

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Aug. 25, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 056 ~ 1 of 65

## Fri., Aug. 25, 2017

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### 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.

### 26

1 p.m.: Boys soccer at Vermillion

3 p.m.: Girls soccer at Vermillion

5:30 p.m.: Heaven Bound Ministries worship in Pierpont

**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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## JOHNSON AGENCY

Real Estate & Insurance

Jay Johnson, Broker

[www.johnsonagencygroton.com](http://www.johnsonagencygroton.com)

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"I TRAVEL NOT TO GO ANYWHERE, BUT TO GO. I TRAVEL FOR TRAVEL'S SAKE. THE GREAT AFFAIR IS TO MOVE."

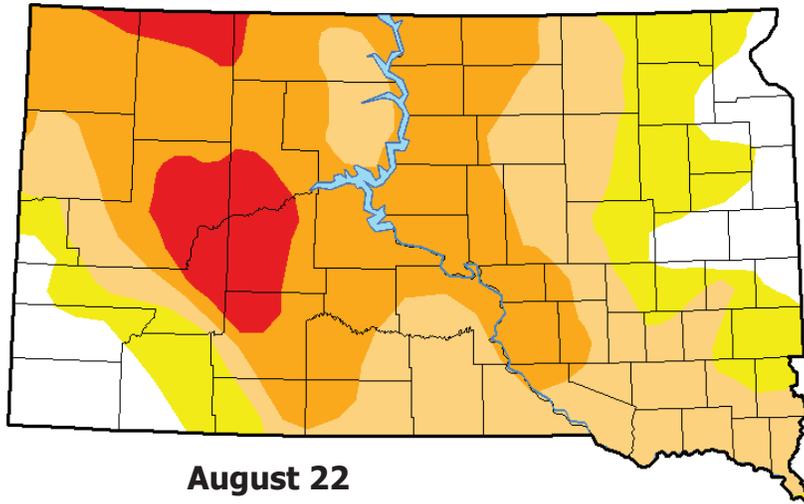
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-Robert Louis Stevenson

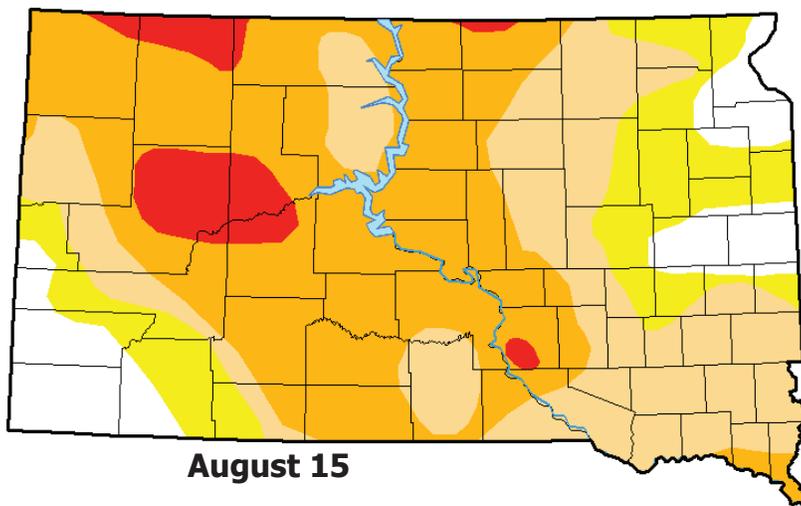
Chicken Soup  
for the Soul.  
@ChickenSoupSoul

## Drought Monitor

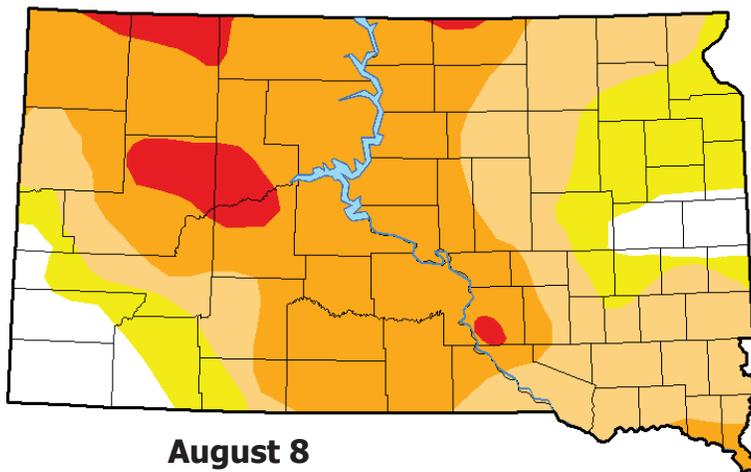
Precipitation was above normal for much of the Dakotas and Nebraska during the week. Rainfall totals exceeded 5 inches in eastern Nebraska and the eastern Dakotas received 3-5 inches. The precipitation helped ease some of the drought conditions that have persisted in the region for several months. Despite the recent rains, significant long-term dryness still existed so drought conditions continued for much of the region. In North Dakota, it was reported that some ranchers are resorting to drilling new wells as the previously established wells have dried up. In South Dakota, reported impacts include: dry dams or unusable water, lack of well water, failed hay crops, and wildfire danger. In Nebraska, it was reported that crops are beginning to stress due to the lack of rain.



August 22



August 15



August 8

## Death Notice:

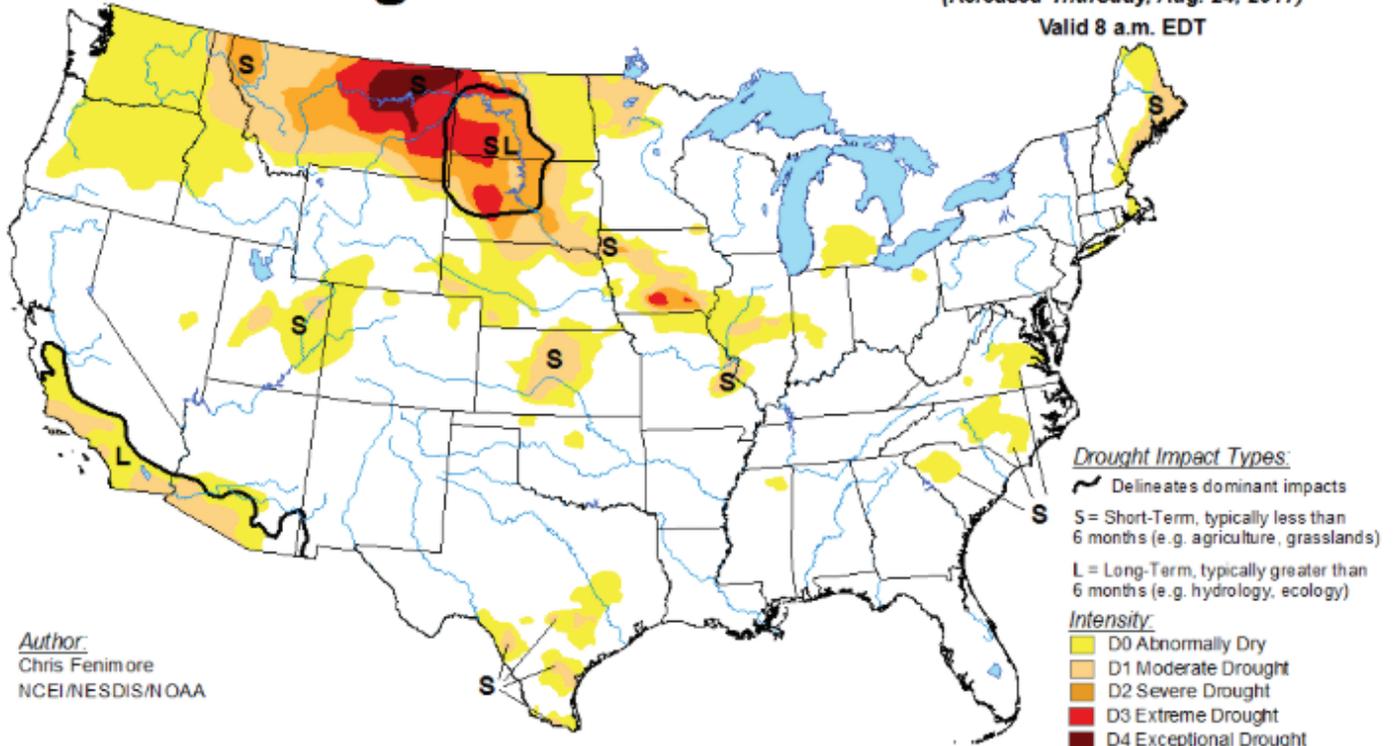
### Janice Taylor

Janice Taylor, 82, of Conde passed away Thursday, August 24, 2017 at Aberdeen Health and Rehab. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

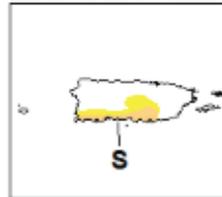
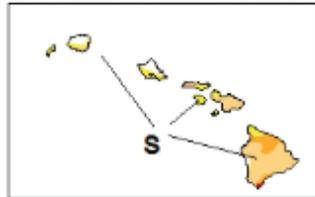
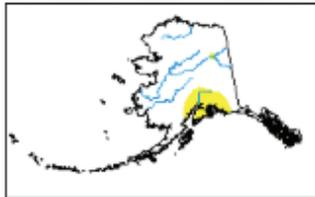
nm / nrmie

## U.S. Drought Monitor

August 22, 2017  
(Released Thursday, Aug. 24, 2017)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Author:  
Chris Fenimore  
NCEI/NESDIS/NOAA



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

## SD37 Project Update

Work is moving right along on the SD37 project. The signal lights were put up on Wednesday, but it will be up to three weeks before they are operational. The new entrance into the north substation will be done soon and work has begun on the street lighting. More sidewalk and curb will be poured in the next day or two.

The cross-over on Third Avenue has been moved back to Fifth Avenue. Construction will soon begin on Phase 6 which is from Railroad Avenue to Aspen Avenue on SD37. During that construction time, there will be one lane of traffic with flaggers during the day and both lanes opened up at night.

## Netters open season with 3-0 win over Deuel

Groton Area's volleyball team opened the 2017 season with a clean sweep over Deuel, winning all seven games. The C team won, 25-10 and 25-5, the junior varsity won, 25-11 and 25-4, and the varsity team won, 25-8, 25-16 and 25-12.

Coach Chelsea Hanson said she is looking for an exciting year for the Tiger team. She said that Groton should be a contender this year for the North-



**Payton Maine goes for the dig as she led all players with 12 digs on the night.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

east Conference title. The Tigers return a number of starters from last year and the experience showed Thursday night in Groton's win over Deuel.

The match was held in the Groton Area Arena and was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Hanlon Brothers, James Valley Seed - Doug Jorgensen, Grain Solutions LLC - Jesse Zak, Groton Ford, Blocker Construction, Erickson Insurance, Bahr Spray Foam & Construction, Allied Climate Professionals - Kevin Nehls, Olson Development, John Sieh Agency.

In serving, Groton Area was 70 of 74 with 14 ace serves. Miranda Hanson was 19 of 20 with four ace serves and Eliza Wanner was 17 of 17 with four ace serves. Deuel had two ace serves, one each by Sarah Ronne and Kendra Damm.

Groton Area was 69 of 82 in attacks with 35 kills. Gia Gengerke was 13 of 16 with 10 kills and Jennie Doeden was 20 of 27 with nine kills. Deuel had 13 kills with Jaydyn TeGantvoort having eight and Saycia Sime three.

Groton was 78 of 78 in sets with 30 assists. Miranda Hanson was 73 of 73 in sets with 25 assists. Deuel was led by Mackenzie Kasten with four assists and Sarah Ronne with three.

Groton had more digs than Deuel, 47-21. Leaders for Groton Area were Payton Maine with 12 and Eliza Wanner with 11 while Deuel was led by Jaydyn TeGantvoort with 10 and Kendra Damm with five.

Groton had three blocks with Taylor Holm having one solo and one assist, Gia Gengerke had one solo and Jessica Bjerke having one assist. Deuel's Saycia Sime had two blocks.

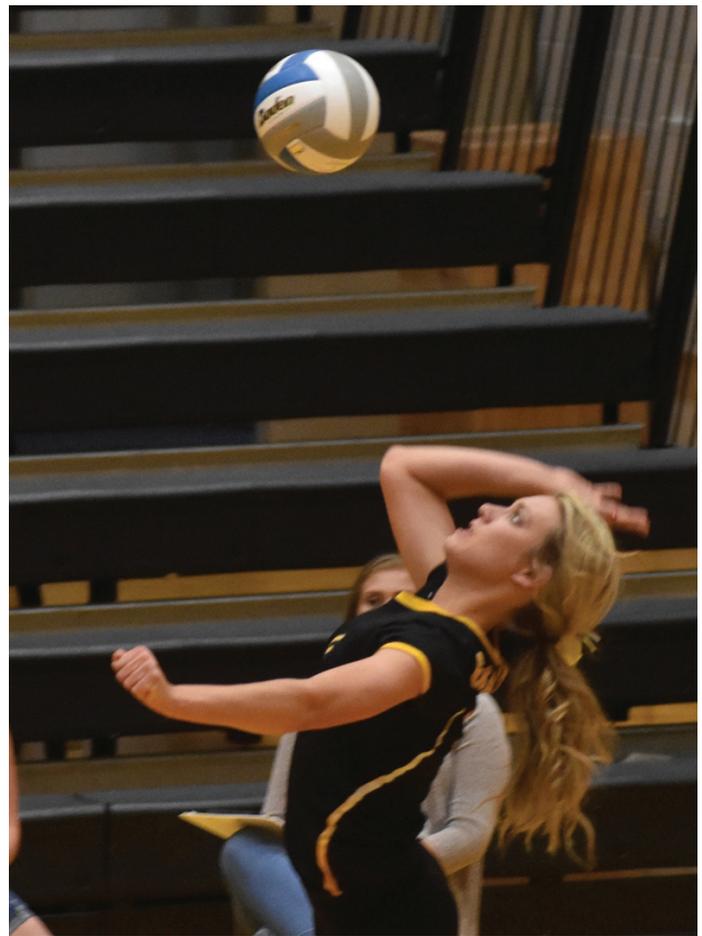
Groton Area will travel to Ipswich on Tuesday and to Redfield next Thursday.

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**Miranda Hanson had 73 of Groton's 78 sets with 25 assists.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



**Gia Gengerke led all players with 10 kills.** (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

## 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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Top photo features Jennie Doeden and the bottom photo features Eliza Wanner.

(Photos by Jeslyn Kosel)



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")**



## Guthmiller places ninth at NEC Golf

Cade Guthmiller placed ninth at the Northeast Conference golf meet held Thursday in Redfield. Guthmiller shot a 43 in both the front and back nine. Hunter Kassube shot a 53 in the front nine and a 51 in the back nine for a total score of 104 and Lucas Simon shot a 55 in the front nine and a 49 in the back back side for a total score of 104.

Sisseton won the team title with 307 points followed by Roncalli with 314, Milbank with 370 and Redfield-Doland with 411.

## Youth Rodeo Action Planned for State Fair

Huron, SD – The seventh annual South Dakota Timed Event Championship (SDTEC) sponsored in part by Panhandle Slim, Double D Western, Producers Hybrids and Iverson Featherlite will be held Saturday, Sept. 2, and Sunday, Sept. 3, in Huron at the South Dakota State Fair.

The area's elite youth rodeo contestants will compete in six timed events, including tie-down calf roping, barrel racing, team roping, goat tying, breakaway roping and steer wrestling. Any rodeo youth from across the country, ages 14 – 19, are eligible to compete.

"We've been nothing but impressed by the quality of competition and the level of fan support," said Jason Edleman with SDTEC. "This is a tremendous opportunity to share our state's official sports event with those at the state's largest venue, the State Fair."

The overall winner not only receives the coveted title of South Dakota Timed Event Champion but the use of a horse trailer sponsored in part by Iverson Featherlite. Event winners receive trophy saddles.

The SDTEC continues to bring in contestants, their families and fans to the State Fair, making it one of the premier events for spectators at the fair.

"This is the only youth rodeo at the State Fair and the only one of its type in the Midwest," says Steven Birkholtz with SDTEC. "Contestants and fans travel from across the state and the nation to be at the South Dakota Timed Event Championship. Since its inception we have had contestants from Minnesota, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and Texas compete"

Last year's Timed Event Champion was Grady Egly of Oelrichs, S.D.

For more information, visit [www.sdtimedeventchampionships.webs.com](http://www.sdtimedeventchampionships.webs.com) or like SD Timed Event Championship on Facebook.

The 2017 South Dakota State Fair will run from Thursday, Aug. 31, through Monday, Sept. 4. Channel Seeds preview night will be Wednesday, Aug. 30. This year's theme is "Seriously Twisted Fun." For more information on State Fair events, contact the Fair office at 800-529-0900, visit <http://www.sdstatefair.com> or find them on Facebook or Twitter.

Agriculture is a major contributor to South Dakota's economy, generating \$25.6 billion in annual economic activity and employing over 115,000 South Dakotans. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture's mission is to promote, protect and preserve South Dakota agriculture for today and tomorrow. Visit SDDA online at <http://www.sdda.sd.gov> or find us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



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## Tree Stands Allowed on Public Land August 25

PIERRE, S.D. -- Archery hunters can start setting up tree stands on public lands beginning Friday, Aug. 25. Permanent tree stands and climbing devices are prohibited on lands owned, leased or controlled by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) as well as the Fort Meade Recreation Area. Portable tree stands and climbing devices that do not use nails, wire or bolts for attachment are allowed from Aug. 25 through Feb. 15, 2018.

The name and address or the year and current big game tag number of the owner or user must be on the stand and legible from the ground. Tree stands may be stabilized with one screw-in T.

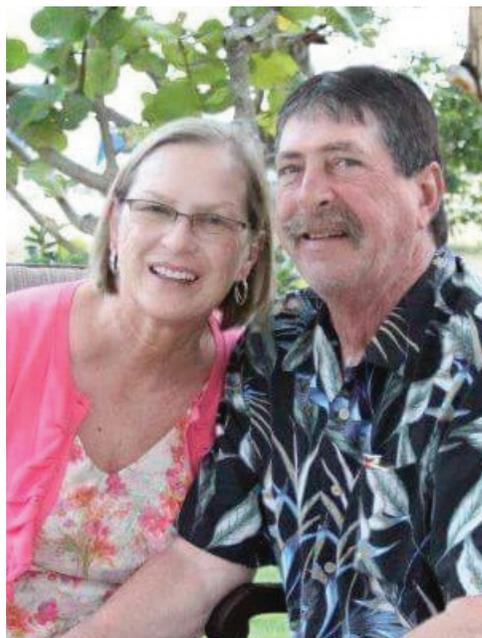
Tree stand hunters are urged to use safety harnesses whenever hunting from an elevated blind. Every year, South Dakota hunters are injured from tree stand falls, and falls from tree stands are the number one deer hunting injury in the United States.

## SDVMA Holds 126th Annual Meeting

The South Dakota Veterinary Medical Association held its 126th Annual Meeting at the Ramkota Convention Center in Sioux Falls August 13th – 16th. The meeting included continuing education opportunities for over 200 veterinarians and veterinary technicians, recognized outstanding accomplishments by professionals in the veterinary fields, and included the annual membership meeting.

The meeting featured Dr. Jason Sweitzer, DVM, a nationally known speaker on mental health and suicide prevention in the veterinary profession. Companion animal topics included anesthesia and soft tissue surgery. Large animal topics included calf scours treatment and management, sheep and goat parasitology and medicine, and equine emergency and field procedures, as well as updates from SDSU's Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Lab.

The following board members were elected for the coming year: Dr. Michelle Jensen, Harrisburg, president; Dr. Mark Braunschmidt, Brandon, president-elect; Dr. Ethan Andress, Hettinger, ND, vice president; **Dr. Chanda Nilsson, Groton, secretary-treasurer**; Dr. Angela Anderson, Sioux Falls, District 1 representative; Dr. Heidi Sorensen, Watertown, District 2 representative; Dr. Chris Chase, Brookings, AVMA delegate; and Dr. Cindy Franklin, Yankton, AVMA alternate delegate. Other board members are Dr. Sandra Wahlert, Hot Springs, District 3 representative; and Dr. Travis White, Sioux Center, IA, past president.



*You're Invited!*

**Bill & Eileen  
Schuelke  
50th Anniversary  
Celebration  
Open House**

**Saturday,  
August 26, 2017  
1:00 – 4:00 pm  
Olive Grove  
Golf Course Clubhouse  
Groton, SD**

*Children are welcome!*

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## Don't miss the Fun at the State Fair FFA Ag Adventure Center!

The SD FFA building at the SD State Fair is always a fun place for kids to hang out and see animals. What is new this year? A whole new set of fun activities at the FFA Ag Adventure Center, and it's free for fair attendees!

"The FFA Ag Adventure Center will bring agriculture to life for visitors. Many consumers have never been to a farm and certainly don't live on a farm. This space brings the farm to them." explains Taylor Krause, FFA Ag Adventure Center superintendent. The SD FFA, SD FFA Foundation and passionate ag industry representatives have been working on the project and leading a capital campaign the past two years. "Unfortunately we live in a world that knows very little about where their food comes from. SD FFA members, advisors and farmers will be in the FFA Ag Adventure Center showcasing modern agriculture practices, communicating commitment to natural resources, and demonstrating wholesome, safe food production, regionally and across the world. It will bring hands on experiences to everyone." The FFA Ag Adventure Center is dedicated to empowering consumers to value today's agriculture. Make this a "must see" location on your trip to the fair!

The reinvented FFA Ag Adventure Center has areas dedicated to pigs, beef cattle, dairy cattle, chickens, soil & range conservation, wheat, soybeans, and corn. No matter what time you visit, there is sure to be an exciting event. At any given moment, you may witness a live sow birth, bottle feed a calf, or watch baby chickens hatch. You can also observe a dairy cow being milked on the front lawn by a robotic milker. There are many new interactive activities including a Cargill Technology Center, grocery store food cases, and feeding bottle calves, chickens and pigs. We will also have "theme days", with additional theme activities planned each day: Thursday- East River Electric Day; Friday - Dairy Day; Saturday - Farm Bureau Women's Day; and Sunday - Sanford Science Day. Visit often!

