

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 1 of 44

Happy 4th of July!

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Schultz Construction Ad
- 2- Chicken Soup of the Soul image
- 3- Weekly Vikings Roundup
- 4- Gas at new low for 2017
- 5- What's happening at the Granary?
- 6- Manikins at Kenny's
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Today's Forecast
- 9- Yesterday's Weather
- 9- Today's Weather Info
- 9- National Weather Map
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- News from the Associated Press

Official Notices

Groton Area School Book
Brown County Official Notices Book
Groton City Official Notices Book
Other Official Notices Book

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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4

FOURTH OF JULY

Open Swim at the Pool: 1-5 p.m.

Senior Menu: NO MEAL.

Olive Grove: Firecracker couples tourney, 10 a.m. shotgun start, 18 holes

5

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff noodles, mixed vegetables, fresh fruit, cookie, whole wheat bread.

United Methodist: Wednesday Coffee time, 9 a.m.

Legion: at Redfield, 6 p.m., DH

Jr. Legion: at Redfield, 1 game, 6 p.m.

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

6

Senior Menu: Baked chicken breast, mashed potatoes with gravy, baby carrots, lemon tart bar, whole wheat bread.

Jr. Legion: at Claremont, 6 p.m., DH

Softball: host Redfield, U8 at 5:30 p.m., U10 at 6:30 p.m., U12 at 7:30 p.m.

United Methodist: Prayer Group, 7 p.m.

7


Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, California blend veggies, peach crisp, whole wheat bread.

Legion: at Mellette, 6 p.m., DH

U12: host Claremont, DH, 6:30 p.m., Nelson Field

U10 B/R: host Claremont, 5:30 p.m., Nelson Field, 1 game

U8Blue: host Claremont, 6:30 p.m., Falk Field, 1 game



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Schultz-Construction-LLC
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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 2 of 44

The background of the entire page is a stylized American flag with stars and stripes. The text is overlaid on this background.

“THE RED AND WHITE
AND STARRY BLUE IS
FREEDOM'S SHIELD
AND HOPE.”

-JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 3 of 44

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings have many of their positions set (barring an injury, knock on wood). We all know Sam Bradford will be the quarterback when the season starts, we know Kyle Rudolph will be the team's starting tight end, we know Harrison Smith will be one of the starters at safety... and so on. However, just like every team around the league, the Vikings enter the 2017 season with some positional battles many of which will be hard-fought and will last through the preseason. For the next few weeks, I'll be breaking down the biggest position battles entering training camp.

Last week, we started the position battle series. While the running back position is important, it pales in comparison to this week's position battle: center/ right guard. Last year, the offensive line was clearly the weak link on the team. Because of injuries and inconsistency along the line, the Vikings went from a championship contender to missing the playoffs. If the Vikings want to even make it to the playoffs in 2017, it starts and ends with the offensive line.

The Vikings spent big money this offseason to help shore up the line, signing Riley Rieff to be the left tackle and Mike Remmers to be the right tackle. The Vikings are also set at left guard, after spending big money on Alex Boone last offseason. Boone didn't have the greatest season, but some of that can be attributed to the poor play of those beside him. I'm hoping we see a better player than the one we saw in 2016.

With left tackle, left guard, and right tackle set, there are only two spots open to competition – center and right guard.

The Vikings have been relatively lucky at the center position in years past, going from Matt Birk to John Sullivan. After Sullivan went down with a career threatening injury, the team was forced to move veteran Joe Berger to center, where he played well the last couple seasons. However, Berger is 35 years old and only has a year or two left before he retires. Realizing he wasn't a long-term solution, the Vikings spent their second draft pick this year (3rd round) on Pat Elflein, a center from Ohio State. Elflein is a tough competitor who will get the first shot to become the team's long term answer at center.

Best case scenario, Elflein is ready to start week 1 which will move Berger to right guard. Again, he isn't a long-term solution at right guard, but the Vikings have a few young players behind him who can hopefully contribute in a year or two.

Worst case scenario, Elflein is unable to learn the center position quickly enough, forcing the team to move Berger to center. Berger will be fine at center for this season, but then the Vikings are forced to start one of their younger offensive linemen at right guard, creating an obvious weak link.

If Elflein is ready to start at center (and I'm willing to believe he is, because he switched to center his last year in college and won the Remington Award, which goes to the nation's top center in college football), the Vikings have the potential to have an average offensive line. Combine that with their top five defense and above-average offensive skill players, the Vikings should be in a position to once again be a contender in the NFL.

What do you think? Let me know by reaching out to me on Facebook ([facebook.com/SkolJWright](https://www.facebook.com/SkolJWright)) or on Twitter (@SkolJWright)!

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 4 of 44

National Gasoline Price Drops to New Low for 2017

July 3, 2017 – At \$2.23, today's national gas price average is the lowest the country has seen all year. On the week, gas prices fell in 46 states. Today, consumers can find gas for \$2.00 or less at one out of every four gas stations in the country.

"The combination of lukewarm demand and increased gasoline and crude output continues to put downward pressure on gas prices," said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. "While holiday gasoline demand is likely to reach new highs, it will probably not be enough to cause a significant increase on the price of gasoline in the coming week."

Independence Day motorists traveling between South Dakota's largest cities should be aware that the citywide gas price average for regular is 19 cents lower in Sioux Falls than in Rapid City today. Check fuel prices, updated daily, at GasPrices.AAA.com.

Current Price Averages per Gallon of Regular Gasoline

Sioux Falls – \$2.06, down 19 cents from one month ago ... down 5 cents from 7/3/16

Rapid City – \$2.25, down 19 cents from one month ago ... down 18 cents from 7/3/16

South Dakota – \$2.24, down 15 cents from one month ago ... down 9 cents from 7/3/16

U.S. – \$2.23, down 15 cents from one month ago ... down 4 cents from 7/3/16

The last time gas prices nationally were this inexpensive for the Independence Day holiday was in 2005. That year, the price on July 4 was \$2.23 per gallon, which was the first time gas prices ever rose above the \$2.00 mark for the holiday.

Quick Stats

Refineries in our region continue to run at high utilization rates, raising the need to push barrels to all markets, including outside of the U.S.

The nation's top ten least expensive markets today are: South Carolina (\$1.90), Alabama (\$1.96), Oklahoma (\$1.97), Mississippi (\$1.97), Tennessee (\$2.00), Arkansas (\$2.00), Missouri (\$2.00), Virginia (\$2.01), Texas (\$2.02) and Louisiana (\$2.04).

The nation's top ten markets with the largest monthly changes are: Ohio (-28 cents), Florida (-23 cents), Michigan (-23 cents), Indiana (-19 cents), Delaware (-19 cents), Kentucky (-18 cents), Texas (-18 cents), Maryland (-16 cents), Iowa (-16 cents) and California (-16 cents).

Global Market Dynamics

After making gains toward the end of the week, West Texas Intermediate was floating above \$46 per barrel this morning. The market has been steadily climbing after Energy Information Administration data showed that domestic oil production fell by about 100,000 barrels per day for the week ending June 23. Moreover, last week Baker Hughes, Inc. reported that for the first time in 24 weeks, the U.S. lost two oil rigs – bringing the total rig count to 756.

While the decline in active rigs might signal that U.S. production may be headed for a new trend, which could lead to a degree of tightening between supply of oil and demand for refined products, the U.S. oil rig count is still up by 415 when compared to the count last year at this time. This significant number of rigs means that the market still has a long way to go before decreased production in the U.S. has a major impact on the price per barrel of crude. In the meantime, drivers will continue to benefit from high crude production rates that have contributed to record refinery output rates this year.

In the EIA's report for the week ending June 23, it noted that gasoline demand dropped by 278,000 b/d and refinery output grew by 200,000 b/d. The drop in demand is unlikely to hold for the next reporting period given the Independence Day holiday weekend. In fact, in light of the record-breaking Memorial Day weekend demand for gasoline, demand is likely to surge to new highs in the next EIA report as AAA is forecasting drivers are expected to hit the road in record numbers for the holiday.

Most market watchers will await EIA's report this week to see if output rates begin to reverse course, which could increase prices later on during the summer. For now, refinery rates continue to exceed demand for gasoline, which is helping drivers save at the pump.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 5 of 44

What's Happening at the Granary?

**"The Apron Chronicles:
A Patchwork of American Memories"**

Come take a stroll through an iconic piece of material culture that impacted our nation in many ways. See how a piece of cloth can hold many different meanings for generations.

June 1st - Sept. 30th, 2017

Granary Rural Cultural Center
40161 128th St.
Groton, SD 57445
605.715.7117
printable map located at www.granaryfinearts.org

Gallery Hours:
Thurs. & Fri. 1-7 pm (June - Aug.)
Sat. & Sun. 1-4 pm (June - Sept.)



Artists' Collective Exhibition

"Create! On the Prairie"

at the GRANARY Rural Cultural Center
Located in rural Groton, South Dakota

June 1 - September 30, 2017

Physical Address: 40161 128th St Groton
Located 2 miles N of US Hwy 22 between Aberdeen & Groton
Printable map at GranaryFineArts.org



SHOWCASING THE WORKS OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL ARTISTS IN THE HEART OF THE PRAIRIE!

OPEN HOURS:
June - August: Thurs & Fri 1 - 7 pm, Sat & Sun 1 - 4 pm
September Only: Sat & Sun 1 - 4 pm

The Granary is an extension of Dacotah Prairie Museum of Art and History

Granary Rural Cultural Center

LIVING HISTORY FALL FESTIVAL

Save the Date!

Saturday, September 23, 2017
11:00 am - 5:00 pm
At The GRANARY - Rural Groton

Fun for All Ages! Reenactment, Demonstrations, Kids Activities, Music, Entertainment & More! CONCESSIONS BY: THE BRASS KETTLE

COME DRESSED IN FRONTIER COSTUME - GET A PRIZE!

FREE ADMISSION

NEW! Don't Miss It! Hear His Story!
PRESIDENT TEDDY ROOSEVELT
Played by Arch Ellwein



THE GRANARY
The Arts & Culture Campus of Dacotah Prairie Museum
www.dacotahprairiemuseum.com
Granary Website: granaryfinearts.org

PHIL BAKER

...IN CONCERT!

AT THE GRANARY RURAL CULTURAL CENTER

JULY 13, 2:30-3:30PM

MUSIC! GAMES! DANCING!

DOOR PRIZES • CONCESSIONS • FREE POPCORN
(MODERN RESTROOMS ON-SITE, BRING A LAWN CHAIR OR A BLANKET)

Granary Rural Cultural Center
40161 128th St • Groton, SD 57445
605.715.7117
printable driving directions at: www.granaryfinearts.org
The Granary is under the auspices of the Dacotah Prairie Museum, Groton, SD



GRANARY RURAL CULTURAL CENTER

MUSIC & OLD TIME ICE CREAM SOCIAL

"A GOOD OLE TIME! Y'ALL COME!"

FEATURED ENTERTAINMENT:
Mary Schaffer-Leasure & Wade Leasure

FLYING PIG FIDDLE & BANJO

"A Concert & Barn Dance"

SUNDAY • JULY 16, 2017 • 1-4 pm
At The GRANARY - Rural Groton • FREE ADMISSION

BYOLC: BRING YOUR OWN LAWN CHAIR
FOR THE ALL AGES!

BENCHWAVE ICE CREAM



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 6 of 44



Terry Kenny at 610 N Main in Groton uses a couple of manikins to add to his wagon scene in front of their house. He moves them around from time to time. Here the baby manikin has "angel wings," and the dad manikin is working on the flowers. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 7 of 44

Today in Weather History

July 4, 1936: Several record highs were seen on this day, including; 113 degrees 4NW of Gann Valley; 111 in Murdo; 107 in Castlewood; 106 in Clark and Highmore; 105 near Onida; 104 in Faulkton and Miller; 103 degrees 6SE of McIntosh; 101 in Pollock.

July 4, 1988: Several record highs were set on this day, including; 103 degrees in Ipswich and Britton; 102 in Webster; 101 in Summit and Artichoke Lake, MN; 99 in Leola; 98 degrees in Clear Lake and Waubay.

1776: Thomas Jefferson purchased a thermometer from a local merchant before signing the Declaration of Independence. According to his weather memorandum book, at 1 PM it was cloudy and 76 degrees.

Thomas Jefferson's Weather Observations for July, 1776

Date	Time	Temperature	Notes
July 4	8-0. a.m.	70.	
	9-12.	76 1/2	
	2-0. P.M.	80.	
	4-45.	82.	
	6-30.	81 1/2	
	9-30	78.	
11.	5-30 a.m.	74.	
	8-0.	76 1/2	
	9-40. P.M.	75.	
12.	7-0. a.m.	72.	
	9-0.	72.	
	8-30. P.M.	72.	
13.	5-30. a.m.	71 1/2	
	11-0.	74	
	2-0. P.M.	76	
	6-45.	76.	
	7-25	76.	
	9-0.	78.	rain.
14.	6-30. a.m.	73.	rain.
	9-30.	72.	rain.
	1-0. P.M.	71 1/2	min.
	1-35.	70.	
	5-0.	69.	
	8-45.	68 1/2	
15.	6-30. a.m.	66 1/2	
	9-0.	68 1/2	
	7-30. P.M.	69 1/2	
19.	5-30. a.m.	79.	
	9-0.	79.	
	4-30. P.M.	79 1/2	
	8-45.	77 1/2	
20.	5-30. a.m.	72.	
	8-20.	75.	
	2-40. P.M.	78 1/2	
	6-0.	78 1/2	
	9-0.	76.	
21.	5-15. a.m.	75.	
	11-30.	79.	
	8-0. P.M.	79.	
	9-15.	77.	
22.	6-0. a.m.	74.	
	9-0.	77 1/2	
	5-20. P.M.	84.	
	9-15.	80.	
23.	6-0. a.m.	75.	
	9-15.	77.	
	10-0. P.M.	78.	
24.	6-30. a.m.	75.	
	9-0.	75.	
	9-40. P.M.	78 1/2	
25.	6-0. a.m.	75.	
	9-0.	76 1/2	
	9-0. P.M.	78.	
26.	6-0. a.m.	72 1/2	
	9-0.	77 1/2	

Image Courtesy of the Library of Congress

1911: Record temperatures are set in the northeastern United States as a deadly heat wave hits the area that would go on to kill 380 people. In Nashua, New Hampshire, the mercury peaked at 106 degrees. Other high-temperature records were set all over New England during an 11-day period. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the History Channel.

Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 8 of 44

Independence Day



Hot

High: 95 °F

Tonight



Slight Chance T-storms

Low: 66 °F

Wednesday



Hot

High: 97 °F

Wednesday Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 68 °F

Thursday



Hot

High: 92 °F

Thursday Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 59 °F

Friday

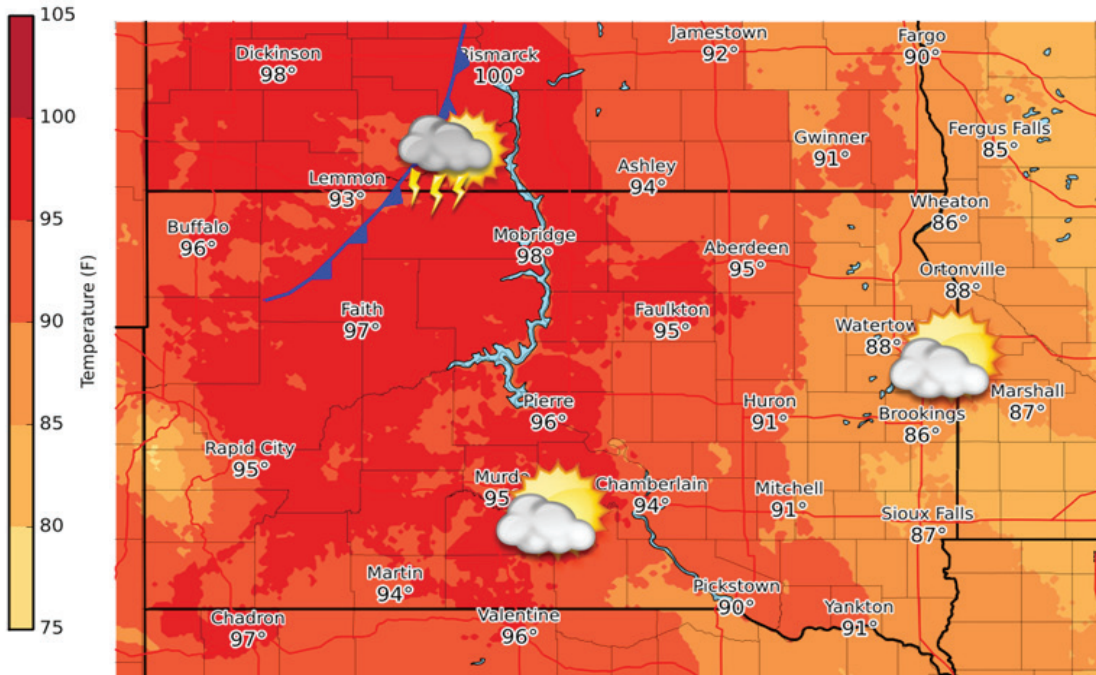


Sunny

High: 82 °F

Hot In The Afternoon Iso'd to Sct'd T-storms in the Evening

Afternoon Highs
Valid: July 04, 2017



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 7/4/2017 3:23 AM Central

Published on: 07/04/2017 at 3:32AM

It's going to be quite warm this afternoon. Stay hydrated! A cold front will begin to pass through the region by early this evening. And there is the potential for a couple thunderstorms to develop along that front, right about fireworks time! But, it shouldn't be a total wash for everyone.

Groton Daily Independent

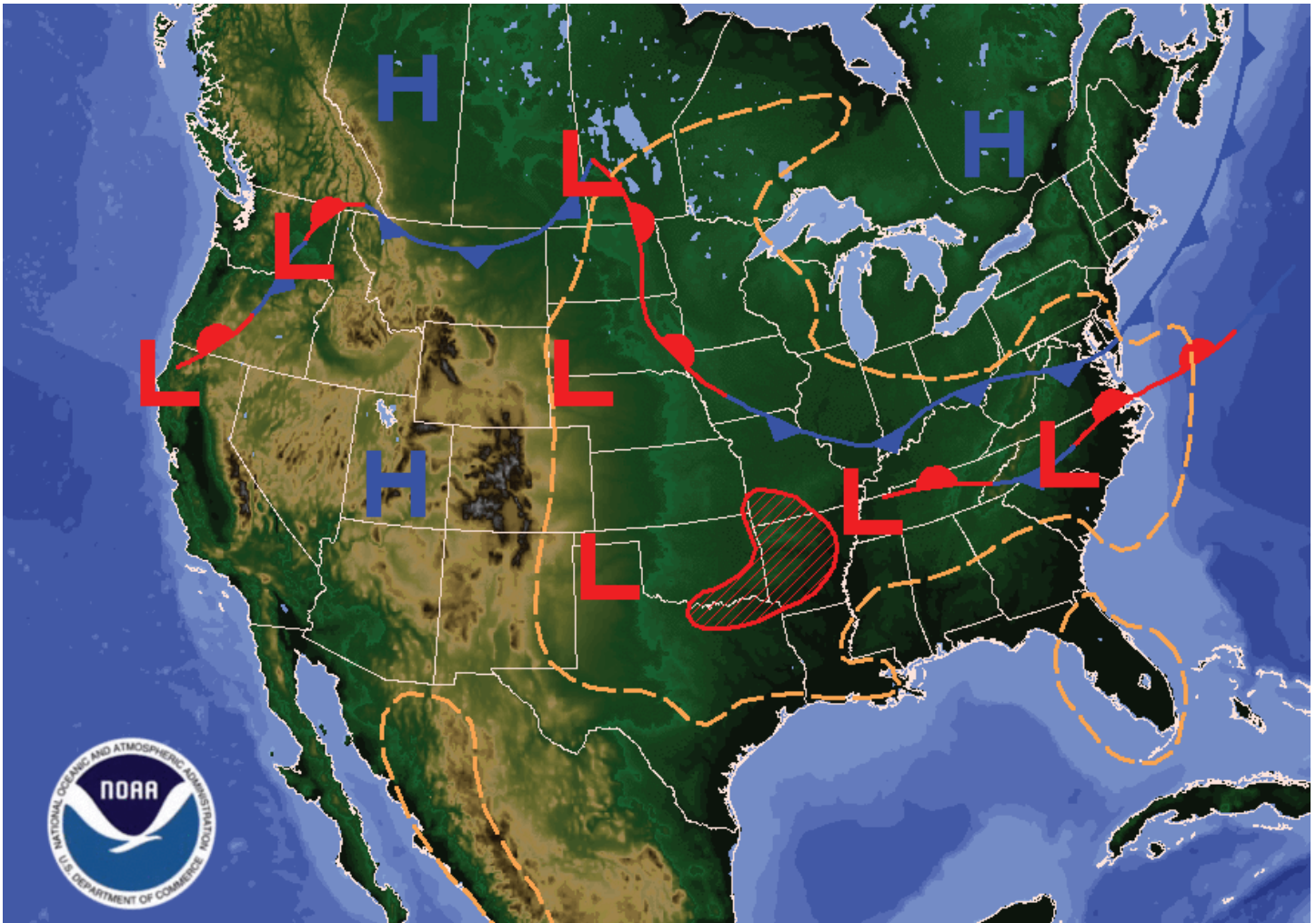
Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 9 of 44

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 85.3 F at 4:58 PM
Low Outside Temp: 57.5 F at 4:23 AM
High Gust: 18.0 Mph at 5:05 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1988
Record Low: 40° in 1967
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July: 0.42
Precip to date in July: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 11.26
Precip Year to Date: 5.77
Sunset Tonight: 9:24 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:51 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Jul 04, 2017, issued 4:41 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)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 10 of 44



CALLING FOR GOD IN A CRISIS

There are some psychologists who believe that our need for safety, structure and stability are more important than nearly anything else. Perhaps they are right.

When we look around and feel threatened and insecure, we become frightened and build what we think are protective walls to make us safe and secure. Yet, often the protective walls we have wrapped around us are suddenly removed and we become frightened and afraid.

Could it be that God is offering us an unplanned opportunity to grow closer to Him? Disaster strikes and we immediately grasp for His protection. We suddenly realize we desperately need Him and since there is no one else to turn to we call on Him for help. We need a "miracle working God" and want Him to do something special for us. So, we call on Him in desperation because we need help and believe that only He can rescue us.

David did not have an easy life. From infancy to old age he knew and experienced the stress and strain and storms of life. We find many examples of this in his writings. One is when he cried, "I give my soul to You, O Lord. All of me – body, mind and spirit – Lord, is now Yours!" Save me and "Let me not be ashamed" for doubting You. David's army and armour could not help.

Overwhelmed with fear he called upon God. He knew that he needed a power beyond himself and knew Who that power was. And when he called, God answered.

Prayer: May we, Lord, come to realize that in and of ourselves we are nothing and need Your protection. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 25:1-2 In you, LORD my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

News from the Associated Press

Dispute over Dakota Access handling of artifacts to linger

By BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A dispute over whether the Texas-based developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline improperly reported the discovery of American Indian artifacts in North Dakota will linger into the fall, as the company continues fighting a relatively minor violation and small fine.

Energy Transfer Partners has been battling since November when state regulators filed a complaint and proposed a \$15,000 fine, which pales in comparison to the \$3.8 billion cost of the pipeline that began moving oil last month.

The complaint came after the Public Service Commission, which oversees pipelines, was notified by a third-party inspector that pipeline crews last October had diverted construction of the pipeline around Native American artifacts. The company had obtained the approval of the State Historic Preservation Office but not of the commission.

The artifacts weren't disturbed and ETP maintains it didn't intentionally do anything wrong. A public hearing on the issue was scheduled for Aug. 16, but the company requested that written arguments be made first. The PSC has agreed to a briefing schedule with a final deadline of Sept. 22. The hearing will be rescheduled after that, Commissioner Julie Fedorchak said.

ETP didn't comment on the reason for its request.

The pipeline began moving North Dakota oil to a distribution point in Illinois on June 1, after approval by the Trump administration ended months of delays caused in part by protests in North Dakota that resulted in 761 arrests between August and February. American Indian tribes and supporters fear environmental harm; ETP says the pipeline is safe.

The commission also is looking into whether the company removed too many trees while laying pipe in the state. An Aug. 17 public hearing is still scheduled. There is not yet a formal complaint in that matter, and "briefs on that at this point would be premature," Fedorchak said.

The company could face fines of up to \$200,000 if found to have violated state rules in either case, though it could contest any fines in state district court.

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

Minnesota Wild open development camp for prospects Saturday

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — The Minnesota Wild will hold a development camp for prospects starting Saturday at Xcel Energy Center.

The on-ice sessions will be led by Minnesota assistant coaches Darby Hendrickson and Bob Woods and other team officials. Players will participate in daily strength and conditioning sessions, as well as other training.

The development camp will feature two scrimmages that are free and open to the public, on Tuesday, July 11 at 2:30 p.m. and on Thursday, July 13, at 5 p.m.

The Wild will also host a block party on July 13 from 6-9 p.m. at the Seven Corners parking lot across from Xcel Energy Center, featuring appearances by Wild players and prospects.

A total of 42 players are scheduled to attend development camp, including 15 selected in the NHL Entry Draft.

Minnesota Wild re-sign free-agent defenseman Mike Reilly

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — The Minnesota Wild have re-signed restricted free-agent defenseman Mike Reilly to a two-year, \$1.45 million contract.

Reilly originally signed with Minnesota as a free agent in 2015. The 23-year-old registered one goal and two penalty minutes in 17 games with Minnesota last season.

The 6-foot-2, 193-pound blueliner added 30 points and 48 penalty minutes in 57 games with the Iowa Wild of the AHL last year, leading defensemen in scoring, assists and shots, and ranking second in goals and power-play goals.

The Chicago native totaled seven points and eight penalty minutes with Minnesota in 2015-16, including his NHL debut at Dallas on Jan. 9, 2016.

South Dakota county struggles with cost of drug epidemic

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota county is fielding requests to hire more attorneys and sheriff's deputies as its drug epidemic intensifies, but officials say there isn't enough money to go around.

Minnehaha County commissioners told the Argus Leader (<http://argusne.ws/2tifIel>) they don't have enough funds to fill requests from the South Dakota attorney's office, the public defender's office and the sheriff's office.

Filling them would require cutting spending in other areas, said Commissioner Jeff Barth.

"We won't be able to fund all of them. That is the nature of the business," Barth said.

Barth said there also isn't enough office space to accommodate the additional staff being requested.

Public safety issues have exceeded revenue by three or four times, said Commission chair Gerald Beninga. Law enforcement has used at least 45 percent of the county's budget every year since fiscal year 2013.

Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead said drug use in the county and state has risen in recent years with the resurgence of methamphetamine, and agencies tasked with dealing with the meth epidemic have seen an increasing demand for services.

The county sheriff's office saw a 13 percent increase in drug-related arrests last year. The main drugs the sheriff's office deals with are marijuana, meth and prescription pills.

Milstead said he's requested to hire another jailor and a patrol deputy for 2018.

"It's just across the board," Milstead said. "This is a very difficult thing to manage with the existing resources."

Commissioners must have a proposed budget outline for next year by the end of July. A final draft is needed by September.

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

June climbing up despite voluntary ban at Devils Tower

DEVILS TOWER, Wyo. (AP) — The number of people who climb an unusual rock formation in northeast Wyoming during June is on the rise despite the concerns of American Indian tribes who hold the place sacred.

Devils Tower is nearly 900 feet tall from base to summit. Devils Tower National Monument was the first U.S.



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 13 of 44

national monument and many know the volcanic feature for its role in the 1977 film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

Devils Tower is a popular target for climbers but also culturally significant to at least 25 tribes in the region. In the mid-1990s, climbers, the tribes and National Park Service officials agreed to a compromise that put the tower voluntarily off-limits to climbing during June.

The number of people climbing Devils Tower in June fell from 1,200 to just 167 in June 1995. Lately the number is back up, reaching 373 in June 2016, Wyoming Public Radio reported (<http://bit.ly/2sbn6Xi>).

A steady increase in June climbing over the past five years isn't tied to the growing number of people visiting Devils Tower, monument superintendent Tim Reid said.

"It's safe to say that largely, the bulk of June climbing is done by relatively local or regional climbers who for whatever reasons find it personally acceptable to climb in June," Reid said.

It's painful when climbers ignore the closure, said Waylon Black Crow Senior as he chaperoned Lakota youth from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

"We see them climbing up there," said Black Crow. "And all we can do is watch."

Recent June climbers included commercial guide and lodge owner Frank Sanders, who said he knew not everyone agreed with his decision to climb then.

"The tower's not for one person, or one group of people, or one month, or one day, or one week," said Sanders. "It's for all of us."

Information from: KUWR-FM, <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/wpr/>

Midwest economy: June state-by-state glance

By The Associated Press

The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates an expanding economy over the next three to six months.

Here are the state-by-state results for June:

Arkansas: The state's overall index rose to 66.1 from May's 58.4. Components of the index were new orders at 73.2, production or sales at 75.3, delivery lead time at 58.3, inventories at 59.5, and employment at 64.2. "Manufacturers in the state are now adding jobs at a quicker pace," Goss said. Based on surveys over the past several months, Arkansas will continue to add manufacturing and nonmanufacturing jobs at a healthy pace.

