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Wednesday, June 28

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato with sour cream, creamed peas, fruited Jell-O with salad, whole wheat bread.

United Methodist: Wednesday Coffee Time, 9 a.m.; Kid Zone Camp, 7 p.m.

Outdoor Story Time: at the Little Free Library located south of the Methodist Church, 10:30 a.m.

Jr. Teener: hosts Webster for 2 games, 6 p.m.

Olive Grove: Men's League, 6 p.m.

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Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, au gratin potatoes, fresh fruit, whole wheat bread.

United Methodist: Kid Zone Camp, 7 p.m.

T-Ball: both teams Scrimmage in Groton, 5 p.m.

Legion: hosts Webster for 1 game, 6:30 p.m.

U12: at Redfield for 2 games, 7 p.m.

U10: at Redfield for 2 games, 6 p.m.

U8 Blue: at Redfield for 2 games, 5 p.m.

U8 Red: at Britton for 2 games, 6 p.m.

Softball: at Mellette (U10 at 6 p.m., U12/14 at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m.)

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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Harry Implement
"Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!"



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Ferney

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"Good company in a journey
makes the way seem
shorter."

- Isaac Walton



@ChickenSoupSoul
©2016 Chicken Soup for
the Soul Publishing, LLC

Congratulations to
**ANITA
LOWARY**
on your retirement!

Thank you for years of dedicated
service to the city of Groton.



Groton's Blood Drive nets 42 units

A total of 39 people volunteered to donate blood, and 35 able to give during Groton's June 20th blood drive. Seven people gave blood on the automated 2RBC machine that collects two units of red blood cells which resulted in 42 total products. Every community and everyone within each community has a stake in an adequate blood supply. To meet the needs of local patients United Blood Services needs to recruit 250 blood donors every day!

Blood will be available only because of blood drive sponsors, coordinators, and volunteer donors. Blood donors are eligible to donate blood every 56 days.

Stacy Oliver coordinated the drive and James Valley Telecommunications sponsored and assisted with recruiting donors, publicity, providing refreshments, and registering donors. Space to hold the drive was provided at the American Legion.

The blood collected at this drive will help meet the needs of patients in 68 hospitals served by United Blood Services in this region. Blood is for sharing; you have truly given the "Gift of Life."

Pray, Roberts are Legacy Greenwing Members of DU

Hailey Pray, daughter of Jessica Benda and Kevin Pray, Ferney, and Laila Roberts, daughter of Lisa Pray and Jason Roberts, Groton, are Legacy Greenwing Members of Ducks Unlimited who attended the Madison Wetland Management District dedication held June 24 at Lake Madison. A Legacy Greenwing member is a youth member of Ducks Unlimited who has contributed \$200 to the organization. Ducks Unlimited recognized and honored Legacy Greenwing members who helped fund the restoration and protection of waterfowl habitat in South Dakota as part of the Ducks Unlimited "Rescue our Wetlands" campaign between 2014 and 2017. During this time DU and US Fish and Wildlife Service worked together to restore and protect over 75,000 acres of waterfowl habitat in South Dakota. Victoria and Catherine Donovan are also Legacy Greenwing Members. They are the daughters of Steve and Yvette Donovan. Steve is a Groton High School alumni and the South Dakota Manager of Conservation Programs for Ducks Unlimited. The Donovans live in Arlington.



The cairn with a plaque listing the names of the Legacy Greenwing Members was unveiled at the dedication. Pictured on left are Steve Donovan and daughter Catherine, on the right in back is Victoria Donovan, middle is Laila Roberts, and in front is Hailey Pray. (Courtesy Photo)

Dry Conditions Prompt Production Changes

BROOKINGS, S.D. - SDSU Extension will host livestock and agronomy meetings in Herreid and Gettysburg on July 6, 2017. The meeting in Herreid will be at 9:00 a.m. at the Community Center/Skateland (107 Main Street S.) and in Gettysburg at 2:00 p.m. at Bob's Steakhouse (29336 U.S. Hwy 212).

"Drought conditions have been at severe drought (D2) conditions for the past few weeks, and reached extreme drought (D3) in several South Dakota counties the past week," said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist.

Topics include:

Early weaning calves and the effect on cow and calf performance, as well as the effect on feed requirements and costs.

Grazing annual forages, how to get them established and the added value they may have for the operation.

Economic resources in the form of budget calculators and other tools, as well as information on federal assistance through the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA).

Weather outlook for the fall months.

Additional SDSU Extension staff will be on hand to address other topics of interest to producers. "We understand there are many aspects of the operation affected by the lack of precipitation the past six months," said Alvaro Garcia, SDSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Director. "We want to bring relevant materials to the producers hardest hit by the drought, so the management changes they make truly are the best ones for their operation."

Producers with concerns about nitrates in annual forages or water quality concerns are encouraged to bring samples in to be tested for livestock suitability during the meeting.

There is no fee to attend the program and early registration is not required.

GFP Wildlife Testing for Bovine Tuberculosis Returns Negative Result

PIERRE, S.D. – In response to a March 2017 discovery of bovine tuberculosis (TB) in a Harding county livestock herd, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) conducted an immediate wildlife surveillance effort to determine if TB was present in area wildlife.

Test results from the National Veterinary Services Laboratories for bovine tuberculosis were negative for the 55 white-tailed deer, 56 mule deer, 42 pronghorn, 37 coyotes and nine raccoons collected from western Harding County. The salvageable big game meat that was processed will be delivered to local food pantries through Feeding South Dakota.

"We are pleased that the results from our initial surveillance efforts have returned negative," stated Tom Kirschenmann, GFP assistant division director of wildlife. "Our agency will work with the South Dakota Animal Industry Board to conduct another wildlife surveillance of TB during the fall hunting season. This additional effort will follow similar efforts conducted in previous years where the concern of TB has occurred."

TEAM AWARDS ANNOUNCED FOR SDHSAA FINE ARTS AND ATHLETIC ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN 2017 SPRING SEASON

The 2016-2017 school year marked the 21st year of recognition by the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) of athletic teams and fine arts groups for academic excellence. The Activities Association recognizes 455 high school athletic teams and fine arts groups from schools across the state that have achieved the "Academic Achievement Team Award" for the spring season. Any varsity athletic team or fine arts group achieving a combined grade point average of 3.0 or higher is eligible to receive the SDHSAA Academic Achievement Team Award.

Numerous independent studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education and major universities continue to demonstrate that students who are involved in interscholastic fine arts and athletic activities tend to have higher grades in school, have better school attendance, and have fewer disciplinary problems than non-participating students. These studies clearly show that high school students learn valuable lessons and lifetime skills, not only inside the classroom, but also through their participation in fine arts programs and school athletics. In addition, many studies indicate that students who are involved in multiple activities tend to have even better academic success than students that are involved in only one activity. This award program is sponsored by the SDHSAA to recognize the academic success of the teams and to encourage all students to excel in the classroom.

Local teams making the list are the Groton Area Girls Track and Field Team and the Girls Golf Team; and from Langford Area, they are the boys track and field team, girls golf team, girls track and field team, student council, large group band, large group chorus and yearbook.

Today in Weather History

June 28, 1961: An F2 tornado skipped ESE from about 5 miles south of Eureka to Lake Mina. About twelve farm buildings were destroyed. A house was damaged when a small shed was smashed against it in Hillsvie. The storm struck north of Roscoe where a barn was unroofed. A second F2 tornado struck west of Hoven. On one farm, a barn, and five small buildings were destroyed, although grain bin nearby was untouched. Another farm, across the road, lost four buildings including a house. The Langford area of Marshall County was struck by an EF2 tornado shortly after 8:00 pm. An estimated 15 to 20 farm buildings were demolished or heavily damaged, and a store in town was partially unroofed.

June 28, 1982: An estimated thunderstorm wind gust up to 94 mph knocked down trees and caused minor structural damage to several homes just west of Wheaton, Minnesota.

June 28, 1990: KDIO radio in Ortonville, Minnesota, clocked winds of 80 to 85 mph for several minutes as a thunderstorm passed. There were reports of numerous trees downed and scattered power outages in Ortonville.

1788: The Battle of Monmouth in central New Jersey was fought in sweltering heat. The temperature was 96 degrees in the shade, and there were more casualties from the heat than from bullets.

1892 - The temperature at Orogrande UT soared to 116 degrees to establish a record for the state. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders)

1923 - A massive tornado hit Sandusky, OH, then swept across Lake Erie to strike the town of Lorain. The tornado killed 86 persons and caused twelve million dollars damage. The tornado outbreak that day was the worst of record for the state of Ohio up til that time. (David Ludlum)

1924: An estimated F4 tornado struck the towns of Sandusky and Lorain, killing 85 people and injuring over 300. This tornado is the deadliest ever in Ohio history. Click [HERE](#) for some images from Ohio Historical Society.

1975: Lightning strikes Lee Trevino and two other golfers at the Western Open golf tournament in Oak Brook, Illinois.

1980 - The temperature at Wichita Falls, TX, soared to 117 degrees, their hottest reading of record. Daily highs were 110 degrees or above between the 24th of June and the 3rd of July. (The Weather Channel)








1987 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in the north central U.S. Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced wind gusts to 70 mph and baseball size hail at Arapahoe, and wind gusts to 80 mph along with baseball size hail at Wolback and Belgrade. Six cities in the Ohio Valley reported record low temperatures for the date, including Cincinnati, OH, with a reading of 50 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Showers and thunderstorms brought much needed rains to parts of the central U.S. Madison, WI, received 1.67 inches of rain, a record for the date, and their first measurable rain since the Mother's Day tornado outbreak on the 8th of May. (The National Weather Summary)

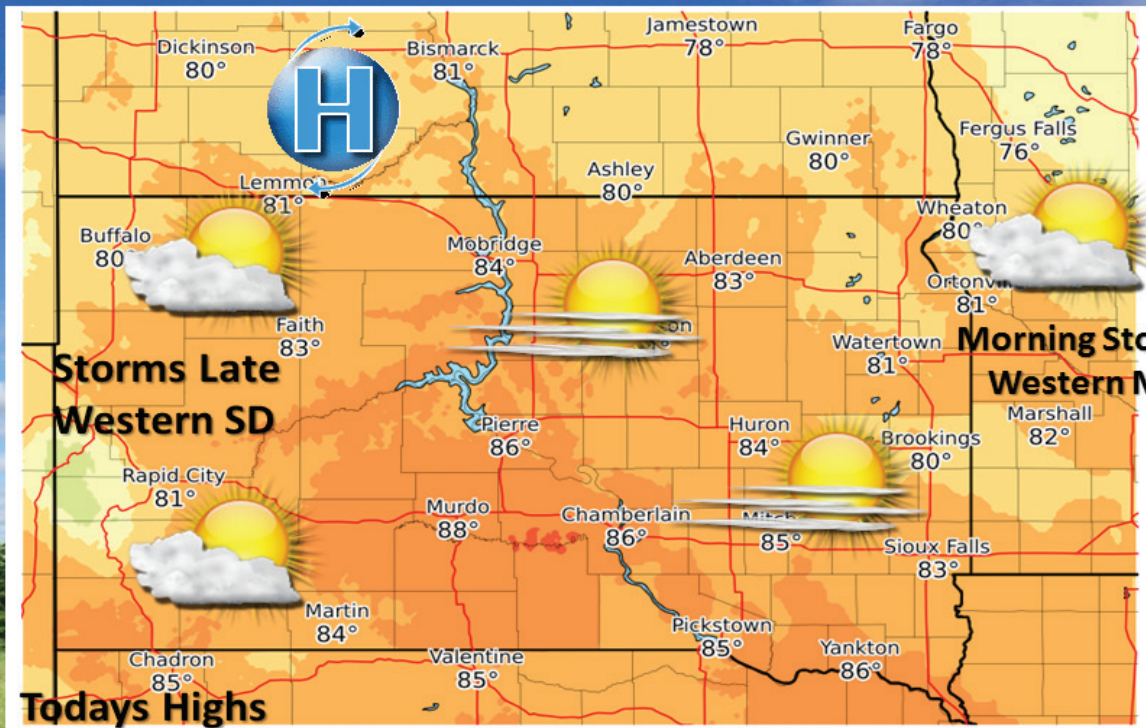
1989 - Evening thunderstorms deluged Winnfield LA with eleven inches of rain in four hours and fifteen minutes, and Baton Rouge LA reported 11 inches of rain in two days. Totals in west central Louisiana ranged up to 17 inches. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Northern High Plains. Two inch hail broke windows in nearly every building at Comstock, NE. Thunderstorms in North Dakota produced two inch hail at Killdeer, and golf ball size hail at Zap. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Clear	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance Showers	Mostly Sunny
High: 82 °F	Low: 55 °F	High: 78 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 72 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 75 °F

Weak High Pressure Builds In Today Additional Chances For Moisture Thursday & Friday



National Weather Service - Aberdeen, SD

@NWSAberdeen



www.weather.gov/Aberdeen

Updated: 6/28/2017 2:11 AM Central

Published on: 06/28/2017 at 2:17AM

Can't rule out a storm or two along the SD/MN state line and points east as that area remains unstable, but with high pressure moving in most of the area will be dry today. The latter half of the work week looks inclement however with chances for moisture and below average temperatures. The upcoming weekend looks dry as well.

