

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 1 of 54



There were a lot of costumes for Halloween night in Groton with two major areas attracting lots of youngsters. The Methodist Church held its annual Trunk or Treat event in the parking lot. Meanwhile downtown businesses had over 100 little trick or treaters taking to the sidewalks to collect goodies. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Region VB in Groton

The semifinal regional volleyball match will be held in Groton Thursday night starting at 7 p.m. The match will feature Groton Area and Milbank as Milbank defeated Webster Area last night, 3-0, to advance to the match. The winner of Thursday's match will advance to the Sweet 16.

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Dakota Tree Ad
- 1- Trunk/Trick or Treaters
- 2- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 3- Farmers Union PSA
- 3- Groton Care & Rehap Help Wanted
- 3- Groton Area Help Wanted
- 4- Street lights are up and operating
- 5- Today in Weather History
- 5- Roslyn 4-Plex for sale
- 6- Today's Forecast
- 7- Yesterday's Weather
- 7- Today's Weather Info
- 7- National Weather Map
- 8- Daily Devotional
- 9- 2018 Community Events
- 10- News from the Associated Press

Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



**DAKOTA TREE
COMPANY**

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 2 of 54

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

“When we accept tough jobs as a challenge and wade into them with joy and enthusiasm, miracles can happen.”

-Harry S. Truman

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 3 of 54



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. Questions should be directed to Joe Schwan, Superintendent at 605-397-2351.

Help Wanted

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

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

Groton Daily Independent

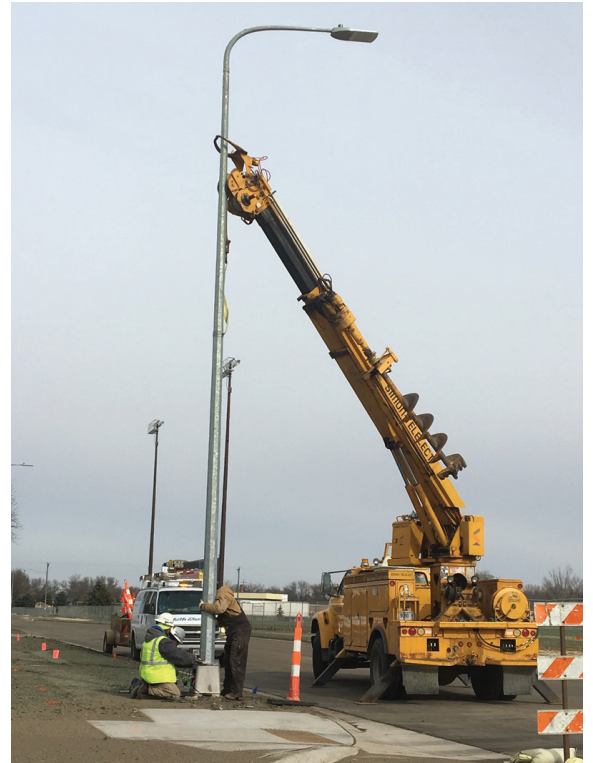
Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 4 of 54



Lights are on!

The street lights for SD37 were erected on Tuesday and there is plenty of light for new LED lights. Striping of SD37 is expected to be done today, weather permitting. Highway 37 should be open by Thursday! (Photos

by Paul Kosel)



Today in Weather History

November 1, 1999: High winds of 30 to 50 mph with gusts to around 55 mph caused some spotty tree and building damage throughout Big Stone and Traverse counties. On Highway 10 just west of Browns Valley, the high winds blew a semi-tractor trailer full of 12,000 pounds of meat off the road and into a ditch. Strong winds from 30 to 50 mph gusting to near 65 mph also caused building and tree damage throughout central, north central, and northeast South Dakota. In Eureka, the high winds blew down a large part of the ballpark fence. In Mellette, a 250-foot diameter grain bin under construction also received

some damage from the strong winds.