"We are thrilled about all the renovations, new activities and programs happening in the FFA Ag Adventure Center," said State Fair Manager Peggy Besch. "The SD FFA Foundation and members of FFA have been working all year on this project and it will be wonderful to see it come to fruition. It will definitely provide an entirely new educational and fun experience for fairgoers. We are grateful for the investment from FFA and all of the contributors who recognize the value of the fair and the positive impact it has on the lives of people who attend." For more information on the FFA Ag Adventure Center or to support the capital campaign to complete this project, contact SD FFA Foundation director, Gerri Ann Eide, gerri@sdfafoundation.org or 605-765-4865.

The FFA Ag Adventure Center is located in the heart of the SD State Fairgrounds, just off of Livestock Ave, west of the Open Class Beef Complex. Come on in and share fun facts about corn and soybeans. It will offer a fun, educational experience to daycares, teenagers, and adults alike. The SD State Fair runs from Thursday, August 31st through Labor Day, September 4th. The FFA Ag Adventure Center will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The SD FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. To accomplish its mission, FFA develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.

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

It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM

 **Groton Area Tigers**

**VS**

 **THUNDER**

**Ellendale/Edgley/Kulm**

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

## VETERANS DAY AT THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FAIR

PIERRE, S.D. – At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017, as Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair, calling on all South Dakotans to honor those men and women who fought bravely for our freedoms.

At 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 31, the South Dakota State Fair will host a "Salute to Veterans" program. The program will be held on the Northwest Energy Freedom Stage (Recreation Avenue). Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be the keynote speaker.

"Whether in peace or at war, the important role of our veterans cannot be denied. They are men and women from all walks of life that have one thing in common --- a love for this great country," said Secretary Zimmerman. "No matter where or when veterans have served, they've always served with distinction and their service to this country is a bridge that was built on courage, dedication and patriotism."

Representatives from the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Service Organizations, the Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home, as well as county veterans service officers will have informational booths in the Veterans Building on Flag Avenue. Veterans are encouraged to stop by the booth and learn more about benefits and programs available to them as well.

To show appreciation for their service, the Fair will give all veterans and active military personnel free gate admission on Aug 31.

## Peterson is new middle/high school special ed teacher

Todd Peterson will be a new special education teacher at the Groton Area Middle and High School. Peterson is a 1982 Aberdeen Roncalli High School graduate and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Northern State University in 1987, a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary special education with a middle school endorsement from Northern State in 1995.

Peterson has taught at a number of schools from Alaska to Hawaii. They were O.M. Tiffany Elementary, Aberdeen; Pukalani Elementary in Maui, Hawaii; Waiahee Elementary in Maui, Hawaii; Kealakehe Middle and High School in Kailua Kona, Hawaii; Emmonak K-12 in Emmonak, Alaska; Horace Mann Elementary in Sioux Falls; and Whittier Middle School in Sioux Falls.

Peterson's motivation for becoming a teacher is wanting the students to succeed. He said, "I honestly can't

say that there was any one person who inspired me to become a teacher. I think just knowing that by guiding young people down a positive path in order to help them reach their potential would give me the fulfillment I was looking for is what pushed me toward teaching." He went on to say, "My primary reason for going into teaching was that I wanted to have an impact in the lives of others through my career."

In all of the places that Peterson has taught, he said, "The driving force my moving to Groton was a strong desire to have my child grow up with the values and work ethic found in a small rural mid western community. I also wanted his grandparents to be able to spend time with him, they live in Aberdeen."

His wife, Cassandra, is also a special education teacher and he said, "She currently has taken time away from the classroom to perform the most important job in the house taking care of our 4 year old son Trace."

Peterson's hobbies include fishing and spending time with his family.



**Pictured are Cassandra, Trace and Todd Peterson.**

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## Today in Weather History

August 25, 1990: Severe thunderstorms moved across central and northeastern South Dakota produce golf ball size hail and wind gusts exceeding 60 mph. One storm produced a weak F0 tornado between Bowdle and Roscoe in Edmunds County.

1814: In the early afternoon, a strong tornado struck northwest Washington D.C. and downtown. The severe tornadic storm arrived the day after the British Troops had set fire to the Capitol, the White House, and other public buildings. The storm's rains would douse those flames. The tornado did major structural damage to the residential section of the city. More British soldiers were killed by the tornado's flying debris than by the guns of the American resistance. The storm blew off roofs and carried them high up into the air, knocked down chimneys and fences and damaged numerous homes. Some homes were destroyed. It lifted two pieces of cannon and deposited them several yards away. At least 30 Americans were killed or injured in the heavily damaged buildings and an unknown number of British were killed and injured.

1885 - A severe hurricane struck South Carolina causing 1.3 million dollars damage at Charleston. (David Ludlum)

1940 - New Jersey experienced its coldest August morning of record, with lows of 32 degrees at Layton and Charlotteburg. (The Weather Channel)

1948: One of the worst tornadoes to strike New Zealand occurred at Hamilton on this day. This estimated F2tornado killed three people, injuring dozens, and destroying or severely damaging almost 150 houses and 50 business premises in Hamilton and Franklin. Click [HERE](#) for tornado damage picture from the Hamilton Heritage.

1987 - Morning thunderstorms produced heavy rain in eastern Nebraska and southwestern Iowa. Stanton IA reported 10.50 inches of rain. Water was reported up to the handle of automobiles west of Greenwood NE. Rainfall totals for a two day period ranged from 7 to 14 inches across southwestern Iowa. Crop damage was in the millions for both states. Subsequent flooding of streams in Iowa the last week of August caused millions of dollars damage to crops, as some streams crested ten feet above flood stage. (Storm Data)

1988 - Seven cities in California reported record high temperatures for the date, including Sacramento with an afternoon reading of 104 degrees. Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in Arizona. Chino Valley was drenched with 2.50 inches of rain in just thirty minutes washing out a couple of streets in town. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Morning thunderstorms drenched Spencer, IN, with 4.10 inches of rain in three hours causing extensive street flooding. Evening thunderstorms in eastern Kansas produced up to six inches of rain around Emporia, and four inches of rain in just forty-five minutes near Parsons, and also produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Lake Melvern. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - Katrina becomes a hurricane just before landfall in south Florida between Hallandale Beach and North Miami Beach. Maximum sustained winds at the time of landfall were near 80 mph. There were eleven fatalities in South Florida, including four by falling trees. More than 1.3 million customers lost electrical services, and preliminary insured loss estimates ranged from \$600 million to \$2 billion in the state of Florida (Associated Press).

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Mostly Cloudy	T-storms Likely	Slight Chance T-storms	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 78 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 78 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 80 °F	Low: 51 °F	High: 81 °F

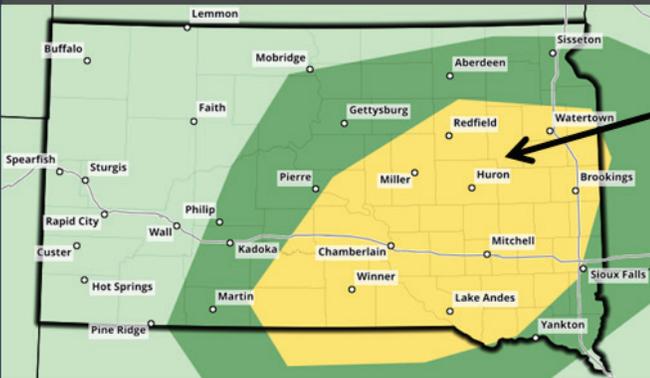


Today: 70s to mid 80s  
warmest over south central SD

chance of afternoon showers & storms

## Heavy Rain Tonight

**Severe Weather Outlook** (late this afternoon and tonight)



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Issued: 9/25/2017 5am Central

**Isolated intense storms possible**



**Wind: 60 mph+  
wind damage**

**Hail: 1", isolated 2"**

www.weather.gov/abr

Published on: 08/25/2017 at 5:15AM

A slow moving area of low pressure will slide east across the region tonight. Showers and thunderstorms are expected to develop by late afternoon. Some of these storms may produce severe weather, and pockets of heavy rain, especially across the southeastern half of South Dakota.

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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 79.2 F at 3:00 PM**

**Low Outside Temp: 58.2 F at 7:03 AM**

**High Gust: 22.0 Mph at 4:06 PM**

**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 101° in 1926**

**Record Low: 38° in 1896**

**Average High: 80°F**

**Average Low: 54°F**

**Average Precip in Aug: 1.96**

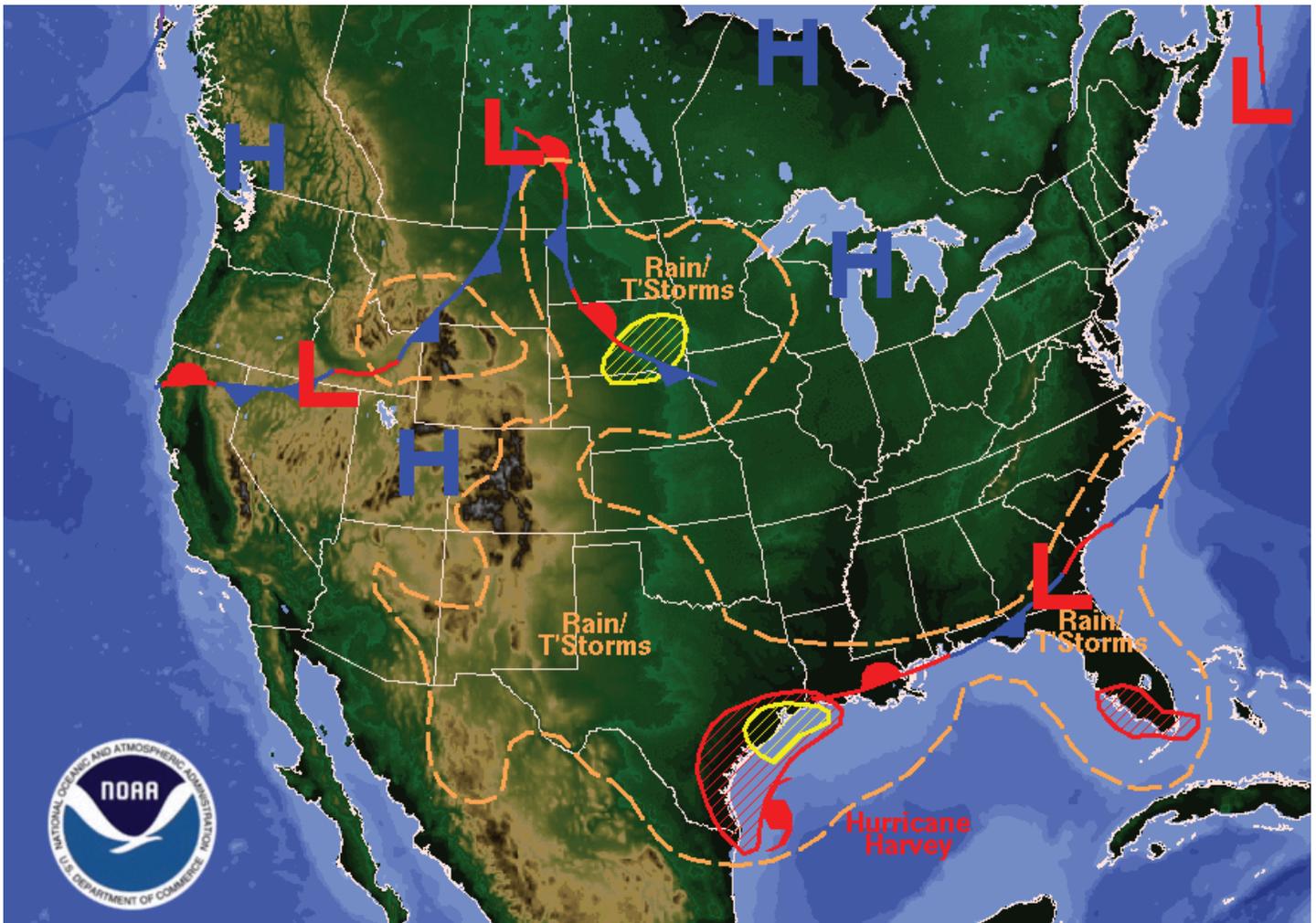
**Precip to date in Aug: 1.80**

**Average Precip to date: 15.82**

**Precip Year to Date: 9.15**

**Sunset Tonight: 8:23 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:48 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Aug 25, 2017, issued 4:52 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Santorelli with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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## FALLING IS NOT FAILING

Watching a child take his or her first steps is a marvelous sight to behold. Pictures are taken, memories created and lives changed.

Recently a mother and father brought their infant son to the Garden for his first steps. After finding the "perfect" location for this historic event, the father gently placed his hands under the child's arms. As the child looked down at his tiny feet and with uncertainty began to "toddle" forward, the father relaxed his grip. Slowly, as the child began to walk on his own, he removed his hands completely. After a few staggering and uncertain steps the little fellow began to carry his weight on his own two feet. The parents were thrilled!

Suddenly, the child lost his balance and fell to the ground. Rushing to pick him up the father smiled, hugged him and encouraged him to "try again." There was no scolding or rejection for falling down. Rather, the father lifted him, dried his tears and helped him to begin again.

How like our Heavenly Father. If the Lord is delighted in the way we walk – even though we fall – He will come to our rescue, lift us up and "make our steps firm." As long as we do our part to walk in His ways, He will do His part to give us the stability to "move on."

When we fall, He does not consider us a failure. He lovingly lifts us up, tenderly dries our tears and then carefully watches over us as we struggle to walk in His ways. He will never leave us nor forsake us if we fall.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your care, concern and compassion that always supports and sustains us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 37:23, 24 The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.

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## News from the Associated Press

### Driver crashes into Pierre business, causes \$100K in damage

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Pierre driver who authorities say was under the influence of both alcohol and drugs caused an estimated \$100,000 in damage when he crashed into a business.

Police say the van driven by the 52-year-old man got stuck under the porch of the Hitching Horse Inn shortly before 11 a.m. Wednesday, trapping him for a time.

He was arrested on numerous alcohol, drug and driving offenses.

### Thursday's Scores

By The Associated Press

#### PREP FOOTBALL

Upton/Sundance, Wyo. 42, Lead-Deadwood 6

### Thursday's Scores

By The Associated Press

#### Volleyball

Avon def. Bon Homme, 25-22, 25-14, 25-23

Baltic def. Colman-Egan, 25-13, 25-14, 25-19

Beresford def. Garretson, 25-11, 25-15, 25-17

Clark/Willow Lake def. Sisseton, 25-12, 25-9, 25-17

Dakota Valley def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 24-26, 25-15, 25-20, 20-25, 15-12

Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-21, 25-10, 25-15

Deubrook def. Arlington, 22-25, 25-20, 25-16, 25-22

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Sioux City, West, Iowa, 25-15, 25-10, 25-8

Florence/Henry def. Great Plains Lutheran, 24-26, 25-23, 17-25, 25-14, 19-17

Groton Area def. Deuel, 25-8, 25-16, 25-12

Hamlin def. Britton-Hecla, 25-14, 25-12, 25-22

Harding County def. Timber Lake, 3-2

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 28-26, 25-20, 25-23

Howard def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-15, 25-13, 25-11

Irene-Wakonda def. Scotland, 25-21, 25-21, 25-17

Kadoka Area def. Little Wound, 25-12, 25-13, 25-6

Kimball/White Lake def. Gregory, 25-16, 17-25, 25-22, 25-19

Madison def. Flandreau, 25-7, 25-11, 25-7

Miller def. Winner, 21-25, 25-19, 25-16, 25-20

Mitchell def. Brandon Valley, 25-13, 25-14, 25-22

Northwestern def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-15, 25-6, 25-11

Parkston def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-11, 25-16, 25-19

Philip def. Dupree, 25-15, 25-19, 25-15

Redfield/Doland def. Webster, 22-25, 18-25, 25-15, 25-21, 15-11

Sioux Falls Christian def. Tea Area, 25-7, 25-7, 25-9

St. Thomas More def. Douglas, 25-17, 25-17, 25-15

Sturgis Brown def. Hot Springs, 25-16, 25-15, 16-25, 25-22

Wagner def. Vermillion, 25-17, 25-20, 25-17

Warner def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-14, 25-20, 25-12

Watertown def. Brookings, 25-19, 25-23, 25-18

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Waverly-South Shore def. Wilmot, 25-23, 23-25, 23-25, 25-23, 15-12

Hanson Tournament

Consolation Semifinal

Ethan def. Platte-Geddes, 30-28, 25-18

Gayville-Volin def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 2-1

Seventh Place

Freeman Academy/Marion def. Platte-Geddes, 25-18, 25-13

Fifth Place

Ethan def. Gayville-Volin, 25-12, 25-4

Championship

Hanson def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-9, 25-12

## South Dakota farmers face destroyed crops from herbicide

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers are reporting crops devastated by herbicide drift.

Farmers believe the herbicide to be dicamba, which is used for weed control. Three dicamba products — Engenia, FeXapan and Xtendimax — are registered for use on dicamba-tolerant soybean plants in the state.

State Department of Agriculture official Tom Gere said more than 150 farmers have reported suspected damage from the herbicide within the first week of the department opening surveys to farmers. The department was still accepting reports Tuesday, the Argus Leader reported .

“We’ve had like four come in since lunch time,” Gere said Tuesday. “It’s significant.”

Gere said the department doesn’t know yet whether it would ban the Monsanto herbicides or discontinue their registrations for 2018. Dicamba has been banned in Arkansas and reviewed by U.S. regulators over concerns it can drift or vaporize and move.

Weeds field specialist Gared Shaffer said farmers have been using dicamba since the 1950s, but Monsanto started recently selling soybean varieties genetically altered to withstand dicamba.

The herbicide has been known to cause cupping and veining symptoms in plants that are intolerant of it. Soybean farmer Al Krutsinger said his plants’ leaves have cupped and wrinkled. He’s reported it to the state, saying he’s worried what this could mean for his harvest.

“It’s hard to make a living already and if they won’t take your beans, I just can’t imagine,” he said. “Nobody’s talking about it. Nobody’s even brought it up.”

Farmers nationwide have said the herbicide’s directions are too complicated to understand, and they end up with dicamba drift because of faulty applications and failure to abide by buffer zones.

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

## Franken, Klobuchar deny blocking Trump’s federal nomination

By KYLE POTTER, Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar said Thursday she’s still considering the nomination of a state Supreme Court Justice to a federal post, echoing comments from fellow Democratic Sen. Al Franken as Republicans accuse the pair of blocking a conservative appointment.

President Donald Trump nominated Minnesota Supreme Court Justice David Stras to a vacancy on the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which serves Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa and Arkansas. Elevated to the state’s highest court in 2010 by then- Gov. Tim Pawlenty, Stras was also on Trump’s shortlist for the U.S. Supreme Court.

But more than three months later, Stras’ nomination is still in limbo. Klobuchar and Franken haven’t given Stras their sign-off through so-called blue slips — a privilege given to home state senators before judicial nominations progress for final Senate confirmation.

The delay has caused outrage among Republicans in both Minnesota and in Washington, D.C., where Trump has accused Democrats in the Senate of blocking his nominations for judgeships and other top

positions. Stras was one of 10 judicial nominations made at the time.

By contrast, when then-Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Wilhelmina Wright was nominated to a federal judgeship by President Barack Obama in 2015, Klobuchar returned her blue slip the same day she received it. Franken returned his one day after getting it.

But Klobuchar denied blocking Stras' appointment during an interview on Minnesota Public Radio News on Thursday, saying she's met with Stras once already and plans to meet with him again before deciding whether to allow the nomination to proceed.

A spokesman for Franken said this week that the Democratic senator is still reviewing Stras' "lengthy record" before giving his approval, faulting the White House for putting Stras' name forward without consulting his office about possible candidates.

"Rather than discuss how senators traditionally approached circuit court vacancies or talk about a range of potential candidates, the White House made clear its intention to nominate Justice Stras from the outset," spokesman Michael Dale-Stein said.

Stras is a former law professor who clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Stras declined to comment on his pending nomination through a Supreme Court spokesman on Thursday.

Klobuchar signaled greater concern about the state's vacant U.S. Attorney position. The state's former U.S. Attorney Andrew Luger, an appointee of former President Barack Obama, resigned in March at Trump's request. No permanent replacement has surfaced.

"We need a name from the White House," Klobuchar said. "If it goes on another 2 months, I'll say I'm mad."

## Groups sued by pipeline company decry attack on free speech

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Environmental groups being sued by the developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline say the lawsuit is an attack on free speech and an effort to punish supporters of American Indian tribes that oppose the project over fears of environmental harm.

Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners on Tuesday filed a lawsuit against Greenpeace, BankTrack and Earth First, alleging they disseminated false and misleading information about the project, interfered with its construction and damaged the company's reputation and finances through illegal acts.

The lawsuit filed in federal court in North Dakota cites "a pattern of criminal activity and a campaign of misinformation for purposes of increasing donations and advancing their political or business agendas," and seeks damages that could approach \$1 billion.

BankTrack called the allegations "outrageous" and maintained it did nothing wrong in informing the public and commercial banks about the potential impact of the \$3.8 billion pipeline to move North Dakota oil to a distribution point in Illinois. It also denied it benefited financially from its efforts.

"BankTrack considers the lawsuit an attempt ... to silence civil society organizations, and to curb their crucial role in helping to foster business conduct globally that protects the environment, recognizes the rights and interests of all stakeholders, and respects human rights," the group said in a statement.

Greenpeace attorney Tom Wetterer said the lawsuit was meritless, "harassment by corporate bullies" and an effort "to silence free speech."

Michael Bowe, one of the company's attorneys, countered that the response by Greenpeace "was not to defend the truth of its challenged statements, but to attack the lawyers who exposed those statements as false."

"Our laws hold accountable those who intentionally make demonstrably false statements, and there is no special exception for Greenpeace," Bowe said.