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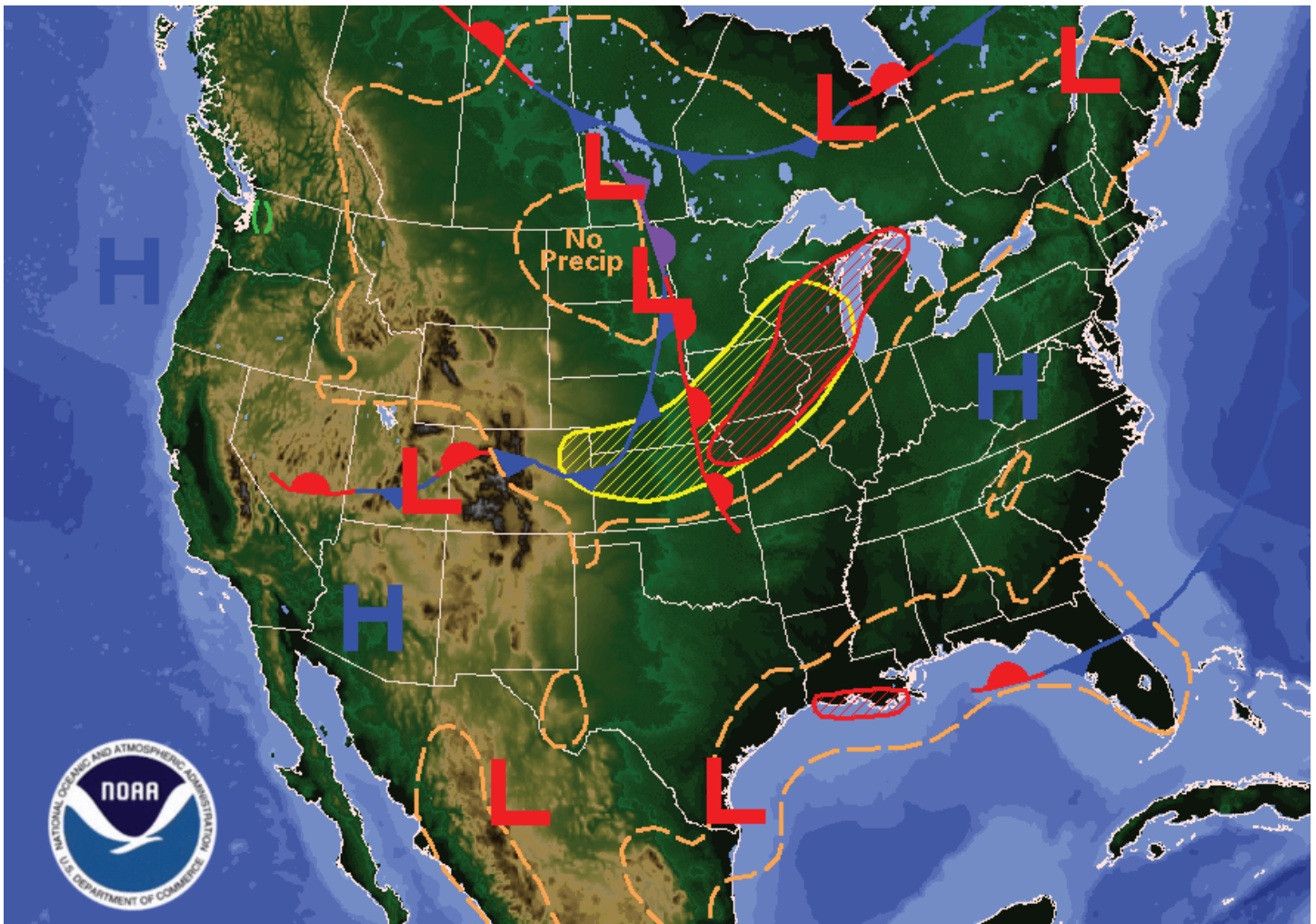
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 82.2 F at 6:04 PM
Low Outside Temp: 48.7 F at 3:11 AM
High Gust: 36.0 Mph at 1:38 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 112° in 1931
Record Low: 40° in 1951
Average High: 81°F
Average Low: 57°F
Average Precip in June: 3.47
Precip to date in June: 2.52
Average Precip to date: 10.61
Precip Year to Date: 5.71
Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:48 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Jun 28, 2017, issued 4:39 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds 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)



TRIUMPH OVER TRIALS

Once, while I was reading a newspaper, my young son was trying to get my attention. He had an urgent need for me to recognize his presence and respond to his request. But I was absorbed in the news.

"Dad," he said, "I'm talking to you!"

"Yes, son, I'm listening," I replied.

"I know you are listening, Dad, but can you hear me?" was his embarrassing question. There is an obvious difference between listening and hearing. It is easy to listen without recognizing the presence of the person trying to get our attention. When we actually hear someone, the message goes to our heart and we can sense their feelings and do something about their needs.

David said, "Turn and answer me, O Lord, my God!" He feared that God had abandoned him, turned His face in the other direction and he was on his own. He was so discouraged that he felt the light of God had left his eyes and he would die. But that was only a temporary, fleeting feeling and he did not give up. In fact, he recalled God's presence and protection in the past and knew that God would never abandon him.

So, he was able to declare, "I trust in your unfailing love!" And he turned his worry into worship.

Notice what he said: "I will rejoice" and "I will sing" – two central themes in true worship. David did not wait for his problems to pass. In the midst of his difficulties he stopped worrying and began to worship. Why? "Because he has been so good to me!"

Prayer: Help us, Heavenly Father, to base our faith on the facts in Your Word not our fleeting feelings. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 13:6 I will sing the LORD'S praise, for he has been good to me.

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

04-21-45-52-57, Mega Ball: 14, Megaplier: 4

(four, twenty-one, forty-five, fifty-two, fifty-seven; Mega Ball: fourteen; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$145 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$92 million

Game, Fish and Parks: Don't bring fireworks to state parks

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is asking state parks visitors to leave their fireworks at home.

Setting off fireworks isn't allowed on lands that the department owns or leases. That prohibition includes places such as state parks, nature areas, lakeside use areas and recreation areas.

State park director Katie Ceroll says parks are a Fourth of July destination. She says high use of campgrounds, beaches and day-use areas over the holiday weekend is a given.

Lighting off fireworks is also prohibited in the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District and in South Dakota's national forests and national parks.

Tennessee man takes Elvis guitar fight to appeals court

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Tennessee man is asking an appeals court to overturn a decision awarding a guitar once owned by Elvis Presley to the National Music Museum at the University of South Dakota.

The museum bought the guitar from Robert Johnson in 2012 as part of a collection of instruments worth \$250,000. The rock 'n' roll icon played the Martin D-35 guitar on his final tour in 1977, the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2tRw6Ch>) reported.

It was damaged during a show in St. Petersburg, Florida, where Elvis gave it to a fan. He died six months later.

Memphis-based memorabilia collector Larry Moss sued Johnson in Tennessee, arguing he was the rightful owner.

Moss said the D-35 was one of four guitars that Johnson agreed to sell him in 2008 for \$120,000. Johnson gave two guitars to Moss for \$70,000, but Moss never received the other two and never paid for them.

As that proceeding played out, the museum sued Moss. The case ended up in federal district court in South Dakota.

A Tennessee judge ruled that the Elvis guitar belonged to Moss. But Federal District Court Judge Karen Schreier ruled that under both Tennessee and South Dakota law, the ownership title doesn't pass from one person to another until the item is delivered. She said that Johnson didn't have title to the instrument because he never possessed it.

A three-judge panel from the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals will rule on the case.

Top GOP lawmaker resigns to join conservative advocacy group

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A top Republican lawmaker resigned from the South Dakota Legislature on Tuesday to lead the state's chapter of Americans for Prosperity, the conservative advocacy group backed by billionaire brothers David and Charles Koch.

Former House Speaker Pro Tempore Don Haggar will take over as state director of the organization's local chapter, putting him at the helm of a group that has taken on high-profile political fights in South Dakota.

Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard said he expects to appoint a new lawmaker to fill the vacancy in Haggar's Minnehaha County district by the end of the summer.

Haggar, who was first elected to the South Dakota House in 2012, said he ran for the Legislature to push for limited government, holding the line on taxes and working to prevent the overregulation of people's lives and businesses.

"It was easy for me in that sense to work for an organization that reflected the kind of values that I hold," he said. "The real difference, if there is one, is that I'll be able to work 365 days a year promoting those sorts of ideas."

Americans for Prosperity-South Dakota opposed Daugaard's now-defunct plan to expand Medicaid. It also campaigned against a government ethics ballot measure that voters approved in 2016, but helped convince Republican lawmakers to repeal the law this year.

Democratic Party Chairwoman Ann Tornberg said the group has an "extreme far-right agenda that doesn't represent the average South Dakotan." Tornberg also said the state's system of gubernatorial appointments should be re-examined.

Haggar takes over as state director from Ben Lee, who was promoted to regional director for the Dakotas, Colorado, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The chapter also hired Andrew Curley as deputy director. The Argus Leader first reported the hires.

Hendrix Genetics plans turkey hatchery in Beresford

BERESFORD, S.D. (AP) — Hendrix Genetics has plans to build a \$25 million turkey hatchery south of Sioux Falls.

Hendrix estimates more than 100 temporary and permanent jobs will be created by the hatchery in Beresford. It will have the capacity for 35 million hatching eggs.

Beresford is about 35 miles south of Sioux Falls and is connected to the interstate system to transport day-old poults to the US market. The company says access to a skilled workforce and the support of the community were factors in its location decision.

No timetable on the project was released.

Federal murder trial starts over man's death in Porcupine

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A defense attorney for a Kyle man accused of second-degree murder says the man who died in the case was so drunk he could have hit his head or choked on vomit.

The Rapid City Journal (<http://bit.ly/2tRLLSc>) reports that 44-year-old Marlon Iron Crow is charged in the death of Craig Charging Crow.

Authorities say Iron Crow beat Charging Crow in response to a joke while they were drinking at a Porcupine home in November 2016. Defense attorney Jamy Patterson says the men fought, but that Iron Crow only defended himself.

An autopsy showed Charging Crow died from bleeding at the base of the brain. Donald Habbe, who conducted the autopsy, says it could have been caused by a blow or by hitting a hard surface. The federal trial is set to continue Wednesday through Friday.

No injuries in derailment of empty grain train near Gayville

MISSION HILL, S.D. (AP) — No one was hurt when an empty grain train derailed between Gayville and Mission Hill.

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reports (<http://bit.ly/2shQYk4>) that six cars of the 114-car BNSF Railway train jumped the tracks midday Monday.

Railroad spokeswoman Amy McBeth says there's no immediate estimate on damage or a timeline for reopening the line.

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

Dry conditions continue impacting South Dakota farmers

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Dry conditions across South Dakota are continuing to impact farmers and ranchers.

The weekly crop report from the federal Agriculture Department says condition ratings have declined slightly for all crops, and also for range and pasturelands.

Topsoil moisture supplies statewide are rated 63 percent short or very short, and subsoil moisture is 60 percent in those categories.

In the ranching community, pasture and range conditions are rated 53 percent poor or very poor. Stock water supplies are 43 percent in those categories.

UK charges 6 people in deadly Hillsborough stadium case

By **DANICA KIRKA, Associated Press**

LONDON (AP) — British prosecutors charged six people Wednesday in the 1989 Hillsborough stadium disaster in which 96 soccer fans died, many of them crushed to death — the first criminal charges in the tragedy that changed English soccer forever.

Those charged include the police commander on the day, David Duckenfield, who is accused of gross negligence manslaughter in the deaths of 95 men, women and children. Prosecutors declined to charge the manslaughter of the 96th casualty because he died four years after the April 15, 1989 tragedy.

The former chief of South Yorkshire Police, Norman Bettison, is charged with misconduct in public office for lying about the disaster and its aftermath.

Graham Henry Mackrell, the secretary and safety officer for the Sheffield Wednesday Football Club at the time, was charged with failing to carry out health and safety duties

Peter Metcalf, the attorney for the South Yorkshire Police, was charged with acting "with intent to pervert the course of public justice" relating to changes in witness statements during an inquiry into the tragedy. Former Chief Superintendent Donald Denton and former Detective Chief Inspector Alan Foster were charged for their involvement in the same matter.

"Criminal proceedings have now commenced and the defendants have a right to a fair trial," said Sue Hemming, the head prosecutor for special crime and counter terror. "It is extremely important that there should be no reporting, commentary or sharing of information online which could in any way prejudice these proceedings."

The tragedy at the stadium in Sheffield unfolded when more than 2,000 Liverpool soccer fans flooded into a standing-room section behind a goal, with the 54,000-capacity stadium already nearly full for the match against Nottingham Forest. The victims were smashed against metal anti-riot fences or trampled underfoot. Many suffocated in the crush.

At the time, hooliganism was common, and there were immediate attempts to defend the police operation. A false narrative circulated that blamed ticketless and rowdy Liverpool fans — a narrative that their families have challenged for decades.

The original inquest recorded verdicts of accidental death. But the families challenged it and succeeded

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in getting the verdicts overturned in 2012 after a far-reaching inquiry that examined previously secret documents and exposed wrongdoing and mistakes by police.

Some 23 suspects, including individuals and organizations, had faced the possibility of charges.

The Hillsborough disaster prompted a sweeping modernization of stadiums across England. Top division stadiums were largely transformed into safer, all-seat venues, with fences around fields torn down.

Barry Devonside, who lost his son Christopher in the disaster, met the news with mixed emotions, but insisted it was "only right and proper that we fought for our loved ones."

"I was frightened we were going to be let down again," he told Sky News. "We have been smacked in the face on a number of occasions. The families have acted with the utmost of dignity."

This story corrects the former chief of South Yorkshire Police's last name to Bettison.

Jill Lawless contributed to this story.

3 Chicago officers accused of lying about teen's shooting

By MICHAEL TARM and DON BABWIN, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Three Chicago police officers have been indicted on charges that they conspired to cover up and lie about what happened when a white police officer shot a black teenager 16 times — an incident that prompted outrage when a video of the killing was finally released.

The indictment handed down Tuesday alleges that one current and two former officers lied about the events of Oct. 20, 2014, when Officer Jason Van Dyke killed Laquan McDonald.

The officers' version of events contradicts what can be seen on police dashcam video, in which the teenager spins after he was shot and falls to the ground — seemingly incapacitated — as the officer continues to fire shot after shot into his body. The indictment further alleges that officers lied when they said McDonald ignored Van Dyke's verbal commands and that one of the officers signed off on a report that claimed the other two officers were, in fact, victims of an attack by McDonald.

"The co-conspirators created police reports in the critical early hours and days following the killing of Laquan McDonald that contained important false information," says the indictment in which the three are charged with felony counts of obstruction of justice, official misconduct and conspiracy.

The indictments mark the latest chapter in what has been one of the most troubling events in the history of a police force dogged by allegations of racism, brutality and the protection of officers who brutalize African-Americans. The video sparked massive protests, cost the police superintendent his job and left the city scrambling to implement reforms to regain shattered public trust.

