

Groton Daily Independent

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Senior Menu: Hot pork sandwich, cucumber salad, baked beans, ice cream.

10 a.m.: Boys golf at Redfield

6 p.m.: Volleyball hosts Deuel with C/JV matches at 6 p.m.

Pool Hours: Open Swim 1-4:50; Lap Swim 5-5:45; Aerobics 5:45-6:30; Open Swim 6:40-8:00.

25

Senior Menu: Swiss steak, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, fresh fruit, whole wheat bread.

7 p.m.: Football vs. Ellendale/Edgeley/Kulm at Kulm

Olive Grove: BAE Golf

Pool Hours: Open Swim 1-4:50; Lap Swim 5-6:30; Open Swim, 6:40-8:00.

Official Notices

Westport Town (updated 8-21-17)

Other Notices (updated 8-21)

Brown County (updated 8-15)

Frederick Town (Updated 8-15)

Groton City (updated 8-8)

Groton Area School (updated 8-7)

Frederick Area School Book (updated 7-26)

Claremont Town Official Notices Book

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

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



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@ChickenSoupSoul

Chicken Soup
for the Soul.

*"Every artist dips his brush
in his own soul, and paints
his own nature into his
pictures."*

Henry Ward
Beecher



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GROTON KIWANIS CLUB NEWS

Roger Rix reported on the 4-H premium stock sale at the Brown County fair.

President Tom Paepke announced that Chuck Padfield's son, Randy, won the chili cook-off at the Brown County Fair. Randy will now advance to the national competition in Reno, Nevada.

Reed Litch reported on the Aberdeen Kiwanis club meeting that he, wife, Cyndy; and Lee Schinkel attended on Tuesday.

The club was grateful for the dinner provided from Tuesday night's golf course fundraiser.

For the program, Reed entertained the group with karaoke songs he sang at the district convention in Watertown, earlier this month.



The Muth Electric crew was getting ready to lift one of the arms for the new signal lights at US12 and SD37 on Wednesday.

Help Wanted

Full- or part-time for the following positions:
Healthcare workers for Nurse's-RN or LPN, and
Nursing Assistants, Dietary Cook and assistant,
and Housekeeper. (12 hour shifts/rotating weekends for
nurses and C.N.A.s)

Contact Jessica Lindskov or Nellie Peterson at 605-397-2365
or apply in person.

EOE/AA/M/F/V/D-Drug Free Workplace



GROTON
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton
605-397-2365

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All auto owners!
Save \$2-\$4 /tank
& grow your local economy
by choosing low carbon
Super Premium E30's
94 octane, more power,
same mileage, fewer
carbon deposits, lower
maintenance costs,
slashed benzene & related
genotoxic, carcinogenic
tailpipe emissions;
*see sdfu.org's E30 tab for
info, E30 prices/locations.

***Farmers Union's
PSA: Courtesy Merle
Anderson (Merle is 94
year old founder of Ace
and legendary ethanol
supporter.. "because it is
the right thing to do")**



Elementary Principal Brett Schawn was hauling stuff back into the school on Wednesday after the school was reopened to staff.



Joanne Donley and Susan Fjeldheim

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The signal lights were going up on Wednesday which created a little bit of a traffic jam.



The Groton Area Elementary School was busy with activity on Wednesday as the staff started to move items back into the school. There is a lot of cleaning of the items and shuffling around to make everything work.

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Jane Kroll took the plastic off of her chair as she started to unpack in her classroom.

Lynnette Grieve was busy moving things around in the Title 1 Math/RTI room.



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According to Kim Weber, there were 175 people who attended the Bramble Zoo show held Wednesday at the Groton Area High School Gym.



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Zoo workers from the Bramble Zoo in Watertown showcase a number of small animals at the Groton Area High School Gym on Wednesday.

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Coming up this week on
GDILIVE.COM
(Click on images below)

It's Volleyball Action on GDILIVE.COM



Groton Area Tigers

VS



Deuel Cardinals

Thursday, Aug. 24, 2017, 7 p.m.
Groton Area High School Arena

**Webster Scale Weekly Meeting
with the S.D. D.O.T.**

Thurs., Aug. 24, 2017, 1 p.m.
Groton Community Center

It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM



Groton Area Tigers

VS



Ellendale/Edgley/Kulm

Friday, Aug. 25, 2017, 7 p.m.
Kulm, N.D.

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Customer Appreciation Days

Aug. 22 through Aug. 24

Specials All Week! Daily Drawings!

Tuesday is Coffee, cookies and cheese samples

Wednesday is bring your pet in for a treat

Thursday is beef sandwiches, beans and drink
served from noon to 7 pm.

Ritchie Waterer rep Curt Weyh available
to speak with on Thursday

Come let us show you **OUR**
appreciation for your business

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Today in Weather History

August 24, 1960: A man was injured when a barn was blown over by an F2 tornado that touched down near Hayes, in Stanley County. Hail, up to golf ball size accompanied the storm as well as about three inches of rain, causing some damage to crops and a farm house. The sky color in a westerly direction shortly before the tornado hit was described as a distinct shade of green. Evidence suggests that the tornado may have touched down again in northeast Sully County, destroying a barn, a chicken coop, and hay stacks on two farms. Also, precipitation more than 3 inches and locally 6 to 8 inches was accompanied by severe hail, causing damage to buildings and crops. Hail damage was heaviest in Stanly County. The wind carried away an estimated 400 tons of baled hay in Haakon County. A measured rainfall amount of 5.1 inches in less than six hours occurred in Onida, causing extensive flooding of basements, streets, and cropland. Additional rainfall amounts include 5.58 inches 4 NW of Onida, 4.50 inches 23 N of Highmore, 3.05 inches 2N of Onaka, 3.42 inches in Clear Lake, 3.11 inches in Miller, 3.02 inches in Eureka, 2.55 inches 1 NW of Faulkton, 2.40 inches in Gettysburg, 2.22 inches in Blunt, 2.20 inches at Oahe Dam, and 2.16 inches in Clark.

August 24, 1998: A line of severe thunderstorms moved rapidly southeast across Sully, Hyde, and Hand counties during the morning hours, producing destructive winds up to 100 mph and hail up to the size of baseballs. The winds and hail damaged or destroyed a wide swath of sunflowers and corn. Four power poles south of Highmore on Highway 47 were snapped off. The school in Highmore had twenty screens shredded by the hail and the winds. On a farm northeast of Onida, a grain bin was blown over a distance of 200 yards.

79: Stratovolcano, Mount Vesuvius erupted on this day, burying the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the History Channel.

1456: Machiavelli wrote, "On the 24th of August, about an hour before day-break there arose from the Adriatic near Ancona, a whirlwind, which crossing Italy from east to west, again reached the sea near Pisa, accompanied by thick clouds, and the most intense and impenetrable darkness." Click [HERE](#) to read this book.

1906 - A cloudburst deluged Guinea, VA, with more than nine inches of rain in just forty minutes. (David Ludlum)

1968 - Lightning struck the Crawford County fairgrounds in northwest Pennsylvania killing two persons and injuring 72 others. (The Weather Channel)




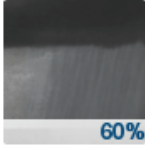

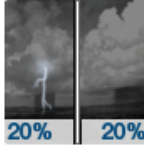

1987 - Autumn-like weather prevailed across the north central and northeastern U.S. Seven cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Saint Cloud MN with a low of 37 degrees. Temperatures in Florida soared to 98 degrees at Pensacola and 99 degrees at Jacksonville. Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Southern High Plains Region, with 5.40 inches at Union NM, and 7.25 inches reported west of Anthony NM. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms in the Delaware Valley of eastern Pennsylvania produced wind gusts to 95 mph around Philadelphia, and gusts to 100 mph at Warminster. A tropical depression drenched the Cabo Rojo area of southwestern Puerto Rico with up to ten inches of rain. San Juan received 5.35 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Late afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in eastern Montana and western sections of the Dakotas. Thunderstorms in Montana produced wind gusts to 76 mph at Jordan, and golf ball size hail at Rock Springs, which collected three to four feet deep in ditches. Lewiston ID reported a record 1.50 inches of rain for the date, and a record rainfall total for August of 2.63 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Showers Likely	Slight Chance Showers then Slight Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms then Slight Chance Showers	Mostly Sunny
High: 79 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 78 °F

Searching for wet weather?

best chance of wet weather
Friday night over E SD and W MN

Today	Friday	Saturday
75-86° 	75-87° 	75-86° 
	afternoon showers/storms increasing late	showers/storms mainly over E SD and W MN

 National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
www.weather.gov/abr
GRAPHIC CREATED:
8/24/2017 4:49 AM

Published on: 08/24/2017 at 4:56AM

Precipitation chances will increase Friday into Saturday, as low pressure crosses the region from the west. The highest chance of showers and thunderstorms will be late Friday afternoon into Friday night, especially over eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Highs will remain in the mid 70s to upper 80s.

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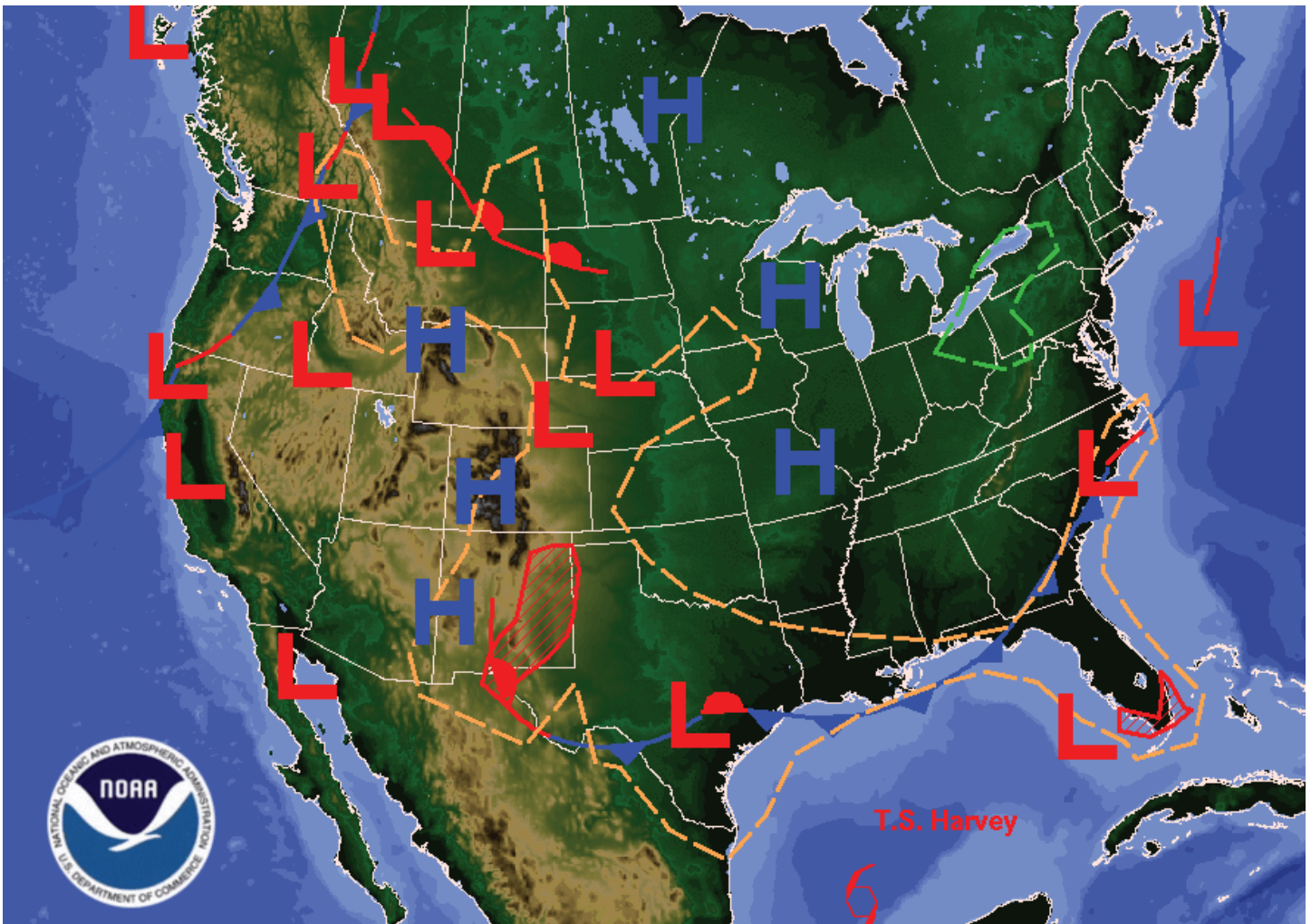
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 81.2 F at 3:23 PM
Low Outside Temp: 46.8 F at 5:06 AM
High Gust: 19.0 Mph at 6:02 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1929
Record Low: 38° in 1934
Average High: 81°F
Average Low: 55°F
Average Precip in Aug: 1.88
Precip to date in Aug: 1.80
Average Precip to date: 15.74
Precip Year to Date: 9.15
Sunset Tonight: 8:25 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:46 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Thu, Aug 24, 2017, issued 4:30 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Krekeler with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

- Rain
- Rain and T'Storms
- Rain and Snow
- Snow
- Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
- Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
- Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
- Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)



THE REWARD FOR BEING MEEK

Who are the "meek" who will "inherit the earth?" Are they the ones we would classify as weak? Would they fall into a special category labeled "non-assertive?" Is the "meek" person one who has no expectations or goals in life? Have you ever seen an ad in the classified section of a newspaper where an insurance company is searching for sale persons that says, "Only the meek should apply?"

David said, "The meek will inherit the land." And Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth." Who are these "meek" people anyway? Is there any way we can recognize them?

Yes, there is, according to Scripture. The "meek" are the ones who are the opposites of the "know it all" or possess a "false-pride." They are the proud and believe that worldly might and power are an end in themselves. They present themselves as the ultimate resource of all knowledge, wisdom, insight and understanding. They consider themselves to be worldly-wise. It is those who think they are the "light of the world" – not Jesus.

In God's Word, however a truly "meek" person is one whose goal is to know Christ and make Him known. We become meek when we are willing to have God alter every detail of our lives by surrendering to the teachings of God's Word and desiring to honor Him alone.

When it comes to weakness, our "meekness" will allow us to become "weak" in the hands of God. Then He can shape us into becoming who He would have us to be.

Prayer: Lord, fill our hearts with a meekness that opens our lives to Your Word, Your will and Your ways. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 37:11 But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.

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News from the Associated Press

Authorities seek to charge man in park assault death

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are seeking to charge a Rapid City man in the fatal assault of a woman last month in a park.

Rapid City police and the Pennington County Sheriff's Office have requested a warrant for the arrest of the 46-year-old man on a charge of second-degree manslaughter. He's already in jail on other charges.

