

Groton Daily Independent

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Wed., July 5, 2017

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Official Notices

Groton Area School Book
Brown County Official Notices Book
Groton City Official Notices Book
Other Official Notices Book
Claremont Town Official Notices Book
Frederick Area School 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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Wednesday, July 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.

Thursday, July 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.

Friday, July 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

T-Ball: Gold hosts Claremont, 5:30 p.m., Falk Field

Saturday, July 8

Jr. Legion: Tourney in Groton. (Redfield vs. Groton at 2 p.m., Milbank vs. Redfield at 4 p.m., Groton vs. Milbank at 6 p.m.)

U12: at Clark, 3 p.m., 1 game

U10 W/B: at Clark, 2 p.m., 1 game



Sperry Stump Removal
Tyler: 605/216-8431
Over 30 Years of Combined Experience!
TJ: 605/380-7915
TreeLine Tree Service

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Chicken Soup
for the *Soul*

“There is no
footprint too small
to leave an
imprint on this
world.”

-Author Unknown

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Championship Flight

- 68- Brad and Darliss Larson
- 71- Tom and Pat Price
- 72- Ryan Easthouse and Carmen Ferguson
- 72- Scott and Susan Nehls
- 73- Steve and Lisa Millard
- 74- Mark and Kari Herman
- 75- Mark and Rachel Schock
- 76- Brandon and Brittany Bulsen

First Flight

- 74- Mitch and Mel Hoffman
- 75- Jan and Nancy Gilchrist
- 76- Steve and Betty Dunker
- 76- Mark Papstien and Susie Souza
- 77- Austin Schuelke and Elise Ferrell
- 78- Tim and Barb Gillick
- 78- Adam Herman and Rachel Blackmun
- 83- Travis and Jacki Johnson

Second Flight

- 77- Randy and Sue Stanley
- 80- Mike and Cheri Baker
- 80- Tim and Jan Kearns
- 80- Lance and Sammy Bonn
- 80- Brad and Brenda Waage
- 81- Roger and Sharon Zastrow
- 82- Lorin and Julie Fliehs
- 82- Les and Julie Hinds
- 84- Lance Frohling and Cindy Wixon
- 86- Pat and Vickie Kramp
- 86- Rod and Arlys Kluess
- 88- Tom and Alesa Mahan

Third Flight

- 81- Mike and Terri Traxinger
- 84- Rich and Tami Zimney
- 85- Dave and Marcy Blackmun
- 85- Jonathan and Mandilyn Fliehs
- 88- Mitchell and Heidi Locke
- 88- Bob and Vicki Walter
- 88- Jon and Jerrie Vedvei
- 90- LeRoy and Marion Kilber
- 90- Bob and Mavis Rossow
- 98- Bob and Judy Sundling
- 98- Larry Frohling and Deb Fredrickson
- 100- Bob and Val Wegner

Other Prizes

- Women's Closest to Pin #4: Cindy Wixon
- Men's Closest to Pin #8: Scott Nehls
- Men's and Women's Longest Putt #9: Lance Bonn
- Putting Contest Winner: Roger Zastrow

Firecracker Golf Tourney July 4, Olive Grove Golf Course



Roger Zastrow won the putting contest. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Schuelke Farms sponsored the Firecracker Tournament again this year. Pictured are Bill Schuelke and his son, Austin. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Pin Prize Winners
Left to right are Lance Bonn, Cindy Wixon and Scott Nehls. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Deb and Austin Schuelke did the scoring after the tournament. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Bill Schuelke showed the putting contestants where the Ts and holes were at for the Putting Contest. Picture are Schuelke, Roger Zastrow, Susan Nehls, Bob Walter, Elise Ferrell, and Jackie Johnson. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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First Place Winners
Third flight, Mike and Terri Traxinger; second flight, Randy and Sue Stanley; first flight, Mitch and Mel Hoffman; championship flight, Brad and Darliss Larson. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Second Place Winners
Championship Flight: Tom and Pat Price; third flight, Rich and Tami Zimney; not pictured are first flight Jan and Nancy Gilchrist and second flight Mike and Cheri Baker. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Third place Winners
Couples left to right: Championship Flight, Ryan Easthouse and Carmen Ferguson; first flight, Steve and Betty Dunker; second flight, Tim and Jan Kearns; third flight, Dave and Marcy Blackmun. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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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 American Art

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
For Granary to order 100 copies 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



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Mr. Manikin decided it was a good day for grilling at the Terry Kenny home at 610 N Main in Groton. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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2017 Brown County 4-H Horse Show

These are the corrected Brown County 4-H Horse Show results. The previous set that was published was only a partial list. We apologize for missing a couple of pages in the file.

Exhibitor, 4-H Age, Grade, Division, Class, Class Ribbon, Class Awards
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Equitation, Senior Hunt Seat, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Games, Senior Barrel Racing, Blue
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Games, Senior Pole Bending, Red
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Reining, Red
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Trail, White
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Blue
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Showmanship, Senior English Showmanship, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Adrienne Schaunaman, 18, 12, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Purple
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Purple
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Blue
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Performance, Junior Ranch Riding, Blue
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Performance, Junior Trail, White
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Performance, Junior Reining, Red
Blake Pauli, 9, 5, Showmanship, Beginner Pony/Miniature Horse Western Showmanship, Blue, GRAND CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Equitation, Senior Hunt Seat, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Performance, Senior Reining, Red
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Performance, Senior Trail, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Cassandra Townsend, 15, 10, Showmanship, Senior English Showmanship, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Colin Sprinkel, 14, 8, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Purple
Colin Sprinkel, 14, 8, Performance, Senior Trail, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Colin Sprinkel, 14, 8, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Blue
Colin Sprinkel, 14, 8, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Colin Sprinkel, 14, 8, Showmanship, Senior English Showmanship, Purple
Dylan Krueger, 13, 8, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Dylan Krueger, 13, 8, Performance, Junior Reining, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Dylan Krueger, 13, 8, Performance, Junior Ranch Riding, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Dylan Krueger, 13, 8, Performance, Junior Trail, Red
Dylan Krueger, 13, 8, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, Blue
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Equitation, Beginner Hunt Seat/Saddle Seat Equitation, Blue, GRAND CHAMPION
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, White
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Blue
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Blue
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Performance, Junior Trail, Blue, GRAND CHAMPION
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Emily Malsam, 9, 4, Showmanship, Beginner English Showmanship, Blue, GRAND CHAMPION

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Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, Blue
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Performance, Junior Reining, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Performance, Junior Ranch Riding, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Performance, Junior Trail, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Faith Flihs, 11, 5, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Red
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Blue
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Equitation, Senior Hunt Seat, Blue
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Games, Senior Pole Bending, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Games, Senior Barrel Racing, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Blue
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Performance, Senior Trail, Blue
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Blue
Grace Malsam, 14, 9, Showmanship, Senior English Showmanship, Red
Hanna Miller, 13, 7, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, Red
Hanna Miller, 13, 7, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Blue
Hanna Miller, 13, 7, Performance, Junior Trail, White
Hanna Miller, 13, 7, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Blue
Jack Podoll, 10, 4, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, White
Jack Podoll, 10, 4, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Jack Podoll, 10, 4, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Jack Podoll, 10, 4, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Jack Podoll, 10, 4, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Blue
Jazmine Hart-Crissman, 12, 6, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, Blue, RESERVE CHAMPION
Jazmine Hart-Crissman, 12, 6, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Jordan Zoellner, 12, 6, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, Red
Jordan Zoellner, 12, 6, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Red
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, Blue
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Games, Junior Pole Bending, White
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, White
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, White
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Performance, Junior Trail, White
Kylie Johannsen, 9, 4, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Red
Mallory Miller, 11, 6, Equitation, Junior Stock Seat Equitaiton, White
Mallory Miller, 11, 6, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, White
Mallory Miller, 11, 6, Games, Junior Pole Bending, White
Mallory Miller, 11, 6, Showmanship, Junior Western Showmanship, Red
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Red
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Equitation, Senior Hunt Seat, Blue
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Games, Senior Barrel Racing, Blue
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Games, Senior Pole Bending, Blue
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Red
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Trail, Red
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Red
Megan Malsam, 18, 12, Showmanship, Senior English Showmanship, Blue

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Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, Red
Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Red
Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Red
Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, Red
Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Performance, Junior Trail, White
Rayven Dutenhoffer, 8, 3, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Blue
Riley Zoellner, 8, 2, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, White
Riley Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Junior Barrel Racing, Red
Riley Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Junior Pole Bending, Red
Riley Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, Red
Riley Zoellner, 8, 2, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Red
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Equitation, Senior Stock Seat Equitation, Blue
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Games, Senior Barrel Racing, Blue, GRAND CHAMPION
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Games, Senior Pole Bending, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Games, Senior Break-Away Roping, Red
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Games, Senior Tie-Down Roping, Red
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Ranch Riding, Purple, RESERVE CHAMPION
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Performance, Senior Trail, Red
Trey Wright, 18, 12, Showmanship, Senior Western Showmanship, Red
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Equitation, Beginner Stock Seat Equitation, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Junior Pony Barrel Racing, White
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Junior Pony Pole Bending, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Games, Beginner Flag Racing, White
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Performance, Junior Reining, Red
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Performance, Junior Ranch Riding, Purple
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Performance, Junior Trail, White
Walker Zoellner, 8, 2, Showmanship, Beginner Western Showmanship, Purple, GRAND CHAMPION

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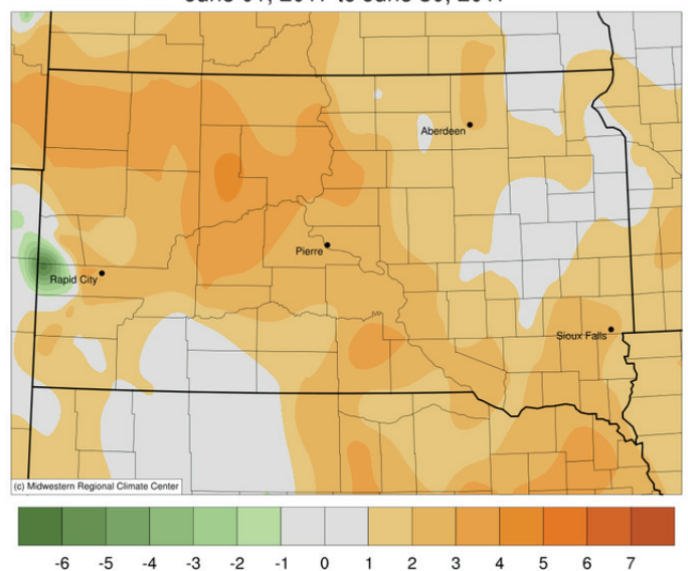
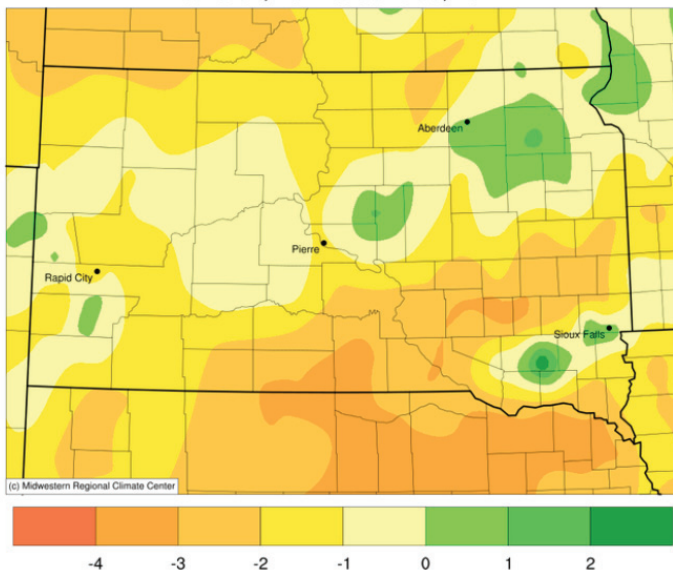
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June 2017: Drought, Wide Range of Weather

Climatologically, June is the wettest month of year across our area, and some locations lived up to expectations thanks in large part to widespread storms on June 13th. Pierre and Aberdeen both set daily precipitation records with 1.53" and 2.98" respectively. Unfortunately, a large outbreak of severe weather accompanied the beneficial rain that day. 10 confirmed tornadoes and damaging straight-line winds to over 90 mph led to widespread damage across northeastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota. In addition to June 13th, portions of east central South Dakota were impacted by two more significant straight-line wind events (June 11th and 22nd). Despite these events, drought conditions expanded and intensified over the course of the month such that over 50% of South Dakota ended in at least D1/Moderate Drought (as defined by the US Drought Monitor), and portions of Dewey, Campbell, Potter and Walworth counties ended in D3/Extreme Drought. These areas are down generally 4-6" of precipitation from normal since the beginning of the year.

It was a tale of two Junes regarding temperatures. June 1-15th ranked in the top 10 warmest on record for most locations, and several record high temperatures were broken (Mobridge: 100° on the 2nd, 95° on the 4th and 103° on the 9th, Pierre: 103° on the 9th, 98° on the second 2nd, Aberdeen 100° on the 2nd). However, record cold followed during the second half of the month (Mobridge: 42° on the 26th, Aberdeen: 39° on the 24th, 41° on the 25th, 39° on the 26th, 42° on the 27th,). Frost developed across parts of north central South Dakota on the mornings of June 25th and 26th, particularly in low-lying areas. Already severely stressed crops were damaged as a result. This is a rare occurrence for this time of year, but not unprecedented meteorologically. In fact, the drought contributed to such extreme temperature swings this month as it takes less energy to heat dry air compared to moist air, and dry air cools down faster at night compared to moist air. For instance, Aberdeen hit 39° at 5:21 am on the 1st. Then, about 34 hours later at 3:47 pm on the 2nd, the temperature soared to 100°, a 61 degree change!

Accumulated Precipitation (in): Departure from 1981-2010 Normals **Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1981-2010 Normals**
June 01, 2017 to June 30, 2017 June 01, 2017 to June 30, 2017



Highway work is ahead of schedule

Despite utility conflicts, the work on SD37 and US 12 in Groton is ahead of schedule, according to John Shoemaker of Webster Scale, Inc. The announcement was made at last Thursday's project meeting held at 1 p.m. at the Groton Community Center. These are weekly meetings and are open to the public. They are also broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM.

The original completion date for the US12 project was July 1; however, due to utility conflicts (16 days from NWE according to written response by WSI to NWE on a one-call complaint - see separate article) and other changes to the project, the new completion date is set for July 28.

Shoemaker pointed out that while the highway will be opened up, there are still other parts of the project that will not be done until later, such as lighting. He said there will be an effort to put up the permanent flashing lights earlier than scheduled so the temporary ones can be taken down and returned to the state.

"I'm pretty pleased," Shoemaker said, "with the time schedule." He also said that the SD37 project going through Groton is well ahead of schedule.

The completion date for the entire project is October 12th.

Lionel Bruemmer of Ken's Food Fair was also at the meeting and he said that he has been happy with how much the contractors are working with them during this project. One of the items of concern was access to Ken's Shell Express off of SD37. Shoemaker said once US12 is opened up, they will make an effort to allow access to Ken's off of SD37, even if it's gravel.

NWE 1-call complaint against Webster Scale is dismissed

Northwestern Energy filed a complaint against Webster Scale, Inc. in May with the South Dakota One Call Enforcement Panel. According to the complaint, Northwestern Energy alleged that Webster Scale "used unsafe methods digging near marked facilities. A gas main was hit causing a gas outage to part of the town because they (WSI) were digging perpendicular to and within 18" of the markings. This was the second incident on the same job. The first was a gas service damaged due to scaling over the top of the markings with a dozer."