In January, the Department of Justice issued a scathing report that found the department had violated the constitutional rights of residents for years, including by too often using excessive force and killing suspects who posed no threat.

Around the country, there are renewed questions whether the legal system is willing to punish officers, particularly after two police officers — one in Milwaukee and the other in Minnesota — were acquitted and a mistrial was declared in Cincinnati in the shootings of blacks that were captured by video.

Patricia Brown Holmes — appointed special prosecutor last July to investigate officers at the scene and involved in the investigation of the shooting — said in a news release that the three — David March, Joseph Walsh and Thomas Gaffney — "coordinated their activities to protect each other and other members of the Chicago Police Department," including by filing false police reports, ignoring contrary evidence and not even attempting to interview key witnesses.

"The indictment makes clear that these defendants did more than merely obey an unofficial 'code of silence,'" Holmes said in the statement. "It alleges that they lied about what occurred to prevent independent criminal investigators from learning the truth."

The officers allegedly began to conspire almost immediately on the day of the shooting, "to conceal the true facts of the events surrounding the killing of Laquan McDonald" and "to shield their fellow officer

from criminal investigation and prosecution.”

The indictment alleges that the officers understood that, if video and other evidence became public, “it would inexorably lead to a thorough criminal investigation by an independent body and likely criminal charges.”

Jeffrey Neslund, an attorney who helped negotiate a \$5 million settlement with the city on behalf of the McDonald family, welcomed the indictments.

“This is the same thing that our investigation showed back when we were negotiating with the city in 2015, that there was a cover-up,” he said.

Van Dyke was charged more than a year after the shooting with first-degree murder on the same day that the city — under orders from a judge — made public the dashboard camera video. He has pleaded not guilty.

His attorney Dan Herbert released a fiery statement late Tuesday, alleging the indictment will silence potential witnesses and is “further proof that the government is determined to prevent” Van Dyke from having a fair trial.

If convicted, the three officers could face years in prison. The official misconduct charge alone carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

The officers weren’t arrested and will be allowed to show up on their own accord at their arraignment on July 10, Holmes said. Asked why, she told a news conference later Tuesday “it’s very typical for a situation like this to give a courtesy call to the defendants” and, if they’re not deemed dangerous or a flight risk, to let them appear at their future arraignment.

Transit agency: Human error caused subway train derailment

By DAVID PORTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A subway train derailment in New York City that injured nearly three dozen people and sparked major delays is being blamed on human error, not a track defect.

A preliminary investigation indicates the derailment just before 10 a.m. Tuesday in Harlem was caused by “an improperly secured piece of replacement rail that was stored on the tracks,” Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Joe Lhota and Interim Executive Director Ronnie Hakim said in a joint statement late Tuesday night.

“Storing equipment in between tracks is a common practice employed by railroads across the country to accelerate rail repairs,” the statement said. “The key to this being an effective and safe practice is making sure that the extra equipment is properly bolted down, which does not appear to have happened in this case.”

The derailment tossed people to the floor and forced hundreds of passengers to evacuate through darkened tunnels.

Crews are inspecting “every inch of rail” to ensure that every replacement part “is properly stored and secured,” MTA officials said, adding that the investigation is ongoing.

MTA officials said crews still were repairing tracks damaged in the derailment Wednesday morning. The agency was hoping to restore normal service for morning commuters, although those on the A and D trains can expect delays.

Passengers on the A train Tuesday said it suddenly jerked and began shaking violently as it approached the station at 125th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue.

“We started seeing sparks through the windows. People were falling,” said passenger Susan Pak, of Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

The derailment came after a winter and spring marked by mechanical failures, power outages and several episodes in which passengers were trapped on stuck trains for an hour or more. Some state lawmakers demanded that the Legislature take up emergency funding for the system in a special session scheduled for Wednesday.

Jack Cox, a software developer, said he felt a “large thump” and heard and felt the train grinding for as

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long as 30 seconds.

"During the whole time, it was just like 'What's going on? What's going to happen?' Then it stopped," he said. "I didn't have time to be scared before then, but I looked around and the woman next to me was curled up in some sort of fetal tuck."

Cox said smoke started coming in from one end of the car.

"It wasn't heavy smoke, but it was frightening," he said.

Passengers ended up walking through the darkened cars using their cellphone lights and exiting onto the platform.

Three other trains approaching the station halted in their tracks. Emergency crews shut off track power after derailments to prevent evacuees from being electrocuted.

Julian Robinson said he was stuck on one of them for about an hour before rescuers arrived to escort passengers along the tracks into the station.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo called the derailment "an unacceptable manifestation of the system's current state."

"It is my expectation that with new leadership brought by Joe Lhota, the MTA will address the fundamental issues plaguing the transit system and overhaul the organizational structure of the MTA," the Democratic governor said.

Associated Press writers Deepti Hajela and Karen Matthews contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. 'OBAMACARE' REPEAL TEETERS AFTER SENATE SHELVES VOTE

The development leaves the bill's fate uncertain while raising new doubts about whether Trump will ever erase his predecessor's signature legislative achievement.

2. WHAT VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT SAYS ABOUT CHOPPER GUNFIRE

Nicolas Maduro says a stolen police helicopter fired on the Supreme Court in what he called a thwarted "terrorist attack" aimed at ousting him from power, but those who oppose him claim it was a ruse to justify a crackdown.

3. WHERE LATEST CYBERATTACK ATTACK LIKELY CAME FROM

A new, highly virulent strain of malicious software that is crippling computers globally appears to have been sown in Ukraine.

4. 3 CHICAGO OFFICERS ACCUSED OF LYING ABOUT TEEN'S SHOOTING

The officers are indicted on charges they conspired to cover up and lie about what happened when a white police officer shot black teenager Laquan McDonald 16 times.

5. WHAT WORKERS SAY ABOUT FACTORY THAT MAKES SHOES FOR IVANKA TRUMP

They tell the AP that they've faced long hours, low pay as well and verbal and physical abuse in China.

6. HOW ZINKE VIEWS NATIONAL MONUMENTS

The U.S. interior secretary is recommending that Utah's Bears Ears National Monument be downsized instead, noting presidential precedent.

7. EX-TRUMP CAMPAIGN CHAIR REGISTERS AS FOREIGN AGENT

The move by Paul Manafort is for political consulting work he did for a Ukrainian political party, acknowledging that he coached party members on how to interact with U.S. government officials.

8. SARAH PALIN SUES NEW YORK TIMES

The former vice presidential nominee is accusing the newspaper of defamation over an editorial that linked one of her PAC ads to the mass shooting that severely wounded Gabby Giffords.

9. GIRLS ARE NEWEST ACTION HEROES

In the Netflix series "Stranger Things" and films like "Logan" and "Okja," little girls have the kind of power and strength onscreen that used to just belong to boys.

10. TRANSFER QBs COULD MAKE BIG IMPACTS

Florida follows Auburn, West Virginia, Houston and Pitt to become the latest team to turn to a transfer quarterback when the Gators land Malik Zaire, formerly of Notre Dame.

Venezuela: Helicopter strafes court in 'terrorist attack'

By JOSHUA GOODMAN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A police helicopter fired on Venezuela's Supreme Court and Interior Ministry in what President Nicolas Maduro said was a thwarted "terrorist attack" aimed at ousting him from power.

The confusing exchange, which is bound to ratchet up tensions in a country already paralyzed by months of deadly anti-government protests, took place as Maduro was speaking live on state television Tuesday. He later said the helicopter had fired on the pro-government court with grenades, one of which didn't go off, helping avoid any loss of life.

Adding to the intrigue, pictures of a blue police helicopter carrying an anti-government banner appeared on social media around the same time as a video in which an alleged police pilot, identified as Oscar Perez, called for a rebellion against Maduro's "tyranny" as part of a coalition of members of the country's security forces. Authorities said they were still searching for the man.

"We have two choices: be judged tomorrow by our conscience and the people or begin today to free ourselves from this corrupt government," the man said while reading from a statement with four people dressed in military fatigues, ski masks and carrying what looked like assault rifles standing behind him.

Many of Maduro's opponents took to social media to accuse the president of orchestrating an elaborate ruse to justify a crackdown against Venezuelans seeking to block his plans to rewrite the constitution. Venezuela has been roiled by anti-government protests the past three months that have left at least 75 people dead and hundreds injured.

After the incident, Maduro sounded alternately calm and angry as he told the audience about what had happened in the airspace just beyond the presidential palace.

"It could've caused a tragedy with several dozen dead and injured," he said, calling it a "terrorist attack."

Later, Information Minister Ernesto Villegas read a statement from the government accusing the helicopter of firing 15 shots against the Interior Ministry as a reception was taking place for 80 people celebrating national journalist's day. It then flew a short distance to the court, which was in session, and launched what he said were four Israeli-made grenades of "Colombian origin," two of them against national guardsmen protecting the building.

The pro-government president of the high court said there were no injuries from the attack and that the area was still being surveyed for damages.

Villegas said security forces were being deployed to apprehend Perez as well as recover the heisted German-built Bolkow helicopter. Photos of the pilot standing in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter were displayed on state television to further bolster the government's case that he was taking instructions from the CIA and the U.S. Embassy.

Maduro said one of the pilots involved in the alleged attack used to fly for his former interior minister, Miguel Rodriguez Torres, who he accused of working for the CIA. Rodriguez Torres, who has been leading a campaign against Maduro made up of leftist supporters of the late Hugo Chavez, immediately dismissed the accusation as baseless.

As the drama was unfolding outside the court, inside magistrates were busy issuing a number of rulings further hemming in the opposition. One dismissed a challenge against Maduro's plans for a constitutional assembly by chief prosecutor Luisa Ortega Diaz, a longtime loyalist who broke with the government over the issue.

The helicopter incident capped a volatile 24 hours that began with widespread looting in the coastal city of Maracay on Monday night and continued Tuesday when opposition lawmakers got into a heated scuffle with security forces assigned to protect the National Assembly.

At least 68 supermarkets, pharmacies and liquor stores were looted and several government offices

burned following anti-government protests in Maracay, which is about a 90 minute drive from Caracas. Maduro condemned the violence but with a stern warning to his opponents that's likely to only further inflame an already tense situation.

"We will never surrender. And what we couldn't accomplish through votes we will with weapons," he said.

On Tuesday, opposition lawmakers got into fisticuffs with national guardsmen as they tried to enter the National Assembly. In a video circulating on social media, the commander of a national guard unit protecting the legislature aggressively shoved National Assembly President Julio Borges as he's walking away from a heated discussion.

At nightfall, a few dozen people were still gathered inside the neoclassical building as pro-government supporters stood outside threatening violence.

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Former Trump campaign chairman registers as foreign agent

By CHAD DAY and JEFF HORWITZ, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, has registered with the Justice Department as a foreign agent for political consulting work he did for a Ukrainian political party, acknowledging that he coached party members on how to interact with U.S. government officials.

Manafort says in a Justice Department filing Tuesday that his firm, DMP International, received more than \$17 million from the Party of Regions, the former pro-Russian ruling party in Ukraine, for consulting work from 2012 through 2014.

Manafort is the second member of the Trump campaign to register as a foreign agent. In March, former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn registered with the Justice Department for work his consulting firm performed for a Turkish businessman that he said could have aided the Turkish government. Both registrations came after the work had been completed.

Manafort helmed Trump's campaign for about five months until August and resigned from the campaign immediately after The Associated Press reported on his firm's covert Washington lobbying operation on behalf of Ukraine's ruling political party. He is one of several people linked to the Trump campaign who are under scrutiny by a special counsel and congressional committees investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 campaign and potential coordination with Trump associates.

Manafort has denied any coordination with Russia and has said his work in Ukraine was not related to the campaign.

The Washington Post first reported Manafort's registration and posted a copy of his filing online Tuesday. The filing does not bear the date and time stamps showing that it has been formally received by the Justice Department's FARA unit. But Manafort spokesman Jason Maloni confirmed to several news outlets that Manafort had gone through with the registration.

Maloni did not respond to phone calls or emails from AP seeking comment.

His registration came more than two months after Maloni told the AP that Manafort would be registering under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Maloni later backed off that statement, saying in late April that Manafort was still considering his options after receiving guidance from the Justice Department.

Under federal law, people who represent foreign political interests and seek to influence U.S. public opinion and policy are required to register with the Justice Department before they perform any work. Manafort's registration comes more than three years after he completed his work.

The Justice Department rarely prosecutes violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Instead, as in Manafort's case, they often work with lobbyists to get in compliance.

In addition to Manafort, his deputy, Rick Gates, also registered for the Ukrainian political work. Gates also served in the Trump campaign. He could not be immediately reached for comment Tuesday evening.

In the filing, Manafort said that his company's work was mostly focused on domestic Ukrainian politics as part of its work for the Party of Regions, which was led at the time by former Ukrainian President Vik-

tor Yanukovych. The filing repeatedly states that Manafort's firm worked "to advance the goal of greater political and economic integration between Ukraine and the West."

Manafort's firm also acknowledged that it had some involvement with a Brussels-based nonprofit called the European Centre for Modern Ukraine, saying that it provided "advice" to the entity.

Last August, the AP reported that emails show that Manafort's firm and Gates directed the efforts of Washington lobbying firms that were working on behalf of the center.

The emails show Gates directing lobbyists from Washington firm Mercury LLC to set up meetings between a top Ukrainian official and senators and congressmen on influential committees involving Ukrainian interests. Gates also had the firms gather information in the U.S. on a rival lobbying operation and directed efforts to undercut sympathy for Yulia Tymoshenko, an imprisoned rival of Yanukovych.

Both of the lobbying firms involved in the work— Mercury and The Podesta Group — have since registered with the Justice Department as foreign agents.

GOP 'Obamacare' repeal teeters after Senate shelves vote

By ERICA WERNER and ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican Party's long-promised repeal of "Obamacare" stands in limbo after Senate GOP leaders, short of support, abruptly shelved a vote on legislation to fulfill the promise.

The surprise development leaves the legislation's fate uncertain while raising new doubts about whether President Donald Trump will ever make good on his many promises to erase his predecessor's signature legislative achievement.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell announced the delay Tuesday after it became clear the votes weren't there to advance the legislation past key procedural hurdles. Trump immediately invited Senate Republicans to the White House, but the message he delivered to them before reporters were ushered out of the room was not entirely hopeful.