The man allegedly assaulted 31-year-old Cari Black Elk Cline early in the morning of July 23. She died several days later.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

02-06-11-19-31

(two, six, eleven, nineteen, thirty-one)

Estimated jackpot: \$522,000

Hot Lotto

17-32-35-36-47, Hot Ball: 15

(seventeen, thirty-two, thirty-five, thirty-six, forty-seven; Hot Ball: fifteen)

Estimated jackpot: \$9.66 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$37 million

Powerball

06-07-16-23-26, Powerball: 4, Power Play: 4

(six, seven, sixteen, twenty-three, twenty-six; Powerball: four; Power Play: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$700 million

Capitol flags to be at half-staff to honor late lawmaker

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has ordered state Capitol flags to be flown at half-staff Saturday in memory of former state Sen. Roger McKellips.

McKellips died last Friday at age 94. His funeral is Saturday.

McKellips served as majority leader of the South Dakota Senate from 1993-94, the last time that Democrats controlled a state legislative chamber.

South Dakota Democratic Party executive director Sam Parkinson calls McKellips a dedicated public servant and "a great Democrat" who served the party well.

McKellips was the Democratic candidate for governor in 1978. He beat Lt. Gov. Harvey Wollman in the primary before losing to Republican Bill Janklow in the general election.

McKellips served in the Legislature from 1977-78 and 1981-1994. He also held the posts of assistant minority leader and minority leader.

Closure of grocery stores sparks worry in South Dakota city

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The closure of almost a quarter of Rapid City's grocery stores is sparking concerns about food availability among some residents and organizations in the South Dakota city.

Michigan-based SpartanNash announced last month that three of its Rapid City stores — Prairie Market, Family Thrift Center and Family Thrift Express — will close in October in an effort to consolidate. The city of roughly 74,000 residents has a total of 13 grocery stores, the Rapid City Journal reported .

Officials of nonprofit Feeding South Dakota said the closures will result in "food deserts," or areas without grocery stores, and particularly affect low-income residents. It also means a loss of stores within walking distance for people in the city's central and western neighborhoods.

Mary Corbine, food security manager at Feeding South Dakota, has been working with a food security committee through the Rapid City Collective Impact since April. The Food Security Oversight Committee, which is made up of representatives from nearly two dozen local and area charitable organizations, determines whether there are enough food sources for neighborhoods that will be adversely affected by the store closures.

"This work was already happening," Corbine said. "We were already collecting this when the closure of the grocery stores was being announced. That just added to the picture."

There currently are 5,700 people per store in Rapid City, according to a statement from the Collective Impact. That number will increase to 7,400 people per store after the store closures, but it's still under the national average of 8,800 residents per supermarket, according to data from the Food Market Institute and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Rapid City resident Brittany Romey said people in nearby apartments may not be able to easily change to another store.

"A lot of people walk here, and it's right in the middle for people to go," she said.

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

Group backs making constitutional amendments harder to pass

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A state task force voted Wednesday to back a measure that would ask voters to make it harder to change the South Dakota constitution.

The Initiative and Referendum Task Force voted 11-2 to send the plan to the Legislature. If lawmakers approve the proposal, it would put a constitutional amendment before voters in 2018. The amendment would increase the majority vote threshold required for a constitutional change to at least 55 percent of the votes cast on an amendment.

Republican Sen. Jim Bolin, a supporter, said the South Dakota constitution needs special protection. Bolin said bringing in paid signature gatherers to collect the necessary support to get on the ballot has "distorted the process."

"Our constitution needs protection against a wide range of efforts to change it and to reform it and to alter it in ways that I think the general public is not really appreciative of," Bolin said.

Initiated measures need nearly 14,000 valid signatures, while constitutional amendments require almost 28,000 names to go before voters. Sen. Reynold Nesiba, a Democrat who opposes the idea, said it's already very difficult to change the constitution.

"I don't think we need to protect the constitution any further from the people of South Dakota," Nesiba said.

Bolin proposed a similar measure during the 2017 legislative session, but it was set aside in committee. Republicans have discussed changes to the ballot question system after the 2016 election season brought 10 questions and millions of dollars from out-of-state groups.

The task force Wednesday also offered support for other measures on topics ranging from petition and petition font size to resolving conflicts between measures or amendments adopted in the same election.

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1 teen killed, 4 hurt in SUV crash in northeast South Dakota

MILBANK, S.D. (AP) — One teenager is dead and four others hurt after a sport utility vehicle rolled over in northeastern South Dakota.

The South Dakota State Patrol says the crash happened Tuesday afternoon a mile north of Milbank. Authorities say a 14-year-old boy who was driving a 2002 Chevy Trailblazer lost control on a gravel road.

A 15-year-old female passenger was thrown from the vehicle and died at the scene. Authorities say she was not wearing a seat belt.

The driver and three other teenage girls in the SUV had minor injuries.

The names of the five are not being released until family members are notified.

Authorities ID 2 killed in weekend crash near Watertown

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have released the names of two people including a teenage girl killed in a two-vehicle crash near Watertown last weekend.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says 16-year-old Jaden Olson was driving a 2002 Toyota Corolla on U.S. Highway 81 when she crossed the center line and collided with a 2003 Chrysler Concorde driven by 64-year-old Michael Forbush.

Both drivers were from Watertown and died at the scene. They were the only people involved in the crash.

The accident was reported about 4 a.m. Sunday about 10 miles south of Watertown.

Getting drought-relief hay to Northern Plains no easy task

By BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Farmers around the country are donating tons of hay for ranchers whose livestock are suffering from the drought in the Northern Plains, but the officials and groups lining up the aid aren't finding it easy getting the feed to the region.

North Dakota's Agriculture Department has issued a plea for truckers to help haul donated hay hundreds of miles from other states for a hay lottery program, while an effort in the eastern U.S. started by a tractor pulling team is seeking thousands of dollars to pay for fuel.

About a dozen semitrailer loads of hay have been donated through the effort spearheaded by Tom Bedgar, a Pennsylvania man who farms, hauls grain and runs the competitive tractor Patriot Pulling Team. Some of the hay has been hauled to North Dakota — at a cost of \$1,000 per load in fuel and tolls — but there is plenty more to send, according to Bedgar.

"We have a lot of hay out here; we had a good crop," he said. "If anybody can help us out with donations now, we'll get fuel in the trucks. We've got the hay, and we're trying to get started moving here."

Donations of money, hay, lodging or meals are being handled by the Stutsman County Farm Bureau in North Dakota, where Bedgar's niece is a board member.

"Nobody knew what the drought really was about out there until she called, and told us how bad it was," Bedgar said.

About 82 percent of North Dakota, 76 percent of South Dakota and 70 percent of Montana are in some stage of drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. About 44 percent of North Dakota, 25 percent of Montana and 6 percent of South Dakota are in extreme or exceptional drought, the two worst categories. Many ranchers have been forced to sell off cattle because they have no hay crop or can't afford to buy hay with demand pushing prices to as high as double the normal cost.

North Dakota's Agriculture Department, North Dakota State University and the Michigan-based nonprofit Ag Community Relief earlier this month announced a program to accept hay donations at a site near the Fargo campus. Applications from ranchers in all three states are being accepted through the end of the month, and the hay will be distributed through a lottery drawing next month.

More than 40 semitrailer loads of hay have been donated, and the Agriculture Department is looking for truckers to donate their time and equipment to haul it to the Fargo site.

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"The majority (of donated hay) is in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois," North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. "Then we get out to Indiana and Ohio, which is quite a jaunt. We also have some very generous people in Tennessee, Arkansas and Maryland, even Texas, but we're talking 13, 14 or 15 hundred miles."

There is heavy interest in the hay lottery. The department has received about 900 applications from ranchers in the three states, spokeswoman Michelle Mielke said.

A semi-load of hay contains about 30 bales. A typical rancher during a typical winter needs six to eight bales per cow, Goehring said.

State officials have approved \$1.5 million in aid to help North Dakota ranchers with hay-hauling costs, but the money will not go toward getting hay lottery donations in other states to the region.

"For that, we're counting on the generous and gracious efforts of others," Goehring said.

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

Montana woman pleads not guilty to murder in South Dakota

SUMMERSET, S.D. (AP) — A Montana woman accused of killing her roommate in the South Dakota town of Summerset has pleaded not guilty.

Thirty-eight-year-old Stormy Marsh, of Miles City, Montana, is charged with second-degree murder in the death of 49-year-old Phyllis Mastin, who was found dead in her mobile home Aug. 2. Marsh entered her plea Monday.

Authorities say Mastin was stabbed several times and that a knife and gun were found under her body. Police say they found Marsh at a Rapid City motel with the victim's car and cellphone.

Marsh maintains Mastin was alive when Marsh left the home after witnessing a fight between Mastin and her ex-boyfriend.

Second-degree murder is punishable by up to life in prison.

Attorney general explains prescription drug price initiative

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley has released an explanation for a proposed ballot measure that would cap the prices state agencies could pay for prescription drugs.

Jackley's office said Wednesday that the explanation has been filed with the secretary of state's office.

The measure would impose a price limit on state drug purchases at the same as or less than the lowest price paid for the same drug by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Backers need to submit nearly 14,000 valid signatures to the secretary of state by Nov. 6 to get the measure on the ballot in November 2018.

Mitchell man charged with manslaughter in stabbing death

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A Mitchell man accused of stabbing another man to death outside of an apartment complex has been charged with first-degree manslaughter.

Forty-nine-year-old Anthony Lewis allegedly stabbed the 30-year-old man four times after a confrontation early Tuesday. The victim's name hasn't been released.

Police say the two men knew one another and had an adversarial relationship.

The Daily Republic reports that Lewis appeared in court on Tuesday but did not enter a plea. He was granted a public defender and had bond set at \$500,000.

First-degree manslaughter is punishable by up to life in prison.

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

Pierre woman pleads not guilty to human trafficking

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Pierre woman accused of human trafficking, promoting prostitution and pimping has pleaded not guilty.

Authorities allege 40-year-old Sheilata Gordon prostituted an 18-year-old woman in July.

The Capital Journal reports that Gordon has a previous felony drug conviction in Iowa, meaning that if she's convicted of all charges in the South Dakota sex crime case she could face up to 65 years in prison.

Information from: Pierre Capital Journal, <http://www.capjournal.com>

Yankton man pleads guilty to robbing downtown bank

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — A Yankton man accused of robbing a downtown bank in the city a year ago has pleaded guilty.

Authorities say David Giese donned a Halloween mask on July 26, 2016, walked into the Wells Fargo branch and demanded money. He left behind a package that turned out to be harmless. No one was hurt.

Giese emerged as a suspect after months of investigation, and he surrendered to authorities in February. He initially pleaded not guilty but changed his plea on Aug. 15.

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reports that Giese faces up to 25 years in prison when he's sentenced Nov. 6.

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

In Kiev, Mattis says Moscow wants to redraw borders by force

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — On the 26th anniversary of Ukraine's independence from Moscow, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis accused Russia of menacing Europe and suggested that he favors providing Ukraine with defensive lethal weapons.

Mattis also said the Trump administration will not accept Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region.

After attending a spirited and colorful independence day parade, Mattis met with President Petro Poroshenko and other top government leaders. He is the first Pentagon chief to visit the former Soviet republic since Robert Gates in 2007.

"Have no doubt," Mattis said at a news conference with Poroshenko. "The United States stands with Ukraine." He said Washington does not, "and we will not," accept Russia's annexation of Crimea, a 2014 action that was followed by Russian military intervention in support of separatists in eastern Ukraine.

"Despite Russia's denials, we know they are seeking to redraw international borders by force," Mattis said, an ambition by Moscow that the secretary said is undermining sovereign European nations and stirring tension.

Asked by a reporter whether he agrees with the Obama administration's view that selling defensive lethal weapons to Ukraine would provoke Moscow, Mattis replied, "Defensive weapons are not provocative unless you're an aggressor."

Mattis declined to say explicitly what he would recommend to the White House on the weapons issue. He did not say so, but it is known that the Pentagon and the State Department have recommended going ahead with defensive weapons transfers to Ukraine.

Poroshenko sidestepped the question of how soon he expects a White House decision on arms.

In his remarks, Mattis cited agreements and commitments that Moscow has made since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, including a two-year-old accord known as the Minsk Agreement, which lays out a roadmap for reducing the conflict in Ukraine that has claimed some 10,000 lives over the past three years. He also cited other Russian commitments to Ukraine dating to 1994.

"Unfortunately, Russia is not adhering to the letter, much less the spirit of these international commit-

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ments," he said.

It has been known for weeks that the Trump administration has reopened consideration of long-rejected plans to give Ukraine lethal weapons.

Those deliberations put pressure on President Donald Trump, who is fighting perceptions he is soft on Moscow amid investigations into whether his campaign colluded with the Kremlin to interfere in the 2016 U.S. election.

In his remarks alongside Poroshenko, Mattis said the U.S. is committed to helping Ukraine build and modernize its armed forces.

Sen. John McCain, a vocal critic of President Barack Obama's cautious approach to assisting the Ukrainian army, said Wednesday that Trump should change that course.

"It is long past time for the United States to provide Ukraine the defensive lethal assistance it needs to deter and defend against further Russian aggression," McCain said in a statement.

Raising the cost of aggression may help to change Vladimir Putin's calculus, pressure Russia to fully comply with the Minsk agreements, and, ultimately, create more stable security conditions on the ground that are essential for peace."

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. A DAY LATER, AN ABOUT-FACE

Within a 24-hour span, Trump delivers one speech in which he tears into the media and members of his own party, and a second in which he calls for national unity and love.

2. 'COMMUNITY RECOVERY TOWN HALL' IN THE OFFING

Angry and upset Charlottesville residents are getting a chance to talk with city officials about a white nationalist rally that devolved into deadly violence.

3. SOMEONE'S WAKING UP RICH

A single winning Powerball ticket matching all six numbers and carrying a jackpot of \$758.7 million has been sold in Watertown, Massachusetts.

4. QATAR RESTORES FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH IRAN

The move disregards the demands of Arab nations now locked in a regional dispute with the energy-rich country that it lessen its ties to Tehran.

5. US NAVY: BODY FOUND BY MALAYSIA NOT ONE OF MISSING

Divers have found remains in flooded compartments of the USS John S. McCain, which is docked at Singapore's naval base, but the Navy has not disclosed specifics.

6. MANY ADDICTS SEEKING OPIOID RECOVERY FIND RELAPSE, FRAUD

Authorities say South Florida, long a U.S. hub of the substance abuse recovery industry, has become a focal point for rampant insurance fraud that relies on keeping addicts hooked.

7. HARVEY REGAINS STRENGTH

The tropical storm crawls toward the Texas Gulf Coast amid forecasts it could become a hurricane by landfall later this week, dumping heavy rain and raising the threat of flooding.

8. SUSPECT DETAINED IN CONNECTION WITH NETHERLANDS THREAT

The U.S. band Allah-Las had to cancel a gig in Rotterdam at the last minute after Spanish police tipped Dutch authorities off about a terror threat.

9. STAR WARS TOY LAUNCH TO UNVEIL NEW 'LAST JEDI' CHARACTER

BB-8-happy fans are about to get a glimpse at a new character as a part of a marketing rollout of toys and products inspired by the film.