Northwestern Energy put a claim in for \$642.09 for the April 12th incident and \$1,238.88 for the April 21st incident. According to state statute, when digging within 18" of markings, the area must be hand dug. Northwestern said in their complaint, "We met with this company to discuss safe digging practices and they still hit our gas facilities twice within the same job due to unsafe digging practices. We also spoke with their employees on site after the first incident to try to prevent further damage."

In a written response to the South Dakota One-Call Enforcement Panel, John Shoemaker, vice president of Webster Scale, Inc., responded, "In Webster Scales Inc.'s opinion, we are not responsible for any of the damages that occurred."

In the letter, Webster Scale, Inc., stated that a preconstruction meeting was held Thursday, March 30, 2017, all utilities involved were present with the exception of Northwestern Energy. In addition, the project has been on the South Dakota Transportation plan for over three years. Northwestern Energy had advised Webster Scale, Inc. That they would be at the initial meeting, but they did not appear, according to Webster Scale Inc.'s response. WSI attempted to contact Northwestern Energy later that day. Northwestern Energy did not attend any of the meetings.

Construction began April 4, 2017. WSI, in their response, said, "James Valley Communications, Midcontinent, WEB Water and the City of Groton all worked closely with WSI in order to insure there were no utility issues. According to the SD Department of Transportation plan, Northwestern Energy was aware of this large project and all known utility conflicts for over three years." Several one-calls were made and all parties received copies of these one-calls.

On the first incident on April 12, an employee of NWE was on-site and advised WSI that there were no conflicts in the area that was being excavated. "WSI was operating a dozer and bringing the site to grade.

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Shortly thereafter, Mr. (Evan) Almburg left the scene and that gas service was damaged.

"As to the second incident that occurred on April 21, once again NWE was not on site. The plans which had been provided by the State of South Dakota did not show any gas lines in the area in which we were operating. These plans had been previously been provided to NWE. At the time of the excavation in question took place, the project superintendent, three laborers, the excavator operator and a representative of James Valley were present. The James Valley representative was present because it was known that a fiber optic line was in the area where the excavation was taking place. At no time did any of the individuals believe there was a gas main present. The idea this strike was intentional is ludicrous."

It was stated that WSI is well aware of the 18" requirement. "WSI would never place its employees, subcontractors, state personnel and the general public at risk."

WSI had specifically asked NWE and its representatives to come by on a regular basis to make sure there were no issues. "Evan agreed to this, however, it never occurred," according to the letter. "In fact, as of the date of this answer, WSI is of the belief that NWE has caused delays of 16 days due to their failure to move their lines out of the public right-of-way." Meanwhile, it was stated that Almburg had quit his employment and that the new contact information provided was incorrect.

WSI has been in business for 57 years. "We have never had a complaint filed against us," the letter said. "The fact that there have been no issues with any of the other four utilities involved with the project is a testament as to our practices."

The South Dakota One Call Board met June 16 in Rapid City. Discussion was held on the information presented and finding no probable cause, the complaint was dismissed on a unanimous vote.

It should be noted at according to the minutes of the meeting, this was a legal proceeding and only the written information provided by the complainant and the written response from the defendant were considered. No comments from the parties involved in the complaints were taken. This article was produced from the documentation on the website of South Dakota One Call.

The full documentation of the complaint can be viewed on-line at www.sdonecall.com.

<http://www.sdonecall.com/complaints/south-dakota-one-call-complaints/2017-south-dakota-one-call-complaints/oc17-003/>

In addition, Webster Scale, Inc., along with the South Dakota Department of Transportation, hold weekly meetings at 1 p.m. on Thursday at the Groton Community Center. These meetings are also broadcast live at GDILIVE.COM and are also open to the public.

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Today in Weather History

July 5, 1936: Three record high temperatures were set on this day. Near Gann Valley, the temperature reached 120 degrees, setting the state record. The state record was tied on July 15, 2006, at 17 miles WSW of Fort Pierre. Other record highs on this date include 119 degrees in Kennebec and 116 degrees in Murdo. The record highs near Gann Valley, Kennebec, and Murdo are all-time highs for each location.

July 5, 1996: A powerful thunderstorm packing over 100 mph winds and grapefruit-sized hail tracked from Belle Fourche Reservoir to Wall. The storm caused an estimated \$4.5 million in crop damage, killed numerous livestock, and stripped vegetation bare.

1891 - Sixteen horses were killed by hail, and many more have to be put to death due to injuries from a hailstorm at Rapid City, SD. (The Weather Channel)

1900 - A spectacular three day fire began when a bolt of lightning struck a refinery in Bayonne NJ. (David Ludlum)

1916 - A hurricane produced 82 mph winds, an 11.6 foot tide, and a barometric pressure of 28.92 inches at Mobile, AL. (David Ludlum)

1925: A large hailstone weighing a half pound fell at Plumstead, just outside of London, England. This hailstone was the heaviest hailstone ever recorded in the United Kingdom.

1937: The temperature at Medicine Lake, Montana soared to 117 degrees to tie the state record. Glendive, Montana reached 117 degrees on July 20th, 1893.

1937 - Midale and Yellow Grass in Saskatchewan hit 113 degrees to establish an all-time record high for Canada that same day. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - The morning low at Death Valley CA was 103 degrees, and the high that afternoon was 120 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1980: The "More Trees Down" started in western Iowa and tracked eastward affecting several states along its path before dissipating in eastern Virginia. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the Storm Prediction Center.

2003: From the 5th through the 7th, New Zealand had its worst snowstorm in 50 years. The storm caused thousands of power outages to homes and businesses and stranding hundreds of motorists. In some areas, 12 inches of snow falls.








1987 - Severe thunderstorms raked south central Kansas for the second morning in a row. Thunderstorm winds again gusted to 80 mph at Clearwater, and in the Wichita area reached 100 mph. Twenty-five persons were injured at a trailer park at El Dorado Lake. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms spawned eleven tornadoes in Montana and three in North Dakota. Baseball size hail was reported at Shonkin, MT, and wind gusts to 85 mph were reported south of Fordville, ND. Twenty cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Fargo ND with a reading of 106 degrees. Muskegon, MI, equalled their July record with a high of 95 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Moisture from what once was Tropical Storm Allison triggered thunderstorms over the Middle Atlantic Coast Region, which deluged Wilmington, DE, with a record 6.83 inches of rain in 24 hours, including 6.37 inches in just six hours. Up to ten inches of rain was reported at Claymont, northeast of Wilmington. July 1989 was thus the wettest month in seventy years for Wilmington, with a total of 12.63 inches of rain. Alamosa CO reported an all-time record high of 94 degrees, and Pierre, SD, hit 113 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Hot	Mostly Clear	Hot	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 100 °F	Low: 67 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 85 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 89 °F

HOT and Humid Today

Highs 95 to 105 Degrees



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 7/5/2017 4:41 AM Central

Published on: 07/05/2017 at 4:45AM

Hot temperatures can be expected today with highs in 90s to 105 degrees!

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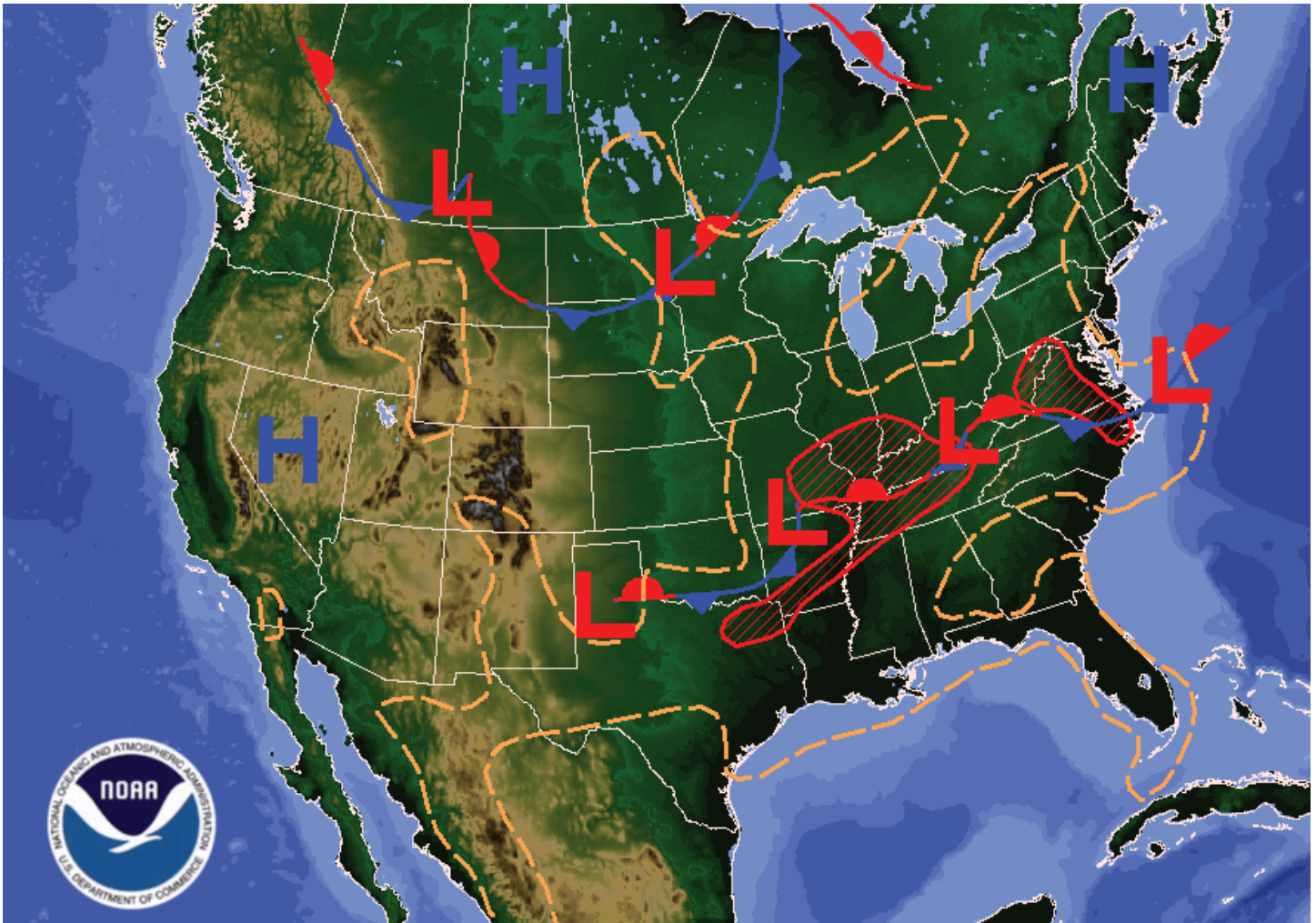
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 95.6 F at 4:51 PM
Heat Index: 103 at 4:24 PM
Low Outside Temp: 66.7 F at 5:46 AM
High Gust: 26.0 Mph at 1:02 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 108° in 1936
Record Low: 35° in 1915
Average High: 83°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July: 0.53
Precip to date in July: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 11.37
Precip Year to Date: 5.77
Sunset Tonight: 9:24 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:52 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Jul 05, 2017, issued 4:42 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)



A WAY OUT

Being troubled or lonely or afflicted or distressed or having a broken heart or in a state of anguish will take the joy out of life. But to have them all happening at the same time? That seems unreal and unfair. Yet, that is how David described himself in Psalm 25.

However, he did not remain in that hopeless condition. He looked to God for healing, asking Him to look on his affliction and pain and to forgive all of his sins. He knew God's grace and had enjoyed His mercy and now wanted to be restored to "the joy of Your salvation." He experienced the consequences of his sin and wanted God's forgiveness and deliverance.

One of the greatest blessings of prayer is to have the peace that comes from emotional healing. The pain that David was feeling was emotional pain and he needed inner healing – perhaps the healing of memories from the times he acted selfishly using and abusing others. No doubt he needed forgiveness for the sins he committed. They tormented and troubled his mind. He certainly needed release from guilt that burdened his heart and caused him distress. His need for healing was intense. Guilt distorted his mind and troubled his heart. He wanted to move beyond his pain and enjoy the peace he knew that only God could give him. He was estranged from God because of his sins.

So he asked God to forgive all of his sins. He wanted to be released from his past so he could move into the present and live in complete peace with God.

Prayer: Help us, Heavenly Father, to come to You for Your love and forgiveness, salvation and peace. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 25:16 Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

16-39-47-53-71, Mega Ball: 15, Megaplier: 4

(sixteen, thirty-nine, forty-seven, fifty-three, seventy-one; Mega Ball: fifteen; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$172 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$121 million

Sioux Falls mayor wants city left 'rock solid' financially

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls Mayor Mike Huether says a big priority in his final year in office is to leave South Dakota's largest city in a "rock solid" financial position.

Huether told KELO Radio on Tuesday (<http://bit.ly/2sntH11>) that his administration has accomplished a lot and made sound investments, but there's more to do.

Huether and the Sioux Falls City Council have been challenged by the weaker farm economy and slowing tax revenues. The mayor has had to tighten the city budget. He says there will be no "bells and whistles" projects during his final year as mayor.

Asked what he'll do when he leaves office, Huether said he and his wife are still discussing the future and have made no decisions yet.

Huether has been mayor of Sioux Falls since 2010.

Information from: KELO-AM, <http://www.keloam.com>

Authorities ID 2 Sioux Falls residents killed in I-90 crash

BRANDON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified two Sioux Falls residents who were killed in a crash on Interstate 90 near Brandon in eastern South Dakota last weekend.

A pickup truck collided with a compact SUV early Saturday. Both vehicles rolled into the north ditch.

The Department of Public Safety said Tuesday that the SUV driver, 38-year-old Anna Mason, and her 44-year-old male passenger, Shannon Fischer, were not wearing seatbelts and were ejected. They died at the scene.

The third person in the SUV, an 11-year-old girl, suffered serious but non-life threatening injuries. Her name was not released.

A 39-year-old man from Adrian, Minnesota, who was driving the pickup, received life-threatening injuries. The department says charges are pending against him.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating.

Piedmont man jailed in Rapid City shooting that wounded 1

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are holding a Piedmont man in a shooting that seriously injured another man in Rapid City.

Police say the 49-year-old was arrested on suspicion of attempted first-degree murder on Monday. He's being held in the Pennington County jail.

Rapid City Police Sgt. Andy Becker says officers responded around 8 a.m. Monday to a call about an intoxicated man. They discovered that he was not intoxicated but was suffering from a gunshot wound to the chest. He says the shooting happened around 10 p.m. Sunday.

Investigators traced the suspect to a residence in Meade County. Detectives believe the two men knew each other.

The Rapid City Police Department and the Pennington County Sheriff's Office are investigating, and will turn the case over to the Pennington County State's Attorney's Office.

Authorities seek inmate who left Rapid City job site

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are looking for a state prison inmate who left his community service job site in Rapid City without authorization.

The Department of Corrections says it's believed that 20-year-old Brendan Lebar left Monday with someone driving a 1990s black sedan. He's described as white, 5-foot-7 and 135 pounds.

Lebar is serving a five-year sentence for forgery, two years for eluding a police officer and a seven-year sentence with two years suspended for burglary. All the sentences are from Pennington County, and Lebar is serving them concurrently.

Failing to return to custody from a job assignment or temporary leave constitutes felony second-degree escape and is punishable by up to five years in prison. Knowingly concealing an escaped prisoner is also a felony.

10 things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. WHY NORTH KOREA IS REVELING IN ITS ICBM LAUNCH

As North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vows to never give up missiles or nuclear weapons and North Korean state media exults, this time the accomplishment might actually match the over-the-top description.