"This will be great if we get it done, and if we don't get it done it's just going to be something that we're not going to like, and that's OK and I understand that very well," he told the senators, who surrounded him at tables arranged in a giant square in the East Room. Most wore grim expressions.

In the private meeting that followed, said Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, the president spoke of "the costs of failure, what it would mean to not get it done — the view that we would wind up in a situation where the markets will collapse and Republicans will be blamed for it and then potentially have to fight off an effort to expand to single payer at some point."

The bill has many critics and few outspoken fans on Capitol Hill, and prospects for changing that are uncertain. McConnell promised to revisit the legislation after Congress' July 4 recess.

"It's a big complicated subject, we've got a lot discussions going on, and we're still optimistic we're going to get there," the Kentucky lawmaker said.

But adjustments to placate conservatives, who want the legislation to be more stringent, only push away moderates who think its current limits — on Medicaid for example — are too strong.

In the folksy analysis of John Cornyn of Texas, the Senate GOP vote-counter: "Every time you get one bullfrog in the wheelbarrow, another one jumps out."

McConnell can lose only two senators from his 52-member caucus and still pass the bill, with Vice President Mike Pence to cast a tie-breaking vote. Democrats are opposed, as are most medical groups and the AARP, though the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports the bill.

A number of GOP governors oppose the legislation, especially in states that have expanded the Medicaid program for the poor under former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act. Opposition from Nevada's popular Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval helped push GOP Sen. Dean Heller, who is vulnerable in next year's midterms, to denounce the legislation last Friday; Ohio's Republican Gov. John Kasich held an event at the National Press Club Tuesday to criticize it.

The House went through its own struggles with its version of the bill, pulling it from the floor short of votes before reviving it and narrowly passing it in May. So it's quite possible that the Senate Republicans

can rise from this week's setback.

But McConnell is finding it difficult to satisfy demands from his diverse caucus. Conservatives like Rand Paul of Kentucky and Mike Lee of Utah argue that the legislation doesn't go far enough in repealing Obamacare. But moderates like Heller and Susan Collins of Maine criticize the bill as overly punitive in throwing people off insurance roles and limiting benefits paid by Medicaid, which has become the nation's biggest health care program, covering nursing home care for seniors as well as care for many poor Americans.

GOP defections increased after the Congressional Budget Office said Monday the measure would leave 22 million more people uninsured by 2026 than Obama's 2010 statute. McConnell told senators he wanted them to agree to a final version of the bill before the end of this week so they could seek a new analysis by the budget office. He said that would give lawmakers time to finish when they return to the Capitol for a three-week stretch in July before Congress' summer break.

The 22 million extra uninsured Americans are just 1 million fewer than the number the budget office estimated would become uninsured under the House version. Trump has called the House bill "mean" and prodded senators to produce a package with more "heart."

The Senate plan would end the tax penalty the law imposes on people who don't buy insurance, in effect erasing Obama's so-called individual mandate, and on larger businesses that don't offer coverage to workers.

It would cut Medicaid, which provides health insurance to over 70 million poor and disabled people, by \$772 billion through 2026 by capping its overall spending and phasing out Obama's expansion of the program.

Associated Press writers Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Ken Thomas, Andrew Taylor, Michael Biesecker and Julie Bykovicz contributed to this report.

Pick 6: Transfer quarterbacks who could make a big impact

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

Florida might have solved its long-running quarterback problem with the addition of Notre Dame transfer Malik Zaire.

That move became official last week, and as a graduate transfer, Zaire will be immediately eligible. Zaire is no lock to be the Gators starter when they open against Michigan in Arlington, Texas, at the home of the Dallas Cowboys. Of course, if coach Jim McElwain and the Gators really felt good about redshirt freshman Feleipe Franks, then Zaire probably would not be going to school in Gainesville.

Florida is one of several schools likely turning to a transfer quarterback this season to lead their teams. Six that will be drawing lots of attention in 2017.

Kyle Allen, Houston

Allen was a five-star recruit who spent two seasons at Texas A&M before he bailed on Aggie-land drama. He sat out last season at Houston and now gets his chance to deliver on that pedigree and help the Cougars transition from Tom Herman to Major Applewhite as coach. In 19 games with Texas A&M, Allen threw 33 touchdown passes and 14 interceptions. This looks very promising for the Cougars.

Max Browne, Pitt

The former USC quarterback was a huge recruit in 2012. Yes, 2012. He waited a while to get a shot to lead the Trojans and then lost his starting job to Sam Darnold in the first month of last season. A graduate transfer landed him at Pitt, where he will replace former Tennessee transfer Nate Peterman. Browne's talents should nicely match the pro-style system the Panthers run — with one caveat. Peterman thrived last year with Matt Canada as offensive coordinator, but now former Louisville and Texas assistant Shawn Watson is directing Pitt's offense.

Brandon Harris, North Carolina

Harris rarely looked like the four-star recruit he was out of high school during his three seasons at LSU, completing 53.7 percent of his passes in 22 games (15 starts). LSU's plodding offense did Harris no favors. At North Carolina, the spread offense Larry Fedora runs should be more to Harris' liking. The graduate transfer missed spring practice, so he will have to win the job in preseason. Fedora bringing Harris to

Chapel Hill signals he wasn't thrilled with the QBs already on the roster.

Will Grier, West Virginia

Grier was last seen in Gainesville in 2015, giving Florida fans hope that he would be the Gators best quarterback since Tim Tebow. He was suspended for failing a test for performance-enhancing substances after six games, and then transferred out. After sitting out last season, Grier is eligible for the start of 2017. Mountaineers fans are excited, but it should be noted that Grier's resume includes four SEC games: one sensational performance against Ole Miss and three OK outings against Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri.

Tanner Lee, Nebraska

The Tulane transfer won the job in the spring practice after sitting out last season. Lee was a starter for two seasons for the Green Wave and his numbers were not good. He threw 23 touchdown passes and 21 interceptions and completed 53.5 percent of his passes while playing as a freshman and sophomore on teams that had little talent around him. Lee seems a better fit for Huskers coach Mike Riley's offense than departed starter Tommy Armstrong, but it's fair to be skeptical about his ceiling.

Jarrett Stidham, Auburn

Stidham was a four-star recruit who started three games as a freshman at Baylor and looked pretty good (934 yards passing, six touchdowns and 63 percent completions). Stidham sat out last season, giving him plenty of time to learn Gus Malzahn's spread offense. Stidham is the most talented quarterback Auburn has had since Cam Newton, and the Tigers should provide him good weapons and protection. Expectations are really high for Stidham. Maybe too high?

Follow Ralph D. Russo at www.Twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP

More college football coverage: <http://collegefootball.ap.org/>

Pentagon: 'active preparations' by Syria for chemical attack

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon on Tuesday said it detected "active preparations" by Syria for a chemical weapons attack, giving weight to a White House statement hours earlier that the Syrian government would "pay a heavy price" if it carried out such an attack.

A Pentagon spokesman, Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, said the U.S. had seen "activity" at Shayrat airfield that "indicated active preparations for chemical weapons use." That is the same base from which the Syria air force launched an attack in April that the U.S. and others said used lethal chemicals to kill civilians. Syria denied the charge.

President Bashar Assad's government and Russia dismissed the White House allegation that Damascus was preparing a new chemical weapons attack. Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that "such threats to Syria's legitimate leaders are unacceptable." Russia is Assad's key backer and sided with him when he denied responsibility for a chemical weapons attack that killed dozens of people in Idlib province on April 4.

The U.S. responded to that attack by hitting the airfield with dozens of cruise missiles.

A Monday evening statement by White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said the U.S. had "identified potential preparations for another chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime that would likely result in the mass murder of civilians, including innocent children."

Spicer said the activities were similar to preparations taken before the attack in April, but provided no evidence or further explanation.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin, Josh Lederman, Lolita C. Baldor, Vivian Salama and Matthew Lee contributed to this report.

Utah officials blame lack of logging for major wildfire

By BRADY McCOMBS, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Insisting that logging could have cleaned up dead, bug-infested trees that are fueling a Utah wildfire, a Republican state lawmaker blamed federal mismanagement and lawsuits by “tree hugger” environmentalists for the blaze that has burned 13 homes and forced the evacuation of 1,500 people.

A conservation group called that contention “shameful” and misleading, saying it fails to take into account climate change and drought.

In addition, a U.S. Forest Service researcher said logging probably would not have made a big difference in the high-altitude fire that is sending embers from tree-to-tree over long distances — normal for the ecosystem.

Utah state Rep. Mike Noel said Tuesday he wants to use the fire near the ski town of Brian Head and a popular fishing lake to highlight the imbalance of power afforded environmental groups under previous presidents and to ease bureaucratic and legal blockades for logging companies. He believes the Trump administration will provide a more receptive audience for his plea.

The blaze is one of several in the West. Crews in California were making gains against two new fires that spread quickly, and firefighters in Idaho battled five lightning-sparked wildfires burning in grass and brush.

Crews dealt with windy conditions as they battled a northern Arizona wildfire that has burned nearly 7 square miles (18 square kilometers).

Authorities say the Utah fire was started on June 17 by someone using a torch tool to burn weeds on private land.

Noel contends it wouldn't have spread as fast if federal forest lands had been cleared of dead trees.

A video of his Monday rant against environmentalists generated social media buzz and sparked new debate about whether logging could help prevent Western wildfires. He joined several other state and county officials in speaking out.

“When we turn the Forest Service over to the bird and bunny lovers and the tree huggers and the rock lickers, we've turned our history over,” Noel said. “We are going to lose our wildlife and we are going to lose our scenery, the very thing you people wanted to try to protect. It's just plain stupidity.”

Mark Finney, a researcher at the U.S. Forest Service Fire Science Laboratory in Missoula, Montana, said getting rid of the dead trees in the Brian Head area probably would not have made much difference. The trees died years ago, making irrelevant a 2011 U.S. Forest Service study that found the needles of beetle-killed trees ignite three times faster and burn more intensely than healthy trees.

“If we're looking for someone to blame, there isn't anyone,” Finney said. “Forests burn.”

Steve Bloch, legal director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, said Noel's assertion is an oversimplification of wildfires that are the result of fire suppression, climate change, drought and unpredictable winds.

“It's shameful that Rep. Noel has chosen to exploit the fire and mislead the public by saying that conservationists are to blame for this event,” Bloch said.

Stiff winds and hot temperatures have made the Utah blaze the largest in the nation at 78 square miles (201 sq. kilometers). The estimated cost of fighting the blaze has reached \$11 million.

Jason Curry of the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, said logging or fires being allowed to burn in the state's forests would help get rid of timber that serves as easy fuel for the blazes. But he also acknowledged that drought and climate play a role.

U.S. Forest Service officials and Utah state officials didn't immediately have information about logging requests in the area.

Finney said logging companies generally can't make money in operations at high elevations because the trees don't grow back quickly enough and logistics are difficult.

Bloch said his group hasn't challenged logging in the area of the Utah fire in two decades. But Noel says the lawsuit in the early 1990s delayed a Forest Service plan to get rid of an emerging cluster of bark

beetles before it spread.

Chad Hanson, co-founder the John Muir Project, co-authored a 2009 study that was one of the first to dispute the theory that bug-infested trees burn faster.

"That's just logging industry propaganda," Hanson said. "This is a direct outgrowth of the rhetoric of fear and hate coming out of the Trump administration. It has emboldened some very anti-environmental voices."

Meanwhile in California, firefighters had two major blazes under enough control to allow evacuated residents to return to their homes.

Mandatory evacuations for dozens of homes were called for in a wildfire in rugged foothills east of Los Angeles that broke out Tuesday, but residents there were allowed back home within a few hours.

The blaze erupted and quickly surged in hot, dry, windy weather.

A half-square-mile (1.4 sq. kilometer) wildfire erupted and quickly surged in hot, dry, windy weather near Highland in San Bernardino County. It was climbing ridges and moving away from homes but came frighteningly close to a subdivision, prompting the evacuations, U.S. Forest Service spokeswoman Gerelaine Alcorido said.

In Central California, a 2.5-square-mile (6.5 sq. kilometer) wildfire that burned at least one building was 60 percent contained. About 250 residents were ordered from their homes in the area of Santa Margarita after the blaze erupted Monday, but on Tuesday night they were told they could return home.

Robert Jablon in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

New highly virulent strain of ransomware cripples networks

By RAPHAEL SATTER and FRANK BAJAK, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A new, highly virulent strain of malicious software that is crippling computers globally appears to have been sown in Ukraine, where it badly hobbled much of the government and private sector on the eve of a holiday celebrating a post-Soviet constitution.

The fresh cyber-assault Tuesday leveraged the same intrusion tool as a similar attack in May and proved again just how disruptive to daily life sophisticated cyber-assaults can be in this age of heavy reliance on computers.

Hospitals, government offices and major multinationals were among the casualties of the ransomware payload, which locks up computer files with all-but-unbreakable encryption and then demands a ransom for its release.

Ukraine and Russia appeared hardest hit. In the United States, it affected companies such as the drug-maker Merck and Mondelez International, the conglomerate of food brands such as Oreo and Nabisco. Multinationals, including the global law firm DLA Piper and Danish shipping giant A.P. Moller-Maersk, were also affected.

The virus' pace appeared to slow by Wednesday, in part because the malware appeared to require direct contact between computer networks, a factor that may have limited its spread in regions with fewer connections to Ukraine.

Its origins and the motive for its release remained unclear, and financial gain may not have been a big reason. The time and place of release could have been a clue.

It was loosed on the eve of a national holiday marking Ukraine's 1996 constitution — its first after independence from Soviet rule.

Ukraine has been a persistent target of pro-Russia hackers in recent years. They have been blamed for twice shutting down large swaths of its power grid and sabotaging its elections network in a bid to disrupt a May 2014 national vote.

Researchers picking the program apart found evidence its creators had borrowed from leaked National Security Agency code, raising the possibility that the digital havoc had spread using U.S. taxpayer-funded tools.

"The virus is spreading all over Europe, and I'm afraid it can harm the whole world," said Victor Zhora,

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the chief executive of Infosafe IT in Kiev, where the first reports of it emerged early Tuesday afternoon.

