

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Midwest Masonry & concrete Pumping

Greg Heilman, owner



405 E 1st Ave., Groton  
Greg: 253/929-9137  
Mike: 605/492-7041  
midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com

**Volleyball at Redfield Tourney  
Pumpkin Fest at City Park**

## 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 **Closed**

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*Chicken Soup*  
for the *Soul*

“An effort  
made for the  
happiness of  
others lifts  
us above  
ourselves.”

-Lydia M. Child



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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")**

## Groton Area Help Wanted

The Groton Area School District is seeking qualified applicants for a part-time Assistant Business Manager. Job description and application materials can be found under the employment tab at [www.grotonarea.com](http://www.grotonarea.com). Questions should be directed to Joe Schwan, Superintendent at 605-297-2351.

## Help Wanted

We are Hiring Nurses – RN or LPN,  
Full or Part Time. Cooks/Dietary Aid.

**NEW WAGE PACKAGE!!!**

Contact Brynn Pickrel 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**

0913.1005



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## Some volleyball photos from the Clark/WL Match



**Payton Colestock**



**Jessica Bjerke**



**Payton Maine**



**Miranda Hanson**





## Concrete Work is Done!

It was a tight schedule, but Wright & Sudlow was true to their word as they finished the concrete work late on Friday as part of the SD37 project. Putting down of asphalt will continue next week as the deadline looms for the completion of the project. (Photo by Paul Kose!)





## **It's the great pumpkin patch!**

The pumpkins are ready and the organizers have been working very hard in getting everything ready for the Second Pumpkin Fest in Groton. The event starts at 10 a.m. with activities at the park. Hayrides will be held to and from the Pumpkin Patch. Food will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## **Governor Asks For Flags At Half-Staff On Sunday**

PIERRE, S.D. – President Trump has proclaimed the week of Oct. 8 – 14 as Fire Prevention Week, and has ordered flags at half-staff on Sunday, Oct. 8, in honor of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service.

In accordance with the President's wishes, Gov. Dennis Daugaard asks that all flags in South Dakota be flown at half-staff from 8 a.m. until sunset on Sunday.



## **Board of Technical Education approves two-year RN programs for LATI, MTI and WDT**

WATERTOWN, S.D. – The State Board of Technical Education has approved a joint proposal from Lake Area Technical Institute, Mitchell Technical Institute and Western Dakota Technical Institute to create two-year registered nursing programs at each technical institute.

The joint nursing programs will create a bridge for students finishing the LPN program to obtain an RN degree, and respond to employer demands to meet healthcare workforce challenges. Southeast Technical Institute has offered this program since 2011.

The programs were authorized during the board's two-day meeting at Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown.

"Our technical institutes are key contributors to South Dakota's workforce development efforts," said Dana Dykhouse, the board's chairman. "As a board, we can help them grow to even greater heights, and this meeting we approved a two-year registered nursing program."

The board also heard from the state Department of Education on their career and college readiness aspiration and from each technical institute about their key performance indicators. Lastly, the board examined fall enrollment numbers and trends over recent years. With the success of dual credit opportunities for high school juniors and seniors, enrollments at the technical institutes have increased three years in a row.

The State Board of Technical Education was established on July 1, following the passage last fall of Amendment R and of Senate Bill 65 this legislative session. The board is charged with addressing the state's skilled workforce pipeline and education through its oversight of the four technical institutes in Watertown, Sioux Falls, Mitchell and Rapid City.

Find more information about the board on the Board of Technical Education webpage.

## Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters: Overview

The National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is the Nation's Scorekeeper in terms of addressing severe weather and climate events in their historical perspective. As part of its responsibility of monitoring and assessing the climate, NCEI tracks and evaluates climate events in the U.S. and globally that have great economic and societal impacts. NCEI is frequently called upon to provide summaries of global and U.S. temperature and precipitation trends, extremes, and comparisons in their historical perspective. Found here are the weather and climate events that have had the greatest economic impact from 1980 to 2017. The U.S. has sustained 218 weather and climate disasters since 1980 where overall damages/costs reached or exceeded \$1 billion (including CPI adjustment to 2017). The total cost of these 218 events exceeds \$1.2 trillion. This total does not yet include the costs for Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, which are being assessed and will be included in our 4th quarter release.

### 2017 in Progress...

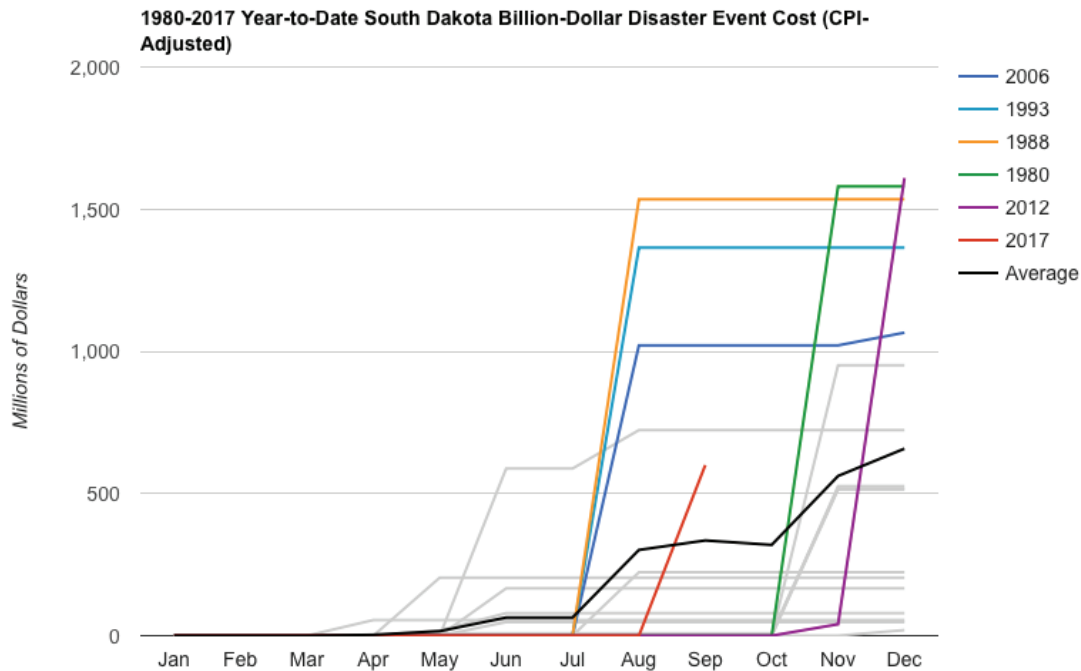
In 2017 (as of October 6), there have been 15 weather and climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each across the United States. These events included 1 drought event, 2 flooding events, 1 freeze event, 7 severe storm events, 3 tropical cyclone events, and 1 wildfire event. Overall, these events resulted in the deaths of 282 people and had significant economic effects on the areas impacted. The 1980–2016 annual average is 5.5 events (CPI-adjusted); the annual average for the most recent 5 years (2012–2016) is 10.6 events (CPI-adjusted).

## U.S. 2017 Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters



For the first 9 months (Jan–Sept) of 2017, the U.S. has experienced 15 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disasters. 2017 ties the record year of 2011 for the most (15) billion-dollar disasters for the year to date. The record number of billion-dollar disasters for an entire calendar year is 16 events set in 2011. The 2017 events include two floods, a freeze, seven severe storms, three tropical cyclones, a drought and wildfire - collectively causing 282 fatalities.





Event statistics are added according to the date on which they ended. Statistics valid as of October 6, 2017.

## Methodology and Data Sources

In 2012, NCEI -- then known as National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) -- reviewed its methodology on how it develops Billion-dollar Disasters. NCEI held a workshop with economic experts (May, 2012) and worked with a consulting partner to examine possible inaccuracy and biases in the data sources and methodology used in developing the loss assessments (mid-2013). This ensures more consistency with the numbers NCEI provides on a yearly basis and give more confidence in the year-to-year comparison of information. Another outcome is a published peer-reviewed article "U.S. Billion-dollar Weather and Climate Disasters: Data Sources, Trends, Accuracy and Biases" (Smith and Katz, 2013). This research found the net effect of all biases appears to be an underestimation of average loss. In particular, it is shown that the factor approach can result in an underestimation of average loss of approximately 10–15%. This bias was corrected during a reanalysis of the loss data to reflect new loss totals.

It is also known that the uncertainty of loss estimates differ by disaster event type reflecting the quality and completeness of the data sources used in our loss estimation. In 2016, six of the fifteen billion-dollar events (i.e., the 4 inland flooding events, drought and Hurricane Matthew) have higher potential uncertainty values around the loss estimates due to less coverage of insured assets. The remaining nine events (i.e., 8 severe storm events and wildfire) have lower potential uncertainty surrounding their estimate due to more complete insurance coverage. Our newest research defines the cost uncertainty using confidence intervals as discussed in the peer-reviewed article "Quantifying Uncertainty and Variable Sensitivity within the U.S. Billion-dollar Weather and Climate Disaster Cost Estimates" (Smith and Matthews, 2015). This research is a next step to enhance the value and usability of estimated disaster costs given data limitations and inherent complexities.

In performing these disaster cost assessments these statistics were taken from a wide variety of sources and represent, to the best of our ability, the estimated total costs of these events -- that is, the costs in terms of dollars that would not have been incurred had the event not taken place. Insured and uninsured losses are included in damage estimates. Sources include the National Weather Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, other U.S. government agencies, individual state emergency management agencies, state and regional climate centers, media reports, and insurance industry estimates.

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## Upcoming Farm Bill Discussions a Golden Opportunity to Empower South Dakota Ag

In the next 12 months, Congress will ramp up its work on the reauthorization of the farm bill, which expires Sept. 30, 2018. With the farm economy struggling over the past four years and commodity prices down, the policy changes we enact in this farm bill are as important as ever. I've been talking closely with farmers and ranchers across the state about their priorities for the upcoming farm bill to make sure their voices are heard.

One major issue that I hear about time and again is that producers are having difficulty accessing necessary capital during tough times. To help alleviate this concern, I recently introduced the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loan Guarantee Enhancement Act, a bill to assist lenders in supporting producers during periods of economic downturn within the ag sector. This legislation would raise the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) guaranteed ownership and operating loan guarantee from \$1.4 million to \$3 million, increased authorized private-sector loan offerings for guaranteed operating and ownership loans from \$3 billion to \$8 billion and raise the cap for direct loans up to \$3 billion. Lastly, it would provide spending assurance, rather than have these programs depend on the yearly appropriations process.

Increasing both the individual cap for these loans and the total amount of money available for lending will allow a greater number of producers to utilize the program. The FSA Loan Guarantee Enhancement Act would more accurately reflect inflation and the increasing costs of agriculture production today and make certain lenders have the flexibility to allow farmers and ranchers to weather times of economic downturn. If passed, this bill has the potential to immediately help farmers and ranchers in our state and around the country. This bill was crafted in close consultation with producers in South Dakota, and has received the backing of the Independent Community Bankers Association (ICBA), South Dakota ICBA, the American Bankers Association and the Farm Credit Council.

I also recently wrote to the Chairman and Ranking Members of the Senate Ag Committee to outline a list of priorities for South Dakota producers in the farm bill discussion. We'd like to see the federal crop insurance program adequately supported. With 17 million acres covered under this program in South Dakota alone, crop insurance is a critical tool for farmers to protect themselves and their operations. We also put in a request to establish a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) vaccination bank to combat economic, food and national security concerns. A major outbreak of FMD would be financially devastating to our producers. Finally, we encouraged the committee to increase the cap for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres. CRP is an important safety net, designed to assist farmers and ranchers during adverse times, such as during a drought like we've experienced in South Dakota this year. I appreciate the bipartisan work the leaders of the Ag Committee have been conducting, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on ways we can strengthen agriculture across the country.

South Dakota producers work hard every day to feed and fuel a growing global population. As in all businesses, some years will be better than others. During those more difficult times, it's important that our farmers and ranchers have access to tools that can help them keep their operations viable. I believe my legislation, along with the next farm bill, will provide them with additional solutions to the problems they face.



## The Life of Phyllis C. Huber



Phyllis C. Huber, age 96, of Watertown, SD, formerly of Groton, SD, passed away on Wednesday, October 4, 2017, at a local care center in Watertown. Funeral Mass will be at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, October 9, 2017, at Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton, SD. Father Mike Kelly will officiate. Family is requested to meet at the church on Monday by 9:30 a.m. for a prayer service.

Visitation will be prior to services at the church on Monday.

Burial will be at Sunset Memorial Garden in Aberdeen, SD. Active pallbearers are: Owen Bain, Ray Lapka, Tom Heckel, Dennis Rasmussen, Scott Schuring and Randy Schuring.

Phyllis Cecile Huber was born October 10, 1920, on a farm 10 miles west of Frederick, SD, to Henry and Cecile (Veatch) Bain. In March of 1932, the family moved to a farm east of Leola, SD where Phyllis attended country school through the 8th grade. In 1935, Phyllis went to live with her aunt, Ivy Thompson, in Conde, SD where she helped in the maternity home that Ivy managed. She graduated from Conde High School in 1939.

On October 28, 1939, Phyllis married Earnest R. Klapperich in Conde, SD. Together they made their home in the Groton, SD area. To this union, three daughters were born: Eunice Deneige, Elta Rachel, and Wava Marie.

On September 8, 1962, Phyllis married Martin Huber in Aberdeen, SD. They lived on a farm one mile west of Andover, SD. In the fall of 1979, they moved to Groton, SD, where Phyllis resided until 1996. After living in Aberdeen for two years, Phyllis moved to Benet Place in Watertown, SD, where she resided until entering Jenkins Living Center in December, 2011.

She is survived by her two daughters, Elta Helgelien of Watertown, SD and Wava (Richard) Seurer of Groton, SD; one brother, Leland (Zelda) Bain of Mentone, CA; one sister-in-law, Treva Arlene Bain of Frederick, SD; five grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandsons.