10. DODGERS PITCHER GOES FROM PERFECT TO LOSER

Rich Hill's bid for a perfect game was spoiled by a leadoff error in the ninth inning and then he lost his no-hitter on a Josh Harrison homer in the 10th in the Pirates' stunning 1-0 win.

Thai ex-PM urges supporters to stay away from court ruling

By JERRY HARMER and KAWEEWIT KAEWJINDA, Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Friends and foes alike of former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra are anxiously awaiting a verdict Friday by the Supreme Court on charges she was criminally negligent in implementing a rice subsidy program that is estimated to have cost the government as much as \$17 billion and could send her to prison for 10 years.

Thousands of supporters had been expected to appear outside the courthouse to demonstrate their solidarity with Yingluck, but on Thursday she posted a message on her Facebook page urging them not to come. Yingluck said she was worried about their safety in case there is "chaos that could be instigated by a third party, as security officials have always said."

"I want those who wish to support me to listen to the news from home, to avoid risking any unexpected problems that could arise from those who have ill-intentions toward the country and all of us," she wrote, without naming anyone. She also said that security measures would make it impossible to interact face-to-face with supporters.

Thai authorities have earlier threatened legal action against anyone planning to help transport her supporters and announced plans for a massive deployment of security personnel outside the court, adding vague hints of possible violence that spurred scare headlines in local media.

The upcoming verdict is generally seen as a political judgment as much as a criminal one. The case against Yingluck is the latest in a decade-long offensive against the political machine founded and directed by her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a 2006 military coup for alleged corruption and disrespect for the monarchy.

Thaksin, a telecommunications mogul, has been in self-imposed exile since 2008 to escape a prison sentence on a conflict of interest conviction. The 2006 coup triggered years of sometimes-violent battles for power between his supporters — mainly the less well-off rural majority who delivered him thumping election victories — and opponents — mainly royalists, members of the urban middle and upper classes, as well as the military, which in 2014 ousted Yingluck's elected government.

Yingluck has appeared calm in the days leading up to the verdict, making merit at Buddhist temples and reportedly praying for a victory in Friday's ruling.

However the Supreme Court rules, the junta is likely to lose face, one analyst said.

If the court rules not guilty, "the generals will have egg on their face," said Paul Chambers, a political scientist at Naresuan University in northern Thailand. The military's reasoning for staging the 2014 coup was, in part, to rid the system of corrupt politicians.

If she is found guilty, "then the generals will have to deal with what comes next and that could be a martyr figure," Chambers said.

The rice subsidy was a flagship policy that helped Yingluck's party win the 2011 general election. The government paid farmers about 50 percent above what they would have received on the world market, with the intention of driving up prices by warehousing the grain.

Instead, other rice-producing countries captured the market by selling at competitive prices. Vietnam as a result replaced Thailand as the world's leading rice exporter.

The military government said Wednesday it expects by next year to finally have sold off the stockpile of 17.8 million tons of rice the subsidy created. It has earned \$40 million from the sales but calculates the government lost billions because it couldn't export at a price commensurate with what it had paid farmers.

Yingluck already has been held responsible for about \$1 billion of the losses in an administrative ruling that froze her bank accounts.

Prosecutors in the criminal negligence trial argued that Yingluck ignored warnings of corruption in the subsidy program.

"I think the designer of the program did not think carefully, did not understand the functioning of the rice market, particularly the world rice market," said Niphon Poapongsakorn from the Thailand Development Research Institute, who gave evidence at the trial.

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"What they thought (about) was only the beneficial impact of the program, which is not a surprise because I believe the hidden agenda of the policy was to win a landslide election," he said.

Yingluck was ousted as prime minister by a court ruling involving a nepotism case shortly before the coup ejected her government. Since then, she has been formally impeached and banned from political office for five years.

The court cases and possible criminal conviction aside, Yingluck retains great popularity with her base. Millions, like farmer Gaysorn Petcharat, saw their incomes suddenly rise markedly. There was money to buy luxuries and to invest in their farms.

Now Gaysorn's income has dropped sharply. But her loyalty to Yingluck is unwavering.

"If you ask any farmer if they like Yingluck, they all like Yingluck because she was willing to help us," she said, pausing from harvesting her field in Chachoengsao province outside Bangkok.

"She did her best for us. All my life I've never sold rice at such a good price as when she was prime minister," she said.

Yingluck denies the negligence charges. She told the court she was the victim of a "political game" aimed at crushing the Shinawatra clan, first her brother Thaksin, and now her.

Some analysts agree, and believe the prosecution's approach sets a dangerous precedent.

"I think it is clear enough that politics is involved in the Yingluck trial," said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, director of the Institute of Security and International Studies at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University.

"I mean, this is a government that was elected in 2011 by a simple majority and it had a policy platform led by the rice pledging scheme. The scheme led to losses probably, but on the other hand, if we use this benchmark for other governments, then we could have a lot of government leaders in jail," he said.

Lucky numbers for \$758.7M Powerball jackpot drawn

By SCOTT McFETRIDGE, Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Lottery players across the U.S. scooped up \$2 Powerball tickets in hopes of beating the odds and winning a massive \$758.7 million jackpot in Wednesday night's drawing.

Some details about the game and the giant prize:

WINNING NUMBERS

The lucky numbers from Wednesday night's drawing are 6, 7, 16, 23 and 26, and the Powerball number is 4. The Massachusetts State Lottery announced on Twitter that the single winning ticket was sold at the Handy Variety convenience store in Watertown.

WHAT IS POWERBALL AND HOW DOES THE GAME WORK?

Powerball is played in 44 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, all of which collectively oversee the game. Drawings are held twice a week. Five white balls will be drawn from a drum containing 69 balls and one red ball will be selected from a drum with 26 balls. Players can choose their numbers or let a computer make a random choice.

THE ODDS

The odds of matching all six numbers remain the same, at a miserable one in 292.2 million, regardless of the jackpot prize. However, a larger prize attracts more players and that means more number combinations are selected, so the probability increases that one or more people will buy winning tickets. So, an individual's chances of winning don't increase, but the odds that someone will win do rise.

Tom Rietz, a professor at the University of Iowa who researches probabilities, says it's hard for people to fathom what odds of one in 292.2 million mean. For a better sense, he suggests people envision the 324 million U.S. residents. Your chance of winning is roughly comparable to being that one lucky person out of the entire population, with everyone else losing. Cornelius Nelan, a mathematics professor at Quinnipiac University, puts the odds in perspective by noting they're about the same as flipping a coin and getting heads 28 times in a row.

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WHY IS WATERTOWN FAMILIAR

Watertown is the suburb to which the Boston Marathon bombers fled in April 2013.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev (TAM'-ehr-luhn tsahr-NEYE'-ehv) was killed in an ensuing gunbattle with police, and his brother, Dzhokhar, was captured hiding in a boat in a Watertown man's backyard.

THE PRIZE

The \$758.7 million jackpot is second only to a \$1.6 billion prize shared by three people in January 2016. The current jackpot refers to the annuity option, doled out in 30 payments over 29 years, increasing 5 percent annually. Nearly all winners favor the cash option, which would now be \$480.5 million. The advantage of taking cash is that people can invest the money with hopes of a greater return than the guaranteed payments they would receive through the annuity. The downside is they'll pay a little more in taxes and won't have the certainty of giant annual paychecks for decades.

Powerball Product Group Chair Charlie McIntyre said in a statement early Thursday that the \$758.7 million jackpot is the largest grand prize won by a single lottery ticket in U.S. history.

TAXES

Winners should expect to pay 40 percent or more in taxes. Federal income taxes will take a 25 percent bite from winnings. State taxes vary, so the amount winners will pay in depend on where they play. Some of the nation's biggest states, including California and Texas, don't assess state taxes on lottery prizes, so winners in those spots would be just a bit richer.

WHAT IF I MATCH SOME BUT NOT ALL THE NUMBERS?

Face it, you're almost certainly not going to win the jackpot, but players have much better odds of one in 25 of winning a lesser prize. Those odds range from one in 11.7 million of winning \$1 million for matching the five regular balls to one in 38 for matching the Powerball and winning \$4.

Follow Scott McFetridge on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/smcfetridge>

16 dead as strong typhoon floods Macau, southern China

By **KELVIN CHAN** and **CHRISTOPHER BODEEN**, Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — The most powerful typhoon to hit the southern Chinese region in more than half a century left at least 16 dead as a sudden deluge swamped the gambling hub of Macau, submerging streets and stranding residents.

Macau said Thursday that eight people were killed in the former Portuguese colony, including two men found overnight in a submerged parking garage. Another 153 were injured amid extensive flooding, power outages, and the smashing of doors and windows by high winds and driving rain.

"It's a calamity, the losses are high and a lot of buildings need repair," said Macau lawmaker Jose Pereira Coutinho, adding that he heard from many people who still had no water or electricity a day after Typhoon Hato tore across the 30-square kilometer (19-square mile) territory.

Coutinho said the flooding was at its worst in the older parts of the city's downtown, where narrow lanes date back from Macau's time as a Portuguese colony for more than four centuries.

"People were just swimming, they cried for help. There were no boats. The water came so suddenly," said Coutinho, who slammed the city government for having "reacted so slowly and so badly."

Casinos downtown "were either closed or barely operating," while some resorts in the newer Cotai district were in better shape but operating without air conditioning, Union Gaming Research analyst Grant Govertsen said in a report.

The chief executive of Macau's local government, Chui Sai On, ordered measures to "further the relief

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efforts," the Government Information Bureau said in a statement Thursday.

Residents waded in waist-high murky water and rows of city buses sat half-submerged on city streets, according to photos circulating among residents. Fallen trees blocked roads, causing traffic snarls, and residents lined up with buckets to collect water from public standpipes, television video showed.

Macau, which is surrounded by water, is vulnerable to high tides and has few options for draining storm runoff. The territory took almost a direct hit from the storm as it churned toward mainland China.

Its reliance on the mainland for electricity compounded problems. Power cuts in neighboring Guangdong province, which supplies nearly 90 percent of Macau's electricity, cascaded into outages across the city, forcing casino operators, a hospital, and the city's mobile phone company, CTM, to switch to backup generators.

CTM also said two equipment rooms were seriously damaged by flooding, affecting telecommunications service in the area. Power utility CEM said Thursday it was restoring service but about 40,000 customers remained in the dark because of damaged power supply facilities.

China's official Xinhua News Agency said eight more people were killed in Guangdong and one person remained missing. Typhoon Hato roared into the area Wednesday with winds of up to 160 kilometers (100 miles) per hour. It weakened into a tropical storm Thursday as it moved farther west inland.

Xinhua said almost 27,000 people were evacuated to emergency shelters, while extensive damage to farmland due to the heavy rain and high tides was also reported. Almost 2 million households lost power temporarily, while fishing boats were called back to port and train services and flights suspended, Xinhua said.

"Compared to other typhoons, Hato moved fast, quickly grew more powerful and caused massive amounts of rainfall," Wu Zhifang, chief weather forecaster at the Guangdong meteorological bureau, was quoted as saying by Xinhua.

By Thursday, a weaker Hato was moving into China's Guangxi region.

Flooding and injuries were also reported in Hong Kong, which lies across the water 64 kilometers (40 miles) from Macau, but there were no reports of deaths. Hato's fierce gales blew out windows on skyscrapers in the Asian financial capital, raining shattered glass onto the eerily quiet streets below. Hong Kong's weather authorities had raised the hurricane signal to the highest level for the first time in five years.

Three of the earlier deaths in Macau were men, aged 30, 45 and 62. One fell from the 11th floor of a building, one was hit by a truck and another was killed when the wind blew down a wall. Two others, a man aged 48 and a woman, 44, died from drowning, according to a press statement. No information was given for the remaining victim.

Bodeen reported from Beijing.

Harvey regains tropical storm strength in Gulf of Mexico

MIAMI (AP) — Harvey regained tropical storm strength as it drifted in the Gulf of Mexico toward Texas early Thursday and forecasters said it could become a hurricane.

A hurricane warning was issued for the Texas coast Thursday morning, covering an area from Port Mansfield to Matagorda.

The storm's maximum sustained winds had increased to near 45 mph (70 kph). The U.S. National Hurricane Center said additional strengthening was expected and Harvey could become a hurricane by Friday, when it's expected to approach the southern Texas coast.

As of 5 a.m. EDT, the storm was centered about 370 miles (595 kilometers) southeast of Port Mansfield and was moving north near 10 mph (17 kph).

In Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott has ordered the State Operations Center to elevate its readiness level, making state resources available for possible rescue and recovery actions. Abbott also pre-emptively declared a state of disaster for 30 counties on or near the coast to speed deployment of state resources to any areas affected.

Emergency officials Wednesday asked residents along the upper Texas coastline to move or prepare to move inland. Those in low-lying areas were urged to seek higher ground, and those elsewhere were told to monitor official announcements closely.

A hurricane watch was in effect for Texas from Port Mansfield to San Luis Pass. A storm surge watch was in effect from Port Mansfield to High Island.

On South Padre Island, people filled sandbags and loaded them into cars and vans Wednesday to take to protect exposed homes and businesses. Others in the forecast path of the storm sought out generators, plywood and other goods from hardware stores. Meanwhile, rice farmers in coastal Matagorda County moved quickly to harvest their crops.

Ship collision exposes Southeast Asian territorial spat

By EILEEN NG, Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — The collision between the USS John S. McCain and an oil tanker has exposed a long-simmering dispute between Singapore and Malaysia over which country should control a 60-meter (197-foot) wide guano-encrusted outcropping at the edge of the South China Sea.

Malaysia and Singapore both say the accident happened in their territorial waters because of the competing claims to Pedra Branca. Barely an island, the rocks are home to utilitarian structures including a communications tower meant to reinforce Singapore's claim and lapped by waters often fouled by mini oil slicks in one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

Despite being devoid of charms, the islet is a major political and economic prize for both countries.

Singapore and Malaysia were quick to help when the guided missile destroyer and oil tanker Alnic MC collided early Monday while the U.S. ship was approaching Singapore on a routine port call. And both claimed to be the coordinator of the search and rescue effort for 10 missing Navy sailors.

Malaysia has deployed four warships, multiple boats and aircraft along with more than 500 personnel, while Singapore contributed five helicopters, five aircraft, more than 300 personnel including divers and numerous ships.

"The subtext of both Singapore and Malaysia's search and rescue efforts is about asserting and staking their claims to the disputed areas," said Eugene Tan, associate professor of law at the Singapore Management University.

The International Court of Justice awarded Pedra Branca — known in Malaysia as Batu Puteh, which also means white rock — to Singapore in 2008, but handed another rocky outcrop nearby to Malaysia. Earlier this year, Malaysia reignited the dispute with a fresh bid to review the court's decision.

Relations between the two countries have often been prickly since they split in 1965 after a brief union following the end of British colonial rule over what was then called Malaya. Despite strong economic, social and security ties, relations are often influenced by economic rivalry and mistrust.

