

Groton Daily Independent

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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 MYYF.

Olive Grove: Class Reunions

24

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m.; Sunday School at 10 a.m.

United Methodist Church: Conde worship, 9 a.m.; coffee fellowship time, 10 a.m., Sunday School, 10 a.m.; Groton worship, 11 a.m.

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

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

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

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**

Dakota Brush

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

Get Ready for Spring With
Wash Brushes & Squeegees

397-9337

104 N. Main, Groton

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“A friend is the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out.”

-Grace Pulpit

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

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The sixth grade float took first place. (Photo by Tina Kosel)



The eighth grade float took second place. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

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The seventh grade float took third place. (Photo by Tina Kosel)



The Class of 1967 is cheering on the Tigers!
(Photo by Tina Kosel)

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Groton's Snow Queen were in the homecoming parade. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

The fifth graders march for the last time through a homecoming parade. (Photo by Tina Kosel)



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Farm Credit Services had the best commercial float. Tom Woods was Batman on a motorcycle. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

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

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



Katie Koehler is the reigning Carnival of Silver Skates Queen. She is on a car with Groton's first Silver Skates King, Bob Pray, Sr. Bob was the 1st King in 1941 with Queen Gunrun Martinson McCullough and in 1942 with Dorothy Fangen Kah (Photo by Tina Kosel)

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



GROTON
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

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

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Locke-Karst Field is getting a new infield this year. Weber Landscaping has removed the sod and will be putting a new sod down next week. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The dugouts on the smaller fields at the Groton Baseball Complex have been removed with new ones to be installed for the next season. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Area wins fourth "Battle of the Tigers"

It was not only the Battle of the Tigers, but it was also Groton Area's homecoming and the traveling trophy will remain in Groton as the Groton Area Tigers posted a 28-20 win over the visiting Tigers.

"The boys were pretty excited to get the trophy back," said Coach Shaun Wanner. "We got it out the other night and put it in the locker room. Some of the younger ones never seen this before so we had to explain the history of the trophy. It was a nice idea that this guy (Roy Gay) had and he still e-mails to find out the update of it."

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



The traveling "Battle of the Tigers" trophy was donated by 1957 Moberidge Alumni Roy Gay. It was started in 2014. Groton Area Coach Shaun Wanner and Moberidge-Pollock Coach Nathan Lamb hold the trophy back in 2014. The trophy has never left Groton. (GDI file photo by Paul Kosel)

2014: Groton Area 27, Moberidge-Pollock 18
2015: Groton Area 27, Moberidge-Pollock 8
2016: Groton Area 33, Moberidge-Pollock 0
2017: Groton Area 28, Moberidge-Pollock 20



Hunter Schaller gets ready to kick the ball on the kickoff. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

"It was a nice win for the boys," Wanner said. "With Roncalli losing, it might put us into the number one spot in the region. We also have a chance at a split for the conference title. Milbank is 2-0. Roncalli is 1-1 and we're 1-1. Next week's game with Milbank will be a big conference game for us."

Groton Area's defense stopped Moberidge-Pollock in a goal line stand on the visiting Tigers' first drive. On third and goal from the Groton Area five yard line, Moberidge-Pollock attempted a pass into the endzone which was picked off by Brandon Keith.

"That was a big booster for us," Wanner said. "We stopped a big Moberidge-Pollock drive and then we went down to score. Our offensive and defensive lines did a great job. It shows that hard work does pay off

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Marshall Lane hands off the ball to Lucas Hinman. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Groton Area's Luke Thorson and Moberidge-Pollock's Nathan Bauer get ready to tangle at the line. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

- practicing hard and listening to the coaches. The boys are getting more experience with each game and it's showing. We just need to manage the clock better. We're shooting ourselves in the foot at the end of the games."

Groton would then go 80 yards on five plays as Lucas Hinman would score with a two-yard run with 1:27 left in the first quarter. Hunter Schaller kicked the PAT and Groton Area took a 7-0 lead. During that drive, Marshall Lane connected with Brandon Keith for a 59 yard pass play that would take the ball quickly inside Moberidge-Pollock territory.

Groton Area would score on its third drive of the game, starting at its own 42 yard line. The Tigers would score in four plays as Marshall Lane connected with Seric Shabazz for a 45-yard pass play. Groton Area would take a 14-0 lead with 10:12 left in the first half as Schaller kicked the PAT.

The fourth possession by Moberidge-Pollock proved fruitful as the Tigers would score on a five play, 61 yard drive culminating with a 23 yard pass play from Caden Halsey to Reece Cerney. The PAT kick by Tom Zott was good and it would be 14-7, Groton Area, with 2:43 left in the half.

Moberidge-Pollock would take the opening kick-off of the second half all the way into the endzone. Nathan Bauer had the 73 yard kick-off return. Brandon Keith blocked the PAT kick and Groton Area hung on to the lead, 14-13.

Brandon Keith makes a catch and has a 59 yard pass play to set up a touchdown for the Groton Area Tigers.

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



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just before half time as the Tigers threatened to score, but Luke Thorson had a big sack that took the thunder out of that drive and the half ended, Groton Area 14, Mobridge-Pollock 13.

The Groton Area defense kept Mobridge-Pollock deep in its own territory, forcing the Tigers to punt on fourth and 11 from the Mobridge-Pollock 25 yard line. On the punt, Groton Area had a fair catch at the Mobridge-Pollock 37 yard line. Two Mobridge-Pollock penalties put the Groton Area Tigers in the red zone at the 12 yard line. On the fourth play of the drive, Lucas Hinman would dash in for the 12-yard touchdown run. Schaller kicked the PAT and Groton Area took a 21-13 lead with 7:30 left in the third quarter.

Right before the end of the third quarter, Groton Area would start its drive from the Mobridge-Pollock 37 yard line. On second and 11 from the 38 yard line, Marshall Lane would connect with Brandon Keith for a 38-yard touchdown pass play. Schaller kicked the PAT and Groton Area took a 28-13 lead with 28 seconds left in the third quarter.

Mobridge-Pollock would score on its 11th drive of the game. The Mobridge-Pollock drive would start from its own 44 yard line with 7:45 left in the game. Mobridge-Pollock would go for it on fourth and five and Dylan Cerney would get a first down and he got down to the Groton Area 36 yard line. And again, Mobridge-Pollock would go for it on fourth and 10, but this time, the Tigers would score on a 36-yard pass play from Caden Halsey to Dyaln Cerney. The PAT kick was good by Tom Zott and Groton Area now had a 28-20 lead with 4:30 left in the game. Groton Area would stop the final Mobridge-Pollock drive and the Groton Area Tigers would once again, win the Battle of the Tigers and the travelling trophy will remain in Groton for the fourth year.

First Downs: Groton Area 14, Mobridge-Pollock 11

Rushing: Groton Area 36-119 (Lucas Hinman 19-90, 2 touchdowns; Marshall Lane 16-33, Andy Rintalla 1-(-4). Mobridge-Pollock: 35-113 (Dylan Cerney 17-111).

Passing: Groton Area's Marshall Lane completed 6 of 12 passes for 161 yards, 2 touchdowns. Mobridge-Pollock's Caden Halsey completed 6 of 19 for 104 yards, 2 touchdowns and 1 interception.

Receivers: Groton Area: Brandon Keith 2-97, 1 touchdown; Seric Shabazz, 3-61, 1 touchdown; Jackson Oliver 1-3. Mobridge-Pollock: Dylan Cerney 2-64 yards, 1 touchdown; Reece Cerney 1-23.

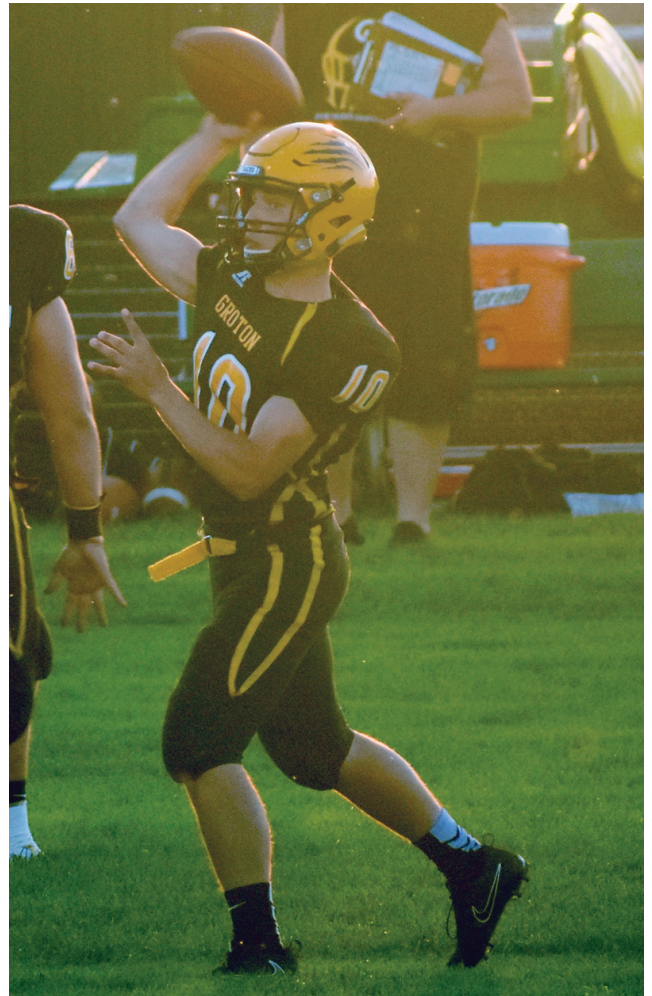
Penalties: Groton 8-70, Mobridge-Pollock 10-80.

Fumbles: Groton area had none. Mobridge-Pollock recovered both of their fumbles.

Defense: Groton Area: Brandon Keith 11 tackles and 1 interception, Luke Thorson 9 tackles and 2 sacks for a -19 yards, Seric Shabazz 8 tackles and 1 sack for a -4 yards, Brandyn Anderson had 1 sack for -7 yards, Darien Shabazz had 1 sack for a -10 yards and Peyton Johnson had 1 sack for -2 yards. Mobridge-Pollock: Jason Gerry 16 tackles, Braxyton Alberts 6 tackles.

Record: Groton Area 4-2, Mobridge-Pollock 1-4.

Next Games: Groton Area at Milbank, Mobridge-Pollock hosts Cheyenne-Eagle Butte.



Quarterback Marshall Lane throws the ball to one of the receivers. (Photo by Julianna

Kosel)

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The long waited process of putting down asphalt on SD37 through Groton has begun. The first 1.5 inches of asphalt was laid down on Friday from US12 to Fifth Avenue. (Photos by Paul Kosel)



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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting September 25, 2017 – 7:00 PM

Groton Area Elementary School (Lower Pod)

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.
- POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3
- OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:
1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
 2. Program Overview Presentations Grades 2 and 3... J. Kroll, A. Zoellner, D. Winburn, K. Anderson
 3. School Board Committee Reports:
 - a. Building, Grounds, & Transportation: Clint Fjelstad, Merle Harder, Marty Weismantel
 - b. Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum: Deb Gengerke, Grant Rix
 - c. Negotiations: Kelly Kjelden, Steve Smith
 4. Update on Elementary project progress.
 5. Consider Elementary project change orders.
 - a. CCO#017: Add Fire Extinguishers/Cabinets
 - b. CCO#018: Access Panel for Building Signage
 - c. CCO#003: Storm Sewer Drainage
 6. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report
- NEW BUSINESS:
1. Approve FY2018 district budgets with amendments and authorize Business Manager Weber to file tax request with county auditor.
 2. First Reading of Recommended Policy Amendments: KBA-E Application for Access to Public Records (Amendment); BDDH Public Participation at Board Meetings (Amendment); GCDB Criminal Background Checks (Amendment); GCDB-E Criminal Background Checks Privacy Rights (New); GBCA Staff Conflict of Interest (Delete); BBFA Board Member Conflict of Interest (Delete); AH Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Authorization (New); EFC Meal Charge Policy (New)
 3. Approve hiring Sarah Lewandowski, Elementary Special Education Paraprofessional, at \$11.40/hour.
 4. Approve hiring Matt Locke as 8th Grade Girls Basketball Coach for 2017-2018 at 5% of base salary.
 5. Approve hiring Shannon Wiedrick as student custodian at \$9.25/hour for up to 20 hours/week.
 6. Approve auxiliary staff assignment changes for Amanda Bisbee, Lena Cox, Joann Donley, Bill Duncan, Butch Farmen, Joel Guthmiller, Randy Hjermstad, Jill Krueger, Lois Krueger, Rebecca Lewandowski, Kami Lipp, Jamie Mitchell, Lisa Sippel, Deb Tollifson, Kim Weber, and Kandi Weismantel.
 7. Approve work agreements for bus drivers Adam Franken and Chuck Padfield.
 8. Consider request from the Groton Youth Rally Committee for waiver of facility use fee for annual Youth Rally scheduled for November 15.
 9. Acknowledge Notification for Public School Exemption #18-09.
 10. Approve Open Enrollment #18-18 (Grade 10) from Aberdeen School District.
- ADJOURN

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Today in Weather History

September 23, 1984: Snow fell from the early morning to the late evening hours across northwest South Dakota bringing more than a foot of snow to some locations. Camp Crook in Harding County reported 14 inches. Amounts between six and twelve inches were common across Harding and Perkins Counties as well as parts of Meade and Butte Counties. Roads in these areas were slushy with icy bridges. The snow covered much of the western third of South Dakota with depths an inch or less.

September 23, 2004: A tornado touched down northeast of Browns Valley, MN during the late afternoon. This tornado traveled through a cornfield and a farmstead before dissipating. The tornado damaged several sheds and a trailer along with toppling a large grain bin. Another tornado touched down south and southwest of Rosholt in Roberts County in the late afternoon. This F2 tornado destroyed a house, a mobile home, and a travel trailer. The tornado also killed three cattle.

1551: The Grand Harbour at Valetta, Malta, was hit by a waterspout which then moved inland. This waterspout sunk four ships, killing at least 600 people. It should be noted, the year of the event could also be 1555, or 1556 as sources conflict.

1722: La Nouvelle-Orléans (New Orleans) was founded May 7, 1718, by the French Mississippi Company, under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, on land inhabited by the Chitimacha. Four years later, a hurricane destroys nearly every building in the village, including the only church and hospital.

1815 - One of the greatest hurricanes to strike New England made landfall at Long Island and crossed Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It was the worst tempest in nearly two hundred years, equal to the hurricane which struck in 1938, and one of a series of severe summer and autumn storms to affect shipping lanes that year. (David Ludlum)

1904 - The temperature at Charlotteburg, NJ, dipped to 23 degrees, the coldest reading of record for so early in the autumn for the state. (The Weather Channel)

1975: On September 22, Hurricane Eloise intensified to attain Category 2 strength, and became a major hurricane of Category 3 status shortly after that as it turned towards the northeast. Several ships penetrated the storm's center during its passage through the Gulf. Hurricane Eloise continued to strengthen until it reached its peak winds of 125 mph and a minimum barometric pressure of about 955 mbar. It moved ashore along the Florida Panhandle near Panama City on September 23.