November 1, 2000: A tornado event on the 1st of November was a rare and unusual weather phenomenon to occur so late in the year in North Dakota. Several tornadoes, with five distinct paths, hit south central North Dakota causing property damage and injuries. The majority of the damage and injuries occurred in the Bismarck area. Forty-two homes suffered minor to moderate damage. The tornadoes were rated F0 and F1 on the Fujita scale, packing winds up to 90 mph. Another unusual phenomenon, these tornadoes traveled from east to west. The track was caused by a strong low-pressure system, centered over north-central South Dakota, spinning counterclockwise, allowing the low-level flow over Bismarck to move east to west. At the same time these tornadoes were occurring, snow began to fall in the far western area of North Dakota. Winter storm watches and warnings were posted across north central and western North Dakota that afternoon. Before this, the last recorded tornado to occur in the state was October 11th, 1979 in Sargent County in southeast North Dakota.

1755: A magnitude 8.7 earthquake devastated the city of Lisbon, Portugal on this day, killing as many as 50,000 people. The epicenter was located 120 miles west-southwest of Cape St. Vincent. Many individuals who sought safety on the Tagus River were killed by an estimated 20-foot tall tsunami that struck 40 minutes after the earthquake.

1848: When Henry came to the Smithsonian, one of his first priorities was to set up a meteorological program. In 1847, while outlining his plan for the new institution, Henry called for "a system of extended meteorological observations for solving the problem of American storms." By 1849, he had budgeted \$1,000 for the Smithsonian meteorological project and established a network of some 150 volunteer weather observers. A decade later, the project had more than 600 volunteer observers, including people in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Its cost in 1860 was \$4,400, or thirty percent of the Smithsonian's research and publication budget.

ROSLYN, SOUTH DAKOTA

4-PLEX FOR SALE

The following real estate is for sale:

Lots Seven (7), Eight (8) and Nine (9), Block Twenty-two (22), Original Plat, Roslyn, Day County, South Dakota;

A/k/a 716 1st Street, Roslyn, South Dakota; st Consisting of lots and 4-plex apartment house, currently unoccupied and has been for five (5) years. Property is to be sold "AS IS". Apartment units have electric baseboard heat and electric hot water heaters. Apartment units also include electric ranges, refrigerators, and washers/dryers.

No warranties are being offered on the appliances ("AS IS").

Interested parties should submit sealed bids to Law Office of Danny R. Smeins, P.C., 506 Main Street, Webster, SD 57274, or hand delivered to the same address prior to 5:00 p.m. on the 14th day of November, 2017. Bids will be opened after the bid deadline, and Seller will identify the bidders that will be invited to raise their bid on the 17 day of November, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. at the Law Office of Danny R. Smeins, P.C. in Webster, South Dakota. Not all bidders will be invited to raise their bid.








Successful bidder will be required to execute a standard Purchase Agreement and make an earnest money deposit.

SELLER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS.

Direct all inquiries, questions or requests for real estate information to Danny R. Smeins, Attorney at Law, at (605) 345-4875 or (605) 448-5964 or Ray Lardy, Roslyn Homes, Inc., at (605) 228-1597 or Richard Galbraith at (605) 229-0180.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 6 of 54

Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Chance Rain/Snow then Chance Rain	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Chance Snow then Rain/Snow Likely	Snow Likely then Wintry Mix Likely	Slight Chance Rain/Snow then Slight Chance Rain
High: 44 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 37 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 35 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 41 °F

TODAY

Breezy:
South Winds
Gusts To 30mph

Highs: Western Minnesota
Upper 30s

Sisseton Hills/James Valley
Low/Mid 40s

Central Counties
Low/Mid 50s.

Better Chance For Snow
Coming Friday-Saturday

www.weather.gov/abr/winter



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
www.weather.gov/abr

Scattered Snow
Showers

Very Light
Accumulations



11/1/2017 5:39 AM

Published on: 11/01/2017 at 5:45AM

A weak system crossing the northern plains will generate some light snow accumulations, with the majority falling across North Dakota into Minnesota. Breezy conditions will persist as well. These south winds will bring some closer to average air temperatures back to parts of the forecast area today. Another system is in the works for Friday into early Saturday however, and this one has the potential to bring some more winter-like conditions to the area.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 7 of 54

