

Groton Daily Independent

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Official Notices

Brown County (updated 8-31)
Frederick Area School (updated 8-29)
Groton City (updated 8-29)
Groton Area School (updated 8-29)
Westport Town (updated 8-21-17)
Other Notices (updated 8-21)
Frederick Town (Updated 8-15)
Groton Area School (updated 8-7)
Claremont Town Official Notices Book

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

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

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Homecoming Week

First day of Autumn

All School Dress-up Day: Spirit Day - Black & Gold
Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, rice pilaf, California blend vegetables, peach crisp, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Mini pancakes, fruit, milk and juice.

School Lunch: Homecoming brats or hot dogs, beans, chips, bars.

Football: Homecoming Game with Mobridge-Pollock at 7 p.m.

Dance Practice: Groton Community Center (Sugar Babes 3:50 to 4:35, Sweet Sensations 4:40 to 5:25, Spice Girls 5:30 to 6:30)

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance: Men's Bible Study at the Groton Dairy Queen, 6:30 a.m.

Olive Grove: Class Reunions

Jungle Day Bazaar: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church

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

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

Soccer: hosts Tea Area, girls at 1 p.m., Boys at 3 p.m.

Youth Football: 9:30 a.m., Groton 5th/6th at Sisseton Black; 9:30 a.m., Groton 3rd/4th hosts MVYF.

Olive Grove: Class Reunions



Dakota Outdoors


Erik Dean

402 N Main St
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605.229.0123

dakoutdoors@midconetwork.com

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“THE WORLD IS A
TRAGEDY TO THOSE WHO
FEEL, BUT A COMEDY
TO THOSE WHO
THINK.”

-HORACE WALPOLE

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

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Drywall dust triggered a sensor at the Groton Area Elementary School during noon hour on Wednesday as the Groton Fire Department was called to the scene. According to Superintendent Joe Schwan, the workers were sanding sheetrock and the dust got so thick that it triggered a sensor. The students and staff were evacuated from the building just to make sure it was safe to re-enter. (Photos by Paul Kosel)





This is SD37 looking north from Ninth Avenue. Starting on Friday, Sept. 22, Lien Transportation will begin putting down the first layer of asphalt which will be 1.5 inches thick. The asphalt will be laid down from US12 south to Fifth Avenue. The grade is being fine tuned between Third Avenue and Second Avenue. While the concrete work is being done at Third Avenue, Second Avenue will be reopened with Third Avenue being closed. Then when concrete work begins on Second Avenue, it will be flipped once more. Depending on the weather, milling was scheduled to begin on SD37 between Railroad Avenue and Aspen Avenue. If the forecast of rain comes true, the milling will have to be put off a little longer. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Sisseton Golf Meet Results

Three Groton Area golfers participated in the Sisseton Golf meet held Thursday. Cade Guthmiller placed 20th with scores of 46 and 48 for a total of 94. Tristan Traphagen placed 33rd with scores of 51 and 50 for a total of 101. Hunter Kassube placed 34th with scores of 55 and 46 for a total of 101.



All auto owners!
Save \$2-\$4 /tank
& grow your local economy
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Super Premium E30's
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same mileage, fewer
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*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")**

1967 and 1968 Groton graduates plan reunion

A duo class reunion of the Groton graduating classes of 1967 and 1968 will be held over Groton Homecoming weekend, September 22 and 23, 2017. Class members of 1967 will be celebrating 50 years while the class of 1968 will celebrate 49 years.

There were 53 class members in 1967 and 60 classmates in 1968. Ferney, Verdon and Bath areas joined Groton School District in 1965. Andover classmates came in 1966 and Columbia consolidated with Groton in 1967.

The duo classes will participate in the homecoming parade. Following the parade there will be an open house from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm at the Groton Legion Club Room for anyone wanting to reminisce with the graduates.

Welcome home to all of the 1967 and 1968 Groton Graduates. Enjoy your time together!

Help Wanted

We are Hiring Nurses – RN or LPN,
Full or Part Time.

NEW WAGE PACKAGE!!!

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

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



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CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

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



The varsity volleyball team posed for a picture in front of the banner that they would bust through. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Netters beat Sisseton, 3-0

Groton Area's volleyball team defeated Sisseton in three games Thursday night in action taking place at the Groton Area Arena.

Groton Area won the games, 25-13, 25-13 and 25-8.

In serving, Groton Area was 66 of 73 with 16 ace serves. Miranda Hanson was 17 of 17 with five ace serves and Jessica Bjerke and Payton Maine were each 11 of 12 with three ace serves. Sisseton was 29 of 31 with two ace serves. Ayinna Chanku was six of six and Alexis Metz was five of five with one ace serve.

Groton Area was 84 of 96 in attacks with 31 kills. Gia Gengerke was 22 of 25 with 12 kills, Jennie Doeden was 21 of 25 with eight kills and Taylor Holm was 12 of 14 with six kills. Sisseton was 10 of 18 in attacks with six kills. Katylynn Joyce was four of four with three kills and Mariah Pistorius was five of six with two kills.

The Tigers were 98 of 98 in sets with 25 assists. Miranda Hanson was 87 of 87 with 24 assists. The Redmen were 39 of 43 in sets with six assists. Kelsey Heath was 24 of 26 with five assists and Courtney Heath was 14 of 16 with one assist.

Groton Area had 38 digs with Payton Maine having 10, Jennie Doeden nine and Jessica Bjerke six. Sisseton was 44 of 57 in digs with Libby Medenwald being 12 of 15.

Groton Area had five blocks with Taylor Holm having four and Gia Gengerke one. Kiara LaFromboise had seven blocks for Sisseton.

In the preliminary matches, the seventh graders won both of the games with the score of one game being 25-11 and the second game was not available. The eighth graders lost their first game, 25-19. In the second game, Groton Area was trailing, 24-17 and the eighth graders rallied to take the lead 25-24, and went on to win, 27-25 with Trinity Smith having an ace serve for the win. The eighth graders then won the match by winning the third game, 25-15. The C team lost their match, 2-1, with game scores of 25-16, 20-25 and 15-25. The junior varsity team won its match, 25-9 and 25-11.

Groton Area will travel to Roncalli on Thursday. The Tigers' season record is now 7-2 on the season while Sisseton is 2-13.

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Today on GDILIVE.COM

It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM



Groton Area Tigers

VS



Mobridge=Pollock Tigers

Friday, Sept. 22, 2017, 7 p.m.
at Doney Field, Groton

[Click here for the program](#)

GHS Homecoming Parade

Friday, Sept. 22

1 p.m.

Groton Main Street

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Granary Rural Cultural Center - Groton, S.D.

LIVING HISTORY FALL FESTIVAL



See The Past Come Alive!



Saturday, September 23, 2017

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

FREE ADMISSION

COME DRESSED IN FRONTIER COSTUME—GET A PRIZE!

*Fun for All Ages! Reenactment, Demonstrations,
Hands On Activities, Spelling Bee at 2:30 p.m.,
Square Dance Lessons with Art Marmorstein
Pie Social from 1-4 p.m., Music & More!*

NEW!

... As if you were there!

**PRESIDENT TEDDY
ROOSEVELT**

Played by Arch Ellwein of Flyin' Lion Productions



PERFORMANCES at 1 & 3 p.m.

Program made possible by: South Dakota Humanities Council
(An affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities)



Stop by for Lunch! Concessions by: **THE BRASS KETTLE**



THE GRANARY - Physical Address: 40161 128th St., Rural Groton
The Arts & Culture Campus of Dacotah Prairie Museum
Museum Website: www.dacotahpraiemuseum.com • Granary Website: granaryfinearts.org



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Today in Weather History

September 22, 1936: Abnormally warm conditions brought record temperatures to much of central and northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota on this day in 1936. Temperatures rose into the upper 90s and lower 100s during the afternoon hours. Pierre and Watertown set record highs of 99 degrees. Mobridge and Sisseton warmed to record highs of 101 degrees. Finally, Kennebec and Aberdeen rose to record highs of 102 and 103 degrees, respectively.

1810: A tornado striking Fernhill Heath had a width between 0.5 to 1 mile; making it the widest path ever in Britain.

1890: A severe hailstorm struck Strawberry, Arizona. Five days after the storm hail still lay in drifts 12 to 18 inches deep.

1913 - Des Moines, IA, experienced their earliest freeze of record. (The Weather Channel)

1961 - Hurricane Esther made a near complete circle south of Cape Cod. The hurricane then passed over Cape Cod and hit Maine. Its energy was largely spent over the North Atlantic Ocean, however, heavy rains over Maine resulted in widespread local flooding of cellars, low roads, and underpasses. (David Ludlum)

1983 - Forty-one cities reported record cold temperatures during the morning. Houston, TX, hit 50 degrees, and Williston ND plunged to 19 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hurricane Emily, the first hurricane to roam the Caribbean in nearly six years, made landfall over the Dominican Republic late in the day, packing 125 mph winds. Emily killed three persons and caused thirty million dollars damage. A record high of 92 degrees at Miami FL was their fifth in a row. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - An early morning thunderstorm produced baseball size hail at Plainview, in Hale County TX. Late in the evening more thunderstorms in the Southern High Plains Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Plainview TX and Crosby TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)





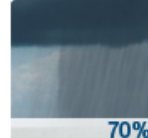
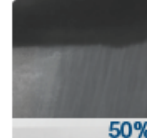

1989 - Hurricane Hugo quickly lost strength over South Carolina, but still was a tropical storm as it crossed into North Carolina, just west of Charlotte, at about 7 AM. Winds around Charlotte reached 69 mph, with gusts to 99 mph. Eighty percent of the power was knocked out to Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Property damage in North Carolina was 210 million dollars, and damage to crops was 97 million dollars. The strongest storm surge occurred along the southern coast shortly after midnight, reaching nine feet above sea level at ocean Isle and Sunset Beach. Hugo killed one person and injured fifteen others in North Carolina. Strong northwesterly winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the north central U.S., in time for the official start of autumn, at 8" 20 PM (CDT). Squalls produced light snow in northern Wisconsin. Winds in Wisconsin gusted to 52 mph at Rhinelander. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - For the first time in the historical record, two hurricanes reached category-5 intensity in the Gulf of Mexico in a single season as Hurricane Rita intensified before making landfall (Katrina and Rita).

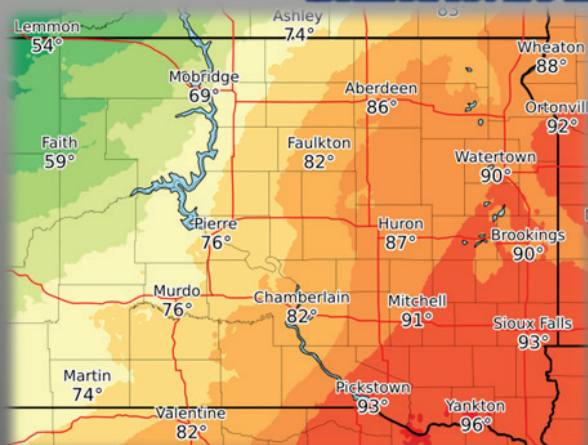
2006: The tristate area of Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky was struck by the worst tornado outbreak in the recorded history during the month of September. One supercell produced a long-track F4 tornado across southeastern Missouri into southwestern Illinois. This tornado traveled 27.5 miles.

Broton Daily Independent

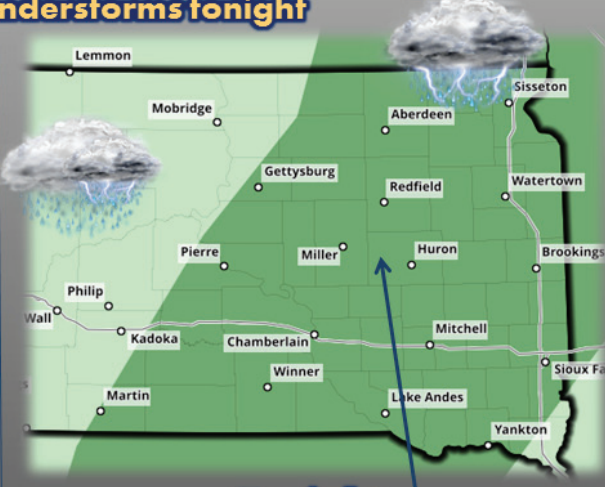
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| Today | Tonight | Saturday | Saturday Night | Sunday | Sunday Night | Monday |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|  10% |  50% |  60% |  80% |  70% |  50% |  40% |
| Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Showers | Chance Showers | Showers Likely | Showers | Showers Likely | Chance Showers | Chance Showers |
| High: 86 °F | Low: 53 °F | High: 60 °F | Low: 51 °F | High: 58 °F | Low: 47 °F | High: 58 °F |

Significant Cool Down after Today isolated severe thunderstorms tonight




Highs Today:
60s northwest of Mobridge to the
80s and low 90s southeast



Tonight:
Isolated Severe
thunderstorms possible

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 9/22/2017 5:26 AM Central



Published on: 09/22/2017 at 5:29AM

Temperatures today will vary significantly, ranging from the 60s northwest of Mobridge to the 80s and even low 90s over southeastern South Dakota. Dry weather should prevail most of the day, with showers and isolated severe thunderstorms returning tonight. The main threat will be hail, strong winds, and heavy rain over eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

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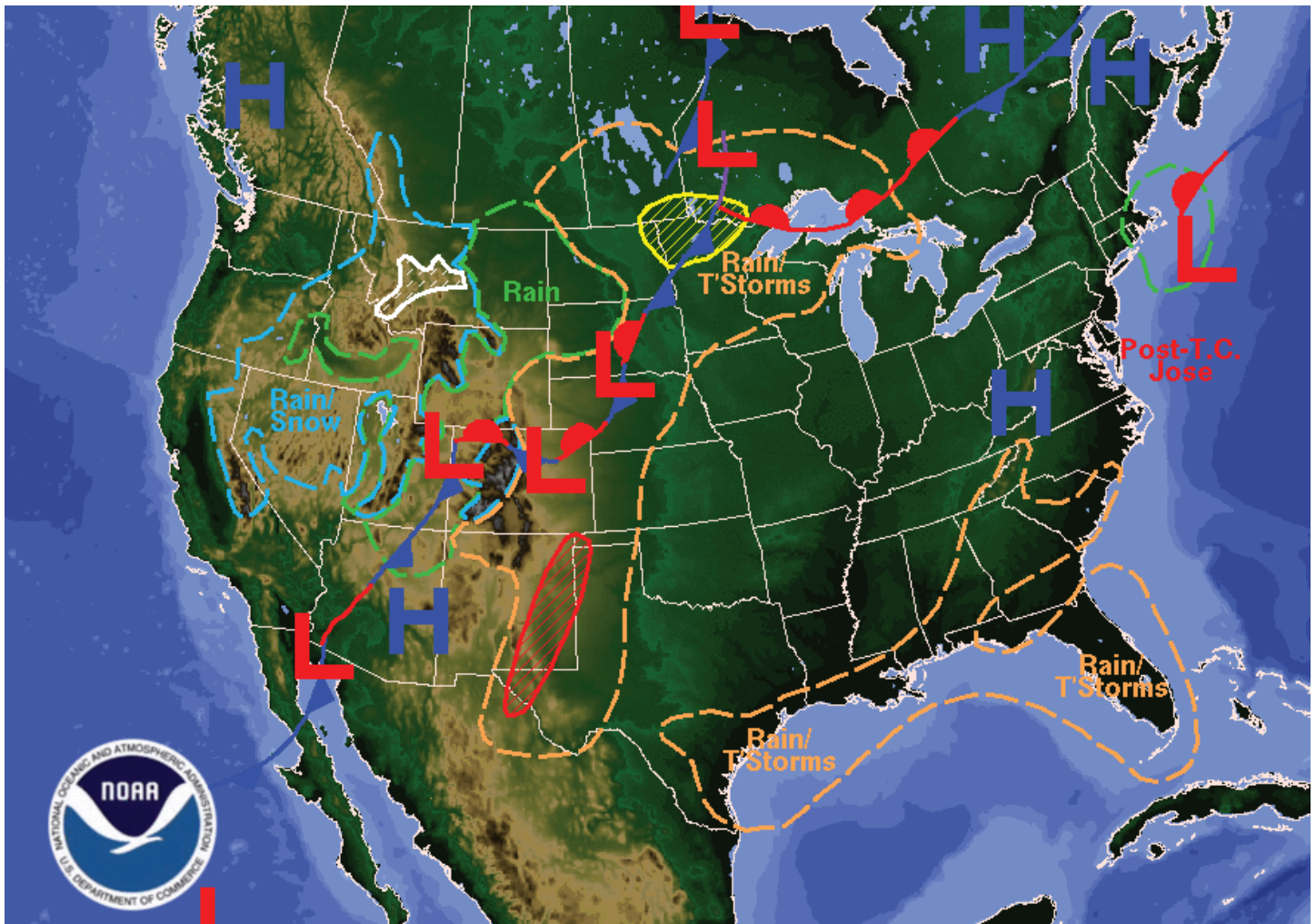
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 83.6 at 4:44 PM
Heat Index: 91 at 3:58 PM
Low Outside Temp: 53.9 at 7:15 AM
High Gust: 31 at 10:24 AM
Precip: 0.63

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1936
Record Low: 20° in 1995
Average High: 69°F
Average Low: 43°F
Average Precip in Sept: 1.62
Precip to date in Sept: 0.87
Average Precip to date: 17.91
Precip Year to Date: 10.39
Sunset Tonight: 7:30 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:22 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Sep 22, 2017, issued 4:32 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Santorelli with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING

"You are not prepared to live," said the professor to his philosophy class, "until you are ready to die." Few, if any, live with that thought in mind.

When he was twenty years old, David was diagnosed with cancer. After a careful examination the attending physician said to him, "I'm sorry, but you have only a short time to live. At the most, two years." David took the news without flinching. He had accepted Christ as his Savior six months before he was given the news.

As the disease progressed and his health deteriorated his faith continued to grow. And as his faith grew so did his willingness to witness and he gained a boldness about sharing God's grace. On one occasion he said, "Cancer brought me to my knees and I realized I had no control over my life – only my mind."

During a visit with one of his physicians he was asked, "Do you want to live a short time for God or a long time for nothing?" He responded by saying, "Whether I live a short time or a long time it will be for God. My life is in His hands."

Shortly before his death his mother would walk into his room and ask, "David, are you still here?" Each time he would answer, "Yes, Mother. I'm still here."

On the last day of his life she went into his room and asked, "David are you still here?" His reply that day was, "Yes, Mother, but not for much longer. I'm going home." He looked around the room and said, "Mother, faith is a lighted room."

Where does a faith like David's come from? "God will redeem my life from the grave," said the Psalmist, "he will surely take me to Himself." It comes from faith in Christ.

David lived his life knowing he was ready to die. Are you?

Prayer: We are grateful, Lord, for the confidence we have in You knowing that we are redeemed through the work of Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 49:15 But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead; he will surely take me to himself.