Phyllis was preceded in death by her parents; her two husbands; her daughter, Eunice; five brothers: Clarence (Dutch), Ernest (Fat), Alan, Leslie and Glen; four sisters: Cleotice Crabtree, Maysie Rexinger, Esther Ellis and Henrietta Martilla; one son-in-law, Daryl Helgelien; and two sisters-in-law: Etta and Marie.

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## Today in Weather History

October 7, 1970: On October 7th through the 9th, 1970 a record-breaking early season snowstorm hit parts of southern South Dakota. Snowfall of 5 to 9 inches was typical across the southwest and south central on the 7th. Late on October 8th and into the 9th of 1970 the southeast portion of the state was hit. The 5 inches that fell in Sioux Falls is the earliest significant snow on record for the area.

The heavy snows also affected portions of western Iowa and western Minnesota. Amounts of up to 7 inches were recorded in northwest Iowa. The heavy, wet snow snapped many tree branches and downed power lines. Sioux City recorded their heaviest snow for so early in the season. The snow was very wet and heavy but melted quickly over the next several days.

1825: Raging forest fires in Miramichi region of New Brunswick, Canada, destroy over 3 million acres of forest. As many as 500 people were killed. The blaze has been partly attributed to unusually hot weather in the fall and summer of 1825, coupled with outdoor fires by settlers and loggers.

1970 - Widespread flooding took place across Puerto Rico. Rainfall amounts for the day ranged up to seventeen inches at Aibonito. A slow moving tropical depression was responsible for six days of torrential rains across the island. Totals in the Eastern Interior Division averaged thirty inches, with 38.4 inches at Jayuya. Flooding claimed eighteen lives, and resulted in 62 million dollars damage. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1981 - Seattle, WA, received four inches of rain in 24 hours, a record for the city. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - It was another hot day in the southwestern U.S. Tucson, AZ, hit 101 degrees for the second day in a row to again equal their record for the month of October. Phoenix AZ reported a record high of 103 degrees, and Blythe CA and Yuma AZ tied for honors as the hot spot in the nation with afternoon highs of 108 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

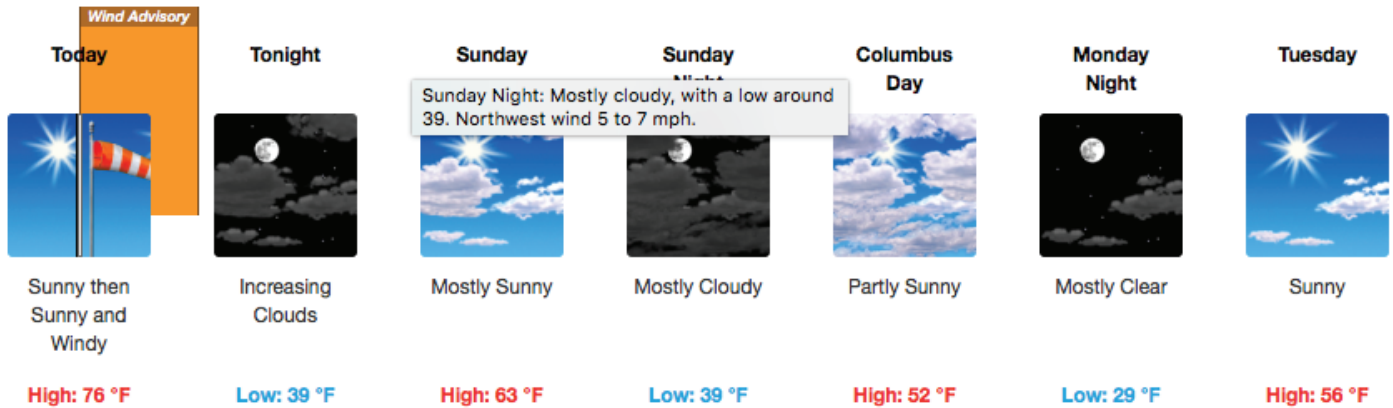
1988 - Morning fog in the central U.S. reduced the visibility to near zero at some locations. Morning lows of 28 degrees at Rockford IL and 24 degrees at Waterloo IA were records for the date. Afternoon highs of 92 degrees at Hollywood FL and Miami FL were records for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Morning thunderstorms in central Texas drenched San Antonio with 3.10 inches of rain in six hours causing local flooding in northeastern sections of the city. Temperatures dipped below the freezing mark from the Northern Rockies to the Upper Mississippi Valley. (The National Weather Summary)



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## Strong Winds & Elevated Fire Danger Today Western & Central South Dakota

- ✓ **Have A Plan**
  - Easy To Access Cell Phone
  - Fire Extinguishers/Water Available
  - Bring A Shovel
- ✓ **Equipment Maintenance**
  - Ensure Proper Lubrication
  - Check Wiring/Fuel/Hydraulics
  - Move Crop Dust/Debris From Heat Sources
  - Allow Engines to Cool Before Refueling
- ✓ **Fire Extinguishers**
  - Carry Both Pressurized Water & ABC Dry Chemical Extinguishers.
- ✓ **Call 911**

**Temperatures**  
**Mid /Upper 70s**

**Wind Gusts**  
**30 to 50mph**

**Afternoon Humidity**  
**20-30%**



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, South Dakota

[www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr)



NWSAberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 10/07/2017 at 5:33AM

Strong winds will develop today with gusts over 50mph possible across north central South Dakota. With temperatures in the 70s and low afternoon humidity - we can expect elevated fire danger today. Additional information at: <https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/blog/clarke-mcgrath-h-m-hanna/fire-prevention-and-management-tips-during-harvest>

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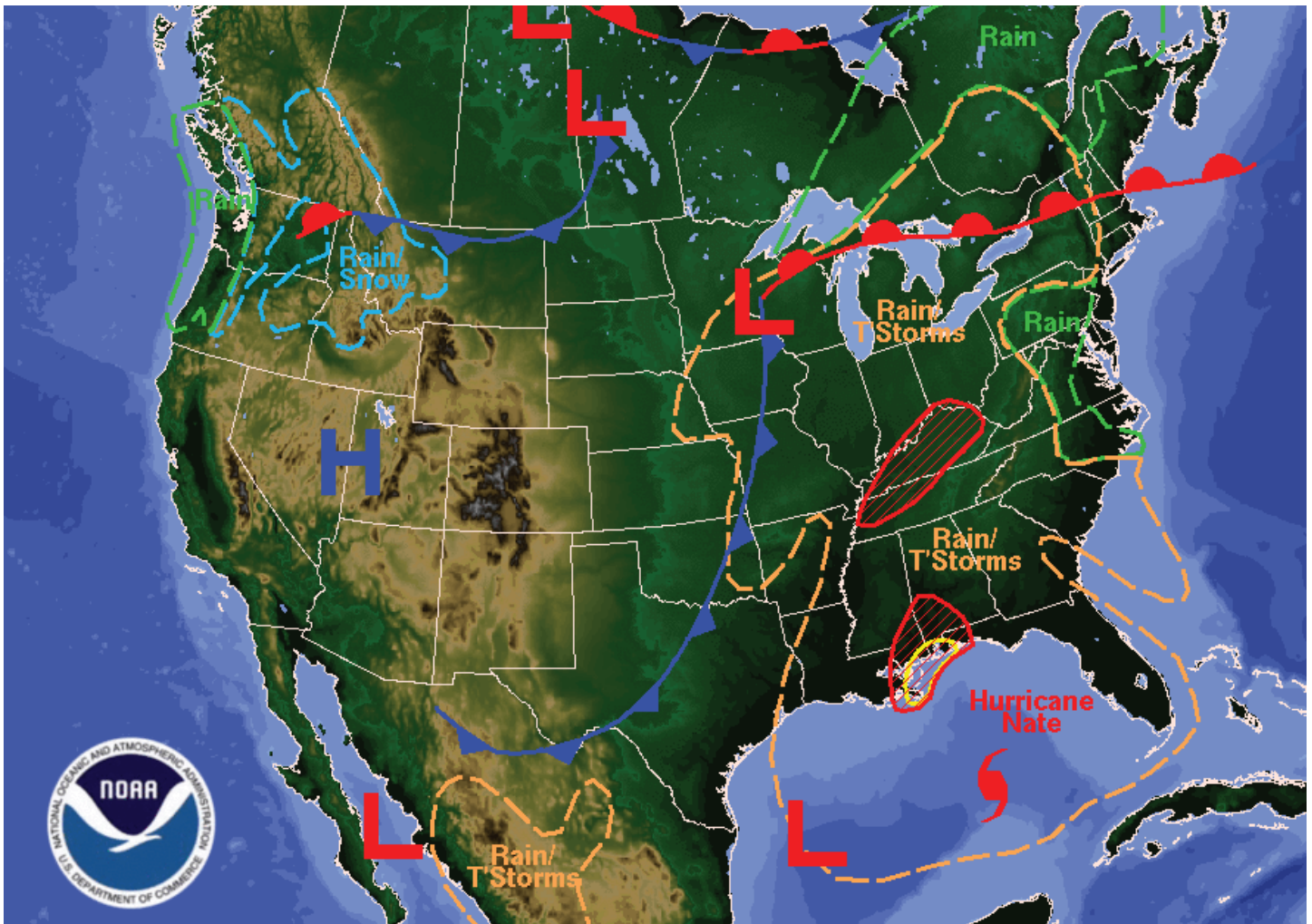
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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 67.1**  
**Low Outside Temp: 41.9**  
**High Gust: 9 mph**  
**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 91° in 1909**  
**Record Low: 14° in 1952**  
**Average High: 62°F**  
**Average Low: 36°F**  
**Average Precip in Oct: 0.54**  
**Precip to date in Oct: 0.19**  
**Average Precip to date: 19.02**  
**Precip Year to Date: 13.28**  
**Sunset Tonight: 7:02 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:41 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Oct 07, 2017, issued 4:54 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Tate 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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## NOW GOD! RIGHT NOW!

"Don't worry about the sweet by-and-by," said the president of the university I attended years ago. "That will be here soon enough. God has promised it and that's all we need to know. As sure as God has kept His Word in the past He will honor it today, tomorrow and every day, from now until the sweet by-and-by is here. What we need to worry about is the nasty now-and-now."

That goes with the phrase we often hear: "Some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good."

While being concerned about and planning for the future makes good sense, we need to be much more concerned about what we might do every moment of every hour of every day to honor God. With that thought in mind, David said, "But I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning and at noon I cry out in distress and He hears my voice."

Notice his priorities: He would not retire at night without going to God in prayer, asking for His forgiveness, peace and protection so he might rest well and be at ease with God. Nor would he begin his day without asking God to guide him and guard him and give him His power and protection. And then – right in the middle of the day – he would stop everything and go to his Lord in prayer. He needed His help in the "now!"

Prayer, for David, was not a trivial ritual. It was his life – his source of strength. "I cry out...He hears!"

Prayer: May we, like David, Lord, recognize our need for prayer. Let it become the centerpiece of our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 55:16-17 As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.



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## 2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- 11/18/2017-3/31/2018 Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meal- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 1/28/2018 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 3/24/2018 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 5/5/2018 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/28/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- 6/14/2018 Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- 6/15/2018 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/16/2018 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2018 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/22/2018 Summer Fest (4th Sunday in July)
- 9/8/2018 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/6/2018 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/12/2018 Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2018 Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/10/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
  
- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

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News from the  Associated Press

## Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

### PREP FOOTBALL

Alcester-Hudson 52, Centerville 12  
Arlington/Lake Preston 44, Estelline 0  
Baltic 35, Parker 0  
Belle Fourche 59, Pine Ridge 6  
Bennett County 50, St. Francis Indian 0  
Beresford 39, Flandreau 0  
Brandon Valley 34, Watertown 0  
Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 27, McCook Central/Montrose 0  
Britton-Hecla 55, Waverly-South Shore 8  
Colman-Egan 38, Castlewood 5  
Corsica/Stickney 22, Colome 6  
Dakota Valley 35, West Central 2  
DeSmet 30, Deubrook 7  
Dell Rapids 42, Milbank Area 21  
Douglas 20, Spearfish 6  
Faith 72, Dupree 20  
Garretson 77, Viborg-Hurley 26  
Gayville-Volin 56, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 6  
Great Plains Lutheran 43, Tri-State 26  
Gregory 34, Wolsey-Wessington 6  
Harding County 58, Newell 6  
Harrisburg 41, Brookings 0  
Herreid/Selby Area 28, Potter County 22  
Hitchcock-Tulare 8, Northwestern 7  
Howard 49, Chester 28  
Irene-Wakonda 61, Menno/Marion 0  
Kimball/White Lake 58, Platte-Geddes 14  
Lemmon/McIntosh 40, Bison 20  
Lennox 28, Canton 20  
Little Wound 63, Crow Creek 15  
Lyman 16, Rapid City Christian 12  
Madison 42, Tea Area 0  
Mobridge-Pollock 28, Sisseton 12  
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 52, Chamberlain 0  
North Border 62, Ipswich/Edmunds Central 26  
Pierre 14, Mitchell 7  
Placeholder 12, Parkston 0  
Rapid City Stevens 23, Sioux Falls Lincoln 19  
Red Cloud 34, Custer 19  
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 55, Huron 13  
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 41, Rapid City Central 12  
Sioux Falls Washington 42, Aberdeen Central 13  
Sioux Valley 48, Elk Point-Jefferson 19

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St. Thomas More 37, Hot Springs 7  
Sully Buttes 66, Langford 28  
Sunshine Bible Academy 55, Crazy Horse 8  
Todd County 56, McLaughlin 6  
Vermillion 54, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 0  
Wall 33, Philip 6  
Webster 59, Florence/Henry 20  
Winner 64, Wagner 16  
Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 35, Aberdeen Roncalli 7  
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS  
Scotland vs. Avon, ppd. to Oct 7th.  
Sioux Falls Christian vs. Tri-Valley, ppd. to Oct 7th.  
Yankton vs. Sturgis, ppd. to Oct 7th.