2. HOW THE WORLD IS RESPONDING TO NORTH KOREA

The dangerous new reach for weapons Pyongyang hopes to top with nuclear warheads one day is spurring U.S. demands for "global action" to counter the threat.

3. WHAT AWAITS TRUMP AS HE RETURNS TO EUROPE

The president could get a friendly welcome in Poland ahead of a G20 summit, despite lingering skepticism across the continent over his commitment to NATO, his past praise of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his decision to pull the U.S. out of a major climate agreement.

4. MUELLER PROBE COULD DRAW FOCUS TO RUSSIAN CRIME OPERATIONS

The U.S. government has long warned that Russian organized crime posed a threat to democratic institutions, including "criminally linked oligarchs" who might collude with the Russian government to undermine business competition.

5. WHERE A FRAIL 4-YEAR-OLD GIRL LOOKS AS IF SHE'S ONLY 1

Born in a squalid displaced camp for Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya minority, Rosmaida Bibi has struggled to do something most children do effortlessly: grow.

6. MORE FAMILIES FLEEING CENTRAL AMERICA RESETTLING IN MEXICO

Instead of trying to reach the U.S., which many Central American refugees see as increasingly hostile, more people fleeing violence in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and staying in Mexico.

7. UKRAINE SAYS IT PREVENTED ANOTHER CYBERATTACK

The country is still trying to find its feet after scores or even hundreds of businesses and government agencies were hit by an explosion of data-scrambling software on June 27.

8. WHY AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL IS CRITICIZING LOUISIANA CONGRESSMAN

U.S. Rep. Clay Higgins filmed part of a political video from inside a former gas chamber at the site, and Auschwitz officials say it is not a stage, but a place for silence.

9. BIG FIREWORKS RING IN AMERICA'S 241ST BIRTHDAY

Americans celebrated the United States' 241st birthday with hot dogs, small-town parades and flashy fireworks displays for massive crowds.

10. HOW BRITAIN CELEBRATED BASEBALL

A vivid piece of American sports culture was displayed in London's Hyde Park as baseball came to town for America's Independence Day.



South Korean army soldiers ride a K-1 tank during the annual exercise in Paju, South Korea near the border with North Korea, Wednesday, July 5, 2017. Grinning broadly, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un delighted in the global furor created by his nation's first launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile, vowing Wednesday to never abandon nuclear weapons and to keep sending Washington more "gift packages" of missile and atomic tests. (AP Photo/

Ahn Young-joon)

A big North Korean moment, amplified with bigger propaganda

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A "brilliant victory" and "thrilling" success, North Korea's grinning leader crowed of his country's first test of a long-range ballistic missile. The "final phase" in a confrontation with America, Kim Jong Un called it. Part of a coming stream of "gift packages" to the Yankees in the form of more weapons tests.

You can feel the self-satisfied, self-aggrandizing bliss as North Korean state media revels in what it clearly sees as a historic moment — and a golden chance to boost the dictator and his military.

In some respects, the accomplishment this week is as big a deal as the breathless descriptions. But, as ever with North Korea, there are some important reasons to be skeptical.

People in the North Korean countryside still go without food. It's still a third-world economy, with massive corruption and rampant human rights abuses. It is hated, feared, mocked and sanctioned by its neighbors. And several years of development and tests still lie ahead before its intercontinental ballistic missile — the North calls the nascent version it test-fired on Tuesday the Hwasong-14 — will actually work.

Yet despite all of this, after decades of single-minded determination, a tiny, impoverished country stands on the threshold of completing a long-coveted goal that only the United States, Russia and a handful of others have accomplished: building nuclear-armed ICBMs.

A look at North Korea's delighted propaganda, and what it might mean:

"GIFT PACKAGES"

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THE PROPAGANDA: "Respected Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un," with a "broad smile on his face," urged his scientists to continue to "frequently send big and small 'gift packages' to the Yankees as ever so that they would not feel weary."

WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN: Pyongyang, with this part boast, part threat, is likely promising more missile and nuclear tests.

It's a show of defiance, sure — such tests are banned by the U.N. — but it also reveals something important, and less flattering, about the North: More tests signal weakness.

Before it can actually back up its bluster, it needs repeated tests to build a single ICBM that can reach North America, let alone an arsenal of them.

Same goes for nuclear bombs.

Some analysts believe North Korea can arm its short-range missiles with nuclear warheads already. But there's more doubt about whether Pyongyang can build a warhead that can fit on a long-range missile.

Each new test puts the North closer to its goal. But it also signals that it is not there yet.

"BRILLIANT VICTORY"

THE PROPAGANDA: North Korea said that it had scored a "brilliant victory" and "great success" by launching an ICBM that can carry a "large-sized" nuclear warhead. Kim praised his scientists for "thrillingly succeeding at one try in even the test-launch of Hwasong-14 capable of striking the U.S. mainland this time." The weapon's guidance, stability, structural and "active-flight stages" systems were all "confirmed."

WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN: The North did succeed, in a way, by getting the missile to fly in a highly lofted arc and splash down in the Sea of Japan. Washington, Seoul and Tokyo all confirmed this as the North's best effort to date.

It's also true that if not stopped, North Korea appears only a matter of years away from building a working ICBM.

But there are big reasons to doubt North Korea's claim of complete success "at one try."

These include whether the North has mastered the technology for a re-entry vehicle crucial for returning a warhead to the atmosphere from space so it can hit its intended target. And whether North Korea can build a warhead small enough to fit on a long-range missile.

"FINAL PHASE"

THE PROPAGANDA: Kim "stressed that the protracted showdown with the U.S. imperialists has reached its final phase, and it is the time for the (North) to demonstrate its mettle to the U.S."

WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN: This sounds like a threat, and North Korea has, without doubt, been demonstrat-



People walk past a TV news showing an image of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un while reporting North Korea's missile test which landed in the waters of Japan's economic zone (EEZ) in Tokyo Tuesday, July 4, 2017. North Korea claimed to have tested its first intercontinental ballistic missile in a launch Tuesday, a potential game-changing development in its push to militarily challenge Washington — but a declaration that conflicts with earlier South Korean and U.S. assessments that it had an intermediate range. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

ing its mettle for years, ignoring repeated U.S. warnings not to test nukes and missiles and threatening to strike targets in the United States.

Such propaganda helps domestically by boosting Kim Jong Un as a titan bestriding the world stage. It also causes fear in America, South Korea and Japan.

"Final phase" may also be a way of trying to keep North Korea's elites from getting complacent as the nuclear standoff nears 30 years.

There's a glimmer of truth in the phrase, too.

If the goal has always been a nuclear-armed ICBM, then the first smooth test of a nascent version of that weapon could indeed mark a "final phase" of sorts.

What's less certain is whether this phase will end with violence, some sort of negotiated nuclear freeze or simply more years of frustration and North Korean weapons progress.

China invites foreign experts to treat Nobel laureate Liu

By DIDI TANG, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China has agreed to allow liver cancer experts from the U.S., Germany and other countries to join a medical team treating imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo, amid international criticism of Beijing's handling of his case and calls for him to be allowed to be treated abroad.

The judicial bureau in a northeastern city where Liu is being treated said Wednesday Liu's medical team agreed to a request by Liu's family members for foreign experts to be consulted. Liu, China's best-known political prisoner, is being treated at a Shenyang hospital for late-stage liver cancer diagnosed in late May.

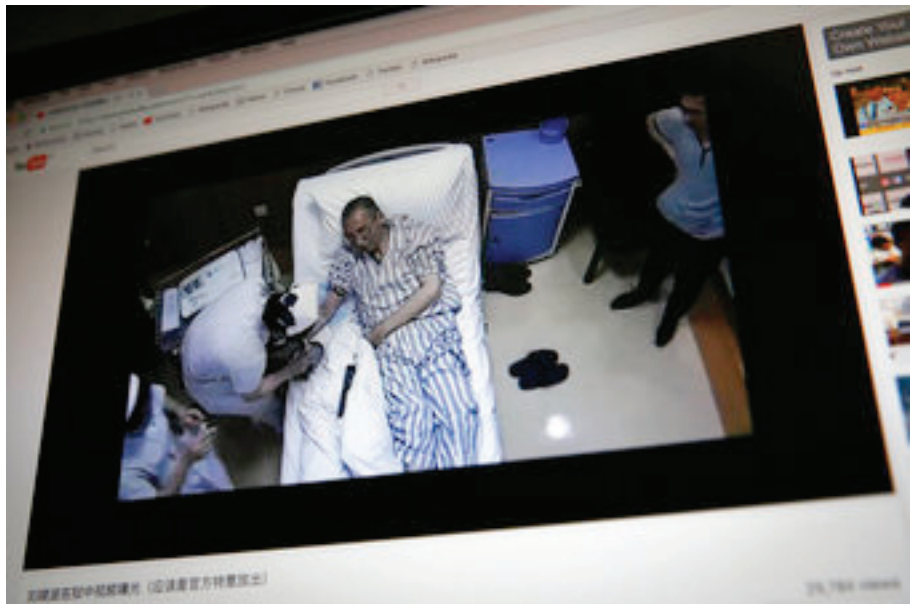
The bureau said in an online statement that the invited experts were "the most authoritative liver cancer treatment experts," but gave no other details. Other countries whose experts had been invited weren't named.

In an emailed statement, the German foreign ministry in Berlin said it supports a humanitarian solution and hopes Liu will get the medical treatment he needs.

It was unclear whether Liu's case was brought up when German Chancellor Angela Merkel met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Berlin on Wednesday ahead of the G-20 Summit in Hamburg.

The U.S. Embassy in Beijing did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Following initial questions over how Liu had become so sick without having been previously diagnosed, authorities said they had assembled a team of eight Chinese specialists to oversee his treatment and have released statements testifying to the care he is receiving.



In this Thursday, June 29, 2017, photo, a video clip shows China's jailed Nobel Peace laureate Liu Xiaobo lying on a bed receiving medical treatment at a hospital on a computer screen in Beijing. China says it has invited U.S. and German liver cancer experts to join a medical team treating imprisoned Liu. The judicial bureau for the northeastern city of Shenyang said Wednesday, July 5, 2017, in an online statement that Liu's family members made a request for foreign experts and Liu's medical team agreed. (AP Photo/Andy

Wong)

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Yet his friends have raised concerns that Liu, his wife and other family members have not been able to freely communicate with the outside and that their messages have been tightly controlled by authorities, who say Liu's family has been satisfied with their course of treatment.

"Having foreign experts on the medical team is no replacement for Liu Xiaobo and his family to freely choose how and where he should be treated," Liu's friend, scholar Wen Kejian, said Wednesday. "We have not been able to speak to family members, who are under pressure not to speak to us."

Wen said he believes Liu and his family want to seek medical treatment overseas and that it is important for Liu to be allowed to communicate with his friends for the sake of his emotional health as he battles the liver cancer that has metastasized to his entire body.

Wen and another friend of Liu's, Mo Zhixu, tried to visit Liu at the First Hospital of China Medical University in Shenyang where the authorities said Liu is being treated. They made inquiries at likely floors, but were turned away when nurses said they were not aware of a patient by the name of Liu Xiaobo.

Western governments have been urging Beijing to release Liu and allow him the freedom to choose where he wants to be treated. The invitation of foreign experts also followed meetings between Chinese and Western officials, who suggested at least American and German doctors be allowed to see Liu.

Geng Shuang, spokesman for China's foreign ministry, said Wednesday that China protects the rights of those convicted and serving time in jail.

"We request that China's judicial sovereignty be respected," Geng said at a daily media briefing. "No country shall interfere with China's internal affairs through an individual case."

Liu, 61, an essayist and literary critic, was sentenced to 11 years in prison in 2009 on the charge of inciting subversion of state power, based on his writings, including the bold Charter 08 that he co-authored. That document and some of his prior writings called for political reforms that would end the one-party communist rule. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 while incarcerated.

China calls Liu a criminal who sought to overthrow the government and has denounced the awarding of the Nobel prize to him as an attack on its political and legal system.

In a statement Wednesday, Amnesty International reiterated calls for Liu and his wife Liu Xia to be allowed to travel overseas.

"It is not too late for the authorities to end this cruel farce," the group said by email. The invitation to foreign experts appeared to be "in part an attempt to limit international criticism," it said.

Kim vows North Korea's nukes are not on negotiation table

By FOSTER KLUG and HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed Wednesday his nation will "demonstrate its mettle to the U.S." and never put its weapons programs up for negotiations, a day after test-launching its first intercontinental ballistic missile. The hard line suggests more tests are being prepared as the country tries to perfect nuclear-armed missiles capable of striking anywhere in the United States.

Tuesday's ICBM launch, confirmed by U.S. and South Korean officials, is a milestone in North Korea's efforts to develop long-range missiles with nuclear warheads. It isn't there yet — some analysts suggest it will take several more years and many more tests to perfect such an arsenal — but a successful launch of an ICBM has long been seen as a red line after which it would only be a matter of time if North Korea isn't stopped.

Worry spread in Washington and at the United Nations, where the United States, Japan and South Korea requested an emergency U.N. Security Council session on Wednesday. U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson confirmed that the missile was an ICBM and said the U.S. response would include "stronger measures to hold the DPRK accountable," using the acronym for the nation's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The uproar only seemed to inspire North Korea, whose propaganda machine rarely fails to aggrandize its leader and its military or to thumb its nose at rivals Seoul and Washington.

A report in its state media Wednesday described leader Kim as "feasting his eyes" on the ICBM, which

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was said to be capable of carrying a large nuclear warhead, before its launch. "With a broad smile on his face," Kim urged his scientists to "frequently send big and small 'gift packages' to the Yankees," it said, an apparent reference to continuing the stream of nuclear and missile tests Kim has ordered since taking power in late 2011.

North Korea was also pleased that its test came as Americans celebrated Independence Day. Kim, the state media report said, told "scientists and technicians that the U.S. would be displeased to witness the DPRK's strategic option" on its Independence Day. North Korea has a history of conducting weapons tests on or around July 4.

The report said Kim "stressed that the protracted showdown with the U.S. imperialists has reached its final phase and it is the time for the DPRK to demonstrate its mettle to the U.S., which is testing its will in defiance of its warning."

The missile test, North Korea's most successful yet, was a direct rebuke to U.S. President Donald Trump's earlier declaration on Twitter that such a test "won't happen!"

The launch came days after the first face-to-face meeting between Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in and ahead of a summit of the world's richest economies.

On Wednesday, U.S. and South Korean troops, in response to the ICBM launch, engineered a show of force for North Korea, with soldiers from the allies firing "deep strike" precision missiles into South Korean territorial waters. Moon ordered the drills with the United States to show "North Korea our firm combined missile response posture," his office said.

North Korea's Academy of Defense Science, in a bit of hyperbole, said the test of the Hwasong-14 missile marked the "final step" in creating a "confident and powerful nuclear state that can strike anywhere on Earth."

A U.S. scientist analyzing the height and distance of the launch said the missile could potentially reach Alaska.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said it's unclear whether North Korea has mastered re-entry technology for an ICBM. It said the North may now conduct a nuclear test with "boosted explosive power" to show off a warhead mounted on a missile.

North Korea has a reliable arsenal of shorter-range missiles and is thought to have a small number 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.



A public TV screen broadcasts a local TV news showing what was said to be the launch of a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile, ICBM, aired by North Korea's KRT on July 4, 2017, in Tokyo Wednesday, July 5, 2017. The Japanese government says it is taking every measure to ensure people's safety a day after North Korea test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile. The missile that North Korea launched Tuesday fell into the sea between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

North Korea says it needs nuclear weapons and powerful missiles to cope with what it calls rising U.S. military threats.

