hit. "I pity the civilians and the women who were near the targeted area. They're getting caught in the conflict and I hope this ends soon."

Military spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said government forces are working to "clear the city of all remnants of this group."

Some civilians refused to evacuate because they want to guard their homes, slowing down the government operations, he said.

"But that's fine as long as civilians are not hurt," Padilla said.

On Friday, Duterte ordered his troops to crush the militants, warning that the country is at a grave risk of "contamination" by the Islamic State group.

Duterte told soldiers in Iligan, a city near Marawi, that he had long feared that "contamination by ISIS" loomed in the country's future, using the acronym for the Islamic State group.

"You can say that ISIS is here already," he said.

Lt. Gen. Carlito G. Galvez Jr., a military commander, said about 150 trapped civilians have been rescued by troops from their homes, adding the militants were burning houses to distract troops. The gunmen were still holding out in two areas and soldiers have begun door-to-door searches.

As troops intensified their assaults, Galvez apologized to Muslim residents over the disruption during the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Hapilon, who was recovering from wounds inflicted by an airstrike in January, is still hiding out in the city under the protection of gunmen who are desperately trying to find a way to extricate him, said Philippine military chief Gen. Eduardo Ano. Hapilon has also suffered a mild stroke, he said.

Ano predicted that the military operation would take about a week as soldiers go house to house to clear the city of militants.

In a sign that the long-standing problem of militancy in the south could be expanding, Solicitor General Jose Calida said foreigners, including Indonesians and Malaysians, were fighting alongside the gunmen in Marawi.

Ano said foreign fighters were believed to be inside, but he was more cautious. "We suspect that, but we're still validating," he said.

Hapilon is one of the most senior commanders of the Abu Sayyaf, which is notorious for kidnappings for ransom, beheadings and bombings. He pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group in 2014. He also heads an alliance of at least 10 smaller militant groups, including the Maute, which has a presence in Marawi and was instrumental in fighting off government forces in this week's battles.

Washington has offered a \$5 million reward for information leading to Hapilon's capture.

Palestinian prisoners end mass hunger strike

By IAN DEITCH, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of hunger-striking Palestinian prisoners ended their 40-day fast on the first day of the month-long Muslim holiday of Ramadan, after reaching a compromise with Israel for additional family visits, Israeli and Palestinian officials said.

Israel prison service spokeswoman Nicole Englander said the inmates declared an end to the strike Saturday morning. She said it came after Israel reached a deal with the Palestinian Authority and the Red Cross for prisoners to receive a second family visit each per month.

Hundreds of prisoners observed the strike they said was aimed at improving prison conditions.

The hunger strike had evolved into one of the longest such protests with this many participants since Israel's 1967 capture of territories Palestinian seek for their state in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

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Englander said 1,578 prisoners participated in the hunger strike overall and 834 ended their fast Saturday. She said 18 were being treated in hospitals.

Many Israelis view the prisoners as terrorists and have little sympathy for their demands. More than 6,000 Palestinians are currently in prison for offences linked to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for charges ranging from stone-throwing to weapons possession and attacks that killed or wounded Israeli civilians and soldiers.

Palestinians rallied behind the hunger strikers as national heroes, relishing a rare break from deep divisions between two rival political groups, the Islamic militant group Hamas which runs Gaza and Fatah, the movement of Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas who administers autonomous enclaves in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Palestinians hoped the protest will draw the attention of a seemingly distracted international community as the Israeli occupation hits the 50-year mark in early June.

Support for the prisoners is an emotional consensus issue; hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been jailed by Israel at one time or another since 1967.

Israel's public security minister, Gilad Erdan, alleged that the hunger strike was motivated by a power struggle in Abbas' Fatah movement. He claimed that imprisoned strike organizer Marwan Barghouti cynically exploited his fellow prisoners to boost his standing in Fatah and secure his position as a possible successor to Abbas. Barghouti's family has denied such claims.

Qadoura Fares, who runs the Prisoners' Club advocacy group, said negotiations took place between Israel officials and a committee from the prisoners, including Marwan Barghouti. He said negotiations began on Friday and were the first since the strike began. Fares said he had no details on the terms of the deal.

He said the agreement was reached at 4 a.m. coinciding with start of the first day of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month where the devout observe dawn-to-dusk fasting and nightly feasts.

Barghouti is serving five life terms after being convicted by an Israeli court of directing two shooting attacks and a bombing that killed five people. In prison since 2002, he never mounted a defense, saying the court had no jurisdiction over him.

Earlier this month, Israel released footage it said shows Barghouti breaking his fast. Palestinians say the video is a fabrication.