Earth First did not reply to Associated Press requests for comment.

Earthjustice, whose attorneys are representing the Standing Rock Sioux tribe in a federal lawsuit that aims to shut down the pipeline, isn't a defendant in the lawsuit but is mentioned throughout as being part of a vast network of groups and people who allegedly conspired against the pipeline.

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Earthjustice President Trip Van Noppen said the lawsuit is “nothing more than an attack on all those who stood up for the tribe in this historic fight, packaged as a legal claim.”

ETP said the company “has an obligation to its shareholders, partners, stakeholders and all those negatively impacted by the violence and destruction intentionally incited by the defendants to file this lawsuit.”

The 1,200-mile (1,930-kilometer) pipeline began operating June 1, after months of delays caused by legal wrangling and on-the-ground protests. Police made 761 arrests in North Dakota between August and February.

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

## South Dakota drought conditions relatively stable over week

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Drought conditions in South Dakota have remained relatively stable over the past week.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor map shows 72 percent of the state in some form of drought, down slightly from 76 percent last week.

Areas of severe or extreme drought total 43 percent, down from 47 percent. The pockets of extreme drought in the west went from 6 percent to 7 percent.

The Drought Monitor says precipitation was above normal for much of the Dakotas over the week, but significant long-term dryness still exists. Lack of well water is an issue in some areas of South Dakota.

## Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

### Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Aug. 24

#### Allied Art Fund shouldn't be cut by city

Among the cuts in Mayor Allender's proposed \$164 million budget is \$27,000 for Allied Arts Fund Community Investments, which last year received \$102,000 from the city.

As with the mayor's desire to eliminate all funding, or \$40,000, for the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, this will hurt an organization that receives a relatively small amount of money that ripples through Rapid City in ways that make a real difference in people's lives.

The Allied Arts Fund distributes grants to groups that include the Black Hills Chamber Music Society, Black Hills Dance Theatre, Black Hills Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Music Festival of the Black Hills, Rapid City Concert Association, Dakota Artists Guild and the Black Hills Pow Wow Association — all organizations that contribute to the culture and quality of life here while surviving on tight budgets.

GiGi Lage, executive director of the Allied Arts Fund, uses city funds to help generate contributions from foundations and businesses. She told the Journal that for every dollar it receives from the city, there is a return of \$4.85. In 2016, area nonprofits received \$141,087 from the arts fund.

Lage said if the city council approves the budget cut, it could harm a number of organizations and initiatives like the artist's guild educational programs offered to fifth-graders.

One complaint you hear about Rapid City is there is too little for youth to do, which is often a recipe for trouble. Youths who have too much free time on their hands are more likely to turn to drugs and alcohol, which can lead to a lifetime of problems and place a greater demand on law enforcement, the courts and the jail, which already consume a significant portion of Rapid City's and Pennington County's budgets.

In a proposal that calls for a \$4 million increase in spending and four or five new full-time positions that will pay far more than \$27,000, it is difficult to understand why the mayor doesn't place more value on an organization that does so much for the community with so little money.

The Allied Art Fund has demonstrated it is a responsible steward of the city's appropriation and that it can leverage the money to help people of all ages who create art, enjoy the arts or want to learn about the arts.

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The \$27,000 the mayor wants to cut in this case won't be needed to balance a growing budget. Cutting the money, however, would send the message that the arts are becoming less important and that would be a step backward for our community.

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## **American News, Aberdeen, Aug. 24** **The fair's good, and good to improve**

The Brown County Fair is an annual thing of wonder.

Think about it. The fairgrounds on the northwest edge of Aberdeen becomes its own fully functioning city. It has its own food places, entertainment, transportation systems, governing body, security, waste management and living accommodations for 716 campers and others such as carnival workers.

There is a lot of good that happens there in a week's time. Plus, the fair has a solid reputation, and adds to Aberdeen's resume as a place where good things happen.

Of course, if you are not moving forward, you are falling behind. Therefore, fair improvements must continue.

Here are our 2017 fair "thumbs up, thumbs down" — some good things mixed in with needed improvements:

**Thumbs up:** To all the volunteers, thank you. They are the backbone of the fair, folks such as local resident Stu Swenson, whose family is on its third generation of helping at the fair.

**Thumbs down:** When you leave hundreds of people to park on their own in make-shift parking lots, there are going to be problems. People are going to take down barriers to park where they are not supposed to park as well as box other people in with careless attitudes. Maybe the return of parking volunteers is needed, especially on the nights of concerts.

**Thumbs up:** In 2016, heavy rains made a mess of parking. Work was done to improve parking areas, and it made a big difference this year, even though there are still improvements to be made.

**Thumbs down:** Ticketing issues were again a problem early on at the Monday rodeo. Resolved maybe, but come on. How many years in a row are we going to have problems with ticketing? Why can't this be resolved? This has to be job No. 1 for 2018.

**Thumbs up:** There was a nice mix of fair food vendors to please the palates of many. Keep the favorites and mix in new vendors and new options.

**Thumbs down:** If you are going to have reserved seating in the grandstands, the row numbers on the steps need to be able to be seen. They need to be repainted.

**Thumbs up:** The pet ban was a good idea that seemed to work for the most part.

**Thumbs down:** The fair needs to figure out free internet access for guests. A good Wi-Fi connection is almost like a water hookup in this day and age. The fair, active on social media, should encourage patrons to promote the fair with the convenience of free Wi-Fi.

**Thumbs up:** Most of the entertainment seemed top notch. A rising star band such as Old Dominion seemed to impress concert-goers, and their numbers certainly impressed band members, who said as much during their energetic performance.

**Thumbs down:** It seems like more and more ATVs are being allowed on the fairgrounds. Golf carts, although still a threat to walkers, are needed to help transport those who need help walking as well as to carry heavy loads. But ATVs that have the ability to go very fast should be very limited in their use to only those who need to get somewhere fast, such as law enforcement.

**Thumbs up:** We like to see our local, state and federal office-holders visit the fair and meet-and-greet with constituents of all political leanings.

**Thumbs down:** Underage drinking continues to be an issue at the fair, and continues to be a concern to us all.

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## Madison Daily Leader, Madison, Aug. 21

### Generous gifts are a new boost to DSU rocket

When describing Dakota State University to others away from Madison, I often describe it as a "rocket ship." The university's leadership, faculty, program designs and strategic focus all contribute to its performance.

So when news broke of a major announcement at Sunday's dedication of the Beacom Institute of Technology, we were curious about another great thing about to happen to a great institution.

The announcement was made: a \$30 million gift from Miles Beacom and T. Denny Sanford, \$10 million in funding from the South Dakota Future Fund, and \$20 million in federal funding — still being finalized — announced by U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds.

The announcement focused on the big picture, not the details. The Beacom/Sanford gift is by far the largest gift in Dakota State history. It follows the \$5 million gift from Beacom and Sanford to help build the Beacom Institute. The gift and the other funding will be used in the field of cybersecurity, the fastest-growing field of study at DSU.

We didn't learn Sunday about how that money would be spent, but we're confident it will be spent wisely. Sanford has a history of tying his donations to lofty goals, such as finding a cure for Type 1 diabetes or discovering the origins of matter through the Sanford Homestake Laboratory in Lead.

First, we expect bricks and mortar. Today's highest level of research in cybersecurity can't be done in a facility without top-rate security over public internet connections. We expect the best-designed facility for that work to be located right here in Madison.

Second, we expect recruitment of the best researchers, who may or not be teaching faculty. While there will be some opportunities for students to conduct research, the highest-level research will be conducted by the best, most experienced people in the field.

Third, we could expect scholarships for students to pursue cybersecurity as a career path, with a commitment to practicing in the field for a certain number of years, in line with the Cyber Corp Scholarships already in place.

To continue our rocket ship analogy, it feels as though another booster rocket is being placed on a ship that's already taking off. It also fits with Sunday's celebration theme of "Rising."

We offer heartfelt thanks to Miles Beacom, Denny Sanford, Gov. Dennis Daugaard and Sen. Mike Rounds. But equal recognition and thanks go to DSU President Dr. Jose-Marie Griffiths, the leadership team and all others at the university. The current success and vision for the future are what attracted the donors and funding, and they will be the characteristics that will lead to success.

## South Dakota Hutterite colonies submit feedlot applications

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Two Hutterite colonies in northeastern South Dakota have submitted multi-animal feedlot applications that are pending approval by the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The American News reports that Camrose Colony is pursuing a new turkey and swine feeding operation by Doland that was first put forward over a decade ago. The new application is a revised version of the first one.

Neal Konda of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources says the facility could have as many as 1,400 head of swine and 80,000 turkeys.

Newport Colony is planning to expand an animal feeding operation near Britton. It would allow for adding as many as 5,000 chickens and two dairy cows.

The existing operation has a maximum of 12,256 head of swine, four dairy cows, 2,000 chickens and 1,000 ducks.

Mitchell man sentenced for embezzling from restaurant

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A Mitchell man has been ordered to pay nearly \$10,000 in restitution, fines and fees for stealing money from Whiskey Creek while he was an employee of the restaurant.

The Daily Republic reports that 25-year-old Eric Anderson Jr. was accused of embezzling between November 2015 and January 2016.

He pleaded guilty Tuesday to felony grand theft. He was given a suspended five-year prison sentence, and ordered to pay \$8,600 in restitution and \$1,100 in fines and court fees. He'll be on probation for four years.

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

## Thai military ruler says authorities searching for ex-PM

By KAWEEWIT KAEWJINDA and TODD PITMAN, Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Thailand's military ruler said authorities are searching for Yingluck Shinawatra, the prime minister whose government he ousted in a coup three years ago, after she failed to appear for a verdict Friday in a criminal case that could send her to prison for 10 years.

Yingluck's whereabouts were not immediately known, and her absence fueled speculation that she had left the country.

An official of Yingluck's Pheu Thai party who is close to the Shinawatra family told The Associated Press she was no longer in Thailand. The official gave no other details, and declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the subject.

Yingluck, who became Thailand's first female prime minister when her party swept elections in 2011, is accused of negligence in overseeing a money-losing rice subsidy program. She pleaded innocent and decried the charges as politically motivated.

A verdict had been expected Friday, as thousands of Yingluck supporters gathered outside the court and thousands of police stood guard. But Yingluck never appeared, and a judge read out a statement saying her lawyers had informed the court she could not attend because of an earache.

The judge said the court did not believe the excuse, however, because no official medical verification was provided. He said a warrant would be issued for her arrest, and announced the trial would be postponed until Sept. 27.

Norrawit Larlaeng, Yingluck's lawyer, confirmed a warrant had been issued, but said he had no details on her whereabouts. "I was told this morning that she was ill, that she had vertigo, that she felt dizzy, so I requested the postponement ... that's all I have to say."

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the military chief who engineered the 2014 overthrow of Yingluck's government, also said he did not know where she was, and the government was "looking for her."

"If she's not guilty she should stay and fight the case," Prayuth said. "If she's not here, what does that tell you? Will she still say that she didn't get justice?"

Defense Minister Prawit Wongsuwan said security forces had not allowed Yingluck to leave and are checking possible routes she may have used if she did. He said security officials monitoring Yingluck had not seen her leave her Bangkok home in the last two days.

The trial is the latest chapter in a decadelong struggle by the nation's elite minority to crush the powerful political machine founded by Yingluck's brother, Thaksin Shinawatra, who was toppled in a 2006 coup. Thaksin, who has lived in Dubai since fleeing a corruption conviction he says was politically motivated, has studiously avoided commenting on his sister's case, apparently to avoid imperiling it.

Thaksin is a highly polarizing figure, and his overthrow triggered years of upheaval and division that has pitted a poor, rural majority in the north that supports the Shinawatras against royalists, the military and their urban backers.

When Yingluck's government proposed an amnesty in 2013 that could have absolved her brother and allowed him to return without being arrested, street protests erupted that eventually led to her govern-

ment's demise in the 2014 coup.

The junta that seized control of Thailand has since suppressed dissent and banned political gatherings of more than five people. The long-awaited decision on Yingluck's fate has rekindled tensions in the divided nation, but the military remains firmly in charge.

Fearing potential unrest, authorities tried to deter people from turning out Friday by threatening legal action against anyone planning to help transport Yingluck supporters. Yingluck posted a message on her Facebook page urging followers to stay away, saying she worried about their safety.

Thousands of people turned up outside the Bangkok courthouse anyway, along with thousands of police who erected barricades around the court.

Prawit Pongkunnut, a 55-year-old rice farmer from the northeastern city of Nakhon Ratchasima, said he came with 10 other farmers to show solidarity with Yingluck.

"We're here to give her moral support because she truly cared and helped us out," Prawit said.

The rice subsidies, promised to farmers during the 2011 election, helped Yingluck's party ascend to power. Critics say they were effectively a means of vote-buying, while Yingluck supporters welcomed them.

The rice subsidy plan Yingluck oversaw paid farmers about 50 percent more than they would have made on the world market. The hope was to drive up prices by stockpiling the grain, but other Asian producers filled the void instead, knocking Thailand from its perch as the world's leading rice exporter.

The current government, which is still trying to sell off the rice stockpiles, says Yingluck's administration lost as much as \$17 billion because it couldn't export at a price commensurate with what it had paid farmers. If convicted, Yingluck has the right to appeal.

In a separate administrative ruling that froze her bank accounts, Yingluck was held responsible for about \$1 billion of those losses — an astounding personal penalty that prosecutors argued Yingluck deserved because she ignored warnings of corruption but continued the program anyway.

On Friday, the Supreme Court handed down several other verdicts. Boonsong Teriyapirom, a former commerce minister in Yingluck's administration, was sentenced to 42 years in prison for helping secure a fraudulent rice contract. His deputy, Poom Sarapo, was sentenced to 36 years in prison for his role in the case.

AP journalists Jerry Harmer, Grant Peck and Kankanit Wiriyasajja contributed to this report.

## South Korean court sentences Samsung heir to 5 years prison

By YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A South Korean court sentenced the billionaire chief of Samsung to five years in prison for crimes that helped oust the country's president, a stunning downfall that could freeze up decision making at a global electronics powerhouse long run like a monarchy.

The Seoul Central District Court said Friday that Lee Jae-yong, 49, was guilty of offering bribes to Park Geun-hye when she was South Korea's president, and to Park's close friend, to get government support for efforts to cement his control over the Samsung empire. The revelations that led to Lee's arrest in February fed public outrage which contributed to Park's removal.

A panel of three judges also found Lee guilty of embezzling Samsung funds, hiding assets overseas, concealing profit from criminal acts and perjury. Prosecutors had sought a 12-year prison term.

The court said Lee and Samsung executives who advised him caused "a big negative effect" to South Korean society and its economy.

"The essence of the case is unethical collusion between political power and capital," the court said in a statement. It led the public to fundamentally question the public nature of the president's work and to have "mistrust in the morality of the Samsung group," it said.

The families who control South Korea's big conglomerates, known as chaebol, were lionized a generation ago for helping to turn South Korea into a manufacturing powerhouse but public tolerance for double standards that put them above the law has been rapidly diminishing.

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Analysts said the verdict will not immediately have an impact on Samsung's business operations, which are overseen by three chief executives. The company has successfully weathered past crises that include two recalls of Galaxy Note 7 smartphones prone to catch fire and Lee's arrest. It is set to report its highest-ever earnings this year.

But long-term business decisions, such as finding future growth areas and identifying companies for acquisitions, may have to be put on hold.

"South Korea's chaebol system is similar to monarchy," said Park Sang-in, a professor at Seoul National University. "In the monarchy system, you need a king."

There is also potential for a destabilizing family feud over inheritance when the elder Lee dies.

"Samsung was in the middle of change and that has stopped," said Park Ju-gun, chief executive at CEO Score, a private corporate watchdog. "That is a big risk."

Business lobby groups, while refraining from openly criticizing the verdict, expressed concerns that Lee's absence from the helm of Samsung would take a toll on the South Korean economy. Samsung accounts for about one fifth of the nation's exports.

"Samsung Electronics represents South Korea as a global company so we are deeply worried about the fallout from his long absence," said a Korea Employers Federation spokesman. "It will be a disaster not just to an individual company but to the nation's economy."

The verdict, however, could be good news for shareholders at South Korean companies who have complained about weak corporate governance that let founding families wield outsized influence and enjoy emperor-like authority even with minority ownership.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in's office, in a rare commentary on a court ruling, welcomed the ruling as a step toward rooting out corruption.

"We hope that it would pave the way to end persistent government-business collusion, which has hampered society from moving forward," its spokesman Yoon Young Chan said.

Lee was accused of offering \$38 million in bribes to four entities controlled by Choi Soon-sil, a long-time friend of Park, in exchange for government help with a merger that strengthened Lee's control over Samsung after his father suffered a heart attack in 2014.

Samsung has not denied transferring corporate funds. But Lee, vice chairman at Samsung Electronics and the Samsung founder's grandson, claimed innocence during the court hearing. He said he was unaware of the foundations or the donations, which were overseen by other executives.

The closely-watched verdict is the latest convulsion in a political scandal that prompted millions of South Koreans to protest last fall, culminating in the ouster and arrest of Park as well as the arrests of Choi and Lee. Park, who was embroiled in a tumultuous series of scandals, was removed from office in March. She and Choi are both currently on trial.

Judges pointed to an unusual arrangement in which Samsung bankrolled equestrian training for Choi's daughter as proof of Lee's knowledge of what was transpiring.

They said Lee was aware that Park wanted Samsung to sponsor the equestrian training.

Samsung secretly provided a huge amount of money to Choi's Germany-based company that paid for the training and the exorbitantly priced foreign horses worth 3.6 billion won (\$3.2 million) were part of the bribes, the verdict said. The attempts to hide Samsung's involvement also constituted crimes, it said.

In total, Samsung paid \$7.9 million in bribes to the German company and a winter sports center, the judges said.

The verdict also dealt a blow to Samsung's publicly stated position that recent business dealings or restructuring efforts have nothing to do with the succession of corporate leadership to Lee from his father. Instead, Samsung has insisted that a merger of two Samsung companies at the center of the scandal was about creating business benefits. Judges rejected Samsung's argument.

"He was set to benefit most from the succession work, which was part of the favors sought from the president," Kim Jin-dong, the head judge, said.

Other former Samsung executives charged with Lee were also found guilty.

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Choi Gee-sung, a mentor of Lee, and Chang Choong-ki were sentenced to four years in prison. Two other former executives received suspended prison terms.

The ruling in Lee's case can be appealed twice. Samsung will appeal the ruling immediately, Song Woo-cheol, a Samsung attorney, told reporters.

## 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. OMINOUS CATEGORY 2 STORM SPINS TOWARD US MAINLAND

Harvey intensifies and steers for the Texas coast in what could be the fiercest hurricane to hit the U.S. in almost a dozen years.

### 2. WHOSE LEGAL TROUBLES ARE EXPANDING

Authorities in Thailand's are searching for former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra after she fails to show up to hear the verdict in her criminal trial with speculation rife she may have fled the country.

### 3. SAMSUNG HEIR GUILTY OF BRIBERY

A stunning fall from grace as a South Korean court sentences the billionaire grandson of Samsung's founder to five years in prison for bribery and other crimes.

### 4. WHY CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS' LEGACY IS BEING WEIGHED

Soul-searching in the U.S. over whether to take down monuments to the Confederacy extends to other historical figures accused of such things as brutality toward Native Americans.

### 5. SOME NOT GUNG-HO TO CLAIM MORAL HIGH GROUND

The Republican National Committee is headed toward adoption of a resolution condemning white supremacists — but not all the party faithful welcome the move.

### 6. LOTTERY WINNER WANTS TO 'SIT BACK AND RELAX'

A 53-year-old Massachusetts hospital worker steps forward to claim the biggest undivided lottery jackpot in U.S. history — a \$758.7 million Powerball prize.

### 7. US NAVY FACING POSSIBLE THREAT FROM ABOVE

The presence of Iranian drones high above the Persian Gulf but relatively close to Navy aircraft and ships is worrying U.S. commanders.

### 8. AMAZON FIRES SALVO IN GROCERY WARS

The company says it will cut prices on bananas, eggs, salmon, beef and more when it completes its \$13.7B takeover of Whole Foods.

### 9. WHICH IMAGES ARE GETTING NEW LIFE

Thirty-six years after Diana married Prince Charles, the AP has restored original footage from the wedding and is making it available to the public on YouTube.

### 10. FIGHT COULD BE BLOODBATH — FOR BOOKMAKERS

Based on the betting so far, Las Vegas bookies could lose millions of dollars if the underdog McGregor stops Mayweather early in Saturday's fight.

## Texas prepares as Harvey strengthens to Category 2 storm

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Harvey continued to intensify as it steered for the Texas coast, with the forecasters saying early Friday that it had strengthened to a Category 2 storm.

The hurricane with the potential for up to 3 feet of rain, 125 mph winds and 12-foot storm surges could be the fiercest such storm to hit the United States in almost a dozen years. Forecasters labeled Harvey a "life-threatening storm" that posed a "grave risk" as millions of people braced for a prolonged battering that could swamp dozens of counties more than 100 miles inland.

Landfall was predicted for late Friday or early Saturday between Port O'Connor and Matagorda Bay, a 30-mile (48-kilometer) stretch of coastline about 70 miles (110 kilometers) northeast of Corpus Christi.

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Harvey grew quickly Thursday from a tropical depression into a Category 1 hurricane. Early Friday, the National Hurricane Center reported it had become a Category 2 hurricane. Fueled by warm Gulf of Mexico waters, it was projected to become a major Category 3 hurricane.

The last storm of that category to hit the U.S. was Hurricane Wilma in October 2005 in Florida.

Superstorm Sandy, which pummeled New York and New Jersey in 2012, never had the high winds and had lost tropical status by the time it struck. But it was devastating without formally being called a major hurricane.

"We're forecasting continuing intensification right up until landfall," National Hurricane Center spokesman Dennis Feltgen said.