Iowa: The overall index for Iowa improved to 61.4 from 57.5 in May. Components of the index were new orders at 68, production or sales at 70, delivery lead time at 54.2, employment at 59.6, and inventories at 55.3. "Nondurable goods continue to add jobs at a solid pace more than offsetting losses for the state's durable goods producers," Goss said. "Manufacturing and nonmanufacturing activity will continue to expand in the state through the fourth quarter of this year with job gains trailing the expansion in overall economic activity."

Kansas: The overall index for Kansas expanded to 56.3 from May's 53.9. Components of the index were new orders at 62.3, production or sales at 64.2, delivery lead time at 49.7, employment at 54.7, and inventories at 50.7. "Gains for nondurable goods producers, including food processors, more than offset pullbacks for durable goods manufacturers including transportation equipment manufacturers," Goss said.

Minnesota: The state index soared to a regional high 68 in June from May's healthy 58.4. Components of the overall June index were new orders at 75.2, production or sales at 77.4, delivery lead time at 59.9, inventories at 61.2, and employment at 66. "Expansions were recorded for a broad range of manufacturers,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 14 of 44

both durable and nondurable, including navigation equipment producers, medical equipment manufacturers and food processors. Based on surveys over the past several months, the state economy will continue to grow at a healthy pace through the fourth quarter of this year," Goss said.

Missouri: The overall index for Missouri rose to 53.8 from 51 in May. Components of the overall June index were new orders at 59.6, production or sales at 61.3, delivery lead time at 47.5, inventories at 48.5, and employment at 52.3. "Growth was recorded by nondurable and durable goods producers in the state. However, manufacturing growth continues to lag behind nonmanufacturing advancements. Business expansion will remain positive through the end of the final quarter of this year," said Goss.

Nebraska: The Nebraska index grew to 61.3 from 55.2 in May. Components of the index from the monthly survey of supply managers were new orders at 67.8, production or sales at 69.8, delivery lead time at 54, inventories at 55.2, and employment at 59.5. "Durable goods producers continue to shed jobs. However, these losses are more than offset by gains among nondurable goods manufacturers in the state. Expansions were very healthy for foods processors in the state as metal manufacturers and machinery producers recorded pullbacks," Goss said.

North Dakota: The state's overall index jumped to 67.2 in June from May's 53.9. Components of the overall index were new orders at 74.4, production or sales at 76.3, delivery lead time at 59.2, employment at 65.2, and inventories at 60.5. "Manufacturing linked to energy is once again expanding as manufacturers tied to agriculture continue to experience pullbacks. Based on surveys over the past several months, the state will continue to add jobs and economic activity through the fourth quarter of this year," said Goss.

Oklahoma: The overall index climbed to 57.7 from 54.2 in May. The components include new orders at 63.9, production or sales at 65.7, delivery lead time at 50.9, inventories at 51.9, and employment at 56.0. "Oklahoma manufacturers are once again adding jobs and expanding economic activity. Food processors in the state are experiencing healthy business and job growth. Oklahoma will, based on recent surveys, continue to expand at a positive pace, but unspectacular pace through the final quarter of this year," said Goss.

South Dakota: The overall index for South Dakota increased to 67.4 from May's regional high 61.7. Components of the overall index were new orders at 74.6, production or sales at 76.8, delivery lead time at 59.5, inventories at 60.7, and employment at 65.5. "Expansions among nondurable goods manufacturers in the state more than compensated for slight losses for durable goods producers. Manufacturing output in the state is growing at a healthy pace even as producers add jobs at a sub-par rate," said Goss.

Healthy economic growth expected in Midwest, Plains states

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The economy will likely continue growing at a healthy pace over the next few months in nine Midwest and Plains states, according to a monthly survey of business leaders released Monday.

The overall economic index for the region increased to 62.3 in June from May's solid 55.5. Any score above 50 suggests growth.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss said the Federal Reserve's recent interest rate hike didn't dampen business leaders' confidence in the economy.

"The overall index over the past several months indicates a healthy regional manufacturing economy, and points to healthy growth for both manufacturing and nonmanufacturing into the fourth quarter of this year," Goss said.

The survey released Monday covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth in that factor, while a score below that suggests decline.

The monthly employment index remained at a strong level of 60.7 even though it declined slightly from May's 62.3.

Goss said that food processors and ethanol producers are adding jobs in the region faster than durable goods manufacturers are eliminating jobs.

"As a result, the job picture for regional manufacturing continues to improve," Goss said. The business leaders are feeling optimistic. The confidence index jumped to 67.5 in June from May's 61.4. The survey's wholesale price index remained elevated at 69.4 in June even though it was slightly lower than May's 73.1. The export index increased to 56.6 in June from May's 54. The import index also grew to 56.7 from May's 52.4.

No 'specific agenda,' but Trump, Putin have lots to discuss

By JOSH LEDERMAN and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's first face-to-face meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday will be brimming with global intrigue, but the White House says there's "no specific agenda." So in the absence of a set list of topics, what are two of the world's most famously unpredictable leaders to discuss?

Trump, who prefers to have neatly packaged achievements to pair with high-profile meetings, may be looking for some concessions from Russia to show he's delivering progress and helping restore a productive relationship between the two powers. Putin would almost surely want something in return, and there's a long list of "irritants" between the two countries that they could potentially resolve.

Ahead of the meeting, White House National Security Council and State Department officials have been reviewing possible gestures the U.S. could offer Russia as part of the meeting, a current and a former administration official said. They weren't authorized to comment publicly and requested anonymity.

Yet any outward sign of bonhomie between Trump and Putin would be immediately seized upon by the president's critics and Russia hawks eager to show he's cozying up to the Russian leader. The ongoing investigations into Russia's interference in the U.S. election and potential Trump campaign collusion won't be far from anyone's minds.

The two leaders will sit down in Hamburg, Germany, on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit of leading rich and developing nations. Ahead of the meeting, Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak met Monday in Washington with the No. 3 U.S. diplomat, Thomas Shannon, to prepare.

A look at what Trump and Putin could address:

ELECTION HACKING

Trump has been reluctant to publicly and directly acknowledge Russia's role in meddling in the U.S. election, out of apparent concern it undermines the legitimacy of his win. He's also insisted there was no collusion with him or his campaign, a conclusion that U.S. investigators have not yet reached.

U.S. officials says Russia tried to hack election systems in 21 states and to sway the election for Trump, a level of interference in the U.S. political system that security experts say represents a top-level threat that should command a forceful response from the U.S. Putin has denied all this.

There are no indications Trump plans to raise Russia's meddling at the meeting. Yet if he doesn't, it will give fuel to Trump's critics who say he's blatantly ignoring a major national security threat. It could also embolden those who say Trump is trying to cover for the Russians after benefiting from their interference.

IRRITANTS

Each side has a long list of complaints about the other that do not rise to the geopolitical level but are nonetheless impeding broader attempts to coordinate or cooperate on larger concerns. After meeting in Moscow earlier this year, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov agreed to set up a mechanism to deal with these issues the Russians describe as "irritants" and the Americans call "the smalls."

But even that effort has stalled. After the Treasury last month imposed new sanctions on Russia for its intervention in Ukraine, Moscow called off a scheduled second meeting between Thomas Shannon, the U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, and Sergey Ryabkov, a Russian deputy foreign minister.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 16 of 44

Shannon and Ryabkov's canceled June 23 meeting in St. Petersburg has yet to be rescheduled.

It was not clear if either Trump or Putin would seek to reopen the channel when they see each other in Hamburg, although Tillerson and other State Department officials have taken pains to stress that they remain open to a resumption of the talks.

RUSSIA'S WISH LIST

Russia has been especially vocal about its chief demand: the return of two properties it owns in the U.S. that were seized by the Obama administration as punishment for Russian meddling in the 2016 election. The recreational compounds are located in Oyster Bay, New York, on Long Island, and along the Corsica River in the Eastern Shore region of Maryland.

On Monday, Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, said Russia had been remarkably restrained by declining to retaliate but that its patience was running out. If the U.S. doesn't soon give back the compounds, also known as dachas, Moscow will have no choice but to retaliate, Ushakov said.

Another Russian demand is to ease surveillance of its diplomats in the U.S.

US DEMANDS

The U.S. has its own list, topped by a resumption of adoptions of Russian children by American parents which Russia banned in late 2012, an end to what it says is intensifying harassment of U.S. diplomats and other officials in Russia and a resolution to a dispute over a piece of land in St. Petersburg that was meant to be the site of a new U.S. consulate in Russia's second-largest city. The U.S. also wants expanded cultural and exchange programs between the two countries. Such programs were vastly curtailed or ended after Putin's 2012 return to the Kremlin in an election he accused Washington of interfering in.

Tillerson has made the adoption issue a priority, according to aides, although it remains unclear if he has succeeded in convincing the Russians to even consider revisiting the ban. The property dispute in St. Petersburg dates to 2014 when Russia blocked the U.S. from developing the site after the Obama administration hit Russia with sanctions because of its annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region.

Officials say the U.S. won't simply swap the Russian compounds for the St. Petersburg consulate. Action on the other demands is also required, they say.

UKRAINE SANCTIONS

Moscow has long sought an easing of economic sanctions the U.S. slapped on Russia over its actions in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, which the U.S. does not recognize. Though there were indications that Trump's aides entertained easing the sanctions in the run-up to the inauguration and early days of his presidency, his administration has repeatedly insisted that they will stay in place until Russia pulls out of Crimea and lives up to its commitments under a cease-fire deal for eastern Ukraine that has never been fully implemented.

Given that Russia has taken neither of those steps, easing sanctions would require a major reversal by Trump and would infuriate Russia hawks in both parties in the U.S. In fact, Congress has been pushing to increase sanctions on Russia and make them harder for Trump to lift. The Senate has passed the popular measure, which won't go to a House vote before Trump's meeting with Putin.

SYRIA

Eager to bolster his global legitimacy, Putin has been pressing the U.S. to cooperate militarily with Russia in Syria, where both Moscow and Washington oppose the Islamic State group but disagree about Syrian President Bashar Assad. Though defense laws passed in the wake of the Ukraine crisis bar the U.S. military from cooperating with Russia, the two have maintained a "deconfliction" hotline to ensure their forces don't accidentally collide on the crowded Syrian battlefield.

The Pentagon has steadfastly resisted proposals to work closely with Russia in Syria, out of concern the U.S. can't trust Moscow with sensitive intelligence information. But the problems posed by the lack

of coordination in Syria have resurfaced following recent events. The U.S. has recently shot down several pro-Syrian government aircraft, leading Russia, an ally of the Syrian government, to threaten to shoot down any aircraft that flies west of the Euphrates River.

Reach Josh Lederman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joshledermanAP> and Matthew Lee at <https://twitter.com/APDiploWriter>

US-backed forces breach wall around Raqqa's Old City

By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — U.S.-backed Syrian forces have breached the wall around Raqqa's Old City, the U.S. military said Tuesday, marking a major advance in the weeks-old battle to drive Islamic State militants out of their self-declared capital.

The U.S. Central Command said the coalition struck two "small portions" of the Rafiqah Wall, allowing the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces "to advance into the most heavily fortified portion" of the city, bypassing booby traps and snipers. It said the strikes left most of the 2,500-meter (yard) wall intact.

The head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdurrahman, said the breaching of the wall was the most important development to date in the battle for Raqqa. He said three SDF units advanced toward the wall under air cover, breaking through the IS defenses, and that heavy clashes were underway.

Footage provided by the SDF showed their fighters roaming Qasr al-Banat, a historic quarter inside Raqqa's Old City. Another unit entered through the so-called Baghdad Gate, opening up a second front inside the Old City.

The U.S. military said IS fighters were using the historic wall as a fighting position, and had planted explosives at several openings. It said the coalition forces were making every effort to protect civilians and preserve the historic sites.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces launched a multi-pronged assault on Raqqa last month after securing the surrounding countryside. On Sunday, the U.S.-backed fighters crossed the Euphrates River on the southern edge of the city, completing its encirclement.

U.N. officials say 50,000 to 100,000 civilians remain in the city amid "dire" conditions. Those who try to escape risk being attacked by IS militants or forcibly recruited as human shields.

The U.S.-led coalition is providing close air support to the SDF, which has already driven the extremists from much of northern and eastern Syria.

Several IS leaders were once based in Raqqa, where the group plotted attacks in Europe. The loss of the northern Syrian city, one of the last IS strongholds, would deal a major blow to the group. The militants are also on the verge of losing their last foothold in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, where they declared an Islamic caliphate three years ago.

As IS loses ground, tensions are rising among the array of forces battling it.

Turkey shelled several villages in Syria overnight Tuesday, killing a woman and two children, according to Kurdish officials and Syrian activists. The Kurdish-run Hawar news agency said the three were killed, and several others wounded, near Afrin, a Kurdish-controlled enclave near the border with Turkey.

Turkey's private Dogan news agency said Turkish artillery units responded after the border region came under fire late Monday.

The SDF is dominated by the People's Protection Units, or YPG, which Turkey views as an extension of the Kurdish rebels fighting in its southeast.

Turkish Defense Minister Fikri Isik said Tuesday that Turkey may launch a cross-border operation into Afrin if it constitutes a "constant security threat."

In Europe, Trump gets 2nd chance to make 1st impression

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump will learn this week whether he gets a second chance to make a first impression as he returns to Europe and has his first encounter with Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Trump's first visit to the continent in May stirred anxieties among European allies when he declined to endorse NATO's common defense treaty explicitly and scolded world leaders for not spending more on their armed forces. This time, Trump will use stops in Poland and Germany to try to pull off the tricky balancing act of improving ties with Moscow at a time of particularly fraught relations while also presenting the U.S. as a check against Russian aggression.

Trump is leaving Washington for Europe on Wednesday. In what may be the most-watched event of the four-day trip, the president will meet Putin on Friday on the sidelines of an international summit in Hamburg, Germany. Every aspect of the meeting between the

two unpredictable leaders is sure to be closely scrutinized as investigations press on into alleged Moscow meddling in the 2016 election and potential Trump campaign collusion.

With those investigations hanging heavy in the air, there is little expectation the meeting will produce significant progress on difficult issues such as the crisis in Ukraine or the conflict in Syria.

"I can't imagine any issue they can actually make major headway on, given the poison that surrounds the relationship," said Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow in foreign policy at The Brookings Institution, who suggested it might lay the groundwork for future cooperation.

The Trump-Putin encounter will be one of at least nine meetings the U.S. president will have with foreign leaders while in Hamburg for a Group of 20 summit of industrial and emerging market nations, beginning Friday.

But first Trump will stop in Poland, where leaders are looking for reassurance that the presence of U.S. and NATO troops there will continue as long as the region's security is threatened by a resurgent Russia. In return, Trump will be expecting a warm reception as he pays homage to Polish resolve with a speech Thursday in Krasinski Square, his first major outdoor address in a foreign country.

Poland's leaders are closely aligned with Trump's worldview, and ruling party lawmakers and pro-government activists plan to bus in groups to help ensure an enthusiastic crowd for Trump after his rather awkward European debut in May.