Melania Trump's pricey jacket draws attention in Sicily

By COLLEEN BARRY, Associated Press

TAORMINA, Sicily (AP) — Melania Trump's first outing in the Sicilian sunshine was in a colorful floral applique jacket by Dolce & Gabbana that sells for \$51,000, or several thousand dollars below the median U.S. income in 2015.

She also carried a matching clutch to lunch with spouses of the G-7 leaders, held at the historic Elephants Palace and hosted by Catania's mayor.

The burst of color in the U.S. first lady's wardrobe came after a steady dose of mostly black and white during President Donald Trump's inaugural overseas tour, including a prim black lace dress with a matching mantilla headcover that she wore to meet Pope Francis, and a dark jacket with golden detailing on the cuff and collar that she wore for her arrival in Italy. Both outfits were also by Milan designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana.

The fashion choices of America's first ladies are a longstanding source of public fascination, and Mrs. Trump is getting a taste of that on the trip, her first extended period in the public eye since her husband's inauguration. She has been living in the couple's penthouse at Trump Tower in New York instead of the White House, but plans to move to Washington once the couple's 11-year-old son finishes the school year.

Michelle Obama, for example, received rave reviews for most of the gowns she wore to White House state dinners that she and her husband hosted. But she was also mocked for some fashion choices, including wearing shorts on Air Force One and sporting designer sneakers that cost more than \$500 during a visit to a food bank.

The first lady's attire can also be a big boost for designers.

Gabbana has celebrated each of Mrs. Trump's appearance with Instagram posts. He shared three photos of the floral jacket, worn over a simple white shift dress, with Mrs. Trump looking model-perfect as she stepped out of an SUV. Gabbana tagged the photo with hearts and a "Thank You" to @flotus #melaniatrump.

Dolce & Gabbana have made Sicily their fashion muse, so it wasn't surprising that Trump's wife would wear their designs in Sicily, the final stop on Trump's trip.

The White House did not respond to requests for comment on how much Mrs. Trump, a former model and the wife of an independently wealthy president, paid for the jacket. The U.S. government does not provide first ladies with a wardrobe allowance — though attire for official events of public or historic significance may be given as a gift by a designer and accepted on behalf of the U.S. government.

Several fashion designers have said publicly that they will not dress the first lady because they oppose her husband's policies — a fact that Gabbana appeared to chide in earlier Instagram posts he tagged #boycottdolce&gabbanaplease with laughing emojis.

Mrs. Trump, a former model, is known for her stylish appearance. Her fashion choices so far have been a contrast to her predecessor, who liked to mix designer items with more accessible brands like J. Crew.

The retail price for the Dolce & Gabbana jacket Mrs. Trump wore comes in at about \$5,500 below the median U.S. household income of \$56,516 in 2015, the most recent year for which figures are available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Trump ran a populist campaign, promising to raise workers' wages and revive American manufacturing, but never shied away from showing off and talking about his personal wealth.

As the Trumps traveled through Saudi Arabia, Israel, Italy, Brussels and then back to Italy, the president left it to top aides in Washington to explain the details of his federal budget proposal for 2018. Trump has proposed a \$4.1 trillion spending plan that slashes safety net programs for the poor, including food stamps and Medicaid, while spending billions more on the military and protecting retirement programs for the elderly.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville in Washington contributed to this story.

Lawyer says Kushner stands ready to talk to investigators

By ERIC TUCKER and EILEEN SULLIVAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — If the FBI wants to talk to Jared Kushner about his Russian contacts, they won't have to track down the president's son-in-law. Amid reports the FBI is scrutinizing Kushner's encounters, his lawyer says he stands ready to talk to federal investigators as well as Congress about his contacts and his role in Donald Trump's 2016 campaign.

Federal investigators and several congressional committees are looking into Russia-Trump campaign connections, including allegations that there may have been collaboration to help Trump and harm his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

"The FBI tries to be thorough in their investigations," said defense lawyer Edward MacMahon, who is not involved in the case. "If it's been publicly reported that he met with Russians, and the investigation has to do with administration officials meeting with Russians, well, then, they'll probably want to talk to everybody."

Kushner was a trusted Trump adviser last year, overseeing the campaign's digital strategy, and remains an influential confidant within the White House.

One likely area of interest for investigators would be Kushner's own meetings with Russians, given that such encounters with a variety of Trump associates are at the root of the sprawling probe, now overseen by former FBI director Robert Mueller.

The White House in March confirmed that Kushner and Michael Flynn, the ousted national security adviser, met with Sergey Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the United States, at Trump Tower in December for what one official called a brief courtesy meeting.

