

Groton Daily Independent

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- Groton Area School (updated 8-29)**
- Westport Town (updated 8-21-17)**
- Other Notices (updated 8-21)**

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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Saturday, Sept. 2

Heaven Bound Ministries: Worship in Pierpont at 5:30 p.m.

Soccer: Groton at Tea Area, Girls at 1 p.m., Boys at 3 p.m.

Catholic Parish: Mass at SEAS in Groton, 4:30 p.m.; Mass at St. Anthony, Bristol, 6 p.m.

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

Sunday, Sept. 3

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.

First Presbyterian: Bible Study at 9:30 a.m., Worship at 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Conde worship with communion, 9 a.m.; Fellowship time, 10 a.m.; Groton worship with communion, 11 a.m.

Catholic Parish: Mass at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church at 9 a.m., then at St. Joseph in Turton at 11 a.m.

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

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance: Sunday School for children, youth and adults, 9:15 a.m.; Worship at 10:45 a.m.

4 - LABOR DAY

Senior Menu: No Meal.

Dakota Brush

Brooms, Brushes, Mops, Can Liners, Paper Products.


Get Ready for Spring With
Wash Brushes & Squeegees

397-9337

104 N. Main, Groton

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A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water. A seagull is in flight in the upper left portion of the sky. The waves are gentle and white with foam as they wash onto the sandy beach in the foreground.

"If you don't
think every
day is a good
day, just try
missing
one."

•Cavett Robert•

Chicken Soup
for the Soul
@ChickenSoupSoul

State SBVI Division to Promote Prescription Assistance for Visually Impaired

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Human Services Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) will be promoting access to prescription labels for citizens with vision loss during National Medication Safety Awareness for the Blind Week, which is Sept. 9-15.

Individuals who cannot read prescription labels or distinguish among different medications must rely on memory, use compensatory strategies or devices, or depend on someone else for help when managing medications.

“Our hope is that SBVI staff can be a resource for pharmacists and citizens with vision loss to explore options for accessibility of prescriptions,” said SBVI Division Director Gaye Mattke.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires pharmacies to provide aids to facilitate effective communication between the pharmacist and patient so long as it does not present a financial burden to the pharmacy.

For more information or to request a demonstration from an SBVI staff member, please call 1-800-658-5411.

The mission of SBVI is to provide individualized rehabilitation services that result in optimal employment and independent living outcomes for citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

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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Service Notice: Margaret Padfield

Services for Margaret Padfield, 91, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 5th at the United Methodist Church, Conde. Rev. Thomas Carlson will officiate. Burial will follow in the Conde Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton

Visitation will be held at the chapel on Monday from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m.

Margaret passed away Thursday, August 31, 2017 at Groton Care and Rehabilitation Center.



**Soup, Pie,
& Sandwich
\$2.00 per item**

**St. John's Lutheran Church
Groton, SD
Thursday, September 14th**

**11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
Craft Items – Baked Goodies –
Garden Produce**

**Soups available:
Chili, Wild Rice,
Potato, Ham & Bean**

**For take-out orders, please call
397-2386 at 10:30 a.m. or after.**

The Making of a Touchdown

Juliana Kosel caught these shots of Marshall Lane scoring a touchdown in the second quarter.



It was yellow flag night at the football game

Groton Area scored two touchdowns in the second quarter and that was enough to fend off Sisseton in football action played Friday at Doney Field in Groton.

The game was carried live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Hanlon Brothers, James Valley Seed with Doug Jorgensen, Grain Solutions LLC - Jesse Zak, Groton Ford, Blocker Construction, Erickson Insurance Agency, Bahr Spray Foam & Construction, Allied Climate Professionals with Kevin Nehls, Olson Development, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc., Harry Implement of Ferney, Northern Plains Psychological Associates with Franne Sippel, Doug Abeln Seed Company, Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass and the touchdown sponsor was Cheri's on Main.

The game went over two and one-half hours as the yellow flags got a work out. Groton Area was penalized 17 times for 140 yards and Sisseton had 16 incomplete passes and seven penalties for 45 yards.

The first touchdown came on a Marshall Lane seven yard run. The PAT kick was bobbled but Marshall Lane picked up the loose ball and threw to Brandon Keith for a two point conversion. Groton's second touchdown came when Lucas Hinman broke a tackle and ran 20 yards.

Hunter Schaller kicked the PAT and that was Groton's 15 points on the night.

Groton had more first downs than Sisseton, 8-6. The Tigers carried the ball 38 times for 107 yards with Lucas Hinman having 18 carries for 77 yards. Sisseton rushed 32 times for 89 yards with Korbin Huber having eight carries for 47 yards.

Marshall Lane completed five of eight passes for 104 yards with Seric Shabazz having three catches for 60 yards. Colbey Lehrke of Sisseton completed five of 21 passes for 31 yards with Hunter Ryan having two receptions for 16 yards.

Groton Area lost two fumbles and Sisseton lost one of two fumbles.

Defensive leaders for Groton Area were Brandon Keith with 13 tackles and Jonathan Doeden with 10. Colby Lehrke led Sisseton with 13 tackles and Kaeden Metz had nine.

Groton Area, now 1-2 on the season, will travel to Beresford on Friday. Sisseton, now 0-2, will host Dakota Valley.



Lucas Hinman breaks a tackles and runs 20 yards to score for the Tigers. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Panelists Discuss the Future of Ethanol During State Fair Event

HURON, S.D. - South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU) hosted an E-30 panel discussion today at the State Fair to talk about the economic and environmental benefits ethanol brings to South Dakota and its agriculture producers.

"Producing higher levels of ethanol does not only benefit farmers but consumers as well," explains Marc Rauch, Co-Founder and Executive Vice President of The Auto Channel.

"The more ethanol we use the cleaner the air is and the better our engines run. That's good for everyone. My own tests and tests conducted by others, show that E30 ethanol-gasoline blends produce the best MPG (mile per gallon) results in most current gasoline-optimized vehicle engines, including E85 flex fuel vehicles. This means that consumers save money and get better mileage."

Rauch discussed the potential benefits higher levels of American production of ethanol would bring to the national economy.

"I'd rather give my fuel money to American farmers than to foreign dictators, so we can keep more money in the country," said Rauch. "By using E30 nationally we could save hundreds of billions of dollars that leave the country to be spent on importing foreign fuel.

If we can avoid sending the \$1 billion a day (\$360 billion per year) out of the country and instead, use those dollars here to pay salaries and buy domestically produced goods, those dollars become stimulus for the economy without having to print additional dollars and devalue those already in circulation. Then, if those dollars are spent on American workers and American products, we actually wind up recycling the dollars and multiplying its stimulus effect several fold. It could be possible to recycle the \$360 billion three, four, five, six times, giving us a trillion dollar-plus stimulus every year for every year that we can avoid importing petroleum oil."

Rauch is among three panelists who discussed the opportunities and benefits associated with fuels



South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU) hosted an E-30 panel discussion today at the State Fair to talk about the economic and environmental benefits ethanol brings to South Dakota and its agriculture producers.

Panelists include, from left to right: Dale Christensen, Board member of Glacial Lakes Energy; Doug Sombke, South Dakota Farmers Union President; Marc Rauch, Co-Founder and Executive Vice President of The Auto Channel.



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")**

containing higher blends of ethanol. Other panelists include: Doug Sombke, S.D. Farmers Union President and Dale Christensen, Board member of Glacial Lakes Energy.

"Having this panel at the State Fair will encourage people to use more ethanol and in return better our rural economies," says Doug Sombke, South Dakota Farmers Union President. "Using more ethanol would enhance the bottom line for family farms."

For more than three decades, S.D. Farmers Union members have shown their support for the ethanol industry. This support is the motivation behind SDFU's decision, alongside National Farmers Union and other state organizations, to unveil a recent initiative to advance federal policies that support U.S. renewable energy sources including ethanol.

More than \$1 million in tax revenue collected at the 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally

PIERRE, S.D. – Tax collections at the 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally increased by 6 percent compared to last year.

To date, the South Dakota Department of Revenue has collected \$1.26 million in taxes from temporary vendors at the 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. The state sales tax accounts for the majority of collections with \$715,757. At this time last year, the Department of Revenue collected \$1.19 million in taxes with \$674,660 in state sales tax.

While tax revenue increased in 2017, the number of vendors in the Black Hills area decreased. The 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally featured 1,050 vendors--down from last year's tally of 1,153.

"The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is an important part of South Dakota's tourist season," said Department of Revenue Secretary Andy Gerlach. "We value our partnerships with local governments, our fellow state agencies and the vendors at the rally. Each year, these partnerships ensure successful tax collection throughout the Black Hills."

The Northern Black Hills, which includes Sturgis and all other communities in Meade and Lawrence counties, was home to 857 vendors and \$969,840 in total tax collected. Of the tax collected in the northern hills, \$551,277 was state sales tax.

The Southern Black Hills, which includes Rapid City, Custer, Hill City, and Keystone, had 193 temporary vendors with \$290,854 in total tax collected--\$164,480 of which was state sales tax.

Taxes collected at the 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally included state sales, tourism, municipal sales and municipal gross receipts. For more statistics on the 2017 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, please see the attached document.

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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

~~Sept 5, 2017~~ – 7:00pm

September 11, 2017

Groton City Hall

Date Change due to Lack of Quorum

1. Minutes
2. Bills
3. Department reports – Herron (1st reading Ordinance #714), Lambertz, Mayou
4. FEMA Training September 26th & 27th Aberdeen
5. Law Review Symposium – Vermillion September 28 – Hope
6. Doug Hamilton representing the legion regarding the cemetery
7. Second council meeting in September
8. Request for community center for Community Thanksgiving Dinner-Tom & Barb Paepke
9. Second reading of ordinance #712 – Utility revisions
10. Motion to transfer \$200,000 from electric cash account to general cash account (\$75,314 in general now, chip seal expense)
11. Motion for automatic budget supplement to amend the budget for grant revenue (means of finance) & contingency (appropriations)
 - This will replenish the contingency for the amount previously used for baseball (\$48,850)
 - \$20,000 Dave Olson memorial grant & \$23,884.48 Game Fish & Parks grant
12. Second reading of ordinance #713 – 2018 Budget
13. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)

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KRISTI NOEM
REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH DAKOTA



Back to School

Can you believe the kids are back in school? Kassidy and Kennedy are in Brookings now – Kassidy for work and Kennedy to wrap up her last year at SDSU. I can't figure out how time flew by so fast! At least we still have Booker at home for a few more years. He started his sophomore year this fall and already has a few football games under his belt (Go Chargers!)

With one in high school, one in college, and another just getting into their career, I have a front-row ticket to the continuum of our education system. From this perspective, one thing is abundantly clear: states, individual school districts, and parents should have more control over what happens in schools than the federal government.

The Obama administration had pushed to federally regulate everything from what was taught in the classroom to what was served in the lunchroom. Whether it was a student in inner-city L.A. or Booker in Hamlin County, South Dakota, they wanted every student to learn the same thing, eat the same thing, do the same thing. I wholeheartedly disagree with that approach.

Last Congress, I helped get the Every Student Succeeds Act signed into law. At its core, the legislation stops federal micromanagement. It gives states greater flexibility to spend money in a way that benefits their students most. It empowers parents to hold schools accountable and modernizes the Impact Aid program, which many South Dakota schools rely on. Maybe most notably, the new law ensures the federal government can't pressure states into adopting specific academic standards, like Common Core.

Now, I'm working to do the same thing for school lunch. The Obama administration created a failing one-size-fits-all meal program that severely restricted meats, grains, sodium, and more without a good scientific basis for doing so. The sodium restrictions, for instance, were so limiting that many schools would have a difficult time serving milk or cheese because of the naturally occurring sodium in those products. Unbelievable!

I've introduced legislation to retain the U.S. Department of Agriculture's research and recommendations as a resource for schools, but there would be no requirement to follow the existing mandates.

I believe in the same philosophy of local control when it comes to colleges and universities too. Earlier this year, I helped the House pass the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act, which among other things would give states and local community leaders more flexibility in using federal education dollars. This way, states can innovate new learning experiences, better encourage apprenticeships and internships, and develop programs around the local economy's needs. Understanding the relationship between those educating Kennedy and those hiring Kassidy is essential as we prepare all students for good-paying, in-demand South Dakota jobs.

The bottom line is that I want kids of all ages and backgrounds to be excited about their future in South Dakota. That is best accomplished by decentralizing education and giving those closest to our kids greater control.

During their first few days back, I got to speak with fourth and fifth grade students in Rapid City. These kids were so inquisitive, so eager to learn. It was clear they were surrounded by teachers and school administrators who care deeply about their success. It's this community and involved parents that I can trust to make decisions about our kids' education, not federal bureaucrats who are trying to put every student into a single, nationwide model.

Preschool Levels of Excellence

The School Administrators of South Dakota recognize the importance of a quality preschool experience as an integral part of a student's success in school. In South Dakota, 76% of children under the age of 6 have all available parents in the labor force. The national average is 65%. South Dakota ranks the highest in the nation based on 2015 data. Those statistics make early childhood education that much more important in South Dakota. Knowing this, SASD began the process two years ago to put in place a tool to help identify and acknowledge Levels of Excellence for preschool programs in South Dakota. "We are hopeful that our process and tool will be available this fall for any preschool, public or private, who may be interested in going through the process of seeing how well their preschool performs in comparison to our Levels of Excellence" Rick Thaler, Committee Chair. The document and process put together by SASD is entirely voluntary.

The SASD Pre-School Standing Committee, Chaired by Rick Thaler was established and met for the first time in August of 2015. The late Dr. Gera Jacobs from USD was asked to take part in the work and she began to put together the framework for the Levels of Excellence. She was assisted by Dr. Sherrie Bosse from USD and Carmen Stewart from USD Head Start. The committee met over a two-year period to work through the Levels of Excellence document to make it as user friendly as possible for any preschool, yet have the validity it needed.

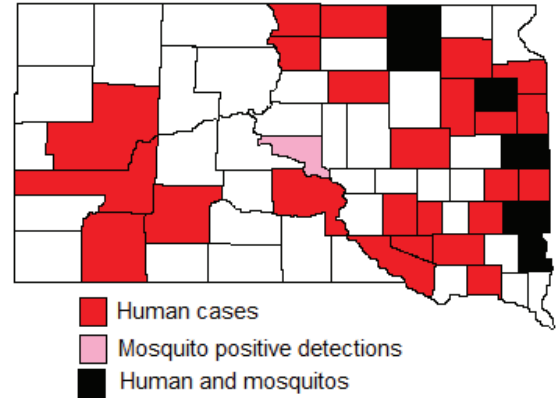
The Preschool Levels of Excellence document contains indicators that will identify where a preschool fall on a continuum of three levels; Proficient, Distinguished, and Exemplary based on a final tabulation of scores. The director or owner of the preschool does an initial self-evaluation with the document, and then a member from SASD will do their own evaluation of the preschool program. The two will then meet to discuss the final document before a tabulation is done by SASD. Once a level has been established, the preschool will receive a certificate from SASD identifying their level of excellence to display at their preschool. Their name and address, along with their level of excellence will also be hosted on the SASD.ORG website identifying preschools of excellence around the state. The level of excellence is good for three years before the process needs to be repeated. However, if a preschool is wanting to advance their level, they can request another evaluation before the three-year timeframe is up. "Early intervention through quality childhood programs are proven to be vital to later academic success for many children at the k-12 level. SASD is very proud to be the leader in our state as we raise the bar in preschool education. We believe that the SASD Level of Excellence program will have a positive impact on the lives of many of South Dakota's Children". Kevin Nelson, Principal of Beresford Elementary School.

During this past school year, seven school piloted the Levels of Excellence document. Their scores were tabulated and each of them received a certificate at the ASBSD / SASD Joint Convention in August based on their final tabulation. The school districts who piloted were: Wagner, Exemplary; Chester, Exemplary; McCook, Distinguished; Elkton, Distinguished; Lake Andes, Distinguished; Iroquois, Distinguished, and Beresford, Exemplary.

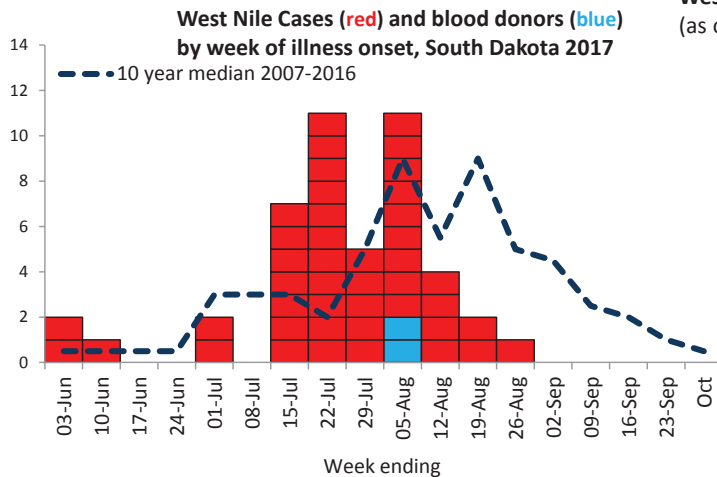
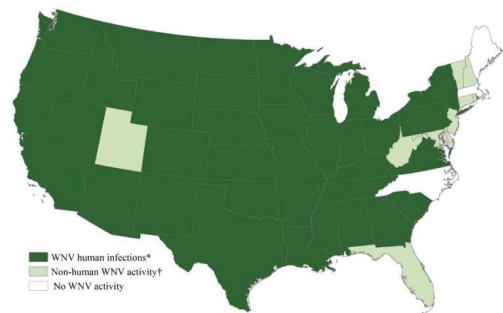
You can find more out about the program by going to SASD.ORG and clicking on the Preschool Levels of Excellence tab or contacting Rob Monson, Executive Director of SASD.

West Nile update: South Dakota, 1 September 2017

- **44 human cases of West Nile virus disease have been reported to the SD Department of Health.**
- 32% of cases have neuroinvasive disease, 68% have West Nile Fever. 41% hospitalized.
- **Counties with human WNV cases:** Aurora 1, Beadle 2, BonHomme 2, Brookings 4, Brown 2, Campbell 1, Charles Mix 1, Clark 1, Codington 4, Davison 1, Day 1, Deuel 1, Douglas 1, Faulk 2, Grant 1, Hamlin 1, Hutchinson 3, Jackson 1, Lake 1, Lincoln 2, Lyman 1, McCook 1, McPherson 1, Meade 1, Minnehaha 1, Moody 1, Oglala Lakota 1, Pennington 1, Walworth 1, Yankton 2.
- **Age:** median age 50 years; range 4-85 years.
- **Race:** 86% White, 11% American Indian, 2% Other.
- **Deaths:** 1.
- **Viremic blood donors:** 2, both in Brown County.
- **Counties with WNV positive mosquito detections:** Brookings, Brown, Codington, Hughes, Lincoln and Minnehaha.
- **WNV positive birds:** 2 Red-tailed hawk, Codington County.



West Nile virus activity reported to CDC, by state, United States, 2017 (as of 29 August, 2017)



SD Department of Health phone 800-592-1861
 SD Department of Health: <http://westnile.sd.gov>
 SDSU WNV risk assessment: <http://mosquito.sdstate.edu>
 CDC West Nile: www.cdc.gov/westnile

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Thank you for your Hospitality

August is an important month for me. It is the traditional time in which members of Congress spend extended time back home, and this year was no exception. During the shortened in-state work period, I had the opportunity to travel across the state for various events. We held open coffees in Chamberlain and Deadwood, as well as other ceremonies, roundtables and meetings in Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Pierre, Rapid City, Huron and elsewhere. I thank those of you who took the time out of your day to meet with me and share your thoughts.

Throughout our visits, people brought up many topics, including national security, ag policy, veterans, banking and overregulation, just to name a few. However, health care continues to be a top concern for many. While I was disappointed in the result of this summer's vote to repeal and replace Obamacare, the fight to relieve South Dakotans from our failing health care system is far from over. Our premiums have gone up 124 percent in the last four years under Obamacare and are expected to rise another 20 percent in 2018. This is simply unsustainable, and why I have continued to work with my colleagues on ways to stabilize the market and prevent premiums from continuing to skyrocket.

During veterans' events in Huron and Sioux Falls, I had the opportunity to thank our men and women in uniform for the sacrifices they and their families have made to keep us safe. Working with other members on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, we have begun the process of making major reforms, including passing three significant pieces of legislation that will improve the lives of our nation's veterans.