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.

The missile test could invite a new round of international sanctions, but North Korea is already one of the most sanctioned countries on Earth.

Last year, it conducted its fourth and fifth atomic bomb tests. The fifth test in September was its most powerful atomic detonation to date.

The Korean Peninsula has been divided since the end of World War II. Almost 30,000 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea.

Iraqi commander says 300 IS fighters holed up in Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — Some 300 Islamic State fighters remain in the small patch of territory still controlled by the group in Mosul's Old City, a senior Iraqi commander said Wednesday.

Lt. Gen. Sami al-Aridi of Iraq's special forces told The Associated Press that the militants' hold on Mosul has shrunk to a 500 square meter (600 sq. yard) area. A large number of civilians are believed to be trapped in the IS-run enclave, with around 1,500 fleeing with every 100-meter (yard) advance by Iraqi forces.

Iraqi forces moved to besiege the Old City before launching their attack in order to prevent IS fighters from fleeing to neighboring Syria, but al-Aridi said hundreds of militants still managed to escape from the Old City alone.

"They just shave their beards and walk out," al-Aridi said. "Just yesterday we captured two among a group of women and children."

Late Tuesday, Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi congratulated the armed forces on a "big victory" in Mosul, despite ongoing clashes. The prime minister declared an end to the extremist group's self-styled Islamic caliphate in June.

IS captured Mosul in a matter of days when it swept across northern and central Iraq in the summer of 2014. Iraqi forces backed by a U.S.-led coalition launched a major operation to retake the city in October.



Iraqi special forces Lt. Col. Salam Hussein, center, and his team watch Islamic State positions using a surveillance camera near the frontline in the Old City of Mosul, Iraq, Wednesday, July 5, 2017. Some 300 Islamic State fighters remain in the small patch of territory still controlled by the group in Mosul's Old City, a senior Iraqi commander said Wednesday. (AP Photo/Felipe Dana)

Trump looks for friendlier European welcome in Poland

By VIVIAN SALAMA and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is headed back to Europe hoping to receive a friendly welcome in Poland despite lingering skepticism across the continent over his commitment to NATO, his past praise of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his decision to pull the U.S. out of a major climate agreement.

Trump arrives in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday for a brief visit that will include a speech in Krasinski Square, near the site of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis. He'll also meet with the leaders of Poland and Croatia and hold a joint news conference with Polish President Andrzej Duda.

Before moving on to an international summit in Germany, the president will also hold meetings with the leaders of a dozen countries located between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black seas at a summit of the Three Seas Initiative, which aims to expand and modernize energy and trade. One of the initiative's goals is to make the region less dependent on Russian energy.

"Even if he doesn't mention Putin or Russia outright, just stepping foot in Poland sends a powerful statement," said Jim Carafano, a foreign policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. "Europe is working for energy independence — looking for free market solutions — and Poland is in the middle of that energy corridor, so it makes so much sense that the president would go there and talk about energy policy."

At the same time, Trump will have to balance his visit to Europe with escalating tensions with North Korea, after the U.S. concluded Tuesday that North Korea had test-launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile. The U.S., South Korea and Japan responded to the provocation by requesting an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council, scheduled Wednesday afternoon.

Trump returns to Europe after a shaky first trip to the continent in May and signs of unhappiness around the globe with the start of his presidency.

A recent Pew Research Center survey of attitudes toward Trump in more than three dozen countries found fewer than 3 in 10 respondents expressing confidence in his ability to do the right thing on international affairs.

Most of those surveyed disapproved of Trump's major policies, including temporarily halting travel from six mostly Muslim countries. Among the 37 countries Pew surveyed, Trump scored higher marks than his predecessor, President Barack Obama, in only two: Russia and Israel.

Trump's first trip to Europe as president in May saw a series of awkward encounters, including a tough speech to the leaders of NATO countries urging them to spend more on their armed forces, an uncomfortable handshake with France's new president, and a caught-on-camera moment when Trump pushed past the prime minister of Montenegro, Europe's newest country, while squeezing his way to the front of a crowd.

But Poland may offer Trump a chance to shine.



In this Thursday, March 31, 2005, file photo a woman in Czestochowa, Poland, shows her thumbnails decorated with portraits of Poland's Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, right, and U.S. President George W. Bush. When President Donald Trump arrives in Warsaw, on Wednesday, July 5, 2017, with his wife Melania, he will be the eight U.S. president to visit Poland, a Central European nation that peacefully shed Moscow's dominance in 1989, joined NATO in 1999 and the European Union in 2004, and which is one of the staunchest U.S. allies in Europe.

(AP Photo/Jacek Sroda, File)

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According to Polish media reports, Poland's government promised the White House a reception of cheering crowds as part of its invitation. To make good on that pledge, ruling party lawmakers and pro-government activists plan to bus in groups from the provinces to hear Trump's speech.

The White House didn't respond to a request for comment on those reports.

With Trump's sights already set on the 2020 election, his visit to Poland could also be seen as a power play for battleground states like Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, which are home to hundreds of thousands of Polish-American voters.

Trump may also seek to use Poland as an exemplar of partnership. A U.S. ally in Iraq and Afghanistan, Poland is one of the five NATO members that spends at least 2 percent of their gross domestic product on the military. That's something that Trump — and U.S. leaders before him — have demanded of NATO allies. Trump has scolded other NATO members for falling short on their commitments.

Poland is also host to about 1,000 U.S. troops, and is supporting U.S. and NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's also a regular customer for U.S. military equipment.

Before Trump's arrival, Poland's government emphasized that Russia's aggression in Ukraine poses a threat to the whole of Europe, something that will inevitably be raised in discussions with Trump as Europeans seek to gauge the president's willingness to confront Putin before their first face-to-face meeting later this week.

"Poland is, in some ways, a poster child for some of the issues that the Trump administration has been stressing," said Jeffrey Rathke, deputy director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "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."

Poland also hopes Trump's visit will reinforce its position with European partners as it faces allegations of backsliding on democracy. The right-wing government is also one of only three European Union countries — along with Hungary and Austria — refusing to accept any relocated refugees, in legal violation of EU quotas.

Trump, too, has been working to curb refugee admissions to the U.S. as part of his travel ban.

On Twitter follow Salama at <https://twitter.com/vmsalama> and Thomas at <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

NKorea long-range missile test spurs US calls for action

By JOSH LEDERMAN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — North Korea's first test of an intercontinental ballistic missile, demonstrating a dangerous new reach for weapons it hopes to top with nuclear warheads one day, is spurring U.S. demands for "global action" to counter the threat.

U.S. officials confirmed Tuesday their belief that North Korea's latest missile launch was indeed an ICBM and joined South Korea and Japan in requesting an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council, scheduled Wednesday afternoon. Previously, North Korea had demonstrated missiles of short and medium range but never one able to get to the United States.

In a show of force directly responding to North Korea's provocation, U.S. and South Korean soldiers fired "deep strike" precision missiles into South Korean territorial waters on Tuesday, U.S. military officials in Seoul said. The missile firings demonstrated U.S.-South Korean solidarity, the U.S. Eighth Army said in a statement.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson vowed "stronger measures to hold the DPRK accountable," using an acronym for the isolated nation's formal name, and said: "Global action is required to stop a global threat." Any country helping North Korea militarily or economically, taking in its guest workers or falling short on Security Council resolutions, he said, "is aiding and abetting a dangerous regime."

Tillerson's statement, issued Tuesday evening as most Americans were celebrating the Fourth of July holiday, notably did not mention China, whose help the Trump administration has been aggressively seeking to press Pyongyang over its nuclear weapons program.

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In recent days, as the North has continued to test missiles in defiance of global pressure, President Donald Trump has started voicing doubt that Beijing is up to the task. His administration has taken a number of steps against China's interests that have suggested its patience has run short.

Tillerson's comments were the first public confirmation by the United States that the missile was indeed an ICBM, constituting a major technological advancement for the North and its most successful missile test yet.

The prime danger from the U.S. viewpoint is the prospect of North Korea pairing a nuclear warhead with an ICBM. The latest US intelligence assessment is that the North probably does not yet have that capability — putting a small-enough nuclear warhead atop an ICBM.

Initial U.S. military assessments had been that it was an intermediate-range missile. NORAD, or the North American Aerospace Defense Command, said the missile did not pose a threat to North America.

Trump, in his initial response to the launch on Monday evening, urged China on Twitter to "put a heavy move on North Korea and end this nonsense once and for all!" But he also said it was "hard to believe" that South Korea and Japan, the two U.S. treaty allies most at risk from North Korea, would "put up with this much longer."

The U.S. mission to the United Nations said that U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley had requested that the Security Council meet urgently along with the U.N. envoys from Japan and South Korea. The 3 p.m. meeting Wednesday was to be held "in the open chamber," rather than behind closed doors.

The launch was not wholly unexpected. Daniel Coats, director of national intelligence, testified to Congress in May that the U.S. anticipated an ICBM test before the end of this year.

The Pentagon has spent tens of billions of dollars developing a missile defense system tailored to the North Korean ambition of attaining the eventual capability to attack the U.S. with a nuclear-armed missile. On May 30 the Pentagon successfully shot down a mock warhead designed to replicate the North Korean threat.

Pentagon spokeswoman Dana W. White said the U.S.-South Korea missile exercise Tuesday was meant to show "our precision fire capability.

"We remain prepared to defend ourselves and our allies and to use the full range of capabilities at our disposal against the growing threat from North Korea," she said in a statement. "The United States seeks only the peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Our commitment to the defense of our allies,



In this photo provided by Eighth U.S. Army, a U.S. MGM-140 Army Tactical Missile is fired into the east sea during the combined military exercise against North Korea at an undisclosed location in South Korea, Wednesday, July 5, 2017. North Korea delighted in the international furor created by its first launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile, vowing Wednesday to never give up its missiles or nuclear weapons and to keep sending Washington more "gift packages" of weapons tests. U.S. and South Korean forces, in response, engineered what was meant as a show of force for Pyongyang, with soldiers from the allied nations firing "deep strike" precision missiles into South Korean territorial waters. The missile firings Tuesday demonstrated U.S.-South Korean solidarity, the U.S. Eighth Army said in a statement. (Eighth U.S. Army via AP)

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the Republic of Korea and Japan, in the face of these threats, remains ironclad.”

Since he entered the White House, Trump has talked about confronting Pyongyang and pushing China to increase pressure on the North, but neither strategy has produced fast results. The White House has been threatening to move forward on its own, though administration officials have not settled on next steps.

Patrick Cronin, an Asia expert with the Center for a New American Security, said Trump was probably “coming to the point of no return” with North Korea, adding that the upshot could be diplomatic overtures or military action.

“We either go to the diplomatic table with Kim Jong Un or we do take some course of action,” Cronin said. “In all probability we do both.”

Trump spoke with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Monday, discussing North Korea and its nuclear program with both leaders. He will meet them both this week at the Group of 20 meeting in Germany, as well as have his first meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Trump and Xi emerged from their first meeting — in April at the U.S. president’s Florida estate — seemingly as fast friends. But China has long resisted intensifying economic pressure on neighboring North Korea, in part out of fear of the instability that could mount on its doorstep, and Trump has not found a way to break through Beijing’s old habits.

AP National Security Writer Robert Burns contributed to this report.

US celebrates July Fourth with parades, fireworks, hot dogs

NEW YORK (AP) — From flashy firework displays for massive crowds to small-town parades, Americans celebrated the United States’ 241st birthday in both joyous and serious ways.

Tuesday’s events even went international, as U.S. senators traveled to Afghanistan and spent the holiday with the troops and an Independence Day exhibition took Major League Baseball to London.

Along with the fireworks, July Fourth also comes with some light-hearted traditions, like competitive eating contests. But the holiday is taking place in a nation that has grappled with divides this past year. And in an era of concerns about security, the Independence Day celebrations are mixed with precautions.

Some highlights from around the world:

SPARKLE AND FLASH

Thousands upon thousands of fireworks turned the night sky over New York City into a festival of color during the annual Macy’s fireworks show. Crowds lined up along the East River to watch.

The 60,000 shells launched from five barges went off at an average of 2,400 shells per minute and exploded into happy faces and flowers in colors including purple, orange and yellow. The crowd cheered and applauded wildly, with lots of oohs and cries of “Look at that!”



Fireworks explode over Coors Field during an Independence Day celebration after the Colorado Rockies hosted the Cincinnati Reds in a baseball game Tuesday, July 4, 2017, in Denver. The Reds won 8-1. (AP Photo/David Zalubowski)

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Melissa Beasley, who recently moved to New York from Alabama, said she hoped the fireworks show was an inspiration.

"For all of the people here, I hope it brings them together and makes them realize that there is a wonderful fact about the United States in which all these tribes, all these different types of people can come together and celebrate the fact that we live here relatively peacefully with each other," she said.

Security to get into the area was tight. Police set up checkpoints to examine bags, and onlookers had to leave chairs and blankets behind in favor of standing. Some officers were heavily armed, with bulletproof vests and helmets.

New York resident G. Brian Hutchinson was happy to see them, thanking each one as he walked by.

"These guys are the best," he said. "It's a hard job they got, keeping us safe in New York City at an event like this."

Before the fireworks went off, artists including Jennifer Lopez, Sheryl Crow, and Brad Paisley performed.

A FIRST FOR THE PRESIDENT

For President Donald Trump's first Independence Day in office, he and first lady Melania Trump hosted a picnic for military families at the White House.

Rain threatened the event on the South Lawn but cleared up as Trump stepped out to address the crowd from a balcony. The Republican president pledged his "unwavering support" and told the crowd that he will "always have your back."

Before the picnic, Trump kicked off his holiday at his golf club in Virginia. He arrived at the club in Sterling just before 10 a.m. and spent nearly four hours there before returning to the White House. Aides did not answer questions about whether he was golfing.

Later, the festive, star-spangled crowd that gathered for the July Fourth concert and fireworks on the National Mall couldn't avoid being reminded of the ugly reality of life in Washington in 2017.

Concertgoers were greeted by heavy security, including police officers with semi-automatic rifles around their necks and roads blocked with concrete barriers, military vehicles and construction equipment.

And host John Stamos took time during the "Capitol Fourth" concert on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol to honor one police officer in particular: special agent David Bailey, of the U.S. Capitol Police, who was wounded while protecting members of Congress during a shooting at a baseball practice last month.

The concert featured performances by the Beach Boys, the Four Tops and the Blues Brothers.

CALIFORNIA CELEBRATES WITH CLASSIC CARS

Decked out in red, white and blue, Californians waved flags and sang patriotic songs at Independence Day parades across the state.

Hundreds of people lined the streets under bright sunshine Tuesday for seaside Santa Monica's celebration, which featured bands and classic cars.

California's love affair with the automobile was also front and center at South Pasadena's parade, which had the theme "Freedom on the Road. Celebrating Route 66."

When the sun sets, the parties will continue with fireworks displays. Among the largest in the Los Angeles area will be the annual fanfare at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

To the north, officials are hoping clouds will clear in time for the big display over San Francisco Bay.

OBSERVING JULY FOURTH OVERSEAS

A bit of American sports culture was displayed in London's Hyde Park, where several former major leaguers competed in a home run derby. Major League Baseball aims to build interest in the sport in Britain and Europe, despite the region's longstanding preference for soccer.

The managing director of Major League Baseball for Europe, Charlie Hill, said the Independence Day exhibition is an attempt to "lay down roots" in Britain. He says it's possible that some official games will be played in London during the 2019 season.