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News from the  Associated Press

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Arlington def. DeSmet, 25-13, 25-18, 25-15
Belle Fourche def. Custer, 25-16, 25-20, 25-16
Bridgewater-Emery def. Canistota, 25-15, 25-18, 25-27, 22-25, 15-10
Burke/South Central def. Bon Homme, 25-12, 25-15, 25-18
Chester def. Garretson, 25-9, 25-15, 25-13
Colman-Egan def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-15, 25-14, 22-25, 25-15
Crow Creek def. Crazy Horse, 25-7, 25-15, 25-11
Deuel def. Redfield/Doland, 25-18, 25-12, 25-11
Edmunds Central def. McLaughlin, 25-17, 17-25, 25-23, 25-16
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Estelline, 25-15, 25-9, 25-20
Ellendale, N.D. def. Leola/Frederick, 25-23, 25-17, 25-22
Ethan def. Scotland, 25-15, 26-24, 25-13
Flandreau def. Dell Rapids, 13-25, 25-23, 25-22, 25-23
Florence/Henry def. Waubay/Summit, 25-12, 25-20, 25-19
Freeman def. Menno, 25-19, 27-29, 25-14, 27-25
Groton Area def. Sisseton, 25-13, 25-13, 25-8
Hanson def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-10, 25-7, 25-14
Herreid/Selby Area def. Linton-HMB, N.D., 25-12, 25-23, 25-23
Hot Springs def. Red Cloud, 25-16, 22-25, 25-23, 26-24
Howard def. Beresford, 25-13, 25-23, 25-17
Jones County def. Todd County, 25-11, 22-25, 25-20, 25-21
Lake Preston def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 25-8, 25-11, 25-9
Langford def. Ipswich, 25-23, 23-25, 23-25, 25-20, 15-13
Lemmon def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-20, 25-15, 24-26, 25-13
Lennox def. West Central, 22-25, 12-25, 26-24, 26-24, 15-13
Madison def. Tri-Valley, 25-21, 25-14, 25-11
Marshall, Minn. def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-19, 23-25, 25-17, 13-25, 15-10
McCook Central/Montrose def. Parkston, 25-19, 29-27, 25-13
McIntosh def. Dupree, 17-25, 17-25, 28-26, 25-19, 15-10
Milbank def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-16, 21-25, 25-16, 26-24
Miller def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-13, 25-14, 25-17
Mitchell def. Brandon Valley, 25-18, 25-17, 25-14
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Canton, 25-13, 25-21, 22-25, 25-9
North Border def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-12, 25-14, 25-21
Northwestern def. Warner, 25-16, 23-25, 25-22, 25-23
Parker def. Baltic, 25-21, 25-13, 25-20
Philip def. Harding County, 25-21, 18-25, 25-16, 25-17
Pierre def. Brookings, 25-19, 28-26, 25-22
Potter County def. Stanley County, 25-13, 25-17, 25-14
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Iroquois, 25-17, 25-23, 25-13
Sioux Falls Christian def. Dakota Valley, 25-23, 25-22, 27-25
Sioux Falls Washington def. Harrisburg, 25-21, 10-25, 19-25, 25-20, 15-13
Sully Buttes def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-11, 25-17, 25-14

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Timber Lake def. Standing Rock, N.D., 25-21, 25-7, 25-19
Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Mitchell Christian, 28-26, 25-14, 25-19
Waverly-South Shore def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-21, 22-25, 25-21, 25-15
Webster def. Britton-Hecla, 25-22, 25-19, 25-15
Wolsey-Wessington def. James Valley Christian, 23-25, 20-25, 25-17, 25-20, 16-14
Elk Point-Jefferson Triangular
Akron-Westfield, Iowa def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-8, 25-22, 25-22
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-16, 25-21, 25-10
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Akron-Westfield, Iowa, 25-12, 25-16, 25-18
Newell Triangular
Hill City def. Lead-Deadwood, 20-25, 25-22, 25-19, 25-16
Hill City def. Newell, 25-12, 25-13, 25-14
Lead-Deadwood def. Newell, 25-9, 25-8, 25-15
White River Triangular
Kadoka Area def. Pine Ridge, 25-15, 25-18, 19-25, 25-21
Kadoka Area def. White River, 25-11, 25-11, 25-22
Pine Ridge def. White River, 28-26, 25-15, 25-15

Simple, cheap experiments pay off in fish growth

By MARK WATSON, Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — Fisheries crews at McNenny State Fish Hatchery may have found a cheap and simple tool to significantly increase the size of the fish they raise: A child's toy.

Through time, there have been concerns on how fish were raised in hatchery settings in relation to post-stocking survivability or how they behave after being released into the wild, said Mike Barnes, the manager of the hatchery. So hatchery personnel added structure such as brush piles or even small trees, the Black Hills Pioneer reported. Barnes said his crews even tried introducing concrete blocks into the tanks.

"The problem with all that is that it interferes with fish production," Barnes said. "Circular tanks are all self-cleaning. If you introduce things directly into the bottom of the tank, it just destroys that. Now you are having to spend a lot more time cleaning, and you can have disease issues."

One day as the McNenny team was brainstorming ideas, someone asked about suspending something in the tanks.

The hatchery had aluminum rods left over from a previous project, so the crew threaded the end of the rods, placed a nut of the end, and lowered the 20-inch rods into the tank, clustered together. The rods were suspended about nine inches from the bottom.

"The initial thing was to just see how they modified the self-cleaning tanks," Barnes said. "Would they be suitable in a hatchery setting?"

The employees set up the study using the rods in some tanks, the experimental tanks; and not altering other tanks, the control tanks. The tanks were stocked with the same number of fry, baby fish, and fed at the same rate.

"At the end of three or four months, we were just shocked. Our tanks with just covers had something like 120 pounds of fish, which is what we expected. But the ones with the rods had 150-160 pounds."

The exact reason for the significant increase is not yet known. Barnes suspects that there was slack water created from the rods being suspended in the tanks. This would provide a small area of refuge for the fish. Perhaps the rods altered the water flow, creating a more even water quality in the tanks, and perhaps the fish are less stressed and realize better growth because there is structure added to the tanks even though that structure was aluminum rods.

So in spirit of the McNenny mantra, the crews took their experiment to the next step.

A study from the West Coast indicated that there may have been a positive response in salmon, close cousins to the rainbow trout raised at the hatchery, when color was added to their environment; however,

those results were purely speculative, Barnes said.

A former hatchery employee, Jeremy Kientz, went to Walmart with his state credit card to purchase a couple of bags of plastic play balls, similar to those found in play pits. Kientz, a new employee at the time, was in his hatchery uniform but could not get his state-issued credit card to work.

Barnes said a man behind Kientz in line asked what the balls were for. Kientz told him, and the man said, "That's cool," and paid for the balls with his own credit card.

Kientz did not catch the man's name.

"I'd like to very much thank the man," Barnes said. "Those balls elevated the game to the next level."

The hatchery crews suspended the balls similarly to the aluminum rods.

"At the end of the rearing period as we expected; we got 120 pounds in a covered tank, 150-160 pounds in the tanks with the aluminum rods, but the tanks with the balls, for the first time in my 28 years out here, we had tanks with over 200 pounds of fish, which is totally unprecedented," Barnes said.

The cost per tank to improve the growth: About \$2 or \$3, he said.

The team added even more balls to the tanks and still saw good levels of growth, but the addition prevented the self-cleaning function of the tanks.

Barnes said studies will continue.

Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

Computer helps map out maneuvers of Central's marching band

By KATHERINE GRANDSTRAND, Aberdeen News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — When football players trot off the field at halftime, it's the Central High School marching band's moment to shine.

The music plays and the band marches aptly around the field, creating patterns without missing a note, the Aberdeen News reported .

The formations on the field start as a map created on a computer program called Pyware, said Jeremy Schutter, director.

"We've probably been using it a half-dozen years or so now," he said.

Each student gets her or his own marker, each instrument represented by a different letter or symbol, Schutter said. Not only do the formations need to look impressive, the music needs to sound good, meaning the placement of sections needs to be planned with purpose.

"If you have a strong trumpet section and maybe you have a weaker clarinet section or your brass is stronger than your woodwinds, (you need to take that into consideration because) you're staging on the field has to be predetermined before you are even mapping out on the field there," he said.

The program creates maps and an animation of what the performance will look like with music, Schutter said. The students maybe watch it once or twice, but giving them printed out maps of the show has proven to be the best method.

"Every student gets a copy of what their sets are," Schutter said. "We're probably burning through six to 10 reams of paper."

A ream has 500 sheets.

Each musician is assigned a position that can be tracked on the maps.

"The advantage of giving each student a copy of the printout this way is they visually get to see what the form looks like," Schutter said.

The band's field show is an arrangement of three originally composed numbers put together around a central theme, he said. The show and music aren't composed specifically for Central, but the company the school orders from guarantees that no other schools within 100 miles or so will use the same arrangement.

But because their marching competitions are so spread out — Marshall, Minn.; Brandon; Sioux Falls and Vermillion — Central vies against schools outside of that range. Still it's rare that another school would use the exact same arrangement, Schutter said.

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The band spends the Monday after Friday night marches the same way many football teams do — watching video and reviewing performances.

"We pull that animation back out and ask the kids, 'We just talked about problem XYZ, now watch how that's being handled in the computer animation,'" Schutter said. "We should be able to do it, we should be able to come across as technically perfect."

The first game at which the band played was Aug. 25. Its first marching competition is Sept. 23.

"During the game, we are there to really promote school and event pride," Schutter said. "I try to imitate what the big college bands are doing in their stands, sometimes a little bit too much."

Playing for games is much more fun than marching in parades, said tuba players Justin Desens, junior, and Trenton Kehrwald, sophomore.

"Marching during a parade, you get to do that in eighth grade," Kehrwald said.

The band has gotten in trouble from game officials for playing too close to the snap, Schutter said.

Parade strategy for the marching band is a little different, he said. Many area bands play pop songs, so the Central band goes with a patriotic number.

"They're usually a crowd-pleaser, the kids don't mind playing them and sometimes we can take those particular numbers and use them at different places such as our Veterans Day ceremony," Schutter said. "We look to get a little bit more mileage out of what we play."

The students still get to play pop songs as members of the pep band, he said.

Marching band is one of the first activities at the school before the start of the fall semester. This year band members were back on the last Monday of July, Schutter said. The students have music and routines to learn.

The faculty parking lot is marked out as a football field, and drills are executed with and without music.

Once school starts, band kids are some of the first to show up at school as practices begin at 7:30 a.m.

But all that hard work is worth it for the students.

"Getting to provide entertainment to all those people" is rewarding, Desens said. "I like being a part of a group that does that."

People appreciate the band's work, said Paige Madsen, a freshmen flautist.

Hearing contest scores is another great reward, Kehrwald said.

"When it's a good score, that is," he said.

Schutter and fellow director John Patzlaff run a tight ship. If chatter starts between bursts of music, students are called out.

Marching band doesn't have a very long season. It's over as the first term ends, Schutter said.

"When we step back into school on Oct. 23, we'll break out into our concert bands," he said.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Real estate agent claims Taekwondo world title

By MICK GARRY, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Stephen Rueber is an extremely polite and cheerful sort who works in commercial real estate in the area and is undoubtedly pretty good at it.

There would be a segment of the population that knows him only through what he does for a living, the Argus Leader reported. They would not know that this conspicuously humble athlete is now a world champion in full-contact Taekwondo. Or that he's piled up dozens of other national, regional and district titles along the way.

A native of Canton, Rueber has had a fascination with martial arts for as long as he can remember. Lessons were outside the parameters of the family budget until he was a teenager, though. Since then, Taekwondo has been both a passion and steadying influence in his life.

"When I finally got to take lessons, I became obsessed," he said. "I didn't do any other sports. It was all Taekwondo."

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Seven years ago, he decided to kick it up a notch and pursue competitive combat Taekwondo. His ascent from highly regarded local black belt to world champion has been steady. It didn't happen overnight, and Rueber talks like he's glad it didn't.

"Everybody's abilities and goals in martial arts are different," he said. "For some people it's about fitness, or they want to learn self-defense principles. For me, Taekwondo has helped me focus. I'm better at my business and it has made me a better person."

It has also made him a better martial artist.

"I love the challenge of going up against the best of the best," he said. "It's a great way to test yourself and really know about your strengths and weaknesses. I love the chance to be able to do that."

Rueber trains at Hoover's ATA Martial Arts located in the Western Mall, operated by Larry Hoover, a chief master eighth-degree black belt who has been guiding his student up through the competitive rungs of the sport.

Hoover is obviously proud of what Rueber has done, but probably more proud of the way he's gone about it.

"It's his work ethic — he knows what he needs to do," Hoover said. "And he devotes enough time to do it. To me, that's why he's where he's at today. It's like if you were going to lose weight and you lost a pound a week for 50 weeks. It's the same way with him about getting better at this. Set a goal, create a realistic time frame and then do what needs to be done to take care of that section of the overall goal."

With a 10-month plan set up and aimed at the ATA World Championships in Little Rock, Ark., this past June, Rueber went about his preparation just as Hoover described. He was steady, methodical and unyielding in pursuit.

And then when he got there, it all came together. In full-contact Taekwondo, you can't strike an opponent in the face with your hands. There are also no take-downs or submission holds. If you want to kick a guy in the head, though, that's a good thing.

Rueber had six two-minute matches in a single-elimination bracket over a span of about three hours on his way to a gold medal, winning all of them.

"My goal was not to win the championship so much as it was to do my best," Rueber said. "I knew it was going to be extremely competitive — there were competitors from all over the world. I knew I had to bring my 'A' game and I was very happy with the outcome."

There's more to it than hard work, of course. Rueber is a strong and athletic 200 pounds with a natural aptitude for the sport. It was honed, though, with all that work.

"He's one of the few I've worked with who has maintained exceptional strength while maintaining his flexibility," Hoover said. "Everyone thinks about flexibility being about being able to kick higher. It's not, it's about kicking faster. So you take his size and strength and then he's got the speed to go with it."

It is a sport built upon a very strong culture of sportsmanship. While MMA warrior Conor McGregor would probably have exceptional aptitude for the sport itself, his antics would be frowned upon. It is another element of this portion of the martial arts world Rueber wants to hold onto.

"There are a percentage of people who think this is all about blood and guts when you get into the competitive part of it," Rueber said. "They would think it's very adversarial — basically that we're out there trying to kill each other. But that's not it. Some of the best people I've ever met have been my fellow competitors. There is a lot of mutual respect."

Rueber goes to approximately 10 tournaments a year and trains about 12 hours a week. He is sponsored by NG Nutra, Science Nutrition, Escape Float Spa and his own employer, Jim Dunham & Associates. Because there is no prize money, he'd be struggling to be involved in the sport to the degree that he's been if he didn't have them by his side.

With them, though, the sky is the limit.

"The ambitious part of me says there is still more to do on the tournament circuit," Rueber said. "I want to participate in the World Championships again. I'm ranked No. 1 and I want to keep that ranking for as long as possible. But being goal-driven, I would love to give back to (Hoover's) school, too. I want to teach, coach and mentor other students who would be interested in competing."

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

Irene couple's letter spreads happiness down river

By **RANDY DOCKENDORF, Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan**

IRENE, S.D. (AP) — Little did Sandy Highland know, a year later, her message in a bottle would bring joy to a stranger who had suffered a great loss.

In August 2016, Highland was enjoying a summer evening with her husband, Corey, on the James River, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported .

"We were across the way, at one our favorite fishing spots on the Jim River," she said, pointing to a spot near their home northwest of Irene.

"Corey was fishing, and I was watching him. I was drinking wine and just enjoying the day. I really wanted to share that feeling."

Looking down at the now-empty wine bottle, she recalled an old movie scene.

"In the movie, someone put a message into a bottle, then tossed the bottle into the water and let it flow downstream until someone found it," she said.

Highland had never done it before, but she liked the idea and decided to give it a try.

"I found a slip of paper and decided to write something that would make the other person happy," she said. The message went like this:

8-11-16

Fishing on the James River near Yankton, SD, with my wonderful husband.

Wishing whoever finds this, love & happiness like we have.

Happy fishing.it's better with wine.

Corey & Sandy Highland, Irene SD

Sandy put the message in the bottle and shut it with the cork. She then gave the bottle a ceremonial heave into the Jim River, launching its journey down the slow, meandering waterway.

Corey admitted he paid more attention to his fishing at the time than his wife's message in a bottle.

"I'm not much of a romantic," he said, flashing a grin but noting the couple's third anniversary was last Wednesday (Sept. 13).

After Sandy launched her message last year, the bottle went out of sight, floating down one of the flattest rivers in the world.

Corey didn't think the bottle would go far, given the numerous crooks in the shallow river. Sandy hoped she would hear from anyone who found the floating object.

"Time went on, and I kind of forgot about it after a while," Sandy said.

Then, the bottle and its message resurfaced a year later about 150-200 miles downstream. Sandy was notified by a third party that the bottle had been found in Nebraska.

"A girlfriend told me that I should check Facebook," Sandy said. "It was all over a page that someone had found the bottle. I hadn't really thought about it since I tossed the bottle into the river a year ago."

The recipient, Angie Martin, had found the bottle floating in the Missouri River near Blair, Nebraska. Martin couldn't be reached by the Press & Dakotan, but she shared her story with the Highlands.

Martin and her family live in Fremont, Nebraska, and were spending the recent Labor Day weekend at the Missouri River. The children were playing in the area while Martin was keeping watch over them and the beach.

"Angie saw these white butterflies on the beach, which made her feel better," Highland said. "Angie had been thinking about her premature baby who passed away. When Angie saw the white butterflies, it made her feel like a sign of life."

Then, Martin saw a shiny object near the butterflies. She wasn't sure what the object was, but she eventually retrieved it. As she uncorked the bottle, she found the Highlands' intact piece of paper.

At one of the lowest times in her life, Martin read the message of unconditional joy and love.

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Martin posted her find on Facebook, sharing a photo of the message that came with the bottle. She posted a "shout out" to the Highlands in the following Facebook post:

"Message in a bottle! This bottle swept up on the beach today! Pretty cool came from South Dakota and retrieved in Blair NE a year later! Here's to you Corey and Sandy Highland Irene SD!"

Corey admitted he never expected the bottle to be found, much less make it down the James River and into the Missouri River.

"I thought it was neat (to hear about the recovery)," he said. "I just thought the bottle would get stuck in the mud when it tried to turn the first corner (in the Jim River). I didn't think it would get more than 500 yards."

Thanks to Facebook, Martin contacted the Highlands to express gratitude.

"Angie was very excited to get the bottle and message," Sandy said. "We sent messages on Facebook, and we talked back and forth."

At one point, Sandy became stunned to learn about the loss of Martin's premature baby. The news hit really close to home.

"My niece has a child that was born a preemie but is alive and well," Sandy said. "It was a rough deal Angie is going through. Corey and I each have children, and I can't imagine going through that (tragedy) with my own family. I can't imagine losing your child."

Martin has engaged in her own act of pay it forward, Sandy said.

"I saw a picture (on Facebook) where Angie and her husband threw the bottle back in the Missouri with a new message," Sandy said. "Who knows where it may end up this time? Maybe somewhere down the Mississippi River?"

Actually, Sandy felt rewarded to learn that her message made a difference in another person's life.

"I was glad that Angie found it, and she felt better after reading the message," Sandy said. "It was fun and romantic to hear she found the bottle floating down the river. It more than topped off my weekend."

For Sandy, the toss was so nice she did it twice.

"I was inspired hearing from Angie, so I decided to throw another bottle and message into the river," she said. "I didn't wait — I did it the night I heard from her. I wanted to do it one more time to make someone smile."

Sandy felt it was good to share the story.

"We have so many disasters going on around us. We have mountain fires, hurricanes, floods and drought," she said.

"With so much bad stuff going on all around us, it's good to have something like this (message in a bottle). Everything turned out just perfect."

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

Thune, Rounds both support GOP health care overhaul bill

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

South Dakota's two Republican U.S. senators both say they support the latest GOP effort to replace former President Barack Obama's health care law.

Sen. John Thune and Sen. Mike Rounds both believe the proposed law would address a failing system while benefiting states. Rounds called it "a step in the right direction" during a conference call with reporters Thursday.

"We can move forward with this particular approach to health care reform or we can leave 'Obamacare' in place," he said. "Until such time as a perfect plan comes along, this is the binary choice today."

Thune's office also confirmed that the South Dakota Republican will vote for the new bill by Sens. Bill Cassidy and Lindsey Graham that would replace major pillars of the Affordable Care Act with block grants to states to design their own programs. President Donald Trump and Republican Senate leaders are trying to rally 50 Republican votes to pass the bill next week.

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Both South Dakota senators have generally been supportive of dismantling "Obamacare."

"It's a commitment that we made," Thune said in a recent televised interview with FOX Business Network. "Obamacare, as we know, is failing. It's led to higher costs and higher taxes and fewer options for people in this country."

South Dakota Democratic Party Executive Director Sam Parkinson criticized Thune and Rounds for supporting the bill.

"Tens of thousands of South Dakotans will lose their health care, and those who still have health care coverage will pay more for worse coverage," Parkinson said in a statement.

The Cassidy-Graham bill would end the requirement that most people buy health coverage and that larger employers offer it to workers. It would let insurers charge higher premiums to seriously ill customers and cut Medicaid, the health insurance program for the poor, over time.

One issue in dispute is whether it would protect people with pre-existing conditions. Thune and Rounds believe it will, but some opponents, including leading health advocacy groups, dispute that.

The law would end health insurance subsidies and provide \$1.2 trillion in block grants to states over seven years, with fewer federal strings attached. However, a study by the consulting firm Avalere Health found that the bill would lead to an overall \$215 billion cut to states in federal funding for health insurance, through 2026.

The study found 34 states would see cuts by 2026, but South Dakota isn't among them. The state would see an increase of \$1 billion, according to Avalere. A study by the Kaiser Family Foundation released Thursday showed a similar increase for South Dakota.

"This (bill) would fix part of an ongoing issue that we've had here where Native Americans who are served by Medicaid still require a state match under current law," Rounds said. "This changes that, and the federal government, for Medicaid-eligible Native Americans, would assume 100 percent of the cost."

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

Sioux Falls Chamber defends city's immigrant population

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce is speaking out about recent events in South Dakota it calls "antagonistic to immigrants and new demographic groups in Sioux Falls."

The Chamber released a statement Wednesday that partially appeared to be a response to recent events held in South Dakota, including a Monday gathering Minnehaha County Republicans organized. A speaker at the event urged the state to crack down on immigration, refugee placement and Muslim groups, the Argus Leader reported.