At the annual ag forum during Dakotafest, we heard from farmers about their priorities for the upcoming farm bill, particularly the importance of maintaining and strengthening safety net provisions such as the crop insurance program. We also heard concerns about perpetual easements, access to capital and burdensome regulations that are hurting producers' ability to operate.

We also had the opportunity to hold a Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) subcommittee field hearing on the Army Corps' management of the Missouri River. The purpose of the hearing is to make certain the Army Corps is working in a responsible manner to properly manage the Missouri River. During the hearing, we heard from both Army Corps officials and local leaders about their experiences along the river. The hearing gave us important insight to the practices of the Corps, such as their ability to increase and decrease water flows that result in drastic fluctuations in short periods of time. We will now be following up to make sure the Corps is acting appropriately.

I'm always grateful for the hospitality I receive when visiting communities across the state. Even when we disagree politically, I appreciate the opportunity to engage in healthy, respectful discussions about the issues you care about. Washington can learn a lot from what I call 'South Dakota common sense'. I look forward to bringing your thoughts and opinions with me to Washington when we return.

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Today in Weather History

September 2, 1962: From 315 to 445 pm, hail fell in and around the Moberly area. The hail ranged from 1 1/2 to 4 inches in diameter. The ground was covered up to 3 inches deep with drifts of 2-3 feet. At this time, the storm was one of the worst in recent history for damage.

September 2, 1983: A tornado touched down in the late afternoon 3 miles west and 1 mile south of Polo in Hand County damaging buildings, machinery, and trees. The roof of a hog house was torn off, and the north side of the building was destroyed. A barn was pulled several inches off of its foundation, and numerous trees were destroyed. At a nearby farm, two outbuildings were destroyed, with two cows injured along with two calves killed.

September 2, 1985: Intense thunderstorms moved from south central South Dakota to northeast South Dakota during the evening. Winds gusted to 60 to 70 mph over the area. Southwest of Presho, three small buildings were destroyed, and barns were damaged. Power lines and other property were damaged near Vayland, Miller, Wessington, Wolsey, Kimball, White Lake, Armour, and Castlewood. Large hail caused considerable damage to crops.

1775: The 1775 Newfoundland hurricane, also known as the Independence Hurricane, was a storm that hit the Colony of Newfoundland. It is believed to have killed at least 4,000 people, making it one of the deadliest Atlantic hurricanes of all time. The death toll in Virginia and North Carolina was 163 lives.

1935: The 1935 Labor Day Hurricane was the strongest and most intense hurricane to make landfall in the United States and the Atlantic Basin in recorded history. A central pressure of 892 mb (26.35 inHg) suggests winds between 188.7 mph – 186.4 mph. The death toll from this hurricane is between 408 to 600 individuals.

1950 - The temperature at Mecca, CA, soared to 126 degrees to establish a U.S. record for the month of September. The low that morning was 89 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1985 - After teasing residents along the Gulf of Mexico for two days, Hurricane Elena finally came ashore at Biloxi MS. The hurricane, packing winds of 127 mph, caused more than a billion dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Late evening thunderstorms in the Northern Plains Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Jordan MT, and a ""hot flash"" at Redig SD. The temperature at Redig rose from 66 degrees at 10 PM to 86 degrees at 11 PM as thunderstorm winds gusted to 36 mph. Nine cities in the Upper Ohio Valley, the Tennessee Valley and the Central Gulf Coast States reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins WV with a reading of 38 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1988 - Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in the northwestern U.S. Afternoon highs of 98 degrees at Olympia WA, 98 degrees at Seattle WA, 105 degrees at Portland OR, and 110 degrees at Medford OR, established records for the month of September. Quillayute WA equalled their September record with an afternoon high of 97 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)


1989 - Eight cities in the Gulf Coast Region reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the upper 90s. Houston TX and Port Arthur TX hit 99 degrees. Late evening thunderstorms, developing ahead of a cold front, produced wind gusts to 63 mph at Dickinson ND, and golf ball size hail in North Dakota and Nebraska. Winds along the cold front itself gusted to 62 mph at Buffalo SD. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2002: An F3 tornado destroyed much of the downtown area of Ladysmith, Wisconsin. Overall damage was estimated at \$20 million, but there were no fatalities. Click [HERE](#) for photographs from rootsweb.ancestry.com


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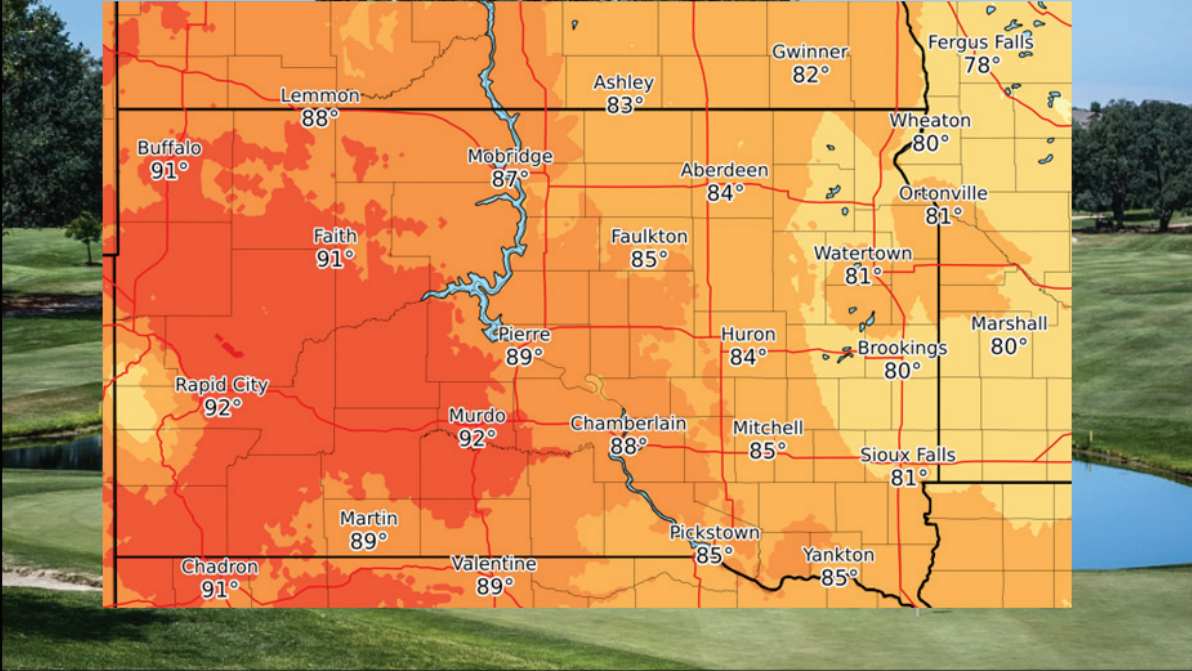
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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Labor Day	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Hot	Clear	Mostly Sunny then Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
High: 83 °F	Low: 57 °F	High: 92 °F	Low: 57 °F	High: 73 °F	Low: 48 °F	High: 70 °F






Warm and Dry Today





National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD


weather.gov/Aberdeen

National Weather Service Aberdeen

@NWSAberdeen
Updated: 9/2/2017 5:29 AM Central

Published on: 09/02/2017 at 5:32AM

Today will feature mostly sunny skies with highs in the 80s. Warmer on Sunday before cooling off on Monday.

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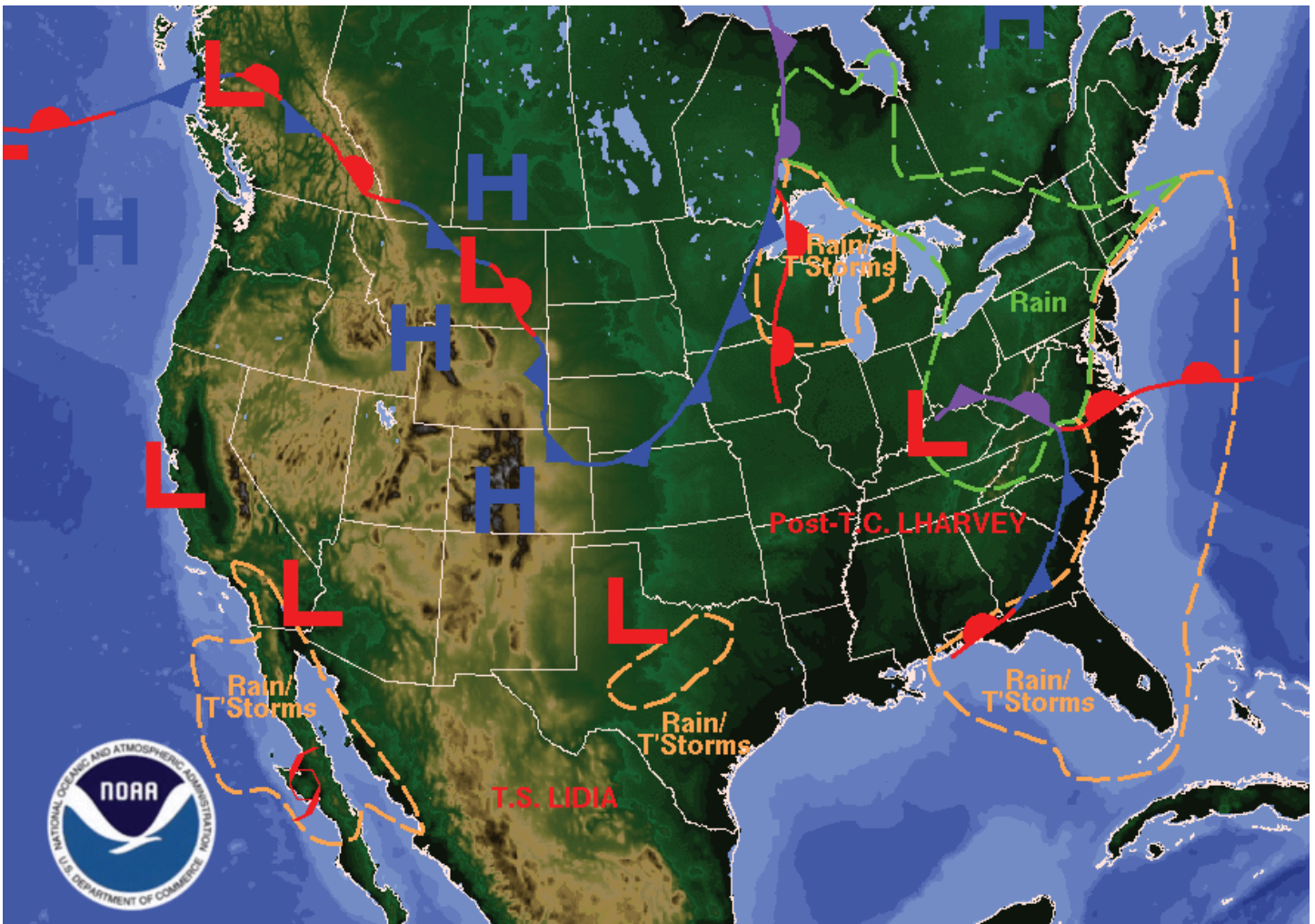
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 73.9
Low Outside Temp: 65.0
High Gust: 30
Precip: 0.11

Today's Info

Record High: 104° in 1913
Record Low: 35° in 1896
Average High: 78°F
Average Low: 52°F
Average Precip in Sept: 0.16
Precip to date in Sept: 0.11
Average Precip to date: 16.45
Precip Year to Date: 9.63
Sunset Tonight: 8:08 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:57 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Sep 02, 2017, issued 5:06 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Campbell 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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WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO?

Many celebrities do not want to be held accountable as "role models." They do want attention and accolades, recognition and rewards, popularity and prestige. But they do not want the "pressure" to have to live lives that reflect integrity and honesty, purity and decency. They do not want, as many of them have said, "to be a role model." "I want to live my life as I choose."

Many of us, however, look for "role models." We want someone to look up to, to follow, to be our hero, our example. Often we think, "If I can see it, I can do it. If there is someone who has done it, I know others can do it and so can I!"

David, in many ways, can be "a hero" for most of us. However, he did not want that responsibility. Not because of the pressure that it would put on him. Instead, he wanted everyone to know that his hero was his Lord and he wanted others to "hero-up" to Him.

"Blessed," he said, is the person who "trusts in the Lord," and does not "look to the proud or turn aside to false gods." Whenever we look at David, we see a man who knew victory as well as defeat, who sinned and had to plead with God for His forgiveness. He recognized his failures and would never set himself up as a model. And he recognized that there was only One person he could look up to as a model: his Lord and Savior.

When we put our faith in Him we know that He is not a "false god." We can follow the Lord confidently!

Prayer: We look to You, Lord, as the "author and finisher" of our salvation and our guide in life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 40:4 Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.

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News from the Associated Press

Sioux Falls pushes for easier driving tests for immigrants

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Construction industry leaders in the Sioux Falls area want to change South Dakota's driving laws to make it easier for Spanish speakers to get behind the wheel.

The Argus Leader reports that state law requires all government documents to be published in English, and officials extend the rule to both the written and skills sections of the driving exam. Most states offer driving tests in different languages, but South Dakota does not.

An attorney for the state Department of Public Safety says non-English speakers can bring an interpreter to the written test, but they're in charge of finding, hiring and paying for the service.

Language restrictions have created a shortage on the workforce in a fast-growing construction industry in the city.

Business leaders are targeting the law for potential revision.

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

Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Aberdeen Central 28, Huron 27
Arlington/Lake Preston 50, Deubrook 26
Baltic 55, Menno/Marion 14
Brandon Valley 38, Sioux Falls Lincoln 24
Britton-Hecla 54, Tri-State 0
Canton 38, Aberdeen Roncalli 0
Castlewood 56, Estelline 6
Chamberlain 51, St. Francis Indian 0
Clark/Willow Lake 50, Waverly-South Shore 0
Colman-Egan 40, Dell Rapids St. Mary 0
Colome 64, Burke/South Central 14
Corsica/Stickney 58, Alcester-Hudson 14
Custer 45, Little Wound 24
Dakota Valley 65, Todd County 22
DeSmet 38, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 6
Dell Rapids 27, Vermillion 8
Deuel 46, Great Plains Lutheran 8
Douglas 33, Sturgis 9
Elk Point-Jefferson 54, Flandreau 14
Faulkton 48, Northwestern 6
Florence/Henry 33, Dakota Hills 30
Gayville-Volin 38, Centerville 8
Gregory 56, Jones County/White River 6
Groton Area 15, Sisseton 0
Hamlin 35, Webster 7
Hanson 52, Viborg-Hurley 20
Harding County 54, Bison 20

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Hill City 46, Edgemont 8
Howard 54, Parker 12
Irene-Wakonda 43, Chester 13
Langford 50, Ipswich/Edmunds Central 0
Lower Brule 54, Iroquois 0
Lyman 16, Kadoka Area 12
Madison 47, Belle Fourche 21
McCook Central/Montrose 28, Beresford 0
McLaughlin 14, Crow Creek 0
Milbank Area 55, Redfield/Doland 0
New Underwood 30, Philip 16
North Border, N.D. 40, Potter County 12
Parkston 26, Kimball/White Lake 18
Pierre 42, Yankton 14
Pine Ridge 20, Lead-Deadwood 14
Red Cloud 46, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 22
Sioux Falls Washington 41, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 7
Standing Rock, N.D. 50, Crazy Horse 0
Stanley County 20, Wagner 14
Sunshine Bible Academy 30, Tiospa Zina Tribal 6
Tea Area 20, St. Thomas More 14
Timber Lake 50, Newell 0
Tri-Valley 27, Lennox 20
Wall 35, Rapid City Christian 0
Warner 44, Hitchcock-Tulare 8
Watertown 26, Rapid City Central 18
Winner 14, West Central 0
Wolsey-Wessington 36, Platte-Geddes 14
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 27, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 6

Keywords: South Dakota, Boys, Football, Prep Scores, High School

Once-paralyzed South Dakota football player returns to field

By BRIAN HAENCHEN, Argus Leader

ONIDA, S.D. (AP) — It was late in the fourth quarter when Sully Buttes coach Mark Senftner told freshman Landon Severson to put on his helmet.

With the victory over Herreid/Selby Area already in hand and only a few seconds left on the clock, Landon figured he would be lining up at receiver while the Chargers ran a play in the opposite direction.

That wasn't the case.

"They're going to let you score," Senftner told Landon, who less than a year ago was paralyzed from the waist down.

"All the way from here?" Landon asked as the offense prepared to take over from its own 25-yard line.

"Yeah, just do it," Senftner responded.

"So, I went out there," Landon told the Argus Leader. "The quarterback lined us up, handed the ball to me and I just kind of strolled up the field. I had all my guys going and all the guys from Herreid/Selby were cheering me on, too. That was pretty nice."

"It was a total surprise," Sarah Severson, Landon's mom, said. "I just thought they were putting him in for a nice little play to get him some playing time. So, I was totally shocked."

It was a memorable moment on an especially emotional day.

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Exactly one year earlier, Sarah received a phone call.

Her son, who seemed fine when he left the house earlier that morning, couldn't move his legs. It began with a tingling sensation and numbness, and within 40 minutes, he was paralyzed from the waist down.

"For me it's been tough, of course," Sarah said. "Nobody wants to see their child go through something like this, especially when he was a perfectly healthy three-sport athlete prior to that, and in a matter of 40 minutes his life changed."

Landon was taken by ambulance to Pierre and then driven to Sioux Falls for further testing.

He was diagnosed with transverse myelitis, a rare autoimmune disorder that affected his ability to move his legs and feet, as well as the function of his bowel and bladder.

Landon spent the next two weeks in a Sioux Falls hospital where he received high doses of IV steroids, plasmapheresis, MRIs and lumbar punctures.

"The doctors and medical professionals don't really give you any guidance because they don't really know," said Sarah, explaining that some are able to make a complete recovery, while others never really recover at all. "There's really nothing that says, 'This is what's going to happen. This is your outlook.'"

Landon spent the next 14 weeks at Madonna Rehabilitation Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, undergoing physical and occupational therapy. During that time, he went from a wheelchair to a walker to two canes to one cane to walking without needing any assistance.

In November, he traveled to Huron for the state volleyball tournament, then back to Onida to celebrate Thanksgiving with his family before returning to the rehab center.

On Dec. 15, Landon was finally able to return home for good.

"They already wanted me back on the track last spring," laughed Landon, who continues to do therapy in nearby Pierre. "I was like, let's just wait until football. This year when football came around, I made sure I was going to be around."

Talk to anyone about Landon and the scene in Herreid, and it won't be long before they begin gushing about the young man's character and resilience.

Through the entire ordeal, Sarah says her son never once complained or asked, "Why me?"

"He's taken everything like a champ," she said. "He's mentally strong, and that definitely has helped in the recovery process. He's a determined kid with a positive attitude."

In the final seconds of Friday night's game, Herreid/Selby coach Clayton Randall, whose son Clayton II is close friends with Landon, made sure the Sully Buttes freshman had his moment.

"I had no idea that Landon was even on the football team until he took the field Friday night," explained Randall, who called timeout to set up the scenario. "During the timeout, one of my assistant coaches and I went to the official, told him what we wanted to do and got the message relayed over to their coaches."

As he neared the 20-yard line, one of Landon's teammates told him that once he scored, he had to spike the ball.

"Spike it?" Landon replied. "I don't want to get flagged."

"I'll let you spike it," said the referee as he walked alongside the pack of players. "But it better be a good one or I'm going to flag you."

So as he crossed the goal line, Landon reared back and triumphantly thrust the ball toward the turf. Moments later, he was carried off the field on the shoulders of his teammates, putting the final flourish on a feel-good Friday night.

"It's kind of amazing, in a sense, when we look at where we were just a year ago," Sarah said. "He's a phenomenal kid."

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

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SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

04-13-31-50-64, Mega Ball: 12, Megaplier: 5

(four, thirteen, thirty-one, fifty, sixty-four; Mega Ball: twelve; Megaplier: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$53 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$68 million

California braces for severe heatwave through Labor day

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Dozens of cooling centers opened throughout California, schools let students out early and outdoor events were cancelled as temperatures soared from a heat wave expected to last through the Labor Day weekend.

In normally cool and foggy San Francisco, temperatures reached an all-time high of 106 degrees (41 degrees Celsius) Friday afternoon, well above the city's 90-degree (32-degree Celsius) record set for this day in 1950 and the all-time record high of 103 degrees (39 degrees) set in 2000.