All seven Texas counties on the coast from Corpus Christi to the western end of Galveston Island have ordered mandatory evacuations of tens of thousands of residents from all low-lying areas. In four of those counties, officials ordered their entire county evacuated and warned those who stayed behind that no one could be guaranteed rescue.

Voluntary evacuations have been urged for Corpus Christi itself and for the Bolivar Peninsula, a sand spit near Galveston where many homes were washed away by the storm surge of Hurricane Ike in 2008.

Texas officials expressed concern that not as many people are evacuating compared with previous storms.

"A lot of people are taking this storm for granted thinking it may not pose much of a danger to them," Gov. Greg Abbott told Houston television station KPRC. "Please heed warnings and evacuate as soon as possible."

Abbott has activated about 700 members of the state National Guard ahead of Hurricane Harvey making landfall.

As of 4 a.m. CDT Friday, Harvey was centered about 180 miles (290 kilometers) southeast of Corpus Christi and was moving northwest near 9 mph (15 kph) with maximum sustained winds near 105 mph (165 kph).

Harvey's effect would be broad. The hurricane center said storm surges as much as 3 feet could be expected as far north as Morgan City, Louisiana, some 400 miles away from the anticipated landfall.

And once it comes ashore, the storm is expected to stall, dumping copious amounts of rain for days in areas like flood-prone Houston, the nation's fourth most-populous city, and San Antonio.

State transportation officials were considering when to turn all evacuation routes from coastal areas into one-way traffic arteries headed inland. John Barton, a former deputy executive director of the Texas Department of Transportation, predicted state officials will do this before the storm hits, but said timing and determining where to use it are the key factors. Storms change paths and if contraflow starts too early, supplies such as extra gasoline needed to support impacted areas can't get in, he said.

This would be the first hurricane for Bethany Martinez, who is pregnant and has two boys, 5 and 6, who were with grandparents in Austin. Asked about her demeanor, Martinez replied: "Afraid."

She's a front desk clerk at a Holiday Inn Express at Port Aransas. "We are closing down," Martinez said of the 74-room hotel a couple of blocks from the Gulf of Mexico. It was about two-thirds full before all guests were cleared out.

Driscoll Children's Hospital in Corpus Christi was airlifting at least 10 critically ill, mostly premature infants from its neonatal intensive care unit to Cook Children's Hospital in Fort Worth. They were expected to arrive by early Friday. Cook transport director Debbie Boudreaux said the infants were being moved inland for fear that power outages might disable their ventilators.

Harvey would be the first significant hurricane to hit Texas since Ike in September 2008 brought winds of 110 mph (177 kph) to the Galveston and Houston areas and inflicted \$22 billion in damage. It would be the first big storm along the middle Texas coast since Hurricane Claudette in 2003 caused \$180 million in damage.

It's taking aim at the same vicinity as Hurricane Carla, the largest Texas hurricane on record. Carla came ashore in 1961 with wind gusts estimated at 175 mph and inflicted more than \$300 million in damage. The storm killed 34 people and forced about 250,000 people to evacuate.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said President Donald Trump was "briefed and will

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continue to be updated as the storm progresses.”

In Houston, one of the nation’s most flood-prone cities, Bill Pennington prepared his one-story home for what he expected would be its third invasion of floodwaters in as many years and the fifth since 1983.

“We know how to handle it. We’ll handle it again,” Pennington said he told his nervous 9-year-old son.

Dozens were in lines Thursday at a Corpus Christi Sam’s Club, at home improvement stores and supermarkets. Alex Garcia bought bottled water, bread and other basics in the Houston suburb of Sugar Land after dropping his daughter off at college. He said grocery items were likely more available in Houston than back home in Corpus Christi, where Garcia, a beer distributor salesman, said stores were “crazy.”

“We’ll be selling lots of beer,” he laughed.

In Galveston, where a 1900 hurricane went down as the worst in U.S. history, City Manager Brian Maxwell said he was anticipating street flooding and higher-than-normal tides.

“Obviously being on an island, everybody around here is kind of used to it.”

Associated Press writers Frank Bajak in Houston; Seth Borenstein and Catherine Lucey in Washington; Diana Heidgerd, Jamie Stengle and David Warren in Dallas; and videographer John Mone in Sugar Land contributed to this report.

## **In the Persian Gulf, Iran’s drones pose rising threat to US**

**By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press**

ABOARD THE USS NIMITZ (AP) — High above the Persian Gulf, an Iranian drone crosses the path of American fighter jets lining up to land on the USS Nimitz.

The drone buzzes across the sky at least a mile above the massive aircraft carrier and is spotted by the fighters. It is unarmed.

But for the senior Navy commanders on the ship, the presence of the enemy drone so close is worrying. Their biggest fear is the surveillance aircraft will start carrying weapons, posing a more direct threat to U.S. vessels transiting one of the world’s most significant strategic and economic international waterways.

“It’s just a matter of time before we see that,” said Navy Rear Adm. Bill Byrne, commander of the carrier strike group that includes the Nimitz. He said the Iranian drone activity has “generated a lot of discussion” and was becoming an increasingly pressing matter of concern.

If, at some point, Byrne believes a drone is threatening his ship, he and his staff would have to carefully proceed through the required responses — efforts at communication, sounding the horn, firing flares and warning shots, and flying a helicopter close to the unmanned vehicle. If all those efforts fail and he still perceives a threat, Byrne said it would be his duty, his “responsibility,” to shoot down the Iranian drone.

So far, it hasn’t come to that. But the drones have become an even more dangerous security risk as U.S. carriers in the Persian Gulf like the Nimitz play a key role in Iraq and Syria. Planes from these ships are regularly flying to each country to bomb Islamic State militants and other targets. From the Nimitz alone, U.S. fighter jets flew missions resulting in at least 350 bombs being dropped on IS militants just in the last month.

Iran has routinely challenged U.S. ships and aircraft across the Gulf, asserting at times that the entire waterway is its territory. Navy commanders say Iran’s unpredictable behavior is the biggest safety hazard.

“Iranians don’t always follow the rules,” Byrne said. “There is a well-established set of norms, standards and laws. They don’t tend to follow them.”

To counter the threat, Pentagon experts are searching for new ways to deter, defeat or disable the drones. According to Byrne and Cdr. Dave Kurtz, the Nimitz’s executive officer, Iranian drones fly over the carrier strike group almost daily.

They said the danger is that as the F/A-18 fighters return from their missions in Iraq and Syria, they circle overhead, lining up for their turn to land on the carrier. Even if the Iranian drones are only meant to annoy, their buzzing across the American flight paths risks an accident.

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Up in the carrier's control room, a book on Iranian naval and maritime forces sits above the radar screen. Commanders on the ship announce when a drone appears. Then, they go through a careful, planned response of attempted radio calls and warnings.

Gen. Joseph Votel, the top U.S. commander in the Middle East, visited the Nimitz on Thursday, also stopping on the nearby USS Vella Gulf, a guided missile cruiser. The drone, he said, also flew over that ship.

"The proliferation of drones is a real challenge," said Votel, who was finishing his 10-day trip to the Middle East and Afghanistan. "It's growing exponentially."

Speaking with traveling reporters, Votel said the Pentagon has sought to devise more high-tech ways to handle the drones through the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Organization, originally set up in 2006 to counter improvised explosive devices used by insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan to kill and maim American troops.

Much as it did with that decade-old roadside bomb battle, the organization now focuses on how to deal with Iran's drones, Votel said. He didn't provide details, but he acknowledged that U.S. cyber capabilities could be used to defeat a drone or the network controlling it.

The military is training troops on drone response, he said. But right now, said Byrne, they're still following their normal procedures. And he still hasn't been forced to shoot one down.

Byrne described how a helicopter from the Nimitz flew by the drone to ensure it wasn't weaponized. In the month the Nimitz has been in the Gulf, efforts to speak with the drone operators have been hit or miss, he said.

"Sometimes they answer, sometimes they don't," he said, echoing experiences American forces have had with small Iranian fast boats that pose a similar threat of coming too close by sea.

When the Iranians do answer, Byrne said, they often "challenge our assertion that they are flying into danger." The drones fly out of airfields up and down the Iranian coast, mainly watching U.S. ships and taking photos.

On Thursday, the Nimitz was about 40 miles from the Iranian coast, halfway between the Islamic Republic and Bahrain.

## RNC to vote on condemning, but some roll eyes

By THOMAS BEAUMONT, Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Still cleaning up after President Donald Trump's comments about a deadly protest in Virginia, the Republican National Committee is headed toward adoption of a resolution condemning white supremacists.

And while the rebuke of groups Trump waffled on is expected to pass overwhelmingly Friday, some attending the summer meeting of the party's most faithful are rolling their eyes at the move.

"It's amazing that we have been lured into this argument that we're not racists. It's absurd," said Colorado Republican Chairman Jeff Hays. "Why would we feel compelled to do that?"

The grumbling reflects a difference between some veteran Republicans concerned about the party's image in light of Trump's latest rhetorical thicket and newer, more ardently pro-Trump state Republican leaders.

"There's no debate. We're affirming we're the party of Lincoln," Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna Romney McDaniel said, dismissing complaints about the resolution. "We are showing the moral high ground by disavowing hate and violence."

Despite the resolution, there doesn't appear to be a softening of support for the president within the party's national organization.

Rather, what was to be a sleepy, pro-forma late summer gathering seemed to spark renewed backing for the president despite a series of recent setbacks: the GOP's stunning failure to repeal and replace "Obamacare"; the furious backlash over his comments about the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia; and the departure of crowd favorite Reince Priebus, the former RNC chairman, as Trump's chief of staff.

"The president was not wrong to point out what the media has failed to point out," that counter-protesters

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also "came for a battle" in Charlottesville, Pennsylvania Republican Chairman Val DiGiorgio said.

DiGiorgio was standing by the "many sides" comment Trump immediately made after the clash in Virginia, in which a car was driven into a crowd of counter-protesters, killing a woman. The president had been criticized harshly by both Republicans and Democrats because he didn't immediately denounce the white nationalist groups in Charlottesville.

Bill Palatucci, a RNC committeeman from New Jersey who sponsored the resolution, said it was important for the committee to formally denounce white supremacists. Palatucci said, "I think he got it wrong a week ago Tuesday, in regards to Charlottesville," when Trump said during a free-wheeling, defiant news conference that there were "very fine people on both sides" at the demonstration.

But even Palatucci, who was a devout supporter of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's 2016 presidential campaign, said, "I support the president's agenda." He cited deregulation measures Trump has signed and the president's plan, outlined Monday, to send additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan to revive the effort to root out terrorist cells.

The party's robust \$75 million in first-half 2017 fundraising — more than twice what Democrats raised in the first half of President Barack Obama's inaugural year in office — has also lifted spirits, as has improving economic confidence.

The consensus in Nashville is that the Republican-controlled Congress, not Trump, has let down the party.

"There is a level of frustration that Congress didn't repeal and replace Obamacare," Ohio Republican Party Chairwoman Jane Timken said. "They want the president's agenda passed. They blame Congress."

While Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have feuded before and since the failed health care vote in July, there was little talk in Nashville of dumping the veteran Kentucky senator as leader.

"I'm not ready to abandon McConnell," Pennsylvania's DiGiorgio said. "But I would urge him to come together and get this done."

Trump has complained about McConnell, and other Republican senators who have criticized the president or opposed his efforts. He notably pointed to Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake, Arizona Republicans, during an angry speech to supporters in Phoenix Tuesday.

Trump's intraparty attacks have some GOP strategists worried that the fighting could harm Republicans' chances of holding the Senate in next year's midterm elections, though that would require Democrats to retain almost all of the 10 seats they occupy in states Trump won last year.

Chairwoman McDaniel said Trump's taunts are the outspoken New Yorker's way of urging action.

"The president wants to see his agenda passed," McDaniel said. "He's channeling what I'm hearing from the American people, which is, 'We gave you the White House. You have the Senate. You have the House. Why aren't you getting these things done?'"

## 2nd victim found from USS McCain crash; 8 still missing

SINGAPORE (AP) — A second victim of the collision between the USS John S. McCain and an oil tanker near Singapore was identified by the Navy on Friday.

The 7th Fleet said Navy and Marine Corps divers recovered and identified remains of 26-year-old Electronics Technician 3rd Class Dustin Louis Doyon on Thursday night. He is from Suffield, Connecticut.

More divers and equipment arrived overnight to continue the search inside flooded compartments of the ship for eight others still missing. The Navy had called off the search of the seas on Thursday.

Divers earlier recovered the remains of 22-year-old Electronics Technician 3rd Class Kenneth Aaron Smith from Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

The collision Monday ripped a gash in the McCain hull, flooding crew berths and machinery and communications rooms. The destroyer is now in port in Singapore.

The commander of the 7th Fleet was fired this week after four accidents this year raised questions about its operations. The firing of Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, a three-star admiral, was a rare dismissal of a high-ranking officer for operational reasons.

The Navy also 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.

## **Kushner's Mideast peace push met with Palestinian skepticism**

**By MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH, Associated Press**

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Presidential adviser Jared Kushner met with Israeli and Palestinian leaders on Thursday to try to jumpstart moribund peace talks, but after months without progress the Mideast envoy faces growing skepticism on the Palestinian side.

With no clear vision for peace outlined by the administration and domestic issues distracting President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, expectations for the new peace push are low.

The Palestinians initially welcomed Trump's election, but they have since grown impatient with what they say is a failure by the U.S. president to present a roadmap for peace. Specifically, they are seeking a halt to Israeli settlement construction on occupied lands, and an American commitment to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state as part of a peace deal with Israel.

"If the U.S. team doesn't bring answers to our questions this time, we are going to look into our options because the status quo is not working for our interests," said Ahmad Majdalani, an aide to Abbas.

It was not clear whether Kushner offered any clarity during his three-hour meeting with Abbas. Nabil Abu Rdeneh, Abbas' spokesman, called the meeting "positive," without discussing details, and said the Palestinian leader had reiterated his desire for an American commitment to a Palestinian state.

The White House later said both sides agreed the U.S.-talks were the best step forward. "The Palestinian Authority and the U.S. delegation had a productive meeting focused on how to begin substantive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Both sides agreed to continue with the U.S.-led conversations as the best way to reach a comprehensive peace deal," the statement said.

Abbas said ahead of the meeting the Palestinian side appreciated Trump's efforts. "We know things are difficult and complicated, but nothing is impossible with good intentions," he said.

Trump took office with hopes of striking what he calls the "ultimate deal" between Israelis and Palestinians — a goal that has eluded administrations before his dogged by the same intractable issues. But he has since given few details of his vision for peace, managing to frustrate both sides.

Kushner, Trump's chief Middle East adviser and his son-in-law, met Netanyahu in Tel Aviv earlier Thursday before traveling to Ramallah later in the day to meet with Abbas. Kushner is expected to return to the U.S. on Friday.

Before his meeting with Kushner, Netanyahu spoke optimistically of the road ahead.

"We have a lot of things to talk about, how to advance peace, stability and security in our region, prosperity too," Netanyahu said, standing alongside Kushner. "I think that all of them are within our reach."

A statement from Netanyahu's office after the meeting said the talks were "substantive" but gave no details on progress or further steps.

On the campaign trail, Trump took a staunchly pro-Israel line, energizing Netanyahu and hard-liners in his coalition. He promised to relocate the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem — a move welcomed by Israel and opposed by the Palestinians — and refused to endorse the Palestinian goal of independence. His platform played down the significance of Israeli settlements and he surrounded himself with advisers with deep ties to the settlement movement, including Kushner and the U.S. ambassador to Israel, David Friedman.

But since taking office, Trump decided not to move the embassy and has urged Israel to restrain settlement construction.

He has not come out in support of the two-state solution, a position backed by most of the international community and also his Republican and Democratic predecessors, indicating vaguely that he supports whichever solution the sides agree to.

Disappointed Palestinian officials privately gripe that Trump's team has begun to support Israeli positions

and ignore their concerns.

Further complicating any hope for progress are internal troubles for all three leaders. Trump's administration has become preoccupied with a series of domestic crises, most recently the fallout from the deadly racially charged violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, earlier this month.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, is facing a growing corruption investigation that could soon lead to an indictment against him. These legal troubles, along with Israeli concerns about a possible long-term Iranian presence in neighboring Syria, make it unlikely that he will agree to any major diplomatic initiative.

After years of on-and-off peace efforts that have yielded no progress, Abbas is deeply unpopular at home. He also is stuck in a bitter rivalry with the Islamic militant group Hamas, which seized the Gaza Strip from his forces a decade ago and is now pursuing a reconciliation deal with Mohammed Dahlan, a former Abbas ally who has turned into his political nemesis.

Since the collapse of U.S.-mediated peace talks three years ago, the sides have grown further apart and have been plagued by repeated rounds of violence, including a war between Israel and Hamas and recurring low-level violence sparked by tensions over a contested Jerusalem site holy to both Jews and Muslims.

Israel, meanwhile, has increasingly shifted its sights toward a regional deal with certain Arab countries, rather than one focusing solely on the Palestinians, an approach Trump has expressed support for.

"The time has come for a regional approach," Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely told Israel Radio. "That is the thinking guiding President Trump and the prime minister of Israel, and so our message to the Palestinians is that time is working against them."

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Associated Press writer Fares Akram in Gaza City, Gaza Strip, contributed to this report.

## **Chef slain at Charleston restaurant; suspect shot by police**

**By RUSS BYNUM, Associated Press**

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — A fired dishwasher shot and killed a chef and held a person hostage for about three hours before he was shot by police at a crowded restaurant in a tourist-heavy area of downtown Charleston on Thursday, authorities and one of the restaurant's owners said.

The hostage was freed unharmed, Mayor John Tecklenburg said. The shooting took place at Virginia's restaurant on the usually crowded King Street, a row of shops and nice dining that caters to both tourists and residents in South Carolina's largest and most historic city.

Tecklenburg quickly said the shooting was "the act of a disgruntled employee" and not a terrorist attack or a hate crime in a city where nine black church members were killed by a white man two years ago.

"This was a tragic case of a disturbed individual, I think, with a history of some mental health challenges," Tecklenburg said at a news conference.

The gunman killed Virginia's executive chef, 37-year-old Anthony Shane Whiddon, deputy Charleston County coroner Sheila Williams said late Thursday.

Authorities had not released the name of the wounded gunman. They initially said they believed there were "a couple" or a "small number" of hostages.

The shooting was reported shortly after noon Thursday.

Peter Siegert IV and his family from Galesville, Maryland, had just been served fried chicken at the restaurant when he noticed waitresses and kitchen workers leaving hurriedly through the front door. Then he saw a man in a backward ball cap and an apron enter the dining room from the back of the restaurant.

"He said, 'There's a new boss in town,'" Siegert told The Associated Press. "I don't think anybody realized he had a gun until after he locked the door. And then he turned around and had a revolver in his hand. He never pointed it at any of the patrons. He held it by his side."

The man told all the customers to get onto the floor, Siegert said, then directed them to crawl to the back of the restaurant — where the rear exits remained unlocked.

"He told everybody to get out," he said. "Everybody started running for the doors."

One of the restaurant's owners, John Aquino, told WCSC-TV that a dishwasher who had been fired came

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back to the restaurant and shot a chef to get revenge.

The restaurant was packed with a lunchtime crowd and the first officers to arrive were able to get the man who was shot and a number of diners out safely, interim Charleston Police Chief Jerome Taylor said.

The site is a few blocks away from Emanuel AME church, where nine black members of a church were killed by a white man during a June 2015 Bible study. Dylann Roof was sentenced to death in the case.

It is also just several blocks from where more than 100 cruise ships dock in Charleston each year.

Associated Press writers Seanna Adcox, Jeffrey Collins and Meg Kinnard in Columbia contributed to this report.

## More evacuations as Hurricane Harvey bears down on Texas

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Harvey intensified into a hurricane Thursday and steered for the Texas coast with the potential for up to 3 feet of rain, 125 mph winds and 12-foot storm surges in what could be the fiercest hurricane to hit the United States in almost a dozen years.

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"A lot of people are taking this storm for granted thinking it may not pose much of a danger to them," Gov. Greg Abbott told Houston television station KPRC. "Please heed warnings and evacuate as soon as possible."

Abbott has activated about 700 members of the state National Guard ahead of Hurricane Harvey making landfall.

As of late Thursday afternoon, Harvey was about 305 miles (490 kilometers) southeast of Corpus Christi, moving to the north-northwest at about 10 mph (17 kph). Sustained winds were clocked at 85 mph.

Harvey's effect would be broad. The hurricane center said storm surges as much as 3 feet could be expected as far north as Morgan City, Louisiana, some 400 miles away from the anticipated landfall.

And once it comes ashore, the storm is expected to stall, dumping copious amounts of rain for days in areas like flood-prone Houston, the nation's fourth most-populous city, and San Antonio.

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White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said President Donald Trump was "briefed and will continue to be updated as the storm progresses."

In Houston, one of the nation's most flood-prone cities, Bill Pennington was philosophical as he prepared his one-story home for what he expected would be its third invasion of floodwaters in as many years and the fifth since 1983.

"We know how to handle it. We'll handle it again," Pennington said he told his nervous 9-year-old son.

Dozens were in lines early Thursday at a Corpus Christi Sam's Club, at home improvement stores and supermarkets. The city also was passing out sandbags.

Alex Garcia bought bottled water, bread and other basics in the Houston suburb of Sugar Land after dropping his daughter off at college. He said grocery items were likely more available in Houston than back home in Corpus Christi, where Garcia, a beer distributor salesman, said stores were "crazy."

"We'll be selling lots of beer," he laughed.

Kim Fraleigh, of Sugar Land, stocked up with five cases of water, three bags of ice and other supplies at a supermarket.

"We've got chips, tuna, dry salami, anything that does not require refrigeration," she said.

Joey Garcia, director of the HEB store, said more than a semitrailer load of water was sold Wednesday, and he expected two more trailers on Thursday.

In Galveston, where a 1900 hurricane went down as the worst in U.S. history, City Manager Brian Maxwell said he was anticipating street flooding and higher-than-normal tides.

"Obviously being on an island, everybody around here is kind of used to it."