"Legislation and policies that negatively target specific populations will not help Sioux Falls address our changing workforce needs," Chamber officials said in the statement. "They will not help grow the state economy and certainly do not create new opportunities for South Dakota residents."

Dave Roetman, chairman of the county Republicans, said he didn't take the statement as a direct response to the event.

"It's really less about specific events that have come up, although it does involve several speakers from outside the state, and I'll let people judge what those are," said Jason Ball, president and CEO of the Chamber.

He said the statement is a desire to lay out the group's policies priorities and state legislators should take note.

"We just felt it was really important to reiterate, 'Here's the position and policy perspective we're coming from as the business voice in Sioux Falls,' and signal to our friends in the Statehouse, in similar nature to the previous legislative session, we're going to be sharing these policy preferences in the upcoming session as policy proposals are made," Ball said.

The Chamber's statement reads that "new Americans" are an essential part of Sioux Falls' workforce and contribute to the "vibrancy" of the city.

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"We've got to grow into the community we need to be," Ball said. "And I think that's going to begin here, with us not only just valuing the diversity that exists in this community but finding ways to celebrate it."

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

Supreme Court: Sioux Falls must release \$1M arena contract

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has ruled Sioux Falls officials must make public a contract the city negotiated over repairs to the Denny Sanford Premier Center.

Sioux Falls officials have refused to release details of the contract, which reimbursed the city \$1 million. City officials negotiated the settlement with contractors who worked on the project are warping was discovered on exterior metal panels of the \$115 million arena.

Argus Leader Media sued in 2015 to force the city to release the contract. A judge ruled in favor of the city, but the state Supreme Court reversed that decision Thursday, arguing the contract cannot be kept secret.

The Argus Leader reports the high court concluded the contract does not meet exceptions to South Dakota's open records law.

A spokeswoman for Mayor Mike Huether says city officials are reviewing the decision.

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

Bankers: Rural economy continues to struggle in 10 states

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A new report says low commodity prices and weak farm incomes are continuing to hamper the rural economy in parts of 10 Plains and Midwestern states.

The Rural Mainstreet Index for the region fell to its lowest level of the year at 39.6 from August's 42.2. The index released Thursday ranges between 0 and 100, with any number under 50 indicating a shrinking economy.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey of bankers, says more than half of the bankers reported that they have restructured farm loans. Nearly 20 percent have increased their collateral requirements.

Bankers reported a 2.1 percent increase in farm loan defaults over the past year.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

The Capital Journal, Pierre, Sept. 19

Choose to have an impact on SD pheasant numbers

South Dakota's tourism department on Tuesday sent out a news release with a fancy infographic, making the case that the state still is the best place in the world to hunt ring-necked pheasants.

That claim is pretty hard to refute. Our humble state has enough public land that, on most days, most people can find a place to hunt where a pheasant or two is likely to be found. We grow a lot of pheasants and harvest more pheasants each year than anywhere else. And no, Mr. and Mrs. Naysayer, that total doesn't count all the birds harvested at private shooting preserves.

The tourism department's news release makes a point of saying hunters in South Dakota have killed more than 1 million pheasants in each of the last three years. Also, the release points out that the 20-year average pheasant population in the state is about 7.4 million birds. In the same time period, the release notes, each hunter has harvested an average of 9.5 birds over the last 20 years.

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Still, this year is going to be tough for those folks who like hunting pheasants. Drought has taken a toll on pheasant chicks and all the signs are pointing to a down year. The annual, August brood survey conducted by the Game, Fish and Parks Department found 45 percent fewer pheasants in 2017 than it did in 2016. The average brood size counted in this year's survey was the lowest since 1949. This year, the state's pheasant-per-mile index, which is an estimate of the number of birds per mile, was just 1.7.

The drought this year and its effect on pheasants underscores a long-term trend not covered in the tourism department's news release. The pheasant population has been on a long, slow, downward slide for 10 years. Indeed, the number of pheasants counted in the 2017 brood count survey was 65 percent below the 10-year average.

The last time pheasant numbers were this low was in 2013, when the estimated number of pheasants per mile hit 1.5. The state's pheasant-per-mile index hasn't topped five since 2010 when it was 6.4. Prior to that, you've got to go back to before 2003 to find a year when there were fewer than five birds per mile in the state.

As to why the pheasant population is trending downward, the biologists at GF&P are pointing to habitat loss. To be specific, they blame the loss of nesting habitats such as hay land, small grain crops such as winter wheat and land planted to grass as part of the Conservation Reserve Program, which pays landowners to take land out of crop production in favor of wildlife habitat. Since 1990, about 4.9 million acres of such habitats were lost, according to GF&P. A study published by the South Dakota State University Extension Service in 2014 found that between 2006 and 2012, South Dakota lost 1.84 million acres of grassland primarily to corn and soybean production.

The pheasant-per-mile index hasn't topped four birds per mile since 2012.

The number of pheasants in our state matters. It matters in a big way. You see, the phenomenon of high numbers of nonresident hunters actually is fairly recent. Between 1963 and 1994, according to GF&P license data, the number of nonresident hunters never surpassed 45,500. The number of birds per mile during the same period never rose past 3.8.

In 1994, the pheasants-per-mile index hit 4.13 and the number of nonresident hunters rose to 65,200. The pheasants-per-mile index fell back to around 2.6 for the following three years but in 1998 rose to 5.08. With few exceptions, the number of pheasants stayed high for the next 10 years and by 2007, when the pheasants-per-mile index hit 7.85, there were more than 100,000 nonresident hunters visiting South Dakota.

In 2013, the number of non-resident hunters plunged from 93,419 in 2012 to 74,413. If one uses the price of a 2017 nonresident hunting license, that represents a shortfall of \$2.2 million worth of revenue just for GF&P. The cost of a license is one of the smallest expenses that visiting hunters have.

Also in 2013, the number of residents with a hunting license that allowed them to kill pheasants fell to 57,647, from 68,337 in 2012. Again, the cost of a resident hunting license pales in comparison to the gas, ammunition, gear and snacks all hunters wind up buying on their way to and from the field.

Since 2013, the number of nonresident hunters visiting the state hasn't surpassed 85,000.

The thing is, we can do something about this. Habitat is the key and if, as a state, we decide that wildlife habitat is a priority and we start doing more to encourage landowners to leave more wildlife habitat on the landscape, we can get higher, more-stable pheasant numbers back. We also can encourage our congressional delegation to fight for more CRP spending in the 2018 Farm Bill.

We can have an impact on pheasant numbers if we so choose. Everyone in the state benefits from these birds and everyone needs to be involved.

The Daily Leader, Madison, Sept. 20

DSU's student growth runs across the board

Dakota State University's fall enrollment figures are now public, and we're impressed with the breadth and depth of the gain in students.

While many casual observers might guess that the enrollment gains are just in cybersecurity, which is a high-profile area of study, they would be incorrect.

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All four colleges (Education, Liberal Arts and Science, Business and information Systems, and the Beacom College of Computing and Cyber Sciences) are showing increases, either in total, or in certain majors.

Both undergraduate and graduate headcounts increased. Freshman enrollment is up over last year, and transfer student enrollment is up. Full-time and part-time student counts are showing growth.

Substantial changes in higher education over the past generation or two have made counting students a more complicated process. When Dakota State hits an enrollment record in the late 1960s, it was easy to count. All students were on the Madison campus, and most were traditional freshmen, sophomore, juniors and seniors.

Today, there are students studying online and at the University Center in Sioux Falls. Students may be taking classes at two different South Dakota universities at the same time. DSU had no graduate students in the 1960s, but more than 300 today.

While all students are equally important, many Madison observers like to see on-campus enrollment growth. Freshman are likely to stay four or more years. Dormitories are filled. Attendance at sporting and cultural events goes up. Local restaurants and stores benefit from more people living in Madison.

Dakota State's big investment in purchasing and renovating the former Madison Community Hospital is paying off big, and not a moment too soon. Even though it took years to acquire the property, design and construct it, the 107-bed increase in capacity comes just when it was needed.

DSU officials, faculty and staff are proud of the enrollment growth, and they should be. It is the result of hard work by all members of the DSU community — not only DSU personnel, but alumni, donors and the Madison community, which works to make new students feel welcome. Congratulations to all.

The Daily Republic, Mitchell, Sept. 20

The future of journalism

About one year ago, a small group of students battled to keep the Mitchell High School newspaper together.

It was significant extra work, some of it thankless. But the hours added up.

They captured important moments in journalistic forms, via news stories, opinion editorials and photography. They did it for their readers, the students and faculty at MHS and others who were interested in what was going on at the high school. Most importantly, though, they recognized the importance and value of a newspaper.

Due to a number of factors, the Mitchell High School newspaper, The Kernel, is now defunct. To read about what's going on at the high school, at least from the viewpoint of a student, is nonexistent. This year, there will be no newspaper at Mitchell High School.

The Kernel was around for decades. We presume a good number of people reading this editorial took a newspaper course in high school.

And through the years of the student newspaper, hundreds of students practiced their writing, design and photography skills. If it didn't entice students to the newspaper industry as a profession, it at least helped them become interested in current events. The course encouraged students to be involved in their high school community.

That's what newspapers do. And that's why they're so important.

Successful communities have good, local newspapers. So when we heard at the beginning of the 2016 school year there was no official newspaper course, but there were a few students who wanted to keep The Kernel alive, The Daily Republic jumped at the opportunity to help. Quite simply, we need good journalists from here until the end of time.

It was the students last year who did the majority of the work for the not-for-credit, monthly newspaper — our staff offered guidance, encouragement and ideas. A little extra work results in pride and satisfaction, they learned, and a good number of student awards were picked up along the way.

As the beginning of this school year approached, staffers at The Daily Republic again raised our hands to help a new batch of students organize a monthly high school paper. Sadly, the interest wasn't there.

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Today, we can't help but feel discouraged and disappointed to know a community of our size doesn't have a high school newspaper. We've heard this problem isn't exclusive to Mitchell, and the support for school newspapers is dwindling across South Dakota.

Remember, there will always be news to be delivered, government meetings covered and entertaining stories that deserve to be told.

As the Mitchell High School newspaper is now gone, it lends us to worry just a bit more about the number of journalists who bring us the ever-important news.

Drought in western North Dakota eases significantly

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Drought in western North Dakota has eased significantly over the past week.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor shows a reduction in extreme and exceptional drought from 19 percent to less than 4 percent, due to heavy rains. The northwestern corner of the state is the only area that remains in those categories of drought, which are the two worst.

Overall, 87 percent of North Dakota is in some stage of drought, down from 93 percent last week.

Seventy-two-percent of South Dakota is in some stage of drought, unchanged over the week. Areas in severe or extreme drought declined slightly, from 44 percent to 40 percent.

The federal Agriculture Department reports that South Dakota leads major-producing states in very poor to poor ratings for sorghum, corn and soybean crops.

Rapid City Rush names new president to oversee business

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man with experience with professional basketball, soccer and hockey has been named the new president of the Rapid City Rush hockey team.

Joe Macdonell has worked as an official with the NBA's then-New Jersey Nets and with New York and Chicago organizations in the MLS. Since 2010 he has been vice president of business operations for the USHL.

The Rush is the ECHL affiliate of the NHL's Minnesota Wild. Macdonell will be in charge of all business operations. He takes over for Joe Ferras, who left this summer to join the scouting department of the NHL's New Jersey Devils.

Brown County officials reject proposed hog farm expansion

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The Brown County Planning Commission has rejected the proposed expansion of a hog operation in the Bath area.

The American News reports that the group unanimously denied two necessary permits this week. The commission had tabled action on the request in March after some neighbors of the operation voiced concerns.

County Commission Chairwoman Rachel Kippley says the Wolff Family Genetics hog operation failed to get the approval of enough neighbors for the expansion to be allowed.

The hog farm can appeal to the full County Commission.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Pierre couple killed in interstate crash

MURDO, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol has identified two people killed in a weekend crash west of Murdo.

A couple from Pierre died when their pickup truck collided with a semi on Interstate 90 and caught fire. Authorities say the semi was eastbound, entered the median and traveled into the westbound lanes where the collision occurred Sunday.

Sixty-four-year-old Terrie Roede and 59-year-old Randy Roede were pronounced dead at the scene.

The driver of the semi wasn't injured.
The Highway Patrol is investigating the crash.

Kim fires off insults at Trump and hints at weapons test

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un lobbed a string of insults at President Donald Trump on Friday, calling him a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard" and hinting at frightening new weapons tests.

It was the first time for a North Korean leader to issue such a direct statement against a U.S. president, dramatically escalating the war of words between the former wartime foes and raising the international nuclear standoff to a new level.

Trump responded by tweeting that Kim is "obviously a madman who doesn't mind starving or killing his people."

In a lengthy statement carried by state media, Kim said Trump would "pay dearly" for his recent threat to destroy North Korea. He also called Trump "deranged" and "a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire."

Kim said his country will consider the "highest level of hard-line countermeasure in history," a possible indication of more powerful weapons tests on the horizon, but didn't elaborate.

His foreign minister, asked on a visit to New York to attend the U.N. General Assembly what the countermeasure would be, said his country may test a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean.

"I think it could be the most powerful detonation of an H-bomb in the Pacific," Ri Yong Ho said, according to South Korean TV. "We have no idea about what actions could be taken as it will be ordered by leader Kim Jong Un."

Kim's statement was unusual because it was written in the first person. North Korean state TV later showed a solemn-looking Kim, dressed in a gray Mao-style suit, reading the statement. South Korea's government said it was the first direct address to the world by any North Korean leader.

Some analysts saw a clear sign that North Korea will ramp up its already brisk pace of weapons testing, which has included missiles meant to target U.S. forces throughout Asia and on the U.S. mainland.

An H-bomb in the Pacific, if realized, would be considered a major provocation by Washington and its allies. North Korea has conducted six nuclear test explosions since 2006, all at its northeastern underground test site.

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera noted a Pacific test could mean a nuclear-armed missile flying over Japan. He said North Korea might conduct an H-bomb test with a medium-range or intercontinental ballistic missile, given its recent advances in missile and nuclear weapons development.

"We cannot deny the possibility it may fly over our country," he said.

Vipin Narang, a nuclear strategy expert at MIT, said such a test could pose a danger to shipping and aircraft, even if North Korea declares a keep-out zone.

"And if the test doesn't go according to plan, you could have population at risk, too," he said. "We are talking about putting a live nuclear warhead on a missile that has been tested only a handful of times. It is truly terrifying if something goes wrong."

North Korea was slapped with new, stiffer sanctions by the United Nations after its sixth and most powerful nuclear test on Sept. 3. In recent months, it has also launched a pair of still-developmental ICBMs it said were capable of striking the continental United States and two intermediate-range missiles that soared over Japanese territory.

North Korea says it needs to have a nuclear deterrent because the United States intends to invade it. Analysts say the North is likely to soon achieve its objective of possessing nuclear missiles capable of reaching any part of the U.S. homeland.

Kim's statement was in response to Trump's combative speech at the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday in which he mocked Kim as "Rocket Man" on a "suicide mission" and said that if "forced to defend itself

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or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea.”

Kim said Trump’s remarks “have convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is correct and that it is the one I have to follow to the last.” He also said he would “tame the mentally deranged U.S. dotard with fire.”

Hours before Kim’s statement, Trump announced stiffer new sanctions on North Korea as he met his South Korean and Japanese counterparts in New York.

“North Korea’s nuclear weapons and missile development is a grave threat to peace and security in our world and it is unacceptable that others financially support this criminal, rogue regime,” Trump said as he joined South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for lunch.

Trump’s executive order expanded the Treasury Department’s ability to target anyone conducting significant trade in goods, services or technology with North Korea, and to ban them from interacting with the U.S. financial system.

Trump also praised China for what he called an instruction to its banks to cut off business with North Korea. But a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said Trump’s announcement was “not consistent with the facts,” though he gave no indication what steps China might be taking.

“In principle, China has always implemented the U.N. Security Council’s resolutions in their entirety and fulfilled our due responsibility,” Lu Kang, the Chinese spokesman, told a regular briefing.

China, North Korea’s largest trading partner and last major diplomatic ally, has cut off imports of coal, iron ore, seafood and other goods from North Korea in line with U.N. sanctions.

The South Korean government, which has sought a dialogue with North Korea, called Kim’s statement a “reckless provocation” that would deepen the North’s international isolation and lead to its demise.

Associated Press writers Matthew Pennington at the United Nations and Kim Tong-hyung and Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul contributed to this report.

Trump piles on new economic sanctions against North Korea

By **MATTHEW PENNINGTON** and **JONATHAN LEMIRE**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump has added economic action to his fiery military threats against North Korea, and renewed his rhetorical offensive against Kim Jong Un on Friday, calling the reclusive leader “obviously a madman.”

Trump’s move to punish foreign companies that deal with the North was the latest salvo in a U.S.-led campaign to isolate and impoverish Kim’s government until his country halts its missile and nuclear tests. Trump announced the measures Thursday as he met leaders from South Korea and Japan, the nations most immediately imperiled by North Korea’s threats of a military strike.

“North Korea’s nuclear weapons and missile development is a grave threat to peace and security in our world and it is unacceptable that others financially support this criminal, rogue regime,” Trump said as he joined Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Moon Jae-in for lunch. “Tolerance for this disgraceful practice must end now.”

Hours later, Kim branded Trump as “deranged” and warned that he will “pay dearly” for his threat to “totally destroy” the North if it attacks. The rare statement from the North Korean leader responded to Trump’s combative speech days earlier where he not only issued the warning of potential obliteration for the isolated nation, but also mocked the North’s young autocrat as a “Rocket Man” on a “suicide mission.”

Returning insult with insult, Kim said Trump was “unfit to hold the prerogative of supreme command of a country.” He described the president as “a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire.” He characterized Trump’s speech to the world body on Tuesday as “mentally deranged behavior.”

The volley of insults continued Friday, as Trump sent out a predawn Twitter post berating Kim.

“Kim Jong Un of North Korea, who is obviously a madman who doesn’t mind starving or killing his people, will be tested like never before!” the president tweeted.

Trump’s executive order expanded the Treasury Department’s ability to target anyone conducting sig-

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nificant trade in goods, services or technology with North Korea, and to ban them from interacting with the U.S. financial system.

"Foreign financial institutions must choose between doing business with the United States or facilitating trade with North Korea or its designated supporters," the order says. It also issues a 180-day ban on vessels and aircraft that have visited North Korea from visiting the United States.

Trump also said China was imposing major banking sanctions, too, but there was no immediate confirmation from the North's most important trading partner. China's central bank would not take questions by phone Friday and did not immediately respond to a faxed request for comment.

Trump praised China for instructing its banks to cut off business with Pyongyang, but neither the Chinese nor Trump officials were ready to say so. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said he had spoken at length Thursday with the head of China's central bank but "I am not going to comment on confidential discussions."

If enforced, the Chinese action Trump described could severely impede the isolated North's ability to raise money for its missile and nuclear development. China, responsible for about 90 percent of North Korea's trade, serves as the country's conduit to the international banking system.

Trump said the China action he described "was a somewhat unexpected move and we appreciate it."

China remains leery of pressuring North Korea into collapse and has resisted cutting off its critical oil supplies, not wanting chaos on its border. Along with Russia, China wants the U.S. to seek dialogue with the North. American officials say the time isn't right for any formal diplomatic process. Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Thursday that negotiations are the "only way out" of the nuclear standoff.

Several news outlets this month have reported Chinese steps to restrict banking transactions, but the government hasn't made a formal announcement. Asked for comment last week, the Foreign Ministry said China has always fully implemented U.N. sanctions on North Korea but opposes "unilateral" restrictions imposed by another country on Chinese entities. China's embassy in Washington declined to comment Thursday.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

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Mexico shocked by news: Girl trapped in rubble didn't exist

By GISELA SALOMON and MARIA VERZA, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hour after excruciating hour, Mexicans were transfixed by dramatic efforts to reach a young girl thought buried in the rubble of a school destroyed by a magnitude 7.1 earthquake. She reportedly wiggled her fingers, told rescuers her name and said there were others trapped near her. Rescue workers called for tubes, pipes and other tools to reach her.

News media, officials and volunteer rescuers all repeated the story of "Frida Sofia" with a sense of urgency that made it a national drama, drawing attention away from other rescue efforts across the quake-stricken city and leaving people in Mexico and abroad glued to their television sets.

But she never existed, Mexican navy officials now say.

"We want to emphasize that we have no knowledge about the report that emerged with the name of a girl," navy Assistant Secretary Angel Enrique Sarmiento said Thursday. "We never had any knowledge about that report, and we do not believe — we are sure — it was not a reality."

Sarmiento said a camera lowered into the rubble of the Enrique Rebsamen school showed blood tracks where an injured person apparently dragged himself or herself, and the only person still listed as missing was a school employee. But it was just blood tracks — no fingers wiggling, no voice, no name. Several dead people have been removed from the rubble, and it could have been their fingers rescuers thought they saw move.