Stricken in Ukraine were government offices, where officials posted photos of darkened computer screens, as well as energy companies, the country's biggest airport, the post office, banks, cash machines, gas stations and supermarkets. Ukrainian Railways and the communications company Ukrtelecom were among major enterprises hit, Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan said in a Facebook post. Omelyan also wrote: "It's no coincidence that the word 'virus' ends in RUS."

The virus hit the radiation monitoring at Ukraine's shuttered Chernobyl power plant, site of the world's worst nuclear accident, forcing it into manual operation.

The full scope of damage wouldn't be known until Thursday when everyone gets back to work, Zhora said.

Ukraine suffered more than 60 percent of the attacks, followed by Russia with more than 30 percent, according to initial findings by researchers at the cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab. It listed Poland, Italy and Germany, in that order, as the next-worst affected.

In the U.S, two hospitals in western Pennsylvania were hit; patients reported on social media that some surgeries had to be rescheduled. A spokeswoman for Heritage Valley Health System would say only that operational changes had to be made. A Wellsville, Ohio, woman at one of its hospitals to have her gallbladder removed said she noticed computer monitors off and nurses scurrying around with stacks of paperwork.

Like last month's outbreak of ransomware, dubbed WannaCry, the new attack spread by using digital lock picks originally created by the NSA and later published to the web by a still-mysterious group known as the Shadowbrokers.

Security vendors said the NSA exploit, known as EternalBlue, lets malware spread rapidly across internal networks at companies and other large organizations. Microsoft issued a security fix in March, but Chris Wysopal, chief technology officer at the security firm Veracode, said it would only be effective if every single computer on a network were patched — otherwise, a single infected machine could infect all others.

"Once activated, the virus can automatically and freely distribute itself on your network," Ukraine's cyberpolice tweeted.

Such self-spreading programs are known as "worms."

The attacks appeared to slow down in part because the ransomware appears to spread only when a direct contact exists between two networks — such as when a global company's Ukraine office interacts with headquarters, said Ryan Kalember, a security expert at Proofpoint.

"It's not randomly spreading over the internet like WannaCry. It's somewhat contained to the organizations that were connected to each other," he said.

Bogdan Botezatu, an analyst with Bitdefender, compared the new program to a contagious disease. It appeared nearly identical to GoldenEye, a variant of a known family of hostage-taking programs known as "Petya," he said.

It demanded \$300 in Bitcoin. But unlike typical ransomware, which merely scrambles personal data files, this program does more. It overwrites a computer's master boot record, making it tougher to restore even a machine that has been backed up, Kalember said.

It may have first spread through a rogue update to a piece of Ukrainian accounting software called MEDoc, according to tweets by the country's cyberpolice unit. It said a rogue update seeded the infection across Ukraine. On Facebook, MEDoc acknowledged having been hacked.

Emails sent Tuesday to an address posted to the bottom of ransom demands went unreturned. That might be because the email provider hosting that address, Berlin-based Posteo, pulled the plug on the account before the infection became widely known.

In an email, a Posteo representative said it had blocked the email address immediately after learning that it was associated with ransomware. The company added that it was in contact with German authorities "to make sure that we react properly."

Bajak reported from Houston. Associated Press writers Anick Jesdanun in New York, Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow, Larry Rosenthal in Beaver, Pennsylvania, and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

Utah lawsuits to test president's power to shrink monuments

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Native American tribes and environmental groups preparing for a legal battle to stop President Donald Trump from dismantling Utah's new national monument face a tougher challenge than anticipated.

Republican officials in the state who oppose Bears Ears National Monument asked Trump to rescind the designation. But U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recommended the monument be downsized instead, noting past presidents have tinkered with the boundaries of lands protected under federal law.

Legal experts disagree on whether the 1906 Antiquities Act allows a president to reduce a monument, and it's something that has never been challenged in court.

Environmentalists and Indian tribes were ready to pounce at the notion Zinke would recommend Bears Ears be abolished, armed with their belief that no president may undo the work of another by rescinding a monument, and the fact that no president has tried.

But past presidents have trimmed national monuments and redrawn their boundaries — 18 times, according to the National Park Service.

Bears Ears, established by President Barack Obama in December, is about the size of Delaware, covering roughly 2,000 square miles (5,300 square kilometers). It protects more than 100,000 archaeological sites on what's considered sacred tribal land in southeastern Utah.

A largely GOP group of Utah officials wants the monument repealed and see it as an overly broad, unnecessary layer of federal control that closes off the area to energy development and other access.

Republican state Rep. Mike Noel said shrinking a monument is politically and legally much easier to defend than attempting to undo one.

"There's been enough history of downsizing, even fairly large areas, significantly large areas," Noel said.

Many times, past presidents reduced monuments only slightly, like when Franklin Roosevelt removed about 52 acres from Arizona's Wupatki National Monument in 1941 to make way for a dam. But occasionally the changes were drastic, like President Woodrow Wilson's move in 1915 to cut Mount Olympus National Monument roughly in half to open more land for logging.

Environmental groups and others gearing up for a fight note that no president has tried to downsize a monument since the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which they say restricts a president's ability to do so. The groups also contend past presidents never faced court challenges for shrinking monuments.

"Whatever this administration does will certainly not go unchallenged," said Kristen Boyles, an attorney with the environmental group Earthjustice.

Legal experts disagree on whether the environmental groups are right, but the court battle that's expected if Trump tries to cut down Bears Ears could significantly alter what's generally been a lasting protection from presidents.

The 1906 Antiquities Act that gives presidents the power to declare monuments does not explicitly say whether a president can nullify a monument proclamation or shrink its boundaries.

Donald J. Kochan, a professor of natural resources, property and administrative law at Chapman University in Orange, California, said the president's broad power to create a monument comes with an inherent ability to change a monument or undo it, just as presidents regularly undo other policies or regulations from past administrations.

Mark Squillace, professor of natural resources law at the University of Colorado-Boulder, disagreed. He said Congress controls public lands and it's significant that in passing the Antiquities Act, lawmakers spelled out only that the president can create a monument.

Congress took care in other laws passed around that time, more than a century ago, to explicitly give the president powers to both act and undo acts, Squillace noted.

He said the 1976 land policy law and congressional records of the law's drafting also make it clear that Congress didn't want to give presidents the authority to shrink or undo monuments.

The question about whether the president has the power to shrink a monument "is one of these big, lingering issues that's been out there for a long time," Squillace said. "I think there's a very strong case against the president's authority to do this."

Lawsuits are expected from the Navajo Nation, groups like the Wilderness Society and Earthjustice, and even outdoor gear company Patagonia once Trump takes action on Bears Ears. That's not likely to happen until at least August, when Zinke finishes the president's request that he review 26 other monuments.

Noel said he's working on legislation that will commit the state of Utah to intervening in the lawsuit to help defend the Trump administration's action.

Representatives for Gov. Gary Herbert and Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes, both Republicans, declined to say whether they'd join a lawsuit. Messages seeking comment from the Interior Department were not returned.

Follow Michelle L. Price at <https://twitter.com/michellelprice>.

Maduro says helicopter fired on Venezuela's Supreme Court

By JOSHUA GOODMAN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — President Nicolas Maduro said a stolen police helicopter fired on Venezuela's Supreme Court Tuesday in what he called a thwarted "terrorist attack" aimed at ousting him from power.

The confusing exchange, which is bound to ratchet up tensions in a country already paralyzed by months of deadly anti-government protests, took place as Maduro was speaking live on state television. He later said the helicopter had fired on the court with grenades, one of which didn't go off, helping avoid any loss of life. The nation's air defense system was immediately activated.

Adding to the intrigue, pictures of a blue police helicopter carrying an anti-government banner appeared on social media around the same time as a video in which an alleged police pilot, identified as Oscar Perez, called for a rebellion against Maduro's "tyranny" as part of a coalition of members of the country's security forces. Authorities said they were still searching for the man.

"We have two choices: be judged tomorrow by our conscience and the people or begin today to free ourselves from this corrupt government," the man said while reading from a statement with four people dressed in military fatigues, ski masks and carrying what looked like assault rifles standing behind him.

Maduro sounded alternately calm and angry as he told the audience about what had happened in the airspace just beyond the presidential palace where they were gathered.

"It could've caused a tragedy with several dozen dead and injured," he said.

Later, Information Minister Ernesto Villegas read a statement from the government accusing the helicopter of firing 15 shots against the Interior Ministry as a reception was taking place for 80 people celebrating national journalist's day. It then flew a short distance to the court, which was in session, and launched what he said were four Israeli-made grenades of "Colombian origin," two of them against national guardsmen protecting the building.

The pro-government president of the high court said there were no injuries from the attack and that the area was still being surveyed for damages.

Villegas said security forces were being deployed to apprehend Perez as well as recover the heisted German-built Bolkow helicopter. Photos of the pilot standing in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter were displayed on state TV to further bolster the government's case that he was taking instructions from the CIA and the U.S. Embassy

Meanwhile many of Maduro's opponents took to social media to accuse the president of orchestrating an elaborate ruse to justify a crackdown against Venezuelans seeking to block his plans to rewrite the constitution. Venezuela has been roiled by anti-government protests the past three months that have left at least 75 people dead and hundreds injured.

Maduro said one of the pilots involved in the alleged attack used to fly for his former Interior Minister, Miguel Rodriguez Torres, who he accused of working for the CIA. Rodriguez Torres, who has been leading a campaign against by Maduro made up of leftist supporters of the late Hugo Chavez, immediately

dismissed the accusation as baseless.

As the drama was unfolding outside the courtroom, inside magistrates were busy issuing a number of rulings further hemming in the opposition.

One dismissed a challenge against Maduro's plans for a constitutional assembly by chief prosecutor Luisa Ortega Diaz, a longtime loyalist who broke with the government over the issue. Another broadened the powers of the nation's Ombudsman, giving him the authority to carry out criminal investigations that until now had been the exclusive prerogative of Ortega's office.

The helicopter incident capped a volatile 24 hours that began with widespread looting in the coastal city of Maracay on Monday night and continued Tuesday when opposition lawmakers got into a heated scuffle with security forces assigned to protect the National Assembly.

At least 68 supermarkets, pharmacies and liquor stores were looted and several government offices burned following anti-government protests in Maracay, which is about a 90 minute drive from Caracas.

Maduro condemned the violence but with a stern warning to his opponents that's likely to only further inflame an already tense situation.

"We will never surrender. And what we couldn't accomplish through votes we will with weapons," he said.

On Tuesday, opposition lawmakers got into fisticuffs with national guardsmen as they tried to enter the National Assembly. In a video circulating on social media, the commander of a national guard unit protecting the legislature aggressively shoved National Assembly President Julio Borges as he's walking away from a heated discussion.

At nightfall, a few dozen people were still gathered inside the neoclassical building as pro-government supporters stood outside threatening violence.

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MTA: Train derailment caused by 'improperly secured' rail

By DAVID PORTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A subway train that derailed Tuesday as it entered a station, tossing people to the floor and forcing hundreds of shaken-up passengers to evacuate through darkened tunnels was caused by an "improperly secured piece of replacement rail" that was stored on the tracks, New York City transit officials said.

Nearly three dozen people suffered minor injuries in the derailment, which happened in Harlem just before 10 a.m.

"Storing equipment in between tracks is a common practice employed by railroads across the country to accelerate rail repairs," the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said in a statement late Tuesday. "The key to this being an effective and safe practice is making sure that the extra equipment is properly bolted down, which does not appear to have happened in this case."

The MTA said crews are inspecting "every inch of rail" to ensure that every replacement part "is properly stored and secured."

Photos of the train posted on social media showed its metal side deeply scraped and dented from being dragged along the wall of the subway tunnel. Debris, including broken signaling equipment and chunks of concrete, were left in the train's wake.

Passengers on the A train said it suddenly jerked and began shaking violently as it approached the station at 125th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue.

"We started seeing sparks through the windows. People were falling," said passenger Susan Pak, of Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Sparks from the skidding train briefly ignited garbage on the track, but there was no serious fire and the train stayed upright, said Joe Lhota, chairman of the MTA.

The derailment came after a winter and spring marked by mechanical failures, power outages and several episodes in which passengers were trapped on stuck trains for an hour or more. Some state lawmakers demanded that the Legislature take up emergency funding for the system in a special session scheduled

for Wednesday.

Jack Cox, a software developer, said he felt a "large thump" and heard and felt the train grinding for as long as 30 seconds.

"During the whole time, it was just like 'What's going on? What's going to happen?' Then it stopped," he said. "I didn't have time to be scared before then, but I looked around and the woman next to me was curled up in some sort of fetal tuck."

Cox said smoke started coming in from one end of the car.

"It wasn't heavy smoke, but it was frightening," he said.

Passengers ended up walking through the darkened cars using their cellphone lights and exiting onto the platform.

Three other trains approaching the station halted in their tracks. Emergency crews shut off track power after derailments to prevent evacuees from being electrocuted.

Julian Robinson said he was stuck on one of them for about an hour before rescuers arrived to escort passengers along the tracks into the station. Pictures and video posted online showed passengers evacuating through darkened subway tunnels.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo called the derailment "an unacceptable manifestation of the system's current state."

"It is my expectation that with new leadership brought by Joe Lhota, the MTA will address the fundamental issues plaguing the transit system and overhaul the organizational structure of the MTA," the Democratic governor said.

The derailment spoiled what should've been a bright day for the system, coming roughly two hours before the reopening of a subway station at the southern tip of Manhattan that had been closed since it was flooded by Superstorm Sandy in October 2012. The South Ferry station on the No. 1 line reopened after \$340 million worth of repairs.

Lhota, who was appointed as the MTA's chairman last week with a mandate to get the system back on track, had to skip a planned media tour of the refurbished station to deal with the derailment.

The number of subway delays has tripled in the past five years, to 70,000 per month. In recent months, several high-profile incidents have occurred, including subway trains stuck in tunnels for an hour or more. In April, a power outage backed up trains around the city and closed a key Manhattan station for 12 hours.

Commuter railroads also have had problems. A report this month found rush hour cancellations and delays on the Long Island Rail Road at the highest level in 10 years.

Associated Press writers Deepti Hajela and Karen Matthews contributed to this report.