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Associated Press writers Frank Bajak in Houston; Seth Borenstein and Catherine Lucey in Washington; Diana Heidgerd, Jamie Stengle and David Warren in Dallas; and videographer John Mone in Sugar Land contributed to this story.

## Florida executes convicted double-murderer using new drug

By JASON DEAREN, Associated Press

STARKE, Fla. (AP) — Florida on Thursday put a man to death with an anesthetic never used before in a U.S. lethal injection, carrying out its first execution in more than 18 months on an inmate convicted of two racially motivated murders.

Authorities said 53-year-old Mark Asay, the first white man executed in Florida for the killing of a black man, was pronounced dead at 6:22 p.m. Thursday at the state prison in Starke. Asay received a three-

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drug injection that began with the anesthetic, etomidate.

Though approved by the Florida Supreme Court, etomidate has been criticized by some as being unproven in an execution. Etomidate replaced midazolam, which became harder to acquire after many drug companies began refusing to provide it for executions.

Prosecutors say Asay made racist comments in the 1987 fatal shooting of a 34-year-old black man, Robert Lee Booker. Asay also was convicted of the 1987 murder of 26-year-old Robert McDowell, who was mixed race, white and Hispanic. Asay had hired McDowell, who was dressed as a woman, as a prostitute, and killed him after learning his true gender, prosecutors said.

Asay was asked whether he wanted to make a final statement. "No sir, I do not. Thank you," he replied.

The execution protocol began at 6:10 p.m. About a minute after the first drug was administered, Asay's feet jerked slightly and his mouth opened. A minute or two later he was motionless and subsequently was pronounced dead by a doctor.

Michelle Glady, a spokeswoman for the corrections department, said there was no complication in the procedure and that Asay did not speak during it.

The execution was Florida's first since the U.S. Supreme Court halted the practice in the state after finding its method for sentencing people to death to be unconstitutional. The high court earlier Thursday had rejected Asay's final appeal without comment.

Asay was the first white man to be executed in Florida for killing a black man. At least 20 black men have been executed for killing white victims since the state reinstated the death penalty in 1976, according to data from the Death Penalty Information Center. A total of 92 Florida inmates had been executed previously in that time period.

The inmate's spiritual adviser, Norman Smith of Cavalry Chapel in Melbourne, Florida spent two hours with Asay before his execution. He said he admitted spouting racial epithets prior to Booker's murder, but said he was drunk and angry, not a racist.

"Until I heard that I would've never known that this man was tagged as a racist," said Smith, who is black. Asay, he added, was ready and not conflicted as the execution hour approached.

Etomidate is the first of three drugs administered in Florida's new execution mixture. It's followed by rocuronium bromide, a paralytic, and finally, potassium acetate, which stops the heart. It is Florida's first time using potassium acetate too, which was used in a 2015 execution in Oklahoma by mistake, but has not been used elsewhere, a death penalty expert said.

State corrections officials have defended the choice of etomidate, saying it has been reviewed. The corrections department refused to answer questions from The Associated Press about how it chose etomidate.

Doctors hired by Asay's attorneys raised questions about etomidate in court declarations, saying there are cases where it had caused pain along with involuntary writhing in patients.

But in its opinion allowing the drug to be used, the state's high court said earlier this month that four expert witnesses demonstrated that Asay "is at small risk of mild to moderate pain."

Executions in Florida were put on hold for 18 months after the Supreme Court ruled that the old system was unconstitutional because it gave judges, not juries, the power to decide.

Since then, Florida's Legislature passed a law requiring a unanimous jury for death penalty recommendations.

In Asay's case, jurors recommended death for both murder counts by a 9-3 vote. Even though the new law requires unanimity, Florida's high court ruled that the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling did not apply to older cases.

Asay was the 24th inmate executed since Gov. Rick Scott has taken office, the most under any governor in Florida history.

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Associated Press writer Curt Anderson in Miami contributed to this story.

## Trump attacks Republican leaders over debt ceiling 'mess'

By KEN THOMAS and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fanning the flames of GOP discord, President Donald Trump accused Republican congressional leaders Thursday of botching efforts to avoid an unprecedented default on the national debt. "Could have been so easy—now a mess!" Trump tweeted.

The president's sharp words underscored the perilous state of play as Congress heads into the fall without a clear plan to take care of its most important piece of business: If it does not increase the nation's \$19.9 trillion borrowing limit, the government could be unable to pay its bills, jarring financial markets and leading to other harsh consequences.

Trump unleashed his latest criticism of the GOP's congressional leadership in a series of morning tweets that also included a rebuke of Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for his inability to get the Senate to repeal the Obama health care law. The harsh posts were fresh evidence of the president's fraying relations with fellow Republicans just when the White House and Capitol Hill most need to be working in sync.

Critiquing GOP legislative strategy, Trump tweeted that he had asked McConnell and House Speaker Paul Ryan to attach the legislation increasing the borrowing limit — a toxic vote for many Republicans — to popular military veterans' legislation that he recently signed. The idea was floated in July but never gained steam in Congress.

Trump said that because legislators didn't follow that strategy, "now we have a big deal with Dems holding them up (as usual) on Debt Ceiling approval."

Republicans control both Congress and the White House, placing the burden on them to ensure the government doesn't default. In the past, Democrats largely provided the votes for debt limit increases.

The Treasury Department has said the debt ceiling needs to be raised by Sept. 29 to avoid potential default on government obligations including Social Security and interest payments.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, playing down Trump's notion of a debt limit "mess," said flatly that Congress would "pass legislation to make sure that we pay our debts."

"I'm not worried that's not going to get done because it's going to get done," he said during an appearance in Washington state.

McConnell likewise said earlier in the week that there was "zero chance, no chance, we won't raise the debt ceiling."

The president's latest broadsides against members of his own party came one day after the White House and McConnell issued statements pledging to work together.

After Trump's latest incendiary tweets, both sides tried again Thursday to tamp down talk of escalating tensions.

Ryan, speaking to Boeing employees in suburban Seattle, said he and Trump have "different speaking styles," but they are in "constant contact" on the policy agenda.

"For me it's really important the president succeeds, because if he succeeds then the country succeeds," Ryan said.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders insisted the president's relationships with GOP leaders "are fine."

For all of that conciliatory talk, the evidence of mounting friction between the president and the Republican party is growing.

Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake said in an interview with Georgia Public Broadcasting on Wednesday that the president was "inviting" a 2020 presidential primary challenge because he was only cultivating the GOP base of voters. Trump has labeled Flake as "weak" and "toxic" on Twitter.

Maine Sen. Susan Collins, a Republican who has been critical of the president, told MSNBC this week it was "too difficult to say" if Trump would be the party's presidential nominee in 2020.

The growing rift between congressional Republicans and Trump could make it more difficult for the White House to advance its agenda.

The White House and congressional Republicans have yet to engage in serious negotiations to address

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the debt ceiling or stopgap legislation needed to avert a government shutdown when the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30. Trump is expected to hold meetings with congressional leaders after the Labor Day holiday.

Asked about the debt ceiling, Sanders put the onus on Congress to resolve the matter: "It's our job to inform Congress of the debt ceiling and it's their job to raise it."

She added that the White House was looking for a "clean" debt ceiling bill — without any legislative add-ons. But tea party Republicans and outside conservative groups are demanding spending cuts as the price for increasing the borrowing limit.

Raising the debt ceiling has often confounded Congress. A 2011 standoff between Republicans and the Obama administration over raising borrowing authority led to tighter controls on spending. That standoff was not resolved until the 11th hour and prompted Standard & Poor's to impose the first-ever downgrade to the country's credit rating.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said raising the debt ceiling and securing the U.S. border was a "good combination" and suggested Republicans force Democrats into difficult votes over the borrowing limit.

"Let's put them in a box when it comes to the debt ceiling. The president is not crazy to attack the Congress. He's not crazy to think of ways to put Democrats in a bad spot regarding the debt ceiling. They do this all the time to us," Graham said in an interview with conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt.

Beyond the challenge of the debt limit, the effort to avoid a government shutdown could be complicated by Trump's long-promised plan to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. The president threatened Tuesday to force a federal shutdown unless Congress provides money for the project. Sanders told reporters the administration would "continue to push forward and make sure the wall gets built."

Appearing at a Louisville breakfast event, McConnell tried to brush aside the tensions with Trump, quipping that running the Senate was "a little bit like being the groundskeeper at a cemetery. Everybody's under you, but nobody's listening."

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Associated Press writer Adam Beam in Louisville, Kentucky, contributed to this report.

## Bookies will lose millions if McGregor knocks out Mayweather

By TIM DAHLBERG, AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Conor McGregor is making a lot of wise guys nervous in this gambling city.

Should he somehow manage to knock out Floyd Mayweather Jr. in the early rounds Saturday night, the city's bookmakers would lose millions of dollars in the biggest single event loss in the history of sports betting.

McGregor fans have flooded sports books with \$100 bills backing the mixed martial arts fighter, and even a late surge of money on Mayweather might not be enough to balance the books.

"I'm OK now," said William Hill oddsmaker Nick Bogdanovich. "But you might want to have a heart monitor on me when the bell rings and Conor starts throwing wild lefts."

Bogdanovich said his chain of sports books will suffer multimillion dollar losses — their worst ever — should McGregor win the fight in any fashion. If he wins early as he has promised, the losses would be even worse.

The big bettors are putting their money on Mayweather, who is 49-0 as a pro. But so many McGregor fans are betting small amounts that the betting slips at William Hill were 18-1 in the Irish fighter's favor.

"This isn't professional money, just the regular Joe," Bogdanovich said. "The butcher and the barber are putting their \$100 on McGregor and it's added up."

The action is reflected in the odds, which bookmakers adjust either way as money comes in on the two fighters. Bookmakers have been lowering the odds steadily since the fight was announced, but even that hasn't stopped the deluge of McGregor bets.

A fight that began with Mayweather an 11-1 favorite is now 5-1 or even less in some sports books. Even that hasn't stopped McGregor supporters from lining up at the betting windows to hand over even more cash.

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They're backing a longshot, hoping that the payoff will be huge.

"There's plenty of money on a guy who has never been in a boxing ring," said Jimmy Vaccaro, oddsmaker at the South Point resort. "It's uncharted waters and that's what makes it so interesting."

Vaccaro said his sports book stood to lose about \$400,000 on a McGregor win, but that was balanced off a bit by a bettor who put \$100,000 Wednesday night on Mayweather. His book also took an \$880,000 bet on Mayweather earlier that would pay off just \$160,000 if he wins.

There have also been big Mayweather bets at the MGM Grand, including a \$500,000 wager on Wednesday at the MGM Grand and a \$1 million bet Thursday at William Hill. That reduces the liability some, though MGM Resorts oddsmaker Jay Rood said the sheer volume of McGregor bets at long odds still overwhelm big Mayweather bets.

Rood said his books have taken 6,700 bets on McGregor and only 300 on Mayweather. The average bet on McGregor is \$125, while the average for Mayweather is \$4,000.

If McGregor wins, Rood said MGM will be a big loser and the state will suffer its biggest single event loss ever.

"We're all in the same boat," Rood said. "Anything McGregor one to four rounds is pretty bad. Any McGregor knockout is not going to be good."

So far, the betting has been unusually active around town, bringing predictions that the volume could set records. Bookmakers say as the fight draws closer the heaviest influx of money will come, especially on Saturday.

The news is not all bad for oddsmakers, who have struggled to make lines for a fight that has no precedent. Most believe Mayweather is an easy winner and should be favored by a much bigger margin, but have had to cut odds to try and balance their books.

Though an overwhelming majority of the tickets are on McGregor, a lot of books have more money wagered on Mayweather. Since bookmakers will have to pay out a lot less to those betting Mayweather, they will likely score big if Mayweather wins as expected.

"We're just kind of going along balancing and are in great shape win on both sides, no matter who wins," said Johnny Avello, oddsmaker at the Wynn resort. "A lot of guys are putting down \$125,000 or so to win whatever on Mayweather so we're high on him now."

Even if McGregor wins and the sports books lose big, all is not lost. Bettors like to be reminded they can win, and the extra betting on football generated by McGregor bettors at the books will help ease some of the pain.

"We don't mind a large decision on a big spectacle like this," Bogdanovich said. "It gets people in our books."

## Harvey's perfect storm recipe: Warm water, calm air up high

By **SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hurricane Harvey is following the perfect recipe to be a monster storm, meteorologists say.

Warm water. Check. Calm air at 40,000 feet high. Check. Slow speed to dump maximum rain. Check.

University of Miami senior hurricane researcher Brian McNoldy said Harvey combines the worst attributes of nasty recent Texas storms: The devastating storm surge of Hurricane Ike in 2008; the winds of Category 4 Hurricane Brett in 1999 and days upon days of heavy rain of Tropical Storm Allison in 2001.

Rainfall is forecast to be as high as 35 inches through next Wednesday in some areas. Deadly storm surge — the push inwards of abnormally high ocean water above regular tides — could reach 12 feet, the National Hurricane Center warned, calling Harvey life-threatening. Harvey's forecast path is the type that keeps it stronger longer with devastating rain and storm-force wind lasting for several days, not hours.

"It's a very dangerous storm," National Weather Service Director Louis Uccellini told The Associated Press. "It does have all the ingredients it needs to intensify. And we're seeing that intensification occur quite rapidly."

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## WARM WATER

Warm water is the fuel for hurricanes. It's where storms get their energy. Water needs to be about 79 degrees (26 Celsius) or higher to sustain a hurricane, McNoldy said. Harvey is over part of the Gulf of Mexico where the water is about 87 degrees or 2 degrees above normal for this time of year, said Jeff Masters, a former hurricane hunter meteorologist and meteorology director of Weather Underground.

A crucial factor is something called ocean heat content. It's not just how warm the surface water is but how deep it goes. And Harvey is over an area where warm enough water goes about 330 feet (100 meters) deep, which is a very large amount of heat content, McNoldy said.

"It can sit there and spin and have plenty of warm water to work with," McNoldy said.

## WEAK WINDS

If winds at 40,000 feet high are strong in the wrong direction it can decapitate a hurricane. Strong winds high up remove the heat and moisture that hurricanes need near their center and also distort the shape.

But the wind up there is weak so Harvey "is free to go nuts basically," McNoldy said.

## PERFECT PATH

Before it hits the Texas coast, Harvey is projected to go over an even deeper and warmer eddy to supercharge it a bit more, just like what happened to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, but not quite as bad, Masters said.

If that's not bad enough, there's a good chance that after Harvey hits it will follow a track so close to the coast and not so much inland that it will essentially keep a toe in the water. The storm could be big enough that not all of it is over land. Because of that, the National Hurricane Center forecasts that it will remain at least tropical storm strength — and 40 mph winds — through Tuesday, maybe into Wednesday.

## SLOW SPEED

Because it looks like Harvey will be meandering at around 10 mph and then will likely stall out over the coast or just a bit inland, that means it will stay over one place and keep raining, Masters said. Day in, day out until the middle of next week.

"We're talking feet of rain, not inches," Masters said.

And the storm's heavy rains can last not just a few hours but "over a two-, three-, four-day period" from Texas to Louisiana, Uccellini said.

## US interior chief recommends changes on some protected lands

By **MATTHEW BROWN** and **BRADY McCOMBS**, Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke announced Thursday he won't seek to rescind any national monuments carved from the wilderness and oceans by past presidents. But he said he will press for some boundary changes and left open the possibility of allowing drilling, mining or other industries on the sites.

Twenty-seven monuments were put under review in April by President Donald Trump, who has charged that the millions of acres designated for protection by President Barack Obama were part of a "massive federal land grab."

If Trump adopts Zinke's recommendations, it could ease some of the worst fears of the president's opponents, who warned that vast public lands and marine areas could be stripped of federal protection.

But significant reductions in the size of the monuments or changes in what activities are allowed on them could trigger fierce resistance, too, including lawsuits.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Zinke said he is recommending changes to a "handful" of sites, including unspecified boundary adjustments, and suggested some monuments are too large. He would not reveal his recommendations for specific sites but previously said Utah's Bears Ears National Monument needs to be reduced in size.

The White House said only that it received Zinke's recommendations and is reviewing them.

Conservationists and tribal leaders responded with alarm and distrust, demanding the full release of Zinke's recommendations and vowing to challenge attempts to shrink any monuments.

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Gene Karpinski, president of the League of Conservation Voters, called Zinke's review a pretext for "selling out our public lands and waters" to the oil industry and others.

Jacqueline Savitz, senior vice president of Oceana, which has been pushing for preservation of five marine monuments included in the review, said that simply saying "changes" are coming doesn't reveal any real information.

"A change can be a small tweak or near annihilation," Savitz said. "The public has a right to know."

A tribal coalition that pushed for the creation of the 2,100-square-mile (5,400-square kilometer) Bears Ears monument on sacred tribal land said it is prepared to launch a legal fight against even a slight reduction in its size.

Republican Utah state Rep. Mike Noel, who has pushed to rescind the designation of Bears Ears as a monument, said he could live with a rollback of its boundaries.

He called that a good compromise that would enable continued tourism while still allowing activities that locals have pursued for generations — logging, livestock grazing and oil and gas drilling.

"The eco-tourists basically say, 'Throw out all the rubes and the locals and get rid of that mentality of grazing and utilizing these public lands for any kind of renewable resource such as timber harvesting and even some mineral production,'" Noel said. "That's a very selfish attitude."

Other sites that might see changes include the Grand Staircase-Escalante monument in the Utah desert, consisting of cliffs, canyons, natural arches and archaeological sites, including rock paintings; Katahdin Woods and Waters, 136 square miles (352 square kilometers) of forest of northern Maine; and Cascade Siskiyou, a 156-square-mile (404-square kilometer) region where three mountain ranges converge in Oregon.

The marine monuments encompass more than 340,000 square miles (880,000 square kilometers) and include four sites in the Pacific Ocean and an array of underwater canyons and mountains off New England.

Zinke did not directly answer whether any monuments would be newly opened to energy development, mining and other industries Trump has championed.

But the former Montana congressman said public access for uses such as hunting, fishing or grazing would be maintained or restored. He also spoke of protecting tribal interests.

"There's an expectation we need to look out 100 years from now to keep the public land experience alive in this country," Zinke said. "You can protect the monument by keeping public access to traditional uses."

The recommendations cap an unprecedented four-month review based on a belief that the 1906 Antiquities Act had been misused by presidents to create oversized monuments that hinder energy development, grazing and other uses. The review looked at whether the protected areas should be eliminated, downsized or otherwise altered.

The review raised alarm among conservationists who said protections could be lost for ancient cliff dwellings, towering sequoia trees, deep canyons and ocean habitats.

Zinke previously announced that no changes would be made at six of the 27 monuments under review — in Montana, Colorado, Idaho, California, Arizona and Washington.

In the interview, Zinke struck back against conservationists who had warned of impending mass sell-offs of public lands by the Trump administration.

"I've heard this narrative that somehow the land is going to be sold or transferred," he said. "That narrative is patently false and shameful. The land was public before and it will be public after."

National monument designations are used to protect land revered for its natural beauty and historical significance. The restrictions aren't as stringent as those at national parks but can include limits on mining, timber-cutting and recreational activities such as riding off-road vehicles.

The monuments under review were designated by four presidents over the past two decades.

Zinke suggested that the same presidential proclamation process used to create the monuments could be used to enact changes.

Environmental groups contend the Antiquities Act allows presidents to create national monuments but gives only Congress the power to modify them. Mark Squillace, a law professor at the University of Colorado, said he agrees with that view but noted the dispute has never gone before the courts.

Conservative legal scholars have come down on the side of the administration.

No president has tried to eliminate a monument, but some have reduced or redrawn the boundaries on 18 occasions, according to the National Park Service.

McCombs reported from Salt Lake City. Associated Press writer Michael Biesecker contributed from Washington.

Follow Matthew Brown on Twitter at —[www.twitter.com/matthewbrownap](http://www.twitter.com/matthewbrownap)

## Amazon to cut prices on Whole Foods staples like eggs, beef

By BERNARD CONDON, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon plans to use its deep pockets to make big changes at Whole Foods, saying it will cut prices on bananas, eggs, salmon, beef and more when it completes its \$13.7 billion takeover next week.

Helping Whole Foods win back customers who found “good enough” organic and natural products elsewhere — possibly at a lower cost — fits Amazon’s track record of keeping prices low to lock in customer loyalty. Looking ahead, Amazon hopes to give members of its Prime program special savings and other in-store benefits.

It’s an “opening salvo” in the grocery wars, said Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData Retail, and shares of other supermarkets fell sharply on the news.

“Rivals should be under no illusion that they are now dealing with a competitor that is not afraid to damage profits and margins if it creates long-term gains,” Saunders said in an analyst note.

Among other Whole Foods items getting discounts Monday: avocados, tilapia, baby kale, apples and rotisserie chicken — all organic, Amazon said. The company also said certain Whole Foods products will be available through Amazon.com, AmazonFresh, Prime Pantry and Prime Now.

Amazon’s announcement comes a day after Whole Foods shareholders gave their approval and the Federal Trade Commission said it would not block the purchase. Amazon will pay \$42 per Whole Foods share, an 18 percent premium from its price the day before the tie-up was announced June 16. The stock edged up to \$41.98 on Thursday.

By buying Whole Foods, Amazon is taking a bold step into brick-and-mortar, with its more than 460 stores and potentially very lucrative data about how shoppers behave offline. The grocery chain, which has fought the “Whole Paycheck” reputation, had been under shareholder pressure to improve results as customers moved on and discount chains like Lidl and Aldi expanded in the U.S.

Whether Amazon will succeed in the fiercely competitive grocery segment is unclear, but customers are going to benefit from the attempt, said Charlie O’Shea, lead retail analyst at Moody’s Investors Service.

“Amazon can come in and price items very low,” he said. “Its shareholders are agnostic about profit, and seem more interested revenue and market share. That’s a competitive advantage.”

Rivals have been scrambling to catch up with the e-commerce giant. Walmart, which has the largest share of the U.S. grocery market, is expanding its grocery delivery service with ride-hailing service Uber and announced Wednesday that it will join forces with Google to let shoppers order goods by voice on Google devices.