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Sarmiento later apologized for being so categorical, saying that if a person is still trapped it could be a child or an adult.

"The information existing at this moment doesn't allow us to say if it is an adult or a child," Sarmiento said. "As long as there is the slightest possibility of someone alive, we will continue searching with the same energy."

Twitter users quickly brought out the "Fake News" tag and complained that the widespread coverage had distracted attention from real rescue efforts where victims have been pulled from the rubble — something that hasn't happened at the school in at least a day.

Viewers across the country hung on the round-the-clock coverage of the drama Wednesday from the only network that was permitted to enter. The military, which ran the rescue operation, spoke directly only to the network's reporters inside the site.

The Associated Press and others reported about the search for the girl, based on interviews with rescue workers leaving the scene who believed it was true. The workers had been toiling through the night, and the chance of rescuing the girl appeared to give them hope and purpose despite their exhaustion.

Reports about the trapped girl led to the donations of cranes, support beams and power tools at the school site — pleas for help quickly met based on the urgency of rescuing children. It was unclear if that affected other rescue operations going on simultaneously at a half dozen other sites across the city.

Despite all the technology brought to bear at the school, including thermal imaging devices, sensors, scanners and remote cameras, the mistake may have come down to a few over-enthusiastic rescuers who, one-by one, crawled into the bottom of shafts tunneled into the rubble looking for any signs of life.

"I don't think there was bad faith involved," security analyst Alejandro Hope said. "You want to believe there are children still alive down there."

Rescuers interviewed by the AP late Wednesday at a barricade that blocked most journalists from reaching the site believed the story of the girl implicitly. Operating on little sleep and relying on donated food and tools, rescuers were emotionally wedded to the story, and the adrenaline it provided may have been the only thing keeping them going.

Rescue worker Raul Rodrigo Hernandez Ayala came out from the site Wednesday night and said that "the girl is alive, she has vital signs," and that five more children had been located alive. "There is a basement where they found children."

Despite the setback — and the diminishing hopes that anyone was left under the rubble — rescuers appeared unwilling to question the effort.

"It was a confusion," said Alfredo Padilla, a volunteer rescuer at the school. "The important thing is there are signs of life and we are working on that."

In retrospect, the story of "Frida Sofia," had some suspicious points from the start.

Officials couldn't locate any relatives of the missing girl, and no girl with that name attended the school. Rescuers said they were still separated from her by yards of rubble, but could somehow still hear her.

It could have political repercussions: Education Secretary Aurelio Nuno, often mentioned as a possible presidential candidate, had repeated the story about the girl.

Hope noted "something similar happened in 1985," referring to the magnitude 8.0 quake that killed 9,500 people.

Media quickly reported that a 9-year-old boy had been located in the rubble days after the Sept. 19 quake 32 years ago. Rescuers mobilized in a huge effort to find the boy, but he apparently never existed.

"That generated anger against those who had spread the story," Hope said.

China: Trump bank ban statement 'not consistent' with facts

BEIJING (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement that Beijing told its banks to stop dealing with North Korea is "not consistent with the facts," a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said Friday, but he gave no indication what steps China might be taking.

The spokesman, Lu Kang, said Beijing complies with U.N. Security Council resolutions. The council has

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told member countries to ban most activity abroad by North Korea's banks in response to its nuclear and missile tests.

Asked at a regular briefing about Trump's comment, Lu said, "As far as I know, what you have mentioned just now is not consistent with the facts."

Lu gave no explanation but added, "in principle, China has always implemented the U.N. Security Council's resolutions in their entirety and fulfilled our due responsibility."

China wants to stop North Korea's nuclear and missile development but has warned against pushing the government of Kim Jong Un so hard it collapses or hurting ordinary North Koreans.

China accounts for about 90 percent of North Korea's foreign trade. Beijing has cut off imports of coal, iron ore, seafood and other goods in line with U.N. sanctions.

Trump praised China on Thursday for what he said was instructions to its banks to cut off business with North Korea. He said the action "was a somewhat unexpected move and we appreciate it."

U.S. officials would not confirm that. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said he spoke at length with the head of China's central bank but "I am not going to comment on confidential discussions."

The Chinese central bank would not take questions by phone and did not immediately respond to a faxed request for comment.

Also Thursday, Trump issued an executive order expanding the Treasury Department's ability to target anyone conducting significant trade in goods, services or technology with North Korea and to ban them from the U.S. financial system.

It imposes a 180-day ban on vessels and aircraft that have visited North Korea from visiting the United States.

Trump announced the measures as he met the leaders of South Korea and Japan, the nations most immediately imperiled by North Korea's threats of a military strike.

Search for Mexico quake survivors enters day 4, some success

By GISELA SALOMON and MARIA VERZA, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Survivors are still being pulled from rubble in Mexico City as rescue operations stretch into a fourth day Friday, spurring hope among desperate relatives gathered at the sites of buildings collapsed by a magnitude 7.1 earthquake.

Mexico's federal police said several people were lifted out of the debris of two buildings Thursday. Rescuers removed or broke through slabs until they found cracks that allowed workers to wiggle through to reach the victims, then lift them to safety. The city government said 60 people in all had been rescued since the quake hit at midday Tuesday.

Still, with the hours passing, fewer of the living were being found, and the official death toll rose to 273 in Mexico City and several nearby states, with 137 in the capital.

The time was nearing when rescuers would be replaced by bulldozers to clear rubble, but officials went to great pains to say it was still a rescue operation.

The federal civil defense director, Luis Felipe Puente, acknowledged that backhoes and bulldozers were starting to clear away some wrecked buildings where no one had been detected or where teetering piles of rubble threatened to collapse on neighboring structures.

"It is false that we are demolishing structures where there could be survivors," Puente said. "The rescue operations will continue, and they won't stop."

Those who witnessed the buildings collapse said the tragedy could have been much worse. Some buildings didn't fall immediately, giving people time to escape, and some shattered but left airspaces where occupants survived.

In other cases, the salvation seemed almost miraculous.

Security guard Felix Giral Barron said that after the quake started, he had time to run and tell people to evacuate his building. Then an entire apartment building across the street crumbled and a big tank of heating gas on its slid off, but didn't explode.

"The 550-pound (250-kilogram) gas tank got caught by the trees on the street, and that prevented it

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from exploding," he said.

What was not miraculous was the disappearance of one of the most dearly held hopes, the belief that a small girl trapped in a collapsed school had been contacted by rescuers.

Since early Wednesday, the nation's attention had been glued to the search for her in the rubble of the school in southern Mexico City. Rescuers told reporters that a girl, identified only as Frida Sofia, had signaled she was alive deep in the rubble by wiggling her fingers. Rescuers said they even spoke with her.

The child became a symbol of hope, but no family members came forward to identify the girl, and officials said no girl by that name was registered at the school.

On Thursday afternoon, navy Assistant Secretary Enrique Sarmiento announced that while there were blood traces and other signs suggesting someone could be alive beneath the school, all its children had been accounted for.

"We have done an accounting with school officials and we are certain that all the children either died, unfortunately, are in hospitals or are safe at their homes," Sarmiento said.

He said 11 children had been rescued and 19 had died, along with six adults, including a school employee whose body was recovered just before dawn Thursday.

"We want to emphasize that we have no knowledge about the report that emerged with the name of a girl," Sarmiento added. "We do not believe — we are sure — it was not a reality."

In fact, he said, the only trace rescuers had were images from a camera lowered into the rubble that showed blood tracks where an injured person apparently dragged himself or herself.

Sarmiento said the only person still listed as missing was a school employee. But it was just blood tracks — no fingers wiggling, no voice, no name. Several dead people have been removed from the rubble, and it could have been their fingers rescuers thought they saw move.

Sarmiento later apologized for being so categorical, saying if anyone was still trapped could be a child or an adult.

"The information existing at this moment doesn't allow us to say if it is an adult or a child," Sarmiento said. "As long as there is the slightest possibility of someone alive, we will continue search with the same energy."

Alfredo Padilla, a volunteer rescuer at the school, played down the importance of the revelation that there was no trapped child.

"It was a confusion," Padilla said. "The important thing is there are signs of life and we are working on that."

And hope burned on.

Outside a collapsed office building in the trendy Roma Norte district, a list of those rescued was strung between two trees. Relatives of the missing compared it against their own list of those who were in the building when the quake struck — more than two dozen names — kept in a spiral notebook.

Maria del Carmen Fernandez's 27-year-old nephew, Ivan Colin Fernandez, worked as an accountant in the seven-story building, which pancaked to the ground, taking part of the building next door with it.

She said the last time the family got an update was late Wednesday, when officials said about 14 people were believed to be alive inside. Three people have been rescued from the building since the quake.

"They should keep us informed, because I think what kills us most is the desperation of not knowing anything," Fernandez said as her sister, the missing man's mother, wept into her black fleece sweater.

Referring to rumors that authorities intended to bring in heavy machinery that could risk bringing buildings down on anyone still alive inside, Fernandez said: "That seems unjust to us because there are still people alive inside and that's not OK."

"I think they should wait until they take the last one out," she said.

Associated Press writer Mark Stevenson contributed to this report.

Puerto Rico faces weeks without electricity after Maria

By DANICA COTO, Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — The eye of Hurricane Maria was nearing the Turks and Caicos early Friday as Puerto Rico sought to recover from the storm's devastation.

Two days after Maria ravaged Puerto Rico, flooding towns, crushing homes and killing at least two people, millions on the island faced the dispiriting prospect of weeks and perhaps months without electricity. The storm knocked out the entire grid across the U.S. territory of 3.4 million, leaving many without power.

The loss of power left residents hunting for gas canisters for cooking, collecting rainwater or steeling themselves mentally for the hardships to come in the tropical heat. Some contemplated leaving the island.

"You cannot live here without power," said Hector Llanos, a 78-year-old retired New York police officer who planned to leave Saturday for the U.S. mainland to live there temporarily.

Like many Puerto Ricans, Llanos does not have a generator or gas stove. "The only thing I have is a flashlight," he said, shaking his head. "This is never going to return to normal."

Maria's death toll across the Caribbean, meanwhile, climbed to at least 19, nearly all of them on the hard-hit island of Dominica. In Puerto Rico, the government said at least two were killed but media on the island were reporting additional deaths and the actual toll appeared unlikely to be known for days.

As of Friday morning, Maria was moving near the Turks and Caicos with winds of 125 mph (205 kph). The storm was expected to move near or just east of the Turks and Caicos and the southeastern Bahamas on Friday. From there, it is expected to veer into the open Atlantic, no threat to the U.S. mainland. Maria was also expected to weaken over the next two days.

In Puerto Rico, the grid was in sorry shape long before Maria — and Hurricane Irma two weeks ago — struck.

The territory's \$73 billion debt crisis has left agencies like the state power company broke. It abandoned most basic maintenance in recent years, leaving the island subject to regular blackouts.

"We knew this was going to happen given the vulnerable infrastructure," Gov. Ricardo Rossello said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency said it would open an air bridge from the mainland on Friday, with three to four military planes flying to the island every day carrying water, food, generators and temporary shelters.

"There's a humanitarian emergency here in Puerto Rico," Rossello said. "This is an event without precedent."

He said his administration was trying to open ports soon to receive shipments of food, water, generators, cots and other supplies.

The government has hired 56 small contractors to clear trees and put up new power lines and poles and will be sending tanker trucks to supply neighborhoods as they run out of water. The entire island has been declared a federal disaster zone.

Mike Hyland, senior vice president of engineering services for the American Public Power Association, a utility industry group that is sending repair crews into the Caribbean, refused to speculate on how long it would take to restore power in Puerto Rico.

"Let's see what the facts tell us by the end of the weekend," he said. But he acknowledged: "This is going to be a tall lift."

Maribel Montilla already had two large barrels filled with water but worried about how long it would last for her, her daughter, her son-in-law and six grandchildren.

"You know what I think? We're going to be without power for six months now," she said.

Cellphone and internet service collapsed in much of Puerto Rico. The only radio station that remained on the air during the hurricane — WAPA 680 AM — was relaying messages to help connect friends and families.

Other concerns were more prosaic. Across the street, someone yelled at a neighbor, "Listen, do you have Netflix?!"

Jaime Rullan, a sports commentator, has a gas stove at home but tried not to think about the lack of air conditioning on an island where the heat index has surpassed 100 degrees (37 Celsius) in recent days.

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"We're used to the lights going out because of storms here in Puerto Rico, but this time, we're worried," he said. "We should prepare ourselves mentally to be at least a month without power."

Deysi Rodriguez, a 46-year-old caretaker for elderly people, does not have a gas stove. And unlike others who have been lining up at the few fast-food restaurants that have reopened, Rodriguez is a diabetic and has to be more careful about what she eats.

Rodriguez said she might temporarily move to New Jersey if the situation gets worse.

Pedro Cartagena, a 57-year-old dock supervisor, said he planned to shower, eat and sleep at his company's office. He plans to buy food at the few restaurants that are open and operating on generators.

"That's going to drain my bank account," he said, "but if I want to eat, that's my only option."

In an upscale neighborhood in San Juan, 69-year-old retiree Annie Mattei's condominium has a generator. But she said maintenance will shut it off between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. to save fuel.

"This has been devastating," she said as her eyes welled with tears.

In the Dominican Republic, Maria knocked down trees and power lines. But Joel Santos, president of the country's hotel association, said the hurricane did not damage the tourism infrastructure, even though it passed close to Punta Cana, the major resort area on the eastern tip of the island.

In Dominica, where Maria laid waste to hundreds of homes and was blamed for at least 15 deaths, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit wept as he spoke to a reporter on the nearby island of Antigua.

"It is a miracle there were not hundreds of deaths," he said. He added: "Dominica is going to need all the help the world has to offer."

Kim Jong Un: 'Deranged' Trump will 'pay dearly' for threat

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, in an extraordinary and direct rebuke, called President Donald Trump "deranged" and said he will "pay dearly" for his threats, a possible indication of more powerful weapons tests on the horizon.

Hours later, North Korea's foreign minister reportedly said his country may test a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean to fulfill Kim's vow to take the "highest-level" action against the United States.

Kim, in his statement, said Trump is "unfit to hold the prerogative of supreme command of a country." He also described the U.S. president as "a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire."

The dispatch was unusual in that it was written in the first person, albeit filtered through the North's state media, which are part of propaganda efforts meant to glorify Kim. South Korea's government said it was the first such direct address to the world by any North Korean leader.

Some analysts saw a clear sign that North Korea would ramp up its already brisk pace of weapons testing, which has included missiles meant to target U.S. forces throughout Asia and the U.S. mainland.

"I will make the man holding the prerogative of the supreme command in the U.S. pay dearly for his speech calling for totally destroying the DPRK," said the statement carried by North's official Korean Central News Agency on Friday morning.

DPRK is the abbreviation of the country's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho told reporters on the sidelines of a United Nations gathering that his country's response "could be the most powerful detonation of an H-bomb in the Pacific," according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

Ri reportedly added that "We have no idea about what actions could be taken as it will be ordered by leader Kim Jong Un."

Such a test would be considered a major provocation by Washington and its allies.

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera noted such a test could mean a nuclear-armed missile flying over Japan. He said North Korea might conduct an H-bomb test with a medium-range or intercontinental ballistic missile, given its recent advances in missile and nuclear weapons development.

"We cannot deny the possibility it may fly over our country," he said.

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Vipin Narang, a nuclear strategy expert at MIT, said that such a test could pose a danger to shipping and aircraft, even if the North declared a keep-out zone.

"And if the test doesn't go according to plan, you could have population at risk, too," he said. "We are talking about putting a live nuclear warhead on a missile that has been tested only a handful of times. It is truly terrifying if something goes wrong."

The statement by Kim Jong Un responded to Trump's combative speech at the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday where he mocked Kim as a "Rocket Man" on a "suicide mission," and said that if "forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea."

Kim characterized Trump's speech to the world body as "unprecedented rude nonsense."

He said Trump's remarks "have convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is correct and that it is the one I have to follow to the last."

Kim said he is "thinking hard" about his response and that he would "tame the mentally deranged U. S. dotard with fire."

Kim Dong-yub, a former South Korean military official who is now an analyst at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, said Kim Jong Un's statement indicated that North Korea will respond to Trump with its most aggressive missile test yet. That might include firing a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile over Japan to a range of around 7,000 kilometers (4,349 miles) to display a capability to reach Hawaii or Alaska.

The statement will further escalate the war of words between the adversaries as the North moves closer to perfecting a nuclear-tipped missile that could strike America.

In recent months, the North has launched a pair of still-developmental ICBMs it said were capable of striking the continental United States and a pair of intermediate-range missiles that soared over Japanese territory. Earlier this month, North Korea conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test to date drawing stiffer U.N. sanctions.

South Korea called Kim Jong Un's rebuke a "reckless provocation" that would deepen his country's international isolation and lead to its demise.

South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman Baik Tae-hyun told reporters Friday that North Korea must immediately stop such provocations and return to talks on nuclear disarmament.

Associated Press writers Matthew Pennington at the United Nations and Kim Tong-hyung and Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul contributed to this report.

AP FACT CHECK: Kimmel's take on health care harder to refute

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Who's right — President Donald Trump and Sen. Bill Cassidy, or late-night host Jimmy Kimmel?

None has really captured the complexity of the debate over who might lose insurance protections in the latest Republican health care bill. But of the three, the TV guy is the hardest to refute.

Trump insists in a tweet that the bill covers pre-existing conditions, a point also made by Cassidy, a sponsor of the legislation. But there's a catch. It allows states to get a waiver from "Obamacare" requirements that insurers charge the same to people with health problems as they do to healthy people.

The potential result: unaffordable premiums for people in poor health.

Here's a look at Trump's assertion, the facts and the Kimmel-Cassidy feud:

TRUMP: "I would not sign Graham-Cassidy if it did not include coverage of pre-existing conditions. It does! A great Bill. Repeal & Replace."

THE FACTS: Such coverage may be included but it's far from assured.

The health care law enacted by President Barack Obama in 2010 offers two levels of protection for people with pre-existing conditions. The GOP bill would allow states to undermine one of them. That loophole could lead to policies priced out of reach.

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To start with, "Obamacare" requires insurers to take all customers, regardless of health problems. On top of that, it prohibits insurers from charging more on account of medical conditions.

Under the GOP bill moving toward a Senate vote next week, insurers would still be required to accept people with pre-existing conditions. But here's where the catch comes in:

States could seek waivers that allow insurers to charge people more on account of health problems. That would allow insurers to offer lower-premium plans to healthier customers.

And states could also get waivers that allow insurers to tailor benefits so that people with costly conditions are discouraged from signing up. For example: plans that don't cover treatment for substance abuse problems.

"If I was a person with a pre-existing condition, I would say I don't have any guarantee of getting health insurance if the bill passes," said Gary Claxton of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation, an expert on the private health insurance system.

"Insurers can charge people with pre-existing conditions much higher rates, making it essentially a denial," added Claxton.

Dr. Michael Munger of Kansas City, Kansas, estimates that 4 in 10 of the patients in his family medicine practice have some sort of condition that could result in higher premiums.

"Individuals that I care for have had a previous cancer diagnosis, underlying diabetes complications, previous heart attacks and heart surgeries," he said. "I am very worried about affordable coverage. We have had a lot of gains and this is certainly something I don't want us to go backward on."

Munger is president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, which is among the major doctors' groups opposing the GOP legislation.

Supporters of the bill, named for its chief sponsors Sens. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Louisiana's Cassidy, point out that the legislative text says states seeking federal waivers must explain how they will "maintain access to adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions."

But Claxton says there's nothing in the text to define what "adequate and affordable" means and, as he reads it, it's unclear if the federal government would even have authority to deny a state waiver application. The bill also reduces federal money, adding to the pressures on states.

The health insurance industry is on record saying the bill would create problems by "pulling back on protections for pre-existing conditions," according to a letter to lawmakers from the trade group America's Health Insurance Plans.

Cassidy is in a public battle with TV host Kimmel about whether the bill meets the "Jimmy Kimmel test." That's a phrase coined by the senator this year after Kimmel gave a heartfelt account of how his infant son got surgery to correct a birth defect, and declared that all American families should have access to high-level care.

Kimmel says the senator should stop using his name. "This new bill actually does pass the Jimmy Kimmel test, but a different Jimmy Kimmel test," said Kimmel. "Your child with a pre-existing condition will get the care he needs if, and only if, his father is Jimmy Kimmel."

Cassidy says Kimmel doesn't understand the legislation.

Kimmel's critique goes to the core of the issue. But it's more nuanced than either he or Cassidy acknowledge, says insurance industry consultant and blogger Robert Laszewski. He points out that governors and legislatures would have to take action to weaken insurance protections guaranteed in federal law under Obama. Those state lawmakers would face pushback from consumers and medical groups, so it's not a given that such protections would be lost.