1983 - A thunderstorm downburst caused a timber blowdown in the Kaibab National Forest north of the Grand Canyon. Two hundred acres were completely destroyed, and scattered destruction occurred across another 3300 acres. Many trees were snapped off 15 to 30 feet above ground level. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Autumn began on a rather pleasant note for much of the nation. Showers and thunderstorms were confined to Florida and the southwestern deserts. Warm weather continued in the western U.S., and began to spread into the Great Plains Region, but even in the southwestern deserts readings remained below 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

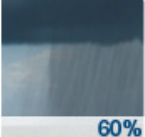
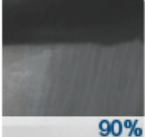
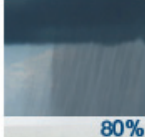




1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front in the south central U.S. produced severe weather in Oklahoma during the afternoon and early evening hours. Thunderstorms produced softball size hail near Noble and Enterprise, and baseball size hail at Lequire and Kinta. A tornado near Noble OK destroyed a mobile home injuring one person. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

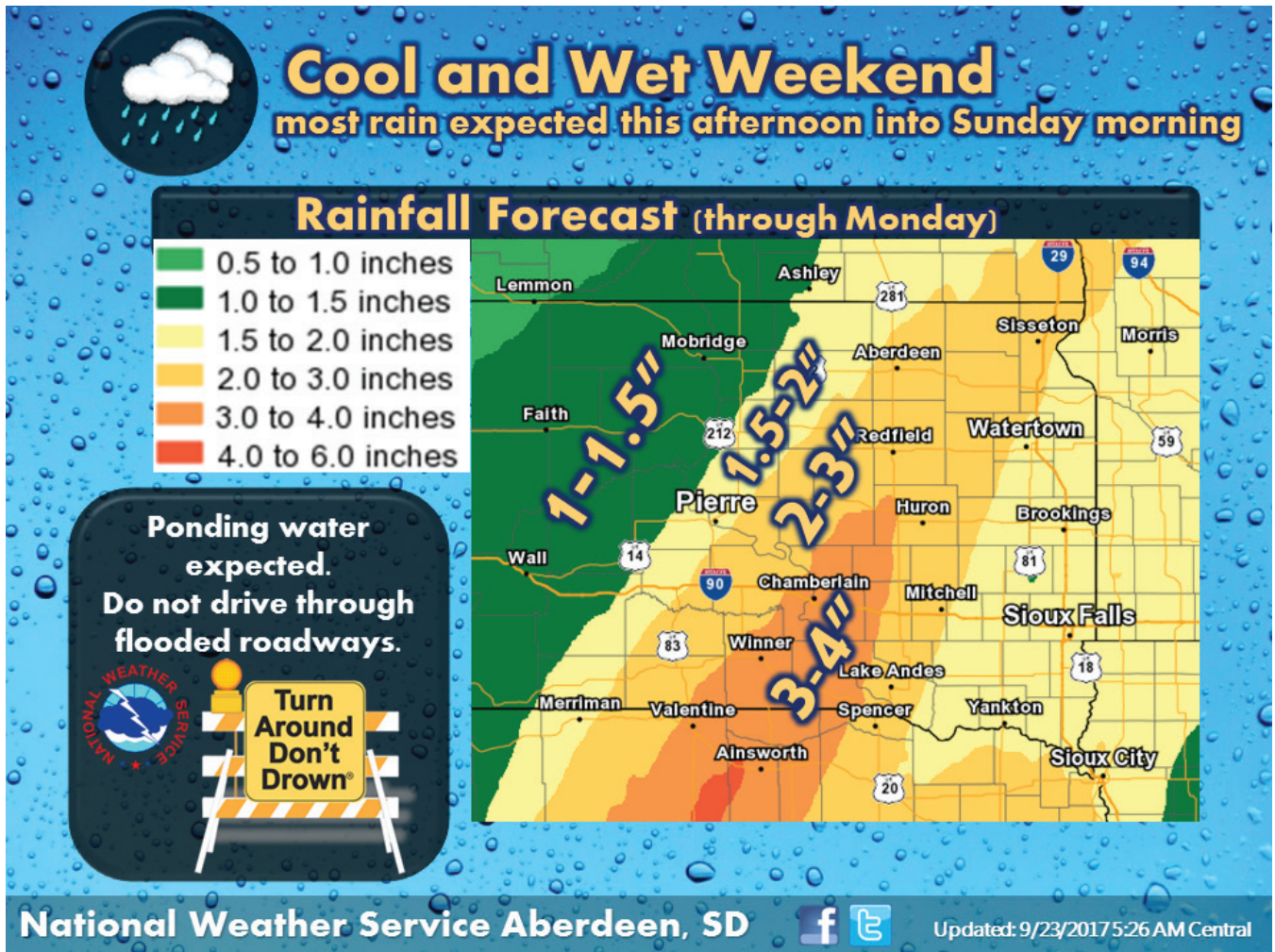
1989 - Seventeen cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Devils Lake ND with a reading of 22 degrees. Jackson KY reported a record low of 41 degrees during the late afternoon. Strong northwesterly winds ushering cold air into the central and northeastern U.S. gusted to 55 mph at Indianapolis IND. Winds along the cold front gusted to 65 mph at Norfolk VA, and thunderstorms along the cold front deluged Roseland NJ with 2.25 inches of rain in one hour. The temperature at Richmond VA plunged from 84 degrees to 54 degrees in two hours. Snow and sleet was reported at Binghamton NY. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - Hurricane Rita reached the Texas/Louisiana border area near Sabine Pass as a category-3 hurricane with maximum sustained winds near 120 mph. A storm surge of at least 15 feet flooded parts of Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Terrebonne and Vermilion parishes, where sugar cane crop losses were estimated near \$300 million. An 8-foot storm surge in New Orleans overtopped the provisionally-repaired levees (from Hurricane Katrina damage) and caused additional flooding. A total of 10 fatalities were reported, and preliminary damage estimates ranged between \$4-5 billion.

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
 60%	 90%	 80%	 30%		 20%	
Showers Likely	Showers	Showers	Chance Showers	Cloudy	Slight Chance Showers	Partly Sunny
High: 57 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 60 °F	Low: 47 °F	High: 57 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 61 °F



Published on: 09/23/2017 at 5:31AM

Cooler temperatures, and rain will be the theme through the weekend. There could still be a few stronger storms over eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota through tonight, but the main threat will be moderate to heavy rain. Total rainfall through Monday will likely be 1 to 3 inches, with the highest amounts from south central to northeastern South Dakota. Ponding of water is likely, as most of the rain falls this afternoon into Sunday morning. See the latest forecast for your area at, www.weather.gov/abr

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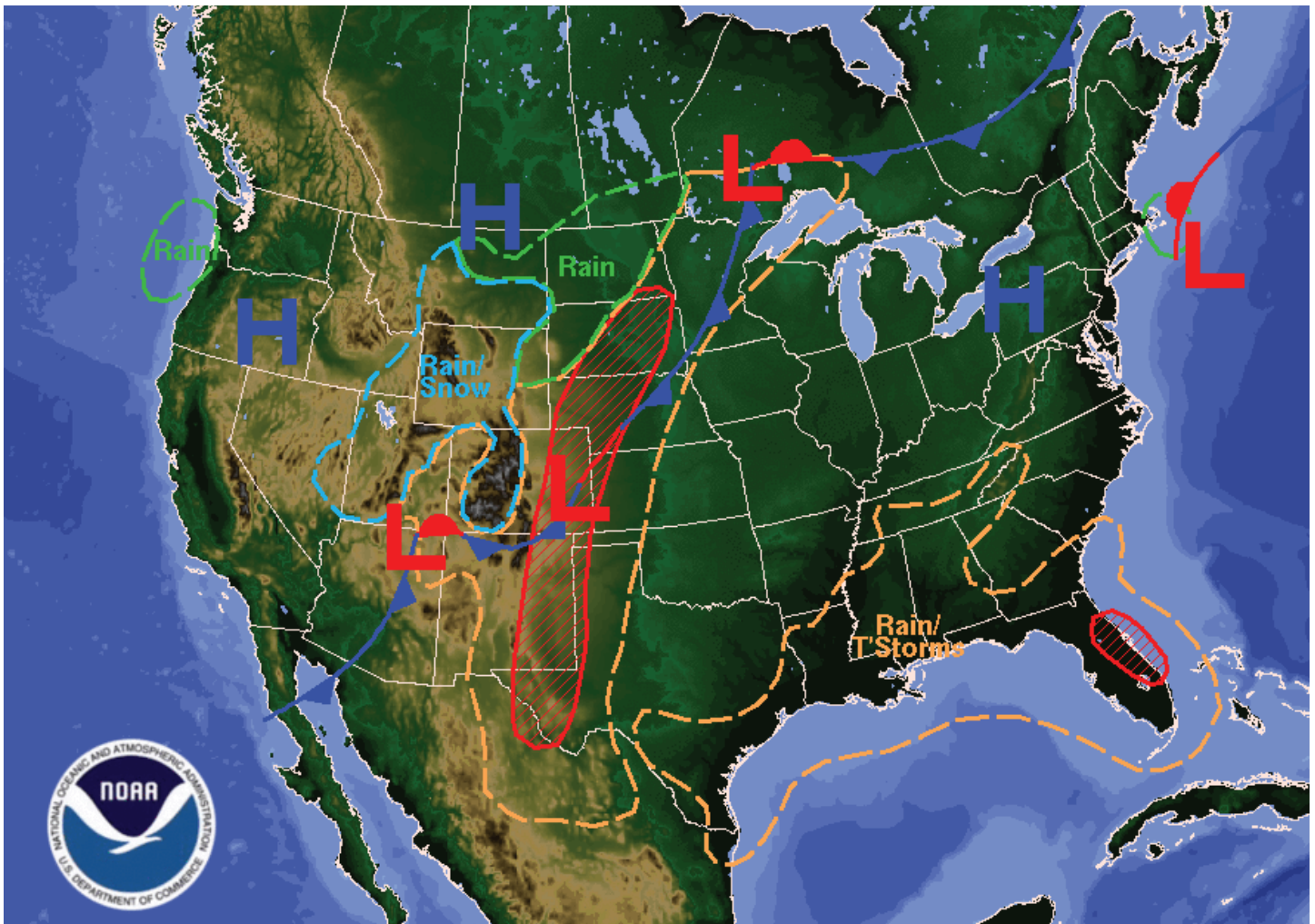
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 90.4 at 3:20 PM
Heat Index: 98 at 3:00 PM
Low Outside Temp: 69.6 at Midnight
High Gust: 26 at 2:29 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 94° in 1935
Record Low: 22° in 2012
Average High: 69°F
Average Low: 49°F
Average Precip in Sept: 1.62
Precip to date in Sept: 0.87
Average Precip to date: 17.98
Precip Year to Date: 10.39
Sunset Tonight: 7:28 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:23 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Sep 23, 2017, issued 4:33 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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NEED HELP? WANT HOPE?

On one special occasion, Queen Elizabeth, decided to honor a nobleman for his service by giving him a ring. As she presented him the ring she said, "If you are ever in trouble, send the ring to me and I will help you."

But there is one who is much more powerful than a king or a queen, a president or a premier who is available to us: "The Mighty One, God, the Lord," declared the Psalmist. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you and you will honor Me," is His enduring promise.

The language of The Mighty One is very significant. He did not say, "Don't call me – I'll call you when I have time." Nor did He say, "That problem's insignificant" or "Your concern does not matter to me," or "I'll refer that to someone else later." Our God, who is richer than the richest and stronger than the strongest and the greatest friend we can have, says to each of us, "Call me when you are facing troubles and need help. I'm always available." Is that not exciting? If you are facing a difficult problem as you are reading this "Seed" you can put it aside – right now – and He's waiting for You to call on Him in prayer.

Not only is He available, but He gives us the assurance that He will deliver us. What good is His availability if He is too powerless to protect us, too weak to fight for us, too poor to meet our needs? Whatever trouble we are facing – large or small, ours or someone we love – He guarantees a timely, effective and positive solution. He will deliver us when we call!

But He does make one simple request of us: "You will honor me." The goal of our prayer must not be to bring attention to ourselves for what He has done or will do for us, it must always be to bring honor to His name in all we do!

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for the hope we have in You and Your willingness to hear our prayer and Your ability to deliver us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 50:15b I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

News from the Associated Press

Minnesota food pantries get produce from individuals farmers

MARSHALL, Minn. (AP) — Food organizations that operate pantries in recent years have placed greater emphasis on fresh produce, relying on a variety of sources including the good will of individual gardeners in southwestern Minnesota.

Minnesota Public Radio reports that 83-year-old farmer Dennis Stelter donated about 1,000 pounds of vegetables to the Kitchen Table Food Shelf in Marshall last year. Stelter is expected to donate even more produce this year, including zucchini, squash and cucumbers.

Kitchen Table Food Shelf volunteer coordinator Lori Lerohl says Stelter comes in with donations nearly every day.

Bob Chatmas is chief operating officer for Twin Cities-based food bank Second Harvest Heartland. He says food pantries hope to decrease fruit and vegetable waste and provide it to low-income people who can't afford to buy fresh produce.

Information from: St. Paul Pioneer Press, <http://www.twincities.com>

Sioux Falls poverty population decreases

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A report says that more people in Sioux Falls are finding full-time work and escaping poverty as the economy benefits from a growing middle class.

The Argus Leader reports that the number of people living in poverty in the four-county metro area declined last year for the first time in four years, falling more than 2 percent. That translates to about 6,000 fewer people below the poverty line.

Population data recently released by the American Community Survey show that Sioux Falls' success mirrors a national trend of decreasing poverty and growing middle-class salaries.

Lon Clemensen is the vice president of workforce development for the Sioux Falls Development Foundation. He says much of the city's credit belongs to nonprofits, local businesses and other community groups.

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

South Dakota county contemplates future of crowded jail

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — It could be the busiest year ever for a jail in the western part of South Dakota, and officials are debating the future of the facility.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports that Sheriff Brian Dean told the Lawrence County Commission earlier this month that the jail is nearly full. The meeting prompted board discussion on housing options once the jail is full and the possibility of building a new jail.

Dean says the average daily population at the jail is more than 40 and that its nine-year average is 34. He says jail trends are being monitored and cautioned that one busy year doesn't a trend make.

Dean says it may be necessary to house some inmates at the Meade County Jail for a fee.

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

Suspect injured after shot by county deputy in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Minnehaha County Sheriff's Department says a deputy shot suspect at a Sioux Falls residence who was armed with a weapon.

The incident happened at 1:25 a.m. Friday after officers responded to a report of a violent domestic assault. Authorities say the suspect was transported to a local hospital with a single gunshot wound.

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No further details of the incident have been released.

Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead says the investigation will be handled by the state Division of Criminal Investigation.

Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Aberdeen Central 10, Harrisburg 7
Baltic 9, Garretson 7
Belle Fourche 30, Hot Springs 27
Bison 28, Edgemont 16
Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 56, Flandreau 6
Britton-Hecla 41, Clark/Willow Lake 18
Burke/South Central 58, Centerville 0
Canistota 34, Irene-Wakonda 28
Castlewood 28, Dell Rapids St. Mary 0
Chester 34, Hanson 30
Colman-Egan 28, DeSmet 0
Colome 64, Alcester-Hudson 14
Corsica/Stickney 54, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 0
Dakota Valley 21, Milbank Area 14
Dell Rapids 28, Tri-Valley 21
Deuel 42, Tri-State 0
Elkton-Lake Benton 40, Estelline 0
Gregory 36, Bon Homme 26
Groton Area 28, Mobridge-Pollock 20
Hamlin 50, Dakota Hills 0
Harding County 50, Faith 0
Hitchcock-Tulare 46, Tiospa Zina Tribal 6
Howard 71, Menno/Marion 28
Kimball/White Lake 16, Wolsey-Wessington 14
Langford 34, Northwestern 18
Lead-Deadwood 23, Bennett County 7
Linton-HMB, N.D. 48, Herreid/Selby Area 14
Little Wound 28, McLaughlin 0
Lyman 38, Philip 12
Madison 36, West Central 25
McCook Central/Montrose 14, Aberdeen Roncalli 7
Mitchell 22, Douglas 14
North Border 23, Faulkton 20
Parker 50, Viborg-Hurley 13
Pierre 28, Brookings 13
Pine Ridge 46, Crow Creek 6
Placeholder 28, Platte-Geddes 12
Potter County 56, Lower Brule 6
Rapid City Christian 34, Hill City 14
Scotland 40, Gayville-Volin 26
Sioux Falls Christian 45, Elk Point-Jefferson 7
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 27, Rapid City Central 14

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Sioux Falls Washington 29, Rapid City Stevens 28
Sioux Valley 41, Lennox 10
Sisseton 54, Redfield/Doland 22
St. Thomas More 54, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 0
Sturgis 20, Spearfish 6
Sully Buttes 50, Sunshine Bible Academy 0
Tea Area 34, Vermillion 6
Timber Lake 40, Lemmon/McIntosh 22
Todd County 58, Red Cloud 28
Wall 21, Kadoka Area 6
Warner 56, Ipswich/Edmunds Central 6
Webster 39, Great Plains Lutheran 0
Winner 20, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 14
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 26, Chamberlain 13
Yankton 37, Huron 0
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS
Florence/Henry vs. Waverly-South Shore, ppd. to Sep 25th._____

Brutality case in South Dakota handed off due to conflict

WAGNER, S.D. (AP) — A county prosecutor won't handle the case of a South Dakota man whose family and tribe have accused police of excessive force after a weekend pursuit because the man serves as an expert witness for the county.

State's Attorney Steve Cotton won't decide whether to charge Raymond Cournoyer Sr., 64, because Cournoyer is an expert witness on family law and tribal matters. The case will be transferred from Charles Mix County to another county that is currently undecided, the Argus Leader reported .