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The Washington Post reported Friday that Kislyak told his superiors that he and Kushner discussed setting up a secret communications channel between the Trump transition team and the Kremlin.

The Post report, citing anonymous U.S. officials who were briefed on intelligence reports on intercepted Russian communications, said Kislyak told his superiors that Kushner proposed using Russian diplomatic facilities for their discussions, apparently to make them more difficult to monitor. The Post said Kislyak was reportedly "taken aback" by the suggestion.

Flynn was pushed out of the White House in February after officials said he misled Vice President Mike Pence about whether he and the ambassador had discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia in a phone call. Sally Yates, the former acting attorney general, told Congress this month that that deception left Flynn vulnerable to being blackmailed by the Russians. Flynn remains under federal investigation in Virginia over his foreign business ties and was interviewed by the FBI in January about his contacts with Kislyak.

Obama administration officials told The Associated Press earlier this week that the frequency of Flynn's discussions with Kislyak raised enough red flags that aides discussed the possibility Trump was trying to establish a one-to-one line of communication — a so-called back channel — with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Reuters reported Friday that Kushner had at least three previously undisclosed contacts with Kislyak last year, including two phone calls between April and November.

The news agency anonymously cited current and former U.S. officials. Kushner's attorney, Jamie Gorelick, told Reuters that Kushner "has no recollection of the calls as described."

Regarding Kushner, former FBI agent Jim Treacy said Friday: "If there is an investigation on anybody, would other folks around that person be of interest to the FBI as far as being interviewed? The answer to that is a big yes." If the FBI wants to speak with someone, it's not necessarily an indication of involvement or complicity, said Treacy, who did two tours in Moscow as the FBI's legal attache.

"Really, being spoken to, does not confer a target status on the individual," he said.

Investigators are also interested in a meeting Kushner had with the Russian banker, Sergey Gorkov, according to reports from The Washington Post and NBC News.

"Mr. Kushner previously volunteered to share with Congress what he knows about these meetings," Gorelick said in a statement Thursday. "He will do the same if he is contacted in connection with any other inquiry."

Another potential line of inquiry could concern Kushner's failure to disclose some of his contacts with Russian government officials when he was filling out his application for a security clearance. The omissions were described as an "administrative error" by Gorelick, who said additional information about his meetings were provided to the FBI the day after he submitted his incomplete clearance application.

When applying for a security clearance, applicants are asked to disclose details about their interactions with foreigners, including the names of all the foreign government officials the applicant has had contact with over the past seven years. In some cases, people can lose their security clearances and jobs for not properly disclosing foreign contacts. Some Democrats have called on Kushner to be stripped of his security clearance and have asked the FBI to review whether Kushner complied with the law.

Todd Hinnen, the former acting head of the Justice Department's national security division, said it would be easy to read too much into investigators' interest in Kushner.

"That doesn't mean he is a subject or the FBI suspects him of any wrongdoing; it also doesn't mean the FBI doesn't suspect him of any wrongdoing," Hinnen said in an email.

"Given his position and his contacts, interviewing him would be an important step in any thorough investigation," Hinnen said.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Iraq says Iranian commander killed fighting IS

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A senior Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander was killed in an explosion during clashes with the Islamic State group west of Mosul, an Iraqi official told The Associated Press on Saturday, as aid groups voiced concern for the safety of civilians after Iraq's government called for residents in militant-held neighborhoods to flee immediately.

Gen. Shaaban Nasiiri was an adviser to Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force. Soleimani has acted as a key adviser to Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces — an umbrella group of Mostly Shiite militia forces sanctioned by the Iraqi government — in the fight against IS since 2014.

The Iraqi official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said Nasiiri was killed Friday and is the first senior Iranian commander to die in the Mosul fight.

Inside Mosul, U.S.-backed Iraqi forces began the push to retake the Old City on Saturday morning, moving in on the district from three directions, according to a statement from Nineveh operations command, the authority overseeing the Mosul fight.

The IS hold on Mosul has shrunk to just a handful of neighborhoods in and around the Old City district where narrow streets and a dense civilian population is expected to complicate the fight there.

Iraqi planes dropped leaflets over the area Friday telling civilians to flee "immediately" to "safe passages" where they will be greeted by "guides, protectors and (transportation) to reach safe places," according to a government statement.

However, it is unclear how the government intends to ensure safe passage for civilians as IS fighters have repeatedly targeted fleeing civilians with small arms and mortar fire.

The move to clear the Old City marks a shift in approach. Since the Mosul operation was launched in October, Iraqi forces have encouraged civilians to remain in their homes to avoid massive displacement. However, more than 730,000 people have fled the fight to date according to United Nations figures.