Previewing the trip, White House officials said Trump would reiterate the U.S. commitment to NATO's



In this May 26, 2017 file photo, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, accompanied by European Council President Donald Tusk, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, talks with President Donald Trump during a family photo with G7 leaders at the Ancient Greek Theater of Taormina in Taormina, Italy. President Donald Trump will learn this week whether he gets a second chance to make a first impression as he returns to Europe and has his first encounter with Russia's Vladimir Putin. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci, File)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 19 of 44

Article 5, which says an attack on one member is an attack on all — something he didn't do at NATO headquarters in Brussels during his first overseas trip but eventually endorsed last month. The president is also expected to cite the need to develop "a common approach to Russia," his advisers said.

"He'd like the United States and the entire West to develop a more constructive relationship with Russia," said the White House national security adviser, H.R. McMaster. "But he's also made clear that we will do what is necessary to confront Russia's destabilizing behavior."

Preparing for the trip, Trump spoke Monday with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni. Earlier in the holiday weekend, he had conversations with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

After this trip, the president will be back in Europe soon for a mid-July visit to France to celebrate Bastille Day alongside new French President Emmanuel Macron. And in late July, he'll send Vice President Mike Pence to Estonia and Georgia — two former Soviet satellites straddling the Russian border — and new NATO member Montenegro.

Poland has been a staunch U.S. ally in Iraq and Afghanistan and is home to about 5,000 U.S. troops serving in separate American and NATO missions.

"They're betting that this relationship with the United States on defense will balance their concerns about the possible directions of U.S.-Russia policy," said Jeff Rathke, a senior fellow and deputy director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Sharing a border with Russia "is of the highest concern for Poland."

U.S.-Russian relations remain tense — Trump said in April they may be at an "all-time low" — and Moscow has denounced the recent decision by the U.S. to impose sanctions on more than three dozen Russian people and firms over Russian activities in Ukraine. But Trump has expressed hopes of improved relations with the global power.

White House aides said Trump did not have a specific agenda for the meeting with the Russian president and they have yet to provide details on the staging for the encounter. Trump has had three phone calls with Putin since taking office. In the past, he's offered contradictory descriptions of his connections with Putin, insisting during the campaign he had no recollection of meeting him but earlier stating that they spoke around the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow.

Trump's overseas trip will be his first since he announced that he was withdrawing the U.S. from the landmark Paris climate agreement, to the regret of a number of world leaders who had lobbied Trump to remain in the 2015 pact. The White House said Trump and Merkel discussed the climate issues in their conversation Monday.

Merkel, host of the G-20 summit, has been open about her disappointment in Trump's decision and told the German parliament "we cannot expect easy talks in Hamburg" on climate issues.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

On Twitter follow Ken Thomas at <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

Trump criticizes Kim Jong Un after latest missile launch

By LOU KESTEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump criticized North Korean leader Kim Jong Un after that country's latest missile launch, asking, "Does this guy have anything better to do with his life?"

Trump wrote on Twitter late Monday that it's "Hard to believe that South Korea ... and Japan will put up with this much longer."

And he urged North Korea's biggest ally, China, to "put a heavy move on North Korea and end this nonsense once and for all!"

South Korean officials said early Tuesday that North Korea had launched another ballistic missile toward

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 20 of 44

Japan, part of a string of recent test firings as the North works to build a nuclear-tipped missile that could reach the United States.

For its part, North Korea claimed to have tested its first intercontinental ballistic missile. But its declaration conflicted with South Korean and U.S. assessments earlier.

The U.S. Defense Department said U.S. Pacific Command detected and tracked the launch of a land-based, intermediate range ballistic missile from North Korea's Panghyon Airfield. The missile was tracked for 37 minutes and landed in the Sea of Japan.

A test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile, if confirmed, would be a major step forward in developing a nuclear-armed missile that could reach the United States.

Shortly before Trump's tweets, the White House said he had been briefed on the South Korean report.

The missile launch comes as the Trump administration has displayed increasing frustration with China's reluctance to put more pressure on North Korea. Last week, the U.S. blacklisted a small Chinese bank over its business ties with North Korea.

The White House said Trump brought up the North Korean missile program during a phone call Sunday with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Chinese state media reported that Xi warned Trump that "some negative factors" are hurting U.S.-China relations.

The New York Times, citing anonymous administration officials, reported Monday that Trump told Xi the U.S. was ready to act on its own against North Korea.

A senior U.S. official told foreign policy experts last week that the U.S. has made clear to China that Chinese banks and companies conducting business with Pyongyang will face sanctions if there is no movement on North Korea's nuclear activities, a participant in the meeting told The Associated Press. The individual wasn't authorized to speak publicly on the matter and asked that his name and that of the senior official be withheld.

Associated Press writer Bradley Klapper contributed to this report.

North Korea claims it tested first intercontinental missile

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM and FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Tuesday claimed it successfully test-launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile, a potential game-changing development in what may be the world's most dangerous nuclear standoff and, if true, a direct rebuke to U.S. President Donald Trump's earlier declaration that such a test "won't happen!"

The launch appeared to be North Korea's most successful missile test yet. A U.S. scientist examining the height and distance said the missile could potentially be powerful enough to reach Alaska.

In typically heated rhetoric, North Korea's Academy of Defense Science said the test of an ICBM — the Hwasong-14 — marked the "final step" in creating a "confident and powerful nuclear state that can strike anywhere on Earth."

It will be difficult to confirm many details about what happened. North Korea's weapons program is perhaps the most closely held state secret in one of the world's most suspicious nations. U.S., South Korean and Japanese officials earlier assessed that the North fired an intermediate-range missile into waters near Japan.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga declined to comment on whether Japan thinks it was an ICBM, and South Korea's Defense Ministry said it was analyzing whether the North's statement was accurate.

North Korea has previously launched satellites in what critics said were disguised tests of its long-range missile technology. A test-launch of an ICBM, however, would be a major step in developing nuclear-armed missiles that could reach anywhere in the United States.

The launch sends a political warning to Washington and its chief Asian allies, Seoul and Tokyo, while also allowing North Korean scientists a chance to perfect their still-incomplete nuclear missile program. It came on the eve of the U.S. Independence Day holiday, days after the first face-to-face meeting of the leaders

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 21 of 44

of South Korea and the United States, and ahead of a global summit of the world's richest economies.

Most outside and North Korean analyses of the missile's height, distance and time in the air were roughly similar.

U.S., South Korean and Japanese officials say it flew for about 40 minutes and reached an altitude of 2,500 kilometers (1,500 miles), which would be longer and higher than any similar North Korean test previously reported. It also covered a distance of about 930 kilometers (580 miles).

North Korea said the missile flew as high as 2,802 kilometers before hitting a designated target in the ocean about 933 kilometers away from the launch site in the North's northwest. It said the missile flew for about 39 minutes and was made at the highest possible angle.

Russia's military, however, said the missile flew considerably shorter and lower than others reported.

Before North Korea's announcement of an ICBM, South Korean analysts said it was likely that it was a retest of one of two intermediate-range missiles launched earlier this year.

One U.S. missile scientist, David Wright, estimated that the highly lofted missile, if the reported time and distance are correct, could have a possible maximum range of 6,700 kilometers (4,160 miles), which could put Alaska in its range, if fired at a normal trajectory.

Hamish de Bretton-Gordon, a former commanding officer of the British Armed Forces Joint Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Regiment, said that "in capability of missile terms and delivery, it is a major step up and they seem to be making progress week-on-week." He added, however, that "actually marrying the warhead to the missile is probably the biggest challenge, which they appear not to have progressed on."

North Korea has a reliable arsenal of shorter-range missiles and is thought to have a small arsenal of atomic bombs, but is still trying to perfect its longer-range missiles. Some outside civilian experts believe the North has the technology to mount warheads on shorter-range Rodong and Scud missiles that can strike South Korea and Japan, two key U.S. allies where about 80,000 American troops are stationed. But it's unclear if it has mastered the technology needed to build an atomic bomb that can fit on a long-range missile.

Soon after the morning launch, President Trump responded on Twitter: "North Korea has just launched another missile. Does this guy have anything better to do with his life? Hard to believe that South Korea and Japan will put up with this much longer. Perhaps China will put a heavy move on North Korea and end this nonsense once and for all!"

"This guy" presumably refers to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. China is North Korea's economic lifeline and only major ally, and the Trump administration is pushing Beijing to do more to push the North toward disarmament.

After North Korea claimed earlier this year it was close to an ICBM test launch, Trump took to Twitter and said, "It won't happen!"

In Beijing, China's foreign ministry urged North Korea on Tuesday "to stop taking actions that violate United Nations Security Council resolutions."

"We hope all relevant parties can exercise restraint, ease tensions on the peninsula as soon as possible, and bring the peninsular issue back to the correct track of peace talks and consultation," ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a regular briefing.

The missile test could invite a new round of international sanctions, but North Korea is already one of the most sanctioned countries on Earth. U.N. Security Council resolutions ban it from engaging in any ballistic activities. Since late 2012, North Korea has placed two satellites into orbit with long-range rockets, each time triggering new U.N. sanctions and worldwide condemnation.

Last year, North Korea conducted its fourth and fifth atomic bomb tests and claimed a series of technical breakthroughs in its efforts to develop long-range nuclear missiles. The fifth nuclear test in September was the North's most powerful atomic detonation to date.

In their meeting last week, South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Trump vowed to oppose North Korea's development of atomic weapons.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sharply criticized North Korea for the launch. "The latest launch

clearly showed that the threat is growing," Abe said.

Abe, who talked by phone with Trump on Monday, said the two leaders plan to seek cooperation from world leaders when they attend a G-20 summit in Germany.

On May 14, North Korea launched a Hwasong-12 missile which its state media said flew as high as 2,111 kilometers (1,310 miles) and landed in a targeted area in the ocean about 787 kilometers (490 miles) from the launch site. On May 21, North Korea tested a Pukguksong-2, which traveled about 500 kilometers (310 miles).

The Korean Peninsula has been divided since before the 1950-53 Korean War. Almost 30,000 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea.

Since taking office on May 10, Moon has tried to improve strained ties with North Korea, but the North has continued its missile tests. North Korea says it needs nuclear weapons and powerful missiles to cope with what it calls rising U.S. military threats.

Since taking office after his dictator father Kim Jong Il's death in late 2011, Kim Jong Un has overseen three nuclear weapons tests and a slew of missile tests. Regional disarmament talks on North Korea's nuclear program have been deadlocked since 2009, when the North pulled out of the negotiations to protest international condemnation over a long-range rocket launch.

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

Christie feels the heat politically after a day at the beach

By MICHAEL CATALINI, Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — There's Gov. Chris Christie, lounging in a beach chair in the Oval Office. There he is again, sitting in the sand as the lovers from the movie "From Here to Eternity" roll around in the surf. And there he is, relaxing outside the meat store from "The Sopranos."

Christie is getting blistered online and in the real world after he was photographed with his family soaking up the sun on a beach that he had closed to the public over the Fourth of July weekend because of a government shutdown that was finally resolved Monday night.

Christie, a deeply unpopular Republican serving out his final six months in office, was lambasted Monday as selfish and arrogant, and jokesters online inserted the picture of him in sandals, shorts and a T-shirt into various photos and movie and TV scenes.

"Tell Gov. Christie: Get the hell off Island Beach State Park," read



In this Sunday, July 2, 2017, photo, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, right, uses the beach with his family and friends at the governor's summer house at Island Beach State Park in New Jersey. Christie is defending his use of the beach, closed to the public during New Jersey's government shutdown, saying he had previously announced his vacation plans and the media had simply "caught a politician keeping his word."

(Andrew Mills/NJ Advance Media via AP)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 23 of 44

a banner carried by a plane flying up and down the New Jersey coast Monday, mocking the time the tough-talking governor told people to "get the hell off the beach" during a hurricane in 2011.

New Jersey state beaches and parks were shut down over the weekend along with motor vehicle offices and other services deemed nonessential after Christie and the Democratic-controlled Legislature failed to agree on a budget for the new fiscal year that began Saturday.

They reached an agreement on a \$34.7 billion budget Monday night, and Christie signed the budget early Tuesday. He said parks and beaches would be open for Independence Day.

Christie defended his visit to the shore while the public was denied access, saying that he had previously announced his plans to vacation at the state-owned governor's beach house and that the media had simply "caught a politician keeping his word."

Christie also said his son apologized to him for inviting his friends to the house and getting him "all this heat," to which Christie said his son "never" has to apologize and he has no regrets about spending time with his family.

"This is who I am, and I've never pretended to be anything other than that," he said.

After Christie was photographed on the beach, he sarcastically called it a "great bit of journalism." His picture was snapped from a plane Sunday by NJ.com at Island Beach State Park, where he and his family had the sun and sand to themselves.

"I didn't get any sun today," Christie said at a news conference later in the day in Trenton.

Then, when told of the photos, his spokesman told NJ.com he was telling the truth because he was wearing a baseball hat during his 45-minute visit to the beach.

People in New Jersey and beyond seized on what many saw as a let-them-eat-cake gesture by the state's chief executive.

"Taxpayers can't use the parks and other public sites they pay for, but he and his family can hang out at a beach that no one else can use?" asked Mary Jackson, a Freehold resident. "Doesn't he realize how that looks, how people will see it as a slap in the face?"

Online, people cracked jokes about the sight of the heavysset Christie in a beach chair. Others likened the beach closing to the 2013 scheme by Christie allies to close lanes and cause huge traffic jams at the George Washington Bridge.

Christie's approval rating is already at an abysmal 15 percent, after three aides were convicted or pleaded guilty in the bridge scandal and after he threw his support to Donald Trump when his own presidential campaign fizzled.

He was passed over for vice president and apparently didn't get the high-level job in Washington that he wanted, but he has been mentioned as a possible late addition to the Trump administration.

"It is hard to imagine a worse optic for public relations on a hot July day. Pollsters may find out how low approval ratings can go in New Jersey," said Fairleigh Dickinson University political science professor Peter Woolley. "Because the story and the photos have gone national, it makes it harder for Christie to rehabilitate his career outside of the state."

Christie regularly says that the only time popularity counts is when you're running for something — and he's not.

"I don't care," he said recently when asked about the fall in his ratings.

And as Christie political adviser Mike DuHaime said: "The vast majority of New Jersey residents will care much more about the substance of the ultimate resolution than about any of the weekend drama about where he was when he was not at the Statehouse."

The vast majority of beaches remained open through the shutdown, since most are controlled not by the state but by towns up and down the state's 130 miles of coastline.

"Come and enjoy them," the governor tweeted Monday morning, "but use sunscreen and hydrate."

Associated Press writer Bruce Shipkowski contributed to this story.

Christie signs \$34.7B budget, ends state government shutdown

By MICHAEL CATALINI, Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — A budget impasse that shuttered government and state parks and beaches for three days ended on the Fourth of July when Republican Gov. Chris Christie signed a deal he and the Democratic Legislature crafted.