Located at the southern tip of peninsular Malaysia, Singapore is a speck next to its neighbor yet has flourished to become a regional economic powerhouse and a global financial center. Its position at the eastern end of the Malacca Strait, a key waterway for global trade, has given the predominantly Chinese city economic and strategic importance.

Muslim-majority Malaysia, despite its much larger population and land area, lags behind economically. It is rapidly developing its southernmost state of Johor, which faces Singapore, to vie for investment. Johor already has a large container port that has lured away clients from Singapore's bustling port with lower costs, and a sprawling regional oil and gas complex is underway in the state.

The overlapping claims apparently haven't hurt search and rescue efforts for missing sailors. Divers have found some remains in flooded compartments of the McCain, which is docked at Singapore's naval base, but the Navy has not disclosed specifics.

"The top priority is the search and rescue. Jurisdiction issues should not overshadow the main priority. This incident should be seen as a test of cooperation, rather than conflict," said Bridget Welsh, a visiting professor at John Cabot University. She said the two countries will eventually have to find a compromise.

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Adm. Scott Swift, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, has praised both countries for their help. At a press conference in Singapore on Tuesday, he dodged questions about which country is in charge, saying that the focus was on finding the sailors.

Malaysia's fresh bid to reclaim Pedra Branca is partly driven by the islet's strategic location as an important access point to the South China Sea, which is key to security and defense, said Tan of the Singapore Management University.

"Territory, in particular territorial waters, is another vital security and economic consideration. For both countries, ownership of Pedra Branca enables them to claim a larger territorial sea, adding to the fishery resources and seabed mining potential," he said.

Tan said Malaysia's move could also be useful for embattled Prime Minister Najib Razak and his ruling coalition to stir nationalism ahead of general elections, due by mid-2018. Najib is under pressure over a multi-billion-dollar financial scandal and faces his toughest test in the polls. His coalition won the 2013 polls but lost the popular vote for the first time to an opposition coalition.

It is unclear which country will oversee the investigation. Singapore has released maps to support its assertion that the collision happened in its territorial waters.

A senior official from Malaysia's Marine Department, which is in charge of probing ship collisions, told The Associated Press that marine officials are waiting for further advice from the country's mapping department.

Associated Press writer Annabelle Liang in Singapore contributed to this report.

Charlottesville, DOJ to host 'community recovery' town hall

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — Charlottesville residents are getting a chance to talk with city officials about a white nationalist rally earlier this month that devolved into deadly violence.

The city is hosting what it calls a "community recovery town hall" Thursday evening, in collaboration with the Community Relations Services of the Department of Justice. Officials will provide an update on "recovery efforts" and offer opportunities for public comment, according to a news release.

"Our community has been shaken to its core," City Manager Maurice Jones said in a statement. "We see this partnership with CRS as the beginning of a process of recovery and renewal."

The event comes a day after workers covered two Confederate statues in black to mourn the death of a woman who was killed while protesting the rally.

It's been nearly two weeks since the event, which attracted what's believed to be the largest gathering of white nationalists in at least a decade.

Rally attendees and counter-protesters fought in the streets. Heather Heyer was killed when a car plowed into demonstrators during a march, and two state troopers died in a helicopter crash that day.

Some residents have criticized city officials for granting a permit for the rally, and others have said police didn't do enough to keep the two sides apart or stop the fighting.

City officials already got some feedback at a council meeting earlier this week when scores of people packed the chamber, shouting and cursing at members. The angry crowd forced the council to abandon its agenda. Instead, the panel heard hours of public comment.

In other developments Wednesday, Christopher Cantwell, a white nationalist from Keene, New Hampshire, turned himself in to face three felony charges in Virginia, authorities said. Cantwell was wanted by University of Virginia police on two counts of the illegal use of tear gas or other gases and one count of malicious bodily injury with a "caustic substance," explosive or fire.

University police issued a brief statement late Wednesday saying Cantwell turned himself in to police in nearby Lynchburg, Virginia, where he was being held at a regional jail pending transport to Charlottesville.

It wasn't immediately known if Cantwell has a lawyer.

Contacted by The Associated Press on Tuesday, Cantwell acknowledged he had pepper-sprayed a counter-demonstrator during an Aug. 11 protest on the campus of the University of Virginia the day before the rally. But he insisted he was defending himself, saying he did it "because my only other option was

knocking out his teeth." He also said he was looking forward to his day in court.

Lynchburg police, contacted by AP late Wednesday, declined to release further information about Cantwell.

Within 24 hours, a pair of wildly different Trump speeches

By **JULIE BYKOWICZ** and **JONATHAN LEMIRE**, Associated Press

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Within a 24-hour span, President Donald Trump delivered one speech in which he tore into the media and members of his own party, and a second in which he called for national unity and love.

The about-face seemed to reflect the president's real-time internal debate between calls for moderation and his inclination to let loose.

On Wednesday, the president spoke in measured tones and stuck to his prepared remarks as he praised veterans at an American Legion conference in Nevada as examples for a nation yearning to set aside its differences.

"We are here to hold you up as an example of strength, courage and resolve that our country will need to overcome the many challenges that we face," he said.

The night before, the president cut loose in Arizona, defying instructions from his aides to stick to the script and angrily renewing his fight with the press over its coverage of his comments about the race-fueled violence in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The public push-and-pull in Trump's message mirrors the internal dynamics at the White House, where new chief of staff John Kelly has organized and regimented the West Wing staff but has been unable to rein in the president's tendency to veer off course.

The president's speech in Reno was full of the calls for patriotism and national healing that would not have seemed out of the ordinary had they been uttered by previous occupants of the Oval Office.

But his rally in Phoenix on Tuesday night was uniquely Trump. He opened his remarks with a talk of unity but quickly erupted in anger, blaming the media for the widespread condemnation of his response to the violence in Charlottesville at a protest organized by white supremacists.

Trump read from his three responses to the racially charged violence, becoming more animated with each one. He withdrew from his suit pocket the written statement he'd read the day a woman was killed by a man who had plowed a car through counter-protesters. But he skipped over the trouble-causing part that he'd freelanced at the time: his observation that "many sides" were to blame.

That, as well as his reiteration days later that "both sides" were to blame for the violence that led to the death of Heather Heyer and two state troopers, led Democrats and many Republicans to denounce Trump for not unmistakably calling out white supremacists and other hate groups.

By the time he arrived at the American Legion conference, Trump seemed more congenial. He even thanked Sen. Dean Heller, a Nevada Republican with whom he has openly and repeatedly feuded. He discussed his early efforts to restructure and improve the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Later in the speech, Trump said Americans aren't defined by the color of their skin, the size of their paycheck or their political party.

Since Kelly took over last month as chief of staff, he has ousted lightning-rod chief strategist Steve Bannon and hard-charging communications director Anthony Scaramucci while limiting dissenting voices, restricting access to the president and steering the president toward a desired outcome on key decisions.

He has urged Trump to more closely follow a game plan. But Trump's broadside against the "damned dishonest" media, which he says is out to get him, was one of several detours he took from remarks prepared for the Phoenix rally. Trump unabashedly acknowledged that his own advisers had urged him to stay on message, and that he simply couldn't.

His diatribe against the press wasn't in his prepared remarks, according to two people familiar with the plan but not authorized to speak publicly about the president's decision.

Though he was subdued in speaking to the veterans, Trump often resurrects his free-wheeling 2016 campaign style when in the comforting presence of his most fervent fans. He flings insults at perceived enemies and meanders from topic to topic. In Phoenix, his ease was apparent. As he discussed his re-

sponses to Charlottesville, Trump interrupted himself to add: "I didn't want to bore you. You understand where I'm coming from. You people understand."

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Alan Fram in Washington contributed to this report.

Republican agenda threatened by Trump-McConnell feud

By **STEVE PEOPLES** and **ALAN FRAM**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump can't enact his agenda without Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. McConnell may not have a majority to lead without Trump's help. It's simple, and still so complicated.

The strangest bedfellows in Washington are locked in an increasingly public and personal feud that defies conventional wisdom. The escalating tension between the two men is threatening the GOP's re-election prospects and its ability to govern. It has erupted at a high-stakes moment for the Republican Party, which is facing the prospect of a government shutdown — and the possibility it may fail to enact any major legislation during its first year in complete control of Washington.

The dispute is a reminder of the unconventional politics that have gripped the GOP in the Trump era. While Trump and McConnell ostensibly share the same philosophy, legislative agenda, voters and political opponents, they increasingly act more like adversaries than allies — a reminder of just how divisive the president remains within his own party.

"He's now actively attacking people who can help his agenda," veteran Republican operative Doug Heye said of Trump, who has mobilized his avid supporters against GOP senators since the party's embarrassing failure to overhaul the nation's health care system. "It seems to be really a one-man spiral to the bottom."

Divisions have deepened in recent weeks.

McConnell, like other leading Republicans, is particularly upset by Trump's persistent attacks against vulnerable Republican senators who need his help, according to a person familiar with the Kentucky Republican's thinking who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share private conversations. The person said McConnell questions whether Trump is capable of righting his struggling presidency.

The concerns were exacerbated by Trump's recent description of some participants in a white supremacist rally as "very fine people," remarks that were broadly condemned by Republicans and Democrats.

The intra-party feuding threatens nearly all of Trump's priorities, including his near-daily campaign trail pledge to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border.

While Trump threatened Tuesday to force a federal shutdown unless Congress provides funds for the massive project, many GOP lawmakers, especially moderates, lack his passion for the proposal. They may be harder to win over given the current rancorous atmosphere.

Republicans who feel wounded by Trump also could be less likely to defend him amid investigations into his campaign's ties to Russia. And it could complicate the task of rallying Republicans around complicated tax legislation, where lawmakers can have divergent priorities.

"In politics, it's a mistake to personalize things, particularly if it's a member of your own team," veteran Rep. Tom Cole, R-Okla., said Wednesday. "The reality is you're going to need them down the road."

Trump and McConnell "remain united on many shared priorities" and they and other top officials will hold "previously scheduled meetings" after Congress returns from its August recess, White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Wednesday in a statement. She said their goals include middle-class tax cuts, building the border wall and strengthening the military.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us, and we are committed to advancing our shared agenda together and anyone who suggests otherwise is clearly not part of the conversation," McConnell said in his own statement.

Such talks are unlikely to yield a close personal relationship between the two leaders.

At 75 years old, McConnell is just four years older than Trump. But he's spent decades in Washington

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compared with Trump's seven months. And stylistically and substantively, they are worlds apart.

McConnell, a Kentuckian, is guarded and gentlemanly, while Trump flashes a New Yorker's brash, bombastic impertinence.

McConnell is an unrelenting GOP loyalist who's mastered Senate rules and the legislative process, while Trump regularly bashes Republicans and has limited knowledge of congressional procedure. McConnell often seems to think several steps ahead of others, while Trump bounces from one subject to another with little clear strategic purpose.

The most perplexing of Trump's strategies has been the attacks on sitting Republican senators when his party holds control of the Senate by a narrow margin. Without his support, the GOP stands a chance — if somewhat unlikely — of losing its Senate majority.

Last week, Trump encouraged a former Arizona state senator to challenge Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., in a Republican primary election. Meanwhile, a super PAC allied with Trump launched attack ads against Nevada Sen. Dean Heller, who is facing a primary challenge.

On Tuesday, Trump said his coy refusal to mention Flake's name at an Arizona rally showed "very presidential" restraint. He abandoned the restraint by Wednesday morning, tweeting that he's "not a fan of" Flake, whom he called "weak on crime & border."

Publicly and privately, Republicans tasked with preserving the GOP's House and Senate majorities next year are outraged.

Some party officials, Heye said, are asking themselves a difficult question: "Is it the Republican president or the Republican Senate I want to protect and work for?"

The divisions are "unprecedented," said Republican pollster Chris Wilson.

Wilson said he thought the party could survive Trump's political struggles and weak polling numbers in 2018, in part because so few races are being fought in competitive terrain. Democrats seeking the House majority have limited opportunities to pick up new seats given the way many congressional districts have been redrawn by Republican-led state legislatures. And Republicans expect gains among 10 states carried by Trump where Democrats currently serve.

But Wilson noted the division between Trump and his party is so clear, many voters don't necessarily link the two.

"He does his own job of separating himself from the Republican brand," Wilson said.

But it would be "catastrophic," he said, if Trump and the Republican-led Congress fail to enact meaningful legislation now that they have total control of Washington.

Gulls: Winningest team in San Francisco Bay Area baseball

By LINDA WANG, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Among Denard Span's greatest fears in the outfield is having a gull splat on him from above as he chases down a long fly ball.

It's a real possibility, considering how regularly the pesky birds come in off the San Francisco Bay to hover low over the Giants' AT&T Park.

"I'm afraid of them dropping something, using the bathroom on top of me," said Span, San Francisco's center fielder. "Or maybe them dropping some food near me and then all of them just freaking swarming me."

Sports venues across the country struggle to wave off pigeons, bats and gulls, but the two Bay Area ballparks' proximity to the water and dumps attracts birds in large flocks. It has been such a problem at the Oakland Coliseum that stadium operations officials added a pair of vinyl kites this season in an effort to fend them off.

Gulls typically feed at dumps, but marine biologists say recent efforts taken by some nearby sites to bury the waste faster have kept the feathered creatures away. Now, the gulls circle Bay Area ballparks in the hundreds to scour for leftovers such as those popular garlic fries, creating a nuisance for fans and players - not to mention the grounds crew that goes back to work on the infield, basepaths and mound

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the moment a game ends.

That prompted the two teams to experiment with unconventional measures of dealing with their respective bird business.

In Oakland, the bird brigade was becoming such a problem that the Athletics added two falcon-shaped kites this season to try to scare off the gulls. The kites even have catchy nicknames chosen by fans: "Falcon McFalconface" and "Scott Hattebird," after former A's star Scott Hatteberg.

"We took off the tarps in the third deck for the first time in several years, so it seemed to open up the opportunity for the birds to come," said David Rinetti, the A's vice president of stadium operations.

There were a few day games this season when more than 300 gulls circled in and around the ballpark. Players and fans noticed, complaining the birds were making a mess. So Rinetti and his staff needed a solution - and fast.

"I looked up 'bird abatement, Bay Area' online and came up with a company that provided these kites that are falcons that supposedly worked to keep seagulls away," Rinetti said.

They are doing the job so far. The duo even startled Span when the Giants played a Bay Bridge Series game in Oakland earlier this month.

"It got me at first. I thought they were real," Span said.

At the Giants' waterfront ballpark, as fans leave, another competition begins: gulls fly in from McCovey Cove to hunt for snacks.

"They eat food, scoop it up, compost it," Giants head groundskeeper Greg Elliott said. "It's fine for us, but the birds are more of a nuisance for ballplayers."

In 2012, the Giants were counting on a red-tailed hawk nicknamed Bruce Lee to solve their "gull-drums." His presence kept the skies clear for a while. The team built a box for Lee to nest in, hoping to keep the gull-chasing predator at AT&T Park, Giants senior vice president of ballpark operations Jorge Costa explained at the time.