"As many as 200,000 additional people may try to leave in coming days," the U.N. said Saturday in a statement following the call for Old City civilians to leave. Save the Children warned that fleeing civilians could be caught in the crossfire, leading to "deadly chaos" in a statement Friday.

Both Iraqi forces and IS fighters are obligated under international law to protect civilians, the U.N. statement added.

More than 100,000 civilians are estimated to still be inside IS-held Mosul neighborhoods.

While U.S.-backed forces have fought inside Mosul during the operation to retake it from IS, Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces have largely operated in the deserts to the west cutting supply lines and attempting to begin securing Iraq's border with Syria.

The Popular Mobilization Forces are largely supported by Tehran, a key Iraqi ally in the fight against IS. Iran has provided weapons, training and advisers credited with important early victories against the extremists in 2014 before the U.S. began a campaign of airstrikes targeting the group.

Mosul's eastern half was declared liberated in January and the push for the city's west began the following month. While some Iraqi commanders said they hoped to retake the city before Ramadan, the Muslim holy month that began Friday night, grueling urban combat has repeatedly slowed the pace of operations.

Mosul siege extends IS fight in Iraq, puts civilians at risk

By SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi forces are steadily closing in on the remaining pockets of territory held by the Islamic State group in Mosul, inching toward a victory that U.S.-led coalition officials say is "only a matter of time."

But unlike past urban battles against IS in Iraq, the militants in Mosul are under siege by Iraqi forces.

The Iraqi government on Friday announced a call for all civilians in the Old City to flee, but human rights groups warned the orders could force tens of thousands into deadly frontline clashes.

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The decision to surround the remaining IS holdouts is prolonging an already grueling fight, according to Iraqi commanders, and is punishing civilians being held by IS as human shields.

In the fight for Fallujah and Ramadi, cities that were also overrun by IS in 2014 as the group seized vast swaths of territory in Iraq, there was a tipping point in the battles — the moment when the militants' hold on a city had shrunk to only a handful of neighborhoods. At that point, senior IS fighters began to flee in greater numbers, the extremists' command and control dissolved, defenses crumbled and Iraqi ground forces racked up a series of swift gains.

But in Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city after Baghdad, Iraqi forces backed by the U.S.-led coalition have shrunk IS-held territory to less than 5 percent of the city and still resistance has remained stiff.

In what was meant to be a simple clearing operation last week, Iraqi Maj. Ihab Jalil al-Aboudi and his unit were pinned down for hours at a residential intersection in western Mosul just a few hundred meters from the Old City.

By afternoon, at least three coalition airstrikes were called in to clear IS fighters armed with medium machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

"Because the enemy cannot flee, the area is completely sealed off," said Brig. Gen. Haider Fadhil of Iraqi special forces. He said it's impossible to predict how the next few weeks of the Mosul operation will play out, but so far the siege of the Old City is slowing progress on the ground.

"We are noticing that the closer we get to the Old City, the greater the resistance," he added, looking over the roughly 8 square kilometers (3 square miles) of Mosul territory still in IS hands on a satellite mapping app.

The Old City — a warren of tightly packed homes and roads that shrink to the width of footpaths — holds special significance for Mosul's residents and IS. The district is home to much of Mosul's ancient heritage, including the iconic leaning minaret of the al-Nuri Mosque where IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared an Islamic caliphate stretching across IS-held lands in Syria and Iraq in June 2014.

U.S. defense officials say "taking the time" to surround Islamic State strongholds is part of a new approach in the war against IS under the Trump administration, aimed at preventing militants from regrouping after territorial losses and foreign fighters from fleeing.

"The foreign fighters are the strategic threat, should they return home," Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said at a Pentagon briefing on May 19. "So by taking the time to de-conflict, to surround and then attack, we carry out the annihilation campaign so we don't simply transplant this problem from one location to another."

Iraq's fight to retake Mosul began last October. By November, Iraqi forces had punched into the city limits along Mosul's eastern edge. In January, after 100 days of fighting, eastern Mosul was declared "fully liberated."

All the bridges spanning the Tigris River, which roughly divides Mosul into its eastern and western half, has been destroyed by coalition airstrikes, but residents reported IS fighters still managed to flee west, ahead of the Iraqi advances.

In February, Iraqi forces closely backed by the U.S.-led coalition launched the operation for western Mosul, initially planning to clear it of IS fighters south-to-north. But after the federal police stalled on the southern edge of the Old City just weeks into the push, the joint command center adjusted the plans, ordering Iraqi forces to first sweep up and around the congested Old City.