Clinton campaign chief has closed-door talk with House panel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Clinton's former campaign chairman met Tuesday with a House committee investigating Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election.

John Podesta spoke with members of the House intelligence committee behind closed doors. He told reporters afterward he was "happy to cooperate" but couldn't say what questions he'd been asked or detail his answers.

The hacking of Podesta's personal email account and the release of those emails by WikiLeaks during the late stages of the campaign is one focus of the committee's investigation.

While President Donald Trump has previously declined to name Russia as responsible for election meddling, in recent days he has referred to Russia in criticizing the Obama administration's response to the hack. Podesta said the Obama administration was "trying to make the best judgment they could."

Also Tuesday, a longtime Trump confidant said he would appear before the same House committee next month — also in private.

In a statement, Roger Stone's lawyer said the political operative has been "much maligned by innuendo and misinformation" regarding the investigations into possible collusion between Trump's campaign and Russia. Lawyer Robert Buschel said Stone looks forward to providing "a timeline based only on the facts."

Stone has denied coordinating with Russia during the 2016 election.

3 Chicago police officers indicted in Laquan McDonald case

By MICHAEL TARM and DON BABWIN, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Three Chicago police officers were indicted Tuesday on felony charges that they conspired to cover up the actions of a white police officer who shot and killed 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, and that the officers lied when they said the black teenager “aggressively” swung a knife at them and tried to get up from the ground still armed after he was shot.

The indictment alleges that one current and two former officers lied about the events of Oct. 20, 2014, when Officer Jason Van Dyke shot the teenager 16 times.

The officers’ narratives contradict what can be seen on police dashcam video, in which the teenager spins after he was shot and falls to the ground — seemingly incapacitated — as the officer continues to fire shot after shot into his body. The indictment further alleges that officers lied when they said McDonald ignored Van Dyke’s verbal commands and that one of the officers signed off on a report that claimed the other two officers were, in fact, victims of an attack by McDonald.

“The co-conspirators created police reports in the critical early hours and days following the killing of Laquan McDonald that contained important false information,” says the indictment in which the three are charged with felony counts of obstruction of justice, official misconduct and conspiracy.

The indictments mark the latest chapter in what has been one of the most troubling stories in the history of a police force dogged by allegations of racism, brutality and the protection of officers who brutalize African-Americans. The video sparked massive protests, cost the police superintendent his job and left the city scrambling to implement reforms to regain shattered public trust.

In January, the Department of Justice issued a scathing report that found that the department had violated the constitutional rights of residents for years, including by too often using excessive force and killing suspects who posed no threat.

Around the country, there are renewed questions whether the legal system is willing to punish officers, particularly after two police officers — one in Milwaukee and the other in Minnesota — were acquitted and a mistrial was declared in Cincinnati in the shootings of blacks that were captured by video.

Patricia Brown Holmes — appointed special prosecutor last July to investigate officers at the scene and involved in the investigation of the shooting — said in a news release that the three — David March, Joseph Walsh and Thomas Gaffney — “coordinated their activities to protect each other and other members of the Chicago Police Department,” including by filing false police reports, ignoring contrary evidence and not even attempting to interview key witnesses.

“The indictment makes clear that these defendants did more than merely obey an unofficial ‘code of silence,’” Holmes said in the statement. “It alleges that they lied about what occurred to prevent independent criminal investigators from learning the truth.”

The officers allegedly began to conspire almost immediately on the day of the shooting, “to conceal the true facts of the events surrounding the killing of Laquan McDonald” and “to shield their fellow officer from criminal investigation and prosecution.”

The indictment alleges that the officers understood that, if video and other evidence became public, “it would inexorably lead to a thorough criminal investigation by an independent body and likely criminal charges.”

It details Walsh’s claim — contradicted by the video — in which the officer contends that, “When McDonald got within 12 to 15 feet of the officers he swung the knife toward the officers in an aggressive manner and that as Van Dyke was shooting McDonald the teen continued moving on the ground, attempting to get up while still armed with the knife.”

According to the department, Walsh, who was Van Dyke’s partner, and March, who as a detective found that the shooting was justified, have left the force. Gaffney remains but, per department policy, has been

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suspended because of the felony indictment.

"The shooting of Laquan McDonald forever changed the Chicago Police Department and I am committed to implementing policies and training to prevent an incident like this from happening again," Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said in a statement.

Johnson didn't comment specifically on the indictment. Kevin Graham, president of the officers' union, said the union has not yet reviewed it and declined to comment because it's an ongoing investigation.

Jeffrey Neslund, an attorney who helped negotiate a \$5 million settlement with the city on behalf of the McDonald family, welcomed the indictments.

"This is the same thing that our investigation showed back when we were negotiating with the city in 2015, that there was a cover-up," he said.

Neslund said he has tried to contact McDonald's mother but has not been successful.

Van Dyke was charged more than a year after the shooting with first-degree murder on the same day that the city — under orders from a judge — made public the dashboard camera video. He has pleaded not guilty.

His attorney Dan Herbert released a fiery statement late Tuesday, alleging the indictment will silence potential witnesses and is "further proof that the government is determined to prevent" Van Dyke from having a fair trial.

If convicted, the three officers could face years in prison. The official misconduct charge alone carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

The officers weren't arrested and will be allowed to show up on their own accord at their arraignment on July 10, Holmes said. Asked why, she told a news conference later Tuesday "it's very typical for a situation like this to give a courtesy call to the defendants" and, if they're not deemed dangerous or a flight risk, to let them appear at their future arraignment.

New cyberattack wallops Europe; spreads more slowly in US

By RAPHAEL SATTER and FRANK BAJAK, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A new and highly virulent outbreak of data-scrambling software — apparently sown in Ukraine — caused disruption across the world Tuesday. Following a similar attack in May, the fresh cyber-assault paralyzed some hospitals, government offices and major multinational corporations in a dramatic demonstration of how easily malicious programs can bring daily life to a halt.

Ukraine and Russia appeared hardest hit by the new strain of ransomware — malicious software that locks up computer files with all-but-unbreakable encryption and then demands a ransom for its release. In the United States, the malware affected companies such as the drugmaker Merck and Mondelez International, the owner of food brands such as Oreo and Nabisco.

Its pace appeared to slow as the day wore on, in part because the malware appeared to require direct contact between computer networks, a factor that may have limited its spread in regions with fewer connections to Ukraine.

The malware's origins remain unclear. Researchers picking the program apart found evidence its creators had borrowed from leaked National Security Agency code, raising the possibility that the digital havoc had spread using U.S. taxpayer-funded tools.

"The virus is spreading all over Europe and I'm afraid it can harm the whole world," said Victor Zhora, the chief executive of Infosafe IT in Kiev, where reports of the malicious software first emerged early afternoon local time Tuesday.

In Ukraine, victims included top-level government offices, where officials posted photos of darkened computer screens, as well as energy companies, banks, cash machines, gas stations, and supermarkets. Ukrainian Railways and the communications company Ukrtelecom were among major enterprises hit, Infrastructure Minister Volodymyr Omelyan said in a Facebook post.

The virus hit the radiation-monitoring at Ukraine's shuttered Chernobyl power plant, site of the world's

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worst nuclear accident, forcing it into manual operation.

Multinational companies, including the global law firm DLA Piper and Danish shipping giant A.P. Moller-Maersk were also affected, although the firms didn't specify the extent of the damage.

Ukraine bore the brunt with more than 60 percent of the attacks, followed by Russia with more than 30 percent, according to initial findings by researchers at the cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab. It listed Poland, Italy and Germany, in that order, as the next-worst affected.

In the U.S, two hospitals in western Pennsylvania were hit; patients reported on social media that some surgeries had to be rescheduled. A spokeswoman for Heritage Valley Health System would say only that operational changes had to be made. A Wellsville, Ohio, woman at one of its hospitals to have her gallbladder removed said she noticed computer monitors off and nurses scurrying around with stacks of paperwork.

Security experts said Tuesday's global cyberattack shares something in common with last month's outbreak of ransomware, dubbed WannaCry . Both spread using digital lock picks originally created by the NSA and later published to the web by a still-mysterious group known as the Shadowbrokers.

Security vendors including Bitdefender and Kaspersky said the NSA exploit, known as EternalBlue, lets malware spread rapidly across internal networks at companies and other large organizations. Microsoft issued a security fix in March, but Chris Wysopal, chief technology officer at the security firm Veracode, said it would only be effective if every single computer on a network were patched — otherwise, a single infected machine could infect all others.

"Once activated, the virus can automatically and freely distribute itself on your network," Ukraine's cyberpolice tweeted.

Bogdan Botezatu, an analyst with Bitdefender, compared such self-spreading software to a contagious disease. "It's like somebody sneezing into a train full of people," he said.

Ryan Kalember, a security expert at Proofpoint, said one reason the attacks appeared to be slowing down was that the ransomware appears to spread only when a direct contact exists between two networks — such as when a global company's Ukraine office interacts with headquarters.

But once it hits a computer on a network, it spreads quickly, even among computers that have applied the fix for the NSA exploit.

"It's more harmful to the organization that it affects, but because it's not randomly spreading over the internet like WannaCry, it's somewhat contained to the organizations that were connected to each other," Kalember said.

Botezatu said the new program appeared nearly identical to GoldenEye, a variant of a known family of hostage-taking programs known as "Petya." It demanded \$300 in Bitcoin.

Unlike typical ransomware, which merely scrambles personal data files, the program wreaking havoc Tuesday overwrites a computer's master boot record, making it tougher to restore even a machine that has been backed up, said Kalember.

It may have first spread through a rogue update to a piece of Ukrainian accounting software called MEDoc, according to tweets by the country's cyberpolice unit. It said a rogue update seeded the infection across Ukraine. In a lengthy statement posted to Facebook, MEDoc acknowledged having been hacked.

The motives of those behind the malware remain unknown. Ukraine has been a persistent target of pro-Russian hackers, who are blamed for twice shutting down large swaths of its power grid in the dead of winter and sabotaging its elections system in a bid to disrupt May 2014 national elections.

Emails sent Tuesday to an address posted to the bottom of ransom demands went unreturned. That might be because the email provider hosting that address, Berlin-based Posteo, pulled the plug on the account before the infection became widely known.

In an email, a Posteo representative said it had blocked the email address "immediately" after learning that it was associated with ransomware. The company added that it was in contact with German authorities "to make sure that we react properly."

___ Bajak reported from Houston. Associated Press writers Anick Jesdanun in New York, Vladimir Isaichenkov in Moscow, Larry Rosenthal in Beaver, Pennsylvania and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

Cosby rejects 'sexual assault tour' idea floated by reps

By BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) — Bill Cosby's "town hall" tour is unlikely to happen before his retrial on sex assault charges in Pennsylvania, one of his lawyers said Tuesday.

Attorney Angela Agrusa said after a hearing to set a trial date in a sex abuse lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court against the comedian that Cosby won't be discussing sexual assault and she "can't imagine" his legal team would let him perform or speak publicly as representatives said he planned to do this summer.

"He doesn't take lightly these criminal charges," Agrusa said. "He would never do anything that undermined the importance of this issue. I don't see him speaking publicly like that."

Talk of the forums after a jury deadlocked in Pennsylvania in the criminal case sparked a backlash from groups that advocate for sexual assault victims and educate about sexual abuse.

Spokespeople for Cosby and his wife had said the forums — at least one planned in Birmingham, Alabama, next month when Cosby turns 80 — were aimed at educating young people how to stay out of trouble and be aware of changing sex assault laws.

After those plans were criticized, though, a spokeswoman said the meetings were never intended to be about sexual assault but an effort to restore Cosby's legacy.

Cosby himself took issue Tuesday with the notion of a "sexual assault tour," dismissing it as propaganda, though he left open the possibility of some future event.

"The current propaganda that I am going to conduct a sexual assault tour is false," Cosby said in a statement. "Any further information about public plans will be given at the appropriate time."

The comedian and actor once known as "America's Dad" for his TV role on "The Cosby Show" as paternal Dr. Cliff Huxtable has had his reputation tarnished with accusations of sexual abuse by nearly 60 women.

One of those accusers is Judy Huth, who accused the comedian of forcing her to perform a sex act on him in a bedroom at the Playboy Mansion in Los Angeles around 1974 when she was 15.

Judge Craig Karlan tentatively scheduled that trial for July 30 next year with the expectation it would occur after a retrial in Pennsylvania. Cosby is due to give a second deposition in the case, but that won't occur until after the criminal case is concluded because he could assert his right not to testify against himself.

Prosecutors in Pennsylvania said they plan to retry Cosby, possibly this fall.

A mistrial was declared June 17 on charges Cosby drugged and molested Andrea Constand, the former Temple University director of women's basketball, at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004. Cosby said the encounter was consensual.

Cosby's legal team declared victory after the mistrial and then his representatives announced the town hall tour.

Huth's attorney Gloria Allred said if Cosby does stage public meetings, she may hold her own forums in those cities to discuss sexual assault.

"All I can say is, Mr. Cosby, be careful what you wish for because if you go on that tour, I will be there," Allred said outside the Santa Monica courthouse.

Cosby is fighting lawsuits by 10 women on both coasts. Three have filed sexual battery or defamation cases in California, and seven have sued for defamation in Massachusetts, where Cosby has a home. He has denied any wrongdoing.

Retracted CNN story a boon for president at war with media

By DAVID BAUDER, AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — For a president seemingly at perpetual war with "fake news," the resignation of three CNN journalists over a retracted story about a Donald Trump Russian connection is a gift from the political gods when the struggling effort to pass a health bill dominates the headlines.

The White House quickly took advantage Tuesday with blistering presidential tweets and a media scolding at the afternoon press briefing. Conservative provocateur James O'Keefe piled on by releasing a video with a CNN producer caught on camera talking about the network's Russia coverage being ratings-driven.

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CNN late Monday accepted the resignations of journalists Thomas Frank, Eric Lichtblau and Lex Harris over last week's web story about Trump aide Anthony Scaramucci's pre-inaugural meeting with the head of a Russian investment fund. The network retracted the story on Friday and apologized to Scaramucci.