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Meanwhile, Denmark hosted the Rebild Festival, considered one of the largest Fourth of July celebrations outside the United States. Danish Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen — who recently tweeted that Trump “should tighten up, focus on the struggle for freedom and show respect for the presidency” in response to Trump’s own Twitter habit — told festival-goers that “when you are friends, you have the right to criticize.”

SENATORS CELEBRATE FOURTH WITH TROOPS ABROAD

Rhode Island U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse says it was emotional and inspiring to spend July Fourth with troops in Afghanistan.

Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican, led a group of senators to Pakistan and Afghanistan for the holiday weekend. They visited a military base in South Waziristan and met with Pakistani leaders in Islamabad before traveling to Kabul, Afghanistan.

Whitehouse, a Rhode Island Democrat, said in a phone interview from Bagram airfield on Tuesday it was emotional because service members in Afghanistan are constantly in harm’s way and constantly making the nation proud.

Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren, South Carolina Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham and Georgia Republican Sen. David Perdue are on the trip. They met with Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani.

GULP! HOW MANY HOT DOGS CAN A PERSON EAT?

Record-setting hot dog eater Joey “Jaws” Chestnut held onto his title at the hot dog eating contest at Nathan’s Famous in New York, breaking the record he set last year. The San Jose, California, man chomped down 72 hot dogs in 10 minutes, besting last year’s mark of 70.

Meanwhile, Miki Sudo notched a fourth straight win in the women’s division on the Coney Island boardwalk. The Las Vegas woman ate 41 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes.

DAYLONG PARTY IN PHILLY

In Philadelphia, where the Founding Fathers approved the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, there was a daylong national birthday party.

At a celebration of freedom ceremony at Independence Hall on Tuesday morning, members of Boyz II Men read excerpts from the document, and a parade was held through the city’s historic area. Descendants of some of the signers of the Declaration were to take part in the annual ceremonial tapping of the Liberty Bell later Tuesday.

Hundreds of thousands of people attended a party on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway with hours of free music capped by a concert by Mary J. Blige. The festivities ended with a fireworks display.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAY

Residents of the southern Utah ski resort town of Brian Head were planning a fireworks-free celebration, having returned home just this past Friday after a wildfire forced evacuations in the town two weeks earlier.

“None of us even knew if we were going to be open for the Fourth of July,” Brian Head Resort spokesman Mark Wilder said.

The alpine town is near several national monuments and parks in Utah’s red rock country.

Brian Head is normally filled with vendors selling crafts and food on the holiday, one of the biggest celebrated at the resort and the start of the area’s festival season, Wilder said.

But he said the town has suspended its fireworks show this year because the area is still too dry and ripe for fires.

PARADE ACCIDENTS

At the nation’s oldest continuous Fourth of July celebration, a woman was hit by a parade float. WJAR-TV reports it happened at the parade in Bristol, Rhode Island. Bystanders said the woman was pinned under the float and onlookers helped lift it off her. The woman was hospitalized.

The Bristol parade was started in 1785. It’s billed as the oldest continuous celebration of independence

in the country and attracts about 100,000 people to the seaside town in a typical year.

In Fremont, Ohio, an antique tow truck crashed into two tractors during an Independence Day parade, injuring multiple people. Police say the tow truck's driver lost control of the vehicle and crashed into two farm tractors near the beginning of the parade.

Iraqi PM congratulates troops on 'big victory' in Mosul

By SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — Iraq's prime minister on Tuesday congratulated his fighters on "the big victory in Mosul" — even as fighting with Islamic State militants continued in Mosul's Old City neighborhood where Iraqi forces are about 250 meters from the Tigris River and facing increasingly fierce resistance.

Haider al-Abadi spoke during a press conference in Baghdad, less than a week after he declared an end to IS' self-styled caliphate after Iraqi forces achieved an incremental win by retaking the landmark al-Nuri Mosque in the Old City.

"Praise be to God, we managed to liberate (Mosul) and proved the others were wrong, the people of Mosul supported and stood with our security forces against terrorism," al-Abadi said.

His remarks came on the third anniversary of IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's sermon at the al-Nuri Mosque, from where he declared an Islamic caliphate on IS-held lands in Syria and Iraq.

Also during the press conference, al-Abadi added that he has given instructions to rebuild and stabilize areas of the city already freed from the militant group.

Inside Mosul's Old City, civilians fleeing Iraqi advance are increasingly desperate. The elderly and weak are carried across mounds of rubble in blankets. Soldiers — increasingly fearful of the Old City's inhabitants after a string of suicide bombings — hurry the groups along.

A middle-aged woman with a gaunt, pale face fainted as she fled past the destroyed al-Nuri Mosque. Two soldiers carried her to the roadside and tried to revive her with cold water.

Largely cut off from food and water for months, humanitarian groups are reporting a spike in the number of displaced people suffering from malnutrition and dehydration.

"None of the previous battles were like this," said Iraqi Maj. Faris Aboud, working at a small field hospital just outside the Old City.

"In a single day we received 300 wounded," Aboud, a father of three continued. "For me, seeing the wounded children is the hardest, we see children who have lost their entire families under the rubble, they have no one now."

Lt. Gen. Abdel Ghani al-Asadi, of Iraq's special forces, said earlier in the day that Iraqi forces are just 250 meters (yards) from the Tigris River, in the western half of Mosul. The Tigris divides the city roughly



A Federal Police Rapid Response Force fighter walks inside a building at Mosul's main hospital complex after it was retaken by Iraqi forces during fighting against Islamic State militants, in Mosul, Iraq, Tuesday, July 4, 2017. (AP

Photo/Felipe Dana)

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into its western and eastern half, which was liberated from IS militants back in January.

IS militants who remain trapped in just a few hundred meters of territory in the Old City are now in a "fight to the death," al-Asadi said, adding that IS fighters are increasingly resorting to suicide bombings and that he expects the fighting to get even heavier as they are pushed closer to the river.

Iraqi forces marked a significant victory this week when the Rapid Response Division retook Mosul's main hospital complex on the city's western side.

The building that once held the city's best medical facilities now sits devastated by the fight. For weeks, a handful of IS snipers perched in the main hospital's top floors held back hundreds of Iraqi forces.

Iraqi forces launched the operation to retake Mosul, the country's second largest city, in October. IS overran Mosul in a matter of days in 2014. At the height of the extremists' power, they held nearly a third of Iraq.

A man who asked to only be referred to as Abu Abid, for fear for his family's safety, was waiting to get a spot on a truck after fleeing the Old City.

"That place, it was absolute death," he said. "We will never be the same. Once the fear has been planted in your heart, you can't get rid of it."

Associated Press writer Ahmed Sami in Baghdad contributed to this report.

N. Korea vows more 'gift packages' of missile tests for US

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Grinning broadly, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un delighted in the global furor created by his nation's first launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile, vowing Wednesday to never abandon nuclear weapons and to keep sending Washington more "gift packages" of missile and atomic tests.

U.S. and South Korean forces, in response to Tuesday's launch, engineered a show of force for Pyongyang, with soldiers from the allies firing "deep strike" precision missiles into South Korean territorial waters. South Korean President Moon Jae-in ordered the drills arranged with the United States to show "North Korea our firm combined missile response posture," his office said.

A North Korean test of an ICBM, confirmed later by U.S. and South Korean officials, is a momentous step forward for Pyongyang as it works to build an arsenal of long-range nuclear-armed missiles that can hit anywhere in the United States. The North isn't there yet — some analysts suggest it will take several more years to perfect such an arsenal, and many more tests — but a successful launch of an ICBM has long been seen as a red line, after which it would only be a matter of time — if the country isn't stopped.

Worry spread in Washington and at the United Nations, where the United States, Japan and South Korea requested a U.N. Security Council emergency session, to be held later Wednesday. U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the U.S. response would include "stronger measures to hold the DPRK accountable," using an acronym for the nation's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The uproar only seemed to inspire the North, whose propaganda machine rarely fails to aggrandize its leader and its military or to thumb its nose at rivals Seoul and Washington.

A report in its state media Wednesday described leader Kim as "feasting his eyes" on the ICBM, which was said to be capable of carrying a large nuclear warhead, before its launch. "With a broad smile on his face," Kim urged his scientists to "frequently send big and small 'gift packages' to the Yankees," an apparent reference to continuing the stream of nuclear and missile tests Kim has ordered since taking power in late 2011.

The North was also pleased that its test came as Americans celebrated Independence Day. Kim, the state media report said, told "scientists and technicians that the U.S. would be displeased to witness the DPRK's strategic option as it was given a 'package of gifts' incurring its disfavor by the DPRK on its 'Independence Day.'" The North has a history of conducting weapons test on or around July 4.

Kim reportedly "stressed that the protracted showdown with the U.S. imperialists has reached its final phase and it is the time for the DPRK to demonstrate its mettle to the U.S., which is testing its will in defi-

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ance of its warning.”

The test, North Korea’s most successful yet, is a direct rebuke to President Donald Trump’s earlier declaration that such a test “won’t happen!”

A U.S. scientist analyzing the height and distance of the launch said the missile could potentially reach Alaska.

North Korea’s Academy of Defense Science, in a bit of hyperbole, said the test of what it called the Hwasong-14 marked the “final step” in creating a “confident and powerful nuclear state that can strike anywhere on Earth.”

South Korea’s Defense Ministry, in a report to lawmakers, tentatively concluded that North Korea test-fired a “new missile with an ICBM-class range” of more than 5,500 kilometers. But the ministry said it’s not certain if the test was successful because Seoul couldn’t verify if the North has mastered re-entry technology for an ICBM. The ministry said North Korea may now conduct a nuclear test with “boosted explosive power” to show off a warhead to be mounted on a missile.

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 days after the first face-to-face meeting between Trump and Moon and ahead of a summit of the world’s richest economies.

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 number 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 launch, 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 Kim. 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.



This image made from video of a news bulletin aired by North Korea’s KRT on Tuesday, July 4, 2017, shows what was said to be North Korea leader Kim Jung Un, center, applauding after the launch of a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile, ICBM, in North Korea’s northwest. Independent journalists were not given access to cover the event depicted in this photo. Keeping North Korea from having a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile has long been considered a key U.S. red line; and one Pyongyang has thumbed its nose at for years. Its Fourth of July ICBM launch is just the latest step in its long march toward, and maybe over, that line. (KRT via AP Video)

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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!"

North Korea says it needs nuclear weapons and powerful missiles to cope with what it calls rising U.S. military threats.

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.

The missile test could invite a new round of international sanctions, but North Korea is already one of the most sanctioned countries on Earth.

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.

The Korean Peninsula has been divided since the end of World War II. Almost 30,000 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea.

Associated Press correspondent Hyung-jin Kim contributed to this report.

Arab nations say they have Qatar's response to their demands

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A quartet of Arab nations said early Wednesday they had received Qatar's response to their demands for ending a diplomatic crisis gripping the Persian Gulf, just ahead of a planned meeting in Cairo.

Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates said in a joint statement they would respond "in a timely manner." The countries did not elaborate on what steps they could take, though a major credit rating agency warned it had changed Qatar's economic outlook to negative over the turmoil.

The countries cut ties to the FIFA 2022 World Cup host early last month over its alleged support for extremist groups and ties with Iran. Qatar denies supporting extremists and has defended its warm relations with Iran; the two countries share a massive undersea natural gas field.

The nations issued a 13-point list of demands on June 22, giving Qatar 10 days to comply. They later extended the deadline by another 48 hours at the request of Kuwait, which has acted as a mediator to resolve the crisis. That deadline expired early Wednesday morning.

Later Wednesday, foreign ministers



A black-and-white depiction of Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, attracts signatures and comments of support from residents amid a diplomatic crisis between Qatar and neighboring Arab countries in Doha, Qatar, on Monday, July 3, 2017. A group of Arab nations has extended a deadline for Qatar to respond to their list of demands in a diplomatic crisis roiling the Gulf by 48 hours, saying Kuwait's emir requested the delay as part of his efforts to mediate the dispute. (AP Photo/Maggie Hyde)

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from the four Arab countries will meet in Cairo to discuss their next move. Late Tuesday, Egypt's state-run MENA news agency reported intelligence agency chiefs from those countries had met in Cairo, likely discussing the crisis.

What Qatar said in response to the demands remains unclear. It already had called the demands, which include shutting down its Al-Jazeera satellite news network, expelling Turkish military forces based in the country and paying restitution, as an affront to its sovereignty.

The crisis has become a global concern as neither side appears to be backing down. Qatar, the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas, hosts some 10,000 American troops at its sprawling al-Udeid Air Base. U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has been trying to ease tensions, while President Donald Trump's comments on Qatar funding extremist groups back the Saudi-led countries' position.

The nations could impose financial sanctions or force Qatar out of the Gulf Cooperation Council, a regional body known as the GCC that serves as a counterbalance to Iran.

Some Arab media outlets have suggested a military confrontation or a change of leadership in Qatar could be in the offing, but officials have said those options are not on the table.

On Tuesday, German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel visited officials in both the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. He said Germany supported the UAE's efforts at confronting those who fund extremists.

"We now have this opportunity to reach good results for the benefit of the whole region. The matter is not related only to the sovereignty of Qatar," Gabriel said. "We have to come back to common work at the GCC and for the Europeans this is a very important matter. For us, the GCC is the guarantor of stability and security in the region."

Emirati Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan kept up the pressure on Qatar in his own remarks to journalists.

"To defeat terrorism, we must confront extremism, we must confront hate speech, we must confront the harboring and sheltering of extremists and terrorists, and funding them," Sheikh Abdullah said. "Unfortunately, we in this region see that our sister nation of Qatar has allowed and harbored and encouraged all of this."

"Enough is enough," he added.

Qatar's foreign minister meanwhile criticized the four Arab nations for trying to isolate Qatar "under the banner of fighting terrorism."

"When measures clothed in this context, it is because they think they will be met with international sympathy because they are 'anti-terrorism' measures," Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said.

Though Qatar Airways' routes over its neighbors have been cut, along with the country's sole land border with Saudi Arabia, the country has been able to source food from other countries. Its economy, fueled by its natural gas exports, continues to hum along though there has been pressure on its stock market and currency.

The credit ratings agency Moody's warned early Wednesday that it had set Qatar's economic outlook to negative over the crisis.

"Public exchanges between the various parties in recent weeks and previous periods of heightened tensions between Qatar and other GCC countries suggest that a quick resolution is unlikely and that the stalemate may continue for some time," Moody's said. "Depending on the duration and potential further escalation of tensions, the dispute could negatively affect Qatar's economic and fiscal strength. Absent a swift resolution, economic activity will likely be hampered by the measures imposed so far."

Illinois Senate nixes vetoes of budget plan with tax hike

By JOHN O'CONNOR, AP Political Writer

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — The Illinois Senate voted Tuesday to override Gov. Bruce Rauner's vetoes of a \$36 billion budget package fueled by a \$5 billion tax increase designed to start digging out of the nation's deepest budget crisis since at least the Great Depression.

The Democratic-controlled chamber completed its work within 30 minutes of the Republican governor's vetoes, sending the package back to the House for an override vote that would give Illinois its first annual budget since 2015.

Fifteen Republicans defied their governor Sunday to give the House a veto-proof 72-vote majority on the tax hike. Whether they'll stand firm against his influence and hefty campaign bank account to override the veto is the question.

It wasn't answered Tuesday. A quorum of House members failed to show up on the Fourth of July holiday, prohibiting work. The House returns Wednesday morning but its leadership gave no indication of whether overrides are in sight.

"The package of legislation fails to address Illinois' fiscal and economic crisis — and in fact, makes it worse in the long run," the first-term governor wrote in a veto message that claimed the Democrats' proposal remains \$2 billion in the red. "It does not balance the budget. It does not make nearly sufficient spending reductions."