Yet Lee has since left his post, and, naturally, the gulls are back.

Eating leftovers is far from healthy for the birds, said marine biologist Dr. Jim Harvey, director of Moss Landing Marine Laboratories in Monterey County.

"They're supposed to be eating fish and squid," he said, "so eating human food, especially ballpark food, that's not good."

Harvey, who also happens to be a longtime Giants season ticketholder, said he is hardly optimistic that baseball franchises will find a permanent, perfect solution because birds always adapt.

"You can put a physical barrier up, create netting around the whole park. But that's not going to happen," he said.

Span just wishes fans might consider doing their part by cleaning up their own messes, if only to benefit the birds - and keep them as far as possible from his center field workspace, of course.

"It is like a snow globe, and I'm surprised that one of them has not been struck by the ball," longtime Giants bench coach Ron Wotus said.

Freak ballpark accidents involving birds have happened in the past.

Hall of Fame left-handed pitcher Randy Johnson struck and killed a dove with a pitch in 2001. The now-infamous video clip shows the ball drilling the bird, sending an explosion of white feathers into the air.

In 1983, star Yankees outfielder Dave Winfield inadvertently took a gull's life in Toronto making a throw between innings. Police charged him with animal cruelty, but the charges were later dropped.

Wotus joked that if an accident does happen again, perhaps the Giants might take advantage.

"We can use a seagull ricochet for an RBI double," he said, chuckling.

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

US Navy: Body found by Malaysia not one of McCain's missing

By ANNABELLE LIANG, Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — A body found at sea by Malaysian forces is not one of the 10 U.S. sailors missing after a collision between the USS John S. McCain and an oil tanker, the Navy's 7th Fleet said Thursday, as more Marine Corps divers joined a search of the destroyer's flooded compartments.

The remains found earlier in the week by the Malaysian navy were medically examined and will be returned to Malaysian authorities, the fleet said in a statement.

Divers have found remains in flooded compartments of the McCain, which is docked at Singapore's naval base, but the Navy has not disclosed specifics. Five of the 10 missing sailors have been named by relatives.

Aircraft and ships from the navies of Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia are searching seas east of Singapore where the collision happened early Monday and the search area continues to expand, the Navy said. More Marine Corps divers have arrived in Singapore to help with the search of the McCain's interior, it said.

The commander of the 7th Fleet was relieved of duty Wednesday following the McCain collision and other accidents this year that raised questions about its operations in the Pacific. Seven sailors died in June when the destroyer USS Fitzgerald collided with a container ship off Japan. Two lesser-known incidents occurred earlier in the year.

The firing of Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, a three-star admiral, was a rare dismissal of a high-ranking officer for operational reasons.

Aucoin was due to retire in a few weeks, and the officer named to succeed him, Vice Adm. Phillip Sawyer, assumed command immediately.

Sawyer, speaking Thursday at a maritime security meeting in Bali, Indonesia, thanked regional navies for helping in the search for the missing McCain sailors.

"Often it is a brutal reminder that what we do is dangerous work in an unforgiving environment, requiring honed skills and constant vigilance," he said. "And even with those, bad things can happen."

Lawrence Brennan, an adjunct law professor at Fordham University and a retired Navy officer, called Aucoin's dismissal "an unprecedented peacetime move."

"Four incidents in a short time in an operational area is a problem," he said, though he cautioned against rushing to assign blame.

The Navy has ordered an operational pause for its fleets worldwide to make sure all steps are being taken to ensure safe and effective operations. The Pacific Fleet will also carry out a ship-by-ship review of its vessels, looking at navigation, mechanical systems, bridge resource management and training.

The 7th Fleet said four sailors injured in the collision and taken to a Singapore hospital for treatment were released on Wednesday.

This story has been corrected to show relatives have named five of the missing sailors, not that they have identified bodies found on the McCain.

Qatar restores diplomatic ties to Iran amid regional crisis

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Qatar restored full diplomatic relations with Iran early Thursday, disregarding the demands of Arab nations now locked in a regional dispute with the energy-rich country that it lessen its ties to Tehran.

In announcing its decision, Qatar did not mention the diplomatic crisis roiling Gulf Arab nations since June, when Qatar found its land, sea and air routes cut off by its neighbors over Doha's policies across the Mideast.

However, the move comes just days after Saudi Arabia began promoting a Qatari royal family member whose branch of the family was ousted in a palace coup in 1972.

"Qatar has shown it is going to go in a different direction," said Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, a research

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fellow at the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University who lives in Seattle. "It could very well be calculated toward reinforcing the point that Qatar will not bow to this regional pressure placed upon it."

Qatar's Foreign Ministry announced early Thursday that the country's ambassador would return to Tehran. Qatar pulled its ambassador in early 2016 after Saudi Arabia's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric sparked attacks on two Saudi diplomatic posts in Iran, a move to show solidarity with the kingdom.

"The state of Qatar expressed its aspiration to strengthen bilateral relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in all fields," a short Foreign Ministry statement said.

Iranian state media acknowledged the development, without elaborating.

Despite recalling its ambassador in 2016, Iran and Qatar maintained their valuable commercial ties. Qatar and Iran share a massive offshore natural gas field, called the South Pars Field by Tehran and the North Field by Doha.

That gas field's vast reserves made Qataris have the highest per capita income in the world, as well as funded the nation's Al-Jazeera satellite news network and secured hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Since the diplomatic dispute with Arab nations began in June, Iran has sent food shipments to Qatar. Shiite power Iran also has incorporated the crisis into its regular criticism of the Sunni-ruled Saudi Arabia, part of the two Mideast powers' long-running proxy war.

There was no immediate reaction from the Arab nations boycotting Qatar. On Wednesday, the Central African nation of Chad announced it would close its embassy in Doha, accusing Qatar of trying to destabilize it from neighboring Libya.

The diplomatic crisis began June 5, when Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates cut ties to Qatar over allegations including it funding extremists and being too close to Iran. Qatar long has denied funding extremists.

The boycotting countries later issued a list of 13 demands to Qatar, including that Doha shut its diplomatic posts in Iran. Qatar ignored the demands and let a deadline to comply pass, creating an apparent stalemate in the crisis. Attempts by Kuwait, the U.S. and others have failed to make headway.

In recent days, however, Saudi Arabia announced it would allow Qataris to make the annual hajj pilgrimage, which is required of all able-bodied Muslims once in their life. Saudi state media said that came in part due to an intercession by Qatari royal family member Sheikh Abdullah Al Thani, who met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and later a vacationing King Salman in Morocco.

But Sheikh Abdullah has no role in Qatar's government and his last position was as head of the equestrian and camel racing federation decades ago. Sheikh Abdullah's grandfather, father and brother were rulers of Qatar until a palace coup ousted his branch of the royal family in 1972 and a prominent Saudi columnist has suggested the sheikh could be the start of a Qatari government-in-exile.

Ulrichsen cautioned that so far, the Saudi moves appeared to be more needling than anything else.

"Given that a formal escalation in terms of sanctions is probably off the table for now, we're seeing this informal pressure on Qatar ... to try and perhaps stir the pot," the professor said. "I think the informal pressure is increasing because of the lack of formal alternative measures they can realistically hope to place on Qatar."

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellap. His work can be found at <http://apnews/2galNpz>.

PGA playoff fever, and all the math that comes with it

By DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

OLD WESTBURY, N.Y. (AP) — The Northern Trust might be one tournament that can change a player's season without even having to win.

Sean O'Hair fits into that category.

A year ago at the FedEx Cup playoffs opener, O'Hair closed with a 66 at Bethpage Black and wound up

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in a tie for second. That shot him up from No. 108 to No. 15 in the FedEx Cup, and he did just enough to remain in the top 30 and get to the Tour Championship. More than picking up a \$190,000 bonus, he got into all four majors.

The best example was Heath Slocum , who actually won at Liberty National after narrowly qualifying for the PGA Tour's version of a postseason. Winning what then was called The Barclays moved him up to No. 3, and he still was in the top 5 when he reached the Tour Championship.

Something along those lines is sure to unfold this week at The Northern Trust, which moves this year to Glen Oaks.

The top players — Jordan Spieth, Justin Thomas, Dustin Johnson — are thinking about \$10 million at the end this lucrative month of golf. The ones in the middle — O'Hair starts this year at No. 54 — have reasonable hopes of contending, or at least getting to East Lake.

Those at the bottom have nothing to lose, and someone typically has a lot to gain.

It all starts on Thursday, when the PGA Tour becomes as much about math as birdies and bogeys.

The LPGA Tour is in Canada, where all but five players are taking one big exhale because they were in the Solheim Cup last week in Iowa. For anyone who doesn't have a U.S. or European passport, it will be just another week on the road to yet another major (the Evian Masters next month).

The rest of American golf is out west — the PGA Tour Championship outside Seattle, the Web.com Tour outside Portland.

THE NORTHERN TRUST

Geoff Ogilvy feels like the happiest player at The Northern Trust, mainly because there was no guarantee he would even be here. Just six days ago, he was at No. 125 in the standings and on his way to a missed cut when he birdied four straight holes, had a strong weekend at the Wyndham Championship and moved up to No. 116.

Does he have a chance? Ogilvy doesn't need to ask O'Hair or Slocum. He knows by experience. Three years ago, Ogilvy missed the cut in the playoff opener and faced elimination until Brendon Todd made a 15-foot putt on the last hole that assured Ogilvy slipped only to No. 100 and advanced to the next playoff event. Then, at the TPC Boston, he shot 65-65 on the weekend to tie for second. That sent him to the Tour Championship.

Besides, Ogilvy might not feel the most relieved. Floating on clouds is Martin Flores , who appeared certain to finish out of the top 125 last week until he made an ace on the 16th hole, a birdie on the 18th hole and moved to No. 118.

Now, everything is up for grabs.

The tournament has a new name (it used to be The Barclays) on a new course. Glen Oaks drops into the rotation because Liberty National is hosting the Presidents Cup.

The playoffs will help decide who gets to the Presidents Cup, too. The playoffs determine a lot of things.

Television: Thursday-Friday, 2-6 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday, 1-2:30 p.m. (Golf Channel); 3-6 p.m. (CBS); Sunday, noon-1:30 p.m. (Golf Channel), 2-6 p.m. (CBS).

CANADIAN PACIFIC WOMEN'S OPEN

It's not unusual for a tour to get back to business after such an emotional high as the Solheim Cup.

Think back to 2008, when the PGA Tour scheduled the Tour Championship after the Ryder Cup, which the Americans won at Valhalla. Anthony Kim summed it up best that week when he said, "A Ryder Cup hangover doesn't feel as bad as a college hangover."

The only Americans from the Solheim Cup who are not playing are Lexi Thompson , Gerina Piller and Lizette Salas.

Most of the top-ranked players are in the field at Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, mainly because they weren't eligible for the Solheim Cup. The focus falls squarely on Lydia Ko, who has gone more than a year without winning. The Canadian Women's Open is where she first won at age 15. That made her the youngest winner in LPGA history. And that seems like a long time ago.

Television: Thursday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday-Sunday, 3-6 p.m. (Golf Channel).

Egypt angered by US aid cut over human rights concerns

By HAMZA HENDAWI and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt reacted angrily Wednesday to the Trump administration's decision to cut or delay nearly \$300 million in military and economic aid over human rights concerns, a surprise move given the increasingly close ties that have bound the two allies since President Donald Trump took office in January.

Hours after the U.S. announcement, Trump's Middle East envoy, son-in-law Jared Kushner, arrived in Egypt as part of a Middle East tour to try to revive Arab-Israeli peace talks. He met with President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and later conferred with Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry before leaving for Israel.

In a statement, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said Cairo regretted the U.S. decision, calling it a "mis-judgment of the nature of the strategic relations that have bound the two countries for decades." The move, it said, "reflects a lack of careful understanding of the importance of supporting the stability and success of Egypt, as well as the size and nature of the security and economic challenges faced by the Egyptian people."

It warned that the cuts may have "negative consequences for the realization of common U.S.-Egyptian interests." It did not elaborate.

However, an Egyptian presidential statement on Kushner's meeting with el-Sissi made no mention of the aid cuts and delays, which totaled \$290.7 million. El-Sissi, a general-turned-president who has repeatedly stated his admiration for Trump, showed none of the frustration expressed by the Foreign Ministry as he smiled while posing for a ceremonial photo with Kushner in the Egyptian leader's opulent Cairo palace.

El-Sissi spoke to Kushner and his delegation about "Egypt's keenness to continue to work on strengthening the multi-faceted relations that bind the two countries in various fields," the statement said.

Of the \$290.7 million, \$195 million was military aid that the State Department said U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was not able to certify that Egypt had met the human rights criteria set by Congress in order to receive it. But because Tillerson signed a so-called national interest waiver, those funds will remain available to Egypt as long as it makes human rights improvements. Had Tillerson not signed the waiver, the money would have been returned to the Treasury by Sept. 30 — the end of the current fiscal year.

The remainder — \$95.7 million in economic and military assistance— was cut from the Egypt account. Most of it had been held in escrow since 2014 as a result of the new aid conditions Congress set after el-Sissi's 2013 ouster of Mohammed Morsi, Egypt's first freely elected president. Of that, \$65.7 million was foreign military financing and \$30 million so-called "economic support funds," basically a cash payment to the government. These funds will now go instead to "key security partners, without undermining Egypt's security," according to the State Department.

In announcing the changes, the Trump administration cited Egypt's poor human rights record and its crackdown on civic and other non-governmental groups.

Prominent rights lawyer Gamal Eid said U.S. demands for Egypt to improve its rights record were "legitimate" given what he said was a surge in violations.

"The government must now convince its American friends that what it's doing in the field of human rights serves democracy and stability," Eid said. "It's in a bind and anything it does now will be seen as a means to secure U.S. aid."

Egypt is among the top recipients of U.S. military and economic assistance, receiving nearly \$1.5 billion annually. The \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$250 million in economic aid is linked to Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel, and underpins a U.S.-Egyptian security relationship that is now mostly aimed at fighting terrorism.

As defense minister, el-Sissi led the military's 2013 ouster of Morsi, an Islamist whose year in office proved divisive. El-Sissi won a presidential election a year later, and has overseen a crackdown on civil society, particularly rights and pro-democracy groups. These groups were instrumental in the uprising that toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak in 2011, but are presented by the media now as part of a foreign conspiracy against Egypt.

As part of the crackdown, authorities have detained tens of thousands, most of them Islamist support-

ers of Morsi, but a number of prominent liberal and secular activists have also been jailed. Critics say the government is trampling on the country's 2014 constitution, possibly the most progressive in Egypt's history.

Egypt maintains that reviving an ailing economy, fighting Islamic militants and creating jobs top its priorities.

Trump made no public mention of human rights when he warmly welcomed el-Sissi to the White House in April, an omission that many took as a sign that the issue was not a priority for the administration. But two months later, two Republican senators slammed as "draconian" a new Egyptian law that effectively bans the work of non-governmental organizations and urged its repeal.