"In order to avoid any appearance of impropriety, we're going to transfer it over to another office," Cotton said.

Police said Cournoyer was speeding to a nursing home to see his dying mother Sunday when he didn't pull over for a Highway Patrol trooper and an uncertified Wagner officer. Once he made it to the Good Samaritan Center, Cournoyer alleged he told officers in the parking lot he needed to see his mother. He was then held down, shocked with a Taser by the Wagner officer and treated in a hospital. Cournoyer didn't see his mother.

Cournoyer's daughter created a Facebook post Sunday that includes graphic photos of his injuries. The post has since been shared nearly 9,000 times and resulted in an inquiry by the state Division of Criminal Investigation as well as strong criticism from the Yankton Sioux Tribe's elected officials.

The Highway Patrol has defended the trooper's actions. The Wagner Police Department requested a state review, which is ongoing.

Cournoyer served as the coordinator for the Yankton Sioux Tribe's Indian Child Welfare Act for several years. He now testifies for Cotton's office in cases involving the welfare act, which is a federal law outlining the rules for handling Native American children removed from their homes.

"Because he's knowledgeable about child rearing and tribal culture, he's a great expert witness for us," Cotton said.

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

Settlement terms released in Premier Center defects case

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A confidential settlement between Sioux Falls and several contractors over construction defects at the Denny Sanford Premier Center included language that specifically sought to limit what information could be given to the City Council.

The city released the agreement Friday following a South Dakota Supreme Court ruling Thursday. The city announced the settlement over bulging panels in 2015 but didn't provide details, citing a confidentiality agreement. Argus Leader Media sued to force its disclosure.

Under the deal, the only information that was supposed to be released to the public and council was that a \$1 million settlement had been reached, so councilors were not told who paid what.

The deal also allowed the contractors to review any press releases or statements that would be made to the public or council.

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

South Dakota forest officials rush to finish timber analysis

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Forest Service is hurrying to finish an analysis of available timber in South Dakota's Black Hills National Forest following the pine beetle epidemic.

The work usually takes a decade, but forest officials are trying to finish in two years, the Rapid City Journal reported .

Forest officials announced in March the end of a 20-year mountain pine beetle epidemic that affected about 450,000 acres (182,000 hectares), or roughly a third of the forest. The beetles kill pine trees and left large areas of the forest brown.

Officials hope the accelerated analysis will help the Forest Service decide the appropriate amount of logging to allow now that the epidemic has ended. The forest is well-known for its significance in the timber industry.

"It's something we're going to have to wrestle with," said Forest Supervisor Mark Van Every. "What does a sustainable program look like in the Black Hills going into the future?"

Logging continued during the epidemic, and even increased in some areas, as forest managers cleared out dead trees that presented fire hazards and tried to thin dense tree stands where pine beetles thrived.

Van Every said the forest became popular for timber because of a high natural rate of tree regeneration in the Black Hills, the economic health of the local timber industry and the comparatively low number of legal challenges that logging faces.

He discussed the work Wednesday during a Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board meeting in Rapid City. He said forest officials have visited about 200 representative plots scattered across the forest this year and plan to visit 200 more next year to finish the analysis.

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

Drought affects duck hunting wetlands in the Northern Plains

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — When duck hunters in the Northern Plains take to the field this fall, they will find fewer wetlands where they can set up their blinds and float their decoys following a summer of devastating drought.

The number of duck-hunting wetlands in North Dakota is down about 40 percent from last year, to the lowest level in nine years, according to the Game and Fish Department's annual fall wetland survey.

"Some much-needed August precipitation helped green up many areas of the state, but not enough to reverse declining wetland conditions," Migratory Game Bird Biologist Andy Dinges said.

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor map shows 87 percent of North Dakota is in some stage of drought. The number of wetlands north and east of the Missouri River — about three-fourths of the state — is down from last fall, according to Dinges. With many that remain, "hunters should expect some wider mud margins ... possibly making hunting more difficult," he said.

The situation is much the same in South Dakota, where about 72 percent of the state is in some stage of drought. There might be plenty of ducks, but hunters may have to travel farther to find them, said

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Harold Bickner, state chairman for the Ducks Unlimited conservation group.

"I don't think there's any question it's going to have an impact (on hunting) in some areas," he said. "In our (south central) area here, we were really dry in July, and the ducks all moved. They have pretty much moved to big waters" that didn't dry up.

The prevalence of wetlands isn't the only determining factor in how many ducks will be available to hunters in the region. Weather conditions and migration patterns as the birds move south from Canada also are big influences.

An annual study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service released in August estimates the 2017 continental duck population at 47.3 million birds, down slightly from last year but 34 percent higher than the long-term average.

South Dakota's duck season opens Sept. 30 in some areas and Oct. 14 in others. Saturday is opening day for duck hunting in North Dakota, and also in neighboring Minnesota, where drought was not widespread this summer.

The waterfowl migration report of the season, released Thursday by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, said duck hunters should expect fair to good numbers in most areas on opening weekend, based on reports from wildlife managers across the state. The number of breeding ducks in Minnesota is good, and there was a big wild rice crop in northern Minnesota that should encourage ducks to stick around.

Associated Press writer Steve Karnowski contributed to this story from Minneapolis.

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

Enrollment up at Southeast Tech after years of decline

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Enrollment at Southeast Technical Institute had rebounded after five years of decline.

The Sioux Falls tech school says the number of new students has increased 10 percent this fall compared to last year. Total enrollment is up 6.4 percent from last fall.

The Argus Leader reports Southeast Tech president Bob Griggs attributes the growth to expanded program offerings and new partnerships, including one with the University of South Dakota which allows students to go on an earn a four-year degree.

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

Rapper Chief Keef pleads not guilty to South Dakota charges

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Rapper Chief Keef has pleaded not guilty to drug charges in South Dakota.

The rapper whose legal name is Keith Cozart was arrested June 12 at the Sioux Falls airport, where officials say marijuana was found in his carry-on bag. He had been in the city performing at an anti-bullying celebrity basketball event at a local university.

The Argus Leader reports that Cozart returned to Sioux Falls last week to plead not guilty to felony and misdemeanor charges for possessing marijuana, a marijuana edible and drug paraphernalia. His trial is scheduled for Nov. 27. The felony charge against him is punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Cozart is from Chicago. He now lives in Los Angeles.

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

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State GOP party won't reprimand lawmaker over Facebook post

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Republican South Dakota legislator who came under fire for a Facebook post won't be reprimanded by her party.

Rep. Lynne DiSanto of Box Elder shared a meme Sept. 7 depicting protesters being hit by a vehicle. It was posted less than a month after a driver hit counter-protesters at a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, killing a woman. DiSanto removed her post and apologized.

The Argus Leader reports that GOP State Chairman Dan Lederman said in a statement that the party does not tell members what is appropriate when it comes to social media posts.

House Majority Leader Lee Qualm earlier told The Associated Press that the incident won't affect DiSanto's position as House majority whip.

DiSanto did lose her job with a Rapid City-based real estate company.

Supreme Court upholds casino robbery conviction

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the conviction of a man who robbed a casino in Aberdeen.

Thirty-six-year-old Roger Kihega sought an acquittal, new trial or new sentencing for his 2015 conviction. Kihega was sentenced in 2015 to 50 years in prison for robbing the Casino Korner with another man. The Aberdeen American News reports the two men stole \$4,600 after both fired gunshots in the air. No one was injured.

Another man was charged in the case for being the getaway driver.

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

<http://scorestream.com/>

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

05-39-54-63-66, Mega Ball: 15, Megaplier: 5

(five, thirty-nine, fifty-four, sixty-three, sixty-six; Mega Ball: fifteen; Megaplier: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$104 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$53 million

NFL commissioner, players' union angrily denounce Trump

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

SOMERSET, N.J. (AP) — The National Football League and its players' union on Saturday angrily denounced President Donald Trump for suggesting that owners fire players who kneel during the national anthem and that fans consider walking out in protest "when somebody disrespects our flag."

"Divisive comments like these demonstrate an unfortunate lack of respect for the NFL, our great game and all of our players," the league commissioner, Roger Goodell, said in a statement.

DeMaurice Smith, executive director of the NFL Players Association, tweeted: "We will never back down. We no longer can afford to stick to sports."

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Trump, during a political rally in Alabama on Friday night, also blamed a drop in NFL ratings on the nation's interest in "yours truly" as well as what he contended was a decline in violence in the game.

Smith said the union won't shy away from "protecting the constitutional rights of our players as citizens as well as their safety as men who compete in a game that exposes them to great risks."

Trump kept up his foray into the sports world on Saturday, when he responded to comments by Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors, who has made it clear that he's not interested in a traditional White House trip for the NBA champions

"Going to the White House is considered a great honor for a championship team. Stephen Curry is hesitating, therefore invitation is withdrawn!" Trump tweeted while spending the weekend at his golf club in New Jersey.

It was not immediately clear whether Trump was rescinding the invitation for Curry or the entire team.

Several athletes, including a handful of NFL players, have refused to stand during "The Star-Spangled Banner" to protest of the treatment of blacks by police. Quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who started the trend last year when he played for the San Francisco 49ers, hasn't been signed by an NFL team for this season.

Trump, who once owned the New Jersey Generals of the U.S. Football League, said those players are disrespecting the American flag and deserve to lose their jobs.

"That's a total disrespect of our heritage. That's a total disrespect of everything that we stand for," Trump said, encouraging owners to act.

"Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, you'd say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out! He's fired,'" Trump said to loud applause.

Trump also predicted that any owner who followed the presidential encouragement would become "the most popular person in this country" — at least for a week.

The players' union said in a statement that "no man or woman should ever have to choose a job that forces them to surrender their rights. No worker nor any athlete, professional or not, should be forced to become less than human when it comes to protecting their basic health and safety."

The NFLPA said "the line that marks the balance between the rights of every citizen in our great country gets crossed when someone is told to just 'shut up and play.'"

Buffalo Bills running back LeSean McCoy tweeted, "It's really sad man" and then used an obscenity to describe Trump.

On the issue of violence on the field, Trump said players are being thrown out for aggressive tackles, and it's "not the same game."

Over the past several seasons, the NFL and college football have increased penalties and enforcement for illegal hits to the head and for hitting defenseless players. A July report on 202 former football players found evidence of a debilitating brain disease linked to repeated head blows in nearly all of them. The league has agreed to pay \$1 billion to retired players who claimed it misled them about the concussion dangers of playing football.

During his campaign, Trump often expressed nostalgia for the "old days" — claiming, for example, that protesters at his rallies would have been carried out on stretchers back then. He recently suggested police officers should be rougher with criminals and shouldn't protect their heads when pushing them into squad cars.

It's also not the first time he's raised the kneeling issue. Earlier this year he took credit for the fact that Kaepernick hadn't been signed.

Television ratings for the NFL have been slipping since the beginning of the 2016 season. The league and observers have blamed a combination of factors, including competing coverage of last year's presidential election, more viewers dropping cable television, fans' discomfort with the reports of head trauma and the anthem protests.

Ratings have been down even more in the early 2017 season, though broadcasters and the league have blamed the hurricanes that hit Florida and Texas. Still, the NFL remains by far the most popular televised

sport in the United States.

Trump said the anthem protest was the top reason NFL viewership had waned.

"You know what's hurting the game?" he asked. "When people like yourselves turn on television and you see those people taking the knee when they're playing our great national anthem," he said.

Trump encouraged his supporters to pick up and leave the stadium next time they spot a player failing to stand.

"I guarantee things will stop," he said.

Associated Press writer Jill Colvin in Washington contributed to this report.

Trump tells NBA star Curry that White House visit is off

By CATHERINE LUCEY and TIM REYNOLDS, Associated Press

SOMERSET, N.J. (AP) — Stephen Curry and President Donald Trump agree on one thing: The Golden State star is not going to the White House anytime soon.

Trump tweeted Saturday that Curry is no longer invited to the White House because of what the president called hesitation by the two-time NBA MVP in deciding whether to make the traditional champions' trip to Washington. Trump's comment on Curry came one day after the president told NFL owners to fire players who won't stand for the national anthem.

It was not immediately clear whether Trump was rescinding the invitation for Curry or the entire team.

"Going to the White House is considered a great honor for a championship team. Stephen Curry is hesitating, therefore invitation is withdrawn!" Trump wrote from his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey.

The Warriors, who hold their first practice of the season Saturday, had not made a collective decision whether to go to the White House in celebration of last season's title. Curry has said he did not want to make such a visit.

"By acting and not going, hopefully that will inspire some change when it comes to what we tolerate in this country and what is accepted and what we turn a blind eye to," Curry said Friday at the Warriors' media day. "It's not just the act of not going. There are things you have to do on the back end to actually push that message into motion."

The Warriors were expected to comment further later Saturday after their opening practice. Other athletes weighed in quickly, including LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers.

"U bum @StephenCurry30 already said he ain't going!" James tweeted. "So therefore ain't no invite. Going to White House was a great honor until you showed up!"

For Trump, it was the NFL one day, the NBA the next.

At a rally in Alabama on Friday night, Trump said NFL players who refused to stand for "The Star-Spangled Banner" are exhibiting a "total disrespect of our heritage." Several NFL players, starting last season with then-San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick, have either knelt, sat or raised fists during the anthem to protest police treatment of blacks and social injustice.

"That's a total disrespect of everything that we stand for," Trump said, encouraging owners to act. He added, "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, you'd say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out! He's fired.'"

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell strongly backed his league's players.

"Divisive comments like these demonstrate an unfortunate lack of respect for the NFL, our great game and all of our players, and a failure to understand the overwhelming force for good our clubs and players represent in our communities," Goodell said in a statement.

Seattle Seahawks star Richard Sherman said the president's behavior is "unacceptable and needs to be addressed."

"If you do not condemn this divisive rhetoric you are condoning it!!" Sherman tweeted.

Trump also bemoaned what he called a decline in violence in football, noting that it's "not the same game" because players are now either penalized or thrown out of games for aggressive tackles.

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"No man or woman should ever have to choose a job that forces them to surrender their rights," DeMaurice Smith, the NFL Players Association executive director, said Saturday. "No worker nor any athlete, professional or not, should be forced to become less than human when it comes to protecting their basic health and safety."

The NBA did not immediately react to Trump's tweet about Curry. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver told The Players' Tribune in July he believes teams should visit the White House when invited, though also said he would not order anyone to make such a trip.

"I think that these institutions are bigger than any individual politician, any individual elected official," Silver said then. "And it concerns me that something like going to the White House after winning a championship, something that has been a great tradition, would become one that is partisan. I will say, though, even though I think that teams should make decisions as organizations, that I would also respect an individual player's decision not to go."

Trump has met with some teams already in his first year in office.

Clemson visited the White House this year after winning the College Football Playoff, some members of the New England Patriots went after the Super Bowl victory and the Chicago Cubs went to the Oval Office in June to commemorate their World Series title. The Cubs also had the larger and more traditional visit with President Barack Obama in January, four days before the Trump inauguration.

And if the Warriors don't want to meet with Trump, they may still get a welcome in Washington: House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California has said she would like to bring the team to the Capitol.

Reynolds reported from Miami.

New earthquake, magnitude 6.1, shakes jittery Mexico

By PETER ORSI, MARIA VERZA and GISELA SALOMON, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A strong new earthquake shook Mexico on Saturday, toppling already damaged homes and a highway bridge and causing new alarm in a country reeling from two even more powerful quakes this month that together have killed nearly 400 people.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the new, magnitude 6.1 temblor was centered about 11 miles (18 kilometers) south-southeast of Matias Romero in the state of Oaxaca, which was the region most battered by a magnitude 8.1 quake on Sept. 7.

It was among thousands of aftershocks recorded in the wake of that earlier quake, which was the most powerful to hit Mexico in 32 years and killed at least 90 people.

There were some early reports of damage in Oaxaca. The Federal Police agency posted images online showing a collapsed bridge that it said had already been closed due to damage after the Sept. 7 quake.

Bettina Cruz, a resident of Juchitan, Oaxaca, said by phone with her voice still shaking that the new quake felt "horrible."

"Homes that were still standing just fell down," Cruz said. "It's hard. We are all in the streets."

Cruz belongs to a social collective and said that when the new shaking began, she was riding in a truck carrying supplies to victims of the earlier quake.

Nataniel Hernandez said by phone from Tonalá, in the southern state of Chiapas, which was also hit hard by the earlier quake, that it was one of the strongest movements he has felt since then.