Across the bay, Livermore will expected to reach 115 degrees (46 degrees Celsius), a temperature last seen in 1950, forecasters said.

The extreme heat sent project manager Michelle Ogburn to a cooling center set up in Santa Clara's North Branch Library, where ice water stations were set up and dozens of people, many of them homeless, were taking shelter Friday afternoon.

"I work from home and I live in an old mobile home with no air conditioning and not very good insulation. Today it was very hot and I just couldn't work," said Ogburn, who lives in Sunnyvale, California.

Schools in the city of Orinda are closing early Friday and sports events in several high schools in the area were canceled or rescheduled.

The extreme heat and light wind combined with vehicle exhaust are prompting officials to ask Bay Area motorists to limit their driving to reduce pollution. Smoke from at least a dozen wildfires burning in Northern California is drifting into Bay Area skies and contributing to the unhealthy air.

Ogburn said a friend offered to let her borrow a portable air conditioner but she didn't take up the offer. "It's too much energy to run it," she said. "If it gets too hot over the weekend, I'll leave the house and go to a movie."

Managers of California's power grid asked for voluntary electricity conservation as forecasters predicted more extreme heat statewide. An excessive heat advisory remains in effect through Monday night for interior valley and higher elevations in the Bay Area, the National Weather Service said.

The California Independent System Operator predicted demand on the system would set a record higher than the 50,270 megawatts on July 24, 2006.

Consumers were asked to cut back on use of electricity between 1 p.m. and 10 p.m. when use of air conditioners is at its peak.

A weeklong heat wave generated by high pressure over the West was nearing its peak, the National Weather Service said. People were urged to take precautions against heat-related illnesses — especially the elderly, infirm and children.

Inland areas north and east of San Francisco Bay were expected to bake in triple-digit heat of up to 115 degrees, and even the usually temperate coastline had 80s and 90s in the forecast. The region's hills and mountains were under fire weather warnings.

The outlook was the same in Southern California as the region faced a combination of strong high pres-

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sure and weak onshore breezes from the Pacific Ocean to land.

"Dangerous heat across SoCal," the Los Angeles-area weather office website declared.

Southern California has also had lightning, thunder, downpours and localized street flooding fed by monsoonal moisture.

Forecasters said more could be expected when remnants of Tropical Storm Lidia move north from Mexico's Baja California during the weekend.

Warnings of excessive heat also blanketed the 450-mile (724-kilometer) length of California's central valley agricultural heartland and portions of the western slope of the Sierra Nevada.

The warmth extended up the West Coast, with excessive-heat warnings posted for southwest Oregon and lesser advisory-level conditions in northwest Oregon. Western Washington state expected a sunny, hot and dry Labor Day weekend.

Elsewhere in the West, fire weather warnings were in effect for parts of Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota.

Groups challenge explanation of drug price cap initiative

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Industry groups have filed a court challenge to the South Dakota attorney general's explanation of a ballot question that would cap how much state agencies could pay for prescription drugs.

South Dakota Biotech and Washington-based Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America are asking a judge to direct Attorney General Marty Jackley to modify his explanation.

The initiative would impose a price limit on state drug purchases to the lowest price paid for the same drug by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The groups say the explanation falls short because it doesn't mention language giving supporters legal standing if the initiative's challenged. Supporter Rick Weiland says the groups are trying to "throw some sand in the gears."

A Jackley spokeswoman didn't immediately return an email requesting comment.

Donated hay being divided among Northern Plains ranchers

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — State agriculture officials in the Northern Plains on Friday were starting the process of distributing tons of hay donated from around the country to help drought-plagued ranchers in the region.

It might be the last best chance for some ranchers in the Dakotas and Montana to obtain hay for the winter, with the nation's focus turning to helping hurricane-ravaged Texas. Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller on Thursday put out a call for donations to a state agriculture relief fund, saying producers have been "devastated by this historic storm."

On the flip side, the Northern Plains have been hit by the driest weather in decades.

"It's ironic that, on this end of the country, producers are in a crisis because of not enough water and, on the other end of the country, they are in a crisis because of too much water," said Julie Ellingson, executive vice president of the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, the state's largest rancher group. "While very different, both are catastrophic scenarios."

North Dakota's Agriculture Department, North Dakota State University and the Michigan-based nonprofit Ag Community Relief on Aug. 1 announced a program to accept hay donations at a site near the Fargo campus for ranchers in the state where prime cattle country is mired in extreme drought. A week later, officials expanded the program to include South Dakota and Montana, which are experiencing similar dry conditions this summer.

Midnight Thursday was the deadline for applications, and nearly 1,400 ranchers in the three states applied, according to Agriculture Department spokeswoman Michelle Mielke. Dozens of semi-loads of hay were donated from around the U.S., with truckers from around the country donating time and equipment to haul it to North Dakota.

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"The way people have responded to this has been a bit uplifting," North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. "The fact that somebody recognizes (ranchers') loss, their need, their issue, has helped them immensely."

The hay is being distributed through a lottery drawing.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor map shows 66 percent of North Dakota in some stage of drought, with 22 percent of the state in extreme or exceptional drought, the two worst categories. South Dakota and Montana are experiencing similar conditions. Ranchers have been forced to sell off cattle, buy hay at prices double the normal cost if it's even available, and drill new water wells.

"The state's livestock producers have and will continue to be sourcing feed resources from outside their home areas in order to maintain their herds," Ellingson said.

Much of the donations that have been delivered to the hay lottery site are from close states such as Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, Goehring said. More hay has been donated, but it's in far-away states such as Maryland and Tennessee, and getting it to North Dakota might be difficult given what has happened in Texas, he said.

"We've sourced another 20-30 semi-loads of hay out there, but we need somebody to haul it," he said. "And now we have a major issue in Texas and we have ranchers in need down there. I talked to one (charitable) organization, and they're going to be turning their attention to Texas. We'll have to try to find local truckers, or some companies that maybe would be looking at doing a backhaul and would be willing to stop and pick some hay up and bring it back."

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

Foreign investors seek to keep state as lawsuit defendant

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Thirty-five foreign investors who sued South Dakota after sinking a collective \$18.5 million into a failed beef processing plant are taking their dispute to the state Supreme Court.

The state won dismissal in July from the lawsuit involving the EB-5 investment-for-visa program. But the Chinese investors, who want the state to remain in the lawsuit, have asked the high court to consider an appeal of the decision before the litigation is resolved, the Rapid City Journal reported .

The Supreme Court is to consider the appeal request on Thursday. At issue is whether state government can be held liable for the investors' losses.

The lower court's July decision applied only to the state-government defendants, leaving former program administrator Joop Bollen and two of his business entities as remaining defendants.

Aaron Scheibe, deputy commissioner of the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development, said in a written statement to the newspaper that the state believes the judge's decision was "firmly based in the law and opposes the appeal."

The investors' lawsuit filed in 2015 seeks to recover the \$18.5 million invested into the plant. It claims that Northern Beef Packers in Aberdeen did not have adequate financing to generate revenue or support additional financing and was already plagued by years of delays.

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

Survey suggests more economic growth ahead for Midwest

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A monthly survey of business supply managers suggests business conditions improved last month and that more economic growth lies ahead for nine Midwest and Plains states, according to a report released Friday.

The Mid-America Business Conditions Index rose to 57.5 in August from 56.1 in July, the report said. The June figure was 62.3.

"The overall index over the past several months indicates a healthy regional manufacturing economy and points to solid growth for both manufacturing and nonmanufacturing for the rest of 2017," said Creighton

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University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth in that factor. A score below that suggests decline. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The August business confidence index jumped to 62.5 from 60.2 in July.

"Strong profit growth, still low interest rates, and international sales boosted the economic outlook among supply managers in the nine-state region," he said.

But, Goss said, economic factors including the national debt ceiling, a potential U.S. budget impasse, tax reform and shipping bottlenecks tied to Hurricane Harvey may weigh on economic confidence during September.

"For example, exports of commodities such as ethanol, hard red winter wheat, corn and soybean will be slowed by port bottlenecks in the short term," said Goss.

Regional hiring rose again, as reflected by a reading of 59.2 for the August employment index. The July figure was 56.5.

"Except for manufacturing tied to agriculture, businesses across the region added jobs at a solid pace for the month," Goss said. "With the recent boost in employment growth, total regional employment growth (year over year) is now 1.4 percent and slightly below the nation's 1.5 percent gain over the same time period."

Midwest economy: August state-by-state glance

By The Associated Press

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

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

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

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

Arkansas: The overall index for Arkansas advanced to 65.9 last month from July's 61.2. Components of the index were new orders at 61.3, production or sales at 70.1, delivery lead time at 65.6, inventories at 64.7 and employment at 68.0. "Arkansas is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace above 2.2 percent and nonmanufacturing at a rate exceeding 2.5 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this positive trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," Goss said.

Iowa: Iowa's overall index rose to 57.7 last month from 54.9 in July. Components were new orders at 53.6, production or sales at 62.3, delivery lead time at 56.4, employment at 59.4 and inventories at 56.6. "The state is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace slightly below 1 percent and nonmanufacturing employment at a rate slightly above 1 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this positive but modest trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," he said.

Kansas: The state's overall index slumped to a regional low of 42.8 in August from 45.9 in July — also a regional low. Components of the index were new orders at 39.8, production or sales at 48.3, delivery lead time at 40.0, employment at 44.1, and inventories at 42.0. "Kansas is shedding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of one-half of 1 percentage point and losing nonmanufacturing at an annual rate of almost 1 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this negative trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," Goss said.

Minnesota: Minnesota's overall index dropped to a still healthy 61.8 last month from July's 63.2. Index components were new orders at 57.5, production or sales at 66.2, delivery lead time at 61.0, inventories at 60.7 and employment at 63.8. "The state is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of approximately 1 percent and growing nonmanufacturing employment at a rate exceeding 2 percent. Our surveys

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over the past several months indicate this positive trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," he said.

Missouri: The state's overall index jumped to 61.1 in August from 52.3 in July. Components were new orders at 56.8, production or sales at 65.5, delivery lead time at 60.2, inventories at 60.0 and employment at 63.0. "Missouri is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of approximately 2.5 percent and adding nonmanufacturing employment at a rate exceeding 2 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this positive and healthy trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," Goss said.

Nebraska: Nebraska's overall index dipped to 57.9 from 58.0 in July. Components of the August index were new orders at 53.8, production or sales at 62.5, delivery lead time at 56.7, inventories at 56.8, and employment at 59.7. "The state is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of almost 1.5 percent and growing nonmanufacturing employment at a rate of approximately 1.2 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this positive trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," he said.

North Dakota: The state's overall index climbed to a regional high of 69.1 last month from July's 66.7 — also a regional high. Components were new orders at 64.3, production or sales at 73.1, delivery lead time at 69.1, employment at 71.3 and inventories at 67.8. "While the state is losing manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of approximately 2 percent, North Dakota is growing jobs linked to energy and nonmanufacturing employment at a rate exceeding 1.5 percent," Goss said. The past several months' surveys indicate the trend will gain steam for the remainder of the year, he said, as the state's energy sector boosts the overall state economy.

Oklahoma: After falling below growth neutral for July, Oklahoma's overall index climbed to 56.2 last month, compared with 49.4 in July. Components were new orders at 52.2, production or sales at 60.9, delivery lead time at 54.7, inventories at 55.1 and employment at 57.9. "The state is adding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of almost 2 percent and growing nonmanufacturing employment at a rate slightly above 1 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this positive trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," Goss said.

South Dakota: The state's overall index plunged in August to 45.5 from July's 53.3. Components were new orders at 43.1, production or sales at 47.1, delivery lead time at 43.9, inventories at 45.5 and employment at 47.8. "South Dakota is shedding manufacturing jobs at an annual pace of approximately 1 percent but growing nonmanufacturing employment at a rate only slightly above 0.3 percent. Our surveys over the past several months indicate this sluggish trend will continue for the remainder of 2017," he said.

Bullhead man sentenced for raping woman passed out drunk

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Bullhead man has been sentenced to more than two years in prison for raping a woman who was passed out drunk.

Authorities say 29-year-old Jimmie High Cat raped the woman during a house party in Bullhead in December 2013.

He pleaded guilty last May to a charge of abusive sexual contact of a person incapable of consent. U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says High Cat was recently sentenced to 26 months in custody to be followed by five years of supervised release.

Parmelee woman sentenced for striking other woman's baby

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Parmelee woman has been sentenced for twice striking another woman's baby during an altercation in a store parking lot in Mission.

Authorities say 22-year-old Charlee Spotted Tail started the altercation in March 2016 with a woman who was holding her 6-month-old child. Spotted Tail tried to strike the woman but missed and instead struck the baby in the head. She then hit the child a second time before fleeing.

U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says Spotted Tail pleaded guilty in June to an assault charge and was recently sentenced to four months in custody to be followed by a year of supervised release.

Escaped inmate arrested following lengthy standoff

LAKE ANDES, S.D. (AP) — An inmate who assaulted a correctional officer and escaped from the Charles Mix County Jail is back in custody after a long standoff with law enforcement in Vermillion.

Sheriff's officials say a car stolen by 19-year-old Jubal Grant was found at a residence in Vermillion about 2 p.m. Thursday. Authorities determined Grant was in the house, but he refused to surrender.

Vermillion police, Clay County sheriff's deputies, officers from the Division of Criminal Investigation and the South Dakota Highway Patrol worked to resolve the standoff. Grant was taken into custody about 8:30 p.m.

Post-Harvey problems plague Texas as funerals for dead begin

By JEFF AMY and JUAN A. LOZANO, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — One week after Harvey roared into the Gulf Coast, a Texas city struggled with no drinking water, fires kept erupting at a stricken chemical plant and funerals began for some of those who drowned in the floodwaters.

In Beaumont, Texas, home to almost 120,000, people waited in a line that stretched for more than a mile to get bottled water after the municipal system failed earlier this week.

The second fire in two days broke out at the flooded Arkema plant in Crosby. Thick black smoke and towering orange flames shot up Friday after two trailers of highly unstable compounds blew up.

And in Houston, friends and family gathered Friday evening to remember 42-year-old Benito Juarez Cavazos, one of 42 people whose deaths are attributed to Harvey. Cavazos came to Texas illegally from Mexico 28 years ago and was in the process of getting his green card.

"It's very unfortunate that right when he finally had hopes of being able to maybe go to Mexico soon to go see his family, it all went downhill," his cousin, Maria Cavazos, said. "Sadly, he's going back to Mexico, but in an unfortunate way."

President Donald Trump departed Saturday from Washington for his second visit to the devastated region. He will be in Houston and Lake Charles, Louisiana, to survey damage. The White House said he would talk to people affected by the disaster and meet with volunteers. Those elements were missing from his first visit on Tuesday.

Earlier Friday, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner announced that ongoing releases of water from two reservoirs could keep thousands of homes flooded for up to 15 days.

Residents of the still-flooded western part of Houston were asked to evacuate due to the releases from two reservoirs protecting downtown. The releases were expected to keep some homes flooded that had been filled with water earlier in the week. Homes that are not currently flooded probably will not be affected, officials said.

Some of the affected houses have several feet (meters) of water in them, and the water reaches to the rooftops of others, district meteorologist Jeff Lindner said.

Turner pleaded for more high-water vehicles and more search-and-rescue equipment as the nation's fourth-largest city continued looking for any survivors or corpses that might have somehow escaped notice in flood-ravaged neighborhoods.

Search teams quickly worked their way down streets, sometimes not even knocking on doors if there were obvious signs that all was well — organized debris piles or full cans of trash on the curb, for instance, or neighbors confirming that the residents had evacuated.

Authorities considered it an initial search, though they did not say what subsequent searches would entail or when they would commence.

Turner also asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide more workers to process applications from thousands of people seeking government help. The mayor said he will request a preliminary aid package of \$75 million for debris removal alone.

The storm had lost most of its tropical characteristics but remained a source of heavy rain that threat-

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ened to cause flooding as far north as Indiana.

National Weather Service meteorologists expect Harvey to break up and merge with other weather systems over the Ohio Valley late Saturday or Sunday.

An estimated 156,000 dwellings were damaged by flooding in Harris County, or more than 10 percent of all structures in the county database, according to the flood control district for the county, which includes Houston.

Figures from the Texas Department of Public Safety indicated that nearly 87,000 homes had major or minor damage and at least 6,800 were destroyed.

Harvey initially came ashore Aug. 25 as a Category 4 hurricane, then went back out to sea and lingered off the coast as a tropical storm for days. The storm brought five straight days of rain totaling close to 52 inches (1.3 meters) in one location, the heaviest tropical downpour ever recorded in the continental U.S.

Far out over the Atlantic, Hurricane Irma was following a course that could bring it near the eastern Caribbean Sea by early next week. The Category 2 storm was moving northwest at nearly 13 mph (20 kph). No coastal watches or warnings were in effect.

Amy reported from Beaumont, Texas. Associated Press writers Johnny Clark in Beaumont, Texas; Brian Melley in Houston; Paul Weber and Will Weissert in Austin; Diana Heidgerd, David Warren, Jamie Stengle, Emily Schmall and Adam Kealoha Causey in Dallas; Michael Kunzelman in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Tammy Webber in Chicago contributed to this report.

Sign up for AP's daily newsletter showcasing our best all-formats reporting on Harvey and its aftermath: <http://apne.ws/ahYQGtb>.

For Trump, chance to return with empathy for Harvey victims

By **KEN THOMAS, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump brought plenty of optimism and swagger to Texas on his first visit to survey Harvey's devastation. He's getting a chance to return with empathy.

At stops in Houston and Lake Charles, Louisiana, on Saturday, the president planned to survey storm damage, talk with residents and meet with volunteers. Those elements were missing from Tuesday's trip to Texas, which was criticized as being off-key for a presidential visit to discuss communities in crisis.

In Corpus Christi and Austin, Trump sat with emergency responders and officials who were coordinating recovery efforts with his administration. The event was marked by Trump's impromptu speech to supporters outside a Corpus Christi firehouse — "What a crowd, what a turnout," he said — instead of images of the president consoling victims or walking among the damage caused by of the storm.

Trump kept his distance from the epicenter of the damage, in Houston, to avoid disrupting recovery operations. Still, critics said he failed to adequately express compassion for the families of those killed in the storm's path or those whose homes were flooded. He raised eyebrows when he predicted his approach would be a model for future presidents to emulate.

"We want to do it better than ever before," he said. "We want to be looked at in five years, in 10 years from now as, 'This is the way to do it.'"

"There was a lot of high-fiving about how well this disaster was being handled even as people were on their rooftops hoping to be rescued," said David Axelrod, a top adviser to President Barack Obama. "People need to know that their president is emotionally engaged in their struggle and part of the obligation or the responsibility of a president, particularly in a media age, is to make that human connection."

Trump later voiced more direct concern for those caught up in the storm. At the start of a speech in Missouri on Wednesday, he said the nation was praying for those in Harvey's path and "we are here with you every single step of the way."

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders emphasized that Trump planned one-on-one time with victims on Saturday.

Trump may take cues from Vice President Mike Pence, who went to a damaged church, cleared away tree limbs and debris, and hugged storm victims this past week.

"All American hearts are with the people of Texas and Louisiana," Trump said in his weekly radio address aired Saturday. He described "a spirit of love, determination and resolve" that he said he sensed during the Tuesday visit."

On Friday, Trump met with evangelical leaders to promote his proclamation of Sunday as a national day of prayer for those affected by the storm, along with relief organizations heavily involved in the recovery.

"I'm confident that this will be an opportunity for the president, on behalf of the entire nation, to show compassion and empathy for those who have lost homes and have had their lives interrupted and in some cases have lost loved ones," said Ralph Reed, the founder of the Faith & Freedom Coalition. He was among the evangelical leaders who met with the president.

Trump has sent lawmakers an initial request for a \$7.9 billion down payment toward Harvey relief and recovery efforts — a request expected to be swiftly approved by Congress, which returns to work Tuesday after its summer break.

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

Flames, smoke at Houston-area chemical plant for a 2nd day

By **FRANK BAJAK, REESE DUNKLIN and EMILY SCHMALL, Associated Press**

HOUSTON (AP) — Thick black smoke and towering orange flames shot up Friday after two trailers of highly unstable compounds blew up at a flooded Houston-area chemical plant, the second fire there in two days.