Rauner's role in stymieing a budget deal since taking office in 2015 has been to demand a freeze on local property taxes and "structural" changes to boost business. The governor acted about three hours after the Senate voted to hike the personal income tax rate by 32 percent. Individual rates would go from 3.75 percent to 4.95 percent. Corporations would pay 7 percent instead of 5.25 percent.

Democrats say it provides the revenue bridge to fund a \$36 billion blueprint, which also includes \$2.5 billion in spending reductions.

"We are faced today with the fierce urgency of 'now,'" the tax increase legislation's sponsor, Sen. Toi Hutchinson of Olympia Fields, said Tuesday morning before the first vote. "We don't have any more time. And too late is not good enough."

With the GOP defection, the House approved the tax increase with 72 votes on Sunday, one more than necessary to override a veto. But House Speaker Michael Madigan announced shortly after the Senate votes that there would be no House action to override Tuesday, but his spokesman said he couldn't answer why. Later, when only 54 members answered the House quorum call, Madigan and Republican leader Jim Durkin, of Western Springs, were among 64 absences.

Although there's no firm deadline, credit-rating houses have vowed to downgrade the state's creditwor-



House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, left, and Senate President John Cullerton, D-Chicago, talk on the Senate floor Tuesday, July 4, 2017, at the Capitol in Springfield, Ill. The Illinois Senate has OK'd an annual spending plan of \$36 billion following a critical vote to raise the income tax rate. If approved by Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner, it would be Illinois' first budget in more than two years. (Rich

Saal/The State Journal-Register via AP)

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thiness to “junk,” signaling to investors that buying state debt is a highly speculative venture. The bond houses predicted a downgrade without a fix by the July 1 debut of the fiscal year — the third consecutive fiscal year Illinois has opened without an approved budget plan. But Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings gave Illinois some breathing room on Monday, issuing notices marking the House tax increase approval a day earlier and indicating they wouldn’t take immediate downgrade action.

Government has limped along for two years on the strength of court-ordered spending, but the state comptroller says the treasury will be \$185 million short of what’s needed to cover basic services by August.

With a \$6.2 billion annual deficit and \$14.7 billion in overdue bills, the United Way predicts the demise of 36 percent of all human services agencies in Illinois by year’s end. Billions of dollars in road construction work is shutting down. Public universities have been cut to the bone and face a loss of academic accreditation.

Sen. Dale Righter of Mattoon, who represents Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, was the lone Republican to support the tax increase. He said he’d like to have seen more spending reductions, “but in a Democrat-majority legislature, this is as good as we can get.”

“The most important issue we face right now is the fiscal stability of our state,” said Righter, a legislator since 1998. “We need to protect our critical state services and the citizens of Illinois who rely on them. This budget is balanced.”

A third piece of legislation in the package, which authorizes implementing the budget, includes a provision allowing the state to borrow \$6 billion to pay down the bill backlog — presumably at a lower interest rate than it pays in interest for past-due status.

If Rauner doesn’t like the tax plan, the financial world does. On Monday, two of the nation’s top credit-ratings agencies signaled it would be a good idea for Rauner to accept the results. Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings, having earlier threatened to move Illinois’ creditworthiness into “junk” status without swift action to approve a budget, smiled favorably on the financial outlook.

Rauner promised to veto the tax measure because Democrats who control the General Assembly have not agreed to resolve his pet issues, including statewide property tax relief, cost reductions in workers’ compensation and benefits for state employee pensions, and an easier process for dissolving or eliminating local governments.

“It’s regrettable that I stand here today not capable of being able to support this package, not because what’s in the package is bad, but because it’s incomplete,” said the Senate’s newly minted minority leader, Bill Brady of Bloomington. “We need a comprehensive budget package with reforms.”

Democrats and Republicans have negotiated the issues that Rauner considers outstanding in the two weeks since the special session began. But the GOP claims talks broke down over the weekend in advance of Madigan calling the budget votes. Madigan said Monday that those talks were ongoing and Cullerton paid tribute to the cooperative pledge before leaving town Tuesday.

“I can’t tell you when we’ll be coming back; a lot of things depend on what happens in the House,” Cullerton said, “but we’ll continue to try to enact, and put on the governor’s desk, many of the reforms that he’s asked for.”

The budget bills are SB6 and SB9 .

Contact Political Writer John O’Connor at <https://twitter.com/apoconnor> . His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/john%20o’connor>

Vatican acknowledges past problems at 'pope's hospital'

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican secretary of state acknowledged Tuesday that there were problems at "the pope's hospital" for children in the past, but said the new administration is making a "serious effort to resolve them."

Cardinal Pietro Parolin said some of the problems identified by current and former Bambino Gesù Pediatric Hospital staff in 2014 were "truly unfounded." But for problems that were verified, "there was an attempt, and there is currently an attempt and serious effort to resolve them," he said.

Parolin was responding to an Associated Press investigation that found that under its previous 2008-2015 administration, the mission of the children's hospital had shifted to focus more on profits than on its young patients.

A Vatican-commissioned report reached that conclusion in 2014 after a three-month investigation into staff complaints that corners were being cut, safety protocols ignored and children put at risk because of pressure to produce.

The report, authored by an Italian cardiologist who interviewed dozens of current and former employees, cited breaches of accepted medical protocols. The problems included overcrowding that caused increased infection risk, the reuse of disposable equipment, early awakening from surgery, unsupervised experimental procedures and facilities that didn't meet medical standards.

But a second, three-day Vatican probe in January 2015 found the hospital was in many ways "best in class." That team, headed by an American health care expert, said it had "disproved" the findings of the first review and said the Vatican should be proud of its hospital for the quality of care it provided, the staff's devotion to children and their families and employees' sense of pride at working there.

Hospital president Mariella Enoc said she found it impossible to believe such problems occurred, but conceded she wasn't at the hospital at the time. She said AP did its job and that she respected its work, and blamed disgruntled employees for what she called "untrue" reports.

"I can say that the climate today is more serene, and I urge everyone when there is a problem ... that we talk and talk and not keep it inside and then have it explode," she said. "We can't always say 'yes,' unfortunately, but we can communicate."

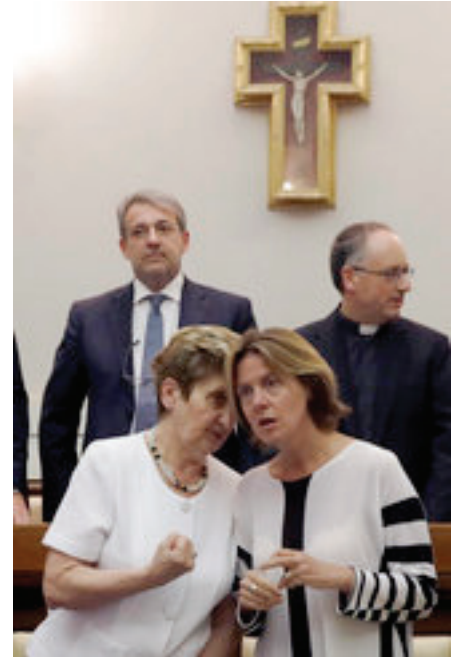
Parolin and Enoc made their comments Tuesday after Bambino Gesù issued its annual report at the Vatican. The hospital boasted in the report of being the only pediatric hospital in Europe that can perform all types of transplants. It said it performed 339 procedures, most of them bone marrow transplants, in 2016.

The hospital reported it had reduced the number of "inappropriate" hospital stays, from 26 percent of admissions in 2012 to 7 percent last year, by increasing the number of outpatient surgeries that were less stressful for children and cheaper for both the hospital and Italy's national health system.

At the presentation, Italy's health minister, Beatrice Lorenzin, praised Bambino Gesù as a leading pediatric research center that made Italy and Rome proud.

"I have met your little patients, some of whom come from around the world, who are treated with great love and great competence," she said.

The AP corroborated many of the first report's findings through interviews with more than a dozen current and former Bambino Gesù employees, as well as patients, their families and health officials. The AP



Mariella Enoc, president of Bambino Gesù Pediatric Hospital talks to Italian health Minister Beatrice Lorenzin prior to the start of an event to release the hospital's annual report at the Vatican, Tuesday, July 4, 2017. (AP Photo/Alessandra Tarantino)

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reviewed medical records, civil court rulings, hospital and Vatican emails, and five years of union complaints.

In a statement, the hospital called the AP's report a "hoax" that "contained false, dated and gravely defamatory accusations and conjectures that had been denied" by the second investigation. It threatened legal action.

Both the Vatican and Bambino Gesu pointed to the second report as evidence that all of the allegations — except one involving space constraints — were "unfounded."

The head of the first investigation, however, fully stood by the report he delivered to Parolin, in April 2014. At the time, he told the hospital employees who worked with him on the investigation that it would be used as a guide for reform by the hospital's board.

"What we wrote in that report was the exact truth," Dr. Steven Masotti said in a June 2 telephone interview. "Now things are completely different," he said. "You have kind of a revolution in the hospital. Literally no one is in there anymore of the old guard. ... And they're trying to fix those problems, based on a number of reports, including our report."

The leader of the second investigation, Sister Carol Keehan, said in an email that she was disappointed by the AP story, saying it distorted, "misrepresented and trivialized the significant review the clinical team and I did."

She said some of AP's statements were factually incorrect, though she didn't say which ones.

"My worry is not for me or the pope. It is for the parents who will be frightened by your distorted picture of the Bambino and parents have enough to worry about when their children are sick," Keehan said. "I also worry for the staff who will feel so disparaged by your portrayal of the work they try so hard to do each day."

A third report, a 2014 external audit by PricewaterhouseCoopers, also found that the original mission of the hospital to care for poor children "had been modified in the last few years" to focus on expansion and commercial activities, without sufficient governance controls.

The hospital president, Giuseppe Profiti, resigned in January 2015, nine months into a new three-year term, just before Keehan's team began its clinical evaluation. The treasurer and human resources director also left.

Follow Nicole Winfield at www.twitter.com/nwinfield and Maria Cheng at www.twitter.com/mlcheng

Read the AP's more detailed report: <https://apnews.com/9a0647481aee487e99c9b3facf6c6691/Focus-at-pope-s-hospital-for-kids-put-profits-over-patients>

Have a Vatican tip? Send it securely to the reporters at:
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Mueller probe could draw focus to Russian crime operations

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government has long warned that Russian organized crime posed a threat to democratic institutions, including "criminally linked oligarchs" who might collude with the Russian government to undermine business competition.

Those concerns, ever-present if not necessarily always top priorities, are front and center once more.

An ongoing special counsel investigation is drawing attention to Russian efforts to meddle in democratic processes, the type of skullduggery that in the past has relied on hired hackers and outside criminals. It's not clear how much the probe by former FBI Director Robert Mueller will center on the criminal underbelly of Moscow, but he's already picked some lawyers with experience fighting organized crime. And as the team looks for any financial entanglements of Trump associates and relationships with Russian officials, its focus could land again on the intertwining of Russia's criminal operatives and its intelligence services.

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Russian organized crime has manifested itself over the decades in more conventional forms of money laundering, credit card fraud and black market sales. Justice Department prosecutors have repeatedly racked up convictions for those offenses.

In recent years, though, the bond between Russian intelligence agencies and criminal networks has been especially alarming to American law enforcement officials, blending motives of espionage with more old-fashioned greed. In March, for instance, two hired hackers were charged along with two officers of Russia's Federal Security Service in a cyberattack on Yahoo Inc. in 2013.

It's too early to know how Russian criminal networks might fit into the election meddling investigation, but central to the probe are devastating breaches of Democratic email accounts, including those of the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman. U.S. authorities have blamed those hacks on Russian intelligence services working to discredit Clinton and help Trump — but have said the overall effort involved third-party intermediaries and paid Internet trolls.

Former law enforcement officials say Russian organized crime has been a concern for at least a couple of decades, though not necessarily the most pressing demand given finite resources and budget constraints. The threat is diffuse and complex, and Russia's historic lack of cooperation has complicated efforts to apprehend suspects. And the responsibility for combatting the problem often falls across different divisions of the FBI and the Justice Department, depending on whether it's a criminal or national security offense — a sometimes-blurry boundary.

"It's not an easy thing to kind of grasp or understand, but it's very dangerous to our country because they have so many different aspects, unlike a traditional cartel," said Robert Anderson, a retired FBI executive assistant director who worked counterintelligence cases and oversaw the criminal and cyber branch.

"You have to know where to look, which makes it more complicated," he added. "And you have to understand what you're looking for."

Federal prosecutors continue to bring traditional organized crime cases, such as one last month in New York charging 33 members and associates of a Russian crime syndicate in a racketeering and extortion scheme that officials say involved cargo shipment thefts and efforts to defraud casinos. But there's a heightened awareness about more sophisticated cyber threats that commingle the interests of the government and of criminals.

"An organized criminal group matures in what they do," said retired FBI assistant director Ron Hosko. "What they once did here through extortion, some of these groups are now doing through cyberattack



In this June 21, 2017, file photo, former FBI Director Robert Mueller, the special counsel probing Russian interference in the 2016 election, departs Capitol Hill following a closed door meeting in Washington. A 2001 Justice Department memo warned that no nation, including the United States, was immune from the threat posed by Russian organized crime. The special counsel investigation is bringing attention to Russian efforts to meddle in democratic processes, the type of intelligence gathering that in the past has relied on hired hackers. It's not clear how much the probe by Mueller will center on the criminal underbelly of Moscow, but he's already picked some lawyers with experience confronting organized crime. (AP

Photo/Andrew Harnik, File)

vectors.”

Within the Justice Department, it's been apparent since the collapse of the Soviet Union that crime from that territory could affect national security in Europe and the U.S. Acting FBI director Andrew McCabe was years ago a supervisory special agent of a task force created to deal with Eurasian organized crime.

A 2001 report from the Justice Department's National Institute of Justice, a research arm, called America “the land of opportunity for unloading criminal goods and laundering dirty money.” It said crime groups in the region were establishing ties to drug trafficking networks, and that “criminally linked oligarchs” might work with the government to undermine competition in gas, oil and other strategic markets.

Three months later came the Sept. 11 attacks, and the FBI, then under Mueller's leadership, and other agencies left no doubt that terrorism was the most important priority.

“I recall talking to the racketeering guys after that and them saying, ‘Forget any focus now on organized crime,’” said James Finckenauer, an author of the report.

Besides cyber threats, Justice Department officials in recent years have worried about the effect of unchecked international corruption, creating a kleptocracy initiative to recover money plundered by government leaders for their own purposes.

In 2014, then-Attorney General Eric Holder pledged the Justice Department's commitment to recouping large sums believed to have been stolen during the regime of Viktor Yanukovich, the Ukrainian president chased from power that year.

That effort led to an FBI focus on Paul Manafort, the Trump campaign chairman who did political consulting work on behalf of Yanukovich's pro-Russia political party and who remains under scrutiny now.

But those same foreign links have also made cases hard to prove in court.

In many instances, foreign criminal hackers or those sponsored by foreign governments — including China, Iran and Russia — have remained out of reach of American authorities. In some cases, judges have chastised U.S. authorities for prosecutorial overreach in going after international targets.

A San Francisco federal judge, for instance, in 2015 dismissed an indictment involving two Ukrainian businessmen who'd been accused of bribing an official at a United Nations agency responsible for creating standards for machine-readable international passports.

The judge said he couldn't understand how the government could apply a foreign bribery law to conduct that had no direct connection to the U.S.

I quit! Federer, Djokovic benefit from Wimbledon retirements

By HOWARD FENDRICH, AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Novak Djokovic's first-round match at Wimbledon lasted all of 40 minutes Tuesday. Roger Federer's, which was next in the All England Club's main stadium, went 43.