The slow military approach may be helping Iraqi and coalition forces kill and capture more IS fighters but it has put trapped civilians at greater risk, according to residents who recently fled neighborhoods still in IS hands.

A woman from al-Rifai neighborhood, who fled with her daughter after their house collapsed in an explosion, said her two sisters and their families were still inside the Old City.

It had been weeks since she heard from them, she said, speaking to The Associated Press from a civilian screening center south of Mosul on condition of anonymity, fearing for her relatives' safety.

Smugglers who deliver food into the district told her that months of Iraqi artillery and airstrikes have killed hundreds, she said. "In a single day they buried 30 bodies," she said.

Iraq's military dropped leaflets over the Old City Friday asking civilians to flee "immediately" to "safe passages" where they will be greeted by "guides, protectors and (transportation) to reach safe places," according to a government statement.

But human rights group Save the Children warned the order would likely lead to "deadly chaos" as the Iraqi government has not negotiated safe passage for civilians with IS.

Over the past two weeks IS has begun barricading families inside their homes, said Khaled Ahmed Aziz, also from al-Rifai. He said IS recently welded the doors to his sister's home shut.

"Now, even if she wanted to flee, she cannot," he said.

Ayad Sayyid, a doctor working at a clinic treating civilians fleeing Mosul said as the battle has ground on he is seeing more children and elderly patients suffering from malnutrition.

Last month there were about five cases a week, now he says he sees 20. Mosul residents have been suffering from food shortages for months, a hardship expected to be exacerbated during the holy month of Ramadan that began Friday night, when Muslims fast during daylight hours.

"It's a disaster," he said, adding that even before the battle, the residents of the Old City were among Mosul's poorest.

Since the push on western Mosul began, the United Nations says more than 580,000 people have been forced to flee.

"Please save the Old City as soon as possible," the woman from al-Rifai pleaded. "But, please stop the airstrikes, there are already enough bodies under the rubble."

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

Carter national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski dies

By LAURIE KELLMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Zbigniew Brzezinski, who helped topple economic barriers between the Soviet Union, China and the West as President Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, died Friday. He was 89.

His death was announced on social media Friday night by his daughter, MSNBC host Mika Brzezinski. She called him "the most inspiring, loving and devoted father any girl could ever have."

In a statement, Carter called Brzezinski "a superb public servant" as well as "brilliant, dedicated and loyal."

Earnest and ambitious, Brzezinski helped Carter bridge wide gaps between the rigid Egyptian and Israeli leaders, Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin, leading to the Camp David accords in September 1978. Three months later, U.S.-China relations were normalized, a top priority for Brzezinski.

Born in Warsaw and educated in Canada and the United States, Brzezinski was an acknowledged expert in Communism when he attracted the attention of U.S. policymakers. In the 1960s he was an adviser to John F. Kennedy and served in the Johnson administration.

In December 1976, Carter offered Brzezinski the position of national security adviser. He had not wanted to be secretary of state because he felt he could be more effective working at Carter's side in the White House.

Brzezinski often found himself in clashes with colleagues like Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. For the White House, the differences between Vance and Brzezinski became a major headache, confusing the American public about the administration's policy course and fueling a decline in confidence that Carter could keep his foreign policy team working in tandem.

The Iranian hostage crisis, which began in 1979, came to dramatize America's waning global power and influence and to symbolize the failures and frustrations of the Carter administration. Brzezinski, during the early months of 1980, became convinced that negotiations to free the kidnapped Americans were going nowhere. Supported by the Pentagon, he began to push for military action.

Carter was desperate to end the standoff and, over Vance's objections, agreed to a long-shot plan to rescue the hostages. The mission, dubbed Desert One, was a complete military and political humiliation and precipitated Vance's resignation. Carter lost his re-election bid against Ronald Reagan that November.

Brzezinski went on to ruffle the feathers of Washington's power elite with his 1983 book, "Power and

Principle," which was hailed and reviled as a kiss-and-tell memoir.

"I have never believed in flattery or lying as a way of making it," he told The Washington Post that year. "I have made it on my own terms."

The oldest son of Polish diplomat Tadeus Brzezinski, Zbigniew was born on March 28, 1928, and attended Catholic schools during the time his father was posted in France and Germany.

The family went to Montreal in 1938 when the elder Brzezinski was appointed Polish consul general. When Communists took power in Poland six years later, he retired and moved his family to a farm in the Canadian countryside.

At his new home, the young Brzezinski began learning Russian from a nearby farmer and was soon bitten by the foreign policy bug.

Brzezinski's climb to the top of the foreign policy community began at Canada's McGill University, where he earned degrees in economics and political science. Later at Harvard, he received a doctorate in government, a fellowship and a publishing contract — for his thesis on Soviet purges as a permanent feature of totalitarianism.