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

## Volleyball

James Valley Christian def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-14, 25-17, 18-25, 25-16  
 Fargo "Scheels" Invitational  
 Pool Play  
 Pool B  
 Sioux Falls Washington def. Sheyenne, N.D., 25-16, 25-16  
 Sioux Falls Washington def. Devils Lake, N.D., 25-20, 25-19  
 Sioux Falls Washington def. Turtle Mountain, N.D., 25-8, 25-10  
 Pool E  
 Bismarck High, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 23-25, 25-17, 15-13  
 Fargo Davies, N.D. def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-23, 25-22  
 Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Kindred, N.D., 25-21, 25-15

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

21-33-36-45-56, Mega Ball: 12, Megaplier: 5

(twenty-one, thirty-three, thirty-six, forty-five, fifty-six; Mega Ball: twelve; Megaplier: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$30 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$112 million

## Mountain lion hunting proposal advances in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Commission is considering a proposal that would allow hunters who use dogs to begin a mountain lion hunt on private land to continue onto most public land outside the Black Hills.

The commission voted Thursday to advance the South Dakota Houndsman Association's petition for further consideration later, the Rapid City Journal reported.

The association sometimes obtains licenses to hunt problem mountain lions for landowners outside



the Black Hills, said Brad Tisdall, president of the association. But the hunt must stop if lions move from private land onto certain parcels of public land where hunting with dogs isn't allowed.

"The landowners are upset with us," Tisdall said.

Mountain lions usually roam the Black Hills. People can hunt the animal statewide, but there are restrictions on hunting with dogs, which are used to tree the lions. Hunting mountain lions with dogs is allowed only in Custer State Park and on private land outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District.

Current rules allow mountain lion hunts with dogs that begin on private land outside the district to continue on public land only if the parcel is managed by the state Office of School of Public Lands or the U.S. Bureau of Management, excluding the Fort Meade Recreation Area near Sturgis.

The rules were established as a compromise to allow some mountain lion hunts with dogs to progress onto public land while keeping some other public land off-limits to avoid conflicts with other users of that land.

The association's proposed rule would allow mountain lion hunts with dogs to continue on any public land, presumably including the recreation area.

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

## Review of Dakota Access oil pipeline to extend into spring

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — It probably will take until next spring for the Army Corps of Engineers to finish court-ordered additional environmental study of the Dakota Access oil pipeline, agency attorneys said in court documents filed Friday.

The Corps had anticipated completing the task by the end of the year, but Justice Department attorney Matthew Marinelli said it will take longer than expected to get needed information including spill modeling from Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners and possibly from at least one unspecified American Indian tribe.

"Given the current expected time frame for the receipt of additional information, the Corps now anticipates that its review and analysis ... will not conclude until approximately April 2, 2018," Marinelli wrote.

The \$3.8 billion pipeline began carrying oil from North Dakota through South Dakota and Iowa to a distribution point in Illinois on June 1. However, four Sioux tribes in the Dakotas continue challenging it in federal court in Washington, D.C., because they fear a leak could contaminate their water supply. The pipeline crosses beneath the Lake Oahe reservoir on the Missouri River just to the north of the Standing Rock Reservation that straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border.

"The notice says they are conducting additional oil spill modeling —in other words, this wasn't done before the Trump administration approved (the pipeline)," tribal Chairman Dave Archambault said Friday in a statement to The Associated Press. "This confirms what we've been saying from the start — until there's been a full analysis of risks and impacts to the Standing Rock tribe, the pipeline should be shut down."

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg is considering halting pipeline operations while the additional study is done. It's not known when he'll rule.

Boasberg ruled on June 14 that the Corps largely complied with environmental law in giving its permission for the pipeline project, but that it didn't adequately consider how an oil spill under Lake Oahe might affect the Standing Rock tribe. He also said the Corps didn't adequately study how the pipeline might disproportionately affect the tribal community — a concept known as environmental justice. That aims to ensure development projects aren't built in areas where minority populations might not have the resources to defend their rights. Boasberg ordered the Corps to reconsider those issues.

The Corps is "actively working on ways to shorten" the new April timeline for completing the work, Marinelli said.

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

## Poor Dakotas pheasant seasons could impact states' economies

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Tourism and business officials in the Dakotas are bracing for poor pheasant hunting this fall when they typically expect hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity.

The worst drought in recent memory this past summer has depleted the population of the popular game bird in the two states, with bird numbers down by nearly half from last year in South Dakota and down nearly two-thirds in North Dakota. The two states are considered among the best pheasant hunting areas in the nation by the Pheasants Forever conservation group.

In North Dakota, where 500,000 pheasants killed is the benchmark for a successful hunting season, "we're not going to get anywhere close to that," state Wildlife Chief Jeb Williams said as the Game and Fish Department prepared for the season opener Saturday. South Dakota's opening day is two weeks later.

Pheasants are big business in the Dakotas, attracting hundreds of thousands of hunters. They spend an estimated \$60 million per year on average in North Dakota, according to state Tourism Division data. In South Dakota, pheasants are an even bigger economic boost, with hunters spending nearly \$250 million last year, according to the state Game, Fish and Parks Department.

"Many communities in southwest and south central North Dakota depend on the influx of hunters to sustain their businesses, so we are hopeful hunters will continue to make the annual pheasant hunting trip to North Dakota," state Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman said.

Her office will "encourage hunters to come and enjoy the experience and tradition of pheasant hunting with less emphasis on bagging their limit," she said.

Bagging birds isn't the only attraction of pheasant hunting, said Troy Mosbrucker, mayor of Mott, which is generally considered the heart of North Dakota pheasant country.

"Some guys come because they like to visit," he said. "They spend a week with their friends, and if they get birds, they get birds."

"There are going to be some disappointed hunters, I can tell you that. The birds are gone," Mosbrucker said.

That will hurt the town of about 800 people, he said.

"Our town probably doubles in size during the first month of hunting season," he said. "Bars and restaurants, they rely on hunting season to get through the winter. The motel's getting cancellations already, and they're usually booked up through Thanksgiving."

Stephan Stanley, who hosts about 300 pheasant hunters each season at his Ringnecks Hunting Lodge in Presho, South Dakota, said he expects business to be down about 10 percent this year, and he expects to be one of the more fortunate ones.

"The small, individual farmers who don't have a full-time hunting business, who just have a 1,000-acre parcel, they're going to be affected the most by this," he said. "Most large commercial operations are releasing birds" to boost pheasant numbers in their areas, he said, and they also draw hunters with other amenities such as food and camaraderie.

"There's a lot more to how good of a trip hunters have than just the pheasant population," he said.

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

## Video used to charge father who left baby overnight in rain

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Charges against the father of an infant left outside for 18 hours in the rain are partly based on video surveillance which shows he was the last person to have custody of the child, a South Dakota prosecutor said Friday. The child survived and is doing well.

Ronald Terry Harrison Jr., 38, was arguing with the child's mother on the patio of Faith Family Church in Sioux Falls Monday afternoon when the woman walked away, leaving Harrison, the baby and their 1-year-old child, according to Minnehaha County State's Attorney Aaron McGowan. Harrison grabbed the older child who was walking away, but failed to retrieve the baby from the patio, according to a court affidavit.

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"Dad was the last one that had custody of the children. They were his responsibility at that point," McGowan said.

Authorities said the 2-month-old baby was left overnight in the rain when the temperature dipped to 54 until a church employee found him the next morning. McGowan says he has charged only the father "based on the time line and who had the custody of the children at the time the child was left alone."

Harrison is charged with felony abuse or cruelty to a minor and a misdemeanor count of contributing to abuse or neglect of a child. The affidavit said the parents came to the police station the following morning to report their baby was missing. The parents said they "accidentally lost," "misplaced" or "forgot" the baby. When detectives spoke to the mother alone, she told them she had left the children with their father and went to a friend's house following their argument, according to court records.

Church employee Adrienne Horsley changed the baby's diaper and wet clothes and gave him a warm bath before police arrived.

Harrison is being held on \$10,000 cash bond. A message left with the Minnehaha County Public Defender seeking comment on Harrison's behalf was not immediately returned.

## Mission man sentenced for assaulting federal officer

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Mission man has been sentenced to nine months in custody for assaulting a federal officer on the Rosebud Indian Reservation.

Authorities say 21-year-old Justin Fast Horse led officers on a chase in and around Mission on March 3 while driving drunk. They say he backed the pickup truck he was driving into a patrol vehicle and also spit at an officer while being arrested.

Fast Horse pleaded guilty in March and was sentenced this week. U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler says he also was ordered to pay nearly \$6,900 in restitution.

## \$23M Winner Regional Healthcare Center project commences

WINNER, S.D. (AP) — Crews have broken ground on a \$23 million project to renovate and expand the Winner Regional Healthcare Center.

The Daily Republic reports that the project is meant to streamline services at the 70-year-old hospital. The main focus will be building a new clinic, emergency room, operating room, lab and radiology department, plus a streamlined registration area.

Hospital operations are planned to continue during construction that will add 28,000 square feet and renovate 16,000 square feet. Winner Mayor Frank Finney says the project will take up to two years to finish.

Finney says it is going to be a "great deal" for the city.

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

## Victim of fatal I-90 crash involving 2 semitrailers ID'd

WALL, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Rapid City man who died in a crash on Interstate 90 involving two semitrailers.

The Highway Patrol says 65-year-old Clarence Ogle was driving a semi that crashed into another semi that had tipped over and blocked both eastbound lanes of the interstate Monday morning.

Ogle was dead at the scene 6 miles east of Wall.

The driver of the tipped semi and a passenger had gotten out before the crash. They were treated at a Rapid City hospital and released. Charges are pending against the driver.

The crash closed the eastbound lanes of the interstate for more than six hours.



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## South Dakota teams top Summit League preseason men's poll

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota State men's basketball team tops this year's Summit League preseason poll, with the University of South Dakota close behind.

SDSU received 13 first-place votes and USD 12 in the annual poll by league head coaches, sports information directors and media.

North Dakota State is third in the poll, followed by Fort Wayne, Denver, Omaha, Oral Roberts and Western Illinois.

## Ipswich man pleads not guilty to felony bestiality charges

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — An Ipswich man accused of bestiality has pleaded not guilty to six felony charges and requested a trial by judge rather than a jury.

The American News reports that 56-year-old James Schumacher is accused of engaging in sexual acts with two calves. He was arrested in July after a Bath-area farmer reported finding a man with one of his animals.

Each count against Schumacher carries a maximum punishment of two years in prison and a \$4,000 fine.

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

## Arrest warrants issued for 2 suspects in Rapid City homicide

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Arrest warrants have been issued for two suspects in a Rapid City homicide.

Police are searching for 21-year-old Maricelo Garcia and 19-year-old Cierra Walks. They're wanted in the Wednesday shooting death of 20-year-old Clinton Farlee.

Authorities say Farlee died after being shot in the chest with a single bullet from a pistol. Garcia is accused of killing him, and Walks of being an accessory. Police say they have found a vehicle associated with the pair.

Farlee and the suspects all are from Rapid City.

It's the seventh homicide case in Rapid City this year, two short of the record-setting year of 2015.

## US Gulf Coast braces for fast-approaching Hurricane Nate

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY, MELINDA DESLATTE and JEFF AMY, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Hurricane Nate raced swiftly over the central Gulf of Mexico on Saturday, gaining added strength as forecasters said it would smash into the U.S. Gulf Coast in coming nighttime hours.

Louisiana's governor urged his state's residents to take Nate seriously even before New Orleans and much of his state's fragile coast was placed under a hurricane warning, saying the storm "has the potential to do a lot of damage."

"No one should take this storm lightly. It has already claimed the lives of at least 20 people," Gov. John Bel Edwards said Friday. "We do want people to be very, very cautious and to not take this storm for granted."

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said the core of the Category 1 hurricane was located at 7 a.m. CDT Saturday about 245 miles (395 kilometers) south-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River. A hurricane hunter plane found the storm had gained new muscle in recent hours, with top sustained winds rising to at 85 mph (135 kph) amid a threat of some additional strengthening.

A hurricane warning is in effect from Grand Isle, Louisiana, to the Alabama-Florida border and also for metropolitan New Orleans and nearby Lake Pontchartrain. A tropical storm warning extends west of Grand Isle to Morgan City, Louisiana, and around Lake Maurepas and east of the Alabama-Florida border to the Okaloosa-Walton County line in the Florida Panhandle.

States of emergency have been declared in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama as Nate — which has already killed at least 21 people in Central America — became the latest in a succession of destructive

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storms this hurricane season.

In Louisiana, Edwards mobilized 1,300 National Guard troops, with 15 headed to New Orleans to monitor the fragile pumping system there. With forecasts projecting landfall on the central Gulf Coast as a Category 1 hurricane, Edwards urged residents to ready for rainfall, storm surge and severe winds — and to be where they intend to hunker down by “dark on Saturday.”

Edwards said forecasts for the fast-moving storm indicate the greatest threats are winds and storm surge. The U.S. National Hurricane Center warned that Nate could raise sea levels by 4 to 7 feet (1.2 to 2.1 meters) from Morgan City, Louisiana, to the Alabama-Florida border. It had already had caused deadly flooding in much of Central America.

A White House statement early Saturday said Louisiana’s emergency declaration covering had been approved, adding President Donald Trump authorized the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate all federal disaster relief efforts. Such statements are intended to speed aid, save lives and protect public safety and property often even before a storm hits.

In New Orleans, the city’s pumping system remains fragile but is working. Two flash floods this summer led to revelations about personnel and equipment problems at the agency that runs the system that drains the city. New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said 109 of its 120 pumps are functioning, which is 92 percent capacity.

“We are ready for whatever Nate brings our way,” Landrieu said of forecasts that Nate could dump 3 to 6 inches (7 to 15 centimeters) of rain on the region — with isolated totals of up to 10 inches (25 centimeters).

Officials ordered the evacuation of part of coastal St. Bernard Parish east of New Orleans ahead of the storm. Earlier Thursday, a voluntary evacuation was called in the barrier island town of Grand Isle south of New Orleans.

On Alabama’s Dauphin Island — a barrier island south of Mobile, Alabama — owners hauled boats out of the water ahead of the storm’s approach. The major concern was the storm surge was projected to coincide with high tide.