Christie, who lounged with his family on a beach that was closed to the public over the weekend and was roundly criticized for it, said he was saddened the budget deal had come three days late. He signed it early Tuesday morning.

He rejected the idea that the aerial photos of him on the beach snapped by NJ.com had any effect on his negotiations.

"There will be some people who say, 'It affected his negotiating ability,'" Christie said. "Let me tell you something, man, I got exactly what I wanted tonight. It doesn't affect my ability to do my job."

He said he had ordered all closed state parks to reopen for Independence Day. And he said state government will open on Wednesday and state workers will get a paid holiday Tuesday at his request.

Democratic Senate President Steve Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto announced the budget deal late Monday. The deal calls for a \$34.7 billion budget that includes more than \$300 million in Democratic spending priorities and is part of an agreement to overhaul the state's largest health insurer, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield.

The Assembly and the Senate approved the budget early Tuesday.

The Horizon legislation calls for annual audits of the nonprofit's reserve level, sets a range for reserves and requires excess to be spent on policyholders. The budget stalemate centered on Christie's desire for legislation to overhaul Horizon.

Without a budget, state parks were shut down along with other nonessential state services, including state courts and the motor vehicle offices where people go to get driver's licenses. Tens of thousands of state workers are furloughed.

Here's a closer look at the standoff over the budget:

BATTLE OF EGOS

On the surface the budget stalemate revolved around Christie's desire to overhaul Horizon, but also in play were the strong personalities of the three principals responsible for passing the budget.

Christie, the brash, tell-it-like-it-is former federal prosecutor, has staked his final year as governor on overhauling the nonprofit insurer in exchange for his support of more than \$300 million worth of Democratic spending priorities.

On Monday he declared victory, saying he had wanted since February to get reform of Horizon.

But the legislation was a far cry from the initial proposal, which would have allowed the state to use Horizon surplus to fund opioid treatment. Instead any surplus above a capped amount must go back to policyholders.

Christie said it was a win because there was no cap on surplus before he stepped in to regulate the company.

Sweeney is a former ironworker and current union boss as well as the top elected Democrat for the past eight years. He held the line on Horizon because he trusted Christie would make good on a gentleman's agreement not to line item veto Democratic priorities.

Sweeney's education funding plan, which includes about \$150 million for new spending, remained intact.

And Prieto is a onetime plumber from Hudson County, long considered one of the state's hardest-edged political regions, known for old-school party boss politics. Prieto's speakership is under threat from another lawmaker who's announced a bid against him.

Prieto had said he opposed any action on Horizon but said Monday he helped bring Horizon into negotiations to model the deal on Pennsylvania's regulations of Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurers.

STATE WORKERS FURLOUGHED

Hetty Rosenstein, the New Jersey director of the Communications Workers of America, the largest union of state government workers, said roughly 35,000 workers had been "locked out" since the shutdown began.

While most of the furloughs took effect Monday, many parks, motor vehicle commission staffers and others who work weekends have been off the job since early Saturday.

Rosenstein said it's unclear if furloughed workers will get back pay but "we certainly feel we're entitled to that."

Christie said Monday that state workers would, at his request, receive Tuesday as a paid holiday. He said he'd discuss back pay with the Legislature.

Contact Catalini at <https://twitter.com/mikecatalini>

Associated Press writers Bruce Shipkowski, in Trenton, and Wayne Parry, in Atlantic City, contributed to this story.

US marks Independence Day with pomp, dazzle, hot dog contest

By REBECCA GIBIAN, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans are celebrating their country's birthday Tuesday with big-time fireworks, small-town parades and the quirky spectacle of competitive hot dog eating, marking a day of shared traditions in a nation that has grappled with divides this past year.

In New York, throngs are expected to watch the annual Macy's fireworks blowout and the Nathan's Famous frankfurter-chomping contest on Coney Island on July Fourth. In Washington, President Donald Trump is observing his first Independence Day in office by hosting a White House picnic for military families, followed by a fireworks viewing event for military families and staffers.

In Boston, one of 14 original copies of the Declaration of Independence will be displayed at a museum, and hundreds of thousands of people are expected at the city's fireworks show. Organizers of Chicago's Independence Day celebration are expecting such large crowds that the city's Navy Pier is opening at 10 a.m., nearly 12 hours before fireworks begin.

Meanwhile, more than 15,000 new citizens will be sworn in during more than 65 Independence Day-themed naturalization ceremonies across the country.

For all the pomp and celebration, July 4 arrives with Americans deeply split over the nation's direction, after last year's presidential election and political clashes over immigration, health care and other issues in the early months of Trump's Republican administration. And in an era of concerns about security, the Independence Day celebrations are mixed with precautions.

The New York Police Department planned to station 100 vehicles to block intersections and 20 sand-filled sanitation trucks to fortify viewing areas for the Macy's fireworks show. Heavily armed counterterrorism units will mingle among spectators, officers will have portable radiation detection devices and bomb-sniffing dogs, and officers will be stationed on rooftops to look out for any sign of trouble.

Boston police also plan to put trucks and other heavy equipment near the celebration there. Police in both cities say there are no confirmed threats.

In a somber observance of the toll of terror, small American flags will be placed by all the nearly 3,000 names on the National Sept. 11 Memorial in New York.

Meanwhile, residents of Laconia, New Hampshire, might not have had a Fourth of July parade if a resident hadn't stepped in to organize it after learning it was facing cancellation for lack of interest. Some 25 organizations have since signed up to provide floats or marchers.

Associated Press writer Jennifer Peltz contributed to this report.

Smackdown! Trump's insult act comes from pro wrestling hype

By JAKE PEARSON, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Making bombastic boasts. Dropping signature catch phrases. Attaching insults to rivals' names. Shouting down perceived enemies.

If President Donald Trump's recent attacks on television personalities, journalists and political rivals feel like something straight out of the pro wrestling circuit, it may not be a coincidence.

Wrestling aficionados say the president, who has a long history with the game, has borrowed the time-tested tactics of the squared circle to cultivate the ultimate antihero character, a figure who wins at all costs, incites outrage and follows nobody's rules but his own.

"In our terminology, he's playing it to the hilt," said former World Wrestling Entertainment writer Dan Madigan.

On Sunday, Trump's apparent fondness for wrestling emerged in a tweeted mock video that shows him pummeling a man in a business suit — his face obscured by the CNN logo — outside a wrestling ring. It was not clear who produced the brief video, which appeared to be a doctored version of Trump's 2007 appearance on World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. But it was tweeted from the president's official Twitter account.

Madigan was first struck by the parallels last summer when Trump was introduced at the Republican National Convention. There was a backlit Trump, unveiled in stark silhouette, who then sauntered onto stage at the Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, just like wrestling's most infamous antihero, The Undertaker.

"His demeanor, duration of his walk to the podium, his playing to the crowd. ... Pure Undertaker," Madigan said.

And Trump's tiger-like pacing on stage behind Hillary Clinton during the second presidential debate last fall in St. Louis? That's how wrestlers stalk their opponents during pre-match taunting sessions.

In subsequent months of Trump's tweets and public feuds, it became clear to Madigan and other former WWE writers that, consciously or not, Trump was channeling professional wrestling in his politics.

"The parallels are uncanny," said Domenic Cotter, a producer who in the mid-2000s cut backstage segments for WWE.

Depending on your political affiliation, the writers said, Trump is playing one of two classic wrestling characters: The "heel," or ultimate bad guy, who wins at all costs; or the modern-day wrestling protagonist, dubbed a "face" or "babyface," in wrestling parlance.

"I think of Donald Trump as the ultimate babyface," Cotter said, "almost in the ilk of 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin, who was this rage-against-the-machine, anti-authority and establishment figure."

Cotter saw Trump employ a classic pro wrestling tactic during his first news conference as president-



In this April 1, 2007, file photo, Donald Trump, left, and Bobby Lashley, right shave the head of Vince McMahon after Lashley defeated Umaga at Wrestlemania 23 at Ford Field in Detroit. Wrestling aficionados say President Trump, who has a long history with the game, has borrowed tactics of the sport to cultivate the ultimate antihero character - who wins at all costs, incites outrage and follows nobody's rules but his own. (AP Photo/Carlos Osorio, File)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 27 of 44

elect, when he ordered CNN reporter Jim Acosta to be quiet and barked, "You are fake news!"

"In wrestling terminology, he cut a promo on that CNN reporter and got over him, basically," Cotter said. "In wrestling, some smarmy heel is going on and on and on and the baby face quips a response right back and the audience goes crazy."

Perhaps Trump comes by it naturally. He hosted back-to-back WrestleMania events in his Atlantic City, New Jersey, Trump Plaza in 1988 and 1989. And then, most famously, there was a mock "Battle of the Billionaires" in 2007 when he body-slammed and then shaved the head of WWE boss Vince McMahon.

Most recently, he picked McMahon's wife, Linda, who ran twice unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate in Connecticut, to head the Small Business Administration.

Ranjan Chhibber, a humanities and film studies professor at Florida State College in Jacksonville who has written about pro wrestling, said Trump is most clearly portrayed in the ring by the industry's current bad-boy-turned-hero: CM Punk, a brash 38-year-old wrestler whom writers have dubbed the "Voice of the Voiceless."

CM Punk's character often says he will say things no one else dares to say, and wrestling writers have created a new narrative for him that's almost tailor-made for the current political environment of leaked emails and unauthorized dossiers: revealing the secrets of what happens backstage.

"This is pro-wrestling writing genius," Chhibber said.

In wrestling, writers create season-long dramas that turn the mat into a stage for fantasy. Narratives pit good against evil, stronger personalities win over more subdued ones, and announcers legitimize the at-any-costs tactics of the "heels."

When Trump publicly supports Russia's Vladimir Putin, depicted by the U.S. intelligence services as a sort of global "heel," he is effectively playing the role of the announcer who builds up the bad boy in the ring, justifying his alpha-dog behavior, Madigan said.

And when Trump assigns prefixes to his political rivals' names (think "low I.Q. Crazy Mika" Brzezinski or "Crooked Hillary" Clinton) he is effectively emulating the longtime wrestling announcer Bobby "The Brain" Hennan, who cheered on "heels" over rule-following "babyface" wrestlers he disparaged.

"The hero is boring. He does the same vanilla thing," Madigan said. "You always watch what the bad guy says and does."

Trump's Twitter battle with press may come with a price

By JILL COLVIN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Whether by whim or design, President Donald Trump keeps adding fuel to his incendiary Twitter battle against the media. The press is an easy target for the Republican president, and one his supporters love to hate.

But the escalating conflict has diverted attention not just from Trump's failures but his claimed successes as well.

Trump tweeted Monday that "at some point the Fake News will be forced to discuss our great jobs numbers, strong economy, success with ISIS, the border & so much else!"

It's his own campaign against the press, though, that keeps changing the subject from that more substantive policy debate Trump claims to crave. And it has hindered Trump's ability to push his agenda through Congress, where Republicans complain about the president's lack of focus as his health-care plan is struggling, work on next year's budget is stuck and talk of a big infrastructure deal is fading.

Trump's latest bash was a repurposed old video he tweeted on the weekend of him fake-pummeling a wrestling promoter whose face had been replaced by the CNN logo.

It was unprecedented, even for Trump: a sitting president, in effect promoting physical assault of a media stand-in. Media watchdogs quickly called him out.

Unrepentant, Trump argued over the weekend that his outsized Twitter presence was part of a calculated redefinition of the presidency.

"My use of social media is not Presidential - it's MODERN DAY PRESIDENTIAL," he tweeted.

Trump spent the weekend at his private golf club in New Jersey. None of his top advisers traveled with

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 28 of 44

him and his activities were closely held. There was no telling how much of his anti-press drumbeat was a calculated strategy to divert attention from his policy struggles vs. a capricious reaction to criticism.

But Trump was clearly being egged on by his supporters, including his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., a frequent attack dog for his father.

The younger Trump on Monday contrasted the more accepting way the media have treated a New York production of "Julius Caesar," in which a Trumpian Caesar dies in a bloody group stabbing, with the outcry over the wrestling clip.

"CNN & Dems calling Trump assassination play 'artistic expression' but WWF joke meme is 'a call for violence'? Hilarious reinforcement of FNN," the younger Trump tweeted Monday, using an acronym for what the president has begun to refer to as the "Fake News Network."

When a CNN reporter tweeted, "Isn't pro wrestling fake?" Trump Jr. responded: "Yes, just like your coverage."

Senior White House counselor Kellyanne Conway also piled on, tweeting that lately the "role of the media has been to retract false stories & fire liars" and that "patriotic vets died" so the press can "talk nonsense."

Princeton University historian Julian Zelizer said that while presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Richard Nixon and George W. Bush have long distrusted and made derogatory statements about the press, Trump's sustained and personal attacks are something entirely new.

"We haven't really seen a president who seems totally consumed, which he's been since the election, with the press as his adversary," Zelizer said, describing the wrestling tweet as unprecedented.

While Trump's electoral base may be urging him on, Zelizer said, the president risks alienating many Americans who have real problems.

They may get a rise out of Trump knocking the unpopular press every once in a while, he said, but "when you're focusing on 'Morning Joe' instead of health care, it could alienate voters" and make them think the president is not engaged in issues that affect them.

"This does have consequences," he said.

Likewise, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, said that by provoking a running battle with the press, Trump has "minimized accountability for his failures but he's also not getting credit for his successes when he distracts us."

Jamieson blamed Trump for stoking the battle, but also chided the press for giving it undue attention.

People care about jobs, defeating terrorism, preventing election hacks and the like, she said.

"Trump's shenanigans in his relations with the press" would be very low on the list if the public were given a checklist of priorities to choose from, she said.

"If everything was fine all around the world, we would have the luxury of these sorts of distractions by the president and the press," she said. "In the current world, we do not have that luxury."

It remains unclear exactly how the wrestling video found its way onto Trump's Twitter feed. Social media director Dan Scavino and the White House press office did not respond to emailed questions. A version of the video had previously appeared on Reddit, though a member of the president's team appeared to add sound and convert the file from its original format to post it.

It's not the first time that a meme has found its way from an obscure online channel to Trump's Twitter feed. The president was criticized during the campaign for tweeting an anti-Hillary Clinton image featuring a Star of David and piles of money that had appeared in an internet forum featuring racist and hateful imagery.

Lucey reported from Bedminster, New Jersey.

DC appeals court orders EPA to move ahead with methane rule

By **MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal appeals court in Washington ruled Monday that the head of the Environmental Protection Agency overstepped his authority in trying to delay implementation of an Obama administration rule requiring oil and gas companies to monitor and reduce methane leaks.

In a split decision, the three-judge panel from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ordered the EPA to move forward with the new requirement that aims to reduce planet-warming emissions from oil and gas operations.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt announced in April that he would delay by 90 days the deadline for oil and gas companies to follow the new rule, so that the agency could reconsider the measure. The American Petroleum Institute, the Texas Oil and Gas Association and other industry groups had petitioned Pruitt to scrap the requirement, which had been set to take effect in June.