Arkema says Harvey's floodwaters engulfed its backup generators at the plant in Crosby and knocked out the refrigeration necessary to keep the organic peroxides, used in such products as plastics and paints, from degrading and catching fire. Arkema executive Richard Rennard said two containers caught fire Friday evening, and that there are six more it expects will eventually catch fire.

Arkema spokeswoman Janet Smith said that the company expects the rest of the containers will ignite "within a matter of days."

Preliminary analysis of data captured by Environmental Protection Agency surveillance aircraft Friday did not show high levels of toxic airborne chemicals, agency spokesman David Gray said. No serious injuries were reported in the last two days as a result of the fires.

The height and color of the flames from the plant Friday suggested incomplete combustion of the organic peroxides, Texas A&M chemical safety expert Sam Mannan said. With complete combustion, he said, the byproduct is carbon dioxide and water, posing about the same amount of risk as standing too close to a campfire. But incomplete combustion implies something else is burning.

The fire burned not just the organic peroxides but also the plastic packaging, insulation, and the materials used to construct the trailers, Smith said.

Daryl Roberts, the company's vice president of manufacturing, technology and regulatory services in the Americas, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the floodwater inundating the plant would cause any toxins produced by the fire to quickly vaporize. By Friday, the water had receded but Smith could not comment on whether that had changed the calculation of risk.

A 1½-mile buffer (2.4 kilometers) around the plant was established Tuesday when Arkema warned that chemicals kept there could explode. Employees had been pulled, and up to 5,000 people living nearby were warned to evacuate. Officials remain comfortable with the size of the buffer, Rachel Moreno, a spokeswoman for the Harris County Fire Marshal Office, said Friday evening.

Smith reiterated statements executives made earlier Friday that the safest course of action was simply to "let these fires happen and let them burn out."

Arkema officials did not directly notify local emergency managers of the generator failure, Moreno said. It instead came by way of the plant's ride-out crew, who told the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department about

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it when they were rescued during the storm, she said.

In a conference call with reporters Friday, Arkema President and CEO Rich Rowe apologized and said he was sending a team of employees to Crosby to figure out how best to assist locals.

"I realize this is not a situation that we can help remedy overnight," he said.

Early Thursday, two blasts blew open a trailer containing at least 2 tons of material, sending up a plume of black smoke and flames 30 to 40 feet (9 to 12 meters) high in the tiny town of Crosby, about a half-hour from Houston, authorities said. The Texas environmental agency called the smoke "especially acrid and irritating" and said it can impair breathing and inflame the eyes, nose and throat.

Questions persisted Friday about the adequacy of Arkema's master plan to protect the public in the event of an emergency in flood-prone Houston, a metropolitan area of about 6 million people.

The plant is along a corridor with one of the nation's greatest concentrations of refineries, pipelines and chemical plants. A 2016 analysis led by Texas A&M University researchers identified Arkema's facility as posing one of the region's biggest risks, based on such factors as the type and amount of chemicals and the population density.

In accident plans Arkema submitted to the EPA in 2014, executives said a hurricane and a power loss were potential hazards. Yet the plans, which were supposed to address worst-case scenarios, didn't explain what Arkema would do if faced with either.

Executives also acknowledged Friday that they didn't have materials at the plant that could have neutralized the organic peroxides.

Instead, workers were forced to scramble and move the chemicals away from floodwaters after buildings were engulfed and power was lost. Workers transferred the compounds to refrigerated containers, but those failed, too, causing Thursday's fire.

After days of questions about what was in its chemical inventory, the company posted a list of them on its website Friday, though not the amounts on hand. Asked why it hadn't shared the information sooner, Rowe said, "We're managing our way through a crisis."

State and federal regulators have cited Arkema for safety and environmental violations at the Crosby plant dating back more than a decade, records show.

Texas' environmental commission penalized the plant at least three times. In June 2006, Arkema had failed to prevent unauthorized emissions during a two-hour warehouse fire. Records show a pallet of organic peroxide was poorly stored, resulting in the blaze, and more than a ton of volatile organic compounds were discharged.

More recently, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration in February fined Arkema nearly \$110,000 — later reduced to just over \$90,000 — because of 10 serious safety violations found during an inspection.

"We don't have a perfect record, we understand that," Rowe said. "We strive to get better at every turn and will continue to do so."

Dunklin reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Michael Biesecker, Matthew Daly and Seth Bornstein in Washington; Luke Sheridan in New York; and Angeliki Kastanis in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Residents who evacuated for Harvey come home to devastation

By JASON DEAREN and JAY REEVES, Associated Press

CROSBY, Texas (AP) — Silvia Casas' eyes welled with tears Friday as she surveyed the damage from Harvey to what was once a working class, mostly Hispanic neighborhood near Crosby, Texas.

Large trees with their roots reaching into the air were pulled from the ground by Harvey's floodwaters. RVs were crumpled like tin cans. Entire houses were picked up and moved 20 or 30 feet from where they once sat, leaving piles of wood and splintered debris and PVC pipes sticking from the ground as the only

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reminder of once-familiar structures.

Near a 30-foot-high pile of debris, once houses and treasured belongings now stacked against a telephone pole, someone had hung a painting of the Virgin de Guadalupe from a tree branch. Around the corner, a sinkhole had swallowed two cars and was filled with brown, mucky water.

A neighborhood stray dog, fed by everyone, weathered the flood by standing on Casas' roof. Her cinderblock house was one of the few structures that wasn't thrown by floodwaters. But inside, a pile of furniture and splintered belongings sat in the middle of the floor, under a ceiling pocked with peeling paint.

Casas stopped to survey the outdoor kitchen that used to stand on the side of the house where several generations would gather.

"This is where we gathered as a family," she said before choking up and adding: "We're going to miss this place."

A week after Harvey roared into Texas, Casas and her family are among thousands of people seeing their devastated homes for the first time. An estimated 156,000 dwellings in Harris County, or more than 10 percent of all structures in the county where Crosby is located, were damaged by flooding, according to the flood control district.

The community where the Casas family lived doesn't have an official name. It is about 6.5 miles southwest of the Arkema Inc. chemical plant in Crosby that flooded earlier this week, causing a fire and explosion that evacuated a 1.5-mile radius around the plant.

Silvia and Rafael Casas said their family got no official evacuation warning when the floodwaters came last Friday. They were told to leave when they lost power, but the lights stayed on. Their home was in the area that was affected by the release of water from two dams that were in danger of overflowing.

"On Friday, someone, maybe with the city, came and told my parents they were going to open the dam, and that's it. They were supposed to come back and alert people when they opened it (the dam) up, but they never did," Rafael Casas said.

He said the person told him that someone would return and let them know whether to evacuate or cut off the power to this whole area, which would be a sign that they should leave.

"But they never came back and they never cut the power."

Luckily, the family decided to leave anyway.

Robey Bartee was happy to leave the George R. Brown Convention Center on Friday after spending six days there with thousands of other evacuees following Harvey. Bartee loaded his belongings into a relative's car for the 11-mile drive to the old, wood-frame house where he lived with his late wife in East Houston.

What he found was worse than he expected. The house reeked of spoiled meat that went bad while the power was off. The carpet squished with each step. A line of grass and debris showed about a foot of water filled his den and was deeper in a sunken bedroom. His furniture was wet. The wallboards were soft.

Hurricane Rita flooded the same house in 2005, he said, but Harvey was worse.

"This one just wiped me out," said Bartee, 66, a retired city employee. "I didn't completely have to start over on the first one. I was able to save a lot of things and pick up the pieces and go along. But this one here, I don't know what pieces to pick up."

There were bright spots: Both of his old cars started despite being submerged in water for days, and a neighbor had cold bottled water. But Bartee said he plans to go back to the shelter and find another home, as much as he hates the idea.

Back near Crosby, Mary Ann Avila was thinking the same thing as Bartee once she saw her destroyed home. The only room left standing was her daughter's bedroom.

She sobbed as she walked around picking up items left behind from the flood.

"It's completely gone. I don't know what else to do. Rebuild? Probably not. In two years it'll be the same thing again. I don't think I can start over, not here," she said through tears. "I have a house, I just don't have a home."

Reeves reported from East Houston.

Follow Jason Dearen on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/JHDearen>

No decision yet on who gets Trump's pledge of disaster aid

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and MARCY GORDON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House is still trying to decide who will get President Donald Trump's pledged \$1 million donation for Harvey storm relief efforts, one of the largest gifts ever given by a president but one that has evoked his checkered charitable past.

The president plans to make the donation, which is expected to come from his personal fortune, early next week, and it may be split among several groups doing relief work in storm-ravaged areas of Texas and Louisiana. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Friday that the president hasn't finalized where the money will go, raising some concern that charitable groups may end up competing for the money.

For the second straight day, Sanders invited reporters to make recommendations for which groups should get the money.

"If you have suggestions, he is very open to hearing those," Sanders said.

The president met with three relief groups — the Red Cross, Southern Baptist Relief and Salvation Army — in the Oval Office on Friday and pledged the nation's support to those affected by Harvey.

"Families have given food and shelter to those in need. Houses of worship have organized efforts to clean up communities and repair damaged homes," Trump said during an earlier meeting with religious leaders. "People have never seen anything quite like this. Individuals of every background are striving for the same goal: to aid and comfort people facing devastating losses."

There has been some concern that, if Trump opted to donate to only one group or just a few, there could be intense competition among relief agencies for the money and the publicity that comes with it.

But Rick Cohen, communications director for the National Council of Nonprofits, said there's already intense competition among organizations for Harvey donations.

"He should be looking to make an informed contribution, and it seems that he's doing so," said Cohen, noting that the president has stayed abreast of conditions on the ground and is planning to see it first-hand.

White House officials said the donation would come from the president's personal fortune and not his business, the Trump Organization, or his charitable foundation.

"You have to take him at his word," said Leslie Lenkowsky, a professor at Indiana University who focuses on philanthropy and who formerly headed the Corporation for National and Community Service. "If he wants to lead the way, that's one of the things that a president's supposed to do. ... He does like the image of himself as a compassionate person."

Trump's history of charitable donations features bursts of generosity frequently overshadowed by failed promises and questions about the source of the gifts.

The president has claimed to be worth \$10 billion while experts have pegged his fortune at far less. But Trump reportedly donates a far smaller percentage of his dollars than many of his fellow billionaires. The exact extent of Trump's charitable giving is not known since the president has broken with decades of tradition and not released his tax returns.

The Trump Foundation came under heavy scrutiny during the 2016 presidential campaign. It was revealed that Trump frequently did not follow through on his charitable promises. Records show that in the 15 years before his campaign, Trump made \$8.5 million in pledges but paid out about \$2.8 million, according to The Washington Post.

In January 2016, Trump held a high-profile fundraiser for veterans' causes, but it took him four months — and pressure from the media — to follow through on his pledge to donate \$1 million of his own money to the cause.

Trump, one of the nation's wealthiest presidents, has also pledged to donate his annual \$400,000 salary to charity. His first two gifts from his presidential earnings were to the National Park Service and the

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Education Department.

Other presidents, including Barack Obama, would customarily donate a percentage of their income — including money from outside sources like book sales — to charity every year.

Lemire reported from New York.

Trump seeks an initial \$7.9 billion in Harvey aid

By ERICA WERNER and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has sent lawmakers an initial request for a \$7.9 billion down payment toward Harvey relief and recovery efforts.

The request, expected to be swiftly approved by Congress, would add \$7.4 billion to rapidly dwindling Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster aid coffers and \$450 million to finance disaster loans for small businesses.

Republican leaders are already making plans to use the aid package, certain to be overwhelmingly popular, to win speedy approval of a contentious increase in the federal borrowing limit.

A senior House Republican, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deliberations were private, disclosed the approach. It ignores objections from House conservatives who are insisting that disaster money for Harvey should not be paired with the debt limit increase. Other senior GOP aides cautioned that no final decision had been made, and Democrats, whose votes would be needed in the Senate, have not signed off on the approach.

For GOP lawmakers who support a straightforward increase in the debt limit, pairing it with Harvey money makes the unpopular vote easier to cast. Congress must act by Sept. 29 to increase the United States' \$19.9 trillion debt limit, in order to permit the government to continue borrowing money to pay bills like Social Security and interest. Failing to raise the debt limit would risk a market-shattering first-ever U.S. default.

"Look, some members are going to vote against the debt ceiling under any circumstances and they want their 'no' vote to be as easy as possible," said Rep. Charlie Dent, R-Pa. "The issue is not making the debt ceiling vote easier for the 'no' votes. The issue is making it easier for the 'yes' votes."

The government's cash reserves are running low since the nation's debt limit has actually already been reached, and the Treasury Department is using various accounting measures to cover expenses. Billions of dollars in Harvey aid are an unexpected cost that at least raises the potential that Congress would have to act earlier than expected to increase the government's borrowing authority.

The House is likely to pass the Harvey aid as a stand-alone bill, but GOP leaders are signaling that the Senate may add the debt increase to it. Then the House would swiftly vote again to send it to Trump. The plan is still tentative, but the White House signaled it's on board with the idea. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney urged lawmakers in a letter outlining the aid request to "act expeditiously to ensure that the debt ceiling does not affect these critical response and recovery efforts."

Meanwhile, despite threats from Trump that he would shut down the government if his U.S.-Mexico border wall is not paid for, lawmakers and aides say the White House has eased off that threat and any fight over the border wall will be delayed until later in the year.

"I just don't think a shutdown is in anyone's interest or needed for anyone's interests," House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said in an interview Friday with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

The initial package of Harvey aid would replenish Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funds through Sept. 30.

The initial Harvey package is just the first installment for immediate disaster response like housing assistance, cleanup and FEMA-financed home repairs. The White House says more than 436,000 households have registered for FEMA aid. Estimates for longer-term rebuilding costs will take weeks or months to prepare, but the magnitude of the disaster could rival or exceed the damage from Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which cost taxpayers \$110 billion.

An additional \$5 billion to \$8 billion for Harvey could be tucked into a catch-all spending bill Congress

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must pass in the coming weeks to fund the government past Sept. 30, according to the senior House Republican. The final rebuilding package would be far larger and is likely by year's end.

Ryan said nothing will stop a Harvey aid bill from getting through Congress and he didn't foresee any problems with it passing, despite opposition to federal aid from some Republicans following Superstorm Sandy.

"It's going to take us time until we know the full scope of it," Ryan said of Harvey's toll. He said a storm the size of Harvey is unprecedented, and because of that it "deserves and requires federal response."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., concurred, issuing a statement Friday night promising that the "Senate stands ready to act quickly" on the measure.

Associated Press writer Scott Bauer in Madison, Wis., contributed.

Booming Houston built over land meant for flood projects

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and NOMAAN MERCHANT, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The explosive expansion of Houston subdivisions into prairies far to the west helped make the city affordable for the average 345 people who moved there each day, but it also paved over thousands of acres that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had intended for a reservoir and other flood-control projects to help against deluges like the ones from Harvey.

The push of subdivisions and freeways across what once was hundreds of square miles of flood-absorbing tallgrass prairies was part of the U.S.-leading population growth of Houston and surrounding Harris County. But the go-go-growth placed housing developments across the drainage basin of the two major reservoirs and dams safeguarding downtown Houston.

Thousands living in the western subdivisions that crowd up to the edges of the reservoirs remain under evacuation orders, after Harvey's record rains killed dozens of people in the Houston area and beyond, flooded tens of thousands of homes, and sent floodwater roaring around the edge of Houston's Addicks Dam for the first time in its 70-year history.

"Guess what was out here" when Houston's dams were built, said Gordon Prendergast, who had bought a kayak to come see how his house was faring after his neighborhood was evacuated. "Wilderness! Goats and wild coyotes, and nobody had any idea they'd build houses out here when the Army Corps was building that dam."

Prendergast, 65, didn't blame the Corps or the engineers for the flooding of all the houses crowded around reservoirs. "The only thing they could have done differently is block off this entire area, and make this a national park, and say you cannot have subdivisions," he said.

"They probably would have been fighting developers and lawyers for 20 to 30 years."

Addicks and Barker dams and reservoirs west of downtown anchor the flood protection system of the fourth-largest U.S. city.

The Corps bought land for the two projects and built them in the 1940s after floods inundated downtown.

The Corps' plan at the time also called for a third reservoir in northwest Houston, as well as a levee and two grand canals intended to funnel water around the city and out to the Gulf of Mexico, then-local Corps commander Col. Richard Pannell told a Houston town meeting over flooding last year.

But authorities never put together the money to buy land for the additional flood control. Development quickly made the tracts too expensive to buy for the projects.

Development to the west of downtown has brought the area desirable employers such as Amazon and FedEx, and subdivisions that made Houston affordable for the average person in a way that San Francisco or New York are not, said Augustus Campbell of the development-friendly West Houston Association nonprofit.

"One of the reasons Houston has been economically successful is you don't have to be rich if you're in Houston," Campbell said.

But each ring of development — covering absorbent grassland and wetlands with concrete — makes for heavier, faster deluges of water rushing on the developments downstream, and further strains the two

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dams and reservoirs, Pannell said in that talk last year. A Corps spokesman did not return a message for comment this week, amid the record flooding. The city of Houston's public affairs office also did not immediately return a call and message.

"Houston is not known for its planning," notes Evelyn Merz of the local Sierra Club. The environmental group went to court five years ago and tried unsuccessfully to block a new parkway on the Katy Prairie to the west of Houston, saying the parkway would draw yet more development and more flooding Houston wasn't prepared to handle.

Houston's push west has consumed all but the last 200,000 acres of the Katy Prairie, said Mary Anne Piacentini, executive director of the Katy Prairie Conservancy, whose work includes managing 20,000 acres of prairie preserve.

With roots stretching well over a dozen feet beneath the soil, native tallgrass can absorb nearly 20 times more water than lawns can, reducing and slowing the cascades of water running off Houston's concrete, Piacentini said. She has worked, with mixed results, to encourage Houston's managers and politically influential developers to promote more prairie open space and so-called pocket prairies within the city.

Houston's long-term planning projects the sprawl across the Katy Prairie will persist, eventually reaching the Brazos River.

Jim Blackburn, lawyer for the Sierra Club in the fight against the parkway and a planning professor at Rice University, hopes to see a revised development scheme given the lessons of Harvey: A Houston with more reservoirs, with protected grasslands and ranches on the city's outskirts, and greenbelts throughout the city.

With the flood, "Houston is at a real crossroads," Blackburn said. "How we respond to this tragedy will determine ... how viable and vibrant Houston will be."

Harvey's dead mourned as search for missing gets desperate

By BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Benito Juarez Cavazos had come to Texas illegally from Mexico on his own as a young teen and was in the process 28 years later of getting his green card when he was swept away in the floodwaters left by Harvey.

Cavazos, 42, had recently received a work permit and Social Security card and was scheduled for an appointment toward getting permanent residency the day after he apparently drowned, his cousins said Friday at a memorial service for the auto body shop worker.

"When he received the Social Security card, he was so excited" because he felt it would prevent him from being deported, Maria Cavazos said. "That was his sense of protection."

His close-knit family in the U.S. and friends mourned his loss and remembered him as a happy-go-lucky guy who was always smiling, never missed a party where beer was served and would give a friend his last dollar.

The service for Cavazos was one of the first for Harvey's 42 known victims.

It's been four days since volunteer rescuers Ben Vizueth and Gustavo Rodriguez went missing in Harvey's murky floodwaters when their boat hit submerged power lines and everyone was pitched overboard.

The bodies of two other men on the boat at the time — Vizueth's brother, 45-year-old Yahir Rubio-Vizuet, and 33-year-old Jorge Perez — were found floating in the water soon after. Two journalists for the British newspaper The Daily Mail were aboard and survived.

Vizueth's wife, Perla Jaquez, trudged through a wooded area filled with downed trees and debris Thursday with other volunteers looking for the missing men.

"There's still a lot of faith and a lot of hope that we can recover them," she said in a Facebook Live video.

The funeral of 82-year-old Ola Mae Winfrey-Crooks was scheduled Saturday. She drowned when her car was swept off a farm-to-market road at the San Jacinto River near her home north of Houston. Authorities say it appears Crooks was trying to cross the bridge and the swift water carried her vehicle off the road and into the floodwaters.

A memorial also was being held Saturday for 58-year-old Ruben Jordan, a former football and track coach

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at Clear Creek High School who disappeared while driving during the storm.

Al and JoDell Pasek want to scatter the ashes of their son, 25-year-old Andrew Pasek, at Mount Rushmore, where they had long planned to take a family trip.