"Since Sept. 7 it has not stopped shaking," Hernandez.

U.S. Geological Survey geophysicist Paul Caruso said the new temblor was an aftershock of the 8.1 quake, and after a jolt of that size even buildings left standing can be more vulnerable.

"So a smaller earthquake can cause the damaged buildings to fail," Caruso said.

"At the moment the greatest damage has been to the Ixtaltepec bridge, which should be rebuilt, and structures with previous damage that collapsed," President Enrique Peña Nieto tweeted. He said health workers were patrolling Juchitan to provide help to anyone who needs it.

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Buildings and street signs swayed and seismic alarms sounded in Mexico City, prompting people with fresh memories of Tuesday's magnitude 7.1 temblor that has killed at least 295 across the region to flee homes and hotels. Some were in tears.

Alejandra Castellanos was on the second floor of a hotel in a central neighborhood and ran down the stairs and outside with her husband.

"I was frightened because I thought, not again!" Castellanos said.

Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said there were no reports of significant new damage in the capital, and rescue efforts related to Tuesday's quake were continuing. He reported that two people died of apparent heart attacks during the new temblor.

At the site of an office building that collapsed Tuesday and where an around-the-clock search for survivors was still ongoing, rescuers briefly evacuated from atop the pile of rubble after the morning quake before returning to work.

As rescue operations stretched into Day 5, residents throughout the capital have held out hope that dozens still missing might be found alive. More than half the dead — 157 — perished in the capital, while another 73 died in the state of Morelos, 45 in Puebla, 13 in Mexico State, six in Guerrero and one in Oaxaca.

Along a 60-foot stretch of a bike lane in Mexico City, families huddled under tarps and donated blankets, awaiting word of loved ones trapped in the four-story-high pile of rubble behind them.

"There are moments when you feel like you're breaking down," said Patricia Fernandez Romero, who was waiting Friday for word on the fate of her 27-year-old son. "And there are moments when you're a little calmer. ... They are all moments that you wouldn't wish on anyone."

Families have been sleeping in tents, accepting food and coffee from strangers, people have organized to present a united front to authorities, who they pressed ceaselessly for information.

They were told that water and food had been passed along to at least some of those trapped inside. On Friday morning, after hours of inactivity blamed on rain, rescuers were readying to re-enter the site, joined by teams from Japan and Israel. Fernandez said officials told them they knew where people were trapped on the fourth floor.

It's the moments between those bits of information that torment the families.

"It's that you get to a point when you're so tense, when they don't come out to give us information," she said. "It's so infuriating."

Trump trying to turn around GOP holdouts on health bill

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Unwilling to concede defeat on a bedrock GOP promise, President Donald Trump on Saturday tried to sway two Republican holdouts on the party's last-ditch health care hope while clawing at his nemesis who again has brought the "Obamacare" repeal-and-replace effort to the brink of failure.

Trump appealed to Sen. Lisa Murkowski, a possible "no" vote, to swing around for the sake of Alaskans up in arms over high insurance costs, and suggested that Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul might reverse his stated opposition "for the good of the Party!"

Arizona Sen. John McCain, whose announcement Friday that he would not vote for the proposal seemingly scuttled efforts to revive the repeal, came under renewed criticism from the White House. It was the second time in three months that McCain, at 81 in the twilight of a remarkable career and battling brain cancer, had emerged as the destroyer of his party's signature and yearslong pledge to voters on health care.

"He campaigned on Repeal & Replace. Let Arizona down!" Trump tweeted.

With Senate Democrats unanimously opposed, two is the exact number of GOP votes that Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., can afford to lose. McCain and Paul are in the "no" column, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, is leaning against the bill and Murkowski is also a possible "no."

But Trump isn't letting go, as seen by his series of tweets while he spends the weekend at his New Jersey golf club.

Aiming at Murkowski, Trump cited increases in premiums and other costs in Alaska under the Affordable

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Care Act. "Deductibles high, people angry! Lisa M comes through," he wrote.

Trump, without offering support for his assertion about former presidential rival Paul, said: "I know Rand Paul and I think he may find a way to get there for the good of the Party!"

But there was no doubt where Trump stood on McCain.

"John McCain never had any intention of voting for this Bill," Trump said. The measure was co-written by South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, McCain's closest Senate ally, and Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La.

"McCain let his best friend L.G. down!" Trump said, adding that the health bill was "great for Arizona."

McCain, in explaining that he could not "in good conscience" vote for the legislation, said both parties "could do better working together" but hadn't "really tried." He also he could not support the measure "without knowing how much it will cost, how it will affect insurance premiums, and how many people will be helped or hurt by it."

His opposition all but ensured a major setback for Trump and McConnell, and appeared likely to deepen rifts between congressional Republicans and a president who has begun making deals with Democrats out of frustration with his own party's failure to turn proposals into laws.

During the election campaign Trump had pledged to quickly kill the Affordable Care Act — "It will be easy," he contended — and he has publicly chided McConnell for not winning passage before now.

Up until McCain's announcement, McConnell allies were optimistic McCain's relationship with Graham might make the difference. GOP leaders hoped to bring the legislation to the full Senate this coming week. They face a Sept. 30 deadline, at which point special rules that prevent a Democratic filibuster will expire.

Democrats hailed McCain's announcement and pledged to commit to the bipartisan process he sought. GOP Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Democratic Sen. Patty Murray of Washington have been working on a package of limited legislative fixes to the health law's marketplaces.

"John McCain shows the same courage in Congress that he showed when he was a naval aviator," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "I have assured Sen. McCain that as soon as repeal is off the table, we Democrats are intent on resuming the bipartisan process."

Trump charged that Schumer "sold John McCain a bill of goods. Sad."

The Graham-Cassidy bill would repeal major pillars of the health law and replace them with block grants to states to design their own programs.

"Large Block Grants to States is a good thing to do. Better control & management," Trump tweeted.

But major medical groups said millions of people would lose insurance coverage and protections. A bipartisan group of governors announced their opposition.

The House passed its own repeal bill back in May, prompting Trump to convene a Rose Garden celebration, which soon began to look premature.

After the Senate failed in several attempts in July, the legislation looked dead. But Cassidy kept at it with his state-focused approach, and the effort caught new life in recent weeks as the deadline neared. Trump pushed hard, hungry for a win.

The bill would get rid of unpopular mandates for people to carry insurance or face penalties. It would repeal the financing for Obama's health insurance expansion and create a big pot of money states could tap to set up their own programs, with less federal oversight. It would limit spending for Medicaid, the federal-state program that now covers more than 70 million low-income people. Insurance rules that protect people with pre-existing conditions could be loosened through state waivers.

Over time, the legislation would significantly reduce federal health care dollars now flowing to the states. But McConnell had little margin for error in a Senate split 52-48 between Republicans and Democrats, and could lose only two votes, counting on Pence to break the tie.

Associated Press writers Erica Werner, Alan Fram and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar in Washington contributed to this report.

Powerless Puerto Rico's storm crisis deepens with dam threat

By DANICA COTO, Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rican officials could not communicate with more than half the towns in the U.S. territory as they rushed to evacuate tens of thousands of people downstream of a failing dam and the massive scale of the disaster wrought by Hurricane Maria started to become clear.

Authorities launched an evacuation of the 70,000 people living downstream from the Guajataca Dam in northwest Puerto Rico, sending buses to move people away Friday and posting frantic warnings on Twitter that went unseen by many in the blacked-out coastal area.

"This is an EXTREMELY DANGEROUS SITUATION," the National Weather Service wrote. "All the areas around the Guajataca River must evacuate NOW. Your lives are in DANGER."

The 345-yard (316-meter) dam, which was built around 1928, holds back a man-made lake covering about 2 square miles (5 square kilometers). More than 15 inches (nearly 40 centimeters) of rain fell on the surrounding mountains after the Category 4 Maria left the island Wednesday afternoon, swelling the reservoir behind the nearly 90-year-old dam.

An engineer inspecting the dam reported a "contained breach" that officials quickly realized was a crack that could be the first sign of total failure of the dam, U.S. National Weather Service meteorologist Anthony Reynes said.

"There's no clue as to how long or how this can evolve. That is why the authorities are moving so fast because they also have the challenges of all the debris. It is a really, really dire situation," Reynes said.

Government spokesman Carlos Bermudez said that officials could not reach 40 of the 78 municipalities on the island more than two days after the hurricane crossed the island, toppling power lines and cellphone towers and sending floodwaters cascading through city streets.

Officials said 1,360 of the island's 1,600 cellphone towers had been downed, and 85 percent of above-ground and underground phone and internet cables were knocked out. With roads blocked and phones dead, officials said, the situation may be worse than they know.

"We haven't seen the extent of the damage," Gov. Ricardo Rossello told reporters in the capital. Rossello couldn't say when power might be restored.

Maj. Gen. Derek P. Rydholm, deputy to the chief of the Air Force Reserve, said at the Pentagon that it was impossible to say when communication and power would be restored. He said mobile communications systems are being flown in.

But Rydholm acknowledged "it's going to take a while" before people in Puerto Rico will be able to communicate with their families outside the island. Until Friday, he said, "there was no real understanding at all of the gravity of the situation."

The island's electric grid was in sorry shape long before Maria 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.

"Some transmission structures collapsed," Rossello said, adding that there was no severe damage to electric plants.

He said he was distributing 250 satellite phones from FEMA to mayors across the island to re-establish contact.

The death toll from Maria stood at six, but was likely to rise.

At least 27 lives in all have been lost around the Caribbean, including at least 15 on hard-hit Dominica. Haiti reported three deaths; Guadeloupe, two; and the Dominican Republic, one.

Across Puerto Rico, more than 15,000 people are in shelters, including some 2,000 rescued from the north coastal town of Toa Baja.

Some of the island's 3.4 million people planned to head to the U.S. to temporarily escape the devastation. At least in the short term, though, the soggy misery will continue: Additional rain — up to 6 inches (15 centimeters) — is expected through Saturday.

In San Juan, Neida Febus wandered around her neighborhood with bowls of cooked rice, ground meat

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and avocado, offering food to the hungry. The damage was so extensive, the 64-year-old retiree said, that she didn't think the power would be turned back on until Christmas.

"This storm crushed us from one end of the island to the other," she said.

Secretary of State Luis Marin said he expects gasoline supplies to be at 80 percent of capacity because the port in the southeastern town of Yabucoa that receives fuel shipments received minor damage.

Hour-long lines formed at the few gas stations that reopened on Friday and anxious residents feared power could be out for weeks — or even months — and wondered how they would cope.

"I'm from here. I believe we have to step up to the task. If everyone leaves, what are we going to do? With all the pros and the cons, I will stay here," Israel Molina, 68, who lost roofing from his San Juan mini-market to the storm, said, and then paused. "I might have a different response tomorrow."

South Korea says natural North Korea earthquake detected

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea's weather agency said a magnitude 3.2 earthquake was detected in North Korea on Saturday close to where the country recently conducted a nuclear test, but it assessed the quake as natural.

The quake was detected in an area around Kilju, in northeastern North Korea, just 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) northwest of where the North conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test on Sept. 3, according to an official from Seoul's Korea Meteorological Administration.

The area isn't where natural earthquakes normally occur. A South Korean expert said the quake could have been caused by geological stress created from the recent nuclear explosion. Other possible causes include landslides or the collapsing of test structures such as tunnels, said Hong Tae-kyung, a professor at the department of Earth System Sciences at Yonsei University.

"It could be a natural earthquake that really was man-made as the nuclear test would have transferred a lot of stress," he said. "The quake is small enough to suspect that it could have been caused by a tunnel collapse, and satellite data shows there have been many landslides in the area since the nuclear test."

China's official Xinhua News Agency said the country's seismic service detected a magnitude 3.4 quake in North Korea and saw the likely cause as an explosion. But the South Korean weather agency official said the analysis of seismic waves and the lack of sound waves clearly showed that the quake wasn't caused by an artificial explosion. She spoke on condition of anonymity, citing office rules.

Another Korea Meteorological Administration official, who also didn't want to be named, said the agency saw the possibility of the earthquake being caused by a tunnel collapse as low.

The U.S. Geological Survey said that it detected a magnitude 3.5 quake in the area of previous North Korean nuclear tests, but that it was unable to confirm whether the event was natural.

North Korea's weakest nuclear test, its first one, conducted in 2006, generated a magnitude 4.3 quake. The USGS measured this month's nuclear test at magnitude 6.3. The latest test was followed by a second magnitude 4.1 quake that experts said could have been caused by landslides or a tunnel collapsing after the explosion.

Analysts examining satellite images of North Korea's mountainous test site after the latest nuclear test said they spotted landslides and surface disturbances that were more numerous and widespread than what was seen from any of the five previous tests.

North Korea has been maintaining a torrid pace in nuclear and weapons tests as it accelerates its pursuit of nuclear weapons that could viably target the United States and its allies in Asia.

North Korea said its recent nuclear test was a detonation of a thermonuclear weapon built for its developmental intercontinental ballistic missiles. In two July flight tests, those missiles showed potential capability to reach deep into the U.S. mainland when perfected.

Meetings with Prince Harry, Canadian PM for Melania Trump

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Melania Trump is set to take her biggest step yet as first lady.

She's leading the U.S. delegation to an international sporting event for wounded service members, her first solo trip outside the United States to represent her adopted country.

On the agenda for daylong stop Saturday in Toronto: a first-time meeting with Britain's Prince Harry, founder of the Invictus Games; a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau; remarks at a reception for the nearly 100 American athletes participating in the weeklong Olympic-style competition; and attending the opening ceremony.

Her decision to lead the American delegation, whose members include Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, professional golfer Nancy Lopez and entertainer Wayne Newton, reflects the first lady's "utmost respect" for the hard work, courage and sacrifice of the U.S. military, said Stephanie Grisham, a spokeswoman for Mrs. Trump.

"She feels strongly that they - and their families - should be honored every day," Grisham said.

Grisham said Mrs. Trump also has "great admiration for the role the games have played in empowering those who have been injured while serving."

At an event last week marking the 70th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force, the first lady thanked the many members of the military who assisted thousands people in Texas, Louisiana, Florida and the Caribbean whose lives were upended by recent hurricanes.

A native of Slovenia who became a U.S. citizen in 2006, Mrs. Trump also thanked service members' families.

"You endure time apart, are expected to move when new orders come in, and face the uncertainty that can come in times of need," she said at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, before introducing President Donald Trump. "This kind of lifestyle requires its own kind of courage and your sacrifices do not go unnoticed or unappreciated."

Mrs. Trump has been slowly warming up to her new role, waiting to move to the White House until her 11-year-old son finished the school year in New York and holding few public events of her own. She accompanied the president on his three overseas trips so far this year.

Prince Harry established the Invictus Games in 2014 for sick and wounded service members from around the globe. More than 550 individuals from 17 countries are expected to participate in 12 sports during the coming week, ranging from cycling to wheelchair tennis to sitting volleyball.

London was the setting for the inaugural event in 2015, followed by Orlando, Florida, last year.

Mrs. Trump's participation continues White House involvement with the games, which were launched during President Barack Obama's tenure.

Jill Biden, wife of then-Vice President Joe Biden, led the U.S. delegation to London as part of a military initiative undertaken with then-first lady Michelle Obama. Mrs. Obama helped open last year's competition in Orlando.

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Trump travel ban expires Sunday; new ban may vary by country

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The next version of President Donald Trump's travel ban could include new, more tailored restrictions on travelers from additional countries.

The Department of Homeland Security has recommended the president impose the new, targeted restrictions on foreign nationals from countries it says refuse to share sufficient information with the U.S. or haven't taken necessary security precautions. The restrictions could vary by country, officials said.

Trump's ban on visitors from six Muslim-majority nations, which sparked protests and a flurry of lawsuits, was set to expire Sunday, 90 days after it took effect.

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Acting Homeland Security Secretary Elaine Duke "has recommended actions that are tough and that are tailored, including restrictions and enhanced screening for certain countries," Miles Taylor, counselor to Duke, told reporters on a conference call Friday.

Officials refused to say how many countries — and which countries — might be affected, insisting the president had yet to make a final decision on how to proceed. Trump huddled with Duke, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, his director of national intelligence and his national security adviser Friday to discuss the issue, White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said.

Taylor said the recommendations were based on whether countries were providing U.S. authorities with enough information to validate the identities of potential immigrants and visitors and to determine whether or not they posed a threat. The recommendations were first reported by the Wall Street Journal on Friday.