But Walmart’s shares were off 2 percent, and shares of other big grocery businesses fell more. The Kroger Co. dropped nearly 8 percent, and Supervalu Inc. fell more than 6 percent. Costco lost 5 percent and Target fell 4 percent.

While Whole Foods accounts for less than 3 percent of U.S. grocery and supermarket sales, the purchase gives Amazon a foothold in a fragile industry that can ill-afford more price cutting.

“Lower prices could be catastrophic for some operators,” said Madeline Hurley, a senior analyst at market research firm IBISWorld. “It could drive them out of the industry.”

On average, she said, supermarkets only squeeze about \$1 of profit out of every \$100 in revenue.

Hurley said she is not sure how big competitors like Walmart will fare, but that Amazon is showing a

determination to shake things up, and fast.

"There was a lot of speculation that Whole Foods might be left as more of an independent entity, at least in the beginning phases of the acquisition," she said. "This shows that Amazon is taking a very hands-on approach."

Financial analysts say one challenge for Amazon is how to cut prices and broaden Whole Foods' appeal without hurting the chain's image for quality food. It's a tricky balance that Amazon itself seemed to acknowledge in its statement.

"Everybody should be able to eat Whole Foods Market quality — we will lower prices without compromising Whole Foods Market's long-held commitment to the highest standards," said Jeff Wilke, CEO of AmazonWorldwide Consumer.

Earlier this month, Amazon sold \$16 billion of bonds in order to pay for the purchase. Its shares were down 0.6 percent to \$952.45 on Thursday.

## Massachusetts hospital worker claims record lottery jackpot

By **BOB SALSBERG, Associated Press**

BRAINTREE, Mass. (AP) — A 53-year-old Massachusetts hospital worker stepped forward Thursday to claim the biggest undivided lottery jackpot in U.S. history — a \$758.7 million Powerball prize — after breaking the news to her employer the way the rest of us only dream of: "I called and told them I will not be coming back."

"The first thing I want to do is just sit back and relax," Mavis L. Wanczyk told reporters at a news conference.

Wanczyk chose to take a lump-sum payment of \$480 million, or \$336 million after taxes, lottery officials said. Winners who take a gradual payout stand to get more money spread out over several decades.

Even after paying taxes on the winnings, Wanczyk is worth more than some small countries such as Micronesia, which has a gross domestic product of \$322 million, or the Pacific islands of Palau, with a GDP of \$293 million, according to 2016 figures from the World Bank.

The previous evening, she recalled, she was leaving work with a firefighter and remarked, "It's never going to be me. It's just a pipe dream that I've always had."

Then she read the number on her ticket and realized she had won.

Wanczyk worked for 32 years in a clerical job in the nursing department at Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, the hospital said.

About a month ago, she shared a post on Facebook joking that she needed a vacation. "And by 'vacation,'" the post read, "I mean I need to move away and find a new job. On a beach. With rum."

The jackpot is the largest ever won with a single ticket. It is the second-largest U.S. lottery prize, ahead of a \$656 million Mega Millions prize won by three people in 2012. But Wednesday's big prize is still dwarfed by a \$1.6 billion Powerball jackpot divvied up between three winners in January 2016.

Wanczyk has two adult children, a daughter and a son.

Massachusetts Treasurer Deb Goldberg said she offered advice to the family about being careful with their newfound wealth.

"A lot of people will be coming at them with all sorts of things," Goldberg told reporters. "I highly encourage them to find very, very good lawyers and advisers and think very, very carefully about how they are going to manage their assets."

Wanczyk bought a total of five tickets. Two were computer-generated Powerball tickets, and three used numbers that she chose. The winning ticket, she said, was one with numbers that used family birthdays.

Her inspiration for the final digit — the Powerball — came from her penchant for playing the number four number every Friday in a Keno game with her mother, stepfather and a friend.

The announcement that a winner had come forward came after a turbulent morning in which lottery officials initially misidentified not only the store that sold the winning ticket, but the town.

The lottery corrected the site where the single winning ticket was sold to Chicopee, Massachusetts.

Overnight, it had mistakenly announced the winning ticket was sold at a shop in Watertown, just outside Boston.

But shortly before 8 a.m., the lottery said it had made a mistake, and that the winning ticket was sold at the Pride Station & Store in Chicopee, about halfway across the state.

Massachusetts Lottery Executive Director Michael Sweeney said officials were manually recording the names of the retailers that sold the winning ticket and transcribed it incorrectly. Sweeney issued an apology for the confusion created by the error, but said lottery staff remained thrilled that a jackpot winning ticket and two \$1 million winning tickets were sold in Massachusetts — one of those at the Watertown location.

Mike Donatelli, a spokesman for the Pride Station & Store in Chicopee, said the store was notified shortly before 8 a.m. that it had actually sold the record jackpot ticket.

Sweeney said the store will pocket \$50,000 for selling the jackpot winner. Bob Bolduc, owner of the Pride store chain, said the proceeds would be donated to local charities.

"The phone started ringing at 8 o'clock" Bolduc said. "We were as surprised as everybody else. We're happy for our customer, and we're happy for the charities."

The lucky numbers from Wednesday night's drawing were 6, 7, 16, 23 and 26, and the Powerball was 4.

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 are drawn from a drum containing 69 balls and one red ball is selected from a drum with 26 balls. Players can choose their numbers or let a computer make a random choice.

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Associated Press Writer Dave Collins in Chicopee, Massachusetts, contributed to this report.

## **Dutch police detain suspect in concert terror threat**

**By MIKE CORDER and SYLVAIN PLAZY, Associated Press**

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (AP) — Alerted by a detailed tip from Spanish colleagues, Dutch police arrested a man Thursday and questioned him on suspicion of preparing an attack on a concert in Rotterdam by an American rock band.

But the Dutch justice minister suggested later in the day that the suspect may only have sent a threatening message.

The 22-year-old man was being interrogated to determine exactly what his role was in the threat, police spokeswoman Svetlana Westermeijer said. No charges had been filed yet.

The arrest in a town identified by Dutch media as Zevenbergen, south of Rotterdam, came hours after police canceled a performance Wednesday night by the Los Angeles band Allah-Las at a converted grain silo in the heart of the port city.

"The suspicion is that the suspect is involved in the preparation of a terrorist attack," Rotterdam Police Chief Frank Paauw said.

"There is no terror threat now anymore," he added. "There is no threat because we have arrested a suspect and the information about the threat was so specific on the location of the event that, with that arrest, we can conclude that the threat is gone."

If authorities want to prolong the suspect's detention, they will have to arraign him at a closed-door hearing with an investigative judge before the end of Friday, prosecution spokeswoman Jeichien de Graaff said.

Police searched the man's home after his arrest but released no details of anything they found. His identity wasn't released, in line with Dutch privacy guidelines.

Security and Justice Minister Stef Blok, in an interview with BNR radio, suggested the suspect may only have spread the threat on a social media platform.

"The person who spread the message has been picked up and he will be questioned," Blok said in a reference to the man's arrest. "We are very curious to hear from him why he carried out this idiotic action."

Meanwhile, a Spanish mechanic detained Wednesday night while driving a white van containing a number of gas canisters close to the concert venue was released without charge.

"Investigations showed there was no link between the man and the terror threat," police said in a statement Thursday night.

Dutch Counterterror Coordinator Dick Schoof commended the police action and left the country's threat level unchanged at "substantial," the fourth step of a five-level scale.

It wasn't clear what the nature of the threat to the concert was.

In an interview with The Guardian last year, band members said they chose the word Allah — Arabic for God — because they were seeking a "holy-sounding" name and didn't realize it might cause offense.

Police in Warsaw, Poland, beefed up security for the band's performance there Thursday night, checking a few hundred fans as they arrived at the NIEBO (Heaven) club.

Joanna Konieczna, 32, was excited that she would be hearing her favorite band live.

"The events in Rotterdam did not scare me, I feel very safe in Poland," she told The Associated Press.

Spain, already on high alert following last week's deadly attacks in and near Barcelona that killed 15 people and injured more than 120 others, played a key role in the events of Wednesday and Thursday.

A Spanish counterterrorism official said Spain's Civil Guard received "an alert indicating the possibility of an attack in a concert that was going to take place in Rotterdam." The Civil Guard shared the information with Dutch authorities, said the official, who spoke anonymously.

Mike Corder reported from The Hague. AP writers Aritz Parra in Madrid and Monika Scislowska in Warsaw, Poland, contributed to this report.

## Bay area leaders strive to protect speech, prevent violence

By PAUL ELIAS and JANIE HAR, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Police and civic leaders in the cradle of America's free speech movement will struggle to balance liberty of expression with safeguards against violence as demonstrators with varying political viewpoints travel to the San Francisco Bay Area for dueling rallies throughout the weekend.

On Saturday, a politically conservative group called Patriot Prayer will host a "freedom rally" near the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge, over the vociferous objections of San Francisco's Mayor Ed Lee and other Democratic leaders who say the group invites hate. On Sunday, a transsexual supporter of President Donald Trump plans a "No to Marxism in America" event in a downtown city park in nearby Berkeley.

Opponents will mobilize too, including clowns and drag queens as well as an anti-Trump organization that has sometimes supported violent tactics.

The challenge for law enforcement comes after an Aug. 12 rally of white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia that turned deadly, killing one counter-protester and two state troopers. Police in both California cities traditionally have given demonstrators a wide berth, even when rallies in recent years turned violent as protesters from both the left and the right have punched people, destroyed property and engaged in violence.

But the deaths and injuries in Charlottesville have police, civic leaders and civil rights groups in the San Francisco area and across the United States rethinking how to respond to hate speech and how to manage competing protests.

The American Civil Liberties Union said it will no longer represent hate groups that demonstrate with weapons after it was criticized for persuading a judge to let the Charlottesville protest go forward. In Boston last weekend, police successfully separated tens of thousands of people shouting anti-Nazi and anti-KKK slogans who showed up to protest a much smaller conservative "free speech" rally — but drawing some complaints that the speakers didn't get to be heard.

"We're in an interesting situation no question about it, where the Bay Area, known for its protection of speech is also known for how much it deplores discrimination and hate speech," said Julie Nice, a constitutional law professor at the University of San Francisco School of Law.

She said police are in a tough spot because they are constitutionally obligated to protect even hateful

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speech until the point that speech crosses the line into violence.

In the San Francisco area, protesters this weekend will face more restrictions and beefed-up police powers than in the past. The Berkeley City Council has expanded the authority of police to confiscate eggs, sticks and other perceived weapons, a position defended by Berkeley's mayor despite the politically liberal city's reputation as the birthplace of the free speech movement and a bastion of tolerance.

Mayor Jesse Arreguin said this week he is tired of his city being targeted by people who show up in military wear and support positions that he calls anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, and anti-gay.

"We have gone above and beyond to facilitate the right for all voices to be heard. What we don't stand for is violence, what we don't stand for is vandalism and we don't stand for thuggery," he said. "What we don't tolerate is people using the concept of freedom of speech to commit violence."

Student activism was born during the 1960s free-speech movement at Berkeley, when thousands of students at the university there mobilized to demand that the school drop its ban on political activism. More recently, the University of California at Berkeley has come under criticism for what some have characterized as suppression of unpopular views.

In February, officials at the University of California at Berkeley were forced to cancel a talk by right-wing provocateur and Trump supporter Milo Yiannopoulos after black-clad protesters hurled smoke bombs and sparked a huge bonfire.

Amber Cummings, who is organizing the rally against Marxism, said racists and hate groups are not invited to her Sunday event. But the anti-Trump group By Any Means Necessary has vowed to shut down the Berkeley rally and authorities worry the two sides could clash.

In San Francisco, the park service issued a permit for the Portland, Oregon-based Patriot Prayer gathering, but banned more than two dozen items, including guns, helmets and tiki torches. They're also working on a plan to keep rally-goers and opponents separated at Crissy Field.

San Francisco cannot block the event because the park is on federal land. But Mayor Ed Lee has urged people to stay away.

"I ask that people avoid going to Crissy Field and engaging with members of Patriot Prayer because that is precisely what they wish us to do and I don't want to dignify their message of hate and their mission of division in our city of love of compassion," Lee told a Wednesday news conference.

Joey Gibson said he organized Patriot Prayer after Trump supporters were beaten in San Jose, California last summer during a campaign stop. He pushed back at Lee and other political opponents, saying that his group doesn't harbor racist views and that hate groups aren't welcome, although his events have attracted violence and white nationalists.

"Right now we have an issue of tolerance. It's not just skin color or gender, I'm talking about tolerance of speech," said Gibson, who is Japanese-American. "We believe that someone is an enemy because they think differently or they voted for someone different."

One of the featured speakers is Kyle Chapman, a right-wing organizer who faces a charge of illegal possession of a baton he was seen swinging at counter-protesters during a chaotic rally for Trump in Berkeley earlier this year.

Officials from both Berkeley and San Francisco urged opponents to attend separate events scheduled at the same time as the politically conservative gatherings on Saturday and Sunday. A drag queen troupe has scheduled its own rally to promote "love and peace" in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood Saturday afternoon.

Yet, there are calls by counter protesters for people to join them in force at Crissy Field to "send a message that hate has no safe space" in the city.

Nearly two dozen political protests in California have turned violent since December 2015, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino.

Dealing with that violence is a "thankless job" for law enforcement, said Brian Levin, the center's director, adding that he supports Berkeley's new get-tough approach.

"They get criticized for cracking down," he said, "or they get criticized for doing nothing."

## **Qatar sending ambassador back to Iran, ignoring Arab demands**

**By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press**

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Qatar restored full diplomatic relations with Iran early on Thursday and promised to send its ambassador back to Tehran — a move counter to the demands of Arab nations trying to isolate Doha as part of a regional dispute.

In announcing its decision, Qatar made no mention of the diplomatic crisis roiling Gulf Arab nations since June, when Doha found its land, sea and air routes cut off by the four Arab states.

Iran, which welcomed Doha's decision, has sent food to Qatar and allowed its airplanes to increasingly use the Islamic Republic's airspace.

Restoring diplomatic ties will undoubtedly anger those opposing Qatar in the regional dispute, chief among them Saudi Arabia, Iran's regional rival. Perhaps not unrelated, 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 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 pulled its ambassador from Tehran 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. A short Foreign Ministry statement issued early Thursday changed that, saying Qatar's ambassador soon would return to Iran.

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

In Iran, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi said Qatar announced its intention to return its ambassador to Tehran in a phone with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

"We welcome this measure by the Qatari government," Ghasemi said, according to the state-run IRNA news agency.

Despite recalling its ambassador in 2016, Qatar maintained its valuable commercial ties to Iran. 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.

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.

However, those tensions may be easing as well, as Iran's semi-official ISNA news agency quoted Zarif as saying visas for both Iranian and Saudi diplomats to visit their respective embassies and consulates had been issued. Zarif said final steps to allow the visits likely would be taken after the annual hajj pilgrimage at the end of the month.

There was no immediate reaction from the Arab nations boycotting Qatar on its Iran decision. 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.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert told reporters on Thursday that the U.S. remains "very deeply concerned with the status of the dispute" between Qatar and the Arab quartet.

"It's gone on for far too long. It really has," Nauert added. She declined to comment on the restoration of Doha-Tehran ties.

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

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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. There have been suggestions that the sheikh could be the start of a Qatari government-in-exile.

But 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."

Associated Press writers Amir Vahdat in Tehran, Iran, and Matthew Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/jongambrellap](http://www.twitter.com/jongambrellap) . His work can be found at <http://apne.ws/2galNpz> .

## Charlottesville mayor says he was shut out of security talks

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — Charlottesville officials met privately Thursday to discuss "personnel matters" in the wake of a deadly white nationalist rally, the city's mayor said in a statement in which he also asserted he'd been largely shut out of security preparations for the event.

In a lengthy statement on Facebook posted ahead of the meeting, Mayor Mike Signer wrote that under Charlottesville's form of government, the city manager "has total operational authority" over events like the Aug. 12 rally.

Signer, who has a spot on the five-person City Council, said the group was not given the security plan for the rally. He also wrote that when he asked during a briefing days before the event what he could do to be helpful, Police Chief Al Thomas responded, "Stay out of my way."

The statement comes as city leaders are facing scrutiny over their response to the event, believed to be the largest gathering of white nationalists in at least a decade. Crowds fought violently in the streets, one woman was killed when a car plowed into a group of counter-protesters, and two state troopers died when their helicopter crashed.

Charlottesville residents, rally organizers and law enforcement experts are among those who have criticized the city's handling of the lead-up to the rally and the chaos that ensued. Anger boiled over at a city council meeting earlier this week, where scores of people screamed and cursed at councilors. Some called for the leaders to resign.

Signer said the events on Aug. 12 "raised serious questions about the city's handling of security, communications, and governance."

Those are questions that the city council should ask "as the ultimate authority over the city manager," he wrote.

The council met behind closed doors Thursday morning. Signer and Vice Mayor Wes Bellamy told reporters as they exited that Thomas and City Manager Maurice Jones were still employed.

Councilors discussed "an array of different things that transpired and how we can improve," Bellamy told The Associated Press, declining to elaborate further because the meeting was a closed session.

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The council has called for an independent review of all decisions related not only to Aug. 12, but also a July KKK rally and a prior torch-lit rally of white nationalists at Emancipation Park, Signer said in his statement. He said he expects details to be announced shortly.

The rally was sparked by the city's decision to remove a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee from Emancipation Park, a decision that's on hold while a lawsuit plays out. On Wednesday, workers draped the statue of Lee and another of Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson in black fabric meant to symbolize the city's mourning.

City officials had been expected to host a "community recovery town hall" Thursday evening in collaboration with the Community Relations Services of the Department of Justice. But they announced Thursday morning that it had been rescheduled for Sunday due to conflicts with a local high school's student activities.

Officials will provide an update on "recovery efforts" at that meeting and offer opportunities for public comment, according to a news release.

In other developments Thursday, Christopher Cantwell, a white nationalist from Keene, New Hampshire, made an initial appearance in Albemarle County General District Court.

He faces 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 in connection with a torch-lit rally on the University of Virginia campus the night before the white nationalist rally.

Contacted by The Associated Press on Tuesday, Cantwell acknowledged he had pepper-sprayed a counter-demonstrator. 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.

UVA police said late Wednesday night that he had turned himself in.

Cantwell told a judge Thursday that he planned to hire his own attorney, The Daily Progress reported. The judge did not set bond, but told Cantwell his attorney could request a bond hearing later.

Also Thursday, a judge waived a hearing for James Alex Fields Jr., the man accused of killing Heather Heyer by driving into the crowd. Fields had a hearing scheduled for Friday, but the judge agreed to a request from prosecutors and Fields' attorney to continue the case until Dec. 14.

## California baseball fans, players have common enemy: gulls

By LINDA WANG, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Like any player, San Francisco Giants outfielder Denard Span worries about hitting nasty curveballs and losing fly balls in the sun. But he's got another concern when he's playing at his home stadium: birds pooping on him in the field.

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

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

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 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: "Fal-

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con 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," the center fielder 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>

## Swiss police: 8 missing after mudslide near Italian border

GENEVA (AP) — Rescue workers used a helicopter and dogs Thursday to search for eight people still missing in a Swiss Alpine valley a day after a muddy rockslide barreled through a village on the Italian border.

Images from the scene showed a trail of destruction left by a river of mud and stone. An alarm system went off in time to allow for the evacuation of about 100 residents in the village of Bondo, 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of Milan.

The slide Wednesday morning sent about 4 million cubic meters (140 million cubic feet) of rocks and

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mud crashing down the mountain, causing an impact equivalent to 3.0 on the Richter scale, senior police official Andrea Mittner said.

Police in Graubunden canton (state) said Thursday that they haven't been able to reach eight people who may have been in the Bondasca valley at the time of the slide — citizens of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, none of them children.

Mittner described the missing people as "Alpinists and walkers." He said a Swiss army helicopter searched the valley during the night, but found nothing.

On Thursday, workers began searching with dogs but didn't immediately find anyone. A helicopter equipped with a device that can locate cellphones also was being sent up. Around 120 people were involved in the operation — police, firefighters, troops and others.

"These people may have been in the disaster area at the time of the event," he told reporters in the nearby town of Stampa. "We hope this was not the case, but it is possible that they had an accident."

"We don't know where exactly they are missing," he added. "The area is around 5 kilometers (3 miles) long."

Thursday afternoon, police received a separate, unverified report that a group of another five or six people could be missing — but spokeswoman Chiarella Piana of Graubunden police said the group had turned up safely in Italy.

Markus Walzer of Graubunden police said the local alarm system was put in place after a similar mudslide in 2012. He said the weather in the area had been good in recent days and the cause of the mudslide wasn't immediately known.

Mittner said Bondo would remain sealed off until at least Friday morning. It wasn't immediately clear when residents might be able to return home.

## Philadelphia Eagles fan gets last laugh with obituary

PORT REPUBLIC, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey man took a parting shot at the Philadelphia Eagles in his obituary.

Jeffrey Riegel, 56, died last Friday. Before his death, the Port Republic, New Jersey, man promised friends a funny message in his obituary.

The longtime Eagles fan's obituary asked for Riegel "to have 8 Philadelphia Eagles as pall bearers so the Eagles can let him down one last time."

Riegel was a passionate Eagles fan who owned season tickets for more than 30 years. Sadly, the Eagles never won a Super Bowl during his lifetime.

It was not always an easy team to love, his wife, Donna Lee Riegel, said. She sometimes suggested he pay allegiance to a different team.

According to her, "I just can't" was his response.

Riegel's friend, Lou Jiapello, tells the Press of Atlantic City he couldn't help but laugh at his friend's humor.

Eight friends wearing Eagles jerseys were to lay Riegel to rest on Thursday at St. Paul's United Methodist Church's cemetery in Port Republic.

Riegel did get to see the Eagles win one last time before his death, Donna Lee Riegel said. He saw last Thursday's 20-16 preseason victory over the Buffalo Bills.

"He got to see them go out on a win," his wife said, suggesting that may have been what he needed to make peace with death.