Frequent trips to Eastern Europe and several books and articles in the 1950s established Brzezinski as an expert on Communism, and by the 1960s he'd begun to attract the interest of policymakers. Throughout his career, he would be affiliated with moderate-to-liberal groups, including the Rand Corp., the Council on Foreign Relations, Amnesty International and the NAACP.

Police: Man hurling racial slurs kills 2, injures 1 on train

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Two people died Friday and another was hurt in a stabbing on a Portland light-rail train after a man yelled racial slurs at two young women who appeared to be Muslim, one of whom was wearing a hijab, police said.

Officers arrested a man Friday afternoon who ran from the train, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported (<https://goo.gl/PKo777>). Police were still working Friday night to identify the man and the people who were attacked.

Before the stabbing the assailant on the train was ranting on many topics, using "hate speech or biased language," and then turned his focus on the women, police Sgt. Pete Simpson said.

"In the midst of his ranting and raving, some people approached him and appeared to try to intervene with his behavior and some of the people that he was yelling at," Simpson told The Oregonian. "They were attacked viciously."

One person was dead at the scene and another died at a hospital, Simpson said. The third person was taken to a hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

It wasn't clear why the man was yelling, Simpson said.

"He was talking about a lot of different things, not just specifically anti-Muslim," Simpson said.

Police don't know if the man has mental health issues or if he was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time.

The attack happened on a MAX train as it headed east. A train remained stopped on the tracks at a transit center which was closed while police investigated.

Evelin Hernandez, a 38-year-old resident of Clackamas, Oregon, told the newspaper she was on the train when the man began making racist remarks to the women. A group of men tried to quiet him and he stabbed them, she said.

Simpson said the women understandably left the scene before police were able to talk with them but that they would like to hear from them to help fill in what happened.

"It's horrific," Simpson said. "There's no other word to describe what happened today."

Millions of Muslims marked the start of Ramadan Friday, a time of intense prayer, dawn-to-dusk fasting and nightly feasts.

Ex-Texas nurse accused of killing dozens of kids in 1980s

By DAVID WARREN, Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — A Texas nurse who is in prison for the 1982 killing of a toddler has been charged with murder in the death of an infant a year earlier, and authorities said Friday that they think she may have killed up to 60 young children around that time.

Geneve Jones, 66, is serving concurrent 99-year and 60-year sentences at a Gatesville prison for the 1982 killing of 15-month-old Chelsea McClellan and the sickening of a 4-week-old boy who survived. The girl was given a fatal injection of a muscle relaxant and the boy received a large injection of a blood thinner.

Jones was due to be freed next March under a mandatory release law that was in place when she was convicted. But on Thursday, the Bexar County district attorney's office announced that she has been charged in the 1981 death of 11-month-old Joshua Sawyer, who investigators say died of a fatal overdose of an anti-seizure drug, Dilantin.

During Jones' time working in hospitals and clinics in San Antonio and elsewhere in Texas, children died of unexplained seizures and other complications.

At a news conference Friday in San Antonio, District Attorney Nico LaHood said investigators believe Jones may have killed some or all of those children because they died under unusual circumstances during or shortly after her shifts.

"She's been suspected in dozens of infant deaths and she's only been held accountable in one," he said.

It's not clear why Jones' actions, involving so many suspected victims, were not detected earlier. But Sam Millsap, a previous district attorney in Bexar County, told KSAT-TV in 2013 that medical records at the San Antonio hospital at one point were accidentally destroyed, hampering efforts by investigators to prove their suspicions.

Chelsea McClellan died after receiving an injection at a clinic in Kerrville, northwest of San Antonio, and prosecutors at Jones' 1984 murder trial said the nurse lethally injected children there to demonstrate the need for a pediatric intensive care unit at a nearby hospital.

Other prosecutors theorized that Jones' tactic was to take swift medical action and save some of her victims, making herself appear to be a sort of miracle worker.

LaHood said the new murder charge is based on fresh evidence that came to light and a review of old evidence. He also said the deaths of some of the other children are being re-examined and that additional charges could be coming.

Jones has been consistently denied parole over the years. She was due to be released next March after serving one-third of her sentence under a mandatory release law adopted in 1977 to help alleviate prison overcrowding. The law was overhauled 10 years later.

Jones, whose case has been chronicled in two books, a TV movie and numerous articles, was "emotional" when she was served an arrest warrant Thursday, LaHood said.

"We have every reason to believe that she fully expected to get out next year," he said.