Trump's travel ban executive orders remain two of the most controversial actions of his administration. The ban, which went into effect in late June, barred citizens of Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen who lacked a "credible claim of a bona fide relationship with a person or entity in the United States" from entering the country. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments on the constitutionality of the ban next month.

Officials described the process of reaching the new recommendations as far more deliberate and systematic than Trump's original travel ban order, which was signed just days after he took office with little consultation or input outside the White House.

Homeland Security said it had worked with other agencies to develop a comprehensive new baseline for foreign nationals based on factors like whether their countries issued passports with biometric information to prevent fraud and shared information about travelers' terror-related and criminal histories.

Taylor described what he said was "our guiding principle."

"We need to know who is coming into our country. We should be able to validate their identities, and we should be able to confirm that our foreign partners do have information suggesting such individuals may represent a threat to the United States," he said.

The U.S. then shared the new baseline requirements with every foreign government in July and gave them 50 days to comply.

While most countries already met the standards, officials said that some that didn't have made changes that put them in compliance. Other countries, however, were unable or "deliberately unwilling" to comply. Citizens of those countries would be denied entry or face other travel restrictions until their governments made changes.

Trump had originally tried to ban the entry of nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries, including Iraq, in his January order, but scaled back his efforts in a more narrowly tailored version written to better withstand legal scrutiny in March. Trump later derided that second order on Twitter as "watered down" and "politically correct."

After a bomb partially exploded on a London subway last week, Trump once again called for a tougher ban.

"The travel ban into the United States should be far larger, tougher and more specific — but stupidly, that would not be politically correct!" he wrote on Twitter.

The administration has argued the ban was necessary to give it time to complete a thorough review of screening procedures and information sharing to make sure that those who enter the country don't pose a safety risk.

Critics accuse the president of overstepping his authority and violating the Constitution's protections against religious bias by targeting Muslims. Trump had called for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" during his campaign.

The American Civil Liberties Union, one of the groups challenging the ban in court, described the proposed changes as "an apparent effort to paper over the original sin of the Muslim ban."

"This looks to be the Trump administration's third try to make good on an unconstitutional campaign promise to ban Muslims from the United States," ACLU Executive Director Anthony D. Romero said in a

statement.

A new travel policy could also complicate the Supreme Court's review, scheduled for argument on Oct. 10. The court could order the parties to submit written arguments about what should happen next, and it might dismiss the case or return it to lower courts for a fresh analysis of the changed circumstances.

Associated Press writer Mark Sherman contributed to this report.

Follow Colvin on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

Trump says he's putting political neck on line in Ala. race

By CATHERINE LUCEY and KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) — President Donald Trump tried to convince Alabama conservatives that the establishment choice in a Republican runoff for Senate shares their revulsion of Washington politics, contending that Sen. Luther Strange is a "swamp" fighter without close ties to GOP leaders.

Before thousands of cheering supporters Friday night in Huntsville, Trump acknowledged that he was putting his political neck on the line for Strange, appointed in February to temporarily fill the vacancy created when GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions became Trump's attorney general.

Trump said he hadn't wanted to get involved in a primary race, but he praised Strange's loyalty and said Strange had wrongly been branded an establishment insider.

Trump asserted that Strange, as a Senate newcomer, barely knew Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "Luther is a tough, tough cookie. He doesn't deal with and kowtow to anybody."

A political action committee tied to McConnell is heavily supporting Strange in Tuesday's tight race against former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, known for opposing gay marriage and pushing unsuccessfully for the public display of the Ten Commandments.

The winner will face Democrat Doug Jones in December.

In a freewheeling speech punctuated by chanting from the crowd, Trump said he appreciated Strange's support during the push to overhaul President Barack Obama's health care law, and he said Strange would better advance the Trump agenda. The president insisted he was taking a political risk and said that if Strange were to lose, the media are "going to go after me."

Trump argued that Moore would have a harder time winning the general election against Jones, but Trump also promised to campaign "like hell" for Moore if he were the nominee.

Moore is favored by many Trump's supporters and allies, including former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon and former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, who headlined a rally for Moore Thursday night, where she said Moore was best qualified to bring change to Washington.

Moore also appears to have the support of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, though a Carson confidant insisted Carson's praise wasn't an endorsement.

In a statement released by Moore's campaign, Carson called the former judge a "fine man of proven character and integrity" who "reflects the Judeo-Christian values that were so important to the establishment of our country."

But Carson confidant Armstrong Williams insisted the praise was "not an endorsement" and said Carson was "just showing support for his friend."

While Trump emphasized his support for Strange, his hour-plus speech also touched on his White House agenda, his recent appearance at the U.N. General Assembly and many campaign themes.

He called North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a "madman." He criticized Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., for opposing Republican efforts to repeal and replace former President Barack Obama's health care law. He said NFL owners should fire players who kneel during the national anthem. He discussed his long-promised border wall. He said allegations of Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. election were a "hoax." And he highlighted his election victory.

Trump's visit was intended to reward Strange's loyalty, but also came at the urging of top Republicans,

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who worry Moore would be a disruptive figure in the Senate or might even lose to Jones.

Still, those at the rally were united in support of Trump, but divided over who should be the state's next senator. And for some Alabama Republicans, the support of a president they adore wasn't enough to dissuade them from supporting Moore.

"Vote for Roy Moore, a man of God," Cal Zastrow repeated to the supporters filing into the Von Braun Civic Center, often getting a thumbs up or enthusiastic "I am" in reply.

One of those was Laura Skipper. She attended rallies in support of Moore in 2003 when he was removed as Alabama chief justice.

"I am a huge supporter of President Trump. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the president, but I am a Moore supporter. I love what he stands for," Skipper said.

Associated Press writers Erica Werner and Jill Colvin in Washington contributed to this report.

China imposes limit on oil supply to North Korea

By JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China announced Saturday that it will limit energy supplies to North Korea and stop buying its textiles under U.N. sanctions imposed over its nuclear and missile development, further reducing support from Pyongyang's last ally.

Exports of refined petroleum to the North will be limited to 2 million barrels per year, effective Jan. 1, the Commerce Ministry said. Sales of liquefied natural gas are banned outright.

North Korea depends on China for almost all its oil and gas but estimates of its consumption are low, leaving it unclear how Beijing's new limit will affect them. The restrictions announced Saturday do not apply to crude oil, which makes up the biggest share of energy exports to the North.

China also will ban textile imports from the North, the ministry said. Textiles are believed to be the North's biggest source of foreign revenue following rounds of U.N. sanctions under which Beijing cut off purchases of coal, iron ore, seafood and other goods.

China accounts for some 90 percent of the North's trade, making its cooperation critical to efforts to derail Pyongyang's nuclear and missile development.

Chinese leaders were long the North's diplomatic protectors but express increasing frustration with the government of Kim Jong Un. They support the latest U.N. Security Council sanctions but are reluctant to push Pyongyang too hard for fear Kim's government might collapse. They also argue against doing anything that might hurt ordinary North Koreans.

Chinese officials complain their country bears the cost of enforcing sanctions, which have hurt businesses in its northeast that trade with the North.

The U.N. Security Council voted Sept. 11 to limit fuel supplies and ban the North's textile exports. China, one of five permanent council members with power to veto U.N. action, agreed to the measure after the United States toned down a proposal for a complete oil embargo.

Petroleum exports for use in the North's ballistic missile program or other activities banned by U.N. sanctions also are prohibited, the Commerce Ministry said.

The U.S. government's Energy Information Agency estimates the North's 2016 daily imports from China at 15,000 barrels of crude oil and 6,000 barrels of refined products. That would be the equivalent of almost 5.5 million barrels of crude and 2.2 million barrels of refined products for the full year.

North Korea has abundant coal but depends almost entirely on imports for oil and gas.

North Korean textile exports in 2016 totaled \$750 million, according to South Korea's Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency. It said nearly 80 percent went to China.

Families of missing in Mexico quake still hold out hope

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN and MARIA VERZA, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hope mixed with fear Friday on a 60-foot stretch of a bike lane in downtown Mexico City, where families huddled under tarps and donated blankets, awaiting word of their loved ones trapped in the four-story-high pile of rubble behind them.

On Day 4 of the search for survivors of the 7.1-magnitude earthquake that brought down the seven-floor office building and many others, killing at least 295 people, hope rose and fell on the small things. A change in the weather, word that Japanese rescuers — strangers from half a world away — had joined the recovery effort, officials' assurances that people remained alive inside, a call from a familiar number.

For Patricia Fernandez Romero, who spent the morning on a yellow folding stool under a handwritten list with the names of the 46 missing, it was remembering how badly her 27-year-old son, Ivan Colin Fernandez, sang and realizing how much she wanted to hear him again.

"There are moments when you feel like you're breaking down," Fernandez said. "And there are moments when you're a little calmer. ... They are all moments that you wouldn't wish on anyone."

The families have been camped out since the quake hit Tuesday. More than half of the dead —157 — perished in the capital, while another 73 died in the state of Morelos, 45 in Puebla, 13 in Mexico State, six in Guerrero and one in Oaxaca.

Among the dead in Mexico City, eight victims were foreigners, the city's morgue service announced.

They included four Taiwanese women. One of the buildings that collapsed in the quake housed a business listed as Asia Jenny Importaciones, S.A. de C.V. A South Korean man was also confirmed dead.

A Panamanian woman died, as did one man from Spain and one from Argentina.

Some of the areas hardest hit by building collapses included part of the city's near west side that are favored by foreigners.

It was in that area, along the bike lane, where families of the missing slept in tents, accepting food and coffee from strangers — people have organized to present a united front to authorities, who they pressed ceaselessly for information about their loved ones.

They were told that water and food had been passed along to at least some of those trapped inside. On Friday morning, after hours of inactivity blamed on rain, rescuers were readying to re-enter the site, joined by teams from Japan and Israel. Fernandez said officials told them they knew where people were trapped on the fourth floor.

It's the moments between those bits of information that torment the families.

"It's that you get to a point when you're so tense, when they don't come out to give us information," she said. "It's so infuriating."

Jose Gutierrez, a civil engineer attached to the rescue who has a relative trapped in the wreckage, gathered other families of the missing to let them know what was going on.

"My family is in there. I want them to get out," Gutierrez said, his voice breaking. "So ... we go onward."

A roller coaster of emotions played out on Friday for Roberta Villegas Miguel, who was awaiting word of her 37-year-old son, Paulino Estrada Villegas, an accountant who worked on the fourth floor and is married with two young daughters.

Wrapped in a fuzzy turquoise blanket against the morning chill she said that her daughter-in-law was contacted by a friend who said she had received a call from a cell number that belonged to her son, but there was no conversation. Her daughter-in-law ran to authorities with the information, but hours later returned to say that it was her husband's old cell number. At first they held out hope that he had given his old phone's SIM card to a co-worker who was using it to call out of the building. But eventually authorities traced the call to Queretaro state, extinguishing the latest glimmer of hope.

The arrival of rain late Thursday and the resulting work suspension drove Villegas' optimism down. But Friday morning the arrival of the Japanese rescuers buoyed her once again.

"We want to be hopeful," Villegas said. "We don't want to lose faith."

Francisco Javier Mendez, whose daughter, Ana Laura, is also believed trapped inside the building, said

his family had been told there were three points inside the collapsed structure where rescuers believe there are people, but only one where there are signs of life.

"They know because they have detected the warmth," he said. "What they don't know is how many or how long they will last. Maybe six, they said."

Asked how it felt to know that perhaps there were only six survivors, the only word he could get out was "anguish."

Meanwhile, the time was nearing for bulldozers to be brought in to clear rubble and replace the delicate work of rescuers, though officials went to great pains to say it was still a rescue operation.

National Civil Defense chief Luis Felipe Puente acknowledged that backhoes and bulldozers were starting to clear away some wrecked buildings where no life has 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."

Back at the bike path, Cristal Estrada paced back and forth near the tent where she spent the night and worried about her missing brother, Martin Estrada, a 31-year-old accountant with a wife and three children, including a 4-month-old baby girl. She said she was frustrated not be able to personally help remove the rubble.

"They keep telling us there is life in there, but we keep on waiting," Estrada said. "There is life, yes, but we do not know if it is my brother's."

"They do not have much time left in there," she added.

Federal government notifies 21 states of election hacking

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and JAKE PEARSON, Associated Press

The federal government on Friday told election officials in 21 states that hackers targeted their systems before last year's presidential election.

The notification came roughly a year after U.S. Department of Homeland Security officials first said states were targeted by hacking efforts possibly connected to Russia. The states that told The Associated Press they had been targeted included some key political battlegrounds, such as Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.

The AP contacted every state election office to determine which ones had been informed that their election systems had been targeted. The others confirming were Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Washington.

Being targeted does not mean that sensitive voter data was manipulated or results were changed. A hacker targeting a system without getting inside is similar to a burglar circling a house checking for unlocked doors and windows.

Even so, the widespread nature of the attempts and the yearlong lag time in notification from Homeland Security raised concerns among some election officials and lawmakers.

For many states, the Friday calls were the first official confirmation of whether their states were on the list — even though state election officials across the country have been calling for months for the federal government to share information about any hacks, as have members of Congress.

"It is completely unacceptable that it has taken DHS over a year to inform our office of Russian scanning of our systems, despite our repeated requests for information," California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, a Democrat, said in a statement. "The practice of withholding critical information from elections officials is a detriment to the security of our elections and our democracy."

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, of Virginia, the top Democrat on a committee that's investigating Russian meddling in last year's election, has been pushing the department for months to reveal the identities of the targeted states. He said states need such information in real time so they can strengthen their cyber defenses.

"We have to do better in the future," he said.

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Homeland Security said it recognizes that state and local officials should be kept informed about cybersecurity risks to election infrastructure.

"We are working with them to refine our processes for sharing this information while protecting the integrity of investigations and the confidentiality of system owners," it said in a statement.

The government did not say who was behind the hacking attempts or provide details about what had been sought. But election officials in several states said the attempts were linked to Russia.

The Wisconsin Election Commission, for example, said the state's systems were targeted by "Russian government cyber actors." Alaska Elections Division Director Josie Bahnke said computers in Russia were scanning election systems looking for vulnerabilities.

A spokeswoman for Indiana Secretary of State Connie Lawson, the president of National Association of Secretaries of State, said Lawson requested a list of the states where there were hacking efforts. In most cases, states said they were told the systems were not breached.

Federal officials said that in most of the 21 states the targeting was preparatory activity such as scanning computer systems.

The targets included voter registration systems but not vote tallying software. Officials said there were some attempts to compromise networks but most were unsuccessful.

Only Illinois reported that hackers had succeeded in breaching its voter systems.

Other states said their cybersecurity efforts turned back efforts to get to crucial information.

"There are constant attempts by bad actors to hack our systems," Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate, a Republican, said in a statement. "But we continue to deflect those attempts."

Colorado said the hacking wasn't quite a breach.

"It's really reconnaissance by a bad guy to try and figure out how we would break into your computer," said Trevor Timmons, a spokesman for the Colorado secretary of state's office. "It's not an attack. I wouldn't call it a probe. It's not a breach, it's not a penetration."

Earlier this year, a leaked National Security Agency report detailed that hackers obtained information from a company that provided software to manage voter registrations in eight states. The May report said hackers sent phishing emails to 122 local election officials just before the November 2016 election in an attempt to break into their systems.

The latest disclosure to the states comes as a special counsel investigates whether there was any coordination during the 2016 presidential campaign between Russia and associates of Donald Trump.

Trump, a Republican who defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton in the presidential election, has called the Russia story a hoax. He says Russian President Vladimir Putin "vehemently denied" the conclusions of numerous American intelligence agencies.

For states that were told they were not targets, the news brought relief.

"This is one time we like being at the bottom of the list," said Lisa Strimple, a spokeswoman for Nebraska's secretary of state.

Associated Press statehouse reporters around the country contributed to this report.

Follow Mulvihill and Pearson at <http://www.twitter.com/geoffmulvihill> and <https://twitter.com/JakePearsonAP>

This story has been corrected to show that a spokeswoman for the president of the National Association of Secretaries of State said a request had been made for the list of states that were targeted, not a spokeswoman for the organization.

Trump says NFL should fire players who kneel during anthem

By JILL COLVIN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) — President Donald Trump says National Football League owners should fire players who kneel during the national anthem. And he's encouraging spectators to walk out in protest.

In an extended riff during a freewheeling rally speech in Alabama Friday night, Trump also bemoaned that football games have become less violent.

"They're ruining the game," he complained.