Nonetheless, Laszewski says Republicans have created a problem for their legislation.

"I think they made a huge mistake by leaving a crack open," said Laszewski. "And Jimmy Kimmel and the Democrats are going to try to drive a truck through it."

After humdrum German campaign, Merkel hopes for fourth term

By DAVID RISING, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Chancellor Angela Merkel appears all but certain to win a fourth term when Germans vote Sunday after a humdrum campaign produced few divisive issues but saw smaller parties gain support — including the nationalist, anti-migration Alternative for Germany, which is set to become the most right-wing party in parliament for 60 years.

Merkel, already chancellor for 12 years, has run a low-key campaign emphasizing the country's sinking unemployment, strong economic growth, balanced budget and overall stability in a volatile world.

Pre-election polls give her conservative Union bloc a lead of 13 to 17 points over the center-left Social Democrats of her challenger, Martin Schulz. The two are traditional rivals but have governed together in a "grand coalition" of the biggest parties for the past four years.

Schulz returned to German politics in January after years as the European Parliament's president. He has struggled to gain traction with a campaign that centered on righting perceived economic injustices for Germany's have-nots. It's also been difficult for him to carve out clear differences with the conservatives.

Merkel offered Germans "a combination of the experience of recent years, in which we have achieved plenty, and curiosity for the new" during the pair's only head-to-head debate of the campaign.

Merkel is pledging to get from Germany's current 5.7 percent unemployment rate — down from 11 percent when she took office in 2005 — to "full employment" by 2025. She pledges limited tax cuts and to keep Germany's borrowing at zero.

And she offers a steady hand internationally, with long experience of European Union negotiating marathons, tough talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and now of engaging cautiously with President Donald Trump.

Polls suggest that Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and their Bavaria-only allies, the Christian Social Union, will come in a few points short of the 41.5 percent support they had in 2013 — Merkel's best result yet. They put Schulz's Social Democrats around or below the 23 percent they won in their worst showing yet in post-World War II Germany, in 2009.

Hans Kundnani, an expert at the German Marshall Fund think-tank, said it's a "foregone conclusion" that Merkel will be the next chancellor.

The difficult part may be forming a new government. Merkel can hope for a narrow majority for a center-right coalition with the pro-business Free Democrats, with whom she ran Germany from 2009 to 2013, or the traditionally left-leaning Greens.

More likely is a result that leaves her either seeking an untried coalition with both those parties, or another "grand coalition" with the Social Democrats. The latter party has pledged to ballot its membership on any coalition deal, which could be tricky if it performs very badly.

A government with the Free Democrats aboard might take a tougher stance on efforts to reform the eurozone and bail out strugglers. The Greens want a faster transition away from gas and diesel cars and a wealth tax on the rich — neither of which the conservatives are likely to swallow.

The junior partners, whoever they are, will have "limited influence over the overall direction of policy," Kundnani wrote in an analysis. He added that "in so far as differences exist between the four parties that could become part of the government, they are a matter of details and nuances."

Polls show four parties competing for third place, with support between 7 and 12 percent: the Free Democrats, who look set to return to parliament after a four-year absence; the Greens, the Left Party and Alternative for Germany, or AfD.

AfD has swung right since it narrowly missed entering parliament in 2013. It has been helped by shrill opposition to Merkel's decision to allow in large numbers of refugees and other migrants in 2015.

Many of Merkel's campaign appearances have been marked by loud heckling from pro-nationalist demonstrators. "This is a kind of intolerance that is very, very difficult," Merkel said recently.

It remains to be seen just how strong AfD's appeal to protest voters dissatisfied with other parties is. If there's another "grand coalition," a third-place finish would make it the opposition leader in the next

parliament — a prospect many in Germany view with distaste.

Merkel has regained ground over the past year after gradually shifting to a more restrictive stance on migrants, stressing the need to deport those who have no right to stay and to prevent so-called “economic migrants” from Africa and the Balkans from coming.

But she has kept her focus firmly on the center ground, long a secret of her success.

Over the years, she has dropped military conscription, accelerated Germany’s exit from nuclear power, embraced the Social Democrats’ demand for a national minimum wage and, in June, cleared the way for parliament to legalize same-sex marriage. That deprived liberal rivals of one awkward issue before campaigning even began.

Schulz says he still hopes to win over undecided voters, arguing that Merkel has no vision for the future. “There is someone who wants to administer the past. She is called Angela Merkel,” he said recently. “And there is someone who wants to shape the future. He is called Martin Schulz.”

After Equifax, public shaming but GOP wary of new rules

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Prospects are good for a public shaming in the Equifax data breach, but it’s unlikely Congress will institute sweeping new regulations after hackers accessed the personal information of an estimated 143 million Americans.

Since early this year, President Donald Trump and the Republican-led Congress have strived to curb government’s influence on businesses, arguing that regulations stifle economic growth. Lawmakers have repealed more than a dozen Obama-era rules and the House voted in June to roll back much of Dodd-Frank, the landmark banking law created after the 2008 economic crisis that was designed to prevent future meltdowns.

Several bills unveiled after Equifax are so far missing a key ingredient for success: Republican co-sponsors.

And most important, there is history. Despite numerous high-profile security breaches over the past decade at companies such as Target, Yahoo, Neiman Marcus and Home Depot, legislation that would toughen standards for storing customer data has failed to gain the necessary traction.

Jessica Rich, a vice president at Consumers Union, said she has questioned over the years what event it would take for lawmakers to impose tougher data security regulations.

“I’m hoping this is the final wake-up call for Congress,” Rich said.

Advocacy groups seek legislation that would enhance the standards for companies that store consumer data and require prompt notification to affected Americans when breaches do occur. But, so far, Congress has opted to let states handle the issue.

“Lawmakers have got to plug the loopholes in current law, and we need tough civil penalties for those who break the law,” Rich said.

Senate and House Republicans say they are in fact-gathering mode before moving on any legislation. Separate hearings are scheduled the first week in October, with Equifax Chairman and CEO Richard Smith slated to testify — and likely to get a public thrashing from lawmakers.

Rep. Greg Walden, the Republican chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said he’s not ruling out new regulations as a result of the data breach at the credit agency, “but first we’ve got to get the facts.”

Democrats will be watching closely.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., described the Equifax breach as a test, asking on the Senate floor will “we act quickly to protect American consumers, or are we going to cave in to firms like Equifax who have spent millions of dollars lobbying to Congress for weaker rules?”

Democrats have introduced several bills. One would require credit reporting companies to place a freeze on a consumer’s credit report without charge if that company is hacked. Currently, all 50 states have laws allowing consumers to place a security freeze on their credit report, but the freeze often comes with a fee.

Chi Chi Wu, an attorney at the National Consumer Law Center, said such freezes are the single most

important step consumers can take to prevent new accounts from being opened in their name.

Democrats are also using the Equifax breach to reprise more longstanding concerns about the work of credit reporting companies like Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.

Rep. Steve Cohen of Tennessee and 30 Democratic co-sponsors are backing legislation that would protect prospective employees from being forced to disclose their credit history as part of a job application process.

Wu said credit checks are used as warning flags about potential employees.

"A lot of people have impaired credit, black marks on their credit report because something bad happened to them," Wu said. "It was not because they were bad or irresponsible people. They were unlucky."

Meanwhile, Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., is taking another crack at legislation designed to help consumers correct entries in their credit report.

Under her bill, creditors who send negative information to a reporting agency must also give a heads-up to the consumer. Credit reporting companies would also have to dedicate sufficient resources to handling consumers' appeals. The appeals staff would have to meet minimum training and certification requirements.

Waters' bill would also reduce the time that most adverse credit information may remain on reports. The time period would drop from seven to four years.

The bill reflects consumer angst about the information on their credit report. Last year, Americans submitted about 54,000 complaints with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau about credit reporting issues. Three-quarters of those complaints alleged incorrect information in credit reports.

Even if the Equifax breach fails to bring about the passage of new legislation, it has scuttled one bill in the works. On the day of Equifax's announcement, a House subcommittee examined legislation that would have decreased the potential consequences when consumer reporting agencies falsely malign someone. Such mistakes can haunt consumers for years.

The bill would have eliminated punitive damages for violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Barry Loudermilk, R-Ga., said the legislation was aimed at curbing frivolous lawsuits and would not have granted any immunity to Equifax for the data breach. "Nevertheless, given the unfounded attacks on me and the rampant misinformation circulating about this legislation, the Financial Services Committee has not scheduled further action on any bill at this time."

Wu, who testified against Loudermilk's bill, said she believes that legislation providing for the free credit freeze probably has the best chance of passage.

"I'm skeptical this particular Congress will be up for wholesale reform," Wu said.

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5 things to know about N. Korean leader's rebuke of Trump

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — On the surface it seems like more of the same: North Korea responds to another threat by U.S. President Donald Trump by calling him a "deranged" old man who will "pay dearly" for his insults.

These words, however, carry the weight of an unprecedented personal rebuke from North Korea's supreme leader, Kim Jong Un.

Behind Kim's colorful language released Friday is a remarkable window into the thinking — albeit filtered through state media — of the leader of a country that, despite opposition by the world's sole superpower, stands on the brink of nuclear weapons mastery.

Here are five things to know about Kim Jong Un's statement:

HE'S BREAKING GROUND

It was written in the first person, and issued directly to the international community generally and to Trump specifically.

Seoul's Unification Ministry, which is responsible for North-South relations, said it was the first time a

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North Korean leader had addressed the world with such a direct statement.

The ministry said neither of the two men to rule North Korea before Kim Jong Un — his father, Kim Jong Il, and his grandfather, national founder Kim Il Sung — issued any similar statements.

It could be that Kim felt that a direct, personal response was crucial because of the harshness of Trump's comments. The U.S. president vowed to unleash "fire and fury" on North Korea, used the nickname "Rocket Man" for Kim, and at the U.N. on Tuesday threatened to "totally destroy" the North if provoked.

HE'S ISSUING A WARNING

The statement suggests more powerful weapons tests are in the works.

North Korea's foreign minister seemed to confirm this on the sidelines of a global U.N. meeting in New York, telling reporters that Kim's comments could mean that North Korea will conduct an H-bomb test in the Pacific, according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

Ri Yong Ho added that no one knows for sure, and Kim would make any decisions on such a test, which would be viewed as massively provocative by Washington.

Analysts in Seoul also saw the statement as a warning that more tests, possibly of the country's developmental intercontinental ballistic missiles, should be expected.

HE'S PLAYING THE STATESMAN

Believe it or not, Kim's statement actually used gentler language than his propaganda specialists have favored in the past.

Granted, he called Trump a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard" (a word to describe a fragile elderly person) and a "frightened dog."

But this is a far cry from North Korea at its worst.

North Korea has previously embraced racist, sexist and just plain rude statements about its enemies. It repeatedly called one past South Korean leader "rat faced." It has said that the South's first female president, Park Geun-hye, was a "crafty prostitute" and suggested ex-President Barack Obama was her pimp. It also called Obama a "monkey."

Trump will surely not appreciate the language, but it's a far cry from North Korean anger at full force. That suggests Kim could be trying to take a more statesmanlike path than his state media.

HE FEELS JUSTIFIED

Kim says Trump's threats only emphasize that North Korea has been justified in its pursuit of nuclear missiles.

North Korea has long said that its weapons tests are necessary because of U.S. hostility, which for Pyongyang includes the nearly 80,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan and South Korea.

Each Trump threat plays into this narrative.

Here's the key line in Kim's argument: "His (Trump's) remarks which described the U.S. option through straightforward expression of his will have convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is correct and that it is the one I have to follow to the last."

HE'S INSULTED

Kim seemed to take umbrage that Trump was personally insulting him. After all, he typically leaves the threats to his propaganda mavens and lower-level officials.

Kim essentially says that he expected better of Trump. Because the U.S. president was speaking publicly on the world stage at the U.N., Kim thought he'd resort to "stereo-typed, prepared remarks a little different from what he used to utter in his office on the spur of the moment."

"But, far from making remarks of any persuasive power that can be viewed to be helpful to defusing tension, he made unprecedented rude nonsense one has never heard from any of his predecessors," Kim continued.

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Kim offered some unsolicited advice to Trump as well. He advised the president "to exercise prudence in selecting words and to be considerate of whom he speaks to when making a speech in front of the world."

He added that "Trump has denied the existence of and insulted me and my country in front of the eyes of the world."

In a country where Kim's word is law, the message seems clear: This will not stand.

US beefs up NKorea sanctions, Kim Jong Un insults Trump

By **MATTHEW PENNINGTON** and **JONATHAN LEMIRE**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump added economic action to his fiery military threats against North Korea on Thursday, authorizing stiffer new sanctions in response to the Koreans' nuclear weapons advances. Its leader Kim Jong Un issued a rare statement, branding Trump as "deranged" and warning he will "pay dearly" for his threat to "totally destroy" the North if it attacks.

The exchange of super-heated rhetoric and unusually personal abuse between the adversaries will escalate tensions that have been mounting as North Korea has marched closer to achieving a nuclear-tipped missile that could strike America. The crisis has dominated the Trump's debut at this week's annual U.N. General Assembly meeting.

Kim's statement, carried by North Korea's official news agency in a dispatch from Pyongyang early Friday, responded to Trump's combative speech days earlier where he not only issued the warning of potential obliteration for the isolated nation, but also mocked the North's young autocrat as a "Rocket Man" on a "suicide mission."

Kim offered choice insults of his own.

He said Trump was "unfit to hold the prerogative of supreme command of a country." He described the president as "a rogue and a gangster fond of playing with fire." He characterized Trump's speech to the world body on Tuesday as "mentally deranged behavior."

"I will make the man holding the prerogative of the supreme command in the U.S. pay dearly for his speech calling for totally destroying the DPRK," said the statement carried by Korean Central News Agency.

DPRK is the abbreviation of the communist country's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

There was no immediate response from the White House.

On Thursday in New York, Trump announced the latest steps to punish foreign companies that deal with the North. It was the latest salvo in a U.S.-led campaign to isolate and impoverish Kim's government until it halts the missile and nuclear tests. He announced the measures as he met leaders from South Korea and Japan, the nations most immediately imperiled by North Korea's threats of a military strike.

"North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile development is a grave threat to peace and security in our world and it is unacceptable that others financially support this criminal, rogue regime," Trump said as he joined Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Moon Jae-in for lunch. "Tolerance for this disgraceful practice must end now."

His executive order expanded the Treasury Department's ability to target anyone conducting significant trade in goods, services or technology with North Korea, and to ban them from interacting with the U.S. financial system.

"Foreign financial institutions must choose between doing business with the United States or facilitating trade with North Korea or its designated supporters," the order says. It also issues a 180-day ban on vessels and aircraft that have visited North Korea from visiting the United States.

Trump also said China was imposing major banking sanctions, too, but there was no immediate confirmation from the North's most important trading partner. China's central bank would not take questions by phone Friday and did not immediately respond to a faxed request for comment.

Trump praised China for instructing its banks to cut off business with Pyongyang, but neither the Chinese nor Trump officials were ready to say so. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said he had spoken at length Thursday with the head of China's central bank but "I am not going to comment on confidential discussions."

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If enforced, the Chinese action Trump described could severely impede the isolated North's ability to raise money for its missile and nuclear development. China, responsible for about 90 percent of North Korea's trade, serves as the country's conduit to the international banking system.

Trump said the China action he described "was a somewhat unexpected move and we appreciate it."

China remains leery of pressuring North Korea into collapse and has resisted cutting off its critical oil supplies, not wanting chaos on its border. Along with Russia, China wants the U.S. to seek dialogue with the North. American officials say the time isn't right for any formal diplomatic process. Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Thursday that negotiations are the "only way out" of the nuclear standoff.

Several news outlets this month have reported Chinese steps to restrict banking transactions, but the government hasn't made a formal announcement. Asked for comment last week, the Foreign Ministry said China has always fully implemented U.N. sanctions on North Korea but opposes "unilateral" restrictions imposed by another country on Chinese entities. China's embassy in Washington declined to comment Thursday.

The focus on economic measures by Washington had at least temporarily shifted focus from the talk of military action that has caused unease, even among U.S. allies. In his speech to the U.N. on Tuesday, Trump spoke of his own nation's patience, but said that if "forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea."

Trump's messengers backed him up in television appearances Thursday. Vice President Mike Pence told Fox News: "We do not desire a military conflict. But the president has made it very clear, as he did at the U.N. this week, that all options are on the table and we are simply not going to tolerate a rogue regime in Pyongyang obtaining usable nuclear weapons that could be mounted on a ballistic missile and threaten the people of the United States or our allies."

Trump's heated language was rare for a U.S. president at the rostrum of the United Nations. But the speech was textbook Trump, dividing the globe into friends and foes and taking unflinching aim at America's enemies.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

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Aaron Hernandez had severe CTE; daughter sues NFL, Pats

By JIMMY GOLEN, AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Former New England Patriots star Aaron Hernandez had a severe case of the degenerative brain disease chronic traumatic encephalopathy, researchers said on Thursday. His lawyer announced a lawsuit against the NFL and the team, accusing them of hiding the true dangers of the sport.

Dr. Ann McKee, the director of the CTE Center at Boston University, said Hernandez had Stage 3 (out of 4) of the disease, which can cause violent mood swings, depression and other cognitive disorders.

"We're told it was the most severe case they had ever seen for someone of Aaron's age," attorney Jose Baez said.

Hernandez killed himself in April in the prison cell where he was serving a life-without-parole sentence for murder. Baez said Hernandez had shown signs of memory loss, impulsivity and aggression that could be attributed to CTE.

"When hindsight is 20-20, you look back and there are things you might have noticed," he said. "But you don't know."

CTE, which can only be diagnosed in an autopsy, has been found in former members of the military, football players and boxers and others who have been subjected to repeated head trauma. A recent study found signs of the disease in 110 of 111 NFL players whose brains were inspected.

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The lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court claimed that the league and Patriots failed to protect their players' safety, leading to the disease that deprived Hernandez's 4-year-old daughter, Avelle, of her father's companionship.

"Defendants were fully aware of the dangers of exposing NFL players, such as Aaron, to repeated traumatic head impacts," the lawsuit said. "Yet, defendants concealed and misrepresented the risks of repeated traumatic head impacts."

NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said the league had not yet seen the lawsuit and could not comment. A Patriots spokesman did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

The league recently agreed to pay \$1 billion to retired players who claimed it misled them about the dangers of playing football.

The "loss of consortium" lawsuit filed on Thursday is independent of the class-action suit that began making payments this summer. Baez said it was the first of its kind.

"If we have to be groundbreakers in this area, it's something we're prepared to do," he said.

Hernandez committed suicide just hours before his former teammates visited the White House to celebrate their latest Super Bowl victory and a week after he was acquitted in the 2012 drive-by shootings of two men in Boston.

Prosecutors had argued that Hernandez gunned the two men down after one accidentally spilled a drink on him in a nightclub, and then got a tattoo of a handgun and the words "God Forgives" to commemorate the crime.

Hernandez did not raise CTE in his defense at either trial because he claimed actual innocence.

"It's something I deeply regret," Baez said.

A star for the University of Florida when it won the 2008 title, Hernandez dropped to the fourth round of the NFL draft because of trouble in college that included a failed drug test and a bar fight. His name had also come up in an investigation into a shooting.

In three seasons with the Patriots, Hernandez joined Rob Gronkowski to form one of the most potent tight end duos in NFL history. In 2011, his second season, Hernandez caught 79 passes for 910 yards and seven touchdowns to help the team reach the Super Bowl, and he was rewarded with a \$40 million contract.

But the Patriots released him in 2013, shortly after he was arrested in the killing of semi-pro football player Odin Lloyd, who was dating the sister of Hernandez's fiancée. Hernandez was convicted and sentenced to life in prison; the conviction was voided because he died before his appeals were exhausted, though that ruling is itself being appealed.

For more AP NFL coverage: <http://pro32.ap.org> and http://twitter.com/AP_NFL

A test for Trump's political muscle in Alabama Senate runoff

By CATHERINE LUCEY and KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — It's Trump versus Trumpland.

President Donald Trump's political muscles are getting a workout in a Republican runoff election in Alabama that has an awkward dynamic: He's campaigning for the establishment-backed incumbent over an upstart beloved by many of his own most ardent supporters, including his former chief strategist Steve Bannon.

Motivated by personal loyalty and a sense that the race is newly competitive, Trump heads to Huntsville, Alabama, on Friday to campaign for Sen. Luther Strange, appointed in February to temporarily fill the seat that opened up when Jeff Sessions became attorney general. The winner of next Tuesday's runoff will be the GOP candidate in a December election to serve out the rest of Sessions' term, ending in January 2021.