Because of the new charge, Jones will be transferred to the Bexar County jail and held on a \$1 million bond while the case is prosecuted. A murder conviction brings a maximum sentence of 99 years. LaHood said Jones is not eligible for the death penalty because Texas did not have such a sentence at the time of the 1981 death.

"We will do our best to ensure that Geneve Jones takes her very last breath behind bars," LaHood said.

This story has been corrected to show the last name of the child that Jones is in prison for killing is McClellan, not McClelland, and that the killing occurred in 1982, not 1984.

Follow David Warren on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/WarrenJourno>

Leery of North Korea, US plans first test of ICBM intercept

By **ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Preparing for North Korea's growing threat, the Pentagon will try to shoot down an intercontinental-range missile for the first time in a test next week. The goal is to more closely simulate a North Korean ICBM aimed at the U.S. homeland, officials said Friday.

The American interceptor has a spotty track record, succeeding in nine of 17 attempts against missiles of less-than-intercontinental range since 1999. The most recent test, in June 2014, was a success, but that followed three straight failures. The system has evolved from the multibillion-dollar effort triggered by President Ronald Reagan's 1983 push for a "Star Wars" solution to ballistic missile threats during the Cold War — when the Soviet Union was the only major worry.

North Korea is now the focus of U.S. efforts because its leader, Kim Jong Un, has vowed to field a nuclear-armed missile capable of reaching American territory. He has yet to test an intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM, but Pentagon officials believe he is speeding in that direction.

Marine Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said this week that "left unchecked," Kim will eventually succeed.

The Pentagon has a variety of missile defense systems, but the one designed with a potential North Korean ICBM in mind is perhaps the most technologically challenging. Critics say it also is the least reliable.

The basic defensive idea is to fire a rocket into space upon warning of a hostile missile launch. The rocket releases a 5-foot-long device called a "kill vehicle" that uses internal guidance systems to steer into the path of the oncoming missile's warhead, destroying it by force of impact. Officially known as the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system, the Pentagon likens it to hitting a bullet with a bullet.

The Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, which is responsible for developing and testing the system, has scheduled the intercept test for Tuesday.

An interceptor is to be launched from an underground silo at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and soar toward the target, which will be fired from a test range on Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific. If all goes as planned, the "kill vehicle" will slam into the ICBM-like target's mock warhead high over the Pacific Ocean.

The target will be a custom-made missile meant to simulate an ICBM, meaning it will fly faster than missiles used in previous intercept tests, according to Christopher Johnson, spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency. The target is not a mock-up of an actual North Korean ICBM.

"We conduct increasingly complex test scenarios as the program matures and advances," Johnson said Friday. "Testing against an ICBM-type threat is the next step in that process."

Officials say this is not a make-or-break test.

While it wasn't scheduled with the expectation of an imminent North Korean missile threat, the military will closely watch whether it shows progress toward the stated goal of being able to reliably shoot down a small number of ICBMs targeting the United States. The Pentagon is thirsting for a success story amid growing fears about North Korea's escalating capability.

"I can't imagine what they're going to say if it fails," said Philip Coyle, senior science fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. He headed the Pentagon's office of operational test and evaluation from 1994 to 2001 and has closely studied the missile defense system.

"These tests are scripted for success, and what's been astonishing to me is that so many of them have failed," Coyle said.

The interceptor system has been in place since 2004, but it has never been used in combat or fully tested. There currently are 32 interceptors in silos at Fort Greely in Alaska and four at Vandenberg, north of Los Angeles. The Pentagon says it will have eight more, for a total of 44, by the end of this year.

In its 2018 budget presented to Congress this week, the Pentagon proposed spending \$7.9 billion on missile defense, including \$1.5 billion for the ground-based midcourse defense program. Other elements of that effort include the Patriot designed to shoot down short-range ballistic missiles and the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, which the U.S. has installed in South Korea as defense against medium-range North Korean missiles.

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The Trump administration has yet to announce its intentions on missile defense.

President Donald Trump recently ordered the Pentagon to undertake a ballistic missile defense review. Some experts argue the current strategy for shooting down ICBM-range missiles, focused on the silo-based interceptors, is overly expensive and inadequate. They say a more fruitful approach would be to destroy or disable such missiles before they can be launched, possibly by cyberattack.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, May 27, the 147th day of 2017. There are 218 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 27, 1937, the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge connecting San Francisco and Marin County, California, was opened to pedestrian traffic (vehicles began crossing the next day).

On this date:

In 1896, 255 people were killed when a tornado struck St. Louis, Missouri, and East St. Louis, Illinois.

In 1929, Charles A. Lindbergh Jr. married Anne Morrow in Englewood, New Jersey.