The law, fiercely defended by Egypt, sparked an international backlash and is believed to be the main cause for Washington's move to cut and delay aid.

"I believe the American decision was expected after Egypt adopted the NGO law," said rights campaigner Khaled el-Balshy. "It's an important but symbolic move, which will likely not lead to positive actions from the Egyptian government."

Lee reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Bradley Klapper in Washington and Menna Zaki in Cairo contributed to this report.

Navy dismisses 7th Fleet commander after warship accidents

By KEN MORITSUGU, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The commander of the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet has been relieved of duty following a series of warship accidents that raised questions about its operations in the Pacific.

The firing of Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, a three-star admiral, was a rare dismissal of such a high-ranking officer for operational reasons.

The Navy's Pacific Fleet released a short statement Wednesday saying Adm. Scott Swift, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, had relieved Aucoin "due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command."

The move follows four Navy accidents in the Pacific since late January, including two collisions that left sailors dead and missing.

On Monday, the destroyer USS John S. McCain and an oil tanker collided off Singapore, injuring five sailors and leaving 10 missing. Navy divers have found the remains of some of the missing in a flooded compartment on the ship, though specifics have not been disclosed.

Seven sailors died in June when the destroyer USS Fitzgerald collided with a container ship off Japan.

Aucoin was due to retire in a few weeks, and the officer named to succeed him, Vice Adm. Phillip Sawyer, assumed command immediately.

Sawyer, speaking Thursday at a maritime security meeting in Bali, Indonesia, thanked the navies of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia for helping in the search for the missing McCain sailors.

"Often it is a brutal reminder that what we do is dangerous work in an unforgiving environment, requiring honed skills and constant vigilance," he said. "And even with those, bad things can happen."

Former 7th Fleet commander Doug Crowder told AP he cannot recall someone at that level being relieved for operational reasons.

High-ranking officers have been removed for misconduct.

Crowder, a retired vice admiral who led the 7th Fleet from 2006 to 2008, said he's sure it was a "tough call" to relieve a three-star fleet commander.

Lawrence Brennan, an adjunct law professor at Fordham University and a retired Navy officer, called Aucoin's dismissal "an unprecedented peacetime move."

"Four incidents in a short time in an operational area is a problem," he said, though he cautioned against rushing to assign blame.

The Navy has ordered an operational pause for its fleets worldwide to make sure all steps are being taken to ensure safe and effective operations. The Pacific Fleet will also carry out a ship-by-ship review of its vessels, looking at navigation, mechanical systems, bridge resource management and training.

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The 7th Fleet said late Wednesday that Navy and Marine Corps divers were continuing to search the McCain, which is now docked in Singapore.

Singapore's government said the area for a sea-based search more than doubled Wednesday to about 5,500 square kilometers (2,120 square miles) with aircraft and vessels deployed by the U.S., Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia.

At least five of the 10 missing sailors have been identified by relatives.

Crew member Logan Palmer is from the Decatur, Illinois, area and his mother identified him as missing, U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis said.

April Brandon in Michigan said the military informed her that her son, Ken Smith, is missing. She said Smith's father, stepmother and grandfather served in the Navy. Brandon said, "His father and I couldn't be prouder of our son."

The family of Jacob Drake of Ohio was told he was among the missing, the Columbus Dispatch reported. Megan Partlow told The Associated Press that Drake was her fiance and she last had contact with him Sunday in a text message.

Family members of Dustin Doyon from Connecticut confirmed that he was among the missing. Local police said the Navy was in communication with the family.

The mother of a Texas sailor said her son, John Hoagland, was among the missing and had served aboard the warship since October.

The cause of the collision has not been determined. The Navy previously said there was no evidence it was intentional, or that it was a result of sabotage or cyberintrusion.

The Navy last week said the Fitzgerald's captain was being relieved of his command and other sailors were being punished after poor seamanship and flaws in keeping watch were found to have contributed to its collision.

There were two lesser-known incidents in the first half of the year. In January, the USS Antietam guided missile cruiser ran aground near Yokosuka base, the home port of the 7th Fleet, and in May another cruiser, the USS Lake Champlain from the Navy's 3rd Fleet, had a minor collision with a South Korean fishing boat.

Aucoin, a career flight officer, served in five fighter squadrons and flew in more than 150 combat missions, according to Navy biographies. He commanded a carrier air wing aboard the USS Kitty Hawk and a carrier strike group based in Bremerton, Washington. Prior to heading the 7th Fleet, he was deputy chief of naval operations for warfare systems.

Associated Press journalists Andi Jatmiko in Bali, Indonesia; Jennifer McDermott in Providence, Rhode Island; Lolita Baldor in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Robert Burns in Amman, Jordan, contributed to this story.

Wrapped: Charlottesville covers Confederate statues in black

By SARAH RANKIN and STEVE HELBER, Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — Workers in Charlottesville draped giant black covers over two statues of Confederate generals on Wednesday to symbolize the city's mourning for a woman killed while protesting a white nationalist rally.

The work began around 1 p.m. in Emancipation Park, where a towering monument of Gen. Robert E. Lee on horseback stands. Workers gathered around the monument with a large black drape. Some stood in cherry-pickers and others used ropes and poles to cover the statue as onlookers took photos and video. Some of the crowd cheered as the cover was put in place.

"It's great. It's a good start," said Jamie Dyer, who spoke a short time later from nearby Justice Park, where workers covered a statue of Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. "They do have to go, but it is a start, and I'm glad the city has finally recognized it has to happen on some level."

Later Wednesday, local media reported that a man with a gun strapped to his leg approached the Lee statue and began cutting the tarp with a knife.

Police asked him to stop, and he complied. He addressed reporters and bystanders, saying he thought

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it was illegal under state law to cover a war memorial and that doing so amounted to erasing history.

In front of TV cameras, the man starting arguing with others at the scene over what should be done with the statues and who was at fault for the violence that unfolded at the Aug. 12 rally.

The decision to shroud the statues came at a city council meeting earlier this week.irate residents packed the meeting, screaming and cursing at councilors over the city's response to the rally. The event, dubbed "Unite the Right," is believed to be the largest gathering of white nationalists in a decade.

Neo-Nazis, KKK members, skinheads and members of various white nationalist factions clashed violently with counter-protesters in the street adjacent to Emancipation Park.

The fighting went on largely uninterrupted by authorities until the event was declared an unlawful assembly and the crowd was forced to disperse. Later, a car rammed into a crowd of demonstrators who were marching through downtown, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer and injuring more than two dozen others.

The man who police say was driving, James Alex Fields Jr., has been charged in Heyer's death.

The death toll for the day climbed to three when a helicopter that had been monitoring the event and assisting with the governor's motorcade crashed, killing two state troopers.

The rally was sparked by the city council's vote earlier this year to take down the Lee statue. That decision is in the midst of a legal challenge, and a judge has issued an injunction preventing the city from removing the statue while the lawsuit plays out.

A state law passed in 1998 forbids local governments from removing, damaging or defacing war monuments, but there is legal ambiguity about whether that applies to statues such as the Lee monument, which was erected before the law was passed.

A hearing in the case is scheduled for Sept. 1.

The council initially planned to leave the Jackson statue in place but at the meeting Tuesday took the first administrative steps toward having it removed as well.

In other developments Wednesday, Christopher Cantwell, a white nationalist from Keene, New Hampshire, turned himself in to face three felony charges in Virginia, authorities said. Cantwell was wanted by University of Virginia police on two counts of the illegal use of tear gas or other gases and one count of malicious bodily injury with a "caustic substance," explosive or fire.

University police issued a brief statement late Wednesday saying Cantwell turned himself in to police in nearby Lynchburg, Virginia, where he was being held at a regional jail pending transport to Charlottesville.

It wasn't immediately known if Cantwell has a lawyer.

Contacted by The Associated Press on Tuesday, Cantwell acknowledged he had pepper-sprayed a counter-demonstrator during an Aug. 11 protest on the campus of the University of Virginia. But he insisted he was defending himself, saying he did it "because my only other option was knocking out his teeth." He also said he was looking forward to his day in court.

Lynchburg police, contacted by AP late Wednesday, declined to release further information about Cantwell.

Rankin reported from Richmond, Virginia.

Violence in Charlottesville leads to soul-searching at ACLU

By TOM HAYS and LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Faced with an angry backlash for defending white supremacists' right to march in Charlottesville, the American Civil Liberties Union is confronting a feeling among some of its members that was once considered heresy: Maybe some speech isn't worth defending.

Cracks in the ACLU's strict defense of the First Amendment no matter how offensive the speech opened from the moment a counter-protester was killed during the rally in Virginia. Some critics said the ACLU has blood on its hands for persuading a judge to let the Aug. 12 march go forward. An ACLU leader in Virginia resigned, tweeting, "What's legal and what's right are sometimes different."

"This was a real tragedy and we're all reeling," said Lee Rowland, a senior staff attorney at the ACLU's headquarters in New York City. "Charlottesville should be a wake-up call to all of us."

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The backlash, reminiscent of one that followed the ACLU's 1978 defense of a neo-Nazi group that wanted to march through Skokie, Illinois, a Chicago suburb with a large number of Holocaust survivors, set off a tumultuous week of soul-searching and led to a three-hour national staff meeting in which the conflict within the group was aired.

What resulted from the backlash was an announcement that the ACLU will no longer stand with hate groups seeking to march with weapons, as some of those in Charlottesville did.

"If people are gathering armed to the hilt and hoping for violence, I think the ACLU would be doing damage to our free-speech rights in the long term," Rowland said.

The newfound limit on how far the nearly century-old ACLU is willing to go to defend free speech sets up intriguing choices in the months ahead. Will it intervene, for example, in the case of a white nationalist rally at Texas A&M that the university canceled after Charlottesville? The ACLU said it won't discuss when and where it might take a stand.

The seeds of upheaval in Charlottesville were planted when a judge agreed with the ACLU that white nationalists should be able to protest the removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee where the monument stands, instead of at a neutral site sought by city officials.

It was a position consistent with the ACLU's history of defending free-speech rights for protesters on all parts of the spectrum. But then James Alex Fields Jr. was accused of using his car to kill 32-year-old Heather Heyer and injure several others who were staging a counter-demonstration.

Within hours, a board member of the ACLU's Virginia branch, Waldo Jaquith, resigned and fired off a stinging tweet that ended with, "I won't be a fig leaf for the Nazis."

In an opinion piece in The New York Times, K-Sue Park, a race studies fellow at the UCLA School of Law, argued that the ACLU's defend-in-all-cases approach to the First Amendment "perpetuates a misguided theory that all radical views are equal," adding that group is "standing on the wrong side of history."

Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe went further, accusing the ACLU of creating a "powder keg" in Charlottesville. The ACLU of Virginia responded by saying it was "horrified" by the violence but didn't cause it.

"We do not support Nazis," it said. "We support the Constitution and the laws of the United States."

After the 1978 furor over the neo-Nazi rally in Skokie, which never actually got off the ground, the ACLU stood firm even as it received hate mail and hundreds of members quit.

The latest criticism of the ACLU has come from some of the same people who had heaped praise and donations on the organization for its resistance to President Donald Trump's travel ban. Membership surged from 425,000 to 1.6 million, with \$90 million in online contributions, in the months since Trump's election.

"The ACLU has faced much worse before and emerged stronger and more dynamic," said Ron Kuby, a New York civil rights attorney. "Refusing to represent people who intend to march while visibly armed is a reasonable line to draw given what we've seen from the white supremacists."

ACLU member and Charlottesville resident Ira Bashkow said he never considered quitting the group but feels the disturbing episode in his city showed it has to rethink its "old-line" approach to the First Amendment.

"I believe in the right to free speech, but it doesn't mean (demonstrators) can say whatever they want and hold a weapon at the same time," he said.

Stacy Sullivan, an associate director with the ACLU, said that after Charlottesville, a small increase in people quitting as members or dropping off social media last week was made up for by new sign-ups.

She said the ACLU will not shy away from taking unpopular positions.

"If you can't stomach respecting the First Amendment rights of people you despise," Sullivan said, "you don't work here."

This story has been corrected to show ACLU membership was 425,000, not 25,000.

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Supporters want Colin Kaepernick signed by NFL season start

By KAREN MATTHEWS and JESSE J. HOLLAND, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Supporters of former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who refused to stand for the national anthem to protest police brutality against blacks, showed their solidarity with him and his cause at a rally outside National Football League headquarters on Wednesday, demanding that he be signed by the start of the regular season next month.

More than 1,000 people, many wearing jerseys bearing Kaepernick's name, crowded the steps outside the NFL's midtown Manhattan offices.

Kaepernick, who once took the 49ers to the Super Bowl, opted out of his contract with the team in March and remains unsigned. Supporters say he is being blackballed for his advocacy, but some critics say he should not have sat or kneeled during the anthem or contend his lack of a job is more about his on-field talent.

Chants at the demonstration included "Boycott! Boycott!"

Women's March organizer Tamika Mallory, addressing football fans, said, "I don't care how long you've been watching football, if they don't stand up for your children, turn the damn TV off."

Some speakers said the league's treatment of Kaepernick is of a piece with a cavalier attitude toward players' health.

"How in the world can we call ourselves the land of the free, the home of the brave, and you get vilified and criminalized just for speaking your mind?" the Rev. Jamal Bryant said. "The NFL has proven with their treatment of Colin Kaepernick that they do not mind if black players get a concussion, they just got a problem if black players get a conscience."

Earlier Wednesday, the NAACP called for a meeting with the NFL to discuss the fate of Kaepernick, who was born to a white woman and a black man but was adopted by a white couple. The civil rights organization's interim president, Derrick Johnson, said in a letter to the NFL's commissioner, Roger Goodell, that it's apparently "no sheer coincidence" that Kaepernick isn't on a roster.

"No player should be victimized and discriminated against because of his exercise of free speech — to do so is in violation of his rights under the Constitution and the NFL's own regulations," Johnson said.

The NAACP's state president in New York, Hazel Dukes, said: "Right now, the action of the league seems to imply to young black men that this league, which is comprised of 70 percent African-Americans, only values black lives if they are wearing a football uniform."

Goodell has said the league isn't blackballing Kaepernick.

Some other players followed Kaepernick's actions last season, and some are doing so in this year's pre-season. On Monday, a group of Cleveland Browns players prayed in silent protest during the national anthem. Among those kneeling was a white player, Seth DeValve. Another white player, Britton Colquitt, did not kneel but kept his hand on the shoulder of a teammate who did.

That protest earned the ire of an Ohio Supreme Court justice, the lone Democrat holding an Ohio statewide office. Justice Bill O'Neill wrote on Facebook that he wouldn't attend any games at which "draft dodging millionaire athletes disrespect the veterans who earned them the right to be on that field."

"Shame on you all," he said.

Within 24 hours, a pair of wildly different Trump speeches

By JULIE BYKOWICZ and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

RENO, Nev. (AP) — It was a tale of two Trumps in the desert Southwest.

Within a 24-hour span, President Donald Trump delivered one speech in which he tore into the media and members of his own party, and a second in which he called for national unity and love. The about-face seemed to reflect the president's real-time internal debate between calls for moderation and his inclination to let loose.