Several athletes, including a handful of NFL players, have refused to stand during "The Star-Spangled Banner" to protest of the treatment of blacks by police. Quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who started the trend last year when he played for the San Francisco 49ers, hasn't been signed by an NFL team for this season.

Trump says those players are disrespecting the flag and deserve to lose their jobs.

"That's a total disrespect of our heritage. That's a total disrespect of everything that we stand for," he said, encouraging owners to act.

"Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, you'd say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now. Out! He's fired,'" Trump said to loud applause.

Trump also predicted that any owner who went through with his encouragement would become "the most popular person in this country" — at least for a week.

Trump, who was in Alabama campaigning for Sen. Luther Strange, also blamed a decline in NFL ratings on the nation's interest in "yours truly" as well as what he described as a decline in violence in the game.

He said players are being thrown out for aggressive tackles, and it's "not the same game."

Over the past several seasons, the NFL and college football have increased penalties and enforcement for illegal hits to the head and for hitting defenseless players. A July report on 202 former football players found evidence of a debilitating brain disease linked to repeated head blows in nearly all of them. The league has agreed to pay \$1 billion to retired players who claimed it misled them about the concussion dangers of playing football.

During his campaign, Trump often expressed nostalgia for the "old days" — claiming, for example, that protesters at his rallies would have been carried out on stretchers back then. He recently suggested police officers should be rougher with criminals and shouldn't protect their heads when pushing them into squad cars.

It's also not the first time he's raised the kneeling issue. Earlier this year he took credit for the fact that Kaepernick hadn't been signed.

Television ratings for the NFL have been slipping since the beginning of the 2016 season. The league and observers have blamed a combination of factors, including competing coverage of last year's presidential election, more viewers dropping cable television, fans' discomfort with the reports of head trauma and the anthem protests.

Ratings have been down even more in the early 2017 season, though broadcasters and the league have blamed the hurricanes that hit Florida and Texas. Still, the NFL remains by far the most popular televised sport in the United States.

Trump said the anthem protest was the top reason NFL viewership had waned.

"You know what's hurting the game?" he asked. "When people like yourselves turn on television and you see those people taking the knee when they're playing our great national anthem," he said.

Trump encouraged his supporters to pick up and leave the stadium next time they spot a player failing to stand.

"I guarantee things will stop," he said.

Colvin reported from Washington.

Trump promises Alabama Sen. Strange will 'drain the swamp'

By CATHERINE LUCEY and KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) — President Donald Trump implored his supporters Friday to get behind an establishment-backed incumbent in a Republican runoff race in Alabama, arguing that Sen. Luther Strange will “drain the swamp” and doesn’t know the Senate Majority Leader “at all.”

Acknowledging he was putting his own political capital on the line, the president insisted to thousands of cheering fans in Huntsville, Alabama, that backing Strange — who was appointed in February to temporarily fill the seat that opened up when Jeff Sessions became attorney general — would help further the Trump agenda.

“We can only win the fights and we can only drain the swamp if we have smart, tough, tenacious leaders who know who they are and know how to deliver,” Trump said. “Luther Strange is our man.”

Despite Trump’s endorsement and heavy spending by a super political action committee tied to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Strange remains locked in a tight race against former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, a jurist known for opposing gay marriage and pushing unsuccessfully for the public display of the Ten Commandments. The runoff vote will be held Tuesday.

Trump said Strange had wrongly been branded an establishment insider, saying people have unfairly claimed Strange is “friendly with Mitch.” Trump called that a “bum rap.”

He also praised Strange for agreeing to back Republican health care legislation with no strings attached, saying, “That’s the coolest thing that’s happened to me in six months.”

Trump noted the Alabama race was close, but said he appreciated Strange’s support during the push to overhaul President Barack Obama’s health care law. Said Trump, “We have to be loyal in life.”

And Trump insisted he was taking a political risk, saying if Strange loses, “they’re going to go after me.”

Moore is favored by many of Trump’s supporters and allies, including former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon and former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, who headlined a rally for Moore Thursday night.

Moore also appears to have the support of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson — though a confidant insisted his praise wasn’t an endorsement.

In a statement released by Moore’s campaign, Carson called the former judge a “fine man of proven character and integrity” who “reflects the Judeo-Christian values that were so important to the establishment of our country.”

But Armstrong Williams insisted the praise was “not an endorsement” and said Carson was “just showing support for his friend.”

The president acknowledged he had friends who supported Moore — Including some who worked for Trump, though he joked, “They may not have a job by Monday.”

Trump argued Moore will have a harder time winning the general election against Democrat Doug Jones, but still promised to campaign “like hell” for Moore if he wins.

While Trump emphasized his support for Strange, his freewheeling speech also delved into his White House agenda, as well as many of his campaign themes.

He lashed out at North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, calling him a “madman.” He criticized Sen. John McCain for opposing Republican efforts to repeal and replace former President Barack Obama’s health care law. He discussed his long-promised border wall, called allegations of Russian election meddling a “hoax,” and relived his 2016 general election victory at length.

Alabamians attending the Friday night rally were united in support of Trump, but divided over who should be the state’s next senator. And for some Alabama Republicans, the support of a president they adore wasn’t enough to dissuade them from supporting Moore.

“Vote for Roy Moore, a man of God,” Cal Zastrow repeated to the supporters filing into the Von Braun Civic Center, often getting a thumbs up or enthusiastic “I am” in reply.

One of those was Laura Skipper. She attended rallies in support of Moore in 2003 when he was removed as Alabama chief justice.

“I am a huge supporter of President Trump. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the president, but

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I am a Moore supporter. I love what he stands for," Skipper said.

Moore led Strange in the first round of GOP voting, but not by enough to avoid the runoff. The two Republicans 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.

Both have emphasized their support for Trump, who remains popular in the deep red state.

Trump allies say he is genuinely appreciative of Strange's loyalty and support. The visit also the urging of top Republicans, who worry Moore would be a disruptive figure in the Senate, or might even lose to Democrat Doug Jones. 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.

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. He is also being boosted by conservative website Breitbart News and the Great America Alliance, an advocacy group that supports Trump.

— Lucey reported from Washington. AP Congressional Correspondent Erica Werner and Jill Colvin in Washington contributed to this report.

GOP's 'Obamacare' repeal all but dead; McCain deals the blow

By ERICA WERNER and ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. John McCain declared his opposition Friday to the GOP's last-ditch effort to repeal and replace "Obamacare," dealing a likely death blow to the legislation and, perhaps, to the Republican Party's years of vows to kill the program. It was the second time in three months the 81-year-old McCain emerged as the destroyer of his party's signature promise to voters.

"I believe we could do better working together, Republicans and Democrats, and have not yet really tried," McCain said of the bill, co-written by Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, his best friend in the Senate, and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana. "Nor could I support it without knowing how much it will cost, how it will affect insurance premiums, and how many people will be helped or hurt by it."

McCain, who is battling brain cancer in the twilight of a remarkable career, said he could not "in good conscience" vote for the legislation. That all but ensured a major setback for President Donald Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and appeared likely to deepen rifts between congressional Republicans and a president who has begun making deals with Democrats out of frustration with his own party's failure to turn proposals into laws.

During the election campaign Trump had pledged to quickly kill President Barack Obama's health care program — "It will be easy," he contended — and he has publicly chided McConnell for not winning passage before now.

With the Arizona senator's defection, there are now two declared GOP "no" votes on the repeal legislation, the other being Rand Paul of Kentucky. With Democrats unanimously opposed, that's the exact number McConnell can afford to lose. But Maine GOP Sen. Susan Collins said Friday she, too, is leaning against the bill, and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska was also a possible "no," making it highly unlikely that McConnell can prevail.

So once again, the GOP seems destined to fail on a campaign promise that every Republican agreed on — right up until the party obtained full control of Congress and the White House this year and was actually in position to follow through.

Trump, speaking at a political rally Friday night in Alabama, called McCain's opposition "sad" and "a horrible, horrible thing" for the Republican Party. But he said he would continue the fight to repeal "Obamacare" even if it meant going back again and again.

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"It's a little tougher without McCain's vote, I'll be honest. But we've got some time. We're going to go back," he said and added: "You can't quit when you have one or two votes short."

Vice President Mike Pence also said the fight wasn't over. "This is not going to be easy. Some have gone so far as to announce their opposition already," he said. "President Trump and I are undeterred."

Graham, too, vowed in a statement to "press on," and reaffirmed his friendship with McCain.

Up until McCain's announcement Friday, close McConnell allies were still optimistic McCain's relationship with Graham might make the difference.

GOP leaders hoped to bring the legislation to the Senate floor next week. They face a Sept. 30 deadline, at which point special rules that prevent a Democratic filibuster will expire.

Democrats hailed McCain's announcement and pledged to commit to the bipartisan process he sought. GOP Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and Democratic Sen. Patty Murray of Washington have been working on a package of limited legislative fixes to the "Obamacare" marketplaces.

"John McCain shows the same courage in Congress that he showed when he was a naval aviator," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "I have assured Sen. McCain that as soon as repeal is off the table, we Democrats are intent on resuming the bipartisan process."

The Graham-Cassidy bill would repeal major pillars of Obama's law, replacing them with block grants to states to design their own programs. Major medical groups are opposed, saying millions would lose insurance coverage and protections, and a bipartisan group of governors also has announced opposition.

Yet Republican congressional leaders, goaded by GOP voters and the president himself, were determined to give it one last try. Trump spent much of August needling McConnell for his failure to pass a repeal bill, and Republican lawmakers back home during Congress' summer recess heard repeatedly from voters angered that after seven years of promises to get rid of "Obamacare," the party had not delivered.

The House passed its own repeal bill back in May, prompting Trump to convene a Rose Garden celebration, which soon began to look premature.

After the Senate failed in several attempts in July, the legislation looked dead. But Cassidy kept at it with his state-focused approach, and the effort caught new life in recent weeks as the deadline neared. Trump pushed hard, hungry for a win.

Trump tweeted Friday morning that "Rand Paul, or whoever votes against Hcare Bill, will forever (future political campaigns) be known as 'the Republican who saved ObamaCare.'"

On the other side, late-night TV host Jimmy Kimmel, whose son was born with a heart defect, got considerable attention when he criticized the new repeal effort at length on his show and said the Republicans were lying about what their new program would cover. In a tweet Friday, he thanked McCain "for being a hero again and again and now AGAIN."

The bill would get rid of unpopular mandates for people to carry insurance or face penalties. It would repeal the financing for Obama's health insurance expansion and create a big pot of money states could tap to set up their own programs, with less federal oversight. It would also limit spending for Medicaid, the federal-state program that now covers more than 70 million low-income people. Insurance rules that protect people with pre-existing conditions could be loosened through state waivers.

Over time, the legislation would significantly reduce federal health care dollars now flowing to the states. But McConnell had little margin for error in a Senate split 52-48 between Republicans and Democrats, and could lose only two votes, counting on Pence to break the tie.

Associated Press writer Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar contributed.

Dam failing as scope of Puerto Rico's disaster becomes clear

By DANICA COTO, Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rican officials rushed to evacuate tens of thousands of people downstream of a failing dam and said they could not reach more than half the towns in the U.S. territory as the massive scale of the disaster wrought by Hurricane Maria started to become clear on Friday.

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Government spokesman Carlos Bermudez said that officials had no communication with 40 of the 78 municipalities on the island more than two days after the Category 4 storm crossed the island, toppling power lines and cellphone towers and sending floodwaters cascading through city streets.

Officials said 1,360 of the island's 1,600 cellphone towers had been downed, and 85 percent of above-ground and underground phone and internet cables were knocked out. With roads blocked and phones dead, officials said, the situation may be worse than they know.

"We haven't seen the extent of the damage," Gov. Ricardo Rossello told reporters in the capital.

More than 15 inches (nearly 40 centimeters) of rain fell on the mountains surrounding the Guajataca Dam in northwest Puerto Rico after Maria left the island Wednesday afternoon, swelling the reservoir behind the nearly 90-year-old dam.

Authorities launched an evacuation of the 70,000 people living downstream, sending buses to move people away and sending frantic warnings on Twitter that went unseen by many in the blacked-out coastal area.

"This is an EXTREMELY DANGEROUS SITUATION," the National Weather Service wrote. "All the areas around the Guajataca River must evacuate NOW. Your lives are in DANGER."

The 345-yard (316-meter) dam, which was built around 1928, holds back a manmade lake covering about 2 square miles (5 square kilometers).

An engineer inspecting the dam reported a "contained breach" that officials quickly realized was a crack that could be the first sign of total failure of the dam, said Anthony Reynes, a meteorologist with the U.S. National Weather Service.

"There's no clue as to how long or how this can evolve. That is why the authorities are moving so fast because they also have the challenges of all the debris. It is a really, really dire situation," Reynes said. "They are trying to mobilize all the resources they can but it's not easy. We really don't know how long it would take for this failure to become a full break of the dam."

Maj. Gen. Derek P. Rydholm, deputy to the chief of the Air Force Reserve, said at the Pentagon that it was impossible to say when communication and power will be restored. He said mobile communications systems are being flown in. But he acknowledged "it's going to take a while" before people in Puerto Rico will be able to communicate with their families outside the island.

Until Friday, he said, "there was no real understanding at all of the gravity of the situation."

Across the island more than 15,000 people are in shelters, including some 2,000 rescued from the north coastal town of Toa Baja, including several who were stranded on roofs.

Rossello couldn't say when power might be restored.

The island's electric grid was in sorry shape long before Maria 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.

"Some transmission structures collapsed," Rossello said, adding that there was no severe damage to electric plants.

He said he was distributing 250 satellite phones from FEMA to mayors across the island to re-establish contact.

Secretary of State Luis Marin said he expects gasoline supplies to be at 80 percent of capacity because the port in the southeastern town of Yabucoa that receives fuel shipments received minor damage.

Hours-long lines formed at the few gas stations that reopened on Friday and anxious residents feared power could be out for weeks — or even months — and wondered how they would cope.

Some of the island's 3.4 million people planned to head to the U.S. to temporarily escape the devastation. At least in the short term, though, the soggy misery will continue: Additional rain — up to 6 inches (15 centimeters) — is expected through Saturday.

In San Juan, Neida Febus wandered around her neighborhood with bowls of cooked rice, ground meat and avocado, offering food to the hungry. The damage was so extensive, the 64-year-old retiree said, that she didn't think the power would be turned back on until Christmas.

"This storm crushed us from one end of the island to the other," she said.

The death toll in Puerto Rico stood at six but was likely to rise.

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At least 27 lives in all have been lost around the Caribbean, including at least 15 on hard-hit Dominica. Haiti reported three deaths; Guadeloupe, two; and the Dominican Republic, one.

By Friday night, Maria was passing about 295 miles (480 kilometers) east of the central Bahamas with top sustained winds of 125 mph (205 kph). The storm is not expected to pose a threat to the U.S. mainland.

Israel Molina, 68, found that Maria had ripped away roofing from his Israel Mini Market in San Juan.

"I'm from here. I believe we have to step up to the task. If everyone leaves, what are we going to do? With all the pros and the cons, I will stay here," he said, and then paused. "I might have a different response tomorrow."

Diana Jaquez, one of the owners of the Coquette hair salon in San Juan's Santurce area, assessed storm damage with her husband Friday as their children played nearby. She said she hadn't decided whether to leave the island.

"Business has dropped a lot," she said. "People have other priorities than looking good."

Outside her store, more than 100 people stood in line waiting to get money out of an ATM machine and hoping there would still be some cash left when their turn came.

New York plans to send about 240 National Guardsmen and state troopers to assist Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The state is also sending drinking water, ready-to-eat meals, electrical generators and other supplies.

This story has been corrected to show that Hurricane Maria was a Category 4 storm, not a Category 5 one, when it crossed Puerto Rico.

In new setback, Uber to lose license to work in London

By DANICA KIRKA, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Uber will lose its license to operate in London because it may be endangering public safety and security, the local regulator said Friday, in a severe blow to a company already facing big questions over its corporate culture.

The company, which has been beset by a litany of scandals over its management style — from accusations of sexism to the illegal use of software to trick regulators — was told it was not "fit and proper" to keep operating in London, where it has 3.5 million passengers and 40,000 drivers.

The regulator, Transport for London, said it "considers that Uber's approach and conduct demonstrate a lack of corporate responsibility in relation to a number of issues which have potential public safety and security implications."

It cited instances in which Uber failed to report serious criminal offences as well as its penchant to deceive regulators in its decision to not renew its license when it expires on Sept. 30. Uber said it will appeal, during which time it can continue operating.