In 1933, the Chicago World's Fair, celebrating "A Century of Progress," officially opened. Walt Disney's Academy Award-winning animated short "The Three Little Pigs" was first released.

In 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States*, unanimously struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act, a key component of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" legislative program.

In 1936, the Cunard liner RMS Queen Mary left England on its maiden voyage to New York. The first Aer Lingus flight took place as a de Havilland Dragon carried five passengers from Dublin to Bristol, England.

In 1941, the British Royal Navy sank the German battleship Bismarck off France with a loss of some 2,000 lives, three days after the Bismarck sank the HMS Hood with the loss of more than 1,400 lives. Amid rising world tensions, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed an "unlimited national emergency" during a radio address from the White House.

In 1942, Doris "Dorie" Miller, a cook aboard the USS West Virginia, became the first African-American to receive the Navy Cross for displaying "extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety" during Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1957, the single "That'll Be the Day" by Buddy Holly's group The Crickets was released by Brunswick Records.

In 1962, a dump fire in Centralia, Pennsylvania, ignited a blaze in underground coal deposits that continues to burn to this day.

In 1977, the punk rock single "God Save the Queen," the Sex Pistols' sardonic salute to Queen Elizabeth II, was released by Virgin Records.

In 1985, in Beijing, representatives of Britain and China exchanged instruments of ratification for an accord returning Hong Kong to Chinese control in 1997.

In 1998, Michael Fortier (FOR'-tee-ur), the government's star witness in the Oklahoma City bombing case, was sentenced to 12 years in prison after apologizing for not warning anyone about the deadly plot. (Fortier was freed in Jan. 2006.)

Ten years ago: American forces freed 42 kidnapped Iraqis in a raid on an al-Qaida hideout north of Baghdad. Dario Franchitti (DA'-ree-oh fran-KEE'-tee) won a rain-abbreviated Indy 500. Broadway actress Gretchen Wyler died in Camarillo, California, at age 75.

Five years ago: Syria strongly denied allegations that its forces had killed scores of people — including women and children — in Houla, but the U.N. Security Council condemned government forces for shelling residential areas. At the Cannes Film Festival, Austrian director Michael Haneke won the top prize for a second time with his stark film, "Amour." Dario Franchitti won the Indianapolis 500 for the third time. Johnny Tapia, the five-time boxing champion whose turbulent career was marked by cocaine addiction, alcohol,

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depression and run-ins with the law, was found dead at his Albuquerque, New Mexico, home; he was 45.

One year ago: President Barack Obama became the first American chief executive to visit Hiroshima, the city where the U.S. dropped the first atomic bomb during World War II, declaring it a fitting place to summon people everywhere to embrace the vision of a world without nuclear weapons. SpaceX pulled off another rocket landing, the third in just under two months, as the first-stage booster of the unmanned Falcon rocket settled vertically onto a barge 400 miles off Florida's east coast, eight minutes after the late afternoon liftoff.

Today's Birthdays: Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Herman Wouk (wohk) is 102. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is 94. Former FBI Director William Sessions is 87. Author John Barth is 87. Actress Lee Meriwether is 82. Musician Ramsey Lewis is 82. Actor Louis Gossett Jr. is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Raymond Sanders (The Persuasions) is 78. Country singer Don Williams is 78. Actor Bruce Weitz is 74. Motion Picture Association of America Chairman Christopher Dodd is 73. Singer Bruce Cockburn (KOH'-burn) is 72. Singer-actress Dee Dee Bridgewater is 67. Actor Richard Schiff is 62. Singer Siouxsie Sioux (The Creatures, Siouxsie and the Banshees) is 60. Rock singer-musician Neil Finn (The Finn Brothers) is 59. Actress Peri Gilpin is 56. Actress Cathy Silvers is 56. Comedian Adam Carolla is 53. Actor Todd Bridges is 52. Rock musician Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains) is 51. Actor Dondre Whitfield is 48. Actor Paul Bettany is 46. Rock singer-musician Brian Desveaux (Nine Days) is 46. Country singer Jace Everett is 45. Actor Jack McBrayer is 44. Rapper Andre 3000 (Outkast) is 42. Rapper Jadakiss is 42. TV chef Jamie Oliver is 42. Alt-country singer-songwriter Shane Nicholson is 41. Actor Ben Feldman is 37. Actor Michael Steger is 37. Actor Darin Brooks is 33. Actor-singer Chris Colfer is 27. Actor Ethan Dampf is 23.

Thought for Today: "Every new opinion, at its starting, is precisely in a minority of one." — Thomas Carlyle, Scottish critic and historian (1795-1881).