Last month, Pruitt announced he intended to extend the 90-day stay for two years. A coalition of six environmental groups opposed the delay in court, urging the appeals judges to block Pruitt's decision.

In a detailed 31-page ruling, the court disagreed with Pruitt's contention that industry groups had not had sufficient opportunity to comment before the 2016 rule was enacted. The judges also said Pruitt lacked the legal authority to delay the rule from taking effect.

"This ruling declares EPA's action illegal — and slams the brakes on Trump Administration's brazen efforts to put the interests of corporate polluters ahead of protecting the public and the environment," said David Doniger, director of climate and clean air program for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

EPA spokeswoman Amy Graham said the agency was reviewing the court's opinion and examining its options. The EPA could seek to appeal the matter to the Supreme Court.

Natural gas is largely made up of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that traps dozens of times more heat in the planet's atmosphere than the same amount of carbon dioxide. Environmental groups contend that actual methane emissions from leaks and intentional venting at fossil-fuel operations are many times greater than what is now publicly reported.

Oil and gas companies say they were already working to reduce methane emissions and that complying with the new rules would make many low-production wells unprofitable.

Pruitt has repeatedly moved in recent months to block or delay environmental regulations opposed by corporate interests.

Prior to his appointment by President Donald Trump to serve as the nation's chief environmental regulator, Pruitt was attorney general of Oklahoma and closely aligned with the state's oil and gas industry. In recent weeks, Pruitt has moved to scrap or delay numerous EPA regulations enacted during the Obama administration to curb air and water pollution from fossil fuel operations.

Follow Associated Press environmental writer Michael Biesecker at www.Twitter.com/mbieseck

TV executive Jamie Horowitz abruptly fired from Fox Sports

By **LYNN ELBER, AP Television Writer**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jamie Horowitz, who oversaw programming and digital news operations for Fox Sports, was abruptly fired Monday after two years on the job.

The move was "fully warranted," Daniel Petrocelli, a lawyer for Fox Sports, said in a statement released Monday by the company. He didn't offer any specifics.

Fox Sports President Eric Shanks, in an email to employees announcing Horowitz's exit, alluded to a question of conduct. Fox Sports is an arm of media magnate Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox.

"Everyone at Fox Sports, no matter what role we play, or what business, function or show we contribute to, should act with respect and adhere to professional conduct at all times," Shanks' email said.

An attorney for Horowitz, who joined Fox Sports National Networks in May 2015 and served as president,

immediately fired back.

"The way Jamie has been treated by Fox is appalling," attorney Patricia L. Glaser said in a statement. "At no point in his tenure was there any mention by his superiors or human resources of any misconduct or an inability to adhere to professional conduct."

Glaser said that Horowitz "performed in an exemplary fashion. Any slanderous accusations to the contrary will be vigorously defended."

In his statement, Petrocelli called her remarks "ill-informed and misguided."

During his Fox Sports tenure, Horowitz reoriented much of the programming to talk personalities, including Skip Bayless, and away from newsgathering.

Before moving to Fox, Horowitz had a brief tenure with NBC's "Today." He was with ESPN from 2006 to 2014 and with NBC Sports from 2000 to 2006.

In his email, Shanks said he will take on Horowitz's responsibilities, including programming, marketing and scheduling for channels FS1 and FS2, until a replacement is hired.

Actress and internet star Stevie Ryan dead at 33

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Stevie Ryan, an actress and comedian who gained fame with impersonations of celebrities on YouTube, has died. She was 33.

Los Angeles County coroner's spokesman Ed Winter says Ryan died Saturday at her home in Los Angeles. He says her death has been ruled a suicide after the agency performed an autopsy.

Ryan had gained fame on YouTube with impersonations of celebrities, including Justin Bieber, Kim Kardashian and Amy Winehouse.

She also had a sketch comedy show on VH1, "Stevie TV," and co-hosted a relationship talk show with Brody Jenner.

Tesla: 1st Model 3 to be built Friday, sales start July 28

NEW YORK (AP) — The first Tesla Model 3 electric car for the masses should come off the assembly line on Friday with the first deliveries in late July, the company's CEO says.

CEO Elon Musk, in several Twitter messages early Monday, says the new car passed all government regulatory requirements for production to begin two weeks ahead of schedule. The company plans to hold a party to hand over the first 30 Model 3s to customers on July 28, Musk wrote in a tweet.

The Model 3 is to start around \$35,000 and with a \$7,500 federal electric car tax credit, could cost \$27,500. Tesla says the five-seat car will be able to go 215 miles (346 kilometers) on a single charge and will be sporty, accelerating from zero to 60 miles per hour in under six seconds.

Musk tweeted that the company expects to produce 100 cars in August and more than 1,500 in September. "Looks like we can reach 20,000 Model 3 cars per month in December," he wrote.

That figure is less than previous estimates. Musk earlier had said Tesla would make 10,000 Model 3s per week by December.

Tesla also said Monday that it delivered about 22,000 vehicles in the second quarter, bringing first-half deliveries to about 47,100.



In this July 31, 2013 file photo Stevie Ryan arrives at the Do Something Awards at the Avalon in Los Angeles. Ryan, an actress and comedian who gained with impersonations of celebrities on YouTube, has died. She was 33. (Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP, File)

That's at the low end of the company's prediction earlier this year of 47,000 to 50,000 Model S sedan and Model X SUV deliveries in the first half, as much as a 71 percent increase over a year ago.

While second-quarter deliveries rose 53 percent from a year ago, they still were about 12 percent below first-quarter deliveries. Tesla said in a statement that second-quarter production was hampered by a severe shortfall of battery packs. Production averaged 40 percent less than demand until early June, the company said.

Tesla said that as long as global economic conditions don't worsen considerably, it is confident that second-half Model S and Model X deliveries are likely to exceed deliveries in the first half.

Musk's tweets about the Model 3 appear to erase doubts that Tesla would be able to meet deadlines for mass producing the cars, which is key to the company making money. Previously it has faced delays in getting vehicles to market. The Palo Alto, California-based company aims to make 10,000 Model 3s per week in 2018.

Tesla hasn't said how many people have put down \$1,000 refundable deposits for the Model 3, but Musk has said people who put down a deposit now won't get a car until the end of 2018, suggesting it could be close to 500,000.

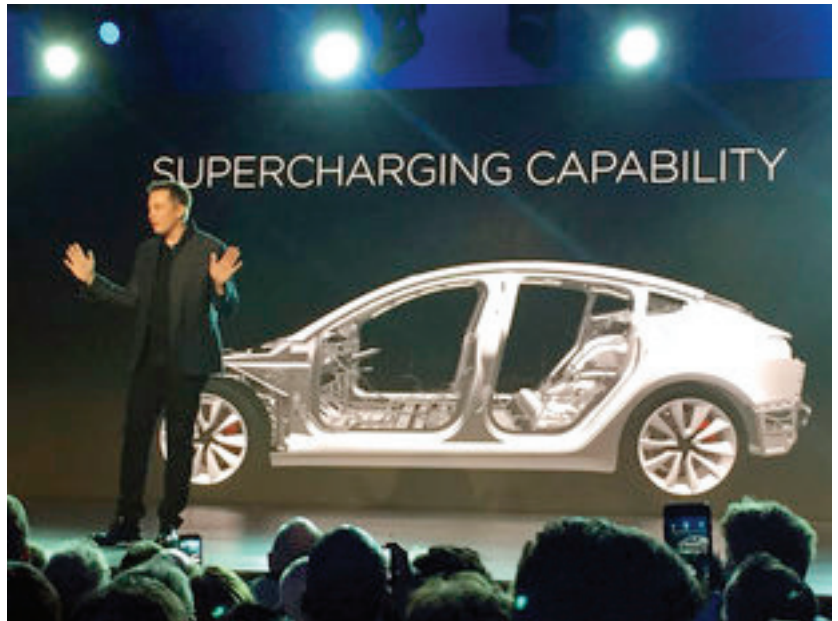
Tesla's last new vehicle, the Model X SUV, was delayed nearly 18 months. Musk says the Model 3 is much simpler to make, but 14-year-old Tesla has no experience producing and selling vehicles in high volumes. Tesla made just 84,000 cars last year. Bigger rivals like General Motors, Volkswagen and Toyota routinely sell around 10 million vehicles per year.

Even if the Model 3 is on time, servicing all those vehicles will still be a challenge. Model S and Model X owners are already worried about having to share Tesla's company-owned charging stations with an influx of new cars. And while Tesla is promising to increase its network of stores and service centers by 30 percent this year, it began 2017 with just 250 service centers worldwide. That leaves many potential owners miles from a service center.

Musk has said a new fleet of mobile service trucks will be deployed to help customers who are far from service centers. Tesla also plans to double its global high-speed charging points to 10,000 by the end of this year and increase them by another 50 percent-100 percent in 2018.

Until recently, Tesla owned the market for fully-electric vehicles that can go 200 miles (322 kilometers) or more on a charge. But that's changing. GM beat Tesla to the mass market with the Chevrolet Bolt, a \$36,000 car that goes 238 miles (about 383 kilometers) per charge. Audi plans to introduce an electric SUV with 300 miles (483 kilometers) of range next year; Ford will have one by 2020. Volkswagen plans more than 30 electric vehicle models by 2025.

Automotive competitors like Mercedes and Volvo — not to mention tech companies like Google and Uber — can also match Tesla's efforts to develop self-driving vehicles. And they have deeper pockets. Tesla has had only two profitable quarters in its seven years as a public company.



In this March 31, 2016, file photo, Tesla Motors Inc. CEO Elon Musk speaks at the unveiling of the Model 3 at the Tesla Motors design studio in Hawthorne, Calif. Electric car maker Tesla said on Monday, July 3, 2017, that its Model 3 car will go on sale on Friday.

(AP Photo/Justin Pritchard, File)

This story has been corrected to show that production of the Model 3 is to start Friday and that sales will begin July 28. The Model 3's range on a single electric charge was corrected to 215 miles.

Discussing crash, Venus Williams sheds tears at Wimbledon

By HOWARD FENDRICH, AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Venus Williams wiped tears from her eyes during her Wimbledon news conference Monday.

She shook her head, fiddled with her hair and sat, silently.

The wave of emotion came as Williams attempted to answer a question about the two-car crash that police say she caused June 9 in Florida; a 78-year-old passenger in the other vehicle died 13 days later. Williams' 7-6 (7), 6-4 victory over Elise Mertens at the All England Club was the five-time Wimbledon champion's first match anywhere since the accident — and the first time she has spoken about it publicly.

Well, tried to speak about it. She began by saying: "There are really no words to describe, like, how devastating and ..."

Williams paused.

"Yeah, I'm completely speechless," she briefly continued.

"It's just ..."

"Yeah, I mean, I'm just ..."

Then she sat there, silently. Eventually, the moderator seated next to Williams temporarily halted the news conference, allowing the 37-year-old American to leave the room for a bit. She huddled nearby with her older sister, Isha, before returning. When the proceedings resumed, the moderator asked that the topic of the crash be avoided, saying, "Venus is willing to take a couple more questions about other things. Tennis, perhaps."

The 10th-seeded Williams' return to action, and difficulty in addressing the off-court matters with the media — just last week, the police report was released, and a day later, the estate of the man who died sued her — were the most noteworthy happenings on Day 1 at the grass-court Grand Slam tournament.

There was, though, on-court news, too, of course, starting with this: No. 3-ranked Stan Wawrinka, a three-time major champion and the runner-up at the French Open just three weeks ago, dealt with a bothersome left knee and bowed out 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 to Daniil Medvedev, a 21-year-old Russian ranked 49th who had never won so much as one Grand Slam match in his career.

"For sure, I wasn't feeling the way I wanted to feel," Wawrinka said.

"Apparently," he said with a grin, "grass is not the best surface for my knee."

Wawrinka has won each of the other majors once apiece but Wimbledon has given him fits over the years. He has yet to get past the quarterfinals and this was his sixth exit in the first round.

Another seeded man hobbled by an injury departed when No. 20 Nick Kyrgios, a talented if temperamental Australian, stopped playing because of a hip problem. He dropped the first two sets against Pierre-Hugues Herbert of France before calling it quits.

Two of the four men who have divvied up the past 14 Wimbledon trophies won easily Monday: Andy Murray and Rafael Nadal.

Murray was asked about what advice he might give Williams.

"I don't know exactly what happened. I just read kind of more, like, headlines, rather than the whole stories about it. But it's obviously horrific when anything like that happens," he said. "I'm sure it must be tough for her to focus on her tennis just now. But I don't know how you advise someone on that. ... Unless you've been through it, you don't know. You don't know what to do."

Williams has not been cited or charged, and police say she was not drunk, on drugs or texting, but that she drove her SUV into the path of a car carrying a married couple. Williams, who owns a home near the crash site, told investigators her light was green when she entered the six-lane intersection but she got stopped midpoint by traffic and didn't see the other car before she crossed their lane.

"I mean, obviously, I think it would weigh on any human being, and Venus is no different," said Williams'

coach, David Witt. "Venus is the nicest person, and (this is) just some random thing that could happen to anybody, any day. But she's looking to focus on the tennis. I'm sure it's weighing on her but we're going day by day and getting good practice in. Once she enters the court, I think her mind's on the match and tennis and winning here at Wimbledon."

Asked Monday how difficult the recent weeks have been, Williams replied: "Tennis is still the love of my life. You know, it gives me joy."

She is a former No. 1 and the owner of seven major singles titles, along with 14 Grand Slam doubles titles, all won with her younger sister, Serena.

Against Mertens, whom she beat 6-3, 6-1 on red clay at the French Open last month, Williams played unevenly.

She took a 3-0 lead, then let that evaporate. She led 6-3 in the tiebreaker, then needed five set points to close it. She fell behind 2-0 in the second set, then took five of the next six games. She failed to convert two match points at 5-3, before a 33-minute rain delay. She needed three more match points to finally end the first match of her 20th Wimbledon appearance.

"I have no idea what tomorrow will bring. That's all I can say about it," Williams said. "That's what I've learned."

Follow Howard Fendrich on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/HowardFendrich>

More AP tennis coverage: <https://apnews.com/tag/apf-Tennis>

Qatar crisis deadline extended by 2 days as nation responds

By **MAGGIE HYDE** and **JON GAMBRELL**, Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Arab nations isolating Qatar extended a deadline Monday for the energy rich country to respond to their demands by another 48 hours, allowing its top diplomat to carry a handwritten response to Kuwait's ruler in an effort to end the diplomatic crisis.

Whether another two days will be enough to end the crisis, however, may be a stretch.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain already have plans to meet in Cairo on Wednesday as the deadline expires to discuss their next moves. Meanwhile, Qataris signed a wall bearing a black-stencil likeness of their ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, as officials in the host country of the 2022 FIFA World Cup maintain that they won't allow other nations to dictate their foreign policy.