“The west end of the island floods in a good thunderstorm,” said Chad Palmer, the owner of FinAtics Inshore Fishing Charters, which operates five charter boats on the barrier island.

In neighboring Mississippi, Gov. Phil Bryant declared a state of emergency in six southernmost counties. State officials warned storm surge was the biggest danger in that state’s low-lying coastal areas, as well as high winds that could damage mobile homes. Mississippi’s government said 11 evacuation shelters would open away from the immediate coast, with buses available for people who can’t drive.

“If you are in an area that has flooded, I would recommend you evacuate that area until the storm has ended and the water has receded for your own personal safety and for the safety of the first responders that will be responding in the event you are trapped,” Bryant said.

Parts of Central America were especially hard hit by Nate.

Nicaragua’s vice president and spokeswoman, Rosario Murillo, said that at least 11 people had died in that country, including two women and a man who worked for the Health Ministry who were swept away by floodwaters in a canal.

Costa Rica’s Judicial Investigation Organism blamed seven deaths in that country on the storm and said 15 people were missing. Flooding drove 5,000 residents into emergency shelters there. Damage caused by the storm prompted Costa Rican officials to postpone a World Cup qualifying soccer match between that country and Honduras, which had been scheduled for Friday night.

In Honduras, there were three dead and three missing, authorities said.

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Associated Press writer Kim Chandler contributed to this report from Alabama.

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## Extra special: Indians edge Yankees 9-8 in 13, take 2-0 lead

By TOM WITHERS, AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — They've won this season in almost every way imaginable: comebacks, walk-offs, blowouts, nail-biters.

No. 104 for the Cleveland Indians topped them all.

Yan Gomes singled home Austin Jackson from second base with none out in the 13th inning as Cleveland rallied from five runs down to stun the New York Yankees 9-8 on Friday and snatch a 2-0 lead in the AL Division Series.

Despite an atrocious start by ace Corey Kluber and losing slugger Edwin Encarnacion with a severely sprained ankle in the first, the Indians, with some help from a call that went their way, continued a charmed season growing more and more special by the day.

"The tendency of this team is to never give up," Kluber said. "Even when we were down 8-3, we didn't believe the game was over. We never feel like we're out of a game."

Jackson drew a leadoff walk in the 13th from Dellin Betances and stole second. Gomes went to a full count before pulling his bouncer just inside the third-base bag, easily scoring Jackson and touching off another one of those wild celebrations inside Progressive Field, where the Indians have been so good while running away with their division and winning 22 straight.

As Jackson sprinted home, Cleveland's players poured out of the dugout and mobbed Gomes at the conclusion of a wild, 5-hour, 8-minute thriller that featured 14 pitchers and a call that may haunt Yankees manager Joe Girardi for months.

"We just were supposed to win," said Indians outfielder Jay Bruce, who hit a game-tying homer in the eighth. "No words, honestly. I'm speechless."

Francisco Lindor hit a grand slam in the sixth to rally Cleveland, which will try for a sweep in Game 3 Sunday at Yankee Stadium. Carlos Carrasco will start for the Indians against Masahiro Tanaka, who will try to extend New York's season.

The Yankees had their chances late, but they stranded the go-ahead run at third in the ninth and 10th — and had pinch-runner Ronald Torreyes picked off second in the 11th by Gomes from the behind the plate.

Josh Tomlin, who had been scheduled to start later in the series, pitched two perfect innings for the win as Francona ran out of relievers in a game started by his best pitcher.

Aaron Hicks hit a three-run homer off Kluber and Gary Sanchez and Greg Bird hit two-run shots for the Yankees, who may have caught a bad break before Lindor's homer.

New York's Aaron Judge went 0 for 3 and is hitless in seven at-bats in the series with five strikeouts.

The Yankees lost consecutive games for the first time since they were swept at home in a three-game series by the Indians from Aug. 28-30. Now, they need to sweep three in a row from Cleveland.

Down 8-3, facing New York's vaunted bullpen, the Indians came back.

New York starter CC Sabathia was lifted with one on and one out in the sixth for Chad Green, another one of the Yankees' flame-throwers who got an out before Gomes doubled. Green came inside and Lonnie Chisenhall was awarded first by plate umpire Dan Iassogna on a hit by pitch.

TV replays showed the ball slightly change direction — it appeared to hit the knob of Chisenhall's bat.

Girardi said there wasn't enough evidence within 30 seconds to justify a challenge. He said the team later saw a slow-motion replay suggesting he should've contested the call, but it was too late.

"There was nothing that told us he was not hit by the pitch," Girardi said.

New York catcher Gary Sanchez said he heard something, but wasn't sure what. Sanchez caught the pitch on a fly — it would've been strike three if it had been ruled a foul tip — and immediately pointed to the Yankees dugout, indicating they should consider challenging the call.

Girardi nodded and held up a finger, asking for time to make a decision.

"I didn't think it hit him, because he never reacted," Sanchez said through a translator. "He stood there. But it's just stuff that happens in the game."

Lindor then stepped in and hit a towering shot off the inside of the right-field foul pole to make it 8-7.



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Before he left the batter's box, Lindor gave his shot some help.

"As soon as I hit it, I knew it had a chance of going out," Lindor said. "Then after a couple of steps, I was like, 'No, don't go foul, please. Just stay fair.' I started blowing on it a little bit. As soon as it went out, it was just a lot of emotions.

As Lindor rounded the bases with Cleveland's first postseason slam since Jim Thome in 1999, Progressive Field shook the way it did last November when Rajai Davis hit a two-run homer in eighth inning of Game 7 off Aroldis Chapman, then with the Cubs and now closing for the Yankees.

Bruce, who has done everything since coming over in an August trade, led off the eighth with his homer to left off reliever David Robertson, who pitched 3 1-3 scoreless innings and earned the win in the wild-card game over Minnesota.

Five innings later, the Indians finally broke the tie. They matched the longest postseason game in Cleveland history — Tony Pena's homer in the 13th beat Boston in Game 1 of the 1995 ALDS.

Kluber wasn't himself. Not even close.

The right-hander, who led the AL in wins, ERA and intimidation, didn't get out of the third inning as Francona pulled him after allowing Hicks' three-run homer.

It was the shortest outing this season for Kluber, and as he slowly walked off the mound, Cleveland's stunned crowd gave him a polite ovation and several teammates approached him to offer consolation.

"I threw too many balls," Kluber said. "And when I'd throw strikes, they were right over the plate."

## SLUGGER HURT

After rolling his ankle, Encarnacion stayed on the ground and rolled in the infield dirt in obvious pain while waiting for medical attention. He was helped to his feet and had to be assisted off the field.

Francona said an MRI showed a sprain and that Encarnacion, who hit 38 homers with 107 RBIs, is day to day.

## BRANTLEY'S RETURN

Sidelined for Cleveland's deep postseason run in 2016, Michael Brantley is along for the ride this year and the plan — before Encarnacion got hurt — was for the All-Star to start Game 3 in left.

He replaced Encarnacion in the second and went 0 for 5.

## UP NEXT

Carrasco went 11-3 with a 2.65 ERA in 17 road starts. Tanaka, who struck out a career-high 15 in his last start, will be making his second postseason start for the Yankees. He lost the wild-card game in 2015.

## Danish police find head, other body parts in submarine case

By JAN M. OLSEN, Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Danish divers found the decapitated head, legs and clothes of a Swedish journalist who was killed after going on a trip with an inventor on his submarine, police said Saturday.

The body parts and clothing were found Friday in plastic bags with a knife and "heavy metal pieces" to make them sink near where the 30-year-old Wall's naked headless torso was found in August, Copenhagen police investigator Jens Moeller Jensen said.

Moeller Jensen said there were no fractures to Wall's skull and he declined to comment on the discovery of the knife.

Peter Madsen, the 46-year-old Danish inventor who is in pre-trial detention on preliminary manslaughter charges, has said Wall died after being accidentally hit by a 70-kilogram (155-pound) hatch on the UC3 Nautilus submarine, after which he "buried" her at sea. But police have said 15 stab wounds were found on the torso found at sea off Copenhagen on Aug. 21. Her arms are still missing.

Wall's cause of death hasn't yet been established yet.

The detention of Madsen, who has denied manslaughter, expires Oct. 31 when a court will decide if he will continue to remain in custody ahead of a possible trial. He is also held on preliminary charges of the indecent handling of a corpse.

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Police have said the submarine only sailed in Danish waters Aug. 10-11.

Police believe the pair didn't know each other beforehand. Wall was working on a story about Madsen, who dreamed of launching a manned space mission. She was last seen alive Aug. 10 aboard the 40-ton, nearly 18 meter-long (60 foot-long) submarine as it left Copenhagen.

The following day, Madsen was rescued from the sinking submarine without Wall at his side and was arrested the same day. Police believe he deliberately scuttled the vessel.

During their investigation, police have found videos on Madsen's personal computer of women being tortured, decapitated and murdered. The videos were considered to be real, according to prosecutor Jakob Buch-Jepsen.

Investigators believe Madsen killed Wall between Aug. 10 and 11, cut up the body and attached a belt with a pipe to the torso with the purpose of making it sink, officials said, adding that her head, arms and legs had been deliberately cut off after her death.

Marks on the dismembered torso indicated that someone had tried to press air out of the body so it wouldn't float, police had said.

A court-ordered psychiatric evaluation of Madsen is pending.

## Citing religious freedom, Trump backing off Obama-era rules

By DAVID CRARY and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a one-two punch elating religious conservatives, President Donald Trump's administration is allowing more employers to opt out of no-cost birth control for workers and issuing sweeping religious-freedom directions that could override many anti-discrimination protections for LGBT people and others.

At a time when Trump finds himself embattled on many fronts, the two directives — issued almost simultaneously on Friday — demonstrated the president's eagerness to retain the loyalty of social conservatives who make up a key part of his base. Leaders of that constituency were exultant.

"President Trump is demonstrating his commitment to undoing the anti-faith policies of the previous administration and restoring true religious freedom," said Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council.

Liberal advocacy groups, including those supporting LGBT and reproductive rights, were outraged.

"The Trump administration is saying to employers, 'If you want to discriminate, we have your back,'" said Fatima Goss Graves, president of National Women's Law Center.

Her organization is among several that are planning to challenge the birth-control rollback in court. The American Civil Liberties Union filed such a lawsuit less than three hours after the rules were issued.

"The Trump administration is forcing women to pay for their boss' religious beliefs," said ACLU senior staff attorney Brigitte Amiri. "We're filing this lawsuit because the federal government cannot authorize discrimination against women in the name of religion or otherwise."

The Democratic attorneys general of California and Massachusetts filed similar suits later Friday.

Both directives had been in the works for months, with activists on both sides of a culture war on edge about the timing and the details.

The religious-liberty directive, issued by Attorney General Jeff Sessions, instructs federal agencies to do as much as possible to accommodate those who claim their religious freedoms are being violated. The guidance effectively lifts a burden from religious objectors to prove that their beliefs about marriage or other topics that affect various actions are sincerely held.

"Except in the narrowest circumstances, no one should be forced to choose between living out his or her faith and complying with the law," Sessions wrote.

In what is likely to be one of the more contested aspects of the document, the Justice Department states that religious organizations can hire workers based on religious beliefs and an employee's willingness "to adhere to a code of conduct." Many conservative Christian schools and faith-based agencies require employees to adhere to moral codes that ban sex outside marriage and same-sex relationships,

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among other behavior.

The Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative Christian law firm, called it "a great day for religious freedom." But JoDee Winterhof of the Human Rights Campaign, a national LGBT-rights group, depicted the two directives as "an all-out assault, on women, LGBT people and others" as the administration fulfilled a "wish list" of the religious right.

The new policy on contraception, issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, allows more categories of employers, including publicly traded companies, to opt out of providing no-cost birth control to women by claiming religious or moral objections — another step in rolling back President Barack Obama's health care law that required most companies to cover birth control at no additional cost.

Employers with religious or moral qualms will also be able to cover some birth control methods, and not others. Experts said that could interfere with efforts to promote modern long-acting implantable contraceptives, such as IUDs, which are more expensive.

The top Democrat in the House of Representatives, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, said the birth-control rollback was despicable.

"This administration's contempt for women reaches a new low with this appalling decision to enable employers and health plans to deny women basic coverage for contraception," she said.

On the Republican side, however, House Speaker Paul Ryan welcomed the decision, calling it "a landmark day for religious liberty."

The new policy took effect on Friday, but its impact won't be known immediately and may not be dramatic.

"I can't imagine that many employers are going to be willing to certify that they have a moral objection to standard birth control methods," said Dan Mendelson, president of the consulting firm Avalere Health.

Nonetheless, he worried that the new rules would set a precedent for undermining basic health benefits required under federal law. The administration has estimated that some 200 employers who have already voiced objections to the Obama-era policy would qualify for the expanded opt-out, and that 120,000 women would be affected.

Since contraception became a covered preventive benefit, the share of female employees paying with their own money for birth control pills has plunged to 3 percent, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Many Catholic hospitals now rely on an Obama-era workaround under which the government pays for the cost of birth control coverage. That workaround can continue under the new rules.

Despite that workaround, there have been extensive legal battles waged by religious institutions and other parties challenging the birth-control mandate. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops hailed the new policy as a "return to common sense" that would enhance "peaceful coexistence" between church and state.

Doctors' groups that were instrumental in derailing Republican plans to repeal Obama's health law outright expressed their dismay.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said the new policy could reverse the recent progress in lowering the nation's rate of unintended pregnancies.

"Instead of fulfilling its mission 'to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans,' HHS leaders under the current administration are focused on turning back the clock on women's health," said the organization's president, Dr. Haywood Brown.

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Crary reported from New York. Associated Press writers Sadie Gurman and Eric Tucker in Washington and Religion Writer Rachel Zoll in New York contributed to this report.



## AP-NORC Poll: Trump fares poorly in public's view

By JULIE PACE and EMILY SWANSON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just 24 percent of Americans believe the country is heading in the right direction after a tumultuous stretch for President Donald Trump that included the threat of war with North Korea, stormy complaints about hurricane relief and Trump's equivocating about white supremacists. That's a 10-point drop since June, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The decline in optimism about the nation's trajectory is particularly pronounced among Republicans. In June, 60 percent of Republicans said the country was headed in the right direction; now it's just 44 percent.