Andrew was on a mission to check on his beloved big sister's cat when he stepped on the wire, then fell into a lamp post attached to the live wire. Pasek's friend moved closer to help, but Pasek warned him away.

"He said, 'Don't touch me. I'm dying,'" said JoDell Pasek.

When news of Cavazos's death spread through the small, tightknit and mostly Mexican neighborhood of Port Houston, friends were devastated, said childhood friend Rene Velez.

In a funeral home Friday night, two singers and a guitarist sang hymns in Spanish as the body of Cavazos lay in a dark blue coffin. He was dressed in a red, white and blue plaid shirt and blue jeans.

His cousin, Olga Cavazos, commented while viewing his body that his ever-present smile was discernible.

Mourners sang along in the small chapel while dozens of others gathered in a nearby kitchen eating food and swapping stories.

Maria Cavazos said her cousin was dedicated to his job and insisted on going to work Tuesday despite warnings from his roommate and the blessings of his boss not to show up that day. His car got stuck in a ditch and his family thinks he tried to walk home and was swept away by waters while crossing Interstate 10 on foot.

Cavazos was found dead in a parking lot after floodwaters receded Tuesday near a Houston freeway. His death was listed by police as a drowning or accident.

The car was found the next day. It was locked and dry inside.

Cavazos, one of eight children, had not been home to visit his parents in the city of Montemorelos in the northern Mexican state of Nuevo León since he arrived in the U.S. because of fears he wouldn't be able to get back in the country.

"It's very unfortunate that right when he finally had hopes of being able to maybe go to Mexico soon to go see his family it all went downhill," Maria Cavazos said. "Sadly, he's going back to Mexico, but in an unfortunate way."

Associated Press writers Amanda Lee Myers in Los Angeles; Anthony Izaguirre in Montgomery, Alabama; Frank Eltman in Garden City, New York; Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Columbus, Ohio; and AP News Researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

NKorea missile fear sets pre-emptive strike debate in Japan

By MARI YAMAGUCHI, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan is debating whether to develop a limited pre-emptive strike capability and buy cruise missiles — ideas that were anathema in the pacifist country before the North Korea missile threat. With revisions to Japan's defense plans underway, ruling party hawks are accelerating the moves, and some defense experts say Japan should at least consider them.

After being on the backburner in the ruling party for decades, a possibility of pre-emptive strike was formally proposed to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe by his party's missile defense panel in March, prompting parliamentary debate, though somewhat lost steam as Abe apparently avoided the divisive topic after seeing support ratings for his scandal-laden government plunge.

North Korea's test-firing Tuesday of a missile, which flew over Japan and landed in the northern Pacific Ocean, has intensified fear and reignited the debate.

"Should we possess pre-emptive strike capability?" liberal-leaning Mainichi newspaper asked the following day. "But isn't it too reckless to jump to discuss a 'get them before they get you' approach?"

Japan has a two-step missile defense system. First, Standard Missile-3 interceptors on Aegis destroyers in the Sea of Japan would shoot down projectiles mid-flight and if that fails, surface-to-air PAC-3s would intercept them from within a 20-kilometer (12-mile) range. Technically, the setup can handle falling debris or missiles heading to Japan, but it's not good enough for missiles on a high-lofted trajectory, those with

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multiple warheads or simultaneous multiple attacks, experts say.

A pre-emptive strike, by Japanese definition, is a step preceding the two-tier defense. Cruise missiles, such as Tomahawk, fired from Aegis destroyers or fighter jets would get the enemy missile clearly waiting to be fired, or just after blastoff from a North Korean launch site, before it approaches Japan.

Japan's self-defense-only principle under the country's war-renouncing constitution prohibits its military from making a first strike, and officials discussing a limited pre-emptive strike are calling it a "strike-back" instead. Whichever the language, it further loosens postwar Japan's pacifist principle and could strain its relations with China, which is suspicious of Tokyo's intentions. There are gray areas as to how far Japan can go and still justify minimum self-defense.

Some experts are skeptical about how it would work. North Korea's secretive, diversified and mobile launch system makes it extremely difficult to track down and incapacitate the weapons with Japan's limited cruise missile attacks, security expert Ken Jimbo at Keio University said in a recent article. A pre-emptive strike capability would also require trillions of dollars to set up spy satellites, reconnaissance aircraft, cruise missiles, as well as training of special units, experts say.

North Korea flight-tested two intercontinental ballistic missiles in July and has threatened to send missiles near the U.S. territory of Guam, home to key military bases. The North already has short-range missiles that cover Japan and possibly has achieved miniaturized nuclear warheads, the Defense Ministry's annual report says.

"North Korea has demonstrated its capability to hit targets anywhere in Japan," said Narushige Michishita, a defense expert at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. "It has become even more important for Japan to improve its missile and civil defense capabilities, and seriously think about acquiring limited but meaningful strike capabilities."

Timing of the pre-emptive strike debate is seen in favor of supporters of the option in the ruling party and the Defense Ministry because they are just starting to revise Japan's multi-year defense plans.

Abe called Tuesday's missile firing "unprecedented, grave and serious threat." Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera, an advocate of bolstering Japan's missile and strike-back capability, said more provocations by the North are likely and Tokyo must quickly upgrade its missile arsenal.

The Defense Ministry announced Thursday a record 5.26 trillion yen (\$48 billion) budget for fiscal 2018, which would cover purchase of upgraded missile defense systems such as land-based Aegis Ashore interceptors or the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, a mobile equipment Washington and Seoul have installed in South Korea. Beijing, which says THAAD's powerful radar can reach deep into China and wants it removed, could react sharply if it is installed in Japan.

Abe, since taking office five years ago, has expanded Japan's military role, allowing it to take on a greater task in international peacekeeping. In 2015, his government allowed Japan to fight for its allies when they come under enemy attack, a condition known as collective self-defense, by re-interpreting part of the constitution and railroading a new security legislation that sparked massive protests.

Pre-emptive strike, however, is even more sensitive and divisive topic and the government may have to prioritize upgrading missile interceptors for now, says Tetsuo Kotani, senior research fellow at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. Polls show most Japanese fear North Korea's missile threat and support bolstering Japan's intercepting capability, but in terms of pre-emptive strike, opponents overwhelmed supporters.

"Prime Minister Abe seems to have turned hesitant about discussing pre-emptive strikes," Kotani said, suggesting Abe's declining popularity is causing his reluctance to push the issue. "Public debate of pre-emptive strikes may slow down."

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

Her work can be found in APNews at <https://www.apnews.com/search/mari%20yamaguchi>

Residents in Harvey's path return to find devastation

By JASON DEAREN and JAY REEVES, Associated Press

CROSBY, Texas (AP) — Silvia Casas' eyes welled with tears Friday as she surveyed the damage from Harvey to what once was a working class, mostly Hispanic neighborhood near Crosby, Texas.

Large trees with their roots reaching into the air were pulled from the ground by Harvey's floodwaters. Recreational Vehicles were crumpled like tin cans. Entire houses were picked up and moved 20 or 30 feet from where they once sat, leaving piles of wood and splintered debris and PVC pipes sticking from the ground as the only reminder of once-familiar structures.

Near a 30-foot high pile of debris, once houses and treasured belongings now stacked against a telephone pole, someone had hung a painting of the Virgin de Guadalupe from a tree branch. Around the corner, a sinkhole had swallowed two cars and was filled with brown, mucky water.

A neighborhood stray dog, fed by everyone, weathered the flood by standing on the Casas' roof. Their cinderblock house was one of the few structures that wasn't thrown by floodwaters, but inside, a pile of furniture and splintered belongings sat in the middle of the floor, under a ceiling pocked with peeling paint from the floodwaters.

Silvia stopped to survey the outdoor kitchen that used to stand on the side of the house where several generations would gather.

"This is where we gathered as a family..." Silvia said before choking up. "We're going to miss this place."

A week after Hurricane Harvey roared into Texas, the Casas are among thousands of people seeing their devastated homes for the first time. An estimated 156,000 dwellings in Harris County, or more than 10 percent of all structures in the county where Crosby is located, were damaged by flooding, according to the flood control district.

The community where the Casas family lived doesn't have an official name. It is about 6.5 miles southwest of the Arkema Inc. chemical plant in Crosby that flooded earlier this week, causing a fire and explosion that evacuated a 1.5-mile radius around the plant.

Silvia and Rafael Casas said their family got no official evacuation warning when the floodwaters came last Friday. They were told to leave when they lost power, but the lights stayed on. Their home was in the area that was affected by the release of water from two dams that were in danger of overflowing.

"On Friday, someone, maybe with the city, came and told my parents they were going to open the dam, and that's it. They were supposed to come back and alert people when they opened it (the dam) up, but they never did," Rafael Casas said.

He said the person told him that someone would return and let them know whether to evacuate or cut off the power to this whole area, which would be a sign that they should leave.

"But they never came back and they never cut the power."

Luckily, the family decided to leave anyway.

Robey Bartee was happy to leave the George R. Brown convention center on Friday where he spent six days after Harvey along with thousands of other evacuees. Bartee loaded his belongings into a relative's for the 11-mile drive to the old, wood-frame house where he lived with his late wife in East Houston.

What he found was worse than he expected. The house reeked of spoiled meat that went bad while the power was off. The carpet squished with each step. A line of grass and debris showed about a foot of water filled his den and was deeper in a sunken bedroom. His furniture was wet. The wallboards were soft.

Hurricane Rita flooded the same house in 2005, he said, but Harvey was worse.

"This one just wiped me out," said Bartee, 66, a retired city employee. "I didn't completely have to start over on the first one. I was able to save a lot of things and pick up the pieces and go along. But this one here, I don't know what pieces to pick up."

There were bright spots: Both of his old cars started despite being submerged in water for days, and a neighbor had cold bottled water. But Bartee said he plans to go back to the shelter and find another home, as much as he hates the idea.

Back near Crosby, Mary Ann Avila was thinking the same thing as Bartee once she saw her destroyed

home. The only room left standing was her daughter's bedroom.

She sobbed as she walked around picking up items left behind from the flood.

"It's completely gone," she said. "I don't know what else to do. Rebuild? Probably not. In 2 years it'll be the same thing again. I don't think I can start over, not here," she said through tears. "I have a house, I just don't have a home."

The version of the story corrects the first name of Robey Bartee.

Reeves reported from East Houston.

Follow Jason Dearen on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/JHDearen>

Houston tries to safeguard some areas by flooding others

By JEFF AMY and JUAN A. LOZANO, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Officials in Houston sought Friday to safeguard parts of their devastated city by keeping others flooded in the wake of Harvey, which retained enough rain-making power to raise the risk of flooding in the middle of the country a week after it slammed into Texas.

The mayor announced that ongoing releases of water from two reservoirs could keep thousands of homes flooded for up to 15 days and told residents that if they stayed and later needed help, first responders' resources could be further strained.

In another Texas city with no drinking water, people waited in a line that stretched for more than a mile to get bottled water. And a new fire erupted Friday evening at a crippled Houston-area chemical plant that was the scene of an earlier explosion and fire.

Residents of the still-flooded western part of Houston were asked to evacuate due to the releases from two reservoirs protecting downtown. The ongoing releases were expected to keep flooded homes that had been filled with water earlier in the week. Homes that are not currently flooded probably will not be affected, officials said.

It could take three months for the Addicks and Barker reservoirs, which are normally dry, to drain. The Harris County Flood Control District said the water releases had to continue to protect the reservoirs' structural integrity and in case more heavy rain falls.

Some of the affected houses have several feet (meters) of water in them, and the water reaches to the rooftops of others, district meteorologist Jeff Lindner said.

Mayor Sylvester Turner pleaded for more high-water vehicles and more search-and-rescue equipment as the nation's fourth-largest city continued looking for any survivors or corpses that might have somehow escaped notice in flood-ravaged neighborhoods.

Search teams quickly worked their way down streets, sometimes not even knocking on doors if there were obvious signs that all was well — organized debris piles or full cans of trash on the curb, for instance, or neighbors confirming that the residents had evacuated.

Authorities considered it an initial search, though they did not say what subsequent searches would entail or when they would commence.

Authorities raised the death toll from the storm to 42 late Friday, while rescue workers conducted a block-by-block search of tens of thousands of Houston homes.

Turner also asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide more workers to process applications from thousands of people seeking government help. The mayor said he will request a preliminary aid package of \$75 million for debris removal alone.

The storm had lost most of its tropical characteristics but remained a source of heavy rain that threatened to cause flooding as far north as Indiana.

By Friday evening, Harvey had dumped more than 9 inches (23 centimeters) of rain in parts of Arkansas and Tennessee and more than 8 inches (20 centimeters) in spots in Alabama and Kentucky. Its remnants

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were expected to generate another 1 to 3 inches (2.5 to 8 centimeters) over parts of Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio and West Virginia.

National Weather Service meteorologists expect Harvey to break up and merge with other weather systems over the Ohio Valley late Saturday or Sunday.

More than 1,500 people were staying at shelters in Louisiana, and that number included people from communities in Texas. The state opened a seventh shelter Friday in Shreveport for up to 2,400 people, said Shauna Sanford, a spokeswoman for Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards.

The Texas city of Beaumont, home to almost 120,000 people near the Louisiana state line, was trying to bring in enough bottled water for people who stayed behind after a water pumping station was overwhelmed by the swollen Neches River.

The latest statewide damage surveys showed the extent of destruction. An estimated 156,000 dwellings in Harris County, or more than 10 percent of all structures in the county database, were damaged by flooding, according to the flood control district for the county, which includes Houston.

Lindner called that a conservative estimate.

Figures from the Texas Department of Public Safety indicated that nearly 87,000 homes had major or minor damage and at least 6,800 were destroyed.

Gov. Greg Abbott warned Friday in an interview with ABC's "Good Morning America" that it could take years for Texas to "dig out from this catastrophe." President Donald Trump tweeted that there's still "so much to do" in Texas' recovery.

At the Arkema chemical plant in Crosby, thick black smoke and towering orange flames shot up once again. The company has blamed the blasts and fires on floodwaters that engulfed the plant's backup generators and knocked out the refrigeration necessary to keep unstable compounds from degrading and catching fire.

In Beaumont, people waited Friday in a line of cars that stretched more than a mile at a water-distribution center at a high school football field. Each vehicle received one case. Earlier, people stood in line at a Kroger grocery store that was giving away gallon jugs of water, which were gone in two hours.

While city officials said little about plans to restore water service, a spokeswoman for ExxonMobil, which has a refinery and chemical plants in Beaumont, said Friday that the company helped install a temporary intake pipe to the city's treatment plant.

The water began pumping late Thursday and a little was flowing into some homes, but the water will not return to full pressure until the city refills reservoirs, spokeswoman Ashley Alemayehu said.

The water supply for the Bolivar Peninsula southeast of Houston was expected to run out within days, and could be out for weeks, after a pumping station 30 miles away was submerged by floodwater, officials said.

About 2,000 people live year-round on the 27-mile (43.45-kilometer) long peninsula, a narrow strip of land in the Gulf of Mexico.

People fleeing the flooding were being bused to the Beaumont airport where airplanes and helicopters waited to fly them to Dallas and elsewhere. Air ambulances were on standby for those with critical medical needs.

About 1,800 people were staying in shelters in Dallas, including about 1,000 who were flown late Thursday from Beaumont, officials said.

Harvey initially came ashore Aug. 25 as a Category 4 hurricane, then went back out to sea and lingered off the coast as a tropical storm for days. The storm brought five straight days of rain totaling close to 52 inches (1.3 meters), the heaviest tropical downpour ever recorded in the continental U.S.

Far out over the Atlantic, Hurricane Irma was following a course that could bring it near the eastern Caribbean Sea by early next week. The Category 2 storm was moving northwest at nearly 13 mph (20 kph). No coastal watches or warnings were in effect.

Amy reported from Beaumont, Texas. Associated Press writers Johnny Clark in Beaumont, Texas; Paul Weber and Will Weissert in Austin; Diana Heidgerd, David Warren, Jamie Stengle and Adam Kealoha Casey in Dallas; Michael Kunzelman in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Tammy Webber in Chicago contributed

to this report.

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Black smoke, flames shoot up from Texas chemical plant

By FRANK BAJAK, REESE DUNKLIN and EMILY SCHMALL, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Thick black smoke and towering orange flames shot up Friday after two trailers of highly unstable compounds blew up at a flooded Houston-area chemical plant, the second fire there in two days.

Arkema says Harvey's floodwaters engulfed its backup generators at the plant in Crosby and knocked out the refrigeration necessary to keep the organic peroxides, used in such products as plastics and paints, from degrading and catching fire. Arkema executive Richard Rennard said two containers caught fire Friday evening, and that there are six more it expects will eventually catch fire.

Arkema spokeswoman Janet Smith said that the company expects the rest of the containers will ignite "within a matter of days."

EPA spokesman David Gray said that preliminary analysis of the data captured by the agency's surveillance aircraft Friday did not show high levels of toxic airborne chemicals. No serious injuries were reported in the last two days as a result of the fires.

Texas A&M chemical safety expert Sam Mannan said that the height and color of the flames from the plant Friday suggested incomplete combustion of the organic peroxides. With complete combustion, he said, the byproduct is carbon dioxide and water, posing about the same amount of risk as standing too close to a campfire. But incomplete combustion implies something else is burning.

The fire burned not just the organic peroxides but also the plastic packaging, insulation, and the materials used to construct the trailers, Smith said.

Daryl Roberts, the company's vice president of manufacturing, technology and regulatory services in the Americas, told The Associated Press Wednesday that the flood water inundating the plant would cause any toxins produced by the fire to quickly vaporize. By Friday, the water had receded but Arkema spokeswoman Smith could not comment on whether that had changed the calculation of risk.

A 1½ mile buffer (2.4 kilometers) around the plant was established Tuesday when Arkema Inc. warned that chemicals kept there could explode. Employees had been pulled, and up to 5,000 people living nearby were warned to evacuate. Officials remain comfortable with the size of the buffer, Rachel Moreno, a spokeswoman for the Harris County Fire Marshal Office, said Friday evening.

Arkema spokeswoman Janet Smith reiterated statements executives made earlier Friday that the safest course of action was simply to "let these fires happen and let them burn out."

Arkema officials did not directly notify local emergency managers of the generator failure, Moreno said.

It came, instead, by way of the plant's ride-out crew, who told the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department about it when they were rescued during the hurricane, she said.

In a conference call with reporters Friday, Arkema President and CEO Rich Rowe apologized and said he was sending a team of employees to Crosby to figure out how best to assist locals.

"I realize this is not a situation that we can help remedy overnight," he said.

Early Thursday, two blasts blew open a trailer containing at least 2 tons of material, sending up a plume of black smoke and flames 30- to 40-foot (9- to 12-meter) high in the tiny town of Crosby, about a half-hour from Houston, authorities said. The Texas environmental agency called the smoke "especially acrid and irritating" and said it can impair breathing and inflame the eyes, nose and throat.

Questions persisted Friday about the adequacy of Arkema's master plan to protect the public in the event of an emergency in flood-prone Houston, a metropolitan area of about 6 million people.

The plant is along a corridor with one of the nation's greatest concentrations of refineries, pipelines and chemical plants. A 2016 analysis led by Texas A&M University researchers identified Arkema's facility as

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posing one of the region's biggest risks, based on such factors as the type and amount of chemicals and the population density.

"This should be a wake-up call (for) all kinds of plants that are storing and converting reactive chemicals in areas which have high population densities," said Massachusetts Institute of Technology expert Nicholas Ashford.

In accident plans Arkema submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in 2014, executives said a hurricane and a power loss were potential hazards. Yet the plans, which were supposed to address worst-case scenarios, didn't explain what Arkema would do if faced with either.

Executives also acknowledged Friday that they didn't have materials at the plant that could have neutralized the organic peroxides.

Instead, workers were forced to scramble and move the chemicals away from floodwaters after buildings were engulfed and power was lost. Workers transferred the compounds to refrigerated containers, but those failed, too, causing Thursday's fire.

After days of questions about what was in its chemical inventory, the company posted a list of them on its website Friday, though not the amounts on hand. Asked why it hadn't shared the information sooner, Rowe said, "We're managing our way through a crisis."

State and federal regulators have cited Arkema for safety and environmental violations at the Crosby plant dating back more than a decade, records show.

Texas' environmental commission penalized the plant at least three times. In June 2006, Arkema had failed to prevent unauthorized emissions during a two-hour warehouse fire. Records show a pallet of organic peroxide was poorly stored, resulting in the blaze, and more than a ton of volatile organic compounds were discharged.