Strange is locked in a tight race with former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, a jurist known for pushing unsuccessfully for the public display of the Ten Commandments and opposing gay marriage. A super political action committee tied to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who favors Strange, has pumped millions of dollars into the race, as Senate Republicans worry that Moore would be a disruptive figure in the chamber, or might even lose to Democrat Doug Jones.

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Moore led Strange in the first round of GOP voting, but not by enough to avoid the runoff, which could stand as an early test of how much sway Trump has over his political base. Both Strange and Moore have emphasized their support for the president, who is popular in the deep red state.

Strange and Moore traded jabs at a Thursday night debate, with Strange stressing that "the president supports me" and Moore arguing that McConnell and the "elite Washington establishment" were trying to influence the race.

GOP leaders worry about what a loss by Strange would say about the president's political strength going into a midterm election year, as well as their ability to advance his agenda in Congress.

McConnell spoke with Trump recently and assured him that Strange was much more competitive than recent public polls suggested, according to a person with knowledge of the call who requested anonymity to discuss it.

Trump, who endorsed Strange last month, tweeted on Thursday: "Senator Luther Strange has gone up a lot in the polls since I endorsed him a month ago. Now a close runoff. He will be great in D.C."

Challenger Moore, running on an anti-Washington platform, has backing from former Trump chief strategist Bannon and his conservative website Breitbart News, and the Great America Alliance, an advocacy group that supports Trump.

A rally for Moore Thursday night at a historic train shed on the banks of the Alabama River featured Trump allies including former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin and former White House official Sebastian Gorka.

Palin stressed her support for the president, while arguing that Moore was a better match for Trump's "movement."

"A vote for Judge Moore isn't a vote against the president. It is a vote for the people's agenda that elected the president," Palin told several hundred cheering supporters.

Trump's visit comes after some GOP encouragement. At the end of a White House meeting last week, he asked Sen. Bob Corker, of Tennessee, about Strange's chances and Corker said Trump needed to make the trip, said a person familiar with the conversation who was not authorized to speak publicly. Trump then got on the phone with GOP strategist Ward Baker, a Corker and McConnell ally who is working on the race for the Senate Leadership Fund, to talk through the campaign, according to a different person who also requested anonymity to disclose the private conversation.

The Washington Post first reported on Corker's involvement.

Trump allies stressed that the president was also motivated by Strange's loyalty and commitment to his agenda.

Steven Law, who runs the Senate Leadership Fund, which is on pace to spend more than \$9 million to keep Strange in the Senate, said "the best booster rocket that Luther Strange could have is Donald Trump coming in in the last few days."

Trump appears to be placing other factors over ideology as he pushes to keep Strange in the Senate over a candidate more in sync with the tone of his own 2016 campaign.

In 2010 and 2012, the GOP had a few disastrous Senate primaries where extreme candidates won and then lost winnable races to Democrats in the general election. Since then, McConnell has been determined not to let it happen again — and has succeeded in every instance.

But the pro-Moore forces have shown no signs of retreat. His conservative backers include Fox News' Sean Hannity and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee. Andy Surabian, a senior adviser to Great America Alliance, stressed said the efforts for Moore were not a knock on Trump.

"We all support the president and that will never change," Surabian said. But he added: "What does a change candidate breed? It breeds a movement."

Moore has stressed that the race could send a message.

"What's happening in Alabama is being watched in the halls of Congress and the Senate," Moore said at a rally over the weekend. "They know what is happening in Alabama. Mitch McConnell knows what is happening in Alabama. They know it is going to affect the future of elections of other senators in 2018 in other states."

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Lucey reported from Washington. AP Congressional Correspondent Erica Werner contributed to this report.

Excitement bubbles up at BYU as caffeinated soda now on sale

By BRADY McCOMBS, Associated Press

PROVO, Utah (AP) — Mormon church-owned Brigham Young University ended a six-decade ban Thursday on the sale of caffeinated soft drinks on campus, surprising students by posting a picture of a can of Coca-Cola on Twitter and just two words: "It's happening."

The move sparked social media celebrations from current and former students, with many recalling how they had hauled their own 2-liter bottles of caffeinated sodas in their backpacks to keep awake for long study sessions.

The university never banned having caffeinated drinks on campus, but held firm to the ban on sales even when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in 2012 clarified that church health practices do not prevent members from drinking caffeinated soft drinks.

The ban has been in place since the mid-1950s. But officials with the school of 33,000 students in Provo, Utah, said Thursday that increasing demand prompted the change.

Students were abuzz about a change that meant they'll no longer have to make off-campus runs to load up on their favorite caffeinated sodas to jolt their sleep-deprived brains.

"It's about time," said Sara McLaws, a junior advertising and graphic design major from Park City, Utah. "BYU is a great school but it's behind in some ways. Just the small change of allowing caffeinated beverages — because it's not against our religion — it's high time."

As cafeteria workers stocked refrigerators in the student center food court with caffeinated Diet Coke, Coca-Cola and Mr. Pibb, students joked about it being the "best day ever."

"I absolutely love it. It's been a big game changer, even just day one," said McKay Murphy, a junior statistics major from Springville, Utah. "I'm a really big fan of caffeine and just soda in general so it's nice to have it on campus with easy access."

Caffeinated soft drinks will also be sold at sporting events that draw tens of thousands of fans. Sales of highly caffeinated energy drinks are still banned.

The Utah-based Mormon religion directs its nearly 16 million worldwide members to avoid alcohol and hot beverages such as coffee and tea as part of an 1833 revelation from Mormon founder Joseph Smith.

Alumni applauded a change many said was long overdue.

"I drank a lot of caffeinated beverages while I was here but none of them was purchased on campus," said Christopher Jones, 34, a visiting BYU history professor and former student. "I never thought I would see the day so it's exciting."

Jones said he didn't know whether to believe it when he saw the announcement on his phone so he walked to a student center and saw the first bottles being stocked in vending machines and refrigerators. He was one of the first people to buy one.

"Did I just buy the first-ever caffeinated Coke Zero Sugar sold in #BYU's Wilkinson Student Center?" he tweeted. "Yes, yes I did."

BYU alum Karl Jepsen, 48, was visiting his daughter who is now a student and basked in being able to drink "real Diet Coke" from the fountain machine.

"It's a big day because we can finally drink on campus what we're allowed to drink in real life," said Jepsen, a 1994 graduate. "It's been ridiculous that we couldn't have caffeinated soda on campus."

Amber Whiteley said she used to get nasty looks when she brought Mountain Dew to campus when she was a BYU student nearly a decade ago.

"You youths will never understand the struggle we went through," Whiteley wrote jokingly in a Facebook post.

In a telephone interview, Whiteley said the change could impact views among Mormons about caffeine. She said some older Mormons in her Salt Lake City congregation still believe all caffeine is prohibited.

"Maybe this will be one more way to get the word out that it's OK to have caffeine," said Whiteley, a mother who is pursuing her doctorate in counselling psychology.

AP writer Michelle L. Price contributed to this story.

Despair rises for relatives of the missing in Mexico quake

By MARIA VERZA and PETER ORSI, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — As painstaking attempts to reach survivors in quake-ravaged buildings across Mexico City stretched into a third day Thursday, desperation mounted among loved ones who earlier had high hopes for quick rescues and some complained they were being kept in the dark about search efforts.

And what many had clung to as the unlikely triumph of life over death was revealed to be a case of some very high-profile misinformation: A top navy official announced there were no missing children at a collapsed Mexico City school where the purported plight of a girl trapped alive in the rubble had captivated people across the nation and abroad.

President Enrique Peña Nieto's office raised the death toll from Tuesday's magnitude 7.1 earthquake to 273, including 137 in the capital. In a statement, it said there were also 73 deaths in Morelos state, 43 in Puebla, 13 in the State of Mexico, six in Guerrero and one in Oaxaca.

More than 2,000 were injured and more than 50 people rescued in Mexico City alone, including two women and a man pulled alive from the wreckage of a building in the city's center Wednesday night.

Still, frustration was growing as the rescue effort stretched into Day 3.

Outside a collapsed office building in the trendy Roma Norte district, a list of those rescued was strung between two trees. Relatives of the missing compared it against their own list of those who were in the building when the quake struck — more than two dozen names — kept in a spiral notebook.

Maria del Carmen Fernandez's 27-year-old nephew, Ivan Colin Fernandez, worked as an accountant in the seven-story building, which pancaked to the ground taking part of the building next door with it.

She said the last time the family got an update was late yesterday, when officials said about 14 people were believed to be alive inside. Three people have been rescued from the building since the quake.

"They should keep us informed," Fernandez said as her sister, the man's mother, wept into her black fleece sweater. "Because I think what kills us most is the desperation of not knowing anything."

Referring to rumors that authorities intend to bring in heavy machinery that could risk bringing buildings down on anyone still alive inside, Fernandez said: "That seems unjust to us because there are still people alive inside and that's not OK."

"I think they should wait until they take the last one out," she said.

Seeking to dispel the rumors, National Civil Protection chief Luis Felipe Puente tweeted that heavy machinery "is NOT being used" in search-and-rescue efforts.

"The (hashtag)Search and Rescue is not being suspended anywhere it is believed that trapped people exist," Puente said in a separate tweet.

Since early Wednesday, the eyes of the nation had been focused on the Enrique Rebsamen school in southern Mexico City, where rescuers told reporters a girl, identified only as Frida Sofia, had signaled she was alive deep in the rubble by wiggling her fingers in response to rescuers' shouts.

Numerous rescuers at the school site spoke of the girl, with some saying she had reported several other children alive in the same space, and the child became a symbol of hope amid a disaster that has shocked the country. But with TV cameras and journalists kept a block away from the precarious site, the only images broadcast live around-the-clock of the purported rescue showed long-distance shots of rescuers digging and no images of a child.

As the rescue effort continued into Thursday, no family members came forward to identify the girl, and some officials had begun to say the identity of the person trapped in the rubble was not clear.

Then on Thursday afternoon, Navy Assistant Secretary Enrique Sarmiento announced that while there were blood traces and other signs suggesting someone could be alive beneath the school, all its children

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had been accounted for.

"We have done an accounting with school officials and we are certain that all the children either died, unfortunately, are in hospitals or are safe at their homes," Sarmiento said.

He said 11 children had been rescued and 19 had died, along with six adults, including a school employee whose body was recovered about 5 a.m. Thursday.

"We want to emphasize that we have no knowledge about the report that emerged with the name of a girl," Sarmiento added. "We do not believe, we are sure, it was not a reality."

Alfredo Padilla, a volunteer rescuer at the school, downplayed the importance of the revelation that there was no trapped child.

"It was a confusion," Padilla said. "The important thing is there are signs of life and we are working on that."

In the middle of a nearby avenue Thursday evening, about 50 people attended a special Mass including aggrieved families and rescuers from the school site. Sobs broke out when the priest spoke the names of the dead, as cars passed by in both directions.

The ceremony ended with the release of white balloons that floated toward the heavens. "My brave princess," one of them read, "we will always love you."

Earlier in the day, rescuers removed dirt bucketful by bucketful and passed a scanner over the rubble every hour or so to search for heat signatures that could indicate trapped survivors. Shortly before dawn the pile shuddered ominously, prompting those working atop it to evacuate.

"With the shaking there has been, it is very unstable and taking any decision is dangerous," said Vladimir Navarro, a university employee who was exhausted after working all night.

The shaky wreckage was reinforced with massive iron beams, each requiring a dozen or more men to carry and lift into place. Stretchers were brought to the edge of the building, and a large crane was also on site.

Lourdes Huerta, 10, was on an upper floor of a part of the school that did not collapse and returned to the site Thursday with her mother as the rescue was under way.

When the quake struck, "it was like we were bouncing up and down," Huerta said, nervously fingering a stuffed animal. "When I left the classroom the whole school was moving and we couldn't go downstairs, so we went back into the classroom and huddled up against the walls."

She said she was terrified when a wall collapsed, but said if they had tried the stairs "we would have ended up being thrown about."

Her mother, Lourdes Prieto, said the school's director and many of its teachers were among the injured, complicating efforts to produce a reliable list of students. So parents were organizing among themselves to come up with one.

"What we need above all is for a census to be taken of those of us who are alive," said Prieto, torn between gratitude that her two children had survived and anguish over the missing and the dead.

This story has been revised to correct Maria del Carmen Fernandez's first name.

Associated Press writers Mark Stevenson and Gisela Salomon and videojournalist Alexis Tribouard contributed to this report from Mexico City.

Facebook to release Russia ads, beef up election 'integrity'

By BARBARA ORTUTAY and TOM LOBIANCO, The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Facebook is slowly acknowledging the outsized — if unintended — role it played in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections.

Bowing to pressure from lawmakers and the public, the company said it will provide the contents of 3,000 ads bought by a Russian agency to congressional investigators, while also pledging to make political advertising on its platform more "transparent."

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"I don't want anyone to use our tools to undermine democracy," CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in a Facebook video and wrote in an accompanying post. "That's not what we stand for."

The moves Thursday come amid growing pressure on the social network from members of Congress, who pushed Facebook to release the ads after the company disclosed their existence in early September. Facebook has already handed over the ads to the special counsel investigating Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Facebook's reluctance to be more forthcoming with information that could shed light on possible election interference has prompted the chairman of the Senate intelligence committee to call for the company to testify in its election-meddling probe.

A MORE TRANSPARENT FACEBOOK

In one of the first steps Facebook has ever taken to open up its secretive advertising system to observation, the company will now require political ads to disclose both who is paying for them and all ad campaigns those individuals or groups are running on Facebook.

That's a key step that will allow outsiders to see how many different variants of a given ad are being targeted to various groups of individuals, a tactic designed to improve their effectiveness. At the moment, there's no way for anyone but Facebook to track these political ads, or for recipients to tell who is sponsoring such messages.

Since average users "don't know if you're seeing the same messages as everyone else," Zuckerberg said, Facebook will "make it so you can visit an advertiser's page and see the ads they're currently running to any audience on Facebook."

The company will hire 250 more people in the next year to work on "election integrity," Zuckerberg said.

The top Democrat on the Senate intelligence panel would go farther. Virginia Sen. Mark Warner is writing a bill that would require social media companies to disclose who funded political ads, similar to rules on television broadcasters. In an interview with The Associated Press, Warner said he hoped to work with social-media companies on the bill.

AND YET STILL SECRETIVE

Zuckerberg suggested that the company may not provide much information publicly, saying that the ongoing federal investigation will limit what he can reveal.

The leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee have sought to bring Facebook executives before their committee for the past couple of weeks. But critics say Facebook should go further. They say the company should tell its users how they might have been influenced by outside meddlers.

The nonpartisan Campaign Legal Center, for instance, stressed again on Thursday that the company should make the ads public, "so that everyone can see the nature and extent of the use of Facebook accounts by Russia."

Zuckerberg also warned that Facebook can't catch all undesirable material before it hits its social network.

"I'm not going to sit here and tell you we're going to catch all bad content in our system. We don't check what people say before they say it, and frankly, I don't think our society should want us to," Zuckerberg said. But those who break the law or Facebook's policies, he added, "are going to face consequences afterwards."

Facebook won't catch everyone immediately, he added, but it can "make it harder to try to interfere."

FACEBOOK HAS COMPANY IN THE HOT SEAT

Zuckerberg's move came a day after Twitter confirmed that it will meet next week with staff of the Senate intelligence committee, which has been scrutinizing the spread of false news stories and propaganda on social media during the election.

Warner said the committee wanted to hear from Twitter to learn more about the use of fake accounts and bot networks to spread misinformation.

"Twitter deeply respects the integrity of the election process, a cornerstone of all democracies, and will continue to strengthen our platform against bots and other forms of manipulation that violate our Terms of Service," the company said in a statement.

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LoBianco reported from Washington. Associated Press Writers Mary Clare Jalonick and Chad Day contributed to this story from Washington.

Canadian leader spotlights his own nation's injustices at UN

By JENNIFER PELTZ and MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — On a stage where many world leaders spotlight their successes, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told the U.N. General Assembly on Thursday about one of his nation's historic failures: the injustices long faced by its native people.

"For indigenous peoples in Canada, the experience was mostly one of humiliation, neglect and abuse" under successive governments that didn't respect their rights, he said.

"We are greatly ashamed," Trudeau said. "And for far too many indigenous people, that lack of respect for rights still persists today."

Trudeau's speech, which detailed measures Canada has taken to right the wrongs, struck an unusual tone at the annual gathering of presidents, prime ministers and monarchs, many of whom use their U.N. speeches to boast about their countries, complain about others or discuss global flashpoints.

During their own speeches, South Korean and Chinese leaders urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and seek dialogue to prevent conflict breaking out on the divided Korean peninsula.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in voiced support for stronger sanctions in response to the North's recent weapons tests — and stronger sanctions came Thursday from the U.S., as President Donald Trump authorized new restrictions on banks and others that facilitate trade with North Korea. Days earlier, Trump issued a dark warning in his own speech to the General Assembly, threatening to "totally destroy" North Korea if forced to defend the United States or its allies.

South Korea faces the greatest immediate risk in a potential military conflict, with its capital of Seoul close to the heavily militarized frontier with the North.

"We do not desire the collapse of North Korea," Moon said, adding: "If North Korea makes a decision even now to stand on the right side of history, we are ready to assist North Korea together with the international community."

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said negotiations offer the "only way out" of the increasingly tense standoff over North Korea's nuclear program. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov also said there was no alternative to diplomacy: "Military hysteria isn't an impasse. It's a disaster."

It is rare for a leader of Canada, a nation that prides itself on its image of tolerance and social harmony, to talk about the plight of the country's native people in a global forum.

Still, General Assembly speeches are often designed to appeal to audiences at home, and "talking about indigenous issues and women fits with Trudeau's domestic political and policy agendas," said University of Toronto political science professor Nelson Wiseman.

Trudeau said after his speech that he was trying to send a strong message of accountability by acknowledging Canada's mistakes.

"If there are things we are not doing right at home, then we need to take responsibility for it," he said. He noted that he had sometimes pressed other countries to improve their human rights records, "and the response has been, 'Well, tell me about the plight of the indigenous people in Canada.'"

Many indigenous people are frustrated by the disparities between their lives and those of their fellow Canadians.

Indigenous people make up 4.3 percent of Canada's population. But the proportion of indigenous adults in jail or prison is about nine times higher than it is among other Canadians. Youth suicide rates are far higher and life expectancy is five to seven years lower than for non-indigenous Canadians.

Indigenous people in Canada didn't have the right to vote in federal elections until 1961 and were not allowed to leave a reservation without a permit until 1951. In much of the last century, 150,000 indigenous children were taken from their families to state-funded residential schools where they were barred from speaking native languages and forced to convert to Christianity. Many were beaten or abused, and up to

6,000 were said to have died, before the policy ended.

Trudeau pointed to recent progress. Investments have made water safe to drink in more than two dozen indigenous communities, and nearly 4,000 new homes are being built, he said.

Associated Press writers Rob Gillies in Toronto and Alexandra Olson at the United Nations contributed.

UN votes to help Iraq collect evidence against Islamic State

By JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. investigators will help Iraq collect evidence to build potential war crimes cases against Islamic State extremists, under a resolution the Security Council approved Thursday.

Iraq, council members and some human rights advocates portrayed the measure as a key step toward bringing the Islamic State group to justice for atrocities. But some major rights groups say it's one-sided and overlooks abuses by Iraqi and other forces fighting the IS militants.

The council voted unanimously to ask the U.N. to establish an investigative team to help Iraq preserve evidence "that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide" committed by IS, variously known as ISIS, ISIL and Daesh.

"This means justice for those people who have been victimized by ISIS," Nadia Murad, a former IS captive in Iraq, said in a Facebook Live video after attending the council vote with well-known human rights lawyer Amal Clooney.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari called it "a victory for justice, a victory for humanity and a victory for the victims."

IS militants seized parts of Iraq in 2014 and proclaimed it a caliphate under Islamic rule. It soon became a realm of horrors, including mass killings, beheadings and rapes.

U.S.-backed Iraqi forces retook the country's second-largest city of Mosul from the extremists in July. The forces have now driven IS from most of the land it had seized in Iraq, retaking all the major urban areas, although the group still controls some pockets in Iraq as well as territory in Syria.

Iraq and Britain have spearheaded the investigative measure. After it passed, Alastair Burt, the British minister of state for the Middle East, announced that the U.K. would provide 1 million pounds (\$1.35 million) to the investigative effort.

It has a prominent champion in Clooney, who represents members of Iraq's Yazidi religious minority who were raped and kidnapped by Islamic State militants.

"It's a huge milestone for all of those who've been fighting for justice for victims of crimes committed by ISIS," the British attorney, who is married to actor George Clooney, said in the Facebook Live video. "It says to victims that their voices will be heard and they may finally get their day in court."

U.N. investigators will be able to help identify victims and perpetrators and "provide an indispensable record of the scope and scale" of IS atrocities, U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley said. Burt said the measure gives priority to Iraqi courts to try the cases but left a door open for other courts to get involved.

But Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch said it came up short.

"No one denies the importance of tackling the widespread atrocities by ISIS in Iraq, but ignoring abuses by Iraqi and international forces is not only flawed, it's shortsighted," said Balkees Jarrah, the rights group's senior international justice lawyer. "The pursuit of justice is essential to all victims ... regardless of who is responsible."

Amnesty International's New York head, Sherine Tadros, said the resolution "threatens to entrench a dangerous culture of 'victor's justice.'"

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has admitted that anti-IS forces have committed abuses, but he insists they were not "systematic" and that those responsible are being held accountable. Human Rights Watch, however, says many such abuses aren't being investigated by authorities in Iraq, as far as the group can tell.

The British U.N. mission said in a statement that given the severity of IS's atrocities, it's vital to take

steps now to keep evidence from being lost.

"We need to act where we can, when we can," the mission said.

Associated Press writers Alexandra Olson at the United Nations and Susannah George in Baghdad contributed.

Sanders: Diplomacy, human rights must drive US world affairs

By BILL BARROW, Associated Press

Once and possibly future presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders said Thursday that President Donald Trump accentuates the worst aspects of generations of U.S. foreign policy, arguing that diplomacy and human rights must drive the U.S. approach to the world.

The Vermont independent chided Trump on everything from his rhetoric and proposed foreign aid cuts to his handling of North Korea, Iran and terrorism. But Sanders also made clear at Missouri's Westminster College that an undue focus on American military might began long before Trump's election.

"The goal is not for the United States to dominate the world. Nor on the other hand is our goal to withdraw from the international community and shirk our responsibilities under the banner of 'America First,'" Sanders said, invoking a phrase Trump has used to explain his approach to military and economic affairs on the global stage.

Rather, Sanders called for "global engagement based on partnership," an attitude he said is "better for security" and "better for facilitating the international cooperation necessary to meet shared challenges."

The senator delivered his remarks as Trump concluded a four-day visit to the United Nations, where he offered an unapologetically aggressive stance that divides the world into friends and foes, with promises to meet America's enemies, particularly North Korea, with catastrophic force.

Sanders has been mentioned as a possible Democratic presidential candidate in 2020, although he would be 79 that year. The venue for his speech in Fulton, Missouri, served as the site for major addresses from Winston Churchill and former President Ronald Reagan.

Sanders defended the United Nations and NATO — both targets of Trump's ire — as fundamental to international stability. "Dialogue and debate are far preferable to bombs, poison gas and war," Sanders said.

Sanders blasted Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate accord and said the president would make a similarly irresponsible mistake should he walk away from the multination Iran nuclear deal. He casts both moves as isolationist actions that would make the world less stable and more dangerous.

And he bemoaned proposals for increased defense spending and cuts in foreign aid, saying the latter will only yield conflicts that will require more military spending in the future.

As during his 2016 presidential primary fight with Hillary Clinton, Sanders outlined a world order that defies the simple ideological paradigm that pits hawks against doves and interventionists against isolationists. In the campaign, he criticized Clinton's support for the Iraq invasion, but he's previously backed U.S. and NATO military actions, including some spending bills that supported U.S. activity in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Yes, military force is sometime necessary," Sanders said at one point Thursday.

Sanders' larger argument is that the U.S. has forgotten former President Dwight Eisenhower's warnings about the perils of "the military-industrial complex" while allowing widening economic gaps across the globe to exacerbate tensions and create conditions for despots to seize power.

A wiser foreign policy, Sanders argued, would place "stronger emphasis on helping people gain economic and civil rights."

Follow Barrow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP> .

Was it a crime? 10 patients at nursing home died after Irma

By TERRY SPENCER, Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — A 10th elderly patient has died after being kept inside a nursing home that turned into a sweatbox when Hurricane Irma knocked out its air conditioning for three days, even though just across the street was a fully functioning and cooled hospital.

Hollywood police said Thursday in a news release that 94-year-old Martha Murray died Wednesday. They said her death was related to the problems at the facility following Irma. The first eight patients from the Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills died Sept. 13, three days after Irma struck. The ninth died Tuesday.

From the perspective of Florida Gov. Rick Scott and relatives of those at the Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills, criminal charges are warranted. But under Florida law, a prosecution might be difficult. Two of three ex-state prosecutors contacted by The Associated Press had doubts as to whether Dr. Jack Michel, the home's owner, or any of his employees will be charged.

All agreed that any criminal prosecutions will hinge on whether the nursing home staff made honest mistakes or were "culpably negligent." Florida defines that as "consciously doing an act or following a course of conduct that the defendant must have known, or reasonably should have known, was likely to cause death or great bodily injury."

Hollywood police and the state attorney's office are investigating.

The home has said it used coolers, fans, ice and other methods to keep the patients comfortable — and that might be enough to avoid prosecution.

"There is a difference between negligence, which is what occurs when you are not giving a particular standard of care vs. culpable negligence," said David Weinstein, a former state and federal prosecutor now in private practice. "So if they are doing everything humanly possible given the circumstances and this all still happened it may be negligent and provide the basis for a civil lawsuit, but not enough for criminal charges."

Retired University of Florida law professor Bob Dekle, who prosecuted serial killer Ted Bundy as an assistant state attorney, said he doubted charges would be brought.

"I would rather be a defense attorney on this case than a prosecutor," Dekle said. "There are some cases that are better tried in civil court than criminal and this might be one of them."

Former U.S. Attorney Kendall Coffey disagreed.

"Given the magnitude of the tragedy and the apparent availability of a hospital 50 yards away, prosecutors are not going to accept that this was an unavoidable tragedy," he said.

Gary Matzner, the nursing home's attorney, said in a statement that Michel and the staff are cooperating with the investigation.

"The center and its employees and directors are devastated by this tragedy," he said.

Irma reached Broward County on Sept. 10. The home has said a felled tree took out a transformer that powered the air conditioner, but it maintained power otherwise. It said it reported the loss to Florida Power & Light and was promised repairs in the next two days, but the utility never arrived.

Scott's office said that over those two days, home administrators Jorge Carballo and Natasha Anderson were in contact with the state about the failed air conditioner but never said the situation had become dangerous. The state said they were told to call 911 if needed.

On the afternoon of Sept. 12, the home borrowed portable air coolers from Memorial Regional Hospital, the trauma center across the street. Later that night, home administrators said, a physician's assistant checked the patients and none were overheated and the building temperature never exceeded 80 degrees. Under state law, the temperature was not supposed to exceed 81 degrees.

In the early hours of Sept. 13, the deaths began. Three 911 calls were made before 6 a.m., causing Memorial staff to rush across the street to offer assistance. Doctors and nurses said they found the home's staff working to cool the patients, although they and police have said the facility was very hot.

No temperature reading has been released as police have said that is part of the investigation.

Three people died on the home's second floor and seven succumbed at the hospital, including the two

who died Tuesday and Wednesday. The state said four of the deceased had body temperatures between 107 (41.6 Celsius) and 109 (42.7 Celsius) degrees.

Dr. Randy Katz, the hospital's emergency director, said last week it was impossible to say whether any of the dead would have survived if they had gotten to the hospital hours earlier.

The number of deaths and injuries could be a determining factor in whether to bring charges. Weinstein said prosecutors could argue that after the first patients became seriously ill, administrators should have known an evacuation was necessary. Dekle agreed the number could be key.

"The more dead victims there are in a homicide case, the less likely a jury is to find reasonable doubt," Dekle said.

Babies try harder when they see you sweat, research shows

By MALCOLM RITTER, AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Especially if a baby is watching.

Children around 15 months old can become more persistent in pursuing a goal if they've just seen an adult struggle at a task before succeeding, a new study says.

The results suggest there may be value in letting children see you sweat. "Showing children that hard work works might encourage them to work hard too," researchers conclude in a report released Thursday by the journal *Science*.

The babies in the study didn't simply imitate what the grown-ups did. They faced a different challenge, showing they had absorbed a general lesson about the value of sticking to a task.

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology conducted three experiments that included a total of 262 children ages 13 months to 18 months, with an average of 15 months.

The basic procedure was this: Two groups of children first watched a researcher remove a rubber frog from a clear plastic container, and also unhook a key chain from a carabiner, a metal ring with a hinged side.

For one group, the researcher succeeded only after 30 seconds of appearing to struggle to figure out how to do the task. For the other, success came easily, within just 10 seconds, and she demonstrated the answer three times in 30 seconds. In both cases, she kept up a narration ("Look there's something inside of there! I want to get it out! ... Does this work? No, how about this ...")

After seeing the adult solve the challenges, the babies were shown that a felt-covered box could play music, and they were encouraged to turn the music on. The box had a large red button to press, but it was inactive. The question was how long the children would persist in pushing the button.

Across the three experiments, children consistently pressed the button more often if they'd seen the researcher struggle than if she had solved her tasks easily. In one experiment, for example, they pushed it an average of 23 times after seeing her struggle but only 12 times if the researcher had not displayed much effort. That smaller number is about what other babies did if they were just handed the cube in the first place, without seeing an adult fiddle with anything.

The effect was much stronger if the researcher had actively engaged the child while doing her own tasks by making eye contact, using the child's name, and adopting the high-pitched, exaggerated-melody style of speech that adults typically use to hold a child's attention.

Results show such young children "can learn the value of effort from just a couple of examples," said study senior author Laura Schulz.

The study could not determine how long the effect lasts, nor does it show that parents could get the same result with their children. But "it can't hurt to try in front of your child," said Julia Leonard, another author.

Elizabeth Gunderson, an assistant professor of psychology at Temple University in Philadelphia who did not participate in the work, called the results compelling. It is surprising that such young children picked up on the general idea of continued effort toward a goal, she said in an email.

On work trips, DeVos flies on her plane at own expense

By MARIA DANILOVA, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Education Secretary Betsy DeVos flies on her personal plane at her own expense when she visits schools around the country, according to her office, as other Cabinet secretaries' flying habits at taxpayers' cost have drawn scrutiny.

Education Department Press Secretary Liz Hill said in a statement to The Associated Press that DeVos travels "on personally-owned aircraft" at zero cost to taxpayers. Speaking with the AP on Thursday, Hill would not disclose details about the model or any other characteristics of the aircraft.

"The secretary neither seeks, nor accepts, any reimbursement for her flights, nor for any additional official travel-related expenses, such as lodging and per diem, even though she is entitled to such reimbursement under government travel regulations," Hill said. "Secretary DeVos accepted her position to serve the public and is fully committed to being a faithful steward of taxpayer dollars."

The issue of Cabinet secretaries' travel came under scrutiny on Wednesday when Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price faced an outcry over chartering five private flights last week for official business when other cheaper travel options were available. Rep. Frank Pallone, D-N.J., said Democrats would seek a "full accounting" of Price's travel from his department's inspector general.

"Taxpayer funds are not meant to be used as a jet-setting slush fund," Pallone said.

DeVos, a long-standing charter and private school advocate, is married to Dick DeVos, the heir to the Amway marketing fortune. Over the years, DeVos and her family have contributed millions of dollars to Republican candidates and causes.

Hill said DeVos pays for "all her travel expenses including flights, hotels, etc., out of pocket and at no expense to taxpayers." Since coming to office, DeVos' only charge to the department was one roundtrip Amtrak ticket from DC to Philadelphia for \$184. Hill added that DeVos also covers travel expenses for her security detail or any other staff accompanying her on the aircraft.

Her predecessor, Secretary John King, spent under \$39,000 of government money on travel during his first months in office, according to department data. Figures on past secretaries' travel were requested by the AP.

"For the record, we flew coach, and we came back same day if we could," tweeted King's former press secretary Dorie Nolt. "We also actually spent time in public schools."

But DeVos has also faced criticism over her use of public dollars. DeVos encountered protesters at events she attended early in her tenure and her security detail has been bolstered at an additional cost of some \$7.8 million, prompting an outcry from some of her critics.

At her Senate confirmation hearing in January, DeVos said she wanted to waive her right to receive a salary. But since federal government rules require her to be paid, DeVos is planning to donate her salary to charity, Hill said.

DeVos is not the only member of the administration to make such donations. In July, President Donald Trump donated his second-quarter salary of \$100,000 to the Education Department to fund a science and technology camp. But the gesture fell flat with some educators, who pointed out that the check will do little to mitigate the \$9 billion cut to the Department's budget that he has proposed.

Price, a former Republican congressman from Georgia, chartered flights to a resort in Maine where he was part of a discussion with a health care industry CEO, according to a report in Politico. He also chartered flights to community health centers in New Hampshire and Pennsylvania. One leg was from Dulles International Airport to Philadelphia International Airport, a distance of 135 miles.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said last week that the initial request for use of a government plane for his European trip last month was about national security and not his own personal convenience on his honeymoon.

Illinois court upholds murder conviction of Drew Peterson

By JOHN O'CONNOR, Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — The use of hearsay testimony to convict former Chicago-area police officer Drew Peterson in the death of his third wife was proper, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled Thursday in upholding the conviction.

The high court, in a unanimous decision, found that hearsay testimony from Peterson's dead third wife and missing fourth wife did not violate his constitutional right to confront his accusers because of evidence that Peterson killed them to prevent their testimony.

The 63-year-old former police sergeant from the Chicago suburb of Bolingbrook is serving a 38-year sentence in the 2004 death of ex-wife Kathleen Savio. He'll follow that with 40 more years after a conviction last year on allegations that he plotted to kill the prosecutor who put him behind bars.

Savio's body was found in a dry bathtub in 2004, weeks before a scheduled hearing to determine monetary and child custody issues related to her divorce from Peterson. Her death was initially ruled accidental, but the case was reopened after the 2007 disappearance of Peterson's fourth wife, Stacy Peterson. Savio's body was exhumed, an autopsy was conducted and her death was ruled a homicide.

Stacy Peterson is presumed dead, though her body has never been found. Drew Peterson remains a suspect in her disappearance, but he has never been charged.

Prosecutors had no physical evidence tying Peterson to Savio's death and no witnesses placing him at the scene, so they relied on hearsay — statements Savio made to family members and in a written statement to police before she died and that Stacy Peterson made to her pastor and a divorce lawyer before she vanished.

Hearsay is any information reported by a witness that is not based on the witness' direct knowledge. The Illinois court's ruling, written by Justice Mary Jane Theis, found proper use of hearsay — typically forbidden in criminal proceedings because it can't be challenged — under a legal doctrine of "forfeiture by wrongdoing."

"We cannot say that the trial court's finding that the state proved that defendant murdered Kathleen to prevent her from testifying was 'unreasonable, arbitrary, or not based on the evidence presented,'" Theis wrote.

Illinois adopted a hearsay law in 2008 tailored to Drew Peterson's case, dubbed "Drew's Law," which assisted in making some of the evidence admissible.

Peterson's attorney, Steven A. Greenberg, said in a statement the court's decision shows that Illinois has one set of laws for the general public and another for Peterson. Greenberg said an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court is likely.

"When it comes to Mr. Peterson, the laws were changed, the rules were broken, and, in some respects, trial counsel was deficient," Greenberg said. "The ruling today demonstrates that courts are willing to overlook the obvious to achieve a certain result."

Will County State's Attorney James Glasgow, who prosecuted Peterson in Savio's death, said he felt vindicated by the ruling.

"His (Peterson's) understanding of the law when he was terrorizing Kathleen Savio and Stacy Peterson, saying he could kill them and make it look like an accident, that we could never use that," Glasgow said. "What he didn't get was that I was going to figure it out and it wasn't going to be good for him."

Peterson was transferred from a state prison in Chester, Illinois, to a federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, in February, after Illinois prison officials cited concerns that he posed a security threat.

Associated Press Writer Don Babwin contributed to this report from Chicago

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

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Sign up for the AP's weekly newsletter showcasing our best reporting from the Midwest and Texas:
<http://apne.ws/2u1RMfv>

This story has been updated to correct the name of Justice Mary Jane Theis.

Russia warns US, says special forces helping Syrian troops

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and PHILIP ISSA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A stern Russian warning Thursday against targeting its special forces in eastern Syria heightened concerns over direct clashes between rival Moscow- and Washington-backed forces fighting for the energy wealth to be found among the Islamic State group's shrinking domain.

The warning was followed by an acknowledgement from the Pentagon of an unprecedented, face-to-face meeting between Russian and American military leaders inside or near Syria to address the rising tensions.

With both Russian-supported Syrian government forces and rival, U.S.-supported Syrian Democratic Forces determined to follow the bends of the Euphrates River all the way to the Iraqi border, Russia's warning underscored the delicacy of the arrangements that have so far kept the two sides from entering into open conflict.

Both sides and their patrons say they are determined to wipe out the Islamic State group from Raqqa province in the north and Deir El-Zour province in the east as quickly as possible. The Syrian government depends on Iranian military support, as well.

But the region — especially Deir el-Zour province — is home to mineral, natural gas and oil reserves that the Syrian government will need to restore its economy as it looks to wind down a more than six-year-long civil war.

As for the SDF forces fighting there, most are from the province and many do not want Syrian President Bashar Assad's authority restored, having risen up against his government in the early years of the war.

And Washington fears that further advances by pro-government forces could help Iran — which also has thousands of militiamen fighting alongside the Syrian government — expand its influence across the region via a land bridge spanning through Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, all the way to Israel.

Russia's Defense Ministry said for the first time Thursday that it had deployed special forces with pro-government forces in the province and accused the U.S.-backed SDF of firing on its allies twice in two days.

It said it would retaliate against any future strikes from SDF-controlled areas.

"The firing positions in those areas will be immediately destroyed with all the arsenal at our disposal," said Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov in a statement.

Such a response would likely endanger the U.S. special forces embedded with the SDF, raising the possibility of escalation. The U.S. provides artillery and air support for the SDF.

An SDF officer commanding the Deir el-Zour forces denied targeting pro-government forces and promised reciprocal action for any attacks against his troops.

"We are far from them, Daesh is between us," said Ahmad Abu Khawla, using the Arabic acronym for IS. "We didn't fire a single bullet toward the regime" forces.

Earlier in the week, the U.S. accused Russia of deliberately targeting an SDF position in Deir el-Zour. It said no U.S. forces were wounded. The SDF said six of its own were.

The Pentagon did not specify when the meeting between Russian and American senior officers was held other than to say it was in recent days.

Army Col. Ryan Dillon said the officers shared maps, graphics and information about where their forces are battling in the area. He said their ground forces in Syria have been coordinating over telephone lines in the past month to avoid firing on each other.

The Deir el-Zour and Raqqa provinces are bisected by the Euphrates River. The Islamic State group, at the apex of its power in 2015, once controlled both banks of the river in Syria and deep into Iraq.

In recent months, the SDF has driven the militants back along its north and east banks, while pro-government forces have been advancing along the south and west.

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The two sides have largely avoided conflict throughout the war as President Assad focused his efforts on defeating a revolt against his family's 40-year dynastic rule.

This balance has largely held until the two sides reached Deir el-Zour.

The Kurds leading SDF say they want their own autonomous zone in a federated Syrian republic, while many Arab fighters in the group say they will not submit again to Assad rule.

Many oil fields, including al-Omar, Syria's largest, are scattered on the eastern bank of the Euphrates River in Deir el-Zour.

"We have prepared plans to liberate the eastern banks all the way to the Iraqi-Syrian border," said Abu Khawla, the SDF officer.

The Russian-backed campaign has so far been to recapture the provincial capital, also called Deir el-Zour.

In the past two weeks, the pro-government forces gained control of most of the city and crossed the Euphrates River to the area of SDF operations, prompting objections from the rival forces.

Syrian troops now control roughly 85 percent of the city and expect to gain full control of it in the coming week, Konashenkov said.

Meanwhile, activists reported an intensive airstrike campaign in western Syria, in the area between Hama and Idlib province, where an al-Qaida-led offensive against government troops began Tuesday.

The opposition-operated Qasioun News Network and the Observatory reported dozens of airstrikes, including barrel bombs, in south Idlib and north Hama.

The Observatory said more than 40 civilians were killed in nearly 500 raids in about 40 towns and villages since Tuesday. The offensive was a test to the Russian-negotiated "de-escalation zone" announced for Idlib last week.

Issa reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb in Beirut and Lolita Baldor in Washington contributed.

Baby whose mother chose giving birth over chemo has died

By JEFF KAROUB, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A tiny preemie whose gravely ill mother had hoped to save her by shunning chemotherapy during pregnancy has died, a relative said Thursday.

Sonya Nelson said her niece, Life Lynn DeKlyen, died Wednesday evening at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor. Life's mother, Carrie DeKlyen, died Sept. 9, three days after giving birth to her sixth child.

Relatives said Life had been doing better than expected after being born prematurely at 1 pound, 4 ounces (567 grams). Nelson told The Associated Press the baby had good and bad days at the hospital, but "took a turn for the worse" this week.