Trump has been unhappy with CNN since he was a candidate, and has been particularly annoyed by its reporting on connections with Russia. The misstep on a relatively minor story — it was never mentioned on any of CNN's television networks — left some White House staff members jubilant, believing it handed them a new talking point to use as a cudgel against mainstream media organizations they feel are largely biased against them.

That happened quickly Tuesday when Sarah Huckabee Sanders called on a Breitbart News reporter for the first question of the White House briefing. It was about CNN.

She said the "constant barrage of fake news" at the president has frustrated Trump. She called stories about Russia and Trump "a hoax" that is distracting from other news. Sanders urged all Americans to watch a video posted by O'Keefe's Project Veritas featuring CNN producer John Bonifield — even though she couldn't vouch for its accuracy.

"If it is accurate, I think it's a disgrace to all of media, to all of journalism," Sanders said. "I think that if we have gone to a place where the media can't be trusted to report the news, then that's a dangerous place for America. And I think if that is that place that certain outlets are going — particularly for the purpose of spiking ratings, and if that's coming directly from the top, I think that's even more scary."

She was interrupted by reporter Brian Karem of the Sentinel newspapers, who accused Sanders of inflaming anti-media sentiment. "Everyone in this room is only trying to do their job," he said.

Sanders ignored CNN reporter Jeff Zeleny's attempt to ask a question before ending her briefing.

After Sanders left the stage, she was criticized on Fox News Channel, where Trump-friendly views usually dominate. Wall Street Journal editor John Bussey told Fox's Shepard Smith that "the White House could actually learn from CNN's example" about being forthright when caught saying something untrue.

Earlier in the day, Trump tweeted that "they caught Fake News CNN cold." He lumped ABC, CBS, NBC, The New York Times and The Washington Post together in the same "fake news" category. He said that "CNN is looking at big management changes now that they got caught falsely pushing their phony Russian stories. Ratings way down!"

A spokeswoman for CNN chief Jeff Zucker didn't respond to a request for comment on Tuesday. CNN's public relations staff refuted Trump's notion that the network is hurting, saying it is completing the most-watched second quarter in its history.

The president was livid at CNN's story but also felt vindicated because it seemed to confirm his belief that the cable network was trying to undermine his presidency, according to one staffer who demanded anonymity to discuss private conversations.

The CNN issue enables the White House to change the subject for what has been a rough stretch for the presidency, with constant questions about the Russia probe and a vote on the Republican health care bill delayed. Aides also believe that highlighting media mistakes could be a useful way of questioning reporters' credibility and convincing supporters that Trump was the victim of a witch hunt.

Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr., tweeted a link to the Bonifield video. Besides talking about ratings, the Atlanta-based producer in CNN's medical unit said the network has no "smoking gun" showing wrongdoing by Trump and that "the president is probably right to say, look, you are witch-hunting me."

CNN said in a statement that it is standing by Bonifield. "Diversity of personal opinion is what makes CNN strong," CNN said. "We welcome it and embrace it."

O'Keefe told The Associated Press that Project Veritas got the video on Friday and that a portion, in an elevator, was recorded at CNN's headquarters. He said that Project Veritas plans to release another video involving another CNN employee, with the timing dependent on how CNN reacts to the Bonifield material.

O'Keefe and Project Veritas have a track record of aiding Republican causes, often by using hidden cameras and hiding identities, and Trump's nonprofit foundation has made two \$10,000 donations to the organization. His sting operation led to the downfall of ACORN, a community organizing group that O'Keefe

portrayed as engaging in criminal activity via hidden camera.

Before last November's election, Project Veritas released a series of heavily edited videos that included a Democratic activist appearing to brag about deploying troublemakers at Trump rallies. The fallout included the two people most prominently featured, Scott Foval and Robert Creamer, cutting ties with the Democratic National Committee. Creamer's firm recently sued Project Veritas alleging the sting violated federal wiretap law.

O'Keefe declined to discuss how the Bonifield video came about. O'Keefe said his efforts are journalistic and, since they include video, he contends that it is more believable than media stories based on anonymous sources. The retracted CNN story was heavily dependent upon one anonymous source.

One social media exchange about the CNN story indicated how feelings about the network were running strong among Trump supporters.

John Podhoretz, a conservative columnist for The New York Post and editor of Commentary magazine tweeted that "CNN published a bad story, pulled it, apologized. 3 journalists quit. That's impressive and decisive action. Yelling 'fake news' is unfair."

That drew a quick retort from Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity, an ardent Trump backer. "John wtf has happened to you?" Hannity wondered online.

Podhoretz declined to respond to Hannity online and denied an interview request.

Associated Press correspondents Julie Bykowicz and Jill Colvin in Washington, and Jonathan Lemire in New York contributed to this report.

New Trump rules on Cuba travel leaves winners and losers

By ANDREA RODRIGUEZ and BETH J. HARPAZ, Associated Press

President Donald Trump's new policy on Cuba travel has winners and losers: Group tour operators hope to sell more trips, but bed-and-breakfast owners in Cuba say they're losing business.

Five of 12 private bed-and-breakfast owners in Havana and Cuba's southern colonial city of Trinidad told The Associated Press that they received cancellations after Trump's June 16 announcement.

"It's contradictory that (Trump) says he want to help civil society, the Cuban people, but what he's doing is hurting them, hurting bed-and-breakfast owners in this case," said Tony Lopez, who rents rooms for \$30-\$50 nightly in a three-bedroom, 16th-floor apartment in Havana's trendy Vedado neighborhood. Those canceling included two Americans worried about legal requirements, including documenting their spending.

"We get a lot of Americans. We're alarmed," said Eliset Ruiz, manager of a nine-room bed-and-breakfast in Trinidad. "We've had a lot of cancellations for June and July."

Alex Bunten of Charlotte, Vermont, hoped to go to Cuba with his girlfriend in August "without the hassle of tour groups and schedules and such. We like watching the world go by, eating good food, not being herded by an umbrella-holding, annoyingly interesting tour guide."

But Bunten nixed the idea because under the new rules, only licensed tour operators can take Americans to Cuba on "people-to-people" trips. That's "too much of a hassle," Bunten said.

GROUP TOUR BOOM OR PUBLIC CONFUSION?

Tour operators "should be opening Champagne" because of the new policy, said John Caulfield, former chief of mission of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana and co-founder of the nonprofit Innovadores Foundation, which seeds innovation in Cuba.

In theory, the new rules should spur "an increase in demand," said Access Trips CEO Tamar Lowell. But some Americans "will be confused by the new policy," wrongly assuming that all Cuba travel is now off-limits.

"The travel operators are going to have to do some work to make people aware that if you go with us, it's OK," said Caulfield.

Classic Journeys President Edward Piegza said the new rules could discourage Americans from traveling individually, but the change could be good for the group tour business.

BAN ON BUSINESS WITH THE MILITARY

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The new rules also ban Americans from doing business with entities controlled by Cuban military and intelligence agencies, including some 50 hotels.

Many tour operators say that's no problem because they already use privately owned villas, casas and eateries, and engage with local guides, entrepreneurs and artists.

Caulfield said the Cubans can also fill up hotels that are off-limits to Americans with tourists from other countries, thereby freeing up rooms elsewhere for U.S. groups.

Meanwhile, small bed-and-breakfast owners plan to create informal associations of neighboring businesses so they can accommodate larger American groups.

Piegza said lodging costs increased last year but are coming down, allowing Classic Journeys to drop tour prices from \$4,995 for four days in Cuba to \$3,995.

But Lowell thinks prices could go either way. With fewer individual Americans traveling, private lodging options could increase, driving prices down. But if tour groups forced out of military-controlled hotels start booking private homes, prices could stay high.

Hotels aren't an issue for cruises because passengers sleep on the ships. But Carnival Corp. says even its activities on the ground in Cuba already comply with the new rules. "Many of our current tours have been designed with small family-run operations to give our guests an authentic Cuban experience," said Carnival spokesman Roger Frizzell.

Others are revising itineraries. "We have had to redesign our women's trip to Cuba," said Phyllis Stoller from The Women's Travel Group, which plans a trip for 15 in March. "Our original operator had us visiting some rural areas that are apparently owned by the military."

Meanwhile private entrepreneurs worry the government may not allow U.S. tour groups to simply shift their business from state-run hotels to the private sector, at least not without hefty commissions. In the decade since President Raul Castro began allowing more private-sector activity, the government has viewed entrepreneurs as both vital sources of economic growth and as dangerous competitors for sluggish state-run businesses. Because tour groups are required to use government buses and guides, the government controls their movements and requires many private businesses that receive tour groups to sign contracts that include commissions for the government.

Visits to major tourist attractions like Ernest Hemingway's estate and the Tropicana nightclub shouldn't be affected by the new U.S. rules, since neither falls under military auspices. U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Florida, a Cuban-American who supports travel restrictions, suggested in tweets that he'd like to ban attractions run by other Cuban government agencies, like the ministries of culture and tourism. But it will be months before the U.S. Treasury Department announces details on which sites are off-limits.

SUPPORT FOR THE CUBAN PEOPLE

Rubio also suggested that independent travel might continue. Rubio tweeted that the new rules allow "individual Americans" to "travel to Cuba under Support for the Cuban people category" as long as they use "privately owned lodging."

That's heartening to companies like ViaHero, which creates personalized itineraries connecting individual Americans with artists, entrepreneurs and other Cuban locals. ViaHero CEO Greg Buzulencia thinks ViaHero trips will qualify under the "support for the Cuban people" category of travel permitted by the U.S. because ViaHero's itineraries "start conversations and promote independent businesses and activity" in Cuba outside of government-run spheres.

ViaHero's model is also affordable, as little as \$400 for a week in Havana — plus a \$25-a-day trip-planning fee — compared with group tours charging \$5,000 for a week.

Chad Olin, president of Cuba Candela, says his company's people-to-people tours qualify under the new rules because all lodging, drivers, restaurants and cultural activities are from Cuba's private sector. But he also thinks Americans can travel independently using the "support for the Cuban people" category, as long as they patronize private businesses and connect with locals in meaningful ways.

This version clarifies a comment about the group tour business by Classic Journeys' Edward Piegza.

EU hits Google with \$2.7B fine for abusing weaker rivals

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and LORNE COOK, Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European regulators fined Google a record 2.42 billion euros (\$2.72 billion) for abusing its dominance of the online search market in a case that could be just the opening salvo in Europe's attempt to curb the company's clout on that continent.

The decision announced Tuesday by the European Commission punished Google for unfairly favoring its own online shopping recommendations in its search results. The commission is also conducting at least two other probes into the company's business practices that could force Google to make even more changes in the way it bundles services on mobile devices and sells digital advertising.

Even so, Europe's crackdown is unlikely to affect Google's products in the U.S. or elsewhere. But it could provide an opportunity to contrast how consumers fare when the company operates under constraints compared with an unfettered Google.

The fine immediately triggered debate about whether European regulators were taking prudent steps to preserve competition or overstepping their bounds to save companies being shunned by consumers who have overwhelmingly embraced an alternative.

Margrethe Vestager, Europe's top antitrust regulator, said her agency's nearly seven-year investigation left no doubt something had to be done to rein in Google.

"What Google has done is illegal under EU antitrust rules. It denied other companies the chance to compete on the merits and to innovate. And most importantly, it denied European consumers a genuine choice of services and the full benefits of innovation," Vestager told reporters Tuesday.

The fine was the highest ever imposed in Europe for anti-competitive behavior, exceeding a 1.06 billion euros penalty on Silicon Valley chip maker Intel in 2009.

The penalty itself is unlikely to leave a dent in Google's finances. Parent company Alphabet Inc. has more than \$92 billion (82 billion euros) in cash, including nearly \$56 billion (50 billion euros) in accounts outside of the U.S.

The findings in Europe contrasted sharply with those reached by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission in a similar investigation of Google completed in 2013. The FTC absolved Google of any serious wrongdoing after concluding that its search recommendations did not undermine competition or hurt consumers.

Leading up to that unanimous decision, though, some of the FTC's staff sent a memo to the agency's commissioners recommending legal action because Google's "conduct has resulted — and will result — in real harm to consumers and to innovation in the online search and advertising markets," according to a memo inadvertently released to The Wall Street Journal two years ago.

Google's misbehavior in Europe boiled down to its practice of highlighting its own online shopping service above those of its rivals. Merchants pay Google for the right to show summaries of their products in small boxes displayed near the top of search results when someone seems to be interested in a purchase.

Meanwhile, Google lists search results of its biggest rivals in online shopping on page 4 — and smaller rivals even lower, based on the calculations of European regulators. That's a huge advantage for Google when 90 percent of user clicks are on the first page.

Google says consumers like its shopping thumbnails because they are concise and convenient.

The commission's decision "underestimates the value of those kinds of fast and easy connections," Kent Walker, Google's general counsel, wrote in a blog post.

Europe's investigation did not present any concrete evidence that consumers had been financially damaged by Google's online shopping tactics, said Pablo Ibanez Colomo, a law professor at the London School of Economics.

"The only harm being alleged here is that competing services have suffered a decrease in traffic coming from Google," Colomo said on a call organized by the Computer & Communications Industry Association, a tech lobbying group.

Alphabet is mulling an appeal of Tuesday's penalty, but even if that is filed, the Mountain View, California, company will still only have 90 days to comply with an order to stop favoring its own links to online shop-

ping. If it does not, Alphabet faces more fines of up to 5 percent of its average daily revenue worldwide. That would translate into roughly \$14 million (12 million euros), based on Alphabet's revenue during the first three months of the year.

Rather than comply, Google could shut down its shopping service in Europe.

If that happens, "it will mean consumers in Europe are going to be worse off than consumers in the rest of the world," predicted David Balto, a consumer advocate and antitrust expert who formerly served as the FTC's policy director. "Consumers rarely benefit when bureaucrats put their thumbs on the economic scales to tip them one way or the other."

Google's critics applauded the EU for standing up to the company after the FTC backed down.

"Some may object to the EU moving so aggressively against U.S.-based companies, but these authorities are at least trying to deal with some of the new competitive challenges facing our economy," said the News Media Alliance, a group representing U.S. newspapers whose revenue has plunged as more advertising flowed to Google during the past decade.

Other antitrust experts believe the fine levied on Google means European regulators are more likely to rein in other U.S. technology companies such as Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Netflix as they win over more European consumers at the expense of homegrown companies.