More recently, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration in February fined Arkema nearly \$110,000 — later reduced to just over \$90,000 — because of 10 serious safety violations found during an inspection.

"We don't have a perfect record, we understand that," Arkema's Rowe said. "We strive to get better at every turn and will continue to do so."

Dunklin reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Michael Biesecker, Matthew Daly and Seth Bornstein in Washington; Luke Sheridan in New York; and Angeliki Kastanis in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

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Judge tosses most serious charges in Penn State frat death

By MARK SCOLFARO, Associated Press

BELLEFONTE, Pa. (AP) — A judge threw out involuntary manslaughter and aggravated assault charges Friday against members of a Penn State fraternity in the alcohol-related hazing death of a pledge, ordering 12 of the young men to stand trial on less serious counts.

The ruling, issued without explanation by District Justice Allen Sinclair, was a stinging defeat for prosecutors in one of the biggest and most harrowing hazing cases ever brought in the U.S., built on hours of security camera footage and numerous text messages exchanged among fraternity brothers.

"Obviously now the teeth have really been taken out of the commonwealth's case," said Michael Engle, defense attorney for Gary DiBileo, 21.

Tim Piazza, 19, of Lebanon, New Jersey, died in February after guzzling vodka and beer at a series of drinking stations at the now-closed Beta Theta Pi house and then falling head-first down the basement stairs.

His frat brothers did not call an ambulance until the next morning. Piazza died a day later of injuries that

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included a fractured skull and damaged spleen.

The judge's decision followed a hard-fought, unusually long seven-day preliminary hearing involving a platoon of defense attorneys who said Piazza's death was a tragic accident.

In his ruling, the judge threw out all charges against four defendants. As a result, 14 frat brothers in all will stand trial. Two of them previously agreed to waive their right to a preliminary hearing. No trial date was set.

Eight of those frat brothers could have been sent away to prison for several years if convicted of the felony charge of aggravated assault. Now the most serious charge any of them face, in addition to unlawful hazing and violating liquor laws, is reckless endangerment, a misdemeanor that could bring them little or no jail time.

District Attorney Stacy Parks Miller said she plans to seek a judge's permission to refile involuntary manslaughter charges and might also try to reinstate aggravated assault charges.

She said the judge apparently based his ruling on an assessment of the defendants' individual roles, which she called "a huge legal error" in a case she pursued based on a theory of accomplice liability.

"Sometimes judges get it wrong — that's why we have an appeal," she said.

An FBI attempt underway to recover suspected deleted footage from the fraternity house's security system could produce new evidence and may warrant additional charges, the prosecutor said.

Piazza's parents watched the hearing from the gallery's front row and left the courthouse without commenting. Their lawyer, Tom Kline, said they planned to return home and consider that their son won't be at Penn State's home football opener on Saturday.

"This is no day for celebration for anyone," Kline said.

Defense attorneys said they will challenge any effort to restore the charges and will work to whittle down what remains.

Leonard Ambrose, the lawyer for Joseph Sala, 19, who was among those facing the most serious counts, said there was "no basis for most of the charges."

Prosecutors argued during the hearing that fraternity members pressured Piazza and other pledges to run through a speed-drinking "gantlet."

Cameras in the frat house showed Piazza staggering around, falling repeatedly over the course of the night.

For several hours after he got hurt, members of the fraternity appeared to take half-hearted and even counterproductive measures to help him, pouring liquid on him and strapping on a loaded backpack to prevent him from rolling over and choking on his vomit.

In one of the many text messages obtained by prosecutors, one frat member said to another: "Make sure the pledges clean the basement, and get rid of any evidence of alcohol."

Defense attorneys argued that their clients' roles were minimal or that their actions did not amount to a crime. They argued the students had little reason to anticipate the night would end in tragedy.

Piazza's "tragic death was an accident, and that's what the judge saw," said defense attorney Frank Fina, who represents the fraternity president, Brendan Young, 22. He complained that the defendants have been demonized.

All charges were thrown out against Joseph Ems, 21, of Philadelphia; Ryan McCann, 22, of Pittsburgh; Lucas Rockwell, 21, of Washington, D.C.; and Braxton Becker, 21, of Niskayuna, New York. Ems had been charged with reckless endangerment, the others with evidence tampering.

"He's happy to move on with his life, which has been on hold for about a year," said Ems' lawyer, William Brennan.

Trump asks for \$7.9 billion down payment for Harvey relief

By ERICA WERNER and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has sent lawmakers an initial request for a \$7.9 billion down payment toward Harvey relief and recovery efforts.

The request, expected to be swiftly approved by Congress, would add \$7.4 billion to rapidly dwindling Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster aid coffers and \$450 million to finance disaster loans for small businesses.

Republican leaders are already making plans to use the aid package, certain to be overwhelmingly popular, to win speedy approval of a contentious increase in the federal borrowing limit.

A senior House Republican, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deliberations were private, disclosed the approach. It ignores objections from House conservatives who are insisting that disaster money for Harvey should not be paired with the debt limit increase. Other senior GOP aides cautioned that no final decision had been made, and Democrats, whose votes would be needed in the Senate, have not signed off on the approach.

For GOP lawmakers who support a straightforward increase in the debt limit, pairing it with Harvey money makes the unpopular vote easier to cast. Congress must act by Sept. 29 to increase the United States' \$19.9 trillion debt limit, in order to permit the government to continue borrowing money to pay bills like Social Security and interest. Failing to raise the debt limit would risk a market-shattering first-ever U.S. default.

"Look, some members are going to vote against the debt ceiling under any circumstances and they want their 'no' vote to be as easy as possible," said Rep. Charlie Dent, R-Pa. "The issue is not making the debt ceiling vote easier for the 'no' votes. The issue is making it easier for the 'yes' votes."

The government's cash reserves are running low since the nation's debt limit has actually already been reached, and the Treasury Department is using various accounting measures to cover expenses. Billions of dollars in Harvey aid are an unexpected cost that at least raises the potential that Congress would have to act earlier than expected to increase the government's borrowing authority.

The House is likely to pass the Harvey aid as a stand-alone bill, but GOP leaders are signaling that the Senate may add the debt increase to it. Then the House would swiftly vote again to send it to Trump. The plan is still tentative, but the White House signaled it's on board with the idea. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney urged lawmakers in a letter outlining the aid request to "act expeditiously to ensure that the debt ceiling does not affect these critical response and recovery efforts."

Meanwhile, despite threats from Trump that he would shut down the government if his U.S.-Mexico border wall is not paid for, lawmakers and aides say the White House has eased off that threat and any fight over the border wall will be delayed until later in the year.

"I just don't think a shutdown is in anyone's interest or needed for anyone's interests," House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said in an interview Friday with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

The initial package of Harvey aid would replenish Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funds through Sept. 30.

The initial Harvey package is just the first installment for immediate disaster response like housing assistance, cleanup and FEMA-financed home repairs. The White House says more than 436,000 households have registered for FEMA aid. Estimates for longer-term rebuilding costs will take weeks or months to prepare, but the magnitude of the disaster could rival or exceed the damage from Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which cost taxpayers \$110 billion.

An additional \$5 billion to \$8 billion for Harvey could be tucked into a catch-all spending bill Congress must pass in the coming weeks to fund the government past Sept. 30, according to the senior House Republican. The final rebuilding package would be far larger and is likely by year's end.

Ryan said nothing will stop a Harvey aid bill from getting through Congress and he didn't foresee any problems with it passing, despite opposition to federal aid from some Republicans following Superstorm Sandy.

"It's going to take us time until we know the full scope of it," Ryan said of Harvey's toll. He said a storm

the size of Harvey is unprecedented, and because of that it “deserves and requires federal response.”

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., concurred, issuing a statement Friday night promising that the “Senate stands ready to act quickly” on the measure.

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Associated Press writer Scott Bauer in Madison, Wis., contributed.

Myanmar military says death toll in clashes almost 400

By BERNAT ARMANGUE, Associated Press

TEKNAF, Bangladesh (AP) — Almost 400 people have died in violence in western Myanmar that was triggered by attacks on security forces by insurgents from the Rohingya ethnic minority, Myanmar’s military said, as both sides exchanged charges of atrocities and thousands of Rohingya fled across the border to Bangladesh.

The death toll, posted on the Facebook page of Myanmar’s military commander Friday, is a sharp increase over the previously reported number of just over 100. The statement said all but 29 of the 399 dead were insurgents.

The statement said there had been 90 armed clashes, including an initial 30 attacks by insurgents on Aug. 25, making the combat more extensive than previously announced. The army, responding to the attacks, launched what it called clearance operations against the insurgents.

Advocates for the Rohingya, an oppressed Muslim minority in overwhelmingly Buddhist Myanmar, say security forces and vigilantes attacked and burned villages, shooting civilians and causing others to flee. Hundreds of civilians were killed, they say, posting photos, videos and details on social media as evidence.

The government blames the insurgents for burning their own homes and killing Buddhists in Rakhine. Longstanding tension between the Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists erupted in bloody rioting in 2012, forcing more than 100,000 Rohingya into displacement camps, where many still live.

As the refugees poured across the border into Bangladesh, a police official in Cox Bazar’s Teknaf area said that 21 bodies of Rohingya were found floating in the Naf River. Mohammed Mohiuddin Khan said two of them had bullet wounds.

On Thursday, three boats with refugees capsized, killing at least 26, including women and children, police said.

Among those fleeing the violence was Sham Shu Hoque, 34, who crossed the border with 17 family members. He said he left his village of Ngan Chaung on Aug. 25 after it was attacked by Myanmar security forces who shot at the villagers. He said troops also used rocket-propelled grenades, and helicopters fired some sort of incendiary device.

Five people were killed in front of his house, he said. His family survived the attack but was told by the soldiers to leave. They took a week to reach Bangladesh, hiding in villages along the way, he said.

Estimates from local and police officials, intelligence sources and Rohingya leaders suggest at least 40,000 have crossed into Bangladesh. In the first six days after the Aug. 25 attacks, the International Organization for Migration said at least 18,000 Rohingya arrived in Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi border guards have tried to keep them out, but usually relent when pressured, and thousands could be seen Friday making their way across muddy rice fields. Young people helped carry the elderly, some on makeshift stretchers, and children carried newborns.

Some, carrying bundles of clothes, cooking utensils and small solar panels, said they had walked at least three days to get to the border.

The insurgent group that claimed responsibility for last week’s attacks, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army — ARSA — said it acted to protect Rohingya communities.

It is nearly impossible to verify information issued by either the government or Rohingya sympathizers because Myanmar has barred most journalists from the area, except on limited official guided tours.

A human rights group, Fortify Rights, said that witnesses who escaped have supported accusations by Rohingya advocates that government security personnel and civilian vigilantes “committed mass killings

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of Rohingya Muslim men, women, and children in Chut Pyin village, Rathedaung township, on Aug. 27.”
“Survivors and eyewitnesses from Chut Pyin told Fortify Rights that soldiers and armed residents burned every house in the village,” the group said in a statement. It said survivors who returned to the village after the attackers left estimated the death toll there to be more than 200.

It quoted a 41-year-old survivor identified by the pseudonym “Abdul Rahman” as saying that soldiers killed and burned his brother along with other victims.

“We found (my other family members) in the fields,” it quoted him as saying. “They had marks on their bodies from bullets and some had cuts. My two nephews, their heads were off. One was 6 years old and the other was 9 years old. My sister-in-law was shot with a gun.”

Government accusations of atrocities committed by the insurgents are less detailed.

“Some of the ethnic natives while on their way were brutally butchered by the terrorists applying inhuman ways without any reason,” Friday’s military statement said. It said the insurgents were “using various terrorism tactics under well-hatched plots, attacking security forces on duty with superior force, mingling with villagers after running away from security forces in hot pursuit of them, cutting off communication lines, and spreading false information to get outside help.”

Most of Myanmar’s estimated 1 million Rohingya live in northern Rakhine state. They face severe persecution, with the government refusing to recognize them as a legitimate native ethnic minority, leaving them without citizenship and basic rights.

The U.S. group Human Rights Watch said it has obtained satellite images that suggest burning villages across a large swathe of Rakhine state. It said the locations match some of the accounts given by people who have fled into Bangladesh of settlements that have been attacked and destroyed by Myanmar soldiers, police and armed civilians.

“The government has to stop this offensive,” said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch. “It has to allow humanitarian assistance and let journalists into this area. We have to actually see what’s happened because quite clearly human rights violations have taken place.”

He said it was possible that violations had occurred on both sides.

The U.N. special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, expressed concern “that many thousands of people are increasingly at risk of grave violations of their human rights.”

The U.N. secretary-general also urged restraint by Myanmar security forces, a spokesperson said in a statement.

“The current situation underlines the urgency of seeking holistic approaches to addressing the complex root causes of violence,” spokesperson Eri Kaneko said.

Utah officer who arrested nurse over blood test put on leave

By **LINDSAY WHITEHURST** and **SALLY HO**, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Utah nurse said she was scared to death when a police officer handcuffed and dragged her screaming from a hospital after she refused to allow blood to be drawn from an unconscious patient.

After Alex Wubbels and her attorneys released dramatic video of the arrest, prosecutors called for a criminal investigation and Salt Lake City police put Detective Jeff Payne on paid leave Friday.

“This cop bullied me. He bullied me to the utmost extreme,” Wubbels said in an interview with The Associated Press. “And nobody stood in his way.”

The Salt Lake City police chief and mayor also apologized and changed department policies in line with the guidance Wubbels was following in the July 26 incident.

Wubbels, a former alpine skier who competed in the 1998 and 2002 Winter Olympics, said she adhered to her training and hospital protocols to protect the rights of a patient who could not speak for himself.

“You can’t just take blood if you don’t have a legitimate concern for something to be tested,” Wubbels said. “It is the most personal property I think that we can have besides our skin and bones and organs.”

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Payne didn't return messages left at publicly listed phone numbers, and the Salt Lake Police Association union did not respond to messages for comment. The department and a civilian board also are conducting reviews.

"I was alarmed by what I saw in the video with our officer," Police Chief Mike Brown said.

Police body-camera video shows Wubbels, who works in the burn unit, calmly explaining that she could not take blood from a patient who had been injured in a deadly car accident, citing a recent change in law. A 2016 U.S. Supreme Court ruling said a blood sample cannot be taken without patient consent or a warrant.

Wubbels told Payne that a patient had to allow a blood sample to determine intoxication or be under arrest. Otherwise, she said police needed a warrant. Police did not, but Payne insisted.

The dispute ended with Payne saying, "We're done, you're under arrest" and pulling her outside while she screamed and said, "I've done nothing wrong!"

He had called his supervisor and discussed the time-sensitive blood draw for over an hour with hospital staff, police spokeswoman Christina Judd said.

"It's not an excuse. It definitely doesn't forgive what happened," she said.

Payne wrote in a police report that he grabbed Wubbels and took her outside to avoid causing a "scene" in the emergency room. He said his boss, a lieutenant whose actions also were being reviewed, told him to arrest Wubbels if she kept interfering.

The detective left Wubbels in a hot police car for 20 minutes before realizing that blood had already been drawn as part of treatment, said her lawyer, Karra Porter. Wubbels was not charged.

"This has upended her worldview in a way. She just couldn't believe this could happen," Porter said.

Wubbels and her attorneys on Thursday released the video they obtained through a public records request to call for change. She has not sued, but that could change, said attorney Jake Macfarlane.

Salt Lake County District Attorney Sim Gill said that the video was concerning and called the police chief to ask for a criminal investigation.

The department is open to the inquiry that will be run by Salt Lake County's Unified Police, Judd said. Gill's office will review the findings.

In response to the incident, Judd said the department updated its blood-draw policy last week to mirror what the hospital uses. She said officers have already received additional training.

The agency has met with hospital administration to ensure it does not happen again and to repair ties. "There's a strong bond between fire, police and nurses because they all work together to help save lives, and this caused an unfortunate rift that we are hoping to repair immediately," Judd said.

The hospital said it's proud of the way Wubbels handled the situation.

The patient was a victim in a car crash and Payne wanted the blood sample to show he had done nothing wrong, according to the officer's written report.

The patient, William Gray, is a reserve police officer in Rigby, Idaho, according to the city's police. They thanked Wubbels for protecting his rights.

Gray is a semi-truck driver and was on the road when a pickup truck fleeing from authorities slammed into him and his truck burst into flames, police reports say.

Ho reported from Las Vegas. Associated Press writers Michelle Price and Brady McCombs contributed to this report.

Follow Sally Ho at http://twitter.com/_sallyho and Lindsay Whitehurst at <https://twitter.com/lwhitehurst>.

From CEOs to bishops, support grows for immigrant program

By ASTRID GALVAN and AMY TAXIN, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Corporate executives, Roman Catholic bishops, celebrities and immigrants have become unlikely companions in an effort to pressure national leaders to save an Obama-era program that shields young immigrants from deportation.

Immigrant groups have been staging daily protests in the scorching Phoenix heat, mobilizing people through phone banks in California, and demonstrating outside House Speaker Paul Ryan's church and office.

Archbishops around the country have been sending letters urging the president to maintain the program. The CEOs of Microsoft, Apple, Google, Facebook, Starbucks and other companies also joined the effort, saying the economy will take a hit if the program is eliminated.

The campaign comes as President Donald Trump is weighing whether to eliminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which has allowed nearly 800,000 immigrants who were brought to the country illegally as children to remain in the U.S. and legally work. The White House says Trump is expected to announce his decision Tuesday.

Immigrants are bracing for the prospect of losing their jobs as their work permits end and possible deportation if the president does away with the program.

Eli Oh of San Jose, California, said he was working as a waiter under the table to pay for his nursing degree before he enrolled in the program.

Oh, 30, has lived in the United States for nearly two decades since his Korean parents overstayed their visa. He works as a nurse who responds to hospital emergencies, and fears he'll be unemployed if his work permit goes away.

"I went from saving lives at a hospital and delivering health care, and now I am like, I might have to drive Uber to pay rent," he said.

Trump railed against the Obama program on the campaign trail, calling it illegal "amnesty." He later said it's been one of the most difficult issues he's dealt with.

Republican officials from 10 states have threatened to file a lawsuit to stop the program. They gave the Trump administration a Sept. 5 deadline to act, although the attorney general of Tennessee, Herbert Slatery III, said Friday his state would no longer pursue the lawsuit.

To qualify, immigrants must have proof that they were brought to the U.S. before they reached age 16. They can't have a criminal record, and their work permits and deportation reprieve must be renewed every two years at the cost of nearly \$500, plus costs to hire an attorney to help with the process.

The issue is especially prominent in California, home to one of every four people covered by the program.

More than 200 people gathered outside the federal office building in Los Angeles on Friday, calling on President Donald Trump to continue the program. They chanted, "If they don't let us dream, we won't let them sleep" and "the people united will never be divided."

In Arizona, a coalition of immigrant rights groups set up a protest camp in front of Immigration and Customs Enforcement offices near downtown Phoenix in the midst of a heat advisory and temperatures of nearly 110 degrees.

"We are calling on people of conscience that if you believe that this is an injustice, there's no room to stay silent. Silence allows for injustices to happen," Reyna Montoya told reporters Monday. Montoya said she was brought to Arizona as a teenager after her family fled political violence in Mexico.

In Wisconsin, the pressure extends specifically to Ryan, who has said previously he supports young immigrants. In a radio interview Friday, Ryan urged Trump to keep the program.

The immigrant advocacy group Voces de la Frontera staged a protest outside Ryan's Roman Catholic church in Wisconsin on Aug. 20. They planned a hunger strike starting Friday in front of his Milwaukee office and a march on Tuesday.

Ilse Merlin, of Racine said she was prepping for the worst by staying informed and active within the immigrant rights movement.

"I'm not scared because I have faith that my God is going to provide and he's going to protect. That

might not sound very reasonable I guess to people that don't have faith, but for me I think it's enough," Merlin said.

Merlin, 22, was brought to Wisconsin as a 5-year-old and has had protection from the program since it began. She said it changed her life by allowing her to get a job, which she used to pay for college.

She works as a children and youth director at her church and hopes to finish a bachelor's degree to become a teacher.

Others lending support for the program include celebrities such as TV mogul Shonda Rhimes and actress America Ferrera. Both took to Twitter to lend their support.

Taxin reported from Santa Ana, California.