"We don't have any answers," Nelson said, adding "the cards were kind of stacked against her" after being born at 24 weeks and five days into the pregnancy — about "the earliest you can survive."

"Maybe Carrie needed her," Nelson said. "It is comforting for us to know that she went home to be with Carrie."

Carrie DeKlyen declined to participate in a clinical trial or undergo treatment for the brain cancer, because it would have meant ending her pregnancy. Her husband, Nick DeKlyen, has said their decisions were rooted in their Christian faith.

The DeKlyens are from the western Michigan city of Wyoming. They have five other children who range in age from 2 to 18 years old.

"Our deepest sympathies go to the DeKlyen family during this time of sorrow," hospital officials said in a statement. "Our team is saddened by the losses of Carrie and Life, and we hope their friends and family can find comfort and peace from their memories."

Afghan leader: Abolishing militant havens in Pakistan is key

BY DARLENE SUPERVILLE and DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Abolishing militant hideouts in Pakistan is critical to establishing peace in neighboring Afghanistan, the Afghan leader said Thursday before meeting President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

Neither Trump nor Afghan President Ashraf Ghani mentioned Pakistan when they appeared publicly together after their discussion. But Ghani said Pakistan's role is an important part of the Trump plan announced last month to end America's longest war and eliminate a rising extremist threat in Afghanistan.

"Reduction of safe havens is absolutely necessary, both for counterterrorism and for stability in Afghanistan," Ghani told National Public Radio in an interview broadcast Thursday.

The Trump administration in August infuriated Pakistan by accusing it of providing haven to extremists. The U.S. also has threatened to withhold military aid from Pakistan. The country repeatedly has said it is acting against Taliban insurgents and members of the Haqqani militant group.

"I hope that this time, Pakistanis get the message loud and clear that business as usual cannot continue. It's not in their interest. It's not in anyone's interest," Ghani said.

After meeting Ghani, Trump praised efforts to try to drive members of more than 20 militant groups, including the Taliban, out of Afghanistan.

"It's really a hornet's nest from that standpoint," Trump said. "We are hitting them very, very hard and very, very effectively."

Senior officials have said Trump's plan for Afghanistan involves sending up to 3,900 additional U.S. troops on top of the roughly 8,400 Americans now in the country.

Ghani stressed that Afghan forces are leading the fight and U.S. forces are advising and training. He said he isn't seeking "a blank check" of unlimited American help.

Ghani said the Trump administration's four-year objective is to bring 80 percent of the country back under the government's control. The Taliban currently hold sway in nearly half of the nation.

Separately Thursday, an independent auditor of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan released a report saying that although the U.S. has spent more than \$70 billion in the past 16 years to build up the Afghan security forces, they're still struggling. Problems include morale, drug use, illiteracy, corruption, poor leadership and the challenges caused by ongoing, annual rotation of U.S. advisers and trainers.

"To put it plainly, as our report does, the United States failed to understand the complexities and scale of the mission required to stand up and mentor security forces in a country suffering from 30 years of war, misrule, corruption and deep poverty," John Sopko, the congressionally appointed special inspector general, said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Afghan forces are sustaining high casualties. Large swaths of the country are off-limits to foreigners. U.S. embassy personnel are mostly stuck behind the walls of the Kabul embassy. They can't train judicial and police staff or offer technical support to Afghan ministries, according to the report, which described civilian advisers "now forced to move with armed guards in convoys or even by helicopter" to meet Afghan officials.

The U.S. government is still struggling to build a security force in a nation of 70 percent illiteracy and few with technological know-how. It has trained more than 100,000 Afghan police officers using U.S. Army aviators, infantry officers and civilian contractors.

"One U.S. officer watched TV shows like 'Cops' and 'NCIS' to learn what he should teach," Sopko said. "In eastern Afghanistan, we met a U.S. Army helicopter pilot assigned to teach policing. We found one U.S. police-training unit set up as a military unit and another set up like a police unit."

Between 2002 and 2015, he said, senior U.S. and NATO officials created a plan for developing the force with "little to no input" from senior Afghan officials.

"At one point, training sessions for Afghan police were using PowerPoint-based curricula from the U.S.-NATO Balkan operations," Sopko said.

The report also said development of the police has been treated as a secondary mission to the army despite its critical role in battling lawlessness and providing security. Today, the Interior Ministry, which

oversees the police, is among Afghanistan's most corrupt institutions — which Ghani publicly acknowledged this year.

Riechmann reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Jonathan Lemire contributed.

Bangladesh truck carrying Rohingya Muslim aid crashes; 9 die

By ESTHER HTUSAN and JULHAS ALAM, Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — A truck filled with aid for Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh veered off a road and fell into a ditch Thursday morning, killing at least nine aid workers, hours after another aid shipment in the refugees' violence-wracked home state in Myanmar was attacked by a Buddhist mob.

Both shipments were from the International Committee of the Red Cross. Aid groups face different challenges on either side of the border: An influx of more than 420,000 refugees in less than a month in Bangladesh, and in Myanmar, government resistance and angry allegations from majority Buddhists that international organizations are favoring the long-persecuted Rohingya minority.

A Bangladeshi medical administrator, Aung Swi Prue, said six people died instantly in the truck crash near the border in southeastern Bandarban district. Three people died after reaching a hospital, and 10 others were injured and are receiving treatment.

ICRC spokeswoman Misada Saif said all of those killed were Bangladeshi workers hired to distribute food packages to 500 Rohingya families.

Saif said the truck belongs to the ICRC and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and was operated by a supplier who has been working for the two agencies for last couple of weeks. She said agency officials are "very shocked and sad."

"Our thoughts are with the families of the dead. They were there to help the people who desperately need help," she said.

The Rohingya exodus began Aug. 25, after Rohingya insurgent attacks on police set off a military crackdown.

Hundreds of people have been killed and thousands of homes have been burned in what many Rohingya have described as a systematic effort by Myanmar's military to drive them out. The government has blamed the Rohingya, even saying they set fire to their own homes, but the U.N. and others accuse it of ethnic cleansing.

Most refugees have ended up in camps in the Bangladeshi district of Cox's Bazar, which already had hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees who had fled prior rounds of violence. Bandarban is a neighboring district where thousands of Rohingya also have fled.

The violence in Myanmar occurred just across the border in Rakhine state, where police said a Buddhist mob threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at officers Wednesday night as they tried to block Red Cross supplies from being loaded onto a boat. The vessel was headed to an area where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims have fled from their homes. No injuries were reported and police detained eight of the attackers.

Dozens of people arrived at a jetty in the Rakhine state capital, Sittwe, as a boat was being loaded with bottled water, blankets, mosquito nets, food and other supplies. As the crowd swelled to 300, they started throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at the officers, who responded by firing into the air, said police officer Phyo Wai Kyaw.

The government of the predominantly Buddhist nation of 60 million said police and several monks showed up to try to defuse tensions. The shipment ultimately was loaded and sent to northern Rakhine state.

Though Myanmar's leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, told diplomats this week humanitarian assistance was being sent to those who remain in northern Rakhine, the government has blocked all U.N. assistance to the area, granting access to only the Red Cross.

Buddhists in Rakhine have accused international aid agencies of favoring Rohingya, a group who Myanmar and many of its people contend migrated illegally from Bangladesh.

"We are explaining to the community members who approached the boats about the activities of the

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Red Cross," said Maria Cecilia Goin, a communications officer at the ICRC in Yangon.

"It's important for them to understand that we are working in neutral and impartial way," she said, adding that the work is being done "with full transparency with the Myanmar authorities."

Suu Kyi's speech this week in Naypyitaw, the capital, defended her government's conduct in Rakhine state and avoided criticism of the military. The country's top general went a step further, traveling to northern Rakhine on Thursday to praise security forces for their "gallant" efforts to defend Myanmar.

At a meeting with military officials and their families in Buthiduang township, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Min Aung Hlaing said that more than a century ago when the area was a British colony, Rohingya — whom he referred to as "Bengalis" — were allowed to settle without restrictions.

"Later, the Bengali population exploded and the aliens tried to seize the land of local ethnics," Min Aung Hlaing said, according to his office's Facebook page. He described repeated army efforts since Myanmar independence in 1948 to "to crush the mujahedeen insurgents," including in 2012 and last fall.

"Race cannot be swallowed by the ground, but only by another race," he said. "All must be loyal to the state in serving their duties, so that such cases will never happen again."

Esther Htusan contributed to this report from Yangon, Myanmar.

Diplomats meet on Iran deal as Trump stays mum on decision

By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump has determined how he wants to approach the Iran nuclear deal — which he has called the worst agreement ever negotiated by the United States — but has not told even his top national security advisers what his decision is.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Wednesday that Trump had not informed him or others in the administration about his decision and had refused to share it with British Prime Minister Theresa May when she asked him about it.

Tillerson said he had been surprised when Trump publicly announced he had reached a decision. The secretary told reporters it would now take some time to prepare to implement the decisions. He gave no hint as to the direction Trump would take, but repeated the president's long-standing position that the deal does not address troubling non-nuclear behavior despite the hopes of those who negotiated it.

Tillerson spoke to reporters following a meeting of the parties to the nuclear deal, including Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. The meeting marked the highest-level U.S.-Iranian encounter since Trump became president.

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, who hosted the meeting, said all parties to the accord — including Tillerson — agreed it "is working and is delivering for its purpose."

Tillerson did not dispute Mogherini's characterization but said that while Iran might be meeting its obligations to the letter of the deal, it is violating its spirit.

"Perhaps the technical aspects have (been met), but in the broader context the aspiration has not," Tillerson said. He later conceded that reports from the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, "continue to confirm that Iran is in technical compliance with the agreement."

However, he said the Trump administration was determined to address the flaws in the deal, the most serious of which are so-called "sunset provisions" that allow Iran to resume some aspects of its nuclear program after certain periods of time. Those provisions relate to enriching uranium to levels near those needed to produce the fuel for a nuclear weapon, as well as other activities that limit Iran's atomic capabilities at various sites.

"One can almost set the countdown clock to Iran resuming its nuclear activities," Tillerson said. He added that the world was made less safe by the Iran agreement as it stands, particularly at a time when the U.S. and its allies are being threatened directly by a nuclear-armed North Korea.

In her comments, Mogherini also alluded to North Korea, but made the opposite argument, saying "the international community cannot afford to dismantle an agreement that is working." Mogherini declined to say whether Tillerson had pledged to remain committed to the deal, but said the European Union is

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committed to preserving it. She suggested that U.S. complaints about Iran's troublesome non-nuclear activities should be discussed in a different forum.

The meeting in the U.N. Security Council chambers followed two days of increasingly hostile rhetoric between Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, as well as Trump's surprise announcement about a decision on the nuclear deal.

"I have decided," he declared to reporters earlier Wednesday, a day after launching a scathing attack on Iran and its government in his address to the U.N. General Assembly. Trump's withering critique Tuesday included an accusation that Iran's government "masks a corrupt dictatorship behind the false guise of a democracy," while ruthlessly repressing its people and exploiting the limits of the nuclear deal.

"We cannot let a murderous regime continue these destabilizing activities while building dangerous missiles," Trump said. "And we cannot abide by an agreement if it provides cover for the eventual construction of a nuclear program."

In response, Rouhani lashed out at "ignorant, absurd and hateful rhetoric" in Trump's U.N. speech. Addressing the General Assembly on Wednesday, Rouhani said his country won't be the first to violate the nuclear agreement, "but it will respond decisively to its violation by any party." In a dismissive jab at Trump he said, "It will be a great pity if this agreement were to be destroyed by rogue newcomers to the world of politics."

"By violating its international commitments, the new U.S. administration only destroys its own credibility and undermines international confidence in negotiating with it or accepting its word or promise," Rouhani said. That echoes criticism even some of America's allies have leveled at a time when the United States hopes to draw North Korea into a negotiation over its rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal.

Rouhani then told reporters at a news conference that the Iranian people are waiting for an apology from Trump for his "extremely offensive" rhetoric and baseless allegations. He said Trump is seeking "an excuse" to pull out of the nuclear deal and it would be a "waste of time" for him to meet the president.

Trump has sent strong signals that he could walk away from the seven-nation agreement, which would potentially lead to new U.S. sanctions on Iran and its international trading partners. The Iranians, in turn, have threatened to respond to any U.S. pullout by restarting nuclear activities that could take them closer to bomb-making capability.

It wasn't clear if Trump had made a final decision to leave or stick with the Iran deal. On several other issues over his presidency, he has teased reporters with the idea that a major verdict might be imminent, only to delay announcements for weeks or months. Trump must next certify by Oct. 15 if Iran is complying with the deal, and officials have said Trump may use that occasion to declare Iran in violation.

In any event, the U.S.-Iranian exchanges augured poorly for the diplomatic meeting, although Tillerson maintained that the atmosphere had been "very open and candid."

"There was no yelling and we didn't throw shoes at one another," he said. "It was not an angry tone at all, it was a very, very matter-of-fact exchange about how we see this deal very differently."

A year ago, such a get-together would have been considered routine as nations strove to implement an agreement that curtailed Iran's nuclear activity in exchange for an end to various oil, trade and financial restrictions on the country. In the current environment, it is anything but ordinary.

Trump has said repeatedly that he is inclined not to certify Iranian compliance after having twice found the country compliant at earlier deadlines. Denying certification could lead the U.S. to reintroduce sanctions, which in turn could lead Iran to walk away from the deal or restart some nuclear activities it curtailed two years ago.

The rhetorical threats have worried the other countries who are part of the agreement: Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia. The Europeans, in particular, have expressed their disapproval of Trump's threats and talked about trying to lobby the U.S. to abide by the accord. If the U.S. tries to activate globally enforceable sanctions on Iran again, European countries could balk, another potential repercussion Trump must weigh.

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Asian shares fall on North Korea concerns, China rate cut

By **KELVIN CHAN, AP Business Writer**

HONG KONG (AP) — Most Asian stock markets fell Friday as investors turned cautious following new U.S. sanctions targeting North Korea and a China credit rating downgrade.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 slipped 0.4 percent to 20,273.26 and South Korea's Kospi lost 0.7 percent to 2,389.83. Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed 0.8 percent to 27,877.19 and the Shanghai Composite fell 0.5 percent to 3,341.72. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 edged up 0.4 percent to 5,675.70. Taiwan's benchmark fell and Southeast Asian indexes were mostly lower.

SANCTIONS: Geopolitical tensions ratcheted up after U.S. President Donald Trump authorized stiffer new sanctions in response to North Korea's nuclear weapons advances, drawing a furious response from Pyongyang. Trump's administration said it would punish foreign companies dealing with the North, including by expanding the Treasury Department's ability to ban anyone from interacting with the U.S. financial system. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un retaliated by calling Trump "deranged" and saying he'll "pay dearly" for his threats, while Kim's foreign minister reportedly said the country might plan to test a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean.

CHINA RATING: Markets in Asia were getting their first chance to react to Standard & Poor's announcement late Thursday that it was downgrading China's credit rating, citing rising debt levels. S&P lowered its sovereign rating by one notch, to A+ from AA-, saying credit growth increased China's economic and financial risks. Then it cut Hong Kong's rating Friday, citing risks posed by close ties between mainland China and the Asian financial center. The downgrade underscores challenges faced by China's Communist leaders as they cope with slowing growth in the world's No. 2 economy.

MARKET VIEW: "S&P's decision to cut China's credit rating yesterday looks like a case of bad timing, as China has already begun the long and difficult process of tackling reforms and leverage," said Rob Carnell, head of Asia research at ING. He and other analysts noted the downgrade came ahead of next month's twice-a-decade Communist Party congress. Beijing wants markets to remain stable for the meeting, where top leaders will be reshuffled and policy plans get laid out.

WALL STREET: Major U.S. benchmarks ended lower. The Standard & Poor's 500 index lost 0.3 percent to 2,500.60. The Dow Jones industrials fell 0.2 percent to 22,359.23. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.5 percent to 6,422.69.

ENERGY: Oil futures were mixed. Benchmark U.S. crude added 8 cents to \$50.63 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 14 cents, or 0.3 percent, to settle at \$50.55 a barrel on Thursday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 3 cents to \$56.06 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar weakened to 111.78 yen from 112.49 yen in late trading Thursday. The euro climbed to \$1.1955 from \$1.1940.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 22, the 265th day of 2017. There are 100 days left in the year. Autumn arrives at 4:02 p.m. Eastern time.

Today's Highlight in History:

On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all slaves in rebel states should be free as of January 1, 1863.

On this date:

In 1776, during the Revolutionary War, Capt. Nathan Hale, 21, was hanged as a spy by the British in New York.

In 1792, the French First Republic was proclaimed.

In 1917, the silent comedy-drama "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," starring Mary Pickford, was released.

In 1927, Gene Tunney successfully defended his heavyweight boxing title against Jack Dempsey in the

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famous "long-count" fight in Chicago.

In 1938, the musical comedy revue "Hellzapoppin'," starring Ole (OH'-lee) Olsen and Chic Johnson, began a three-year run on Broadway.

In 1949, the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb.

In 1950, Omar N. Bradley was promoted to the rank of five-star general, joining an elite group that included Dwight D. Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, George C. Marshall and Henry H. "Hap" Arnold.

In 1957, the TV series "Maverick," starring James Garner and Jack Kelly, premiered on ABC.

In 1964, the musical "Fiddler on the Roof," starring Zero Mostel, opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 3,242 performances. The secret agent series "The Man from U.N.C.L.E.," starring Robert Vaughn and David McCallum, premiered on NBC-TV.

In 1975, Sara Jane Moore attempted to shoot President Gerald R. Ford outside a San Francisco hotel, but missed. (Moore served 32 years in prison before being paroled on December 31, 2007.)

In 1982, the situation comedy "Family Ties" premiered on NBC.

In 1993, 47 people were killed when an Amtrak passenger train fell off a bridge and crashed into Big Bayou Canot near Mobile, Alabama. (A tugboat pilot lost in fog pushed a barge into the railroad bridge, knocking the tracks 38 inches out of line just minutes before the train arrived.)

Ten years ago: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice spoke briefly with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki (NOO'-ree ahl-MAHL'-ih-kee) at the United Nations, but they did not discuss a Baghdad shootout involving guards from Blackwater USA that claimed civilian lives. Marcel Marceau, the master of mime, died in Cahors, France, at age 84.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama campaigned before a crowd of 18,000 in Wisconsin, the home state of GOP vice-presidential candidate Paul Ryan. In the aftermath of the killing of the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans, residents of the Libyan city of Benghazi protested at the compounds of several militias, vowing to rid themselves of armed factions and Islamic extremists.

One year ago: Prosecutors charged a white Oklahoma police officer with first-degree manslaughter less than a week after she killed an unarmed black man on a city street, saying in court documents the officer "reacted unreasonably." (Betty Shelby was acquitted in May 2017 of manslaughter in the death of Terence Crutcher.) It was disclosed that computer hackers had swiped personal information from at least 500 million Yahoo accounts in what was believed to have been the biggest digital break-in at an email provider. President Barack Obama paid tribute to comedian Mel Brooks, NPR interviewer Terry Gross and others at a White House ceremony celebrating "creators who give every piece of themselves to their craft."

Today's Birthdays: Baseball Hall of Fame manager Tommy Lasorda is 90. Actress Anna Karina is 77. Former NBA Commissioner David Stern is 75. Actor Paul Le Mat is 72. Musician King Sunny Ade (ah-DAY') is 71. Capt. Mark Phillips is 69. Rock singer David Coverdale (Deep Purple, Whitesnake) is 66. Actress Shari Belafonte is 63. Singer Debby Boone is 61. Country singer June Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 61. Singer Nick Cave is 60. Rock singer Johnette Napolitano is 60. Actress Lynn Herring is 60. Classical crossover singer Andrea Bocelli (an-DRAY'-ah boh-CHEL'-ee) is 59. Singer-musician Joan Jett is 59. Actor Scott Baio is 57. Actress Catherine Oxenberg is 56. Actress Bonnie Hunt is 56. Actor Rob Stone is 55. Actor Dan Bucatinsky (TV: "24: Legacy") is 52. Musician Matt Sharp is 48. Rock musician Dave Hernandez is 47. Rapper Mystikal is 47. Rhythm-and-blues singer Big Rube (Society of Soul) is 46. Actor James Hillier (TV: "The Crown") is 44. Actress Mireille Enos is 42. Actress Daniella Alonso is 39. Actor Michael Graziadei (GRAHT'-zee-uh-day-ee) is 38. Actress Ashley Drane (Eckstein) is 36. Actress Katie Lowes is 35. Rock musician Will Farquarson (Bastille) is 34. Actress Tatiana Maslany is 32. Actor Ukweli Roach (TV: "Blindspot") is 31. Actor Tom Felton is 30. Actress Juliette Goglia is 22.

Thought for Today: "Autumn, the year's last, loveliest smile." — William Cullen Bryant, American poet (1794-1878).