The broader picture for the president is grim, too. Nearly 70 percent of Americans say Trump isn't level-headed, and majorities say he's not honest or a strong leader. More than 60 percent disapprove of how he is handling race relations, foreign policy and immigration, among other issues.

Overall, 67 percent of Americans disapprove of the job Trump is doing in office, including about one-third of Republicans.

Tracy Huelsman, a 40-year-old from Louisville, Kentucky, is among them. A self-described moderate Republican, Huelsman said she's particularly concerned about the "divisiveness" she feels the president promotes on social media.

"It's scary in 2017 that we are in what seems like a worse place in terms of division," said Huelsman, who did not vote for Trump in last year's election.

The assessments come after a turbulent summer for Trump that included a major White House shake-up, bringing the departure of his chief of staff, top strategist and press secretary. While the installment of retired Marine Gen. John Kelly as chief of staff has ushered in more day-to-day order in the West Wing, the president has still stirred up numerous controversies, including when he blamed "both sides" for the clashes between white supremacists and counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Trump has also raised the specter of a military conflict with North Korea over its nuclear provocations. He's derided North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un, as "rocket man," including during a speech at the United Nations, and has downplayed the prospects that diplomatic negotiations with Kim could yield results.

Despite his electoral success, Trump struggled as both a candidate and now as president to broaden his base of support beyond his ardent supporters. The loyalty of his core backers has been enough to keep Republican lawmakers largely in line, but party operatives are closely watching Trump's support among GOP and independent voters ahead of next year's midterm elections, when the balance of power in Congress will be at stake.

To be sure, lawmakers have their own problems to worry about. Americans have even less esteem for Congress than Trump, with just 18 percent saying they approve of the job being done by the House and the Senate.

Republicans took another hit last month when they failed — for a second time this year — to pass an overhaul of the nation's health care law. GOP leaders tried to rush votes on the complicated legislation, leaving many voters unsure of what was in the package.

"They never seemed to present a bill to people that you could actually look at the details of and the pluses and minuses of it," said Dennis Cronin, a 67-year-old independent from Wenham, Massachusetts.

The GOP failure on health care has irritated Trump, who promised voters that repealing "Obamacare" would be easy. Americans aren't happy with his progress on health care either; 68 percent disapprove of his handling of the issue.

Of all the issues surveyed by the AP-NORC poll, the president performs slightly better on the economy. But even there, 56 percent disapprove of the job he's doing and just 42 percent say they approve.

On Friday, the Labor Department announced that the U.S. shed 33,000 jobs in September because of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, which closed thousands of businesses in Texas and Florida and forced widespread evacuations. It marked the first monthly hiring drop in nearly seven years.

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Ninety-two percent of Democrats and 69 percent of independents say Trump understands the problems of people like them not very or not at all well. Even among Republicans, only 42 percent say he understands them very well, while 32 percent say he does moderately well.

The AP-NORC poll of 1,150 adults was conducted Sept. 28-Oct. 2 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

Respondents were first selected randomly using address-based sampling methods, and later interviewed online or by phone.

Online:

AP-NORC Center: <http://www.apnorc.org/>

Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC> and Emily Swanson at [http://twitter.com/el\\_swan](http://twitter.com/el_swan)

## Welcome to Vegas: Billboards ask for tips on gunman's motive

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Tourists coming to gamble and party on the Strip will soon find something other than bright lights welcoming them to "Fabulous Las Vegas."

Billboards will serve as a stark reminder that investigators remain stumped about what drove a gunman to mow down concertgoers from a perch in a high-rise casino hotel last Sunday.

"We still do not have a clear motive or reason why," a frustrated Clark County Undersheriff Kevin McMahill said Friday. "We have looked at literally everything."

Investigators have chased 1,000 leads and examined Stephen Paddock's politics, his finances, any possible radicalization and his social behavior — typical investigative avenues that have helped uncover the motive in past shootings.

"We have been down each and every one of these paths," McMahill said. "We all want answers."

The FBI announced that billboards would go up around the city asking anyone with information to dial 800-CALL-FBI.

"If you know something, say something," said Aaron Rouse, agent in charge of the Las Vegas FBI office. "We will not stop until we have the truth."

Paddock, a reclusive 64-year-old high-stakes gambler, rained bullets on the crowd at a country music festival from his 32nd-floor hotel suite, killing 58 and wounding hundreds before taking his own life.

McMahill said investigators had reviewed voluminous video from the casino and don't think Paddock had an accomplice in the shooting, but they want to know if anyone knew about his plot beforehand.

In their effort to find any hint of his motive, investigators were looking into whether he was with a prostitute days before the shooting, were scrutinizing cruises he took and were trying to make sense of a cryptic note with numbers jotted on it found in his hotel room, a federal official said.

The U.S. official briefed by federal law enforcement officers wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The official said investigators were interviewing other call girls for information and looking into at least a dozen cruises Paddock took in the last few years, including one to the Middle East.

It is unusual to have so few clues five days after a mass shooting. McMahill noted that in past mass killings or terrorist attacks, killers left notes, social media postings and information on a computer, or even phoned police.

"The lack of a social media footprint is likely intentional," said Erroll Southers, director of homegrown violent extremism studies at the University of Southern California. "We're so used to, in the first 24 to 48 hours, being able to review social media posts. If they don't leave us a note behind or a manifesto behind, and we're not seeing that, that's what's making this longer."

What officers have found is that Paddock planned his attack meticulously.

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He requested an upper-floor room overlooking the festival, stockpiled 23 guns, a dozen of them modified to fire continuously like an automatic weapon, and set up cameras inside and outside his room to watch for approaching officers.

In a possible sign he was contemplating massacres at other sites, he also booked rooms overlooking the Lollapalooza festival in Chicago in August and the Life Is Beautiful show near the Vegas Strip in late September, according to authorities reconstructing his movements leading up to the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

His arsenal also included tracer rounds that can improve a shooter's firing accuracy in the dark, a law enforcement official told the AP. It wasn't clear whether Paddock fired any of the illuminated bullets during the massacre.

Paddock bought 1,000 rounds of the .308-caliber and .223-caliber tracer ammunition from a private buyer he met at a Phoenix gun show, a law enforcement official not authorized to comment on the investigation said on condition of anonymity.

Tracer rounds illuminate their path so a gunman can home in on targets at night. But they can also give away the shooter's position.

Video shot of the pandemonium that erupted when Paddock started strafing the festival showed a muzzle flash from his room at the Mandalay Bay resort, but bullets weren't visible in the night sky.

McMahill said investigators are looking into Paddock's mental health and any medications he was on.

His girlfriend, Marilou Danley, told FBI agents Wednesday that she had not noticed any changes in his mental state or seen indications he could become violent, according to a federal official who wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

Danley said she was unaware of any plans Paddock had when he sent her overseas to see family in her native Philippines. She was out of the country at the time of the attacks and has been labeled a "person of interest," though she's not in custody and is cooperating with authorities.

Because so few people knew Paddock well, investigators will have a harder time probing his background for clues or hints he may have dropped about his plans, Southers said.

There's "no one to say who's he mad at, what his motive is," Southers said. "The key to this case right now is the girlfriend."

Melley reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press writers Ken Ritter, Regina Garcia Cano and Josh Hoffner in Las Vegas; Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix; and Don Babwin and Michael Tarm in Chicago contributed to this report.

For complete coverage of the Las Vegas shooting, click here: <https://apnews.com/tag/LasVegasmassshooting>.

## US states declare emergency ahead of Tropical Storm Nate

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Tropical Storm Nate gained force as it sped past Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula late Friday after drenching Central America in rain that was blamed for at least 21 deaths. Forecasters said it was likely to reach the U.S. Gulf Coast as a hurricane over the weekend.

Louisiana and Mississippi officials declared states of state of emergency and Louisiana ordered some people to evacuate coastal areas and barrier islands ahead of its expected landfall Saturday night or early Sunday. Evacuations began at some offshore oil platforms in the Gulf.

Mississippi's government said it would open 11 evacuation shelters in areas away from the immediate coast, with buses available for people who can't drive.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center warned that Nate could raise sea levels by 4 to 7 feet (1.2 to 2.1 meters) from Morgan City, Louisiana, to the Alabama-Florida border. It had already had caused deadly flooding in much of Central America.



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The center added metropolitan New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain to its latest hurricane warning.

The storm had maximum sustained winds of 70 mph (110 kph) by Friday night and was likely to strengthen over the Gulf of Mexico, reaching the U.S. Gulf coast near New Orleans late Saturday as a hurricane, according to the hurricane center.

The storm was located about 500 miles (800 kilometers) south-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River and was moving north-northwest at 22 mph (35 kph).

Authorities cancelled Friday afternoon classes in parts of Mexico's Caribbean coast state of Quintana Roo, where Cozumel and Cancun are located. But Gov. Carlos Joaquin said it appeared the storm would stay well offshore and not hit land, adding "that, I believe, is good news."

In Nicaragua, Nate's arrival followed two weeks of near-constant rain that had left the ground saturated and rivers swollen. Authorities placed the whole country on alert and warned of flooding and landslides.

Nicaragua's vice president and spokeswoman, Rosario Murillo, said that at least 11 people had died in that country due to the storm. Earlier Thursday she had said 15 people had died before later revising to say some of those were still counted as missing. She didn't give details on all the deaths, but said two women and a man who worked for the Health Ministry were swept away by a flooded canal in the central municipality of Juigalpa.

Costa Rica's Judicial Investigation Organism blamed seven deaths in that country on the storm and said 15 people were missing. Flooding drove 5,000 residents into emergency shelters.

In Honduras, there were three dead and three missing, according to Oscar Triminio, spokesman for the country's firefighters.

Damage caused by the storm prompted Costa Rican officials to postpone a World Cup qualifying soccer match between that country and Honduras, which had been scheduled for Friday night.

In Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency and mobilized 1,300 National Guard troops, with 15 headed to New Orleans to monitor the fragile pumping system there.

With forecasts projecting landfall in southeast Louisiana as a Category 1 hurricane, Edwards urged residents to ready for rainfall, storm surge and severe winds — and to be where they intend to hunker down by "dark on Saturday."

Louisiana's governor said Nate is forecast to move quickly, rather than stall and drop tremendous amounts of rain on the state. State officials hope that means New Orleans won't run into problems with its pumps being able to handle the water.

Edwards warned, however, against underestimating the storm.

The National Hurricane Center issued a hurricane warning from Grand Isle, Louisiana to the Alabama-Florida border.

Officials ordered the evacuation of part of coastal St. Bernard Parish east of New Orleans ahead of the storm. Earlier Thursday, a voluntary evacuation was called in the barrier island town of Grand Isle south of New Orleans.

New Orleans officials outlined steps to bolster the city's pump and drainage system. Weaknesses in that system were revealed during summer flash floods.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's New Orleans office said in a news release that as of midday Thursday, six production platforms, out of the 737 manned platforms in the Gulf, had been evacuated. No drilling rigs were evacuated, but one moveable rig was taken out of the storm's path.

The agency estimated less than 15 percent of the current oil production in the Gulf of Mexico has been shut-in, which equates to 254,607 barrels of oil per day.

## Trump's one-two punch hits birth control, LGBT rights

By DAVID CRARY and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a one-two punch elating religious conservatives, President Donald Trump's administration is allowing more employers to opt out of no-cost birth control for workers and issuing sweeping religious-freedom directions that could override many anti-discrimination protections for LGBT people and others.

At a time when Trump finds himself embattled on many fronts, the two directives — issued almost simultaneously on Friday — demonstrated the president's eagerness to retain the loyalty of social conservatives who make up a key part of his base. Leaders of that constituency were exultant.

"President Trump is demonstrating his commitment to undoing the anti-faith policies of the previous administration and restoring true religious freedom," said Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council.

Liberal advocacy groups, including those supporting LGBT and reproductive rights, were outraged.

"The Trump administration is saying to employers, 'If you want to discriminate, we have your back,'" said Fatima Goss Graves, president of National Women's Law Center.

Her organization is among several that are planning to challenge the birth-control rollback in court. The American Civil Liberties Union filed such a lawsuit less than three hours after the rules were issued.

"The Trump administration is forcing women to pay for their boss' religious beliefs," said ACLU senior staff attorney Brigitte Amiri. "We're filing this lawsuit because the federal government cannot authorize discrimination against women in the name of religion or otherwise."

The Democratic attorneys general of California and Massachusetts filed similar suits later Friday.

Both directives had been in the works for months, with activists on both sides of a culture war on edge about the timing and the details.

The religious-liberty directive, issued by Attorney General Jeff Sessions, instructs federal agencies to do as much as possible to accommodate those who claim their religious freedoms are being violated. The guidance effectively lifts a burden from religious objectors to prove that their beliefs about marriage or other topics that affect various actions are sincerely held.

"Except in the narrowest circumstances, no one should be forced to choose between living out his or her faith and complying with the law," Sessions wrote.

In what is likely to be one of the more contested aspects of the document, the Justice Department states that religious organizations can hire workers based on religious beliefs and an employee's willingness "to adhere to a code of conduct." Many conservative Christian schools and faith-based agencies require employees to adhere to moral codes that ban sex outside marriage and same-sex relationships, among other behavior.

The Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative Christian law firm, called it "a great day for religious freedom." But JoDee Winterhof of the Human Rights Campaign, a national LGBT-rights group, depicted the two directives as "an all-out assault, on women, LGBT people and others" as the administration fulfilled a "wish list" of the religious right.

The new policy on contraception, issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, allows more categories of employers, including publicly traded companies, to opt out of providing no-cost birth control to women by claiming religious or moral objections — another step in rolling back President Barack Obama's health care law that required most companies to cover birth control at no additional cost.

Employers with religious or moral qualms will also be able to cover some birth control methods, and not others. Experts said that could interfere with efforts to promote modern long-acting implantable contraceptives, such as IUDs, which are more expensive.

The top Democrat in the House of Representatives, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, said the birth-control rollback was despicable.