The crisis began June 5, as the countries cut off diplomatic ties to Qatar over their allegations that the world's top producer of liquefied natural gas uses its wealth to fund extremist groups and has overly warm ties to Iran. Qatar long has denied funding terrorists, while it maintains communication with Iran as the two countries share a massive offshore natural gas field.



In this photograph released by the state-run Kuwait News Agency, KUNA, Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, left, and Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al Sabah, right, walk together on an airport tarmac, on Al Thani's arrival in Kuwait. Qatar's foreign minister, carrying a handwritten letter from the country's ruling emir arrived in Kuwait amid a diplomatic crisis engulfing his nation. (KUNA via AP)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 34 of 44

The quartet of countries first restricted Qatar's access to their airspace and ports, while sealing its only land border, which it shares with Saudi Arabia. They later issued a 13-point list of demands on June 22 to end the standoff and gave Qatar 10 days to comply.

Early on Monday morning after the deadline expired, the countries said they would give Qatar another 48 hours after a request by Kuwait's 88-year-old ruler, Sheikh Sabah Al Sabah. The emir has been trying to mediate an end to the crisis, as he did in a similar dispute in 2014.

"The response of the four states will then be sent following the study of the Qatari government's response and assessment of its response to the whole demands," the countries said in a statement.

Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, traveled later Monday to Kuwait City, carrying a handwritten note from Sheikh Tamim, according to the state-run Kuwait News Agency. Kuwaiti and Qatari officials did not respond to questions about what the letter said, though a photograph from the meeting showed Sheikh Sabah reading it with no expression on his face.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump spoke with Sheikh Tamim, as well as King Salman of Saudi Arabia and Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of the Emirati capital, Abu Dhabi.

The White House said Trump urged unity and reiterated the importance of stopping terrorist financing and discrediting extremist ideology. A separate statement carried on the official Qatar News Agency said the emir's discussion with Trump touched on the need to fight terrorism and extremism in all its forms and sources, and was a chance for the countries to review their bilateral strategic relations.

Trump later tweeted: "Spoke yesterday with the King of Saudi Arabia about peace in the Middle-East. Interesting things are happening!"

Germany's foreign minister, speaking to reporters on Monday in Saudi Arabia, said he hoped an agreement would be reached between Arab states and Qatar that ends terrorism financing across the region.

Sigmar Gabriel said after meeting Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir that the two agreed on the need to end any support for extremist organizations and said he hopes the demands made by Saudi Arabia and other countries that cut ties with Qatar focus on ending terror financing and incitement. He is scheduled to visit the United Arab Emirates and Qatar next.

Qatar, like the countries lined up against it, is a U.S. ally. It hosts some 10,000 American troops at the sprawling al-Udeid Air Base. The desert facility is home to the forward headquarters of the U.S. Central Command and has been a key staging ground for the campaign against the Islamic State group and the war in Afghanistan.

What comes next remains in question. If Qatar doesn't agree to the demands, the nations could push forward with financial sanctions or pushing the country out of the Gulf Cooperation Council, a regional body that serves as a counterbalance to Iran. Some Arab media outlets have gone as far as suggesting a military confrontation or new leadership be installed in Qatar.

On Wednesday, the four countries will meet in Cairo to discuss "future steps in dealing with Qatar as well as exchange of points of view and the evaluation of the existing international and regional contacts in this connection," Egypt's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid said.

Meanwhile, Qatari officials have said they won't back down either. Al-Jazeera, the satellite news network funded by Qatar that the countries demand be shut down, issued a video message saying: "We too have demands. ... We demand press freedom."

"Qatar is not an easy country to be swallowed by anyone," Qatari Defense Minister Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah told Sky News on Sunday. "We are ready. We stand ready to defend our country. I hope that we don't come to a stage where, you know, a military intervention is made."

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Adam Schreck and Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo contributed to this report.

Trump offers help to a terminally ill British baby

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump offered to help a terminally ill British baby on Monday, saying on Twitter that “if we can help little #CharlieGard, as per our friends in the U.K. and the Pope, we would be delighted to do so.”

Charlie Gard suffers from a rare genetic condition and is unable to breathe unaided. Last week, his parents lost a legal battle to take him to the U.S. for trial therapy. His parents and a London children’s hospital said Friday that the 10-month-old boy will be given “more time” before life support is withdrawn.

White House spokeswoman Helen Aguirre Ferre said that members of the Trump administration have spoken to Gard’s family.

“Although the president himself has not spoken to the family, he does not want to pressure them in any way, members of the administration have spoken to the family in calls facilitated by the British government. The president is just trying to be helpful if at all possible,” she said, calling the situation “heartbreaking.”

There is little Trump can do to help, because U.K. and European courts have deferred to the hospital’s decision not to allow Charlie to be sent to the U.S. for trial therapy.

Pope Francis on Sunday called for Gard’s parents to be allowed to do everything possible to treat their child.

In a statement, the Vatican press office said Francis “is following with affection and sadness the case of little Charlie Gard and expresses his closeness to his parents. For this he prays that their wish to accompany and treat their child until the end is not neglected.”

On Tuesday, the parents lost a bid to take Charlie to the U.S. for trial therapy when the European Court of Human Rights sided with earlier rulings that continued treatment would cause “significant harm” and that life support should end. Specialists have said the proposed therapy wouldn’t help Charlie.



This is an undated hand out photo of Chris Gard and Connie Yates with their son Charlie Gard provided by the family, at Great Ormond Street Hospital, in London. The president of the United States has offered to help. The pope is willing to have the Vatican hospital take him in. Some 1.3 million pounds (\$1.68 million) have been raised to help him leave Britain for treatment. But little has changed Tuesday July 4, 2017, for Charlie Gard, a terminally-ill British infant suffering from a rare genetic disease that has left him severely brain damaged. (Family of Charlie Gard via AP)

Bus carrying seniors crashes on German highway, killing 18

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A bus carrying German seniors on holiday slammed into the back of a truck that had slowed for a traffic jam and burst into flame Monday, killing 18 people on a major highway in Bavaria, authorities said.

More than two dozen people who were hurt escaped the bus before it became fully engulfed in fire, police said. By the time the blaze was put out, only the vehicle’s charred, twisted frame remained.

The bus from the eastern state of Saxony rear-ended the trailer-truck on the A9 near Muenchberg, north of Nuremberg and not far from the Czech border. Of the 30 people injured, at least two were reported in life-threatening condition, authorities said.

“After we got there, nobody else got off the bus,” Muenchberg firefighter Andreas Hentschel told the

dpa news agency.

The accident occurred at around 7 a.m., when there was no rain and visibility was good. The investigation, which included prosecutors, was looking into what type of cargo the truck was hauling, police said.

The bus driver was among the dead. The truck driver was not injured, police said.

The rest of the fatalities were men and women between 66 and 81 years old, police said.

A total of 48 people were on the bus, including two drivers. The passengers were primarily from Saxony.

Some 200 first responders rushed to the scene, and five helicopters whisked the injured to nearby hospitals. Simple wooden coffins were wheeled in for the remains recovered from the bus.

When firefighters first arrived, the fire was so hot that they could not get anywhere close to the burning bus to rescue those stuck inside, Transport Minister Alexander Dobrindt told reporters at the crash site.

"All they could do was extinguish the fire," he said. The heat was so intense that it destroyed the entire bus and everything inside except for the steel frame.



The wreckage of a burnt-out bus photographed at the place of an accident on the motorway A9, near Muenchberg, Germany, Monday, July 3, 2017. Several people are feared dead after a bus carrying a group of German senior citizens crashed into a truck on a highway in Bavaria early Monday and burst into flames, police said. (Matthias Balk/dpa via AP)

Associated Press Writer David Rising contributed to this report.

Soy 'milk'? Even federal agencies can't agree on terminology

By CANDICE CHOI, AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Dairy farmers want U.S. regulators to banish the term "soy milk," but documents show even government agencies haven't always agreed on what to call such drinks.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture "fiercely" wanted to use the term "soy milk" in educational materials for the public, according to emails recently released in response to a lawsuit. That irked the Food and Drug Administration, the agency that oversees the rule defining milk as coming from healthy cows.

It's "not a trivial decision," the FDA warned in one of the 2011 emails about the USDA's desire to use the term.

The sour history over who gets to use "milk" reaches back to at least 1997, when a soy foods group petitioned the FDA to recognize the term "soymilk." A couple of years later, the group pointed out that the FDA itself had used the term. Even now, the National Milk Producers Federation says it's working to build support for legislation directing the FDA to enforce the federal standard. The dairy group says both "soy milk" and "soymilk" are inappropriate ways to describe non-dairy drinks made from soybeans, and that the one-word version is just an attempt to get around the definition.

There are plenty of other food names at issue. A European Union court recently ruled that a company named TofuTown can't describe its products as "cheese." U.S. rice producers have railed against "pretenders" like diced cauliflower and said they may take the issue to the FDA.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 37 of 44

But the FDA hasn't even always been able to get other agencies to go along, as illustrated in the emails obtained by the Good Food Institute, which advocates alternatives to industrial animal agriculture. The GFI sued the FDA for public records relating to soy milk.

The email exchange started when a nutrition adviser at the Department of Health and Human Services alerted the FDA that the USDA planned to use "soy milk" in educational materials about dietary guidelines.

"USDA staff are preparing consumer publications and fervently want to use the term 'soy milk' because beverages are widely marketed this way," the adviser wrote.

The FDA bristled and provided the federal definition of milk as a "lacteal secretion" from cows. Therefore, the FDA declared that referring to soy, almond and rice drinks as "milk" would be incorrect. It suggested the other agency say "beverage" or "fortified beverage."

When that didn't put the matter to rest, the FDA warned that the USDA's use of the term could undermine the FDA's regulatory authority.

That apparently didn't stop the USDA, either.

"They are adamant about using the term in consumer publications," the nutrition adviser wrote. The USDA had indicated that it would use "soy beverage" in official policy documents, but it wanted to use "plain language" in materials for the public.

Despite the federal regulation, others may also consider "soy milk" an acceptable term. The Merriam-Webster dictionary doesn't limit milk's definition to cows, saying it is "a fluid secreted by the mammary glands of females for the nourishment of their young."

It also allows for a "food product produced from seeds or fruit that resembles and is used similarly to cow's milk."

Asked how the spat was resolved, the USDA provided materials from 2011 that use both terms by referring to "soymilk (soy beverage)." The agency also uses the term elsewhere, including on its "Choose My Plate" website, which currently says "calcium-fortified soymilk (soy beverage)" is part of the dairy group.

The National Milk Producers Federation says the USDA's usage of the term shows even other government agencies are confused about how to describe soy beverages in the absence of consistent enforcement by the FDA.

The FDA declined to comment.



This Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017, file photo shows the ingredients label for soy milk at a grocery store in New York. The dairy industry says terms like "soy milk" violate the federal standard for milk, but even government agencies have internally clashed over the proper term. (AP Photo/Patrick

Sison, File)

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Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 38 of 44

'Despicable Me 3' and 'Baby Driver' win, 'The House' doesn't

By LINDSEY BAHR, AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Minions are still a box office force and original stories are scoring big, but not the R-rated comedy — even with Will Ferrell and Amy Poehler behind it.

Studio estimates on Sunday say that Universal Pictures and Illumination's "Despicable Me 3" earned \$75.4 million over the weekend, while the former Saturday Night Live stars' gambling comedy "The House" burned down.

Featuring the voices of Steve Carell and Trey Parker, "Despicable Me 3" easily topped the holiday weekend charts from 4,529 theaters in North America. While it's a far cry from "Minions'" \$115 million launch in 2015, and also lower than "Despicable Me 2," which opened to \$83.5 million in 2013, Nick Carpou, president of Domestic Theatrical Distribution for Universal Pictures, says that \$75 million is a number he'll celebrate any day of the week.

Carpou notes that Illumination continues to prove itself a formidable brand for family entertainment.

"They resonate and absolutely are relatable," Carpou said. "They're movies that are built for all ages."

Edgar Wright's original heist movie "Baby Driver" coasted to \$30 million in its first five days in theaters, with \$21 million from the three-day weekend to take second place. Sony Pictures released the R-rated pic which stars Jamie Foxx, Ansel Elgort, Jon Hamm and Kevin Spacey and cost a reported \$34 million to produce.

"How great it is to see audiences turn out to support original filmmaking," said Josh Greenstein, Sony's president of worldwide marketing and distribution. "They've made 'Baby Driver' the surprise hit of the summer, a true sleeper."

The R-rated film did well with critics and is one of a handful of original or independent films this weekend that are notable successes. Sofia Coppola's R-rated Civil War-set film "The Beguiled" scored in its expansion from four to 674 theaters in its second weekend. It earned \$3.3 million to take eighth place and bested franchise fare including "The Mummy" and "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales," which were both playing in over 1,670 theaters.

The well-reviewed romantic comedy "The Big Sick" also did good business in its expansion to 71 locations, earning \$1.7 million. The R-rated film expands wide on July 14.

"The best box office stories are further down the chart. They are all benefiting from feeling like the kind of content people are responding to on the small screen," noted Paul Dergarabedian, a senior media analyst for comScore. "Perhaps this is the summer where Hollywood finally starts emulating the small screen model of creating compelling original content in order to generate goodwill with audiences who have more options than ever before."

Rounding out the top five were holdovers "Transformers: The Last Knight" in third with \$17 million, followed by "Wonder Woman" with \$15.6 million and "Cars 3" with \$9.5 million.

Not so successful was suburban gambling comedy "The House" which landed in sixth place with only \$9 million — one of the lowest of Ferrell's career and the latest in a string of R-rated comedies to tank at the box office following "Rough Night" and "Baywatch."

"The R-rated comedy used to be the antidote to the typical summer blockbuster and now those films are having a tough time," said Dergarabedian noting success stories like "The Hangover," "Bridesmaids" and "Neighbors." "Now people feel like they've seen that movie before when they watch the trailer. They've lost interest."

Overall, the summer box office continues to struggle and is down nearly 8 percent from last year, while the year to date is close to flat. But the summer box office roller coaster may still have some surprises in store.

"Spider-Man: Homecoming" will swing in action later this week and, like "Wonder Woman" before it, could turn things around," Dergarabedian said. "But we need more than one box office superhero, we need multiple films performing."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final do-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 39 of 44

mestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Despicable Me 3," \$75.4 million (\$95.6 million international).
2. "Baby Driver," \$21 million (\$6.8 million international).
3. "Transformers: The Last Knight," \$17 million (\$68 million international).
4. "Wonder Woman," \$15.6 million (\$13.6 million international).
5. "Cars 3," \$9.5 million (\$5 million international).
6. "The House," \$9 million (\$2.7 million international).
7. "47 Meters Down," \$4.7 million (\$800,000 international).
8. "The Beguiled," \$3.3 million (\$460,000 international).
9. "The Mummy," \$2.8 million (\$10.3 million international).
10. "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales," \$2.4 million (\$16.3 million international).