On Wednesday, the president spoke in measured tones and stuck to his prepared remarks as he praised veterans at an American Legion conference in Nevada as examples for a nation yearning to set aside its

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differences.

"We are here to hold you up as an example of strength, courage and resolve that our country will need to overcome the many challenges that we face," he said.

The night before, the president cut loose in Arizona, defying instructions from his aides to stick to the script and angrily renewing his fight with the press over its coverage of his comments about the race-fueled violence in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The public push-and-pull in Trump's message mirrors the internal dynamics at the White House, where new chief of staff John Kelly has organized and regimented the West Wing staff but has been unable to rein in the president's tendency to veer off course.

The president's speech in Reno was full of the calls for patriotism and national healing that would not have seemed out of the ordinary had they been uttered by previous occupants of the Oval Office.

But his rally in Phoenix on Tuesday night was uniquely Trump. He opened his remarks with a talk of unity but quickly erupted in anger, blaming the media for the widespread condemnation of his response to the violence in Charlottesville at a protest organized by white supremacists.

Trump read from his three responses to the racially charged violence, becoming more animated with each one. He withdrew from his suit pocket the written statement he'd read the day a woman was killed by a man who had plowed a car through counter-protesters. But he skipped over the trouble-causing part that he'd freelanced at the time: his observation that "many sides" were to blame.

That, as well as his reiteration days later that "both sides" were to blame for the violence that led to the death of Heather Heyer and two state troopers, led Democrats and many Republicans to denounce Trump for not unmistakably calling out white supremacists and other hate groups.

By the time he arrived at the American Legion conference, Trump seemed more congenial. He even thanked Sen. Dean Heller, a Nevada Republican with whom he has openly and repeatedly feuded. He discussed his early efforts to restructure and improve the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Later in the speech, Trump said Americans aren't defined by the color of their skin, the size of their paycheck or their political party.

"Our hearts beat for America. Our souls fill with pride every time we hear the national anthem," Trump said. "This is the spirit we need to overcome our challenges."

When Medal of Honor recipient Donald Ballard joined the president onstage and offered praise for Trump, the president smiled and praised Ballard's declaration that Trump was "the right leader to lead us out to drain the swamp."

"That was very risky of me," Trump told the veterans, explaining that he didn't know in advance what Ballard would say. "That could ruin the whole day for me."

Since Kelly took over last month as chief of staff, he has ousted lightning-rod chief strategist Steve Bannon and hard-charging communications director Anthony Scaramucci while limiting dissenting voices, restricting access to the president and steering the president toward a desired outcome on key decisions.

He has urged Trump to more closely follow a game plan. But Trump's broadside against the "damned dishonest" media, which he says is out to get him, was one of several detours he took from remarks prepared for the Phoenix rally. Trump unabashedly acknowledged that his own advisers had urged him to stay on message, and that he simply couldn't.

His diatribe against the press wasn't in his prepared remarks, according to two people familiar with the plan but not authorized to speak publicly about the president's decision.

Though he was subdued in speaking to the veterans, Trump often resurrects his free-wheeling 2016 campaign style when in the comforting presence of his most fervent fans. He flings insults at perceived enemies and meanders from topic to topic. In Phoenix, his ease was apparent. As he discussed his responses to Charlottesville, Trump interrupted himself to add: "I didn't want to bore you. You understand where I'm coming from. You people understand."

___ Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Alan Fram in Washington contributed to this report.

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Former CIA agent wants to buy Twitter to kick Trump off

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former undercover CIA agent Valerie Plame Wilson is looking to crowdfund enough money to buy Twitter so President Donald Trump can't use it.

Wilson launched the fundraiser last week, tweeting: "If @Twitter executives won't shut down Trump's violence and hate, then it's up to us. #BuyTwitter #BanTrump." The GoFundMe page for the fundraiser says Trump's tweets "damage the country and put people in harm's way."

As of Wednesday morning, she had raised less than \$6,000 of her \$1 billion goal.

In an emailed statement, White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the low total shows that the American people like the Republican president's use of Twitter.

"Her ridiculous attempt to shut down his first amendment is the only clear violation and expression of hate and intolerance in this equation," the statement read.

Wilson wrote on the fundraiser's GoFundMe page that she hopes to raise enough money to buy a controlling interest of Twitter stock. If she doesn't have enough to purchase a majority of shares, she said, she will explore options to buy "a significant stake" and champion the proposal at Twitter's annual shareholder meeting.

If Plame were to hit her \$1 billion goal, she'd still fall far short of gaining a controlling interest in the company. As of Wednesday, a majority stake would cost roughly \$6 billion. But a \$1 billion stake would make her Twitter's largest shareholder and give her a very strong position to exert influence on the company.

Twitter declined to comment Wednesday on Wilson's tweet about seeking to buy the San Francisco-based company.

Wilson's identity as a CIA operative was leaked by an official in President George W. Bush's administration in 2003 in an effort to discredit her husband, Joe Wilson, a former diplomat who criticized Bush's decision to invade Iraq. She left the agency in 2005.

Taylor Swift ends intrigue, announces new album in November

By **LEANNE ITALIE, Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — Yes, Taylor Swift fans, Wednesday was a lucky one for you.

The pop star who whipped her army of Swifties into a frenzy with video snippets of slithery snake parts on social media posted the title of her new album, "Reputation," and announced online it will be out Nov. 10.

The first single, she said in a series of posts, will drop Thursday night. And she threw in the album's cover art for good measure: a black-and-white photo of herself — head and shoulders, in slouchy sweater, hair swept back — against a backdrop of newsprint reading, simply, "Taylor Swift" over and over again.

Swift, who is followed by millions on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, wiped her feeds clean Friday and replaced the black void Monday with the first of three reptilian videos, each offering just a tad more of a snake, from tail to squirmy middle and finally its beady red eyes and ominous fangs lunging briefly at the camera.

The teasers put fans on high alert, and the snake imagery evoked snake emojis used against her in various dis-fests last year, including one with Kim Kardashian West after West claimed Swift knew about hubby Kanye's reference to Swift in his song "Famous."

The album would be Swift's sixth studio effort and the first since the 2014 release of "1989," which is the last time she teased fans online, that round with mysterious Polaroid photographs. She scrubbed her feeds Friday of everything from profile pictures to accounts she follows. It was three years to the date from when she dropped the song "Shake It Off" and announced "1989" — and just a few days after her courtroom assault trial victory against a former radio DJ in Denver.

Word of a new album lifted Swift to a top trending topic around the world Wednesday on Twitter ahead of Sunday's MTV Video Music Awards, to be hosted by Katy Perry, a former friend.

Dutch police detain driver of Spanish van near cancelled gig

By MIKE CORDER, Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Police in the Dutch port city of Rotterdam detained the driver of a van with Spanish license plates and a number of gas tanks inside after a concert by an American rock band was cancelled Wednesday night following a threat, the city's mayor said.

A Spanish counterterrorism official said the van is not connected to the attacks that killed 15 people in Spain last week.

The official said investigators discarded a possible link between the van's driver and the extremist cell that carried out the attacks in and near Barcelona after questioning the driver and examining the van. Rotterdam police could not be reached for a reaction to the Spanish official's comments.

Police detained the driver for questioning about two hours after a concert by Los Angeles band Allah-Las was called off after Dutch police received a terror warning. Rotterdam Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb said the warning came from Spanish police.

However, Aboutaleb said at a hastily arranged press conference that it was too soon to link the van to the unspecified threat directed at the concert.

"It is not yet good to say that the things are linked," Aboutaleb said. "It still has to be established that there was a link between the van and the threat. We can't say that yet."

Military explosives experts checked the van and a police officer later got behind the wheel and drove the vehicle away, Dutch broadcaster NOS reported.

Police said in a statement that the van contained "a couple of gas bottles."

The Dutch terror threat level, which is at level four of a five-step scale, remained unchanged, Lodewijk Hekking, a spokesman for the country's counterterror chief told the AP in a text message.

The Spanish counterterrorism investigation official said Spain's Civil Guard received "an alert indicating the possibility of an attack today in a concert that was going to take place in Rotterdam."

The Civil Guard shared the information with Dutch authorities and is investigating the threat, said the source, speaking anonymously because the Civil Guard is still probing the threat.

Police in Spain have been investigating the deadly vehicle attacks last week in and near Barcelona. They later found bomb-making equipment that included more than 100 tanks of butane gas, nails and 500 liters of acetone.

Rotterdam police said they took the information about a threat "seriously enough that after discussion with organizers it was decided to cancel the event."

Concert organizer Rotown said earlier on Twitter that the concert venue, a former grain silo called Maassilo, was being evacuated because of the unspecified threat. The show hadn't yet started when the decision to cancel it was made.

Dutch television showed officers in body armor outside Maassilo and what appeared to be members of the band leaving the venue in a white van with a police escort. By around midnight, the area was calm and police had lifted the cordon they earlier put up around the venue, the NOS reported.

Allah-Las is a four-piece band from Los Angeles.

In an email to The Associated Press, the band's label, Mexican Summer, said: "Due to a potential terror threat at The Maassilo in Rotterdam, the Allah-Las show was cancelled tonight.

"Details are not available at this time as the incident is still under investigation. The band is unharmed and are very grateful to the Rotterdam Police and other responsible agencies for detecting the potential threat before anyone was hurt."

In an interview with British newspaper The Guardian last year, band members said they chose the word Allah, Arabic for God, because they were seeking a "holy sounding" name and did not realize it might cause offense.

"We get emails from Muslims, here in the U.S. and around the world, saying they're offended, but that absolutely wasn't our intention," lead singer Miles Michaud told the newspaper. "We email back and explain

why we chose the name, and mainly they understand.”

Aritz Parra in Madrid contributed to this story.

This story has been corrected from an earlier version to show Allah-Las derived its name from Allah, the Arabic word for God, not All.

McConnell says he and Trump are united on ‘shared goals’

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell says he and President Donald Trump are in regular contact about “shared goals” and working together to advance them. He says people suggesting otherwise are “clearly not part of the conversation.”

McConnell says priorities include tax overhaul, spending and other bills.

The Kentucky Republican released the statement Wednesday during a rocky period between the two leaders.

Trump has criticized McConnell for the Senate’s rejection of the GOP push to repeal President Barack Obama’s health law. He suggested McConnell might need to step aside as leader if he can’t push top bills through the chamber.

People familiar with McConnell’s thinking say he’s privately expressed dismay over Trump’s failure to clearly criticize Nazis after the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, and for the president’s criticism of fellow Republicans.

Swedish journalist’s torso found in submarine death mystery

By JAN M. OLSEN, Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Journalist Kim Wall had reported on conflicts, crises and natural disasters around the world. Earlier this month, she set out to sea from laid-back Copenhagen for a story about an eccentric Danish inventor and his home-made submarine.

She never returned. On Wednesday, police confirmed that Wall’s headless torso had been found on a beach near the Danish capital. The inventor, Peter Madsen, has been arrested on suspicion of killing her. Wall, 30, was last seen alive on the evening of Aug. 10 on Madsen’s submarine, named UC3 Nautilus. The freelance journalist’s family says she was working on a story about Madsen, 46, a celebrity entrepreneur and engineer who dreamed of launching a manned space mission.

Early the next day, Wall’s boyfriend reported her missing. Madsen was rescued from his sinking vessel south of Copenhagen hours later. Wall was nowhere to be found.

Madsen, who remains in police custody on suspicion of manslaughter, initially told police he had let Wall off on an island several hours into the trip. Later, he said she had died accidentally and he had “buried” her at sea.

On Monday, a cyclist discovered a torso on a beach on Copenhagen’s southern Amager island, near where Wall was believed to have died. Copenhagen police said Tuesday that the body’s head, arms and legs had “deliberately been cut off.”

Copenhagen police investigator Jens Moeller Jensen told reporters Wednesday that DNA tests had confirmed the torso was Wall’s.

Dried blood found inside the submarine was also a match to DNA obtained from Wall’s toothbrush and hairbrush, he said.

Moeller Jensen said the torso “washed ashore after having been at sea for a while,” and was attached to a piece of metal “likely with the purpose to make it sink.”

The investigator said marks on the torso indicated that someone had tried to press air out of the body so that it wouldn’t float.

The cause of the journalist’s death is not yet known, police said. They are still looking for the rest of

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her body.

Madsen's defense lawyer said her client still maintains that Wall died accidentally, and that the discovery of her torso doesn't mean he's guilty of killing her.

"It doesn't change my client's explanation that an accident happened," Betina Hald Engmark told Danish tabloid BT.

"No matter what, we find it very positive that she has been found now," she added.

Wall's boyfriend alerted authorities early on Aug. 11 that the 40-ton, nearly 18-meter-long (60-foot-long) sub hadn't returned from a test run.

The Danish navy launched a rescue operation, scrambling two helicopters and three ships for the search.

The navy said the sub had been seen sailing, but sank shortly afterward. Madsen was picked up by a private boat.

Police say they believe Madsen deliberately scuttled the submarine. Authorities later found it and brought it onto land for investigation.

A self-taught aerospace engineer, Madsen was one of a group of entrepreneurs who founded Copenhagen Suborbitals, a private consortium to develop and construct submarines and manned spacecraft.

Madsen made headlines when he launched the Nautilus — billed as the world's largest privately built sub — on May 3, 2008.

In 2011, Copenhagen Suborbitals launched a homemade 30-foot (nine-meter) rocket five miles (eight kilometers) into the sky over the Baltic Sea, a step toward its unrealized goal of launching a person into space.

The group split in 2014, and Nautilus is currently owned by Madsen's company Rocket Madsen Space Lab, billed on its website as "a place where nothing is impossible and where science and innovation meet practical engineering."

Wall grew up in southern Sweden, just across a strait from Copenhagen. She studied at the Sorbonne university in Paris, the London School of Economics and at Columbia University in New York, graduating with a master's degree in journalism in 2013.

She lived in New York and Beijing, her family said, and had written for The New York Times, The Guardian, the South China Morning Post and Vice Magazine, among other publications. She had reported from Cuba, Sri Lanka, Uganda, China and the Marshall Islands.

Her family said that she had worked in many dangerous places as a journalist, and it was unimaginable "something could happen ... just a few miles from the childhood home."

In an email to The Associated Press, the family said it received the confirmation of her death "with boundless sadness and dismay," adding "the tragedy has hit not only us and other families, but friends and colleagues all over the world."

The Committee to Protect Journalists said it was "shocked and saddened" by Wall's death.

"Wall's death on a seemingly low-risk assignment underscores the dangers that journalists face around the world every day," said the group's Europe and Central Asia Program Coordinator, Nina Ognianova.

Jill Lawless in London contributed to this report.

Trump bashes NAFTA in midst of talks to revamp trade deal

By PAUL WISEMAN, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just a week into talks to rewrite the North American Free Trade Agreement, President Donald Trump is already threatening to abandon the 23-year-old pact with Canada and Mexico.