When two of tennis' biggest stars crossed paths after both advanced when opponents stopped playing because of pre-existing injuries, they kidded each other about a way to try to make it up to the fans.

“We had a little joke about it in the locker room,” Djokovic recounted, “saying we should maybe play a practice set on the Centre Court, have the crowd stay.”

The short workdays for the two were quite similar. Djokovic led 6-3, 2-0 when Martin Klizan retired with a left leg problem that has bothered him for about two months; Federer was ahead 6-3, 3-0 when Alexandr Dolgoplov quit because of a painful right ankle he first twisted last month.

Those still go into the books as wins, allowing Federer to collect his 85th at Wimbledon, breaking a tie with Jimmy Connors for the most in the Open era. Djokovic picked up his 234th match victory at all majors, moving ahead of Connors and alone into second place in history, behind only Federer's 315.

But the way the afternoon went meant Centre Court spectators who paid 56 pounds (more than \$70) per ticket, some of them waiting in line for hours, got only brief glimpses of seven-time champion Federer or three-time champion Djokovic. They did, however, have the opportunity to watch a pair of top women, current No. 1 Angelique Kerber and former No. 1 Caroline Wozniacki, win full-length matches.

“I feel for the crowd. They're there to watch good tennis. Proper tennis. At least they see the two of

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us, who gave it all they had. They saw other players that tried, at least," Federer said. "It's unfortunate that it happened."

Two other men also stopped mid-match Tuesday, 19th-seeded Feliciano Lopez (left foot) and Janko Tipsarevic (right leg), bringing the first-round retirement total to seven. That equals 2008 for the most by men in the first round during the 50 editions of Wimbledon in the Open era.

It sparked discussion about whether Grand Slam tournaments should change their rules to allow players to still receive prize money if they withdraw before an event. That's a system being employed on a trial basis this season on the ATP Tour — which doesn't run majors — and lets someone who lost in qualifying take the spot in the main draw of an injured player.

The theory behind that setup: Players who are injured won't step on court simply to collect their prize money as an entrant, before calling it a day without finishing the match.

"Even if I had a torn muscle today, and the doctor says, 'You shouldn't go on court, you have serious damage to risk,' I could have faked it, stayed there for two less games, and still picked up the paycheck," said Tipsarevic, who stopped while trailing 5-0 after only 12 minutes against Jared Donaldson of the U.S.

A first-round loser at Wimbledon earns 35,000 pounds (about \$45,000).

"Unless you're (in the) top 10 ... it's significant money," said Dolgopolov, who is ranked 84th.

Tipsarevic, Dolgopolov, Djokovic and Federer all said they would like to see the majors follow the ATP's lead.

"A player should not go on court if he knows he (can) not finish. The question is: Did they truly believe they were going to finish? If they did, I think it's OK that they walk on court. Otherwise, I feel they should give up the spot," Federer said. "The ATP has adjusted its rule, but maybe the Slams should ... look at what they could do for the players to make it just a little bit easier."

At Centre Court on Tuesday, Federer and Djokovic had an easy go of things. Kerber, last year's runner-up to Serena Williams at the All England Club, had more to do to get past Irina Falconi of the U.S. 6-4, 6-4, and Wozniacki, a two-time U.S. Open finalist, needed three full sets to edge Timea Babos 6-4, 4-6, 6-1.

But it was the short men's matches that had everyone talking.

"If it's just excruciating pain, OK, you can't play. If something is tweaked here or there and you feel like you can give it a decent go without hurting yourself, I think they should stay out there and I think you owe it to the fans," said 23rd-seeded John Isner, who beat Taylor Fritz 6-4, 7-6 (3), 6-3 in an all-American matchup on Court 14. "I know the Wimbledon Centre Court didn't get their money's worth today, that's for sure."

Collette Sherratt, 54, a spectator who traveled from Manchester, England, to attend the tournament for the first time, sure felt that way.

"I've been watching Wimbledon (on TV) for 42 years, and it's been on my bucket list to come here,"



Slovakia's Martin Klizan gestures after receiving medical treatment during his Men's Singles Match against Serbia's Novak Djokovic on day two at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London Tuesday, July 4, 2017. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

Sherratt said. "I was absolutely thrilled that (I) was going to be on Centre Court, and then for that to happen, it was like, 'I might never get to come here again.'"

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

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

Chanel aims high with starry 'Eiffel Tower' Paris show

By THOMAS ADAMSON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The ever-audacious Karl Lagerfeld proved he is still nimble when it comes to putting on a fashion show. The 83-year-old had a 46-ton Eiffel Tower recreated inside the Grand Palais for the pleasure of his Chanel couture celebrity guests.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo returned the love by presenting him with the city's highest honor. Here are some highlights from the fall-winter 2017 shows Tuesday at Paris Haute Couture Week.

EIFFEL TOWER IN THE GRAND PALAIS HALL

"Does it go through the roof?" asked a bemused fashion insider, pointing at the ceiling of the Grand Palais exhibition hall in Paris

It was a fair question. The 38-meter (125-foot) replica of Paris' most iconic monument that greeted Chanel's couture guests seemed to extend past the famed hall's glass roof thanks to the illusion of swirling clouds created by steam.

Back at ground level, celebrities including Julianne Moore, Katy Perry, Kristen Stewart, Pharrell Williams and Tilda Swinton were shown to metal seats in real sand and gravel.

"It's extraordinary to come into the Grand Palais, which is awesome at the best of any time, but to stand under the tower Eiffel is extraordinary. Only Chanel," Swinton said.

The wood-and-steel tower, which took workmen six weeks to make, was a stunning piece of craftsmanship. It copied nearly beam for beam the columns and metal twists of the edifice made by Gustave Eiffel for the 1889 Universal Exhibition.

CHANEL GOES TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY

The dawn of the 20th century — the period following the Eiffel Tower's construction — was the creative touchstone for Chanel's wintery-looking couture.

The first model strode out in sunlight filtered by wrought-iron columns to set the tone of the graphic, steel-colored collection. She wore a wide-hipped, charcoal gray coat with exaggerated leg-of-mutton arms — styles that harkened to the Belle Epoque period.

This clever historic musing continued with flattened bowler hats and black patent lace-up ankle boots popular before World War I. Flourishing bouquets of plumes then shot out from wrists, ankles and shoul-



Actresses Julianne Moore, left, and Kristen Stewart pose for photographers prior to the Chanel Haute Couture Fall/Winter 2017/2018 fashion collection presented in Paris, on Tuesday, July 4, 2017 in Paris. (AP Photo/Thibault Camus)

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ders in evening wear.

"In this collection, there are feathers treated like fur," Lagerfeld explained.

But the designer relied on myriad references for a show whose one unifying theme might have been simply the Parisienne.

"It's a vision of a revived Parisian woman. It is all about cut, shapes, silhouettes," he added.

Signature tweed jackets were reimagined as long tunics, or cropped and double-breasted.

Then it got arty. Mechanical Art Deco motifs gave a 1920s flair to black froufrou gowns that evoked the paintings of Robert Delaunay. Their frothy, flower embellishments at the hem gave the silhouette a vibrant dynamic.

Mini-dresses in tweed, retro bateau collars and bows under the bust mixed in a dash of the 1960s. Thigh-high boots added a hint of contemporary provocation.

LAGERFELD HONORED BY PARIS

The German-born Lagerfeld was awarded Paris' highest honor — the "La Medaille Grand Vermeil" — by Mayor Anne Hidalgo for service to the city he's called home for seven decades.

And there was perhaps no better site for such an award than beneath a replica of the Eiffel Tower.

"Paris gives you its thanks and its love through this Grand Silver Gilt medal ... which is our city's highest award," Hidalgo said in front of a celebrity audience, including models Claudia Schiffer and Cara Delevingne. "From the bottom of our hearts, thank you. Paris loves you. You are Paris."

Lagerfeld, a contemporary of the late fashion icon Yves Saint Laurent, has been at the forefront of Paris fashion since the 1960s, designing for Chloe before taking over Chanel in 1983.

Although he doesn't see himself as French, the designer professed his love for the City of Light.

"I am a foreigner and I intend to stay a foreigner because foreigners see Paris and France through a different eye," he said, accepting the award. "And when you are not French, you look without nationalism or patriotism... Long live Paris."

GIORGIO ARMANI PRIVE

Kate Winslet, Isabelle Huppert, Priyanka Chopra and Italian cinema icon Sophia Loren led the front row at Giorgio Armani Prive's demure yet playful collection.

As ever, it was classic glamour. The leitmotif of small cone hats and sensual face veils gave the silken 61-piece show a feel for the theatricality of the 1920s.

Large black neck ruffs evoked a harlequin. And a black cape with fuchsia floral embroideries was conceived by the fashion legend in gargantuan proportions — visually overpowering the model's body.

But Armani's fall-winter couture silhouette was all about the chest.

An open menswear tuxedo jacket with peaked shoulders exposed the flesh underneath. Elsewhere, a neckline on a pale blue top plunged daringly and was given a tasteful lift with a broach detail under the bust.

Beautiful black gowns in organza and satin — with huge full skirts — also exposed the shoulders and the chest.

PARTIES, DARLING

Another couture week, another set of exhausting, champagne-guzzling soirees replete with fashionistas and VIP guests.

One of Tuesday's highlights was the launch party of Chanel's new perfume "Gabrielle Chanel" — after house founder Coco Chanel's real name.

Pharell and Katy Perry were among attendees at the Palais de Tokyo fete — as was actress Kristen Stewart, rocking her short blond hair look.

Stewart was named in May as the face of the fragrance and will star in a film campaign of the scent in the fall.

Actress Alicia Vikander, meanwhile, attended the annual party of jewelry house Bulgari — admiring the

panoramic view on top of Galeries Lafayette department store in central Paris.

ALEXIS MABILLE'S VINTAGE COUTURE

The fashion history books seemed to have been consulted on more than one occasion ahead of this season's couture — with age-old styles wafting in the Parisian air.

French fashion designer Alexis Mabille headed for the 1860s to produce a short but beautifully executed collection of silk gowns.

Old gold, shimmering white, pale blue, purple and silver brought to life the archetypically "couture" styles rendered in yards of pleated silk fabric, embroidery and thick sumptuous layering. As was the style in the mid-19th century, gowns came adorned with all the trimmings.

Ruffled sleeves met cascading layers that formed different sections in a wedding cake style. Ribbons were tied around the midriff, and tassels hung off waist-binding belts.

The sumptuous designs might have suited Scarlett O'Hara or any belle of the ball.

Deborah Gouffran contributed to this report.

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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 bilateral 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



In this July 1, 2017 file photo, President Donald Trump speaks in Washington. President Donald Trump's first face-to-face meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin this week will be brimming with global intrigue, but the White House says there's "no specific agenda." So in the absence of a set topic list, what are two of the world's most famously unpredictable leaders to discuss?

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster, File)

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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. 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

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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.

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Joey Chestnut wins 10th title, gobbles a record 72 hot dogs

By MAYLAN L. STUDART, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Joey "Jaws" Chestnut gulped, chomped and powered his way to a 10th title on Tuesday, continuing his record-setting reign as the chowing champion at the annual Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest.

Shoving water-soaked buns and wriggling franks into his mouth on a hot, sunny day on the Coney Island boardwalk, he downed 72 dogs and buns in 10 minutes to beat his own record and hoist the Mustard Belt for a 10th time. The San Jose, California, man bested up-and-comer Carmen Cincotti, of Mays Landing, New Jersey, who ate 60 franks and buns on his 24th birthday.

Miki Sudo notched a fourth straight win in the women's competition. The Las Vegas woman ate 41 hot dogs and buns to beat Michelle Lesco of Tucson, Arizona, who downed 32 franks and buns.

During the men's competition, five people were taken into custody for trying to disrupt the event, police said. The people appeared to be attempting to unfold a black banner before police stopped them and took them away. They were taken to a precinct where they were questioned and released, police said.

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The demonstrators later issued a statement saying they were from a group called Direct Action Everywhere, and want Nathan's to stop holding the contest.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals members separately had been giving away free vegan hot dogs outside the event, but spokeswoman Tricia Lebkuecher said the people arrested inside weren't affiliated with PETA.

Chestnut has dominated the chow-down throwdown for years, eating 70 franks and buns last year to top his then-record and take back the title from Matt "The Megatoad" Stonie. The 25-year-old Stonie came in third on Tuesday, with 48 franks and buns.

"There's no secret, I love to eat, and I love doing it, I love to win, so I had to figure out my body and push it to the limit," a sweating Chestnut said

after his win. The 33-year-old said he'd hoped to down even more dogs but was leaving feeling good.

Cincotti said he'd eaten a thousand hot dogs since May in preparation for his second try at the Mustard Belt. Getting to even second place is "surreal — I grew up watching this contest," he said.

Meanwhile, the women's side has featured a yearslong rivalry between Sudo and record-holder Sonya "The Black Widow" Thomas, of Alexandria, Virginia. Thomas, who's 50, came in third on Tuesday with 30 dogs and buns, well shy of her record 45.

Sudo told ESPN she "just came back better than ever" this year. She's 31; Lesco is 33.

One of America's most outlandish July Fourth traditions, the contest dates to 1972, though the company has for years promoted what a former president acknowledged was a legendary start date of 1916.

Leigh Brown and her husband brought her 11-year-old sons, Carter and Corbyn, all the way from Florida to see it.

"They really wanted to come. They always watched it on TV, so it's pretty special for them," Brown said.



Joey Chestnut wins the Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest, marking his 10th victory in the event, Tuesday, July 4, 2017, in the Brooklyn borough of New York. He downed 72 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes. (AP Photo/Bebeto

Matthews)

US schools rethink meal-debt policies that humiliate kids

By MORGAN LEE, Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Teaching assistant Kelvin Holt watched as a preschool student fell to the back of a cafeteria line during breakfast in Killeen, Texas, as if trying to hide.

"The cash register woman says to this 4-year-old girl, verbatim, 'You have no money,'" said Holt, describing the incident last year. A milk carton was taken away, and the girl's food was dumped in the trash. "She did not protest, other than to walk away in tears."

Holt has joined a chorus of outrage against lunchroom practices that can humiliate children as public school districts across the United States rethink how they cope with unpaid student lunch debts.

The U.S. Agriculture Department is requiring districts to adopt policies this month for addressing meal debts and to inform parents at the start of the academic year.

The agency is not specifically barring most of the embarrassing tactics, such as serving cheap sandwiches in place of hot meals or sending students home with conspicuous debt reminders, such as hand stamps. But it is encouraging schools to work more closely with parents to address delinquent accounts and ensure

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children don't go hungry.

"Rather than a hand stamp on a kid to say, 'I need lunch money,' send an email or a text message to the parent," said Tina Namian, who oversees the federal agency's school meals policy branch.

Meanwhile, some states are taking matters into their own hands, with New Mexico this year becoming the first to outlaw school meal shaming and several others weighing similar laws.

Free and reduced-price meals funded by the Agriculture Department's National School Lunch Program shield the nation's poorest children from so-called lunch shaming. Kids can eat for free if a family of four earns less than about \$32,000 a year or at a discount if earnings are under \$45,000.

It's households with slightly higher incomes that are more likely to struggle, experts on poverty and nutrition say.

Children often bear the brunt of unpaid meal accounts. A 2014 federal report found 39 percent of districts nationwide hand out cheap alternative meals with no nutritional requirements and up to 6 percent refuse to serve students with no money.

The debate over debts and child nutrition has spilled into state legislatures and reached Capitol Hill, as child advocacy groups question whether schools should be allowed to single out, in any way, a child whose family has not paid for meals.