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to comScore:

1. "Despicable Me 3," \$95.6 million.
2. "Transformers: The Last Knight," \$68 million.
3. "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales," \$16.3 million.
4. "Reset (dir. Chang)," \$13.7 million.
5. "Wonder Woman," \$13.6 million.
6. "The Mummy," \$10.3 million.
7. "Baywatch," \$7.7 million.
8. "Baby Driver," \$6.8 million.
9. "Anarchist From Colony," \$6.7 million.
10. "Wished," \$5 million.

Universal and Focus are owned by NBC Universal, a unit of Comcast Corp.; Sony, Columbia, Sony Screen Gems and Sony Pictures Classics are units of Sony Corp.; Paramount is owned by Viacom Inc.; Disney, Pixar and Marvel are owned by The Walt Disney Co.; Miramax is owned by Filmyard Holdings LLC; 20th Century Fox and Fox Searchlight are owned by 21st Century Fox; Warner Bros. and New Line are units of Time Warner Inc.; MGM is owned by a group of former creditors including Highland Capital, Anchorage Advisors and Carl Icahn; Lionsgate is owned by Lions Gate Entertainment Corp.; IFC is owned by AMC Networks Inc.; Rogue is owned by Relativity Media LLC.

Follow AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/lldbahr>

Asian shares mixed, Australia surges ahead of rate decision

By KELVIN CHAN, AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — Australian shares jumped Tuesday as investors awaited an interest rate decision by the central bank, while other Asian shares were mixed Tuesday ahead of a U.S. trading holiday.

KEEPING SCORE: Australia's S&P/ASX surged 1.8 percent to 5,785.10 while Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index added 0.4 percent to 20,141.21. South Korea's Kospi slipped 0.2 percent to 2,390.77 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 0.2 percent to 25,730.80. The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.4 percent to 3,184.29. Taiwan's benchmark fell and indexes in Southeast Asia were mixed.

DECISION DOWN UNDER: Investors are positioning themselves ahead of the release of the latest interest rate decisions by the Reserve Bank of Australia following a monthly policy board meeting. Market watchers expect the central bank to keep rates unchanged to maintain stimulus and boost the economy. However, they'll also be watching for signs officials may plan to join their counterparts in the U.S., Britain, Europe and Canada in raising rates.

MARKET VIEW: "Against the backdrop of shifting rhetoric from advanced economies' central bankers,

there has been some chatter on whether we could see the RBA jump on the bandwagon," said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG.

ROCKET LAUNCH: South Korean shares faltered after Pyongyang fired yet another ballistic missile toward Japan. The launch was the first since June 8. The missile was launched from North Phyongan province and is believed to have landed in the Sea of Japan, but no ships or aircraft in the area were reported damaged, according to statements by the South Korean and Japanese governments.

WALL STREET: Major U.S. benchmarks had a mixed finish in a shortened trading session ahead of the July 4 Independence Day holiday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 0.2 percent to 2,429.02. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.6 percent to 21,479.27. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.5 percent to a six-week low of 6,110.06.

ENERGY: Oil's rally fizzled. Benchmark U.S. crude lost 25 cents to \$46.82 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract gained \$1.03 to settle at \$47.07 a barrel in New York on Monday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 25 cents to \$49.43 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar eased to 113.24 yen from 113.42 yen in late trading Monday. The euro climbed to \$1.1368 from \$1.1361.

Chomping champs face off at July 4 hot dog eating contest

NEW YORK (AP) — Record-setting eaters are gearing up to gobble at the renowned Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest in New York.

Nine-time champion Joey "Jaws" Chestnut is defending his title Tuesday at the showdown on the Coney Island boardwalk.

Chestnut's facing Matt "The Megatoad" Stonie in a rematch. Chestnut downed 70 franks and buns in 10 minutes last year, topping his own Coney Island record.

Meanwhile, Miki Sudo (MIHK'-ee SOO'-doh) is hoping for a fourth title in a row as she confronts Sonya "The Black Widow" Thomas in the women's competition. Sudo powered through 38 1/2 hot dogs and buns to beat Thomas last year. But Thomas holds the women's record, at 45 franks.

The chowdown showdown usually draws thousands of spectators and is televised on ESPN.



Current women's champion Miki Sudo, left, of Las Vegas, and challenger Michelle Lesco, of Tuscon, Ariz., feed each other a hot dog Monday, July 3, 2017, during the weigh-in for the 2017 Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest, in Brooklyn Borough Hall, in New York. Ms. Suto weighed-in at 126 pounds, while Ms. Lesco tipped the scales at 104.5 pounds.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

1918 World Series key in US love affair with national anthem

By DON BABWIN, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — On Tuesday afternoon, the crowd at Wrigley Field will be asked to stand and “gentlemen” reminded to remove their caps for the playing of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Fans who can recite the words as easily as the alphabet will sing or listen to the story of a flag that continued to wave throughout one of the most famous battles in American history.

What they may not know is that Francis Scott Key, apparently better at lyrics than melody, put his description of the battle of Fort Mchenry to an old English tune that had a lot less to do with patriotism than it did with booze and women. Or that this year marks the 100th season since the song was played for the first time at a World Series game — an event that helped cement it in the national consciousness and become the national anthem that is now simply assumed to be part of game day in American sports, from Little League to the Super Bowl to medal ceremonies at the Olympics.

“Certainly the outpouring of sentiment, enthusiasm, and patriotism at the 1918 World Series went a long way to making the (song) the national anthem,” said John Thorn, Major League Baseball’s official historian.

On Sept. 5, 1918, newspapers were dominated by news of World War I, including the latest American dead. In Chicago, one of the headlines read, “Chicagoans on the List,” and it was a particularly harrowing moment in the city for another reason: Someone, possibly self-proclaimed anarchists and labor activists, had the day before tossed a bomb into a downtown federal building and post office, killing four people and injuring dozens more.

The World Series was in town, with the Cubs hosting Babe Ruth and the Boston Red Sox. The Chicago games were played at Comiskey Park, the home of the White Sox, instead of their new home at Wrigley Field, what was called Weeghman Park at the time, because it held more fans. But in a city jittery over the bombing and weary from the war, Game 1 that day attracted fewer than 20,000 fans, the smallest World Series crowd in years.

When they got there, they didn’t make much noise, though that could have had something to do with the 1-0 masterpiece Ruth was pitching — yes, pitching — for the Red Sox.

“There was no cheering during the contest, nor was there anything like the usual umpire baiting,” reported one Boston newspaper.

Then, in the seventh inning, a band from the Navy training station north of Chicago started to play “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The song had been played before at major league games, from at least 1862 and on opening day in 1897, in Philadelphia, Thorn said. But this time, reported The New York Times, something happened that



In this May 20, 2017, file photo, a spectator takes a photo of a United States flag as it is unveiled for the national anthem as part of Military Appreciation Day before a baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the Washington Nationals in Atlanta. The anthem has been a standard part of U.S. sports games since World War II. Experts say Game 1 of the 1918 World Series between the Boston Red Sox and the Chicago Cubs helped pave the way. The song became the official national anthem in 1931. (AP Photo/David Goldman, File)

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 42 of 44

was "far different from any incident that has ever occurred in the history of baseball."

Players took off their caps as they faced a flag that fluttered atop a pole in right field as the 12-piece band began to play.

All of them except Red Sox infielder Fred Thomas .

Thomas was in the Navy during the series — he played on the team fielded by the Great Lakes station that was also home to the band — but was granted furlough so he could play. When the Wisconsin native heard the music, "he turned toward the flag, kept his hat on and gave a military salute," said Jim Leeke, author of "From the Dugouts to the Trenches: Baseball During the Great War."

A few fans began to sing. Then others joined in "and when the final notes came, a great volume of melody rolled across the field," the Times reported. And when it ended, "onlookers exploded into thunderous applause and rent the air with a cheer that marked the highest point of the day's enthusiasm." The Red Sox went on to win the game and the series, part of a Cubs' championship drought that ended up lasting 108 years but was a mere decade old in 1918.

Not everyone thought what happened was a big deal. Chicago sportswriter Ring Lardner mentioned it, but only as a punch line as he reported that Thomas had stood at attention three times during the game, once during the anthem and twice when the umpire was calling him out on strikes.

The leader of the Navy band at the time was conductor and composer John Philip Sousa. He was not at the game, but had recently arranged the standardized version of the song that is still played today. The 1918 World Series would have been one of the first times the band could test drive the new version, according to Mike Bayes, senior chief musician for the Navy Band in Washington.

"It was a very important thing for him to put the anthem on a national stage in its new form," Bayes said.

It wasn't until 1931 that Congress and President Herbert Hoover officially designated the song as the national anthem. Still, it was clear the song was on its way after that day in Chicago.

For one thing, it was played when the series got back to Boston. And as one story goes, Red Sox owner Harry Frazee was so impressed with the way the song quieted rowdy fans that the next season that he ordered the band to play it while the flag was presented on the field.

"It was a turning point and from then on it was played at all opening days and World Series games," Leeke said.

The song was played just on holidays or special occasions for years, in part because ballparks didn't have the kind of sound systems they do today and owners were loath to pay for a band more than they had to. It wasn't until the 1940s during World War II that major league teams started playing it every day. Ironically, Cubs owner P.K. Wrigley decided the song would be played only on major holidays and for special events.

"Wrigley thought it cheapened the anthem to play it every day," said Marc Ferris, author of "Star-Spangled Banner: The Unlikely Story of America's National Anthem." In 1967, the Cubs put the song on the daily playlist, a patriotic gesture during yet another war, this one in Vietnam.

On a recent day at Wrigley, fans stood as one for the anthem.

"It still sends a chill down my back," said 90-year-old Victor Holliday of Champaign, Illinois, his time as a Marine during World War II written right there on his red cap.

The respect for the song was not lost on his son, who recalled the Vietnam war era when the anthem was not always warmly received.

"It changed radically after 9/11," said Shawn Holliday, 58. "And even today, with so many differences in the country, so much division, I think we again are falling back for comfort on these kinds of symbols."

And if anyone did not show the proper respect for the song, others in the stadium were ready.

"Come on, they can cool it for a minute and a half and put down their phones," said Wayne Messmer, who has sung the anthem nearly 5,000 times over more than three decades of performing, most notably before Cubs games at Wrigley. "I will stare people down if they are talking when I'm singing."

AP 360 degree video of an anthem at Wrigley Field: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi7H5GnTGaQ>
&feature=youtu.be ___ More AP baseball: <https://apnews.com/tag/MLBbaseball>

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 43 of 44

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 4, the 185th day of 2017. There are 180 days left in the year. This is Independence Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted by delegates to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

On this date:

In 1802, the United States Military Academy officially opened at West Point, New York.

In 1817, ground was broken for the Erie Canal in Rome, New York. The middle section of the waterway took three years to complete; the entire canal was finished in 1825.

In 1826, 50 years to the day after the Declaration of Independence was adopted, former presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died.

In 1831, the fifth president of the United States, James Monroe, died in New York City at age 73.

In 1872, the 30th president of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, was born in Plymouth, Vermont.

In 1917, during a ceremony in Paris honoring the French hero of the American Revolution, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Charles E. Stanton, an aide to Maj. Gen. John J. Pershing, declared: "Lafayette, we are here!"

In 1939, Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees delivered his famous farewell speech in which he called himself "the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

In 1942, Irving Berlin's musical revue "This Is the Army" opened at the Broadway Theater in New York.

In 1947, the small central California town of Hollister was overrun by thousands of motorcycling enthusiasts, dozens of whom ended up being arrested, most for drunkenness, in what came to be called the "Hollister Riot."

In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Freedom of Information Act, which went into effect the following year.

In 1987, Klaus Barbie, the former Gestapo chief known as the "Butcher of Lyon (lee-OHN)," was convicted by a French court of crimes against humanity and sentenced to life in prison (he died in Sept. 1991).

In 1997, NASA's Pathfinder spacecraft landed on Mars, inaugurating a new era in the search for life on the red planet. CBS newsman Charles Kuralt died in New York at age 62.

Ten years ago: BBC reporter Alan Johnston, seized by the Army of Islam in the Gaza Strip the previous March, was released after 114 days in captivity. The head of the radical-held Red Mosque (Maulana Abdul Aziz) in Islamabad, Pakistan, was caught by security forces. (He was eventually released.) The Black Sea resort of Sochi was elected the host city of the 2014 Winter Olympics, taking the Winter Games to Russia for the first time. Bill Pinkney, the last survivor of the original members of the musical group The Drifters, died in Daytona Beach, Florida, at age 81.

Five years ago: Scientists at the European Center for Nuclear Research in Geneva, where the world's biggest atom smasher is located, cheered the apparent end of a decades-long quest for a new subatomic particle called the Higgs boson, or "God particle." Three children drowned when a yacht carrying 27 people capsized in Long Island Sound off Oyster Bay, New York. Joey Chestnut won his sixth straight Fourth of July hot dog-eating contest at New York's Coney Island, downing 68 dogs and buns to tie his personal best.

One year ago: NASA received a radio signal from the solar-powered Juno spacecraft confirming that it was in orbit around the planet Jupiter after a trip of nearly five years and 1.8 billion miles. Joey Chestnut upset Matt Stonie to regain the championship title at the annual July Fourth hot dog eating contest at Nathan's Famous in Coney Island by downing 70 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes, beating out Stonie by 17 dogs.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Eva Marie Saint is 93. Actress Gina Lollobrigida is 90. Playwright Neil Simon is 90. Country singer Ray Pillow is 80. Singer Bill Withers is 79. Actor Ed Bernard is 78. Actress Karolyn Grimes is 77. Rhythm and blues singer Annette Beard (Martha and the Vandellas) is 74. Broadcast journalist Geraldo Rivera is 74. Vietnam War veteran and peace activist Ron Kovic is 71. Rhythm-and-blues musician Ralph

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 04, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 004 ~ 44 of 44

Johnson (Earth, Wind and Fire) is 66. Rock musician Domingo Ortiz (Widespread Panic) is 65. Singer John Waite is 62. Rock musician Kirk Pengilly (INXS) is 59. Country musician Teddy Carr is 57. Rock DJ Zonka is 55. International Tennis Hall of Famer Pam Shriver is 55. Rock musician Matt Malley is 54. Christian rock singer Michael Sweet is 54. Actor-playwright-screenwriter Tracy Letts is 52. Actor Al Madrigal is 46. Actress Jenica Bergere is 43. Actor-singer John Lloyd Young is 42. Singer Stephen "Ste" McNally (BBMak) is 39. Actress Becki Newton is 39. Actor Mo McRae is 35. TV personality Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino is 35. Rhythm-and-blues singer Melanie Fiona is 34. Malia Obama is 19.

Thought for Today: "If the American Revolution had produced nothing but the Declaration of Independence, it would have been worthwhile." — Samuel Eliot Morison, American historian (1887-1976).