The decision startled many — even though the ride-hailing business has many critics. The city's black-cab drivers — who spend years learning the city streets to pass the famed "Knowledge" test — objected to the interlopers who undercut their business. Unions objected to the company's treatment of its workforce.

In a city where the Labour Party is in the majority, many of these issues — particularly in terms of its treatment of employees — would have resonated with the opposition party's voters. Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan was quick to endorse the decision of an agency he supervises.

"It's a technical decision that picks up the spirit of the age," said Tony Travers, an expert on local government at the London School of Economics.

Uber had been warned. Earlier this year, Transport for London renewed its license on a limited basis, giving it six months to address concerns.

Khan said that any operator of taxi services in the city "needs to play by the rules."

"Providing an innovative service must not be at the expense of customer safety and security," he said. "I fully support TfL's decision — it would be wrong if TfL continued to license Uber if there is any way that this could pose a threat to Londoners' safety and security."

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For its part, Uber accused the city of caving in to special interests "who want to restrict consumer choice." It issued a statement to its users, starting an online petition to reverse the decision that had 375,000 signatures late Friday. Uber said the ban would show that London is closed to innovative companies.

Uber's new CEO Dara Khosrowshahi, in a note to employees obtained by The Associated Press, wrote that he disagreed with the decision but it was based on past behavior.

"The truth is that there is a high cost to a bad reputation," he wrote. "It really matters what people think of us, especially in a global business like ours."

If its ban is upheld, Uber will have to show that it is changing in order to get back into the lucrative London market, said Jan Dawson, chief analysts for Jackdaw Research in California.

"The fact that Uber is so mature and broadly used in London means it's very unlikely that it will be permanently banned there - the political fallout would just be too great."

Uber drivers like James Farrar, the chairman of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain's United Private Hire Drivers branch, wondered how they would pay their bills.

"This is a devastating blow," he said, noting that many people now "face losing their job and being saddled with unmanageable vehicle-related debt."

Uber, founded in 2010 in San Francisco, has often faced opposition as it expanded. Taxi drivers complain that Uber drivers don't have to comply with the same licensing standards, giving the ride-hailing service an unfair advantage and placing the public at risk.

The company, which provides a smartphone application that connects passengers with drivers who work as independent contractors, argues it isn't a traditional transportation company.

Police in London accused Uber last month of not reporting a sexual assault by a driver on a passenger, allowing the driver to strike again. Metropolitan Police Inspector Neil Billany suggested in a letter that the company was putting concerns for its reputation over public safety.

At the time, Uber said it was surprised by the letter and that it had a good working relationship with the police.

But the company has been dogged by questions on its workplace culture. In July, former CEO Travis Kalanick resigned following criticism of his management style. Some 20 people, including some managers, were fired in June amid allegations of sexual harassment and bullying.

Its aggressive corporate culture has resulted in litigation around the world. John Colley, a strategy professor at Warwick Business School, said poor values ultimately bring companies down. Uber is now largely banned from France, Spain and Belgium, and it is facing litigation and investigations around the world, he said.

"There is a very long list of businesses who have suffered for failing to uphold the level of values necessary," Colley said. "Until Uber gets this message then it will suffer lost trade as a result of its deteriorating reputation."

In the meantime, many Uber users could be left by the side of the road. More traditional services, like the black cabs or private-hire cars, are more expensive.

Restaurant worker Rio Kato cited the company's cheaper rates as the reason for using Uber.

"For me it is bad news, because I work at the restaurant — a Japanese restaurant — and it finishes very late," Kato said. "And sometimes there is no bus service, no Underground (metro), so sometimes I use Uber. If it is finished, I have a problem."

Tom Krisher in Detroit contributed to this story.

Cuban official: Still no clue on US diplomat health mystery

By JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Cuba hasn't unearthed any information so far about who or what caused a mysterious series of health problems that have affected U.S. and Canadian diplomats in Havana, its top diplomat said Friday.

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla told the U.N. General Assembly that early results from its in-

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investigation have to date "found no evidence whatsoever that could confirm the causes or the origin" of the incidents, though the inquiry is continuing.

"It would be unfortunate if a matter of this nature is politicized," Rodriguez added in a speech that also laid into U.S. President Donald Trump as a leader with a "supremacist vision" of "America First." Trump had slammed Cuba's leadership as "corrupt and destabilizing" in his own General Assembly speech Tuesday.

At least 21 Americans and several Canadians in Havana's diplomatic community have suffered hearing loss and other symptoms believed to have come from some sort of sonic attack.

Some of the Americans have permanent hearing loss or concussions, while others suffered nausea, headaches and ear-ringing. Some are struggling with concentration or common word recall, The Associated Press has reported.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has described the incidents as "health attacks," though the State Department has since used the term "incidents." In their wake, Tillerson said Sunday that the U.S. was considering closing its recently reopened Havana embassy.

Cuba has said it knows nothing about the incidents, and Rodriguez reiterated that denial Friday.

The U.S. State Department had no immediate response to Rodriguez' remarks. Spokeswoman Heather Nauert said last week that America's "aggressive investigation" into the issue was ongoing.

The U.S. and Cuba, foes since the island nation's 1959 communist revolution, began normalizing relations in 2014. They reopened embassies in each other's capitals and eased restrictions on travel and commerce the next year.

But Trump has taken steps to roll back the rapprochement since he took office in January. While he kept some elements of predecessor President Barack Obama's policy, Trump announced this summer that the U.S. would impose new limits on Americans traveling to Cuba and ban any payments to the military-linked conglomerate that controls much of the island's tourism industry. He said the U.S. wouldn't consider lifting those and other restrictions unless Cuba returned fugitives and made a series of internal changes, including freeing political prisoners and holding free elections.

And Trump underlined his criticisms of Cuba by mentioning them in his debut address to world leaders at the General Assembly.

"The United States has stood against the corrupt and destabilizing regime in Cuba and embraced the enduring dream of the Cuban people to live in freedom," he said.

Rodriguez rebuked Trump over his "America First" policy, celebration of national sovereignty and view of patriotism.

"It embodies an exceptionalist and supremacist vision of ignorant intolerance in the face of diverse political, economic, social and cultural models," Rodriguez said. "The U.S. president manipulates the concepts of sovereignty and security to his exclusive benefit and to the detriment of all others, including his allies."

He said Trump "ignores and distorts history and portrays a pipe dream as a goal to be pursued," reciting a list of ills he said capitalism had wrought, from colonialism to environmental degradation.

This story has been changed to correct the first name of the Cuban foreign minister to Bruno.

Associated Press writer Edith M. Lederer contributed.

'Little Rock Nine' members mark school's 1957 desegregation

By ANDREW DeMILLO, Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — When she saw images unfold from a deadly white supremacist rally this summer in Virginia, Minnijean Brown Trickey immediately thought about the angry mob she and eight other black students faced when they integrated an all-white high school in Little Rock 60 years ago.

"That triggered me so much and watching the mindless mob action just touched me, and I thought, 'This is 60 years later. I can't believe this happened in this time,'" Trickey said Friday, referring to the

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violence that erupted at a rally of white nationalists opposed to the removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee.

"So where did I see it last? In Virginia or wherever people coalesce into mindless violence," she added.

Trickey and the seven other surviving members of the "Little Rock Nine" — who were escorted by federal troops into Little Rock's Central High School in September 1957 — gathered at the University of Arkansas' Clinton School of Public Service for a joint news conference to kick off a series of events commemorating the desegregation anniversary. Some of the surviving members said 60 years ago, they tried to focus more on having the opportunity to attend the school rather than the mobs screaming threats and insults at them.

"The crowd was there, but I ignored them," Carlotta Walls LaNier said. "It was ignorance, in my view, that was across the street in all of the harassment and name-calling and all of that sort of stuff. But I just dismissed it, to be honest with you. I just wanted to go to school."

The school was the focus of a showdown over integration for three weeks as Gov. Orval Faubus used the National Guard to block the nine black students from enrolling in the high school, three years after the U.S. Supreme Court had declared segregated classrooms unconstitutional. President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent members of the Army's 101st Airborne Division to control the angry crowds and escort the students into the school on Sept. 25, 1957.

"When we got there and saw the soldiers and bayonets and all that, for me, a light went on inside my head that this was obviously something more important than my going to class," Ernest Green said. "And if this was that big a deal, I want to see it through."

When asked what she would now say to her teenage self who was facing the mob outside the school, Melba Pattillo Beals said she would want to reassure young Melba.

"You will be OK. You will see your colleagues when you're 75 and they will be alive and well, too," she said. "You will be blessed to have them in your life. It's all going to be OK, as long as you follow the rules, as long as you have compassion for all."

Among a series of events planned throughout the city, former President Bill Clinton will mark the school's desegregation Monday with a ceremony at the school.

Green said the nine students formed a permanent friendship when they integrated Central High, calling it a club with a short membership period.

"You had to be there on the 4th of September to have joined it and on the 25th it was sealed, so we were forever united," he said.

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Trade panel: Cheap imports hurt US solar industry

By **MATTHEW DALY**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Low-cost solar panels imported from China and other countries have caused serious injury to American manufacturers, a U.S. trade commission ruled Friday, raising the possibility of the Trump administration imposing tariffs that could double the price of solar panels from abroad.

The 4-0 vote by the International Trade Commission sets up a two-month review period in which the panel must recommend a remedy to President Donald Trump, with a final decision on tariffs expected in January.

White House spokeswoman Natalie Strom said Trump "will examine the facts and make a determination that reflects the best interests of the United States. The U.S. solar manufacturing sector contributes to our energy security and economic prosperity."

Georgia-based Suniva Inc. and Oregon-based SolarWorld Americas brought the case, saying a flood of imports have pushed them to the brink of extinction. Suniva declared bankruptcy, while SolarWorld had

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to lay off three-quarters of its workforce.

Cheap imports have led to a boom in the U.S. solar industry, where rooftop and other installations have surged tenfold since 2011.

The main trade group for the solar industry and many governors oppose tariffs, saying they could cause a sharp price hike that would lead to a drop in solar installations by more than 50 percent in two years.

Abigail Ross Hopper, president and CEO of the Solar Energy Industries Association, called the trade commission's vote disappointing for nearly 9,000 U.S. solar companies and the 260,000 Americans they employ.

"Foreign-owned companies that brought business failures on themselves are attempting to exploit American trade laws to gain a bailout for their bad investments," Hopper said, warning that potential tariffs could double the price of solar installations, lowering U.S. demand and risking billions of dollars in investment.

Suniva's U.S. operations are based in Georgia, but the company's majority owner is in China. SolarWorld Americas is a subsidiary of German solar giant SolarWorld, which declared insolvency last month.

Suniva hailed the ruling.

"It will be in President Trump's hands to decide whether America will continue to have the capability to manufacture this energy source," the company said in a statement. "President Trump can remedy this injury with relief that ensures U.S. energy dominance that includes a healthy U.S. solar ecosystem and prevents China and its proxies from owning the sun."

Trump has not cozied up to the solar industry, as he has for coal and other fossil fuels, but he is considered sympathetic to imposing tariffs on solar imports as part of his "America first" agenda.

Governors of four solar-friendly states — Nevada, Colorado, Massachusetts and North Carolina — oppose the tariff, warning it could jeopardize the industry. They cited a study showing that a global tariff could cause solar installations to drop by more than 50 percent in two years, a crushing blow as states push for renewable energy that does not contribute to climate change.

"The requested tariff could inflict a devastating blow on our states' solar industries and lead to unprecedented job loss, at steep cost to our states' economies," the two Republicans and two Democrats wrote in a letter Thursday to the trade commission.

A group of former U.S. military officials also urged the Trump administration to reject solar tariffs, noting that the Defense Department is the nation's largest energy consumer and follows a federal law calling for the Pentagon to procure 25 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2025.

Suniva called the case a matter of fairness. Even with better manufacturing methods, lower costs and "dramatically improved efficiency," the company has "suffered substantial losses due to global imports," Suniva said in its petition. The company declared bankruptcy this spring after laying off 190 employees and closing production sites in Georgia and Michigan.

SolarWorld Americas, meanwhile, has trimmed its workforce from 1,300 to 300, with more cuts likely.

"After nearly 30 factories have shut down in the wake of surging imports, the legacy of this pioneering American industry hangs in the balance," said Juergen Stein, CEO and president of SolarWorld Americas.

"We believe that the promise of solar - energy sustainability and independence - can be realized only with healthy American manufacturing to supply growing U.S. demand," Stein said in a statement to The Associated Press.

Hopper countered that a tariff would likely decrease the number of U.S. manufacturers, because of reduced demand.

While the U.S. solar industry employs about 260,000 people, fewer than 2,000 are involved in making solar panels like those made by Suniva and SolarWorld. More than half of solar jobs are in installation, with another 66,000 in sales, distribution and development.

About 38,000 jobs involve manufacture of inverters, racks and other products related to solar panels.

Hopper told reporters she was optimistic that Trump would not impose tariffs on solar imports.

"The president wants to create jobs and increase energy security and economic prosperity, and that is the story of the solar industry," she said. "I think that is entirely resonant with his rhetoric and his concern."

—

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Follow Matthew Daly: <http://twitter.com/MatthewDalyWDC>

NASA's asteroid chaser swings by Earth on way to space rock

By MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA's asteroid-chasing spacecraft swung by Earth on Friday on its way to a space rock.

Launched a year ago, Osiris-Rex passed within 10,711 miles (17,237 kilometers) of the home planet early Friday afternoon — above Antarctica. It used Earth's gravity as a slingshot to put it on a path toward the asteroid Bennu.

Osiris-Rex should reach the small, roundish asteroid next year and, in 2020, collect some of its gravel for return to Earth. If all goes well, scientists should get the samples in 2023.

Friday's flyby was a quick hello: The spacecraft zoomed by at about 19,000 mph (31,000 kph). NASA took precautions to ensure Osiris-Rex — about the size of an SUV — did not slam into any satellites.

"Congratulations @OSIRISREx team on a successful Earth Gravity Assist - trajectory is absolutely perfect - right up the middle!" the University of Arizona's Dante Laretta, chief scientist for Osiris-Rex, said via Twitter.

Ground telescopes tried to observe the spacecraft while it's in the neighborhood. NASA posted a picture gallery online.

NASA said the spacecraft's science instruments would be turned on four hours after the closest approach and tested over the next two weeks, scanning the Earth and moon. Laretta said it would be good practice for operations at Bennu.

Bennu is just 1,640 feet (500 meters) or so across and circles the sun in an orbit slightly wider than ours. Osiris-Rex will go into orbit around the asteroid and seek the best spot for grabbing a few handfuls of the bite-size bits of rock. It will hover like a hummingbird as a mechanical arm briefly rests on the surface and sucks in samples stirred up by nitrogen gas thrusters.

Scientists say the ancient asteroid could hold clues to the origin of life. It's believed to have formed 4.5 billion years ago, a remnant of the solar system's building blocks.

This is the first U.S. attempt to bring back samples from an asteroid. Japan already has visited an asteroid and returned some specks.

Raccoon jumps on moving Colorado police van, takes a ride

Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A Colorado Springs police officer heading to an accident scene in a van got a big surprise when a raccoon jumped onto the front windshield of the vehicle and stayed there until the officer pulled over.

The Denver Post reports (<http://dpo.st/2hojjpi>) that officer Chris Frabbiele was responding to an accident scene in a large van used by police to investigate crashes when the raccoon landed on its windshield late Wednesday night.

Police spokesman Lt. Howard Black says the raccoon hopped off the van after Frabbiele pulled over and stopped it.

Images of the raccoon encounter from a van dash camera showed the animal appearing to cling to the windshield after it landed and crouching by the van's windshield wipers.

Information from: The Denver Post, <http://www.denverpost.com>

Hurricane pushes long-suffering Puerto Rico to the edge

By DANICA COTO and BEN FOX, Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — A tired and discouraged Rosa Maria Almonte cleaned steel pots with bleach inside her darkened cafe as her daughter cooked up rice, beans and pork chops on a gas stove to feed people desperate for a hot meal in their storm-ravaged city.

She has run El Buen Cafe for 21 years and seen some tough times, but the damage from Hurricane Maria, with no running water, no electricity and the prospect of a grinding recovery that could take weeks or months, had her wondering whether there was any point in staying.

"I don't know if I can keep going," the 73-year-old cafe owner said Friday after mopping up water that seeped into her shop, the awning sitting in a heap on her counter. "What am I doing here?"

It's a lament echoing across Puerto Rico at the moment.