AP source: Mueller team has draft letter on Comey firing

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller's team of investigators is in possession of a letter drafted by President Donald Trump and an aide, but never sent, that lays out a rationale for firing FBI Director James Comey, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

The letter was written in the days before the May 9 firing of Comey, but was held after objections from the president's lawyer and others, according to two other people familiar with the process who were not authorized to discuss it publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

On that day, the White House released a different letter announcing Comey's firing, one signed by Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein that cited the handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation as a basis for Comey's dismissal.

Trump had been fuming about Comey for weeks, upset that he would not say publicly that the president was not under investigation, which Trump said Comey had assured him privately.

That was in the earlier letter and was part of the president's rationale for firing Comey. It was later excised — only to be partially restored in the final letter at Trump's behest.

The earlier letter could serve as key evidence to Mueller's team, which is now investigating whether Trump fired Comey to impede the FBI investigation into his campaign associates' ties to Russia. The White House has said Trump was acting on the Justice Department's recommendation when he fired Comey, though the president said in a television interview days later that he was thinking of "the Russia thing" when he made the move and had planned to fire "regardless of recommendation."

The new letter, which was first reported by The New York Times, could provide additional context on Trump's thinking and motive as he prepared to oust Comey.

The Justice Department turned the letter over to Mueller's team, according to a person who was not authorized to publicly discuss the situation and spoke on condition of anonymity. A statement from the Justice Department said the department had been fully cooperative with Mueller's investigation and would continue to do so.

One week after Comey was fired, Rosenstein appointed Mueller as special counsel to oversee an investigation into potential coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia. That investigation, which had been overseen by Comey, is also looking into the financial dealings of several Trump associates.

During a May weekend at the president's New Jersey golf club, Trump asked White House aide Stephen Miller to draft a letter outlining a case for Comey's firing, according to two people familiar with the situation. But the letter, which contained a rationale for the dismissal, was not sent after White House counsel Don McGahn objected, thinking some of its contents were problematic, according to one of the people familiar with the letter.

The Associated Press has not reviewed the letter.

Rosenstein, in a statement to Congress, has said that he learned on May 8 of Trump's plans to fire Comey, and that he agreed with the decision. He has said that in one of his first conversations with Attorney General Jeff Sessions, they discussed the need for new leadership at the FBI.

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He wrote a memo to Sessions summarizing his concerns about the FBI director's performance and said he finalized it the next day and presented it to Sessions. He said he did not intend for his memo to be a "statement of reasons to justify a for-cause termination," and that it was "not a survey of FBI morale or performance."

Miller, the firebrand aide who helped design Trump's travel ban and hardline immigration policies, had become a trusted adviser to the president during the campaign and remained in his inner circle even after fellow nationalist and chief strategist Steve Bannon began to fall from the president's favor.

Instead of using the directive Miller penned, a separate letter written by Rosenstein and focused on Comey's handling of the investigation into Hillary Clinton's private email server was sent to the FBI director when he was dismissed.

'Dreamers' decision weighs on Trump as announcement nears

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Midday protests. Urgent pleas. Furious campaigning. A president torn.

President Donald Trump stood at the center of a frantic lobbying campaign Friday as he neared a decision on the fate of hundreds of thousands of young people brought into the country illegally as children.

After months of dragging his feet, the president on Tuesday will announce his plans for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, which has given nearly 800,000 young immigrants the ability to work legally in the country and a reprieve from deportation.

Despite his fiery pledges during the presidential campaign to end the program, Trump has spent the last week mulling his choices, going over his options again and again, according to several people with knowledge of the deliberations. The people spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss private conversations.

"I think that this isn't a decision that the president takes lightly and he's taking time and diligent effort to make sure that he goes through every bit of the process," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Friday. "I think the decision itself is weighing on him, certainly."

At the same time, House Speaker Paul Ryan and a number of other legislators are urging the president to hold off on scrapping the program to give them time to come up with a legislative solution to protect those now covered by the program.

"These are kids who know no other country, who are brought here by their parents and don't know another home. And so I really do believe that there needs to be a legislative solution," Ryan told Wisconsin radio station WCLO.

Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah also urged Trump not to revoke former President Barack Obama's efforts to protect "individuals who entered our country unlawfully as children through no fault of their own and who have built their lives here."

Pushing the debate over to Congress would add immigration, long a third-rail issue in Washington, to an already packed fall congressional agenda that includes must-pass measures to raise the debt ceiling, shape the federal budget and provide hurricane relief funding.

Republican leaders have worried that Trump would rescind legal status for the so-called dreamers since his first day in office. Some congressional GOP lawmakers spent Inauguration Day urgently trying to reach senior White House officials about the matter after hearing rumors that Trump could roll back the deportation protections as one of his first moves.

Trump had railed against the Obama program during the presidential campaign, slamming it as an illegal "amnesty" that he would immediately end.

Instead, the new president left the protections in place, overruling top advisers including former chief strategist Steve Bannon and policy aide Stephen Miller. The advisers continued to press the matter occasionally in recent months, but Trump always put off the decision for another time.

Then came a letter forcing Trump's hand.

A group of Republican state officials sent a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions in June announcing

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a September 5 deadline: If the president didn't halt the program by then, the lawmakers would challenge DACA in court.

As the deadline neared, anxious Republicans began urging the White House to try to persuade the group, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, to further postpone any lawsuit. It was an approach the administration had also seriously considered earlier in the week. But Paxton made clear the date was non-negotiable.

"No, we are not going to push back the deadline," said spokeswoman Jennifer Speller.

The president also encountered countervailing pressure from those working to keep the program — including CEOs, Roman Catholic bishops and celebrities — and staging daily protests, phone banks, demonstrations and letters.

There appeared to be some signs the pressure was having an impact. Late Friday, the attorney general of Tennessee, one of those who had signed the letter, announced his office was no longer interested in the lawsuit and would encourage legislation to protect the dreamers instead.

"There is a human element to this, however, that is not lost on me and should not be ignored," wrote Herbert Slatery III. "At this time, our Office has decided not to challenge DACA in the litigation, because we believe there is a better approach."

Many DACA advocates still expect the president to announce, in the end, that he will stop the issuance of new work permits under the program, effectively phasing it out over the coming months. One person familiar with the White House discussions said the president was expected to take that route. But the person said the president was looking for ways to soften the blow, such as ending the program at a future date to give Congress time to come up with alternative protection.

The White House also could announce that it will allow the lawsuit to go forward and decline to have the Justice Department defend DACA in court, taking the matter out of its hands.

Trump seemed reluctant Friday to spark the anger that is sure to erupt no matter what he decides.

"We love the dreamers, we love everybody," he told reporters.

Asked what he would say to young immigrants who are awaiting his move, scared about their fate, Trump replied, "I think the dreamers are terrific."

Associated Press writers Ken Thomas, Erica Werner, Julie Pace and Andrew Taylor contributed to this report.

Russia lashes out after Trump orders diplomatic posts closed

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia accused the United States on Friday of a "gross violation of international law" after the Trump administration gave Moscow two days to shutter diplomatic outposts in San Francisco and other American cities.

As Russian diplomats rushed to meet the Saturday deadline, black smoke was seen billowing out of the chimney at the San Francisco consulate, one of three Russian facilities being forcibly closed. Firefighters, who were turned away by Russian officials when they responded to the scene, said the Russians were burning something in their fireplace.

In Moscow, the Russian government claimed that U.S. officials were planning to search both the consulate and apartments used by their diplomats on Saturday, though there were no indications from the U.S. suggesting that was the case. The State Department said merely that it planned to "secure and maintain" the properties and that Russia wouldn't be allowed to use them for "diplomatic, consular, or residential purposes" any longer.

Still, the Kremlin appeared to be wrestling with how forcefully to react to the U.S. order, the latest in a series of escalating retaliatory measures between the former Cold War foes. President Vladimir Putin's foreign policy adviser, Yuri Ushakov, said Russia needs to "think carefully about how we could respond" to one of the thorniest diplomatic confrontations between Washington and Moscow in decades.

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"One does not want to go into a frenzy, because someone has to be reasonable and stop," Ushakov said.

The diplomatic machinations came the day after the Trump administration ordered three Russian facilities to close: the San Francisco consulate and trade missions in New York and Washington. The Russian Embassy in Washington is not affected, nor are three other Russian consulates in the U.S., including in New York.

The Trump administration said the order was retaliation for the Kremlin's "unwarranted and detrimental" demand last month that the U.S. substantially reduce the size of its diplomatic staff in Russia. But Russia, for its part, justified its call for cuts to U.S. embassy and consular personnel as a reaction to new sanctions the U.S. Congress approved in July.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Friday that Moscow would reply with firmness to the forced closure of the diplomatic posts, but needed time to study Washington's directive and to decide on a response.

"We will have a tough response to the things that come totally out of the blue to hurt us and are driven solely by the desire to spoil our relations with the United States," Lavrov said in a televised meeting with students at Russia's top diplomacy school.

Despite Russia's claim the U.S. is violating international law, the Trump administration has defended the closures by citing the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. The U.S. has said the 1960s-era pact gives host countries the right to consent to foreign countries establishing consular posts — or not.

The closures on both U.S. coasts marked perhaps the most drastic diplomatic measure by the United States against Russia since 1986, near the end of the Cold War, when the nuclear-armed powers expelled dozens of each other's diplomats.

American officials argued that Russia had no cause for retribution now, noting that Moscow's ordering of U.S. diplomatic cuts last month was premised on bringing the two countries' diplomatic presences into "parity."

Both countries now maintain three consulates in each other's territory and ostensibly similar numbers of diplomats. Exact numbers are difficult to independently verify.

American counterintelligence officials have long kept a watchful eye on Russia's outpost in San Francisco, concerned that people posted to the consulate as diplomats were engaged in espionage. The U.S. late last year kicked out several Russians posted there, calling it a response to election interference.

The forced closures are the latest in an intensifying exchange of diplomatic broadsides.

In December, President Barack Obama kicked out dozens of Russian officials and closed two Russian recreational compounds. Russian President Vladimir Putin withheld from retaliating. The next month, Trump took office after campaigning on promises to improve U.S.-Russia ties.

But earlier this month, Trump begrudgingly signed into law stepped-up sanctions on Russia that Congress pushed to prevent him from easing up on Moscow. The Kremlin retaliated by telling the U.S. to cut its embassy and consulate staff down to 455 personnel, from a level hundreds higher.

The U.S. never confirmed how many diplomatic staff it had in the country at the time. As of Thursday, the U.S. has complied with the order to reduce staff to 455, officials said.

The reductions are having consequences for Russia. The U.S. last month temporarily suspended non-immigrant visa processing for Russians seeking to visit the United States and resumed it Friday at a "much-reduced rate."

The U.S. had also said it would stop conducting visa interviews at its Russian consulates, leaving the Embassy in Moscow as the only option. But a State Department cable sent to overseas U.S. diplomatic posts and obtained by The Associated Press on Friday said the U.S. was considering whether, with its reduced footprint, it might be able to resume limited interviews at the three consulates, in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok.

Even before the cuts at the U.S. mission were announced, typical waiting time for visa applicants in Russia to be interviewed was longer than a month.

Nadezhda Sianule planned to attend her daughter's wedding in the United States in mid-September and got an appointment in July to be interviewed Thursday. Now these plans are in disarray.

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"I came yesterday and they said that I'm not on the list. They said that the old lists have been canceled," Sianule said Friday morning outside the U.S. Embassy.

Despite the exchange of reprisals, there have been narrow signs of U.S.-Russian cooperation that have transcended the worsening ties. In July, Trump and Putin signed off on a deal with Jordan for a cease-fire in southwest Syria. The U.S. says the truce has largely held.

Lederman reported from Washington. AP Diplomatic Writer Matthew Lee contributed to this report, along with Vladimir Isachenkov, Jim Heintz and Ahmad El-Katib in Moscow and Garance Burke in San Francisco.

Grab a mattress: Businesses become storm shelters in Texas

By JULIET LINDERMAN, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Of all the places that have been turned into shelters for Hurricane Harvey victims — a megachurch, a ballpark, a gas station, a bowling alley, among them — the one with the most comfortable sleeping arrangements surely must be the Gallery Furniture showroom.

Owner Jim McIngvale, better known as Mattress Mack, threw open a couple of his stores to anyone in need, offering food, clean bathrooms and, of course, luxury bedding.

"If this is what you call a shelter, I might not want to go home," said 47-year-old India Jackson, who marveled at the silky pillowcases, the \$1,000 mattresses and the atrium with its live ocelot and colorful macaws.

With more than 17,000 people flooded out of their houses, big-hearted Texans, religious institutions and businesses have turned their places into unlikely shelters, giving soaked, frightened and disconsolate storm refugees — two-legged and four-legged alike — a safe and warm place to sleep.

Some of these places have proved a homier alternative to the convention centers that have taken in more than 10,000.

At Gallery Furniture in Richmond, just outside Houston, a clown and a face-painter delighted the children on Wednesday. On Tuesday, an out-of-state businessman ordered a lamb chop dinner from a fine Houston restaurant for the roughly 150 people at the store.

To relieve evacuees' stress, employees direct them to a meditation area, with soft music and a thousand-gallon fish tank with sharks, stingrays and exotic fish.

Jackson, who was evacuated from her home in Katy, Texas, on Monday, said her temporary bed at Mattress Mack's is a Tempur-Pedic just like the one she has at home, only nicer. "Yeah, I am going to upgrade," she said.

"Mattress Mack. He's the most loving person in Houston," she said. "He turned his store into a resort for refugees."

And the pampering didn't stop at people. A pet groomer was there on Wednesday, offering to clean up any soggy dogs in need of a bath or haircut.

In hard-hit Port Arthur, near the Louisiana line, the Max Bowl bowling alley hosted roughly 500 Port Arthur residents, plus 50 to 100 dogs. And a lizard. And a monkey.

Max Bowl general manager Jeff Tolliver said that the monkey "was a little surprising" but that the primate, like any other Texan, wouldn't be turned away.

The Islamic Society of Greater Houston announced it would offer space at several mosques, and televangelist Joel Osteen on Tuesday opened his 16,000-seat megachurch, formerly the home of the NBA's Houston Rockets, after getting blistered on social media for not doing so sooner.

The basketball team's current home, Toyota Center, started taking in evacuees Tuesday, handling the overflow after more than 9,000 sought shelter at the city's George R. Brown Convention Center.

At least 200 residents of one Houston suburb took cover together for one night in a minor league baseball stadium. Sugar Land Skeeters owners Marcie and Bob Zlotnik said they called the mayor to offer their ballpark as a shelter-in-a-pinch. "Just doing what we can to help people out," Bob Zlotnik said.

And in badly flooded Katy, an outpost of the popular Texas convenience store chain Buc-ees invited first

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responders to eat, drink and stay the night.

Airbnb extended for a month its disaster relief program, which began in Houston before Harvey hit and was supposed to run only until Thursday. The program allows Airbnb hosts to offer housing free of charge and helps match available rooms with evacuees.

Many residents whose homes stayed dry invited flooded-out friends, family and neighbors to stay. Others offered to host complete strangers.

Chaya Koual and her husband and six children hitched a ride across town with Tomer Benschushan and Moshiko Chen, a pair of Israelis who have been going out in Chen's massive Studebaker REO M60 truck to rescue those stranded in waters so high that even a rugged SUV would conk out.

Chen, a cancer survivor who says his bout with illness has imbued him with a renewed sense of responsibility to others, said: "Muslim, Jewish, we don't care. We help everybody."

The pair blasted through flooded areas and churned across abandoned stretches of highway littered with debris in order to bring Koual and her family to the home of Natan Vaisman, who opened his door to people he had never met before.

"If there's a disaster coming or a war," Vaisman said, "everybody becomes family to each other."

Associated Press writers Claudia Lauer contributed from Dallas and Nomaan Merchant from Houston.

Shelley Berman, comedian-bard of everyday life, has died

By FRAZIER MOORE, AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Comedian Shelley Berman, who won gold records and appeared on top television shows in the 1950s and 1960s delivering wry monologues about the annoyances of everyday life, has died. He was 92.

Berman died Friday at his home in Bell Canyon, California, from complications from Alzheimer's disease, according to spokesman Glenn Schwartz.

Berman was a pioneer of a new brand of comedy that could evoke laughter from such matters as air travel discomforts and small children who answer the telephone. He helped pave the way for Bob Newhart, Woody Allen, Jerry Seinfeld and other standup comedians who fashioned their routines around the follies and frustrations of modern living.

Tributes came in Friday from Steve Martin, who tweeted that Berman "changed modern stand-up," and Richard Lewis, who said there was "no better wordsmith."

Late in his career, he played Nat David, father of Larry David, on HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm." With dialogue improvised by its cast, the comedy series gave Berman the opportunity to return to his improv roots and introduced him to a new generation of TV viewers.

"I'm not a standup comedian," Berman often insisted. "I work on a stool."

Comedy was not a childhood ambition for him. He trained as an actor, with the Goodman School of Drama in his native Chicago and with the prestigious actress-teacher Uta Hagen in New York.

"I had dreams of being an actor," he said in a 1960 interview. "For 10 years I tried, picking up small jobs in summer stock and TV. I had a hard time of it."

As a last resort, he put together a 20-minute routine and auditioned at the Chicago nightclub Mister Kelly's. He was given a job, and then he had to scramble to write more material for a half-hour show.

"I was always one of those life-of-the-party boys," he admitted, "though I never stooped to wearing women's hats or lampshades. I was always making people laugh, in school and later in life."

Berman's success in Chicago led to a booking in Las Vegas. He bombed. The gamblers didn't laugh nor did they talk. Accustomed to slam-bang comics out of vaudeville and burlesque, they listened in amazement to the guy sitting on a stool and using big words with a routine that often consisted of one side of a make-believe phone call.

He continued on the saloon circuit, honing his craft and deciding on which direction to go. He didn't fit any category. He wasn't a joke teller nor a "sick" comedian. He figured he was a "humanist humorist."

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Berman made the first of many appearances on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1959. That year he issued his first album, "Inside Shelley Berman." It won a gold record and received the first-ever Grammy Award for the spoken word. Two more albums achieved gold status.

Along with his busy schedule in nightclubs and auditoriums, he fulfilled his first ambition to be an actor. He appeared in a Broadway play, "The Boys Against the Girls," in 1959 and a musical, "A Family Affair," in 1962. His film debut came in 1964 with the adaptation of Gore Vidal's hit political stage drama "The Best Man," starring Henry Fonda and Cliff Robertson.

"Not only an accomplished comedian, actor, and author, Shelley was among the new breed of comedians who made a significant impact through recordings," said The Recording Academy in a statement. "Shelley will be deeply missed, but the influence he exerted on our creative community will remain forever."

Berman's comedy career stalled in 1963. He was performing his act before an audience for a documentary-style NBC show, "Comedian Backstage," when a telephone ringing interrupted him; it was the second night it happened. He stormed backstage and ranted at everyone in sight. His outburst, edited to make him appear temperamental, was included in the telecast.

"Once you're known as being difficult, it becomes too hard to deal with management and even fellow artists," he remarked in 1986. The bookings fell off, and Berman returned to acting, with little luck. He and his wife, Sarah, were forced to file for bankruptcy, and he began a long struggle to pay off his taxes and creditors.

He found work in television series such as "The Twilight Zone," "Rawhide" and "Peter Gunn" and occasional movies including "Divorce American Style." He became active in regional theater and also worked his old routines before college and lecture audiences.

For more than 20 years he taught comedy at the University of Southern California.

In recent years, he landed guest roles on series including "The King of Queens," "Boston Legal" and "CSI: NY," and appeared in the film "Meet the Fockers."

He retired from performing in 2014 after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Sheldon Leonard Berman was born in Chicago and attended public schools. After training as an actor, he joined an improvisational company in Chicago, Compass Players, the beginning of the famed Second City. Watching his fellow performers, Mike Nichols and Elaine May, Berman said in 2000, "I learned more in two weeks than I did in four years at Goodman."

He married in 1947, and he credited Sarah with helping him to survive through his jobless period while trying to be a comedian, the bankruptcy, the rebuilding of his career and the loss of their son, Joshua. They also had a daughter, Rachel, who, along with his wife, survives him.

Berman said of his marriage: "The love we have and the way it has grown, that's what I'd like to be remembered for."

The late Associated Press entertainer writer Bob Thomas contributed to this report.

US job growth slowed in August but economy still looks solid

By JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. job market hit a lull in August, with employers adding a solid but less-than-robust 156,000 jobs and holding back on meaningful pay raises for most workers.