A spokesperson for the Eagles declined to comment about Riegel's request.

## Syria opposition told to come to terms with Assad's survival

By PHILIP ISSA, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — As Damascus reverses military losses in much of the country's strategically important west, and foreign states cut support for rebel forces, diplomats from Washington to Riyadh are asking representatives of Syria's opposition to come to terms with President Bashar Assad's political survival.

The country's civil war has crossed the halfway point of its seventh year and Assad and his allies are now in control of Syria's four largest cities and its Mediterranean coast. With the help of Russian air power and Iranian-sponsored militias, pro-government forces are marching steadily across the energy-rich Homs province to reach the Euphrates River valley.

Western and regional rebel patrons, currently more focused on advancing their own interests rather than accomplishing regime change in Damascus, are shifting their alliances and have ceased calls on Assad to step down.

"There is no conceivable military alignment that's going to be able to remove him," said former U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford, now a fellow at the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C. "Everyone, including the U.S., has recognized that Assad is staying."

The war has settled into a familiar, lower-intensity grind, with the Syrian government now in control of most of the populated west while Islamic State group militants and al-Qaida affiliates, U.S.-backed Kurds and Turkey-backed rebels hold on to remaining pockets in the north, east and south. Russia-sponsored so-called de-escalation zones have significantly reduced violence in rebel-held territory although fighting continues to rage in some areas.

With another round of U.N. mediated peace talks on the horizon in Geneva, the opposition's chief representative group, the High Negotiations Committee, is being told by even its closest patrons it risks irrelevance if it does not adapt to the new realities.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, according to an interlocutor briefed on the matter, told the opposition it was time to formulate "a new vision."

"He didn't explicitly say Bashar (Assad) is going to stay, but if you read between the lines, if you say there needs to be a new vision, what is the most contentious issue out there? It's whether Bashar stays," said the interlocutor, who mediates between the opposition and state capitals and requested anonymity so as not to compromise his work.

It is a difficult pill to swallow for the opposition, which has been holding a series of meetings as part of a months-long stock-taking process in which its members are expected to narrow their aims and refresh their leadership.

However, at a two-day meeting in Riyadh this week that was meant to try and bridge differences between the three main political opposition groups and come up with a unified vision based on the new political and military reality, divisions were once again on full display.

The opposition's chief representative group, the Saudi-based High Negotiations Committee (HNC), publicly held on to its position that Assad must step down before any political transition. In a statement, it said the opposition group known as the "Moscow Platform" insisted Assad's departure must not be a precondition for talks.

"We refuse any role for Assad during a transitional period," insisted spokesman Ahmad Ramadan of the National Syrian Coalition, the leading bloc in the HNC, which has always staked out a maximalist position against Assad.

But internally, there is talk of restructuring the HNC to give weight to the more conciliatory voices among the opposition — representatives based in Cairo and Moscow that groups within the HNC have long derided as the "internal opposition" for their perceived cozy relations with Damascus.

It comes at the urging of the U.N.'s top Syria envoy, Staffan de Mistura, who spent much of the last Geneva talks trying to reconcile the HNC and the Cairo and Moscow groups.

De Mistura set expectations last week that those efforts would bear fruit. He said the opposition was in the midst of "intensive internal discussions" in order to come up with "a more inclusive and perhaps even

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more pragmatic approach" to negotiations, saying he hoped an outcome could materialize by October.

The shifts reflect the changing priorities of the opposition's chief backers — the United States, Europe, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia — which are now more concerned with preserving their own, narrowly conceived strategic interests, than they are with unseating Assad.

For the U.S., that means focusing on fighting the Islamic State group and containing Iran's influence in Syria, to protect its ally Israel. Saudi Arabia, too, wants to contain its regional archrival, Iran, as well as wrest influence away from Qatar, which is seen as a key backer to the HNC and some rebel groups on the ground. Ankara's top priority is to contain the U.S.-backed Kurdish PYD party in northern Syria, which it fears will inspire Kurdish separatism in east Turkey.

Indeed, these nations have never seriously challenged Assad's hegemony militarily, leaving Russia and Iran holding the cards.

Former President Barack Obama fastidiously avoided striking Assad's forces, even after his administration concluded Damascus had trespassed the president's "red line" against chemical warfare; U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is reported to have told the U.N.'s general secretary in July that President Donald Trump's administration would leave Syria's fate in Russia's hands.

Syrian government forces have blocked aid agencies from delivering relief to several areas they have held under siege, and while the U.N. has condemned the tactic as "barbaric" and "medieval," it has been criticized for paying dividends to Damascus, which has seen these areas capitulate one by one. Russia's own leverage over the opposition comes from negotiating cease-fires for besieged areas, which are otherwise pounded mercilessly by air strikes and artillery.

It's not clear what the truces achieve in the long term. The same can be said about the opposition's reorientation, if such a thing indeed happens.

At a rare public speech before Syrian diplomats in Damascus this week, a confident Assad derided the West and declared Syria will look east when it comes to political, economic and cultural relations.

"We will not give them (our enemies) in politics what they failed to take in war," he said.

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Associated Press writer Zeina Karam in Beirut contributed to this report.

## Hurricane Harvey likely to boost gas prices for US drivers

By The Associated Press

Hurricane Harvey is expected to hit a refinery-rich stretch of the Gulf Coast and U.S. drivers could soon see the impact at the gas pump.

Some refineries are expected to shut down until the storm passes, possibly disrupting gasoline supplies.

Wholesale gasoline futures rose Thursday 5 cents, or 3 percent, to \$1.66 per gallon, and experts say that will quickly show up on service-station signs.

"Starting (Thursday night) you could start to see the Harvey effect being factored into gas prices," said Patrick DeHaan, an analyst with GasBuddy. "The good news is this isn't Hurricane Katrina."

That Gulf storm in August 2005 caused about a 40-cent increase overnight, DeHaan said. We might not know the full impact of Harvey until Monday, when refineries have had a chance to assess damage, which could be caused by flooding or power outages, he said.

"We'll see retail prices move up in every nook and cranny of the country through this very uncertain weekend," said Tom Kloza, an analyst with the Oil Price Information Service.

Kloza said an increase of 5 to 15 cents per gallon was most likely but a spike of up to 25 cents by Labor Day was possible if the hurricane hits a refining center.

Before the storm crept so close to the Texas Gulf Coast, the nationwide average price for a gallon of regular gasoline rose a penny this week to \$2.35, according to AAA. A year ago, the average price was \$2.19 a gallon.

In the Gulf of Mexico, oil and natural gas operators have begun evacuating workers from offshore platforms.

The U.S. Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement said that based on reports from operators at midday Thursday, workers had been removed from 39 platforms. The agency said that nearly 10 percent of oil production and 15 percent of natural gas output in the Gulf had been shut down.

Exxon Mobil shut down two of its platforms and was evacuating all personnel in the expected path of the storm, said spokeswoman Suann Guthrie. She said refineries were operating normally late Thursday.

## **Studies: Automated safety systems are preventing car crashes**

**By JOAN LOWY, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Safety systems to prevent cars from drifting into another lane or that warn drivers of vehicles in their blind spots are beginning to live up to their potential to reduce crashes significantly, according to two studies released Wednesday.

At the same time, research by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety raises concern that drivers may be less vigilant when relying on automated safety systems or become distracted by dashboard displays that monitor how the systems are performing.

The two institute studies found that lane-keeping systems, some of which even nudge the vehicle back into its lane for the driver, and blind-spot monitoring systems had lower crash rates than the same vehicles without the systems.

The lane-keeping study looked at police crash data from 25 states between 2009 and 2015 for vehicle models where the systems were sold as optional. Lane-keeping systems lowered rates of single-vehicle, sideswipe and head-on crashes of all severities by 11 percent, and crashes of those types in which there were injuries, by 21 percent, the study found.

Because there were only 40 fatal crashes in the data, researchers used a simpler analysis that didn't control for differences in drivers' ages, genders, insurance risk and other factors for those crashes. They found the technology cut the fatal crash rate by 86 percent.

That's probably high, said Jessica Cicchino, the institute's vice president for research, but even if lane-keeping systems cut such crashes by half it would be significant, she said. Cicchino said about a quarter of traffic fatalities involve a vehicle drifting into another lane.

"Now we have evidence that this technology really can save lives and has the potential to prevent thousands of deaths once it's on every vehicle," Cicchino said.

If all passenger vehicles had been equipped with lane departure warning systems in 2015, an estimated 85,000 police-reported crashes would have been prevented, the study found.

A second institute study of blind-spot detection systems — usually warning lights in side mirrors — found the systems lower the rate of all lane-change crashes by 14 percent and the rate of such crashes with injuries by 23 percent. If all passenger vehicles were equipped with the systems about 50,000 police-reported crashes a year could be prevented, the study found.

Lane-keeping, blind-spot monitoring, and automatic braking systems, which can prevent rear-end crashes, are some of the building blocks of self-driving car technology.

Greg Brannon, the Automobile Association of America's director of automotive engineering, called the institute's studies "encouraging." But he cautioned that is "critical that drivers understand the capabilities and, more importantly, the limitations of the safety technology in their vehicle before getting behind the wheel."

For all the promise technologies hold to enhance safety, researchers are also concerned that they are changing driver behavior.

A separate study by the insurance industry-funded institute and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's AgeLab found that drivers using automated systems that scan for parking spots and then park the car spend a lot more time looking at dashboard displays than at the parking spot, the road in front or the road behind. That was true even when the systems were searching for a parking spot and drivers were still responsible for steering.

Drivers using parking assist systems spent 46 percent of their time looking at the dashboard while ap-

proaching and selecting a parking spot compared to just 3 percent when not using the systems.

Drivers of vehicles equipped with blind-spot monitoring have also told researchers that they don't look behind them as often when changing lanes because they rely on the safety systems.

While the safety systems are reducing crashes, "it's still possible that there are some crashes that are happening that wouldn't have happened before because people are now behaving in different ways," Cicchino said.

Persuading drivers to use safety technology can also be a hurdle. An institute study released in June found lane-keeping systems are turned off by drivers nearly half the time. Drivers often find the beeping or buzzing warnings irritating.

Automakers, taking note of the problem, appear to be switching to systems that vibrate the steering wheel or driver's seat, Cicchino said.

"The vibrating is often more subtle than the beeping," she said. "When a system beeps, it's telling everybody in the car you did something wrong."

Follow Joan Lowy on Twitter @AP\_Joan\_Lowy

## Lab-made "mini organs" helping doctors treat cystic fibrosis

By MARIA CHENG, AP Medical Writer

UTRECHT, Netherlands (AP) — Els van der Heijden, who has cystic fibrosis, was finding it ever harder to breathe as her lungs filled with thick, sticky mucus. Despite taking more than a dozen pills and inhalers a day, the 53-year-old had to stop working and scale back doing the thing she loved best, horseback riding.

Doctors saw no sense in trying an expensive new drug because it hasn't been proven to work in people with the rare type of cystic fibrosis that van der Heijden had.

Instead, they scraped a few cells from van der Heijden and used them to grow a mini version of her large intestine in a petri dish. When van der Heijden's "mini gut" responded to treatment, doctors knew it would help her too.

"I really felt, physically, like a different person," van der Heijden said after taking a drug — and getting back in the saddle.

This experiment to help people with rare forms of cystic fibrosis in the Netherlands aims to grow mini intestines for every Dutch patient with the disease to figure out, in part, what treatment might work for them. It's an early application of a technique now being worked on in labs all over the world, as researchers learn to grow organs outside of the body for treatment — and maybe someday for transplants.

So far, doctors have grown mini guts — just the size of a pencil point — for 450 of the Netherlands' roughly 1,500 cystic fibrosis patients.

"The mini guts are small, but they are complete," said Dr. Hans Clevers of the Hubrecht Institute, who pioneered the technique. Except for muscles and blood vessels, the tiny organs "have everything you would expect to see in a real gut, only on a really small scale."

These so-called organoids mimic features of full-size organs, but don't function the same way. Although many of the tiny replicas are closer to undeveloped organs found in an embryo than adult ones, they are helping scientists unravel how organs mature and providing clues on how certain diseases might be treated.

In Australia, mini kidneys are being grown that could be used to test drugs. Researchers in the U.S. are experimenting with tiny bits of livers that might be used to boost failing organs. At Cambridge University in England, scientists have created hundreds of mini brains to study how neurons form and better understand disorders like autism. During the height of the Zika epidemic last year, mini brains were used to show the virus causes malformed brains in babies.

In the Netherlands, the mini guts are used as a stand-in for cystic fibrosis patients to see if those with rare mutations might benefit from a number of pricey drugs, including Orkambi. Made by Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Orkambi costs about 100,000 euros per patient every year in some parts of Europe, and it's more than double that in the U.S., which approved the drug in 2015. Despite being initially rejected by the

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Dutch government for being too expensive, negotiations with Vertex were reopened in July.

Making a single mini gut and testing whether the patient would benefit from certain drugs costs a couple of thousand euros. The program is paid for by groups including health insurance companies, patient foundations and the government. The idea is to find a possible treatment for patients, and avoid putting them on expensive drugs that wouldn't work for them.

About 50 to 60 patients across the Netherlands have been treated after drugs were tested on organoids using their cells, said Dr. Kors van der Ent, a cystic fibrosis specialist at the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital, who leads the research.

Clevers made a discovery about a decade ago that got researchers on their way. They found pockets of stem cells, which can turn into many types of other cells, in the gut. They then homed in a growing environment in the lab that spurred these cells to reproduce rapidly and develop.

"To our surprise, the stem cells started building a mini version of the gut," Clevers recalled.

Cystic fibrosis is caused by mutations in a single gene that produces a protein called CFTR, responsible for balancing the salt content of cells lining the lungs and other organs.

To see if certain drugs might help cystic fibrosis patients, the medicines are given to their custom-made organoids in the lab. If the mini organs puff up, it's a sign the cells are now correctly balancing salt and water. That means the drugs are working, and could help the patient from whom the mini gut was made.

Researchers are also using the mini guts to try another approach they hope will someday work in people — using a gene editing technique to repair the faulty cystic fibrosis gene in the organoid cells.

Other experiments are underway in the Netherlands and the U.S. to test whether organoids might help pinpoint treatments for cancers involving lungs, ovaries and pancreas.

While the idea sounds promising, some scientists said there are obstacles to using mini organs to study cancer.

Growing a mini cancer tumor, for example, would be far more challenging because scientists have found it difficult to make tumors in the lab that behave like in real life, said Mathew Garnett of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, who has studied cancer in mini organs but is not connected to Clevers' research.

Also, growing the cells and testing them must happen faster for cancer patients who might not have much time to live, he said.

Meanwhile, Clevers wants to one day make organs that are not so mini.

"My dream would be to be able to custom-make organs," he said, imagining a future where doctors might have a "freezer full of livers" to choose from when sick patients arrive.

Others said while such a vision is theoretically possible, huge hurdles remain.

"There are still enormous challenges in tissue engineering with regards to the size of the structure we're able to grow," said Jim Wells, a pediatrics professor at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. He said the mini organs are far smaller than what would be needed to transplant into people and it's unclear if scientists can make a working, life-sized organ in the lab.

There are other limitations to growing miniature organs in a dish, said Madeline Lancaster at Cambridge University.

"We can study physical changes and try to generate drugs that could prevent detrimental effects of disease, but we can't look at the complex interplay between organs and the body," she said.

For patients like van der Heijden, who was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis as a toddler, the research has helped her regain her strength. Vertex agreed to supply her with the drug.

"It was like somebody opened the curtains and said, 'Sunshine, here I am, please come out and play.'" she said. "It's strange to think this is all linked to some of my cells in a lab."

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This Associated Press series was produced in partnership with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Up from the ashes: Samsung unveils successor to Note 7 phone

By ANICK JESDANUN, AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Samsung is trying to move past last year's disastrous Galaxy Note 7 launch with a successor sporting a dual-lens camera, animated messages, expanded note-taking — and lower battery capacity.

The South Korean tech giant is no longer trying to squeeze more battery power into each phone. Last year's Note 7 had to be recalled after dozens spontaneously caught fire because of defective batteries.

Samsung responded by subjecting new phones to multiple inspections and giving the battery more physical protection, taking up room normally available for the charge.

Although the success of this past spring's Galaxy S8 phone suggests that Samsung has recovered from the Note 7 debacle, which included bans on airline flights, any further mistakes could prove fatal.

"Here it is from the ashes, literally, a rebirth of this pretty iconic brand," said Bob O'Donnell, a veteran consumer tech analyst at Technalysis Research.

### THE PRICE TAG

Unveiled Monday, the Galaxy Note 8 will go on sale Sept. 15 in the U.S., about the time Apple is expected to come out with new iPhones. Advance orders for the Note 8 begin Thursday.

The phone is among the most expensive, starting at about \$930. By contrast, the iPhone 7 starts at about \$650 and the S8 at \$750. Samsung's Note phones tend to be niche products aimed at people who use their phones more than the average consumer.

But O'Donnell said the Note 8 launch could boost interest in Samsung's mainstream phones.

"Having a halo product at the top of the line helps drive interest across the line," he said. "The Note 8 will make more people aware of the S8."

Jan Dawson, chief analyst at Jackdaw Research, said the phone should be popular among loyal Note users who have had to wait two years since the last model. But Dawson said the price could give consumers pause.

### NEW AND NOT

The Note 8 phone offers significant improvements over the last Note model still selling. But the S8 already has one of the Note 8's signature features, an "infinity display" that maximizes screen size by reducing the frame, or bezel, surrounding the display. The Note 8's screen will measure 6.3 inches diagonally, up from the Note 7's 5.7 inches, without feeling much bigger.

The Note 8 also matches the S8 in offering the ability to unlock phones with iris patterns, free premium earbuds from Samsung's AKG brand and a slot for adding storage beyond the 64 gigabytes included.

Unlike the S8, the Note 8 will have two camera lenses on the back — one with twice the magnification — allowing for sharper close-ups. The Note 8 will match Apple's iPhone 7 Plus in using that second lens for software tricks that blur out the background in portrait shots. Samsung offers more tweaking capabilities after the shot, though Apple may be adding improvements as well in the upcoming iPhones.

### PEN FEATURES

Samsung's Note line is notable for its stylus, and the new pen restores some of the hardware improvements introduced — then taken away — with the Note 7. A popular feature has been the ability to write notes on the phone's lock screen, much like a chalkboard. Samsung is expanding how much people can write — up to 100 screens full of notes, rather than just one.

Also coming is the ability to handwrite text messages, rather than just typing them. They are sent as animated GIF files, so friends without Note 8 phones can read them, too. With Apple's Messages app, recipients must have iPhones or iPads with a recent software update for animation to work.

The pen will also enable full-sentence translations for travelers, with automatic conversions of currencies and units such as feet and meters.

### POWER MATTERS

Samsung is taking a conservative approach to its battery, as it did with the S8. Capacity is reduced by 6 percent, as thicker walls and other safety measures take away room once devoted to the charge. Still,

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Samsung says the capacity is enough for all-day use, thanks to efficiencies from better software.

To boost confidence, Samsung is also seeking certification from an outside safety lab, UL.

Patrick Moorhead, principal analyst at Moor Insights & Strategy, said the fact the S8 outsold last year's S7 shows that "consumers are well past the Note 7 issues. Consumers are a forgiving bunch, and as long as there aren't strings of issues, they quickly forgive and forget."

## PROSPECTS

Moorhead said Samsung's new Android phone represents its "best opportunity to gain market share from Apple as this is the first super-premium phone they've had for years."

But it comes as Apple is expected to release its own super-premium phone for the iPhone's 10th anniversary. Apple hasn't said anything about it, though it's likely to make an announcement in the coming weeks. Carolina Milanesi, a mobile tech analyst with Creative Strategies, said high-end users tend to stick with the system they already have, whether that's iPhones or Android.

## 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.

## A puzzle for central bankers: Solid growth but low inflation

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER, AP Economics Writer

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming (AP) — Against a backdrop of strengthening growth but chronically low inflation, Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and other central bankers are taking their measure of the global economy at their annual conference in the shadow of Wyoming's Grand Teton Mountains.

With the prospect of new leadership at the Fed within months, investors will be listening for any hint of shifting interest rate plans from the policymakers. The most watched events will come Friday, when Yellen and Mario Draghi, head of the European Central Bank, will each address the conference.

Though a surprise announcement can't be ruled out, most analysts expect no major policy changes to be announced by either leader. Still, central bankers going back to Alan Greenspan's appearances in the 1980's have sometimes used the annual conference to send messages to the financial markets.

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Yellen's predecessor, Ben Bernanke, signaled a new round of Fed bond purchases in 2010 to try to invigorate a weak U.S. recovery. And last year, Yellen let markets know that more rate hikes were coming. The Jackson Hole conference, sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, is in its 41st year.

The conference occurs as the Fed is in the midst of gradually and modestly raising its benchmark rate to reflect a strengthened U.S. economy. By contrast, the ECB is still buying bonds to keep keeping rates at ultra-low levels but may be preparing to slowly taper its purchases next year.

The official theme of this year's conference — "Fostering a Dynamic Global Economy" — is certainly timely. Though the global economy appears more stable than at any other point in the past decade, growth since the 2008-2009 recession has remained sluggish in the United States and most other industrial countries. One consequence is that discontent has grown among groups that feel left behind, having helped fuel Donald Trump's election victory and Britain's vote to exit the European Union.

The stated topic of Yellen's speech Friday will be financial stability, which may provide a platform to address concerns that the Fed's ultra-low rates have fueled asset bubbles in the stock market. Many Fed officials, including Yellen, have said in the past that they do not think asset prices have reached dangerous heights.

The Fed has raised its key policy rate twice this year, in March and June. It's still signaling that it plans to raise rates a third time before year's end and to begin paring its bond portfolio — a move that could increase rates on mortgages and some other loans.

Many analysts say they think the Fed will keep raising rates at only a very gradual pace until it's confident that a recent puzzling slowdown in inflation reflects temporary factors and will reverse course as low unemployment starts boosting wages and spending. Inflation has been running below the Fed's 2 percent target for five years. Chronically low inflation can depress economic growth because consumers typically delay purchases when they think prices will stay the same or even decline.