Even before the storm, Puerto Rico was in dire condition, reeling from a decade-long economic slide that was far deeper than the Great Recession on the mainland and that many here feel was largely ignored by Washington. Now, nearly all 3.4 million people on the island are sitting in the dark amid widespread pessimism about the future of this tropical U.S. territory and whether they should expect much help.

Along streets strewn with tree limbs, downed power lines and muck, it's easy to find Puerto Ricans trying to decide if they should pick up and leave, joining the 450,000 who have moved to the mainland over the past decade in search of a better life.

"This is an absolute crisis," 44-year-old Alana Yendez said as she cradled her 2-month-old grandson and gave him a bottle of scarce baby formula in the Santurce section of San Juan. "This storm crushed us from one end of the island to the other."

Maria, the most powerful hurricane to hit the island in nearly a century, unleashed floods and mudslides and knocked out the entire electrical grid and telecommunications, leaving many mainland families anxiously awaiting word on relatives in Puerto Rico.

Authorities confirmed at least six deaths but were still assessing the damage and trying to reach communities cut off by the storm.

As people searched for a meal or waited in long lines for cash from ATMs, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other agencies rushed to supply water, food, generators and temporary shelters. President Donald Trump has declared a federal disaster, making the island eligible for more assistance.

Rep. Luis Gutierrez, an Illinois Democrat who often looks out for Puerto Rico, which has no voting member of Congress, said much more will be needed.

"This was no average storm," Gutierrez said as he released a letter calling on Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan and Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi to organize a bipartisan delegation to see the damage. "It was a powerful direct hit that struck Puerto Rico when it was already down because of the economic situation."

Many believe Congress shares some of the responsibility for the economic crisis, in part for the 2006 repeal of a tax exemption that helped turn Puerto Rico into a global manufacturing hub, especially for pharmaceuticals. That started a decade of decline that shows no sign of letting up.

As the economy worsened, the island government borrowed money to cover budget deficits and put off funding pensions and other liabilities. The debt ballooned past \$70 billion until the governor at the time declared it unpayable and set off a series of defaults.

Congress, as part of an agreement to allow the island to restructure, imposed a fiscal control board that has demanded sharp cuts to pensions and other expenses and the furloughing of public workers.

The exodus from the island has included so many doctors it can be hard to find a specialist. Foreclosures set a record last year, and unemployment is around 10 percent, far higher than that of any U.S. state. The power company and other agencies are also laboring under massive debt and struggling to fix their finances.

This backdrop makes the storm especially painful.

"I know everybody thinks their crisis is unique and different, but in this case it really is. It's not like one of the 50 states," Gutierrez said. "Show me a state that has lost a third of its doctors in the last 10 years."

... Show me a state where it is the norm that your electricity and water goes out on a regular basis." Amid the chaos, people like Almonte were struggling to make the best of it, cleaning up and offering whatever they could as other businesses all around were boarded up.

She sadly turned away a man seeking coffee, saying, "No my love, I don't have power." But she told others seeking food that it would be a few minutes thanks to her gas grill.

Nearby, store owner Israel Molina was cleaning up and vowing to stay, for now.

"If everyone leaves, what are we going to do? With all the pros and the cons, I will stay here," the 68-year-old said, and then paused. "I might have a different response tomorrow."

— Fox reported from Miami

May tries to reboot Brexit, offers 2-year transition period

By JILL LAWLESS and ALESSANDRA TARANTINO, Associated Press

FLORENCE, Italy (AP) — Britain is prepared to abide by European Union rules and pay into the bloc's coffers for two years after leaving the EU in March 2019, Prime Minister Theresa May said Friday in a conciliatory speech intended to revive foundering exit talks.

The proposal got a positive, if muted, reception from the EU's chief negotiator. But it raised hackles among pro-Brexit U.K. politicians, who accused May of delaying a divorce that is sought by a majority of British voters.

May traveled to Florence, Italy — birthplace of the Renaissance — in hopes of rebooting negotiations with the EU that have stalled over issues including the price the U.K. must pay to leave and the rights of EU citizens in Britain.

May's speech was intended to kick-start the process before talks resume next week in Brussels. But while it was strong on praise for the EU and for shared European values, the few concrete details were far from addressing Brussels' concerns.

The EU's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, said the speech showed a "constructive spirit" but "must be translated into negotiating positions" to make real progress.

Standing in front of a backdrop reading "Shared History, Shared Challenges, Shared Future" in a hall at a Renaissance church, May said Britain and the EU share "a profound sense of responsibility" to ensure that their parting goes smoothly.

She urged the EU to be "creative" and forge a new economic relationship not based on any current trade model. She rejected both a free-trade deal like the one Canada has struck with the bloc and Norway-style membership in the EU's single market.

She called instead for "an ambitious economic partnership which respects the freedoms and principles of the EU, and the wishes of the British people."

May proposed a transition period of "around two years" after Britain leaves the EU for the two sides to work out the kinks in the final Brexit deal.

"People and businesses - both in the U.K. and in the EU - would benefit from a period to adjust to the new arrangements in a smooth and orderly way," she said.

May also signaled willingness to pay a Brexit bill for leaving, saying Britain "will honor commitments we have made."

She reassured EU members that they would not "need to pay more or receive less over the remainder of the current budget plan as a result of our decision to leave." The current EU budget runs until 2020.

May did not cite a figure, and said "some of the claims made on this issue are exaggerated and unhelpful." Reports of the amount the EU is seeking have gone as high as 100 billion euros (\$120 billion).

May also called for a new security treaty between Britain and the EU, saying close cooperation is key to fighting crime, terrorism and military threats. Again, there were few details, just an acknowledgement that "there is no pre-existing model for cooperation" that fits the bill.

Britain is eager to begin hammering out future trade and security relationships, but EU officials say

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that can't happen until there's progress on three key divorce terms — the status of the border between Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland, the financial settlement and the rights of more than 4 million EU and British citizens hit by Brexit.

When Britain leaves the bloc it will end the automatic right of EU nationals to live and work in the U.K., and that has left many worried for their futures. Previous assurances by Britain that EU nationals already in the country will be able to stay have been rejected as too vague by the EU.

"We want you to stay; we value you," May said, adding that she wanted to write any deal on citizens' rights into British law as a guarantee.

British negotiators hope EU leaders will decide at an October meeting that "sufficient progress" has been made on the divorce terms to move talks on to future relations and trade.

Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney called May's speech "a positive contribution," while Alexander Lambsdorff, a German vice president of the European Parliament, said "it is a positive signal that Prime Minister May is finally making concrete suggestions for the Brexit negotiations."

But Barnier suggested more still needed to be done.

"The sooner we reach an agreement on the principles of the orderly withdrawal in the different areas — and on the conditions of a possible transition period requested by the United Kingdom — the sooner we will be ready to engage in a constructive discussion on our future relationship," he said.

Although the speech was directly aimed at the 27 other EU nations, none of their leaders was in the audience to listen to it. May brought along members of her Cabinet, which is split between advocates of a clean-break "hard Brexit" including Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and those like Treasury chief Philip Hammond who favor compromise to soften the economic impact of Brexit. Both Johnson and Hammond watched May's speech from the front row, and praised it afterward.

In Britain, May's speech drew criticism from her opponents both to the right and the left.

Former U.K. Independence Party leader Nigel Farage, a passionate euroskeptic, said it suggested Britain would leave the EU "in name only."

Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn welcomed the transition period, but said that "15 months after the EU referendum the government is still no clearer about what our long-term relationship with the EU will look like."

This story has been corrected to show that the estimated Brexit bill is 100 billion euros, not 100 million euros.

Jill Lawless reported from London. Lorne Cook in Brussels and David Rising in Berlin contributed to this story.

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 a frightening new weapon test.

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.

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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 test 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 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,

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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.

Energy leads US stocks indexes to a mostly higher finish

By ALEX VEIGA, AP Business Writer

A listless day on Wall Street finished with U.S. stocks eking out small gains Friday, as strength in energy, phone and industrial companies offset losses elsewhere.

Some health insurers bounced back after Sen. John McCain said he wouldn't support the latest Republican effort to roll back the Affordable Care Act.

Real estate and utilities companies were among the biggest decliners. A new round of tensions between the U.S. and North Korea helped send bond yields lower, which weighed on banks and other financial stocks. The sector notched daily gains earlier in the week.

"Geopolitical tensions coming out of North Korea caused a flight to quality, which kind of put the brakes on the momentum in financials," said David Schiegoleit, managing director of investments at U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management. "Today equity markets are simply moving sideways and probably digesting that."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.62 points, or 0.06 percent, to 2,502.22. The Dow Jones industrial average shed 9.64 points, or 0.04 percent, to 22,349.59. The average was held back by a loss in Apple, which slid \$1.50, or 1 percent, to \$151.89.

The Nasdaq composite added 4.23 points, or 0.07 percent, to 6,426.92.

Small-company stocks did better than the rest of the market. The Russell 2000 gained 6.60 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,450.78, a fraction of a point above its previous record high.

The Russell 2000 also notched the biggest weekly gain, 1.3 percent. The S&P 500 and Dow posted small gains, while the Nasdaq closed out the week with a modest loss.

The stock indexes spent much of the day drifting between small gains and losses as investors weighed the latest developments in the political brinkmanship between the U.S. and North Korea.

Tensions between the two nations ratcheted up after President Donald Trump authorized stiffer sanctions in response to North Korea's nuclear weapons advances, drawing a furious response from Pyongyang. Trump 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. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un retaliated by calling Trump "deranged" and saying he'll "pay dearly" for his threats.

The heightened tensions drove up bond prices, which sent yields lower. The yield on the 10-year Treasury slipped to 2.25 percent from 2.28 percent late Thursday.

That weighed on bank shares, including Fifth Third Bancorp, which declined 23 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$27.31. Lower bond yields mean banks have to charge lower interest rates on long-term loans like mortgages.

Several health care companies recovered some of the ground they lost earlier as McCain said he wouldn't support the latest Republican health care bill, dealing what could be a fatal blow to the last-gasp GOP measure in a Senate showdown expected next week.

Centene, which administers Medicaid programs and sells health plans to ACA exchanges, rose \$1.48, or 1.6 percent, to \$92.22. Molina Healthcare gained \$2.81, or 4.5 percent, to \$65.32.

Energy stocks rose as crude oil prices finished higher. Hess added 87 cents, or 2 percent, to \$44.50.

Benchmark U.S. crude rose 11 cents, or 0.2 percent, to settle at \$50.66 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, used to price international oils, rose 43 cents, or 0.8 percent, to close at

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\$56.86 a barrel in London.

Real estate investment trusts and utilities were among the biggest decliners. Ventas fell \$1.48, or 2.2 percent, to \$66.04. Duke Energy slid 91 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$84.25.

Industrial stocks, including several airlines, were among the gainers. Alaska Air Group added \$1.84, or 2.5 percent, to \$74.75. American Airlines Group gained 77 cents, or 1.7 percent, to \$47.06.

Traders welcomed news of a possible combination between two major wireless carriers.

Sprint climbed 6.1 percent after Reuters reported the company is close to signing a deal with rival T-Mobile. Shares in Sprint added 49 cents to \$8.52. T-Mobile gained 67 cents, or 1.1 percent, to \$64.06. Verizon also got a boost, rising 96 cents, or 2 percent, to \$49.90.

Among the big movers Friday was Compass Minerals, which slumped 13.5 percent after the mining company cut its annual profit forecast after a partial ceiling cave-in at a rock salt mine in Ontario that will slow operations for six weeks. The stock lost \$9.40 to \$60.10.

CarMax jumped 7.8 percent after the used car retailer's latest quarterly results beat analysts' forecasts. The stock gained \$5.35 to \$74.19.

In other energy futures trading, heating oil was little changed at \$1.82 a gallon. Wholesale gasoline gained 3 cents to \$1.67 a gallon. Natural gas rose 1 cent to \$2.96 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold rose \$2.70 to \$1,297.50 an ounce. Silver lost 3 cents to \$16.98 an ounce. Copper added 1 cent to \$2.95 a pound.

The dollar weakened to 112.05 yen from 112.38 yen on Thursday. The euro climbed to \$1.1941 from \$1.1885.

Markets overseas were mixed Friday.

Germany's DAX fell 0.1 percent, while France's CAC 40 gained 0.3 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.6 percent. In Asia, markets finished unevenly after S&P downgraded the credit rating for China and Hong Kong. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 slipped 0.3 percent, while South Korea's Kospi lost 0.7 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed 0.8 percent.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Sept. 23, the 266th day of 2017. There are 99 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On September 23, 1952, Sen. Richard M. Nixon, R-Calif., salvaged his vice-presidential nomination by appearing on television from Los Angeles to refute allegations of improper campaign fundraising in what became known as the "Checkers" speech.

On this date:

In 1779, during the Revolutionary War, the American warship Bon Homme Richard, commanded by John Paul Jones, defeated the HMS Serapis in battle off Yorkshire, England; however, the seriously damaged Bon Homme Richard sank two days later.

In 1780, British spy John Andre was captured along with papers revealing Benedict Arnold's plot to surrender West Point to the British.

In 1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition returned to St. Louis more than two years after setting out for the Pacific Northwest.

In 1846, Neptune was identified as a planet by German astronomer Johann Gottfried Galle (GAH'-luh).

In 1926, Gene Tunney scored a ten-round decision over Jack Dempsey to win the world heavyweight boxing title in Philadelphia.

In 1939, Sigmund Freud (froyd), the founder of psychoanalysis, died in London at age 83.

In 1955, a jury in Sumner, Mississippi, acquitted two white men, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, of murdering black teenager Emmett Till. (The two men later admitted to the crime in an interview with Look magazine.)

In 1957, nine black students who'd entered Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas were forced to

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withdraw because of a white mob outside.

In 1962, New York's Philharmonic Hall (later renamed Avery Fisher Hall) formally opened as the first unit of the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. "The Jetsons," an animated cartoon series about a Space Age family, premiered as the ABC television network's first program in color.

In 1977, the Randy Newman album "Little Criminals" (featuring the song "Short People") was released by Warner Bros. records.

In 1987, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., withdrew from the Democratic presidential race following questions about his use of borrowed quotations and the portrayal of his academic record.

In 1996, space shuttle Atlantis left Russia's orbiting Mir station with astronaut Shannon Lucid, who ended her six-month visit with tender goodbyes to her Russian colleagues.

Ten years ago: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahd) left Tehran for New York to address the United Nations; state media quoted him as saying the American people were eager for different opinions about the world, and that he was looking forward to providing them with "correct and clear information." Cuba published a photo of a standing, smiling Fidel Castro looking heavier but still gaunt as the 81-year-old communist leader met with Angola's president.

Five years ago: The Libyan militia suspected in the September 11 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound that killed the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans said it had disbanded on orders of the country's president. Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney told reporters while traveling from Los Angeles to Denver that he would spend less time raising money and more time with voters. "Homeland" won the Emmy Award for best drama series, and its stars Claire Danes and Damian Lewis each won leading actor awards; "Modern Family" received four awards, including a three-peat as best comedy series.

One year ago: Sen. Ted Cruz announced on Facebook he would vote for Donald Trump, a dramatic about-face months after the fiery Texas conservative called the Republican nominee a "pathological liar" and "utterly amoral." President Barack Obama vetoed a bill to allow the families of 9/11 victims to sue the government of Saudi Arabia, arguing it undermined national security (both the House and Senate voted to override the veto).

Today's Birthdays: Singer Julio Iglesias is 74. Actor Paul Petersen (TV: "The Donna Reed Show") is 72. Actress-singer Mary Kay Place is 70. Rock star Bruce Springsteen is 68. Director/playwright George C. Wolfe is 63. Rock musician Leon Taylor (The Ventures) is 62. Actress Rosalind Chao is 60. Golfer Larry Mize is 59. Actor Jason Alexander is 58. Actor Chi McBride is 56. Country musician Don Herron (BR549) is 55. Actor Erik Todd Dellums is 53. Actress LisaRaye is 51. Singer Ani (AH'-nee) DiFranco is 47. Rock singer Sarah Bettens (K's Choice) is 45. Recording executive Jermaine Dupri is 45. Actor Kip Pardue is 41. Actor Anthony Mackie is 39. Pop singer Erik-Michael Estrada (TV: "Making the Band") is 38. Actress Aubrey Dollar is 37. Pop singer Diana Ortiz (Dream) is 32. Tennis player Melanie Oudin (oo-DAN') is 26.

Thought for Today: "The only interesting answers are those which destroy the questions." — Susan Sontag, American author and critic (1933-2004).