Friday's jobs report from the government pointed to an economy that is still steadily generating jobs, though more slowly than it did earlier in its recovery from the Great Recession. With the economy now in its ninth year of expansion and unemployment near a 16-year low, fewer people are looking for work and fewer jobs are being filled.

The hiring data for August had yet to account for the damage from Hurricane Harvey, whose economic impact will be felt in coming months as more people seek unemployment benefits and industrial production will likely reflect the loss of Texas refineries and factories.

The unemployment rate ticked up from 4.3 percent to a still-low 4.4 percent, the Labor Department said.

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The government also revised down its estimate of job growth in June and July by a combined 41,000, leaving an average monthly gain this year of a decent 176,000.

One reason why few analysts expressed concern about last month's slower job gain is that monthly employment reports can be volatile — especially figures for August. Employers are gearing up for the start of fall, schools are reopening and the government can't always precisely factor those changes into its August employment data.

"It's more noise than signal," Joe Brusuelas, chief economist at tax consultant RSM, said of Friday's report. "Focus on the longer-term trend of growth in employment."

One persistent soft spot in the job market has been meager pay raises. Average hourly pay rose just 2.5 percent over the 12 months that ended in August. Wage growth typically averages 3.5 percent to 4 percent annually when unemployment is this low.

Economists note that low unemployment normally results in higher pay raises once employers feel compelled to pay more to attract or keep workers. Most say they think U.S. wage growth will eventually accelerate. But economists have noted that average pay growth has been muted in part because older workers with higher wages are retiring while younger millennials who earn less are being hired.

Some employers are already feeling the need to pay more for entry-level workers.

With unemployment so low, MOOYAH Burgers, Fries and Shakes, based in Dallas, said it's paying more to attract entry-level talent and developing ways for workers to be promoted into higher positions with the company.

Michael Mabry, the franchise restaurant's CEO, said he plans to add 15 locations before year's end to the chain's roughly 100 existing sites.

"The people are out there — we just have to offer an enticing reason why to come to work for our brand," Mabry said.

The August jobs report arrives as Americans have grown more optimistic about the economy. A measure of consumer confidence in August hit its highest level in 16 years, the Conference Board said this week.

Inflation is low. Consumer spending in July rose at its fastest pace in three months. The stock market is up 10 percent so far this year. One measure of factory orders suggests that business investment is increasing.

Even the traumatic damage caused by Harvey around the Houston region may not break the national economy's stride. Gasoline prices are rising as the flooding from Harvey knocked out refineries and ports, but rebuilding efforts in the coming months could provide a stimulative benefit.

Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial, predicts that job growth in the coming months "will weaken substantially" in the wake of Harvey, only to rebound quickly as workers who were temporarily laid off are rehired.

Beth Ann Bovino, U.S. chief economist at S&P Global Ratings, said the extent of the short-term drag on the economy "depends on how disruptive the floods remain for the next few weeks."

She said hiring could be subdued in September if the flooding is slow to recede. Once the flooding ends, companies in the Houston area are unlikely to immediately hire because the focus will be on rebuilding. Eventually, though, natural disasters that involve flooding usually lead to more construction and health care jobs.

Overall, hiring this year has averaged 176,000 a month, close to 2016's average of 187,000. August was the 83rd straight month of job gains.

The slowing job gains, coupled with uncommonly low inflation, might make the Federal Reserve hesitant to raise its key short-term interest rate by December, when many Fed watchers had foreseen the next rate hike.

"The Fed has to be second-guessing December," said John Silvia, chief economist at Wells Fargo.

The August jobs report showed that roughly the same proportion of people last month as in July either had a job or were looking for one. Anyone not actively looking for a job isn't considered part of the labor force and isn't counted as unemployed. This so-called labor force participation rate held at 62.9 percent.

The participation rate has tumbled from 66 percent over the past decade, but the decline reflects in part an aging U.S. population that is retiring. Some economists say that in light of that trend, a stable participation rate is a positive sign for the economy.

One of the leading sources of job growth last month was manufacturing, which added 36,000. An additional 28,000 jobs came from construction and 20,200 from the health care sector. By contrast, governments shed 9,000 jobs.

But increased consumer sentiment failed to increase retail hiring. Restaurants and bars — often a major source of hiring — added just 9,200 jobs. Retail stores and auto dealers added just 800 jobs after having lost 1,900 in July.

Kenyan court throws out president's win, calls for new vote

By TOM ODULA, Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — President Uhuru Kenyatta's re-election victory last month was thrown out Friday by Kenya's Supreme Court, which ordered new voting within 60 days in a stunning decision that plunged the East African country back into political chaos.

The move to nullify an election was unprecedented on the African continent.

It gave new hope to opposition candidate Raila Odinga, who had alleged the electronic results of the Aug. 8 balloting were manipulated. He had lost by about 1.4 million votes out of roughly 15 million cast.

The court ruled 4-2 in Odinga's favor, saying the electoral commission committed "illegalities and irregularities." The court, whose full decision with details of its findings is expected to be released within 21 days, did not blame Kenyatta or his party.

Kenyatta said that while he respected the ruling, he "personally disagrees" with it. He urged calm in a country that has a history of postelection violence.

"Six people have decided they will go against the will of the people," the president said, later telling his supporters that Chief Justice David Maraga "and his crooks" had taken away his victory. The official results had given Kenyatta 54 percent of the vote to Odinga's 44 percent.

Opposition members danced in the streets, marveling at the setback for Kenyatta, the 55-year-old son of the country's first president, in the long rivalry between the country's top political families.

"It's a very historic day for the people of Kenya and by extension the people of Africa," Odinga said. "For the first time in the history of African democratization, a ruling has been made by a court nullifying irregular election of a president. This is a precedent-setting ruling."

No African country has annulled a national election due to irregularities, Ronald Slye, a law professor at Seattle University, told The Associated Press. Slye was among those who participated in Kenya's Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission set up after violence killed more than 1,000 people following the 2007 election.

Electoral commission chairman Wafula Chebukati said personnel changes will be made before the new vote, and he said any employee found to be involved in manipulating the results should be prosecuted.

Odinga, 72, called for the election commission to be disbanded. He also said the role of international observers who came to Kenya for the vote must be examined because they put stability ahead of credibility and had "moved fast to sanitize fraud."

The international observers, including former Secretary of State John Kerry, had said on election day that they had seen no interference with the vote. The Carter Center said Friday that Kerry's mission had noted that "the electronic transmission of results proved unreliable."

After the court's ruling, envoys from two dozen countries, including the United States, France and Germany, issued a joint statement that said the decision "demonstrated Kenya's resilient democracy and commitment to the rule of law."

"All electoral processes can be improved, and we will continue to support Kenya's institutions in this important work," the statement said.

Many countries, including the United States, had already congratulated Kenyatta.

Odinga, a longtime opposition candidate and the son of Kenya's first vice president, had unsuccessfully challenged the results of the 2013 vote that Kenyatta won. Odinga's supporters at first had said they would not go to court this time but filed a petition two weeks ago.

Kenya had been braced for further protests before the ruling, with police deployed to sensitive areas of the capital, Nairobi, and streets near the court were barricaded. Human rights groups have said that police killed at least 24 people in unrest after the election.

Instead, opposition supporters exploded in celebration.

"Thank you, Jesus!" one woman shouted. "I'm telling, God is on our side."

"This has shown all (election) observers did not do their job. We want an apology," said John Wekesa, who danced outside the court.

Tensions ran high when the official who oversaw the electronic voting system was found tortured and killed days before the balloting.

Associated Press video journalist Joe Mwiha in Nairobi contributed.

New group to respond to wave of hurricane-related fraud

By STEPHEN BRAUN and MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal prosecutors will lead a new Houston-based group created to help law enforcement agencies respond to an inevitable wave of fraud and other criminal activity set off by Harvey's punishing rains.

Authorities are warning residents, volunteers and officials in flood zones in Texas and Louisiana they could be targeted by storm-related scams, contract corruption, document fraud, identity theft and other crimes. They emphasize that the easy availability of personal information and documents on the internet has widened criminal activities and potential victims to anywhere in the U.S.

The new working group, announced Thursday night, was intended to combine Justice Department prosecutors, FBI and other federal law enforcement agents with Texas and Louisiana state officials in a team aimed at quickly identifying criminal trends and deploying resources for investigations and prosecutions.

Houston-based acting U.S. Attorney Abe Martinez, one of the top officials in the new working group, said storm victims had already suffered devastation and "the last thing that victims of the damage need is to be victimized again."

The working group will be supported by the National Center for Disaster Fraud, a Baton Rouge-based federal task force that has specialized in disaster-related fraud and crimes since its creation in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

The National Center's team of operators will answer an expected crush of complaints in the coming months, while its core of federal prosecutors and agents will help the Houston-based group to identify criminal activities that span areas far from the flood zones.

"We recognize that much of the fraud may occur in areas far removed from the disaster," said Corey R. Amundson, the acting U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana and the executive director of the National Center.

The task force played a role in many of the prosecutions of 1,463 defendants for disaster-related crimes associated with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Those cases targeted defendants in 49 federal districts across the country — a clear indication that criminal activities spawned by Harvey could originate anywhere.

After Katrina, many of the task force's criminal prosecutions targeted those accused of fraudulently obtaining emergency assistance funds intended to help storm and flood victims. The unit's scrutiny broadened to people and companies that filed fraudulent home repair and disaster loan applications and also to contract and kickback schemes involving corrupt public officials.

"Depending on what the new working group tells us about what kinds of crimes they're dealing with and where crimes are occurring, we can help identify what they need to look out for," Amundson said.

Among officials investigated by the task force after Hurricane Katrina were Benjamin L. Edwards Sr., a

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former New Orleans city sewerage director who pleaded guilty in 2010 to wire fraud and tax evasion for soliciting more than \$750,000 in payoffs from hurricane cleanup contractors. Another was Gregory Brent Warr, the former mayor of Gulfport, Mississippi, who admitted guilt in 2009 for improperly receiving federal disaster funds.

As high water continued to spread Friday, Texas law enforcement officials were already warning residents about flood-related crimes.

"Protect yourself and your wallet from unscrupulous operators," urged a new flyer posted by the Texas attorney general, whose office had received nearly 700 complaints by late Wednesday.

Most of the calls reported price gouging but a few alleged cases of fraud, said Kayleigh Lovvorn, a spokeswoman for Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and other relief agencies were accused of loose oversight after Katrina, but they have tightened controls since then, said Walt Green, a Baton Rouge lawyer and former U.S. attorney in Baton Rouge. But even in recent disasters, federal agencies were still targeted by scores of applications using fraudulent addresses, personal information and other spurious documentation.

"Identify fraud is the newest angle," said Green. "You can find long lists of social security numbers of the dark web and people are purchasing them to use after disasters."

Green, who led the federal disaster task force between 2013 and last March, said some criminal activity likely spiked even before Harvey's landfall last week. He said hurricane-related internet addresses — often with wording stressing storm charity and relief — are quickly purchased in the hours before a hurricane's landfall. Some web addresses later surface in charity scams that bilk unsuspecting donors or lure viewers to virus-infected sites.

On Wednesday, the government-funded Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center reported more than 500 domain names associated with Harvey had been registered over the preceding week. The majority of those names, the center reported, used words associated with philanthropy and aid, including "help," "relief," "donate" and "victims."

Four domain names referencing Harvey and the words "relief," "fund" and "recovery" were listed for auction on eBay.com earlier this week, starting at \$5,000 each. James Streigel, a northern California man who acknowledged offering them for sale, said he had no malicious intent and intended to sell them to the highest bidder. Streigel said his listings also carried notices saying he would donate 20 percent of his earnings to the American Red Cross.

He acknowledged to The Associated Press that he had no way of preventing prospective buyers from using the domain names for criminal activity. "We can't be sure of anything these days," Streigel said.

Hours later, an eBay spokesman, Ryan Moore, said the listings had been removed from eBay's site. "We've issued a warning to this seller that these listings violate eBay policy," Moore said.

The site's "offensive material policy" prohibits listings that "attempt to profit from human tragedy or suffering, or that are insensitive to victims of such events."

Turkey's Erdogan slams US indictments as 'scandalous'

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday denounced the indictments in the United States of 19 people, among them 15 Turkish security officials, calling them "scandalous."

The 19 suspects have been accused of attacking peaceful demonstrators gathered outside the Turkish ambassador's Washington home during a visit by Erdogan in May.

Videos show Erdogan supporters and security guards in suits and green uniforms hitting the protestors as police try to quash the violence. Some protestors are heard shouting "Baby killer Erdogan" and "Long live YPG," a Syrian Kurdish militant group that has become a sore spot in U.S.-Turkey relations.

Erdogan said his security detail was protecting him from members of the militant group after U.S. police failed to do so.

Turkey considers the YPG a terror organization and an extension of Kurdish militants waging a three-

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decade-long insurgency against the Turkish state, but the group is a key U.S. ally in Syria against the Islamic State group.

The bodyguards "performed their duties against this attack," Erdogan said and accused the U.S. of protecting a terror group. Nine people were hurt in the attack.

Sixteen of the defendants were charged in June while a grand jury decision on Tuesday added three more suspects, among them the head of security, Muhsin Kose.

They are indicted on a charge of conspiracy to commit a crime of violence, carrying a statutory maximum of 15 years in prison if found guilty. The charges all carry a "bias enhancement," which can increase penalties, and several face additional charges of assault with a deadly weapon.

Erdogan called the indictments "a clear and scandalous expression of how justice works in America" and said he would raise the issue with President Donald Trump during a visit to New York this month.

Earlier this week, Turkey's foreign ministry protested the "biased" indictment and announced Turkey would follow legal paths to fight the decision.

Two suspects, who aren't security officers, were arrested in June and are due in court on Sept. 7. The rest remain at large and are thought to have returned to Turkey.

Pope saw psychoanalyst to seek 'clarity' years ago

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis says that when he was 42 he had sessions weekly with a psychoanalyst who was female and Jewish to "clarify some things."

It wasn't specified what the future pontiff wanted to explore. The revelation came in a dozen conversations Francis had with French sociologist Dominique Wolton, writing a soon-to-be-published book.

La Stampa, an Italian daily, quoting from some of the conversations on Friday, said Francis went to the analyst's home. Francis was quoted as saying: "one day, when she was about to die, she called me. Not to receive the sacraments, since she was Jewish, but for a spiritual dialogue."

"She was a good person. For six months she helped me a lot," Francis said.

Francis then was a Jesuit official in his native Argentina, which was ruled by military dictatorship.

In the conversations with the French author, Francis speaks highly of the positive influence women have had on his life.

"Those whom I've known helped me a lot when I needed to consult with them," Francis is quoted as saying.

The 80-year-old pope also speaks of his state of mind now. "I feel free. Sure, I'm in a cage here at the Vatican, but not spiritually. Nothing makes me afraid."

What bothers him, he ventured, are people with straitjacket points of view.

He singled out "rigid priests, who are afraid to communicate. It's a form of fundamentalism. Whenever I run into a rigid person, especially if young, I tell myself that he's sick."

But Francis concludes that "in reality, they are persons looking for security."

In past remarks, the pope has indicated he struggled with how to use authority in his first leadership roles as a Jesuit.

The Catholic Church used to project a sense of mistrust regarding psychoanalysis.

But over time, the diffidence seems diminished.

Updated Vatican guidelines for use on seminaries in training future priests describe psychologists as valuable in assessing the psychological health of candidates.

This version corrects pope's age to 80.

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World's highest sandcastle built in German city

BERLIN (AP) — The world's highest sandcastle is now standing 16.68 meters (54.72 feet) tall in the German city of Duisburg.

A German travel operator organized the construction of the mammoth sandcastle, bringing in 3,500 tons of sand over the past 3 ½ weeks to the site at a former steelworks in the inland city.

News agency dpa reported that Jack Brockbank, a representative of Guinness World Records, certified the record on Friday. It takes the title from a 14.84-meter (48.69-foot) sandcastle built early this year in India.

The new sandcastle is decorated with sand models of tourist attractions such as Athens' Acropolis, Barcelona's Sagrada Familia and the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

It is supposed to stand until at least Sept. 24.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Sept. 2, the 245th day of 2017. There are 120 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On September 2, 1945, Japan formally surrendered in ceremonies aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, ending World War II.

On this date:

In 1666, the Great Fire of London broke out.

In 1789, the United States Treasury Department was established.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Gen. William T. Sherman's forces occupied Atlanta.

In 1901, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt offered the advice, "Speak softly and carry a big stick" in a speech at the Minnesota State Fair.

In 1924, the Rudolf Friml operetta "Rose Marie" opened on Broadway.

In 1935, a Labor Day hurricane slammed into the Florida Keys, claiming more than 400 lives.

In 1945, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam an independent republic. (Ho died on this date in 1969.)

In 1963, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace prevented the integration of Tuskegee High School by encircling the building with state troopers. "The CBS Evening News" with Walter Cronkite was lengthened from 15 to 30 minutes, becoming network television's first half-hour nightly newscast.

In 1969, in what some regard as the birth of the Internet, two connected computers at the University of California, Los Angeles, passed test data through a 15-foot cable.

In 1972, Dave Wottle of the United States won the men's 800-meter race at the Munich Summer Olympics.

In 1986, a judge in Los Angeles sentenced Cathy Evelyn Smith to three years in prison for involuntary manslaughter for her role in the 1982 drug overdose death of comedian John Belushi. (Smith served 18 months.)

In 1998, a Swissair MD-11 jetliner crashed off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard.

Ten years ago: Following two days of talks in Geneva, the chief U.S. envoy said North Korea had agreed to account for and disable its atomic programs by the end of the year; the head of the North Korean delegation said his country's willingness to cooperate was clear, but he did not cite any dates. Hurricane Felix strengthened into a dangerous Category 4 storm as it toppled trees and flooded homes on a cluster of Dutch islands before churning its way into the open waters of the Caribbean.

Five years ago: Campaigning his way toward the Democratic National Convention, President Barack Obama slapped a "Romney doesn't care" label on his rival's health-care views and said Republicans wanted to repeal new protections for millions without offering a plan of their own. Mark Abrahamian, 46, lead guitarist for the rock group Starship, died in Norfolk, Nebraska, of a heart attack after a performance.

One year ago: President Barack Obama departed for China on his final official trip to Asia. Tropical Storm Hermine hit Florida as a Category 1 hurricane, wiping away beachside buildings and toppling trees onto homes. Samsung Electronics recalled all of its Galaxy Note 7 smartphones after finding batteries in some of

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the flagship gadgets exploded or caught fire. The federal government banned more than a dozen chemicals long-used in antibacterial soaps, saying manufacturers had failed to show they were safe and killed germs.

Today's Birthdays: Dancer-actress Marge Champion is 98. Former Sen. Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo., is 86. Actor-comedian Chuck McCann is 83. Former United States Olympic Committee Chairman Peter Ueberroth is 80. Actor Derek Fowlds (TV: "Yes, Minister"; "Yes, Prime Minister") is 80. Singer Jimmy Clanton is 79. Rhythm-and-blues singer Sam Gooden (The Impressions) is 78. Rhythm-and-blues singer Rosalind Ashford (Martha & the Vandellas) is 74. Singer Joe Simon is 74. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw is 69. Basketball Hall of Famer Nate Archibald is 69. Actor Mark Harmon is 66. Former Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., is 66. International Tennis Hall of Famer Jimmy Connors is 65. Actress Linda Purl is 62. Rock musician Jerry Augustyniak (10,000 Maniacs) is 59. Country musician Paul Deakin (The Mavericks) is 58. Pro Football Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson is 57. Actor Keanu Reeves is 53. International Boxing Hall of Famer Lennox Lewis is 52. Actress Salma Hayek is 51. Actor Tuc Watkins is 51. Actress Kristen Cloke is 49. Actress Cynthia Watros is 49. Rhythm-and-blues singer K-Ci is 48. Actor-comedian Katt Williams is 44. Actor Michael Lombardi is 43. Actress Tiffany Hines is 40. Rock musician Sam Rivers (Limp Bizkit) is 40. Actor Jonathan Kite is 38. Actress Allison Miller is 32. Rock musician Spencer Smith is 30. Electronic music DJ/producer Zedd is 28.

Thought for Today: "Life is a tragic mystery. We are pierced and driven by laws we only half understand, we find that the lesson we learn again and again is that of accepting heroic helplessness." — Florida Scott-Maxwell, American writer and psychologist (1884-1979).