"There's no limit to the bad behavior a school can have. They just have to put it in writing," said Jennifer Ramo, executive director of New Mexico Appleseed, an advocacy group on poverty issues. "We live in a credit society. I think schools should handle debt like everybody else does: You don't take away food from children. You feed them and you settle the bill later."

Spurred by Appleseed and others, New Mexico in April passed its anti-meal-shaming law, which directs schools to work directly with parents to address payments and requires that children get a healthy, balanced meal regardless of whether debts are paid on time.

Elsewhere, the California Senate in May unanimously approved a bill that prevents schools from denying lunch if a parent or guardian has not paid.

Theresa Thomas, a Los Angeles Unified School District food service worker for students with severe physical and learning disabilities, grinds up complimentary cheese sandwiches in a food processor to serve through feeding tubes to students who don't bring lunch and whose parents have not paid.

"They're not able to complain too much," she said. "We should give them all the same food, and we should collect the money as much as possible."

Texas recently adopted a temporary grace period for students to keep eating cafeteria food while debt payments are negotiated with parents.



In this Thursday, May 4, 2017 photo, second grade students Angelina Lopez, left, and Nasim Hamdouni, right, enter a student account code to track lunch purchases at Gonzales Community School in Santa Fe, N.M. All students are offered the same lunch at Gonzales and other Santa Fe public schools to avoid any chance of embarrassing students whose parents may have fallen behind on meal payments. New Mexico in April became the first state to outlaw the shaming of children for any unpaid meals. (AP Photo/Morgan Lee)

At the federal level, language has been proposed for next year's House appropriations bill that would set minimum standards to protect children from public embarrassment and leave them out of payment discussions.

New Mexico's Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act was ushered through the Statehouse by Democratic Sen. Michael Padilla, who was raised in foster homes and vividly recalls having to sweep and mop the lunchroom to earn meals at an Albuquerque public school.

"It's shouldn't be that way," Padilla said. "This should not have to be a thought for a child."

Federal cash subsidies feed two out of three students statewide — yet meals still go unpaid, school administrators say.

"The piece that is really different in this legislation is that you cannot turn a child away no matter what they owe," said Nancy Cathey, who oversees food services at Las Cruces Public Schools.

That provision is likely to drive up the district's unpaid meal accounts, which recently totaled \$8,000, she said. The district previously declined to serve high school students who cannot pay and extended a \$25 credit to middle-schoolers.

Most districts aim to keep meal costs close to \$3.20, the typical federal reimbursement rate for free lunches.

The Albuquerque district is still weighing whether it can afford to serve the same hot meal to all students and do away with an alternative cold meal that has been nicknamed derisively the "cheese sandwich of shame."

Sian McCullough of Albuquerque said her stepdaughter was confronted in first grade with an alternative brown-bag lunch when their meal account went unpaid.

"The intent was, 'We do this because the kids will go home embarrassed and send the money,'" she said. "It just didn't sit well with me."

Want your student loans forgiven? Avoid these 4 mistakes

By TEDDY NYKIEL, NerdWallet

Having college debt disappear is something many student loan holders can only dream of. But it's possible for some of the 44 million people in the U.S. with education loans.

Through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, people with federal student loans can get their loans erased tax-free if they first make loan payments for 10 years while working for the government or a nonprofit.

That's the gist of it, at least. The program rules are more nuanced. Unaware of the complexities, many loan holders inadvertently make decisions that render them ineligible. Only a few hundred people are on track to get forgiveness this fall — the soonest borrowers can receive forgiveness through the program — according to data the U.S. Department of Education presented to financial aid professionals last year.

Borrowers can look out for these PSLF missteps to ensure they stay on track for loan forgiveness.

1. HAVING THE WRONG TYPE OF LOANS

Borrowers' loans must be in the federal Direct Loan Program to qualify for PSLF, which is not the case for nearly 19 million people — or 44 percent of federal student loan borrowers — who have loans in other federal programs, according to 2017 Department of Education data. Those borrowers' nondirect loans are ineligible for PSLF unless they first join the Direct Loan Program by consolidating their debt.

And, in that case, payments won't count toward PSLF until those borrowers consolidate into direct loans.

2. MISUNDERSTANDING 'QUALIFYING PAYMENTS'

To be eligible, borrowers must work full time while making 120 qualifying monthly payments, meaning the payments were made:

—After Oct. 1, 2007

—Through a qualifying repayment plan (generally an income-driven plan)

—For the full payment amount due

—No later than 15 days after the due date

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—While the borrower was employed full time by a qualifying organization

To benefit from PSLF, borrowers must make at least some payments on an income-driven plan, a federal repayment plan that caps borrowers' payments at a percentage of their income. If federal loan borrowers stay on the standard 10-year plan, they'll fully repay their loans by the time they qualify for forgiveness.

Only one qualifying payment counts per month, which means paying extra each billing cycle won't help borrowers achieve forgiveness faster. The payments don't need to be consecutive. They don't count if they're made while the borrower is in school, during the loan grace period or while the loan is in deferment or forbearance.

3. WORKING FOR THE WRONG TYPE OF EMPLOYER

Federal direct loan holders who work full time for the government, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit or an organization providing a qualifying public service may be eligible for PSLF, regardless of their job title. For instance, a full-time janitor at a public school could qualify.

"It's not about what you do," says Betsy Mayotte, director of consumer outreach and compliance for the Center for Consumer Advocacy at the Boston-based nonprofit American Student Assistance. "It's about who you work for."

Borrowers who are on the job hunt and considering PSLF should check that the employer qualifies before accepting an offer.

Until borrowers have made their 120 qualifying payments, they should submit employment certification forms to the Department of Education to confirm that their work qualifies.

4. FALLING FOR FRAUDULENT PROMISES OF FORGIVENESS

Dozens of companies use false claims to con borrowers, a NerdWallet investigation found. They promise to reduce or eliminate loans and charge high fees to enroll people in free federal programs.

For instance, "Obama student loan forgiveness" is a popular scam. The term gets more than 18,000 online searches per month, but no such program exists.

Beware of companies that collect high upfront fees or charge recurring monthly amounts, two signs that an offer is likely too good to be true.

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has proposed cutting PSLF, which started in 2007 during the Bush administration. Critics of the program argue it's too expensive and disproportionately benefits graduate and professional school students, many of whom have six-figure debt loads.

If the proposed cuts go into effect, loans made before July 1, 2018, would be still be eligible for the program.



In this Wednesday, May 17, 2017, file photo, graduating students fill the Columbia University campus during a graduation ceremony in New York. Having college debt disappear is something many student loan holders can only dream of. But it's possible for some of the 44 million people in the U.S. with education loans. Through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, people with federal student loans can get their loans erased tax-free if they first make loan payments for 10 years while working for the government or a nonprofit. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig, File)

This article originally appeared on NerdWallet. Teddy Nykiel is a staff writer at NerdWallet, a personal finance website. Email: teddy@nerdwallet.com. Twitter: @teddynykiel.

Related Links:

U.S. Department of Education: Public Service Loan Forgiveness Questions and Answers

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/public-service-loan-forgiveness-common-questions.pdf>

American Student Assistance: Public Service Loan Forgiveness Eligible Employers

http://www.asa.org/policymakers_advocates/public_service_loan_forgiveness.html#t=EligibleEmployer

NerdWallet: Don't Trust These Companies With Your Student Debt

<https://nerd.me/student-loan-scams>

Trump looks for friendlier European welcome in Poland

By VIVIAN SALAMA and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is headed back to Europe hoping to receive a friendly welcome in Poland despite lingering skepticism across the continent over his commitment to NATO, his past praise of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his decision to pull the U.S. out of a major climate agreement.

Trump arrives in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday for a brief visit that will include a speech in Krasinski Square, near the site of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis. He'll also meet with the leaders of Poland and Croatia and hold a joint press conference with Polish President Andrzej Duda.

Before moving on to an international summit in Germany, the president will also hold meetings with the leaders of a dozen countries located between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black seas at a summit of the Three Seas Initiative, which aims to expand and modernize energy and trade. One of the initiative's goals is to make the region less dependent on Russian energy.

"Even if he doesn't mention Putin or Russia outright, just stepping foot in Poland sends a powerful statement," said Jim Carafano, a foreign policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. "Europe is working for energy independence — looking for free market solutions — and Poland is in the middle of that energy corridor, so it makes so much sense that the president would go there and talk about energy policy."

At the same time, Trump will have to balance his visit to Europe with escalating tensions with North Korea, after the U.S. concluded Tuesday that North Korea had test-launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile. The U.S., South Korea and Japan responded to the provocation by requesting an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council, scheduled Wednesday afternoon.

Trump returns to Europe after a shaky first trip to the continent in May and signs of unhappiness around



President Donald Trump, center, smiles as he greets people at the Fourth of July picnic for military families on the South Lawn of the White House, Tuesday, July 4, 2017, in Washington. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

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the globe with the start of his presidency.

A recent Pew Research Center survey of attitudes toward Trump in more than three dozen countries found fewer than 3 in 10 respondents expressing confidence in his ability to do the right thing on international affairs.

Most of those surveyed disapproved of Trump's major policies, including temporarily halting travel from six mostly Muslim countries. Among the 37 countries Pew surveyed, Trump scored higher marks than his predecessor, President Barack Obama, in only two: Russia and Israel.

Trump's first trip to Europe as president in May saw a series of awkward encounters, including a tough speech to the leaders of NATO countries urging them to spend more on their armed forces, an uncomfortable handshake with France's new president, and a caught-on-camera moment when Trump pushed past the prime minister of Montenegro, Europe's newest country, while squeezing his way to the front of a crowd.

But Poland may offer Trump a chance to shine.

According to Polish media reports, Poland's government promised the White House a reception of cheering crowds as part of its invitation. To make good on that pledge, ruling party lawmakers and pro-government activists plan to bus in groups from the provinces to hear Trump's speech.

The White House didn't respond to a request for comment on those reports.

With Trump's sights already set on the 2020 election, his visit to Poland could also be seen as a power play for battleground states like Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, which are home to hundreds of thousands of Polish-American voters.

Trump may also seek to use Poland as an exemplar of partnership. A U.S. ally in Iraq and Afghanistan, Poland is one of the five NATO members that spends at least 2 percent of their gross domestic product on the military. That's something that Trump — and U.S. leaders before him — have demanded of NATO allies. Trump has scolded other NATO members for falling short on their commitments.

Poland is also host to about 1,000 U.S. troops, and is supporting U.S. and NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's also a regular customer for U.S. military equipment.

Before Trump's arrival, Poland's government emphasized that Russia's aggression in Ukraine poses a threat to the whole of Europe, something that will inevitably be raised in discussions with Trump as Europeans seek to gauge the president's willingness to confront Putin before their first face-to-face meeting later this week.

"Poland is, in some ways, a poster child for some of the issues that the Trump administration has been stressing," said Jeffrey Rathke, deputy director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "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."

Poland also hopes Trump's visit will reinforce its position with European partners as it faces allegations of backsliding on democracy. The right-wing government is also one of only three European Union countries — along with Hungary and Austria — refusing to accept any relocated refugees, in legal violation of EU quotas.

Trump, too, has been working to curb refugee admissions to the U.S. as part of his travel ban.

On Twitter follow Salama at <https://twitter.com/vmsalama> and Thomas at <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, July 5, the 186th day of 2017. There are 179 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 5, 1947, Larry Doby made his debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first black player in the American League three months after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in the National League. In the game against the Chicago White Sox at Comiskey Park, Doby, pinch-hitting for Bryan Stephens, struck out in his first at-bat during the seventh inning; Chicago won 6-5.

On this date:

In 1687, Isaac Newton first published his *Principia Mathematica*, a three-volume work setting out his mathematical principles of natural philosophy.

In 1811, Venezuela became the first South American country to declare independence from Spain.

In 1865, the Secret Service Division of the U.S. Treasury Department was founded in Washington, D.C. with the mission of suppressing counterfeit currency.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act.

In 1940, during World War II, Britain and the Vichy government in France broke off diplomatic relations.

In 1946, the bikini, created by Louis Reard (ray-AHRD'), was modeled by Micheline Bernardini during a poolside fashion show in Paris.

In 1954, Elvis Presley's first commercial recording session took place at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee; the song he recorded was "That's All Right."

In 1962, independence took effect in Algeria; the same day, civilians of European descent, mostly French, came under attack by extremists in the port city of Oran.

In 1977, Pakistan's army, led by General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, seized power from President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (ZUL'-fih-kahr ah-LEE' BOO'-toh). (Bhutto was executed in 1979.)

In 1984, the Supreme Court weakened the 70-year-old "exclusionary rule," deciding that evidence seized in good faith with defective court warrants could be used against defendants in criminal trials.

In 1991, a worldwide financial scandal erupted as regulators in eight countries shut down the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. Actress Mildred Dunnock died in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts, at age 90.

In 2011, a jury in Orlando, Florida, found Casey Anthony, 25, not guilty of murder, manslaughter and child abuse in the 2008 disappearance and death of her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee.

Ten years ago: In a setback for President George W. Bush, GOP stalwart Sen. Pete Domenici (doh-MEN'-ih-chee) withdrew his support for the president's Iraq war policy and embraced a proposal to bring home most troops by March 2008. French opera soprano Regine Crespin died in Paris at age 80.

Five years ago: Trucks carrying NATO supplies rolled into Afghanistan for the first time in more than seven months, ending a painful chapter in U.S.-Pakistan relations that saw the border closed until Washington apologized for an airstrike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. Former Argentine dictator Jorge Rafael Videla was convicted and sentenced to 50 years for a systematic program to steal babies from prisoners who were kidnapped, tortured and killed during the military junta's so-called "dirty war" on leftist dissidents. (Videla died in prison in May 2013.) Jockey Jorge Herrera, 33, died after falling from his horse during a race at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in California.

One year ago: The FBI recommended no criminal charges for Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server, but Director James Comey's scathing criticism of her "extremely careless" handling of classified material revitalized Republican attacks. President Barack Obama heartily vouched for Hillary Clinton's trustworthiness and dedication, making his first outing on the campaign stump for his former secretary of state with an appearance in Charlotte, North Carolina. Republican Donald Trump praised former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's ruthlessness, saying in Raleigh, North Carolina, that while Saddam was a "bad guy," he "killed terrorists. He did that so good."

(Stations: Single name "Joe" is correct)

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Today's Birthdays: Actress Katherine Helmond is 88. Actress Shirley Knight is 81. Singer-musician Robbie Robertson is 74. Julie Nixon Eisenhower is 69. Rock star Huey Lewis is 67. Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Rich "Goose" Gossage is 66. Country musician Charles Ventre is 65. Singer-songwriter Marc Cohn is 58. Actor John Marshall Jones is 55. Actor Dorian Wilson is 55. Actress Edie Falco is 54. Actress Jillian Armenante is 53. Actress Kathryn Erbe (er-BEE') is 52. Actor Michael Stuhlbarg (STOOL'-bahrg) is 49. Country musician Brent Flynn (Flynnville Train) is 48. Rapper RZA (RIH'-zuh) is 48. Rhythm-and-blues singer Joe is 44. Rock musician Bengt Lagerberg (The Cardigans) is 44. Actor Dale Godboldo is 42. Rapper Bizarre is 41. Rapper Royce da 5'9" is 40. Rock singer Jason Wade (Lifeshouse) is 37. Actor Ryan Hansen is 36. Country musician Dave Haywood (Lady Antebellum) is 35. Rock musician Nick O'Malley (Arctic Monkeys) is 32. Actor Jason Dolley is 26.

Thought for Today: "The real drawback to 'the simple life' is that it is not simple. If you are living it, you positively can do nothing else. There is not time." — Katharine Fullerton Gerould, American writer (1879-1944).