"This administration's contempt for women reaches a new low with this appalling decision to enable employers and health plans to deny women basic coverage for contraception," she said.

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On the Republican side, however, House Speaker Paul Ryan welcomed the decision, calling it "a landmark day for religious liberty."

The new policy took effect on Friday, but its impact won't be known immediately and may not be dramatic. "I can't imagine that many employers are going to be willing to certify that they have a moral objection to standard birth control methods," said Dan Mendelson, president of the consulting firm Avalere Health.

Nonetheless, he worried that the new rules would set a precedent for undermining basic health benefits required under federal law. The administration has estimated that some 200 employers who have already voiced objections to the Obama-era policy would qualify for the expanded opt-out, and that 120,000 women would be affected.

Since contraception became a covered preventive benefit, the share of female employees paying with their own money for birth control pills has plunged to 3 percent, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Many Catholic hospitals now rely on an Obama-era workaround under which the government pays for the cost of birth control coverage. That workaround can continue under the new rules.

Despite that workaround, there have been extensive legal battles waged by religious institutions and other parties challenging the birth-control mandate. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops hailed the new policy as a "return to common sense" that would enhance "peaceful coexistence" between church and state.

Doctors' groups that were instrumental in derailing Republican plans to repeal Obama's health law outright expressed their dismay.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said the new policy could reverse the recent progress in lowering the nation's rate of unintended pregnancies.

"Instead of fulfilling its mission 'to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans,' HHS leaders under the current administration are focused on turning back the clock on women's health," said the organization's president, Dr. Haywood Brown.

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Crary reported from New York. Associated Press writers Sadie Gurman and Eric Tucker in Washington and Religion Writer Rachel Zoll in New York contributed to this report.

## Stymied police seek help in uncovering Vegas gunman's motive

By **KEN RITTER** and **MICHAEL BALSAMO**, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — After five days of scouring the life of Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock and chasing 1,000 leads, investigators confessed Friday they still don't know what drove him to mass murder, and they announced plans to put up billboards appealing for the public's help.

In their effort to find any hint of his motive, investigators were looking into whether he was with a prostitute days before the shooting, scrutinizing cruises he took and trying to make sense of a cryptic note with numbers jotted on it found in his hotel room, a federal official said.

So far, examinations of Paddock's politics, finances, any possible radicalization and his social behavior — typical investigative avenues that have helped uncover the motive in past shootings — have turned up little.

"We still do not have a clear motive or reason why," Clark County Undersheriff Kevin McMahill said. "We have looked at literally everything."

The FBI announced that billboards would go up around the city asking anyone with information to phone 800-CALL-FBI.

"If you know something, say something," said Aaron Rouse, agent in charge of the Las Vegas FBI office. "We will not stop until we have the truth."

Paddock, a reclusive 64-year-old high-stakes gambler, rained bullets on the crowd at a country music festival Sunday night from his 32nd-floor hotel suite, killing 58 and wounding hundreds before taking his own life.

McMahill said investigators had reviewed voluminous video from the casino and don't think Paddock had an accomplice in the shooting, but they want to know if anyone knew about his plot beforehand.

Investigators believe Paddock hired a prostitute in the days leading up to the shooting and were inter-



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viewing other call girls for information, a U.S. official briefed by federal law enforcement officials said. The official wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The official also disclosed that Paddock took at least a dozen cruises abroad in the last few years, most of them with his girlfriend, Marilou Danley. At least one sailed to the Middle East.

It is unusual to have so few hints of a motive five days after a mass shooting. In previous mass killings or terrorist attacks, killers left notes, social media postings and information on a computer — or even phoned police.

"The lack of a social media footprint is likely intentional," said Erroll Southers, director of homegrown violent extremism studies at the University of Southern California. "We're so used to, in the first 24 to 48 hours, being able to review social media posts. If they don't leave us a note behind or a manifesto behind, and we're not seeing that, that's what's making this longer."

What officers have found is that Paddock planned his attack meticulously.

He requested an upper-floor room overlooking the festival, stockpiled 23 guns, a dozen of them modified to fire continuously like an automatic weapon, and set up cameras inside and outside his room to watch for approaching officers.

In a possible sign he was contemplating massacres at other sites, he also booked rooms overlooking the Lollapalooza festival in Chicago in August and the Life Is Beautiful show near the Vegas Strip in late September, according to authorities reconstructing his movements leading up to the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

His arsenal also included tracer rounds that can improve a shooter's firing accuracy in the dark, a law enforcement official told AP. It wasn't clear whether Paddock fired any of the illuminated bullets during the high-rise massacre.

Paddock bought 1,000 rounds of the .308-caliber and .223-caliber tracer ammunition from a private buyer he met at a Phoenix gun show, a law enforcement official not authorized to comment on the investigation said on condition of anonymity.

Tracer rounds illuminate their path so a gunman can home in on targets at night. But they can also give away the shooter's position.

Video shot of the pandemonium that erupted when Paddock started strafing the festival showed a muzzle flash from his room at the Mandalay Bay resort, but bullets weren't visible in the night sky.

Investigators are looking into Paddock's mental health and any medications he was on, McMahill said.

His girlfriend, Danley, told FBI agents Wednesday that she had not noticed any changes in his mental state or indications he could become violent, the federal official said.

Paddock sent Danley on a trip to her native Philippines before the attack, and she was unaware of his plans and devastated when she learned of the carnage while overseas, she said in a statement.

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Associated Press writers Regina Garcia Cano and Josh Hoffner in Las Vegas; Brian Melley in Los Angeles; Jacques Billeaud in Phoenix; and Don Babwin and Michael Tarm in Chicago contributed to this report.

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For complete coverage of the Las Vegas shooting, click here: <https://apnews.com/tag/LasVegasmassshooting>.

## Group opposing nuclear weapons wins Nobel peace prize

By JAMEY KEATEN and MARK LEWIS, Associated Press

OSLO, Norway (AP) — The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, a forceful show of support for a grassroots effort that seeks to pressure the world's nuclear powers to give up the weapons that could destroy the planet.

The choice of the little-known coalition of disarmament activists put the Nobel committee again at the forefront of geopolitics at a time when fears are rising over North Korea's nuclear and missile program

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and the invective it has drawn from U.S. President Donald Trump.

The committee cited the tiny, Geneva-based ICAN for its work that led to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that was reached in July at the United Nations.

The group "has been a driving force in prevailing upon the world's nations to pledge to cooperate ... in efforts to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons," Norwegian Nobel Committee chairwoman Berit Reiss-Andersen said in the announcement.

More than 120 countries approved the treaty over opposition from nuclear-armed countries and their allies. In a statement issued after the Nobel was announced, the U.S. reiterated its position that the treaty "will not result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon."

The treaty requires all ratifying countries "never under any circumstances to develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices." It also bans any transfer or use of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices — and the threat to use such weapons.

The nuclear powers oppose the treaty, which goes well beyond existing nonproliferation agreements, arguing that they alone should have the weapons in order to support stability in the world.

The U.S., Britain and France said the prohibition wouldn't work and would end up disarming their nations while emboldening what U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley called "bad actors." They instead suggest strengthening the nonproliferation treaty, which they say has made a significant dent in atomic arsenals.

ICAN, a coalition of 468 nongovernmental groups from over 100 countries, says that argument is outdated. "This prize is really a tribute to the tireless efforts of many millions of campaigners and concerned citizens worldwide who have, ever since the dawn of the Atomic Age, loudly protested nuclear weapons, insisting that they can serve no legitimate purpose and must be forever banished from the face of our Earth," said ICAN executive director Beatrice Fihn.

The prize is likely to give new momentum to ICAN and its allies in the coming months as the group tries to achieve ratification of the treaty by 50 nations. That would allow the ban to become binding under international law for those countries and put nuclear-armed states in the uncomfortable position of being outliers.

On Sept. 20, the first day the treaty was open for signatures, 50 countries signed it and three submitted their ratifications. Three more countries have since added their names. ICAN hopes to get the 50 ratifications by the end of 2018.

Norwegian Nobel Committee chairwoman Berit Reiss-Andersen noted that international prohibitions have been set on chemical and biological weapons, land mines and cluster munitions.

"Nuclear weapons are even more destructive, but have not yet been made the object of a similar international legal prohibition," she said.

The five original nuclear powers — the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France, which also are permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — support nuclear nonproliferation but boycotted the treaty negotiations. Nuclear-armed India, Pakistan and North Korea didn't vote.

"If you want to make sure that no new states get nuclear weapons, you need to be ready to reject nuclear weapons themselves," Fihn said. "This treaty really demands that they walk the walk."

ICAN has its roots in Australia but was launched in Vienna in 2007, inspired largely by another Nobel peace prize-winning group, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

The \$1.1 million prize is likely to help boost ICAN's advocacy. It also organized events globally in 2015 to mark the 70th anniversaries of the attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

The committee, citing nearly 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world, said "the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a long time."

In 2009, it awarded the prize to President Barack Obama, months after he laid out the U.S. commitment to "seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

Since then, the U.S. has been a leading voice against the treaty to ban nuclear weapons. The real lobbying battleground could shape up in countries like NATO member states, Japan and South Korea that

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have military alliances with the U.S., but where activists could be emboldened by the Nobel prize.

Trump has fanned concerns about nuclear conflict, with threats against North Korean leader Kim Jong Un over the secretive regime's tests, missile launches over Japan, and warnings that the U.S. territory of Guam could be next in the firing line.

The Nobel committee wanted "to send a signal to North Korea and the U.S. that they need to go into negotiations," said Oeivind Stenersen, a historian of the peace prize.

"The prize is also coded support to the Iran nuclear deal" he said, alluding to dialogue that won curbs on Tehran's nuclear program.

ICAN's Fihn said many were worried about Trump.

"I think that the election of President Donald Trump has made a lot of people feel very uncomfortable with the fact that he alone can authorize the use of nuclear weapons and there's nothing people can do to stop him," she told a news conference at the World Council of Churches building that hosts ICAN's office in Geneva.

"There is no one who we can trust with the ability to destroy the entire world," she said.

Somewhat unusually for a Nobel peace prize announcement, the nuclear-armed countries were largely silent or restrained in their reaction.

"Today's announcement does not change the U.S. position on the treaty: the United States does not support and will not sign the 'Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,'" the U.S. State Department said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, we are seeing a deterioration in the overall security environment and growing nuclear capabilities of certain states. This treaty will not make the world more peaceful, will not result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon, and will not enhance any state's security," it said.

It added that the U.S. is committed to "creating the conditions for nuclear disarmament, a goal we share with our international security partners."

The British and Russian governments did not comment. But British opposition Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn — a long-time disarmament campaigner whose photo hangs in ICAN's Geneva office — congratulated the group.

In a carefully worded statement that did not endorse a nuclear weapons ban, France's Foreign Ministry said the choice "testifies to the importance of nuclear nonproliferation in a context marked by the North Korean crisis."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres tweeted: "Now more than ever we need a world without nuclear weapons."

And India sent the group tulips, said ICAN network coordinator Daniel Hogsta.

"It was nice to send flowers, but we want them to sign the treaty," he said.

Keaten reported from Geneva. Associated Press writers Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow, Jill Lawless in London, Sylvie Corbet in Paris, George Jahn in Vienna, Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations and Jim Heintz in Stockholm contributed.

This story corrects that 50 countries signed the treaty the day it opened for signatures.

## Is NRA move to regulate 'bump stocks' real or a ruse?

By LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — When the National Rifle Association urged the government to revisit whether "bump stocks" should be restricted, it immediately raised eyebrows. Why would the nation's leading gun-rights organization, not known for compromise, be willing to bend even just a bit when it wields perhaps more influence than ever?



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Some gun-industry experts say the NRA's move is little more than a ruse to stall any momentum for wider gun control until outrage over the Las Vegas attack subsides. It also carries little risk. For one, it's rare for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to reverse course without a change in the law. For another, "bump stocks" are not big moneymakers for the gun industry. And by seeking an administrative change, rather than a new law, the NRA allows its supporters in Congress to avoid going on the record with a vote.

"They're dismissed as silly gadgets that really inhibit the accuracy of a firearm. If these bump stocks were super popular among gun owners, we'd see a very different position from the NRA," said Adam Winkler, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law and author of "Gunfight: The Battle over the Right to Bear Arms in America."

The NRA "can throw a sacrificial lamb of 'bump stocks' because they know that gun owners don't use them or like them," he added.

The devices, originally intended to help people with disabilities, fit over the stock and pistol grip of a semi-automatic rifle and allow the weapon to fire continuously, some 400 to 800 rounds in a single minute, mimicking a fully automatic firearm. Bump stocks were found among the weapons used by Stephen Paddock as he rained bullets from a Las Vegas casino high-rise last Sunday. The gunfire killed 58 people at a concert below and wounded hundreds more.

On Thursday, the NRA issued a statement that urged the ATF to review whether the devices comply with federal law and said it "believes that devices designed to allow semi-automatic rifles to function like fully automatic rifles should be subject to additional regulations."

The statement pointedly noted that it was under President Barack Obama's administration that the devices were authorized to be sold and again urged Congress to enact one of the gun lobby's top priorities: a national "concealed-carry reciprocity" law that would require all states to recognize other states' concealed carry permits.

In a matter of hours, NRA chief lobbyist Chris Cox put to rest any sense that the group was actively seeking a ban of bump stocks, telling Fox News' Tucker Carlson: "What we've said is ATF needs to do their job. ATF needs to look and if there's technology that's come to the market that allow for a semi-automatic rifle to function as a fully automatic rifle, they need to be regulated differently. We didn't talk about banning anything."

Notably, the nation's other leading gun lobbying groups, including Gun Owners of America, reiterated their opposition to restricting or banning the devices.

The few companies that sell bump stocks are known to include in their packaging a letter from the ATF from 2010, when the agency concluded that they were not restricted by either the Gun Control Act or the National Firearms Act.

The ATF provides guidance when a manufacturer asks the agency to evaluate a firearm or accessory to determine if its sale is restricted by either federal law. It is extremely rare for the ATF to reconsider its previous guidance unless federal law changes — so rare that experts could think of only one time when it has happened, and even then they weren't sure their memories were correct.