At a high-profile campaign-style rally in Phoenix on Tuesday night, Trump predicted that the United States would "end up probably terminating" NAFTA "at some point," though he said he hadn't made a final decision.

"Personally," Trump said, "I don't think we can make a deal because we have been so badly taken advantage of."

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The president had made the same threat in April but then reversed himself after a pushback from American businesses, especially farm groups, which have benefited from expanded access to the Mexican market resulting from NAFTA.

The president's renewed threat Tuesday reignited such concerns.

"Abruptly ending NAFTA could create a string of unintended consequences that need to be carefully considered," said Ann Wilson, an executive at the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, which represents auto suppliers. "Mexico and Canada are trusted trade partners to the U.S., and, as a result, we are strong national security partners. We should not take that for granted."

NAFTA erased most trade barriers separating the U.S., Canada and Mexico and fostered a rapid rise in commerce and closer diplomatic ties among the three countries. But the agreement has long fueled heated criticism in the United States because it led some American-based manufacturers to move operations south of the border to capitalize on lower-wage Mexican labor.

Trump has condemned NAFTA as "the worst trade deal in history" and promised to fix it — or drop out of it altogether.

As negotiations on a NAFTA overhaul began last week in Washington, there was wide agreement on the need to modernize the pact to reflect changes over the past two decades, such as the rise of e-commerce.

Still, U.S. Trade Rep. Robert Lighthizer warned that the United States wouldn't settle for a "mere tweaking of a few provisions and an updating of a few chapters." Saying NAFTA had cost America hundreds of thousands of jobs, Lighthizer insisted on the need to take steps to reduce America's trade deficit and to ensure that more of the goods that qualify for NAFTA's duty-free status be made in the United States. Canada and Mexico oppose that idea.

Most economists say NAFTA has had only a modest net effect on U.S. jobs because expanded commerce with Canada and Mexico has also created jobs and because trade represents a relatively small part of the U.S. economy.

After a five-day opening round, the three countries issued a statement that said they would resume talks in Mexico on Sept. 1-5; in Canada in late September; and back in the United States in October. More rounds will likely follow.

James Jones, who served as President Bill Clinton's ambassador to Mexico and helped negotiate NAFTA in the mid-1990s, predicted that Lighthizer and his team of negotiators would seek to use Trump's tough talk to their advantage.

"They'll try to play it in a way that strengthens their hands," said Jones, now chairman of the financial advisory firm Monarch Global Strategies. "They'll tell the other negotiating teams, 'I'm reasonable, but I report to a boss who's less reasonable.'"

Jones predicted that "sanity will prevail" — that the U.S. government will recognize that the United States benefits from an economically unified North America.

Daniel Ujczko, a trade lawyer with Dickinson Wright, said he doubts that an overhauled NAFTA would do much to narrow America's trade deficit or restore lost U.S. manufacturing jobs — results that Trump had vowed to deliver to the blue-collar voters in the Midwest who helped elect him.

"There's not enough red meat to be gained in the NAFTA modernization to satisfy those voters," Ujczko said. "The president's going to have to make a choice when he get a pretty vanilla NAFTA modernization — whether or not he's going to withdraw."

A U.S. move to abandon the agreement would likely trigger a political furor. American manufacturers have invested heavily in supply chains that straddle NAFTA borders and have come to depend on duty-free shipments within the trade bloc. In Congress, farm-state lawmakers have urged U.S. negotiators to do nothing that would imperil U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico and Canada.

"NAFTA has been incredibly successful for our industry," said Jennifer Myers, a spokeswoman for the National Corn Growers Association. "We are closely monitoring negotiations and will continue to advocate for corn farmers' interests throughout this process."

Monarch's Jones predicted that "sanity will prevail" and that the U.S. will remain in NAFTA.

Canada brushed off suggestions that Trump's threats would disrupt the talks.

"Trade negotiations often have moments of heated rhetoric," said Adam Austen, spokesman for Chrystia Freeland, Canada's minister of foreign affairs. "Our priorities remain the same, and we will continue to work hard to modernize NAFTA, supporting millions of middle class jobs."

A refresher on NAFTA can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/21_qyaYKMKS

Follow Paul Wiseman on Twitter at <http://Twitter.com/PaulWisemanAP>

Many addicts seeking opioid recovery find relapse and fraud

By CURT ANDERSON, AP Legal Affairs Writer

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The Reflections treatment center looked like just the place for Michelle Holley's youngest daughter to kick heroin. Instead, as with dozens of other Florida substance abuse treatment facilities, the owner was more interested in defrauding insurance companies by keeping addicts hooked, her family says.

"It looked fine. They were saying all the right things to me. I could not help my child so I trusted them to help my child," Holley said.

Instead, the center refused to give 19-year-old Jaime Holley her prescription medicine when she left, forcing her to use illegal drugs to avoid acute withdrawal symptoms, her mother said. She died of a heroin overdose last November. "Right to my face they lied to me, and I believed them."

Rather than working to get people well, a growing number of unscrupulous industry players are focusing on getting addicts to relapse so that insurance dollars keep rolling in, according to law enforcement officials, treatment experts and addicts in recovery.

"It's terrible right now. I don't know of any business that wants to kill its customers, but this one does," said Timothy Schnellenberger, who has worked for years in running addiction recovery centers in Florida. "It really breaks my heart. Kids are dying left and right."

Reflections and Journey — both centers owned by Kenneth Chatman — are shuttered now, and Chatman is serving a 27-year federal prison sentence after pleading guilty to health care fraud and money laundering, but that's little comfort to Holley, who described her daughter's ordeal in an interview.

"I couldn't fix it. And as a parent, I wanted to fix it," she said, trying to contain her tears as she looked through her daughter's pictures and Mother's Day cards.

As drug addiction destroys families across America, "there's a need for a positive, vibrant recovery network to help people get off of opioids," said State Attorney Dave Aronberg, chief prosecutor in Palm Beach County. "You can't just arrest your way out of this problem."

But lately, sunny South Florida has become the focal point of rampant insurance fraud that relies on a lethal cycle of intentional failure, authorities say.

"The incentive is to keep them in this relapse system, this gravy train that doesn't end until the person leaves in a body bag or an ambulance," said Aronberg, whose opioid task force has made more than 30 fraud arrests. "There's no money in sobriety."

Overcoming substance abuse generally involves a treatment center, where urine tests are done, prescriptions dispensed and recovery group meetings held, and a "sober home," where recovering addicts live together to get group support.

It's a \$1 billion business in Palm Beach County alone, federal officials say.

Florida has the most sober homes per capita of any state, said David Sheridan, President of the National Alliance for Recovery Residences. Opioid treatment fraud has surfaced in California and Arizona, but Florida stands out, in part because so many people come for treatment.

Two people overdose on opioids every day in Palm Beach County, mainly from heroin laced with the synthetic drug fentanyl, investigators say. Statewide, deaths from this combination rose 75 percent in 2015 as more than 2,500 people died in Florida from opioid-related overdoses, according to the state medical

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examiner.

One operation alone — the Real Life Recovery Delray treatment center and the Halfway There Florida home — collected almost \$19 million by fraudulently billing insurance companies for \$58 million over four years, according to the FBI. That case has not yet gone to trial.

The FBI affidavit said the fraud included unnecessary or faked urinalysis samples, double-billing, and paying kickbacks to patients in the form of gift cards, trips to casinos and strip clubs, and free airline tickets. Other tactics included paying “patient brokers” to illegally direct addicts to particular facilities.

Chatman’s patients were given drugs to trigger a positive drug test so they could be considered in “re-lapse” when their insurance coverage was about to expire. Court documents say he induced some female patients into prostitution for free rent at his sober home, and confiscated car keys, cellphones and prescription medications.

“They don’t care if you die. They just want to keep swiping that insurance card so they can keep getting money out of you,” said Blake Oppenheimer of Louisville, Kentucky, who was ordered into treatment, and landed in a center that was shut down for fraud. “I felt like I was something in a store that was just trying to be sold over and over again.”

Fraudulent operators are exploiting a web of state and federal laws that make oversight difficult. Addicts are protected by the Americans With Disabilities Act and health privacy laws. With children up to age 26 now covered under their parents’ insurance, there’s more money to be made.

The Florida Legislature has imposed tougher penalties for patient brokering and new limits on deceptive marketing techniques. Delray Beach and Boynton Beach approved new rules for group homes, requiring them to be accredited by a regulatory organization such as the Florida Association of Recovery Residences.

Oppenheimer, 23, is now at Schnellenberger’s Recovery Boot Camp, and hopes someday to return to college to study neuroscience.

“This is like the last house on the block for me,” he said. “This is my last opportunity, and I’ve got to use it.”

Associated Press reporter Joshua Replogle contributed to this report.

Follow Curt Anderson on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/Miamicurt>

Asian markets mostly higher as Jackson Hole in focus

By **YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets were mostly higher on Thursday as investors brushed off worries about the U.S. political uncertainty while waiting for the upcoming speeches by the world’s top central bankers in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan’s Nikkei 225 slipped 0.1 percent to 19,408.80 but South Korea’s Kospi rose 0.4 percent to 2,375.74. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index advanced 0.5 percent to 27,538.84 and Shanghai Composite Index was flat at 3,288.24. Australia’s S&P ASX 200 added 0.3 percent to 5,751.80.

FED WATCH: Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and other central bankers will assess the global economy at this week’s annual conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Yellen and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi are due to speak on Friday. Analysts foresee no major policy changes but a surprise announcement cannot be ruled out. The Federal Reserve is raising interest rates and is preparing to pare back the \$4.5 trillion it holds on its balance sheet.

US POLITICS WATCH: In a speech late Tuesday, President Donald Trump said that “if we have to close down our government, we’re building that wall” that he wants on the border between Mexico and the United States. He also said that he thinks the U.S. government will “end up probably terminating” the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico, though he also said that he has yet to make up his mind. The latest remarks by the president came as the concern is growing whether the government can push through pro-business policies.

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ANALYST'S TAKE: "President Trump's threat to shut down the U.S. government unless Congress agrees to fund the building of a wall on the Mexican border rattled investor nerves overnight," said Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at CMC Markets. "An absence of macro data and calm currency markets indicate company profit results will once again dominate trading."

WALL STREET: U.S. stock markets finished lower on Wednesday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 0.3 percent to 2,444.04. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 0.4 percent to 21,812.09 and the Nasdaq composite lost 0.3 percent to 6,278.41. The Russell 2000 index of small-cap stocks fell 0.1 percent to 1,369.74.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude oil fell 6 cents to \$48.35 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose 58 cents to settle at \$48.41 per barrel on Wednesday. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 2 cents to 52.55 per barrel in London. On Wednesday, it rose 70 cents to \$52.57 per barrel.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 109.22 Japanese yen from 109.04 yen. The euro slipped to \$1.1801 from \$1.1810.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Aug. 24, the 236th day of 2017. There are 129 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 24, 1992, Hurricane Andrew smashed into Florida, causing \$30 billion in damage; 43 U.S. deaths were blamed on the storm.

On this date:

In A.D. 79, long-dormant Mount Vesuvius erupted, burying the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in volcanic ash; an estimated 20,000 people died.

In 1572, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of French Protestants at the hands of Catholics began in Paris.

In 1814, during the War of 1812, British forces invaded Washington, D.C., setting fire to the Capitol (which was still under construction) and the White House, as well as other public buildings.

In 1912, Congress passed a measure creating the Alaska Territory. Congress approved legislation establishing Parcel Post delivery by the U.S. Post Office Department, slated to begin on January 1, 1913.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart embarked on a 19-hour flight from Los Angeles to Newark, New Jersey, making her the first woman to fly solo, non-stop, from coast to coast.

In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty came into force.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Communist Control Act, outlawing the Communist Party in the United States.

In 1967, a group of demonstrators led by Abbie Hoffman caused a disruption at the New York Stock Exchange by tossing dollar bills onto the trading floor. American industrialist Henry J. Kaiser, 85, died in Honolulu.

In 1970, an explosives-laden van left by anti-war extremists blew up outside the University of Wisconsin's Sterling Hall in Madison, killing 33-year-old researcher Robert Fassnacht.

In 1981, Mark David Chapman was sentenced in New York to 20 years to life in prison for murdering John Lennon. (Chapman remains imprisoned.)

In 1989, Baseball Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti (juh-MAH'-tee) banned Pete Rose from the game for betting on his own team, the Cincinnati Reds.

In 2006, the International Astronomical Union declared that Pluto was no longer a full-fledged planet, demoting it to the status of a "dwarf planet."

Ten years ago: A judge in Inverness, Florida, sentenced John Evander Couey to death for kidnapping 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford, raping her and burying her alive. (Couey died of natural causes in 2009.)

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James Ford Seale, a reputed Ku Klux Klansman, was sentenced to three life terms for his role in the 1964 abduction and murder of two black teenagers in southwestern Mississippi. (Seale died in 2011.) Major wildfires broke out in Greece, burning half a million acres and claiming 65 lives in 11 days.

Five years ago: A suit-clad gunman opened fire outside New York's Empire State Building, killing a former co-worker before being gunned down by police. A Norwegian court found Anders Behring Breivik guilty of terrorism and premeditated murder for twin attacks on July 22, 2011 that killed 77 people; he received a 21-year prison sentence that can be extended as long as he is considered dangerous to society. The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency wiped out 14 years of Lance Armstrong's cycling career — including his record seven Tour de France titles — and barred him for life from the sport after concluding he'd used banned substances.

One year ago: A 6.2 magnitude earthquake reduced three central Italian towns to rubble and killed nearly 300 people. Astronaut Jeffrey Williams, commander of the International Space Station, marked a U.S. recording-breaking 521st day in orbit, a number accumulated over four flights (upon his return to earth 13 days later, Williams had logged a grand total of 534 days in space).

Today's Birthdays: Composer-musician Mason Williams is 79. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marshall Thompson (The Chi-Lites) is 75. Rock musician Ken Hensley is 72. Actress Anne Archer is 70. Actor Joe Regalbutto is 68. Actor Kevin Dunn is 62. Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee is 62. Actor-writer Stephen Fry is 60. Actor Steve Guttenberg is 59. Baseball Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr. is 57. Actor Jared Harris is 56. Talk show host Craig Kilborn is 55. CBS News correspondent Major Garrett is 55. Rock singer John Bush is 54. Actress Marlee Matlin is 52. Basketball Hall of Famer Reggie Miller is 52. Broadcast journalist David Gregory is 47. Country singer Kristyn Osborn (SHeDaisy) is 47. Movie director Ava DuVernay is 45. Actor-comedian Dave Chappelle is 44. Actor James D'Arcy is 44. Actor Carmine Giovinazzo is 44. Actor Alex O'Loughlin is 41. Actress Beth Riesgraf is 39. Actor Chad Michael Murray is 36. Christian rock musician Jeffrey Gilbert (Kutless) is 34. Singer Mika is 34. Actor Blake Berris is 33. Actor Rupert Grint ("Harry Potter" films) is 29.

Thought for Today: "Life begins when a person first realizes how soon it will end." — Marcelene Cox, American writer.