On Friday, Yellen could offer guidance on what the Fed might announce at its next meeting, Sept. 19-20, about its key short-term rate or about the expected start of its parings of its bond portfolio.

Investors will also be listening to what message Draghi — the head of the central bank for the 19 nations that use the euro currency — may send. Three years ago, Draghi signaled in a speech at Jackson Hole that the ECB was preparing to begin buying bonds to keep borrowing rates low and support an anemic European recovery. If not now, then sometime soon, Draghi is expected to signal that the ECB is preparing to start reducing those purchases.

Draghi might choose to wait until the ECB meets next month to communicate any policy shift, in part out of concern that the euro's value has already risen in anticipation of an ECB move and thereby made European exports costlier. The euro's drop has also lowered import prices, further depressing inflation and complicating the ECB's mission. In the 12 months ending in July, annual inflation in the eurozone was 1.3 percent, well below the ECB's target of just below 2 percent.

Such subpar inflation, along with lackluster growth, has hampered policymakers in the United States, Europe and Japan throughout the recovery from the 2008 financial crisis.

"It is a problem in the United Kingdom, in Germany, in Japan," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at DS Economics. "Nobody knows where inflation is going."

Besides assessing possible asset bubbles and undesirably low inflation, another discussion point will likely emerge at this year's conference — at least on the sidelines: Whether Yellen, the first woman to lead the U.S. central bank, will be attending her last Jackson Hole conference as Fed chair.

Yellen's four-year term as chair will end in February, and Trump has made clear he is considering replacing her, though he hasn't ruled out asking her to remain. One candidate the president has mentioned is Gary Cohn, a former Goldman Sachs senior executive who leads Trump's National Economic Council.

In a survey released this week of 184 economists who belong to the National Association of Business Economists, only 17 percent said they expected Yellen to be re-nominated. Nearly half said they thought Trump would tap Cohn.

Not everyone is convinced that Cohn — who, unlike the three most recent Fed chairs, isn't a Ph.D. economist — even wants the job.

"Cohn is a very smart and competent businessman," said Sung Won Sohn, an economics professor at California State University-Channel Islands. "But does he really want to go into the cultural environment that is the Federal Reserve?"

Fed Up, a group representing community activists, labor unions and liberal policy groups, plans to demonstrate here in favor of having Yellen stay as chair. The group argues that Yellen's low-rate policies have helped the job market recover and provided job opportunities for all groups, including minorities. Fed Up says it's wary of critics who have said Yellen should have been more aggressive in raising rates to ensure that future inflation doesn't accelerate to worrisome levels.

"Those of us who can't afford another crash are coming to Jackson Hole to shape the direction of the Fed," said Shawn Sebastian, co-chair of the Fed Up campaign. "The economy is in real danger, and low-income workers, particularly people of color, are the ones who will face the consequences."

## Insurer fills last hole in health law marketplaces for 2018

By **JULIE CARR SMYTH and TOM MURPHY, Associated Press**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The lone U.S. county still at risk of leaving shoppers with no choices next year on the federal health law's insurance marketplace has landed an insurer.

Ohio-based insurer CareSource will step up to provide coverage in Paulding County, Ohio, in 2018, the company and the state Department of Insurance announced Thursday.

The most recent national analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation identified Paulding, just south of Toledo, as the final county still at risk of lacking an insurer when 2018 signups begin Nov. 1. About 10 million people, including 11,000 Ohio residents, currently are served through HealthCare.gov and its state counterparts, a system created under the Affordable Care Act.

Earlier this year, well over 40 mostly rural counties faced the prospect of having no options for their exchanges next year, but insurers have gradually come forward to fill the gaps.

Insurers have been pulling back from the exchanges for a few years now, after getting stung by heavy losses and struggling to attract enough young, healthy customers to balance all the claims they get from people who use their coverage. Many also cited uncertainty over the future of former President Barack Obama's health care law, which Congress is revisiting — though, so far, without success.

Coverage choices have grown particularly thin in rural areas. Those markets are uninviting for insurers because they usually have a smaller, older customer base and a care provider like a hospital system with a dominant market position. That can make it difficult to negotiate payment rates.

Despite those challenges, insurers are expanding to fill holes in these markets because they're getting a nudge from state regulators who don't want to leave their constituents without options. These exchanges offer the only way for customers to buy individual insurance with help from income-based tax credit created by the ACA.

"Good, long-term relationships with the insurance commissioner are very important to an insurance company," said health care consultant Robert Laszewski, a former insurance executive.

Some insurers also have figured out they can make money on exchanges by targeting low-income customers, who receive big tax credits to help cover their insurance bills that can both insulate consumers and provide steady revenue to insurers.

In Ohio, 20 of 88 counties were threatened with a lack of coverage as insurers withdrew. State officials had previously announced coverage was restored to the other 19.

Ohio State Insurance Director Jillian Froment said working through the challenge of covering affected counties has been a priority of her staff in recent weeks.

"There is a lot of uncertainty facing consumers when it comes to health insurance and these announcements will provide important relief," she said.

Republican Gov. John Kasich has been part of a bipartisan governors' group calling for action in Washington to strike a compromise on the embattled health care law, which many Republicans revile as "Obamacare," in order to stabilize insurance markets.

While insurers now have made preliminary plans to sell coverage on the exchanges in every county next

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year, they still have about a month to back out.

They are worried about the fate of billions of dollars in payments from the government to cover cost-sharing reductions for customers with modest incomes.

These payments reimburse insurers for lowering deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses for customers. They are separate from the income-based tax credits that help people buy coverage.

The federal government announced last week that it will make these payments for this month, but their future is unclear. President Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened to end them, and insurers say premiums could soar for some of their plans if this happens.

Even so, CareSource President and CEO Pamela Morris expressed her company's commitment to the exchange. The company had been one of the insurers to cover some other counties that lost their exchange options.

"The Marketplace provides vital health care coverage to more than 10.3 million Americans and we want to be a resource for consumers left without options," she said in a statement issued Thursday. "Our decision to offer coverage in the bare counties speaks to our mission and commitment to the Marketplace and serving those who are in need of health care coverage."

AP Health Writer Tom Murphy reported from Indianapolis. Data editor Meghan Hoyer contributed from Washington, D.C.

## Apple gets \$208M in tax breaks to build Iowa data center

By DAVID PITT, Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Iowa approved a deal Thursday to give Apple \$208 million in state and local tax breaks to build two data storage centers near Des Moines and to create at least 50 jobs — a pact that critics quickly panned.

The deal approved by the Iowa Economic Development Authority includes a refund of \$19.6 million in state sale taxes for Apple Inc. and a \$188 million break on property taxes from Waukee, a booming suburb bordering Des Moines.

In addition to the promised 50 jobs, Apple has agreed to buy 2,000 acres of land for the \$1.4 billion project, enough to allow for future development, said Debi Durham, the state's economic development director.

At an event with Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds outside the Capitol building, Apple CEO Tim Cook credited Iowa's "world-class power grid" and what he called the state's culture of developing computer programmers who have created applications ranging from education to entertainment.

"At Apple we admire what you guys have accomplished and we want to be a part of it," Cook told cheering supporters. Neither he nor the governor took questions at the event.

Cook promised to invest \$100 million to a newly created public improvement fund to be used for community development, including the revitalization of streets, libraries and parks. The first project will be a youth sports campus that can host community and high school games and that will include a greenhouse, playground and fishing pier.

Critics questioned the wisdom and fairness of giving such tax breaks to one of the world's richest companies.

"It's a net fiscal loss that it's a straightforward giveaway in the economy to a company that's extraordinarily wealthy and it makes no sense from an economist's point of view. It only makes sense from a politician's point of view," said David Swenson, an economist at Iowa State University and critic of such large economic development project tax breaks.

Reynolds, speaking briefly to reporters after the announcement, defended the use of the state's \$19.6 million in tax credits at a time when the state budget shortfall that may require a special legislative session to address, saying it's a minimal investment for the return Iowa will get.

"If we want to grow this economy and provide more revenue, then we should be doing what we can to bring jobs and businesses to the state of Iowa," she said. "This puts Iowa on the world stage. This gives

us the opportunity with a global company like Apple to say we are the place to be.

Google, Facebook and Microsoft have already built billion-dollar data centers in Iowa. Like Apple, they were drawn to the state by its generous tax breaks, wind-generated electricity and relative security from natural disasters that could disrupt service.

The economic development board's chairman, Chris Murray, said such projects bring people who build homes, generating tax revenue and causing other businesses to explore moving to Iowa.

"They say we should go to Iowa because we have these epicenters there. And as you look at the age demographics and the growth of Iowa, I think it's really difficult to challenge the fact there are ancillary growth benefits from making an investment like this," he said.

Follow David Pitt on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/DavePitt>

## Shopping by voice on Amazon or Google device could cost you

By ANICK JESDANUN, AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In the name of convenience, Amazon and Walmart are pushing people to shop by just talking to a digital assistant.

Shopping by voice means giving orders to the Alexa assistant on Amazon's Echo speaker and other devices, even if your hands are tied up with dinner or dirty diapers. And next month, Walmart will start offering voice shopping, too, with the Google Assistant on the rival Home speaker.

Voice shopping is still new. But once you start using it, look out — you might never know if it's offering you the best deal. Because these devices can't say much without tiring your ears, voice shopping precludes some of the savvy shopping practices you may have relied on to find the best bargains — in particular, researching products and comparing prices.

You'd be leaving much of the buying decision to Amazon, Walmart or other retailers.

### HOOKED ON AMAZON

Amazon has had more than a year's head start, and dominates voice shopping. Google introduced shopping to Home in February, letting people order essentials from more than 40 retailers like Target and Costco under its Google Express program. Its partnership with Walmart means hundreds of thousands of items will be available to customers in late September.

With websites and apps, many customers place items in the cart, but change their minds before completing the order, said Lauren Beitelspacher, a marketing professor at Babson College in Massachusetts. Voice shopping eliminates those intervening steps.

And with Amazon so far ahead, voice shopping with Alexa is another way of getting you hooked on Amazon. Although Amazon allows some third-party ordering through Alexa, including pizza from Domino's and hotels through Kayak, general shopping is limited to Amazon's own store. If Alexa orders diapers for you just as you run out, for instance, Amazon locks in the order before you have a chance to visit Walmart.

"You can't get away from Amazon," Beitelspacher said. "I don't know if gimmick is the right word, but (voice shopping) is part of a strategy to be omnipresent in consumers' lives."

### ASSISTANT IN CHARGE

Ask Alexa to buy something, and it presents you with something you've bought before or an educated guess based on some undisclosed mix of price, satisfaction rating and shipping time. Amazon won't provide more details. You can get a product's average customer-satisfaction rating, but not specific reviews, even on screen-equipped Echo Show devices.

Brian Elliott, general manager of Google Express, says that with most affiliated retailers, personalization occurs as the assistant learns shoppers' preferences, but the integration with Walmart will happen more quickly.

In some ways, shopping by voice assistant is a throwback to the days when you were largely limited to what sales representatives recommended at a physical store.

Amazon's website gives you a lot of information about most products, from color options and sizes to the specific reasons other customers hated a product you're considering. You're able to compare similar

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items and choose something cheaper if you're willing to sacrifice some features or take a chance on an unknown manufacturer.

And, of course, you can also compare Amazon's prices with those of other online merchants.

But with Amazon's voice shopping, it's back to what the company's representative recommends.

Voice shopping requires membership in Amazon's \$99-a-year Prime loyalty program, and it works with most of the tens of millions of items eligible for free shipping. But someone browsing on the web might find deals in non-Prime items; Alexa won't let you buy them.

In addition, Alexa's interactions with shoppers are constrained by the fact that listening and speaking can be a lot slower than reading and clicking.

And while Amazon's website won't necessarily list the cheapest option first either, the alternatives are easier to view on a screen.

Justin Evans, an engineer in Whitman, Massachusetts, bought oatmeal and smart plugs using Alexa to claim exclusive discounts, but he prefers browsing and reviewing products for general shopping. "I'm a less impulsive shopper than I think their target market is," he said.

## SHOPPING OUT LOUD

Companies are aware that voice shopping takes getting used to. "It's not natural to shout out a purchase desire and have it be fulfilled," said Ryne Misso of the Market Track retail research firm in Chicago.

Jenny Blackburn, Amazon's director of voice shopping, believes it will catch on once people get used to it.

To get people started, Amazon has been offering exclusive deals through Alexa and a \$10 credit on the first order. For its annual Prime Day promotion in July, Amazon gave voice shoppers a head start of two hours.

Amazon says voice shopping has grown in the year-plus it's had it, though it wouldn't release figures. "We're really just getting started with it," Blackburn said in an interview.

## VOICE'S LIMITED RANGE

Blackburn said voice shopping works best for products with "lightweight decisions," such as batteries, cat food and paper towels. Sure, Alexa can order you a TV, but you'll probably want to do some research first.

Nels Romerdahl, a student at the University of Hawaii in Maui, said Alexa can be a big improvement over Amazon Dash buttons — plastic gadgets that can you place around the house and press anytime you need to reorder a specific item. But he doesn't use either Alexa or Dash for recurring items — he stocks up when his parents visit Costco every few weeks.

To prevent inadvertent orders, like the widely circulated report from a local television station of a 6-year-old girl who had Alexa order a dollhouse and sugar cookies for Christmas, Amazon lets you set up a PIN you can recite to the assistant. Amazon disputes the report, saying someone would have had to say "yes" before the order went through.

To boost comfort, Amazon promises free returns on voice orders; normally, Amazon charges a shipping fee for returns unless the company's at fault.

That might not satisfy everyone. Los Angeles attorney Pam Meyer, who bought some dog treats through Alexa to claim her \$10 credit, said she'd want something like a cash-back guarantee when Alexa doesn't offer the best price.

AP Retail Writer Anne D'Innocenzio contributed to this report.

## Hurricane Harvey likely to boost gas prices for US drivers

By The Associated Press

Hurricane Harvey is expected to hit a refinery-rich stretch of the Gulf Coast and U.S. drivers could soon see the impact at the gas pump.

Some refineries are expected to shut down until the storm passes, possibly disrupting gasoline supplies.

Wholesale gasoline futures rose Thursday 5 cents, or 3 percent, to \$1.66 per gallon, and experts say that will quickly show up on service-station signs.

"Starting (Thursday night) you could start to see the Harvey effect being factored into gas prices," said

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Patrick DeHaan, an analyst with GasBuddy. "The good news is this isn't Hurricane Katrina."

That Gulf storm in August 2005 caused about a 40-cent increase overnight, DeHaan said. We might not know the full impact of Harvey until Monday, when refineries have had a chance to assess damage, which could be caused by flooding or power outages, he said.

"We'll see retail prices move up in every nook and cranny of the country through this very uncertain weekend," said Tom Kloza, an analyst with the Oil Price Information Service.

Kloza said an increase of 5 to 15 cents per gallon was most likely but a spike of up to 25 cents by Labor Day was possible if the hurricane hits a refining center.

Before the storm crept so close to the Texas Gulf Coast, the nationwide average price for a gallon of regular gasoline rose a penny this week to \$2.35, according to AAA. A year ago, the average price was \$2.19 a gallon.

In the Gulf of Mexico, oil and natural gas operators have begun evacuating workers from offshore platforms.

The U.S. Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement said that based on reports from operators at midday Thursday, workers had been removed from 39 platforms. The agency said that nearly 10 percent of oil production and 15 percent of natural gas output in the Gulf had been shut down.

Exxon Mobil shut down two of its platforms and was evacuating all personnel in the expected path of the storm, said spokeswoman Suann Guthrie. She said refineries were operating normally late Thursday.

## Global stocks edge higher ahead of key Jackson Hole events

By The Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Stock markets around the world edged higher Friday ahead of a raft of speeches from top central bankers meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, France's CAC 40 was up 0.3 percent at 5,126 while the FTSE 100 index of leading British shares rose 0.4 percent to 7,435. Germany's DAX was 0.4 percent higher at 12,223. U.S. stocks were heading for modest gains at the open with Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 futures up 0.2 percent.

CENTRAL BANKS: The main focus across all financial markets is the symposium in Jackson Hole. The most watched events Friday will be speeches from Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi. Though neither is expected to relay anything substantial on their path of their banks' future intentions, investors know that they could spring a surprise and won't want to be caught short ahead of the weekend. Traders will be monitoring the event to see if Yellen says anything about the prospects of a Fed rate hike later this year and if Draghi gives a hint as to when the ECB will start reining back its stimulus. Anything he says about the strong euro will also be of interest.

ANALYST TAKE: "The Jackson Hole Symposium is widely regarded as one of the most notable annual events, not only because of the speakers it attracts but also because it has been used as a platform to warn of upcoming policy announcements," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at OANDA.

CURRENCIES: The foreign exchange markets will likely be the initial outlet for any unexpected comments from either central banker. Ahead of their speeches, trading was lackluster with the euro up 0.2 percent to \$1.1820 and the dollar 0.1 percent firmer at 106.67 yen.

ASIA'S DAY: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 edged up 0.5 percent to finish at 19,452.61. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was little changed at 5,743.90. South Korea's Kospi was up 0.1 percent at 2,378.51. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 1.2 percent to 27,852.36, while the Shanghai Composite index was up 1.8 percent at 3,331.52.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude rose 31 cents to \$47.74 a barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, firmed 45 cents to \$52.11 a barrel.

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## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Aug. 25, the 237th day of 2017. There are 128 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On August 25, 1967, the Beatles boarded a train in London bound for Bangor, Wales, to attend a conference on transcendental meditation led by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi; the visit was cut short two days later when the group got word of the death of their manager, Brian Epstein. George Lincoln Rockwell, founder of the American Nazi Party, was shot to death at a shopping center in Arlington, Virginia; former party member John Patler was convicted of the killing. Actor Paul Muni, 71, died in Montecito, California.

On this date:

In 1718, hundreds of French colonists arrived in Louisiana, with some settling in present-day New Orleans.

In 1825, Uruguay declared independence from Brazil.

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed an act establishing the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior.

In 1921, the United States signed a peace treaty with Germany.

In 1944, during World War II, Paris was liberated by Allied forces after four years of Nazi occupation. Romania declared war on former ally Germany.

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a measure providing pensions for former U.S. presidents and their widows.

In 1960, opening ceremonies were held for the Summer Olympics in Rome.

In 1975, the Bruce Springsteen album "Born to Run" was released by Columbia Records.

In 1981, the U.S. spacecraft Voyager 2 came within 63,000 miles of Saturn's cloud cover, sending back pictures of and data about the ringed planet.

In 1989, Voyager 2 made its closest approach to Neptune, its final planetary target.

In 1997, former East German leader Egon Krenz was convicted of manslaughter in the deaths of citizens trying to flee to the West during Cold War; he was sentenced to 6 1/2 years' imprisonment. (Krenz was released in 2003 after serving less than four years.)

In 2009, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy died at age 77 in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, after a battle with a brain tumor.

Ten years ago: The government of Greece declared a nationwide state of emergency as the death toll from wildfires rose to at least 49. Bombs blamed on Islamic extremists killed at least 43 people at a park and a street-side food stall in Hyderabad, India.

Five years ago: Neil Armstrong, 82, who commanded the historic Apollo 11 lunar landing and was the first man to set foot on the moon in July 1969, died in Cincinnati, Ohio. A huge explosion rocked Venezuela's biggest oil refinery and unleashed a ferocious fire, killing at least 42 people. Alpha and long-shot Golden Ticket finished in a historic dead heat in the \$1 million Travers Stakes at Saratoga Race Course.

One year ago: Hillary Clinton said that Donald Trump had unleashed the "radical fringe" within the Republican Party, dubbing the billionaire businessman's campaign as one that will "make America hate again"; Trump rejected Clinton's allegations, defending his hard-line approach to immigration while trying to make the case to minority voters that Democrats had abandoned them. The bodies of two nuns, Sisters Margaret Held and Paula Merrill, both 68, were found in their home in Durant, Mississippi; a suspect has been charged with capital murder. Actor Marvin Kaplan, 89, died in Burbank, California.

Today's Birthdays: Game show host Monty Hall is 96. Actor Sean Connery is 87. Actor Page Johnson is 87. TV personality Regis Philbin is 86. Actor Tom Skerritt is 84. Jazz musician Wayne Shorter is 84. Movie director Hugh Hudson is 81. Author Frederick Forsyth is 79. Movie director John Badham is 78. Filmmaker Marshall Brickman is 78. Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal is 75. Rhythm-and-blues singer Walter Williams (The O'Jays) is 74. Actor Anthony Heald is 73. Rock singer-actor Gene Simmons is 68. Actor John Savage is 68. Author Martin Amis is 68. Country singer-musician Henry Paul (Outlaws; Blackhawk) is 68. Rock singer Rob

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Halford is 66. Rock musician Geoff Downes (Asia) is 65. Rock singer Elvis Costello is 63. Movie director Tim Burton is 59. Actor Christian LeBlanc is 59. Actress Ashley Crow is 57. Actress Ally Walker is 56. Country singer Cyrus (AKA Billy Ray Cyrus) is 56. Actress Joanne Whalley is 56. Rock musician Vivian Campbell (Def Leppard) is 55. Actor Blair Underwood is 53. Actor Robert Maschio is 51. Rap DJ Terminator X (Public Enemy) is 51. Alternative country singer Jeff Tweedy (Wilco) is 50. Actor David Alan Basche (BAYSH) is 49. Television chef Rachael Ray is 49. Actor Cameron Mathison is 48. Country singer Jo Dee Messina is 47. Model Claudia Schiffer is 47. Country singer Brice Long is 46. Actor-writer-director Ben Falcone is 44. Actor Eric Millegan is 43. Actor Alexander Skarsgard is 41. Actor Jonathan Togo is 40. Actor Kel Mitchell is 39. Actress Rachel Bilson is 36. Actress Blake Lively is 30. Actor Josh Flitter is 23.

Thought for Today: "No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helps you." — Althea Gibson, American tennis champion (born this date in 1927, died 2003).