The agency, describing its process in general on Friday, indicated that Congress will be responsible for decisions about regulating or banning the devices.

It was not immediately clear whether President Donald Trump or Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who oversees the ATF, could order it to re-evaluate its judgment about devices.

The NRA is viewed as the most powerful and most inflexible group in the gun lobby. It pours millions of dollars into political campaigns and successfully blocks legislation that would either ban certain firearms or make them more difficult to purchase. The NRA has only gained influence following the election of Trump, who became the first president since Ronald Reagan to address the group's annual meeting.

After some particularly deadly mass shootings, the NRA has worked to find some common ground with gun-control advocates.

Following the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting in which a mentally ill student shot and killed 32 people and wounded 17, the NRA worked with gun-control advocates to fund a bill designed to improve record keep-

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ing so that people with mental illnesses were unable to purchase a firearm.

In the days following the Las Vegas attack, unusual alliances began to emerge between top Democratic and Republican members of Congress urging that bump stocks be banned. If the devices were restricted by an administrative ruling, it would spare NRA supporters in Congress from having to go on the record with a vote.

John Feinblatt, president of Everytown for Gun Safety, cast the NRA's move as a "wink and a nod."

"They're not making a concession. What they've really done is punted this to the very federal agency that said bump stocks were legal," Feinblatt said. "This was just a wink and nod."

## Hurricanes cause rare monthly US job loss but rebound likely

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A pullback in U.S. hiring last month resulting from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma will likely prove short-lived, with a resilient job market pointing to gains in the coming months.

The unemployment rate fell to a fresh 16-year low of 4.2 percent, from 4.4 percent, the Labor Department said Friday in its September jobs report. The proportion of Americans with jobs rose to a nearly nine-year high. And even long-dormant wage growth showed signs of picking up.

The economy lost 33,000 jobs last month — the first monthly loss in nearly seven years — as the hurricanes closed thousands of businesses in Texas, Florida and other parts of the Southeast. Yet hiring is widely expected to rebound in coming months as companies reopen and bring back workers and construction firms ramp up repair and renovation work.

Previous natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005, also inflicted short-term job losses that were followed by intensified hiring.

"The labor market remains in good shape," said Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial. "The job losses were due to disruptions from hurricanes, not underlying weakness in the economy."

Outside of hurricane-hit areas, many Americans found work. The number of people describing themselves as unemployed fell to 6.8 million, the fewest since March 2007, before the Great Recession began.

That sign of health makes it appear all but certain that the Federal Reserve will raise its benchmark short-term interest rate in December. According to data from the CME Group, investors now foresee an 88 percent chance of a Fed rate hike then.

Fed Chair Janet Yellen has said she expects pay raises to accelerate as unemployment declines. That, in turn, might lift inflation closer to the Fed's annual 2 percent target level if companies raised prices to pay for higher salaries.

Last month's drop was driven by huge losses in restaurants and bars, which accounted for 105,000 fewer jobs, a sign of the damage to Florida's tourism industry. Overall, roughly 1.5 million people were unable to work last month because of the weather, the government said, the most in 20 years.

Hourly workers who couldn't work because of the storms last month and missed a paycheck would have been counted as not working in the government's survey of businesses, thereby lowering September's job total. That's true even if those employees returned to work after the storm passed or will return.

The unemployment rate fell because it is calculated with a separate survey of households. That survey counted people as employed even if they were temporarily out of work because of the storms. In fact, the proportion of adults who have jobs rose to 60.4 percent, the highest since January 2009.

That's a sign that the low unemployment rate is pulling more Americans off the sidelines and back into the job market. During the recession and the sluggish recovery that followed, many people gave up searching for work.

Dan Harmon, chief operating officer of Smoothie King, a 900-store chain based near New Orleans, said the storms temporarily closed 66 stores in the Houston area and disrupted the company's end-of-summer hiring. One store was so damaged it still hasn't reopened.

In August and September, the company typically hires new employees to replace college workers who return to school. But that process was delayed in Florida and Texas.

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"We weren't able to do our normal hiring spree that we usually do going into the fall," Harmon said.

The storms also disrupted the company's expansion plans. It opened 65 stores nationwide in the July-September quarter. It would have opened four more, but they were damaged while under construction. Each Smoothie King employs about 15 hourly workers and two to three managers.

Nationwide, an alternative barometer of the labor force that includes not only the unemployed but also part-time workers who'd prefer full-time jobs, fell to 8.3 percent. That's the lowest such level in over a decade.

Average hourly wages rose a healthy 2.9 percent from 12 months earlier. That trend was probably inflated by the loss of so many lower-paid workers in hurricane-hit areas. Higher-paid workers likely disproportionately boosted the wage figure.

"We think the magnitude of this distortion was quite small and the underlying wage numbers are indeed firming," said Michael Feroli, an economist at JPMorgan Chase.

The government on Friday also revised up wage gains in August — before the hurricanes hit — to a 2.7 percent annual rate, from 2.5 percent. That suggests that pay could be picking up, even excluding the storms, and encouraging more people to look for work.

More than 11 million people had been employed in the 87 counties in Texas and Florida that were declared disaster areas, the government says. That's equal to about 7.7 percent of the nation's workforce.

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which were hammered by Hurricane Maria, aren't included in the national unemployment report. Their data will be included in the state jobs figures to be released Oct. 20.

The mostly solid employment numbers come after other signs the economy is solid. This week, a survey of services firms — covering restaurants, construction companies, retail stores, banks and others — found that they expanded in September at their fastest monthly pace since 2005. That followed a survey of manufacturers, which found an equally strong gain. Factory activity expanded at the fastest pace in more than 13 years.

Harvey caused about \$76 billion to \$87 billion in economic losses, according to Moody's Analytics, an economic consulting firm. That would make Harvey the second-worst U.S. natural disaster, after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Irma will likely end up having caused \$58 billion to \$83 billion in economic losses. Those estimates include damage to homes and businesses as well as lost business and economic output.

This story has been corrected to show that September's job losses figure was the first decline in nearly seven years.

## **Bergdahl expected to plead guilty to desertion, misbehavior**

**By JOSH LEDERMAN and LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who was held captive by the Taliban for half a decade after abandoning his Afghanistan post, is expected to plead guilty to desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, two individuals with knowledge of the case said.

Bergdahl's decision to plead guilty rather than face trial marks another twist in an eight-year drama that caused the nation to wrestle with difficult questions of loyalty, negotiating with hostage takers and America's commitment not to leave its troops behind. President Donald Trump has called Bergdahl a "no-good traitor" who "should have been executed."

The decision by the 31-year-old Idaho native leaves open whether he will return to captivity for years — this time in a U.S. prison — or receive a lesser sentence that reflects the time the Taliban held him under brutal conditions. He says he had been caged, kept in darkness, beaten and chained to a bed.

Bergdahl could face up to five years on the desertion charge and a life sentence for misbehavior.

Freed three years ago, Bergdahl had been scheduled for trial in late October. He had opted to let a judge rather than a military jury decide his fate, but a guilty plea later this month will spare the need for a trial.

Sentencing will start on Oct. 23, according to the individuals with knowledge of the case. They weren't



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authorized to discuss the case and demanded anonymity. During sentencing, U.S. troops who were seriously wounded searching for Bergdahl in Afghanistan are expected to testify, the individuals said.

It was unclear whether prosecutors and Bergdahl's defense team had reached any agreement ahead of sentencing about how severe a penalty prosecutors will recommend.

An attorney for Bergdahl, Eugene Fidell, declined to comment on Friday. Maj. Justin Oshana, who is prosecuting the case, referred questions to the U.S. Army, which declined to discuss whether Bergdahl had agreed to plead guilty.

"We continue to maintain careful respect for the military-judicial process, the rights of the accused and ensuring the case's fairness and impartiality during this ongoing legal case," said Paul Boyce, an Army spokesman.

Bergdahl was a 23-year-old private first class in June 2009 when, after five months in Afghanistan, he disappeared from his remote infantry post near the Pakistan border, triggering a massive search operation.

Videos soon emerged showing Bergdahl in captivity by the Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan in the years before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and harbored al-Qaida leaders including Osama bin Laden as they plotted against America. For years, the U.S. kept tabs on Bergdahl with drones, spies and satellites as behind-the-scenes negotiations played out in fits and starts.

In May 2014, he was handed over to U.S. special forces in a swap for five Taliban detainees at the Guantanamo Bay prison, fueling an emotional U.S. debate about whether Bergdahl was a hero or a deserter.

As critics questioned whether the trade was worth it, President Barack Obama stood with Bergdahl's parents in the White House Rose Garden and defended the swap. The United States does not "leave our men or women in uniform behind," Obama declared, regardless of how Bergdahl came to be captured. The Taliban detainees were sent to Qatar.

"Whatever those circumstances may turn out to be, we still get an American soldier back if he's held in captivity," Obama said. "Period. Full stop."

Trump, as a presidential candidate, was unforgiving of Bergdahl, who has been assigned to desk duty at a Texas Army base pending the outcome of his case. At campaign events, Trump declared that Bergdahl "would have been shot" in another era, even pantomiming the pulling of the trigger.

"We're tired of Sgt. Bergdahl, who's a traitor, a no-good traitor, who should have been executed," Trump said at a Las Vegas rally in 2015.

Bergdahl's guilty plea will follow several pretrial rulings against him that had complicated his defense. Army Col. Jeffery R. Nance, the judge, decided in June that testimony from troops wounded as they searched for him would be allowed during sentencing, a decision that strengthened prosecutors' leverage to pursue stiffer punishment.

Some of Bergdahl's fellow soldiers want him held responsible for any harm suffered by those who went looking for him. The judge ruled a Navy SEAL and an Army National Guard sergeant wouldn't have found themselves in separate firefights if they hadn't been searching.

The defense separately argued Trump's scathing criticism unfairly swayed the case. The judge ruled otherwise. Nance wrote in February that Trump's comments were "disturbing and disappointing" but didn't constitute unlawful command influence by the soon-to-be commander in chief.

Bergdahl's lawyers also contended that misbehavior before the enemy, the more serious charge, was legally inappropriate and too severe. They were rebuffed again. The judge said a soldier who leaves his post alone and without authorization should know he could face punishment. The misbehavior charge has rarely been used in recent decades, though there were hundreds of cases during World War II.

Defense attorneys don't dispute that Bergdahl walked off his base without authorization. Bergdahl himself told a general during a preliminary investigation that he left intending to cause alarm and draw attention to what he saw as problems with his unit. An Army Sanitary Board Evaluation concluded he suffered from schizotypal personality disorder.

The defense team has argued that Bergdahl can't be held responsible for a long chain of events that included decisions by others about how to retrieve him that were far beyond his control.

\_\_\_ Associated Press writer Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, contributed to this report.

## Spooked businesses shift headquarters out of Catalonia

By CIARAN GILES and ARITZ PARRA, Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — As separatists in Catalonia jockeyed Friday to elude court rulings and find ways to deliver on their promise to declare independence, business giants hit back with plans to relocate their headquarters elsewhere in Spain amid the increasing political uncertainty.

Caixabank, Spain's third lender in global assets, said Friday that it was moving from Barcelona to the eastern city of Valencia, "given the current situation in Catalonia." It said it wants to remain in the eurozone and under the supervision of the European Central Bank — two things that would not happen if Catalonia did manage to secede.

The region's separatist government has vowed to use a pro-independence victory in a disputed referendum last weekend to go ahead with secession, while calling for Spain's central government to accept a dialogue.

But the government of Spain's conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has rejected any negotiations unless the separatists drop their secession bid. Rajoy urged Puigdemont to cancel plans for declaring independence in order to avoid "greater evils."

"In order to dialogue, you must stay within the legal framework," Spanish cabinet spokesman Inigo Mendez de Vigo told reporters Friday, blaming the secessionists for breaking Spain's constitutional order.

"Coexistence is broken" in Catalonia, he said, warning Catalans that a parliamentary declaration of independence "is not enough" and that the international community needs to recognize independent nations.

No country has openly said it would support secession and the European Union says an independent Catalonia would be kicked out of the bloc and forced to stop using the common euro currency. The EU says Catalonia would have to apply to rejoin, a lengthy, uncertain process.

The prospect of an exit has sent shivers among business heavyweights, including lender Banco Sabadell and energy giant Gas Natural, who were among the firms to greenlight relocations of their registered address.

The companies are moving only their official address and so far that does not affect jobs or investments. It doesn't, however, send a message of confidence in the government of Catalan regional President Carles Puigdemont.

Cava-maker Freixenet and Codorniu, two household names in the region's famed sparkling wine, are also considering a move.

Caixabank's relocation was possible after central authorities approved a decree allowing executives to bypass shareholder approval for moving a company's registered address.

"It's very sad what we are seeing," Economy Minister Luis de Guindos said Friday. "This is the result of an irresponsible policy that is causing uneasiness in the business community."

The prospects for an independence declaration remained up in the air after a Constitutional Court suspended a Catalan parliament session next week during which separatist lawmakers wanted to bring up the secession plan.

Puigdemont is now set to address the regional parliament on Tuesday "to report on the current political situation" in Catalonia.

Regional opposition parties said that Puigdemont will be grilled by lawmakers, without any vote expected. But a lawmaker with the far-left separatist CUP group said pro-independence parties were working on introducing a last-minute vote to declare independence.

The Catalan government on Friday submitted to parliament the final results of the Oct. 1 disputed referendum.

Spain's central authorities have deemed the referendum illegal and a Constitutional Court suspended it. But the Catalan government has declared a landslide victory for the "Yes" despite the fact that only 43 percent of the region's 5.3 million eligible voters turned out amid strong police pressure to shut down the vote.

The top Spanish official in Catalonia, Enric Millo, who is in charge of security, said Friday he regretted that hundreds of people were injured Sunday in the police crackdown on the vote — the first statement

by a Spanish official lamenting the injuries.

"I can only say sorry" for the injuries, Millo told Catalonia's TV3 television.