"We already have been in an information trade war," said Larry Downs, who studies antitrust issues as project director at Georgetown University's Center for Business and Public Policy. "But I think it just went from being a cold war to a hot war with Europe."

This story has been corrected to reflect that Alphabet Inc. has \$56 billion (\$50 billion euros) outside of the U.S. instead of Europe.

Liedtke reported from San Francisco. AP Technology Writer Tali Arbel contributed to the story from New York.

Making Ivanka Trump shoes: Long hours, low pay and abuse

By ERIKA KINETZ, Associated Press

GANZHOU, China (AP) — A worker with blood dripping from his head marked a low point in the tense, grinding life at a southeastern China factory used by Ivanka Trump and other fashion brands. An angry manager had hit him with the sharp end of a high-heeled shoe.

Workers from the factory, including one current and two former employees who spoke to The Associated Press, reported overtime that stretched past midnight, steep production quotas and crude verbal abuse at Ganzhou Huajian International Shoe City Co. They said beatings were not unheard of, but the shoe attack, which all three say they witnessed last year, was violent enough to stand out.

"He was bleeding right from the middle of the head," the current worker said.

"There was a lot of blood. He went to the factory's nurse station, passing by me," said a second man, who said he quit his job at Huajian because of the long hours and low pay.

The three workers are the first people with direct knowledge of conditions at the Ganzhou factory to speak with the media. All three spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity, for fear of retribution or arrest.

Last month, three men investigating conditions at the Huajian Group factory in Ganzhou were detained, accused of illegally using secret recording devices to steal commercial secrets. They, like one of the three men AP spoke with, worked with China Labor Watch, a New York group that has been investigating Ivanka Trump's Chinese suppliers for more than a year. The group said the men were released on bail Wednesday, the final day of their legally mandated 30-day detention period limit.

Li Qiang, founder of China Labor Watch, describes Huajian's Ganzhou factory as among the worst he has seen in nearly two decades investigating labor abuses. His group says pay can be as low as a dollar an hour, in violation of China's labor laws. According to China Labor Watch investigators, until recently, workers might get only two days off — or less — per month.

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China Labor Watch said the company forced workers to sign fake pay stubs with inflated salary numbers and threatened to fire workers if they didn't fill in questionnaires about working conditions with pre-approved answers. Workers also said the company pressured people not to speak with outsiders about conditions at the factory.

In comments to the AP, the Huajian Group declined to respond to specific questions, but broadly denied all allegations, calling them "completely not true to the facts, taken out of context, exaggerated." The company said it operates lawfully and that China Labor Watch "invented so-called 'facts' by illegal means of buying undercover work, which has already affected the enterprise's normal business seriously and affected the survival and employment of tens of thousands of staff." The company noted its significant contribution to the economy and to society, particularly through its employment of disabled people.

Before taking on an official role as adviser to her father, Ivanka Trump stepped back from day-to-day management of her brand, but she has retained her ownership interest.

In Washington on Tuesday, she spoke at a ceremony unveiling the annual U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report, in which China was demoted to the lowest ranking over its human trafficking record. She said the report is "clarion call into action in defense of the vulnerable and the exploited."

She has not commented, however, on the detentions or the reports of poor working conditions at one of her brand's suppliers. Her spokeswoman declined to comment for this story.

Abigail Klem, president of the Ivanka Trump brand, said "the integrity of our supply chain is a top priority and we take all allegations very seriously." The company says its products have not been made in the factory since March, but China Labor Watch said it had an April production schedule indicating that nearly 1,000 pairs of Ivanka Trump shoes were due in May.

In the past, some brands have used China Labor Watch's reports as a tool to help keep their supply chains clean. Walt Disney Co., for example, investigated and ultimately decided to sever its relationship with at least one supplier following reports of poor conditions, and sought to improve labor practices at others.

China Labor Watch outlined its findings in letters sent in June to Ivanka Trump at the White House and to other brands. So far, the group says it has gotten no response.

The group said it also sent Ivanka Trump a video taken inside the factory in May. That video included a clip in which a manager threatened to rough up a worker who had apparently arranged shoes in the wrong order.

"If I see them f---ing messed up again," the manager yells, "I'll beat you right here."

The video has not been released to the public, but it was shown to AP at China Labor Watch's office in New York.

Marc Fisher, which has made shoes for Ivanka Trump and Easy Spirit at the Ganzhou factory, has said it would look into the allegations.

G-III Apparel Group, which produces shoes for Karl Lagerfeld, said it had not received a letter but "fully supports the independent monitoring of global supply chains."

"When workplace safety and fairness issues are brought to our attention, we take them very seriously and work with our partners to resolve them," G-III spokesman Chris Giglio said in an email.

Ann Taylor spokesman Shawn Buchanan also said the company takes the allegations "very seriously" and is "actively conducting an investigation to assess this facility's compliance with our code of conduct and applicable laws and regulations."

The Kendall & Kyle brand said its "footwear manufacturer works with many footwear production factories and all factories are required to operate within strict social compliance regulations."

Other brands identified by China Labor Watch as customers of the Ganzhou factory include Nine West, Naturalizer and the Camuto Group, which makes shoes for BCBG Max Azria, Jessica Simpson and Tory Burch. None responded to requests for comment.

The current Huajian employee who spoke to the AP said life at the factory has changed since the arrests of the three investigators brought the glare of public attention.

Overtime was radically reduced this month, he said. Shifts used to run from 7:10 a.m. until after 9 p.m. or 10 p.m., and sometimes after midnight, with two daily breaks, he and a former employee both said.

But for the last few weeks, workers have been released before 7 p.m.

They're also starting to get every Sunday off, which is standard under Chinese labor law, said the current employee, who also moonlights for China Labor Watch.

City government officials turned up recently, he said, and the factory gave everyone an egg to eat in the middle of their afternoon shift.

Life inside Ganzhou Huajian is focused on a single number: the monthly quota of shoes that must be produced, according to China Labor Watch investigators and workers. A single production line of 50 workers may need to produce close to 30,000 pairs of shoes, depending on seasonal demand, the current employee and one former employee told AP.

Those who miss their targets do not collect the full salary, said the current employee.

"It is impossible to meet the target, actually, because it just keeps on going up," the former employee said.

The new abbreviated working hours are a mixed blessing, the current employee said, because they haven't been able to meet production targets.

Huajian, meanwhile, has been moving production to Ethiopia, where workers make around \$100 a month, a fraction of what they pay in China, according to Song Yiping, a manager at Huajian's Ethiopian factory, who spoke to the AP in January. He said he's heard President Trump talk about bringing jobs back to America, but he doubts that will happen with shoes. Even Chinese vocational school dropouts don't want to work for Ethiopian wages.

"The American clients push down the price," Song explained. "Consumers want to buy cheaper shoes."

AP researcher Fu Ting contributed from Ganzhou, China, AP writers Anne D'Innocenzio and Bernard Condon in New York, Elias Meseret in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Josh Lederman in Washington contributed to this report.

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Global share sell-off hits Asia after Wall St, Europe losses

By **KELVIN CHAN, AP Business Writer**

HONG KONG (AP) — A global stock market sell-off pulled shares lower in Asia on Wednesday as investors grew cautious following losses on Wall Street sparked by a delayed health care vote. Sentiment was dented in Europe by speculation that European Central Bank stimulus may be wound down if conditions improve.

KEEPING SCORE: Hong Kong's Hang Seng led declines, falling as much as 0.7 percent. By midday it was down 0.4 percent at 25,747.90 while Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index lost 0.3 percent to 20,159.77. South Korea's Kospi shed 0.3 percent to 2,386.03. The Shanghai Composite index in mainland China edged 0.1 percent higher to 3,192.82 and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.4 percent to 5,738.00.

CENTRAL BANKING: European Central Bank President Mario Draghi's upbeat comments about prospects for the 19-country eurozone were taken as a hint that policy change may be in the pipeline even though he did not mention plans to dial back stimulus measures, but markets took it as a hint that policy change was in the pipeline. Meanwhile, U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, in a speech in London, said she didn't foresee another financial crisis "in our lifetimes." Market watchers also noted that she didn't say anything to contradict earlier statements about plans to gradually remove stimulus and raise rates if economic conditions continue to improve, indicating those plans are still on track.

MARKET INSIGHT: "The net effect of last night's speeches by Yellen and Draghi has been to reinforce a view that markets are now embarking on a phase of global policy tightening with the ECB potentially moving faster relative to the Fed than many had expected," Ric Spooner, chief analyst at CMC Markets, said in a commentary.

U.S. POLITICS: A decision by Republican Party leaders in the Senate to put off until after their July 4 recess a vote on a health care overhaul bill spurred a sell off. The delay added to investor worries about political gridlock and what it could mean for President Donald Trump's plans for health care reforms and

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other economy-boosting measures.

WALL STREET: The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 0.8 percent to close at 2,419.38. The Dow Jones industrial average slid 0.5 percent to 21,310.66. The Nasdaq composite lost 1.6 percent to 6,146.62.

ENERGY: Oil futures fell, with benchmark U.S. crude slipping 17 cents to \$44.07 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract gained 86 cents, or 2 percent, to settle at \$44.24 per barrel on Tuesday. Brent, the international standard, lost 8 cents to \$46.57 per barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar slipped to 112.09 yen from Tuesday's 112.15 yen. The euro weakened to \$1.1352 from \$1.1347.

Today in History By The Associated Press.

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, June 28, the 179th day of 2017. There are 186 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife, Sophie, were shot to death in Sarajevo (sah-ruh-YAY'-voh) by Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip (gavh-REE'-loh PREEN'-seep) — an act which sparked World War I.

On this date:

In 1778, the Revolutionary War Battle of Monmouth took place in New Jersey; from this battle arose the legend of "Molly Pitcher," a woman who was said to have carried water to colonial soldiers, then taken over firing her husband's cannon after he became disabled.

In 1836, the fourth president of the United States, James Madison, died in Montpelier, Virginia.

In 1838, Britain's Queen Victoria was crowned in Westminster Abbey.

In 1867, Italian author and playwright Luigi Pirandello was born in Agrigento (ah-gree-JEN'-toh), Sicily.

In 1919, the Treaty of Versailles (vehr-SY') was signed in France, ending the First World War. In Independence, Missouri, future president Harry S. Truman married Elizabeth Virginia Wallace.

In 1939, Pan American Airways began regular trans-Atlantic air service with a flight that departed New York for Marseilles, France.

In 1944, the Republican national convention in Chicago nominated New York Gov. Thomas E. Dewey for president and Ohio Gov. John W. Bricker for vice president.

In 1950, North Korean forces captured Seoul (sohl), the capital of South Korea.

In 1964, civil rights activist Malcolm X declared, "We want equality by any means necessary" during the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity in New York.

In 1978, the Supreme Court ordered the University of California-Davis Medical School to admit Allan Bakke (BAHK'-ee), a white man who argued he'd been a victim of reverse racial discrimination.

In 1989, about 1 million Serbs gathered to mark the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389.

In 1997, in a wild rematch, Evander Holyfield retained the WBA heavyweight boxing championship after his opponent, Mike Tyson, was disqualified for biting Holyfield's ear during the third round of their fight in Las Vegas.

Ten years ago: The U.S. Supreme Court voted 5-4 to strike down school integration plans in Louisville, Kentucky, and Seattle, a decision that was denounced hours later by Democratic presidential candidates in their third primary debate. President George W. Bush's immigration plan to legalize as many as 12 million immigrants while fortifying the border collapsed in the Senate. The American bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list. The TV series "Burn Notice," starring Jeffrey Donovan as a spy left out in the cold, premiered on USA Network.

Five years ago: The Affordable Care Act narrowly survived, 5-4, an election-year battle at the U.S. Supreme Court with the improbable help of conservative Chief Justice John Roberts. Attorney General Eric Holder became the first sitting Cabinet member held in contempt of Congress, a rebuke pushed by Republicans seeking to unearth the facts behind a bungled gun-tracking operation known as Fast and Furious. (The

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vote was 255-67, with more than 100 Democrats boycotting.) At Wimbledon, 2-time champion Rafael Nadal was overpowered in the second round by Lukas Rosol, a Czech ranked No. 100, 6-7 (9), 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4. Katie Holmes filed for divorce from Tom Cruise after 5 years of marriage.

One year ago: Three suicide bombers armed with assault rifles stormed Istanbul's Ataturk airport, killing 44 victims and wounding nearly 150; no one claimed responsibility, but Turkish official said they suspected the Islamic State group. House Republicans concluded their \$7 million, two-year investigation into the deadly attacks in Benghazi, Libya, with fresh accusations of lethal mistakes by the Obama administration but no "smoking gun" pointing to wrongdoing by Hillary Clinton, who said the report "found nothing, nothing to contradict" the findings of earlier investigations. Death claimed Pat Summitt, the most successful coach in major college basketball history, at age 64; former pro football coach Buddy Ryan at age 85; and pioneering rock guitarist Scotty Moore at age 84.

Today's Birthdays: Comedian-movie director Mel Brooks is 91. Former Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., is 83. Comedian-impressionist John Byner is 80. Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta is 79. Rock musician Dave Knights (Procul Harum) is 72. Actor Bruce Davison is 71. Actress Kathy Bates is 69. Actress Alice Krige is 63. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer John Elway is 57. Record company chief executive Tony Mercedes is 55. Jazz singer Tierney Sutton is 54. Actress Jessica Hecht is 52. Rock musician Saul Davies (James) is 52. Actress Mary Stuart Masterson is 51. Actor John Cusack is 51. Actor Gil Bellows is 50. Actress-singer Danielle Brisebois is 48. Jazz musician Jimmy Sommers is 48. Actress Tichina Arnold is 48. Actor Steve Burton is 47. Actor Alessandro Nivola (nih-VOH'-luh) is 45. Actress Camille Guaty is 41. Rock musician Tim Nordwind (OK Go) is 41. Rock musician Mark Stoermer (The Killers) is 40. Country singer Big Vinny Hickerson (Trailer Choir) is 34. Country singer Kellie Pickler is 31.

Thought for Today: "Logic is one thing, the human animal another. You can quite easily propose a logical solution to something and at the same time hope in your heart of hearts it won't work out." — Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936).