Yet he tempered the apology by saying the Catalan government was responsible for the situation by encouraging people to vote.

Spain has defended police actions, saying there were firm and proportionate, but videos on Sunday saw police yanking people by their hair and kicking and hitting them. Catalan authorities say about 900 people were treated for injuries.

In Madrid, Spain's National Court unconditionally released two senior officers of Catalonia's regional police force and the leaders of two pro-independence civic groups being investigated for sedition in connection with the referendum. The four are to be questioned again later.

The case is linked to Sept. 20-21 demonstrations in Barcelona, when Spanish police arrested several Catalan officials and raided offices in a crackdown on referendum preparations.

The four are Catalan police chief Josep Lluís Trapero, Catalan police Lt. Teresa Laplana, Jordi Sanchez, the head of the Catalan National Assembly, and Jordi Cuixart, president of separatist group Omnium Cultural.

While Trapero and Sanchez were questioned, Laplana declined to testify for medical reasons and Cuixart refused to testify, saying he didn't recognize the court's capacity to question him for a crime he didn't commit.

Carles Campuzano, the spokesman for the Democratic Party of Catalonia, described the hearing Friday as an outrage.

"It's just another expression of the absolutely mistaken, authoritarian, repressive response by the (Spanish) state to the pacific, democratic and civic demand of Catalan society," he told reporters.

Giles reported from Madrid. Frank Griffiths contributed from London.

## **Birth control: Trump expands opt-out for workplace insurance**

**By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and DAVID CRARY, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is allowing more employers to opt out of providing no-cost birth control to women by claiming religious or moral objections, issuing new rules Friday that take another step in rolling back the Obama health care law.

Employers with religious or moral qualms will also be able to cover some birth control methods, and not others. Experts said that could interfere with efforts to promote modern long-acting implantable contraceptives, such as IUDs, which are more expensive.

The new policy was a long-anticipated revision to Affordable Care Act requirements that most companies cover birth control as preventive care for women, at no additional cost. That Obama-era requirement applies to all FDA-approved methods, including the morning-after pill, which some religious conservatives call an abortion drug, though scientists say it has no effect on women who are already pregnant.

As a result of the ACA, most women no longer pay for contraceptives. Several advocacy groups immediately announced plans to try to block the Trump administration rule. "We are preparing to see the government in court," said Brigitte Amiri, a senior attorney for the ACLU.

Catholic bishops called the administration's move a "return to common sense."

Trump's religious and moral exemption is expected to galvanize both his opponents and religious conservatives who back him, but it seems unlikely to have a major impact on America's largely secular workplaces.

"I can't imagine that many employers are going to be willing to certify that they have a moral objection to standard birth control methods," said Dan Mendelson, president of the consulting firm Avalere Health.

That said, Mendelson said he worries the new rule will set a precedent for weakening ACA requirements that basic benefits be covered. "If you look at it as a public health issue, it is a step in the wrong direction, and it weakens the protections of the ACA," he said.

Tens of thousands of women could be affected by Trump's policy, but the vast majority of companies have no qualms about offering birth control benefits through their health plans. Human resource manag-



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ers recognize that employers get an economic benefit from helping women space out their pregnancies, since female workers are central to most enterprises.

The administration estimated that some 200 employers who have already voiced objections to the Obama-era policy would qualify for the expanded opt-out, and that 120,000 women would be affected.

However, it's unclear how major religion-affiliated employers such as Catholic hospitals and universities will respond. Many Catholic hospitals now rely on an Obama-era workaround under which the government pays for the cost of birth control coverage. That workaround can continue under the new rules.

Since contraception became a covered preventive benefit, the share of women employees paying with their own money for birth control pills has plunged to 3 percent, from 21 percent, according to the latest Kaiser Family Foundation figures.

"It was really important for women to have a choice of the full range of contraceptive methods that were FDA-approved," said Alina Salganicoff, director of women's health policy for the Kaiser foundation. "This will now make it up to the employer whether or not to cover contraception, and whether to cover all methods."

Salganicoff said she's concerned about coverage for implantable devices that are more expensive but also much more effective. "It opens up a lot of opportunities for employers to make choices about the coverage that women have right now," she said.

The Trump administration's revision broadens a religious exemption that previously applied to houses of worship, religion-affiliated nonprofit groups and closely held private companies. Administration officials said the new policy defends religious freedom. In addition to nonprofits, privately held businesses will be able to seek an exemption on religious or moral grounds, while publicly traded companies can seek an exemption due to religious objections.

"No American should be forced to violate his or her own conscience in order to abide by the laws and regulations governing our health care system," Health and Human Services spokeswoman Caitlin Oakley said in a statement.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops welcomed the administration's decision.

"Such an exemption is no innovation, but instead a return to common sense, long-standing federal practice, and peaceful coexistence between church and state," Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, the group's president, said in a joint statement with Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, head of its religious liberty committee.

Officials also said the administration is tightening oversight of how plans sold under the health law cover abortion. With limited exceptions, abortions can only be paid for through a separate premium collected from enrollees.

Doctors' groups that were instrumental in derailing Republican plans to repeal the health law expressed their dismay.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said the new policy could reverse progress in lowering the nation's rate of unintended pregnancies.

"HHS leaders under the current administration are focused on turning back the clock on women's health," said the organization's president, Dr. Haywood Brown.

The new rules take effect right away.

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Crary reported from New York. AP Religion Writer Rachel Zoll contributed to this report.

## Stocks fade from records; S&P 500 breaks winning streak

By STAN CHOE, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks faded a bit from their record highs on Friday after telecom and energy stocks sank. The loss for the Standard & Poor's 500 index was small, but it was the first in nearly two weeks.

Much of the day's action was centered on the government's jobs report, which is usually the most an-

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anticipated economic data of each month, but it was a muddled one.

Economists cautioned not to read too much into the hiring numbers, which were far weaker than expected, because they were distorted by hurricanes that damaged businesses from Texas to Florida. Investors focused instead on a stronger-than-expected rise in workers' wages, which helped to push Treasury yields higher.

The S&P 500 fell 2.74 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,549.33. The loss meant the end of the longest winning streak for the index in four years. Roughly nine stocks fell for every five that rose on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 1.72, or less than 0.1 percent, to 22,773.67. The Nasdaq composite added 4.82, or 0.1 percent, to 6,590.18. All three indexes had closed at records on Thursday.

The government's jobs report showed that employers cut more jobs last month than they added, the first time that's happened in seven years. It's a sharp turnaround from earlier this year, when the strengthening job market was encouraging investors to push stocks higher and higher.

Hurricanes Harvey and Irma meant the closure of thousands of businesses, and drops in employment at restaurants and bars were a big driver of last month's decline.

Many investors saw September's job losses as an aberration. Other economic data have been more encouraging, including strong reports on the nation's manufacturing and services sectors earlier this week.

Friday's jobs report also contained signs of strength. Average hourly wages jumped 2.9 percent in September from a year earlier, more than economists expected. Some of that may be due to how many lower-wage jobs were lost following the hurricanes, but the government also revised up its figure for wage growth in August.

"The previous month's revision, that probably has the most information" of all the data points in the government's jobs report, said Jon Adams, senior investment strategist at BMO Global Asset Management. "From the Fed's perspective, this doesn't change anything in terms of overall policy, but it makes them a little more worried about inflation."

If rising wage growth feeds into higher prices across the economy, it makes the Fed that much more likely to keep raising rates from their record lows. As a result, investors made moves Friday in anticipation of a rate increase in December.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury jumped as high as 2.39 percent shortly after the release of the jobs report, up from 2.35 percent late Thursday. The gains faded later in the day, which traders said may have been due to worries about tensions with North Korea. A Russian lawmaker said that North Korea is preparing to test-fire a long-range missile soon.

By Friday evening, the 10-year yield sat at 2.36 percent. The two-year Treasury yield climbed to 1.52 percent from 1.49 percent, and the 30-year yield rose to 2.91 percent from 2.89 percent.

When bonds pay higher yields, it makes them more attractive to investors looking for income and undercuts demand for stocks that pay relatively big dividends.

Telecom stocks in the S&P 500 fell 2 percent, the largest drop among the 11 sectors that make up the index.

Energy stocks were also among the market's weakest after the price of benchmark U.S. crude sank \$1.50, or 3 percent, to settle at \$49.29 per barrel. It's the fourth drop for oil in the last five days. Brent crude, the international standard, lost \$1.38, or 2.4 percent, to \$55.62 per barrel.

Costco Wholesale fell the most in the S&P 500 despite reporting stronger earnings for the latest quarter than expected. Analysts pointed to a slight drop in its membership renewal rates, among other factors. Costco lost \$9.98, or 6 percent, to \$157.09.

In overseas markets, the FTSE 100 in London rose 0.2 percent, France's CAC 40 fell 0.4 percent and Germany's DAX dipped 0.1 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.3 percent, and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong added 0.3 percent.

In the currency market, the dollar slipped to 112.71 Japanese yen from 112.85 yen late Thursday. The euro rose to \$1.1735 from \$1.1708, and the British pound fell to \$1.3065 from \$1.3116.

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In the commodities markets, natural gas fell 6 cents to settle at \$2.86 per 1,000 cubic feet, wholesale gasoline lost 5 cents to \$1.56 per gallon and heating oil fell 4 cents to \$1.74.

Gold rose \$1.70 to settle at \$1,274.90 per ounce, silver gained 15 cents to \$16.79 per ounce and copper fell 2 cents to \$3.03 per pound.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Oct. 7, the 280th day of 2017. There are 85 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 7, 1977, the Queen double-A single "We Are the Champions" (by lead singer Freddie Mercury) and "We Will Rock You" (by lead guitarist Brian May) was released in the United Kingdom by EMI Records.

On this date:

In 1765, the Stamp Act Congress convened in New York to draw up colonial grievances against England.

In 1849, author Edgar Allan Poe died in Baltimore at age 40.

In 1858, the fifth debate between Illinois senatorial candidates Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas took place in Galesburg.

In 1916, in the most lopsided victory in college football history, Georgia Tech defeated Cumberland University 222-0 in Atlanta.

In 1929, former Interior Secretary Albert B. Fall, one of the main figures of the Teapot Dome scandal, went on trial, charged with accepting a bribe from oil tycoon Edward L. Doheny. (Fall was found guilty and served nine months in prison; Doheny was acquitted at his own trial of offering the bribe Fall was convicted of taking.)

In 1949, the Republic of East Germany was formed.

In 1954, Marian Anderson became the first black singer hired by the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York.

In 1960, Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy and Republican opponent Richard Nixon held their second televised debate, this one in Washington, D.C.

In 1982, the Andrew Lloyd Webber-Tim Rice musical "Cats" opened on Broadway. (The show ended its original run on Sept. 10, 2000, after a then-record 7,485 performances.)

In 1985, Palestinian gunmen hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) in the Mediterranean. (The hijackers killed Leon Klinghoffer, a Jewish-American tourist, before surrendering on Oct. 9.)

In 1991, University of Oklahoma law professor Anita Hill publicly accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of making sexually inappropriate comments when she worked for him; Thomas denied Hill's allegations.

In 1992, trade representatives of the United States, Canada and Mexico initialed the North American Free Trade Agreement during a ceremony in San Antonio, Texas, in the presence of President George H.W. Bush, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (muhl-ROO'-nee) and Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

Ten years ago: A 20-year-old off-duty sheriff's deputy went on a shooting rampage in Crandon, Wisconsin, killing six people, including his ex-girlfriend, before taking his own life as police closed in. Nine skydivers and a pilot were killed when their Cessna Caravan 208 crashed in Washington's Cascade Range. In a race run in scorching heat that left one man dead because of a heart condition, Kenya's Patrick Ivuti won the Chicago Marathon by a fraction of a second; another 250 runners were taken to hospitals because of heat-related ailments.

Five years ago: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez won re-election for the third time. (Chavez died in March 2013 at age 58 after a two-year battle with cancer; he was succeeded by Vice President Nicolas Maduro.)

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One year ago: The U.S. accused Russia of hacking American political sites and email accounts in an effort to interfere with the upcoming presidential election and also directly accused Russia of war crimes in Syria; Moscow dismissed the allegations. Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, receiving a big boost in his efforts to save an agreement seeking to end his country's half-century conflict.

Today's Birthdays: Retired South African Archbishop and Nobel Peace laureate Desmond Tutu is 86. Author Thomas Keneally is 82. Comedian Joy Behar is 75. Former National Security Council aide Lt. Col. Oliver North (ret.) is 74. Rock musician Kevin Godley (10cc) is 72. Actress Jill Larson is 70. Country singer Kieran Kane is 68. Singer John Mellencamp is 66. Rock musician Ricky Phillips is 66. Russian President Vladimir Putin is 65. Actress Mary Badham (Film: "To Kill a Mockingbird") is 65. Rock musician Tico Torres (Bon Jovi) is 64. Actress Christopher Norris is 62. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma is 62. Gospel singer Michael W. Smith is 60. Olympic gold medal ice dancer Jayne Torvill is 60. Actor Dylan Baker is 59. Recording executive and TV personality Simon Cowell is 58. Rock musician Charlie Marinkovich (Iron Butterfly) is 58. Country singer Dale Watson is 55. Pop singer Ann Curless (Expose) is 54. Rhythm-and-blues singer Toni Braxton is 50. Rock singer-musician Thom Yorke (Radiohead) is 49. Rock musician-dancer Leeroy Thornhill is 48. Actress Nicole Ari Parker is 47. Actress Allison Munn is 43. Rock singer-musician Damian Kulash (KOO-lahsh) is 42. Singer Taylor Hicks is 41. Actor Omar Benson Miller is 39. Neo-soul singer Nathaniel Rateliff (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 39. Actor Shawn Ashmore is 38. Actor Jake McLaughlin is 35. Electronic musician Flying Lotus (AKA Stephen Ellison) is 34. MLB player Evan Longoria is 32. Actress Holland Roden is 31. Actress Amber Stevens is 31. Actress Lulu Wilson is 12.

Thought for Today: "An egotist is a person of low taste — more interested in himself than in me." — Ambrose Bierce, American author-journalist (1842-1914?).