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 37.3

Low Outside Temp: 12.1

High Gust: 31

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 75° in 1990

Record Low: -3° in 1935

Average High: 49°F

Average Low: 26°F

Average Precip in Nov: .03

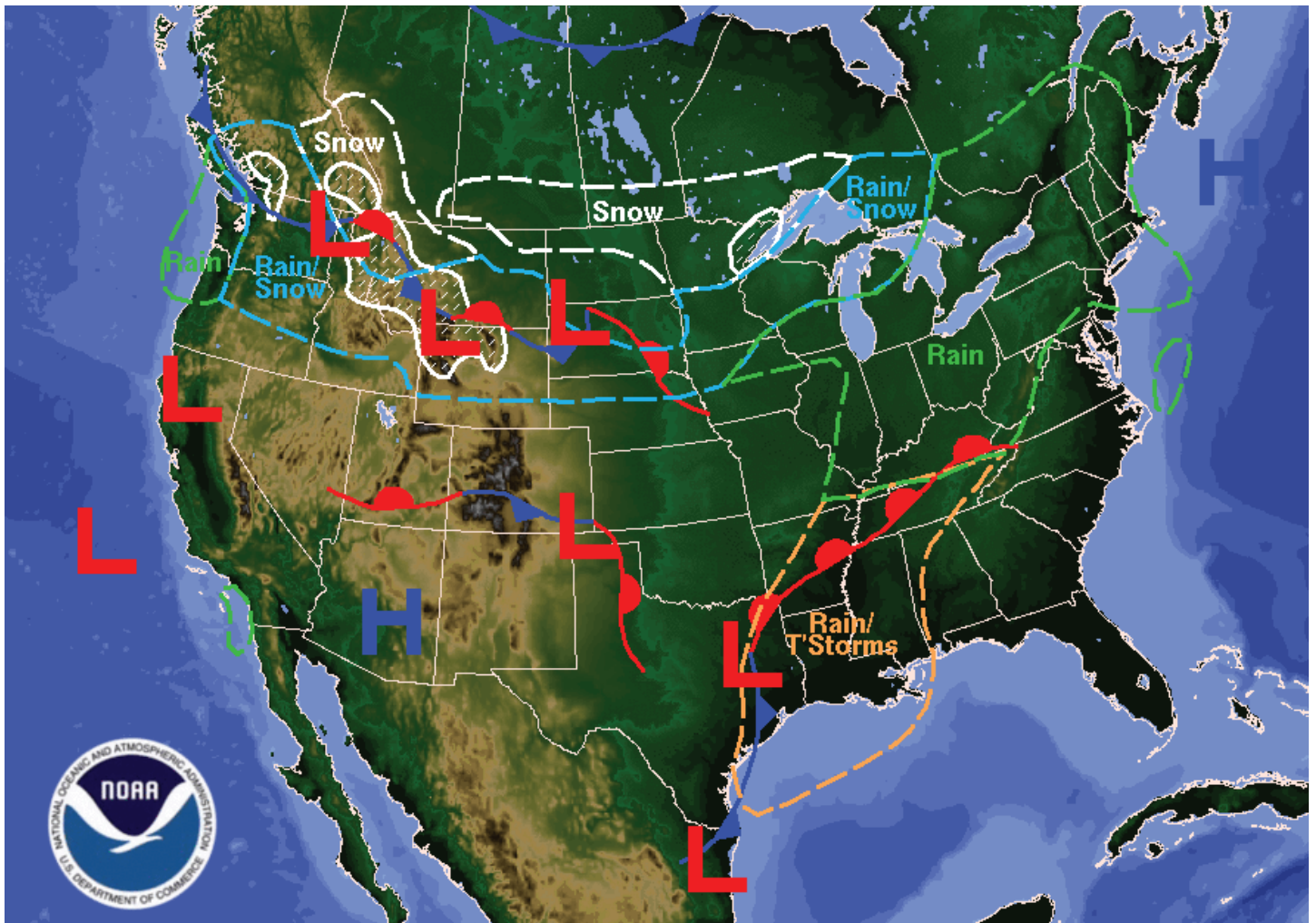
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 20.50

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 6:20 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:14 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Nov 01, 2017, issued 5:33 AM EDT

DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center

Prepared by McReynolds 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)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 8 of 54



THE GOD WHO CAN

God often brings a difficult situation into our lives so He can turn it into a delightful memory so we can remind ourselves of His love and mercy. Often when we face an impossible dilemma, He turns it into a blessing that will provide a story of His incredible power that we can share with our children. There are times when He turns overwhelming obstacles into great opportunities to demonstrate His power and terrible times and trials into triumphs and testimonies of His strength.

David wanted to remind the children of God about the greatness of God and wrote, "He turned the sea into dry land (and) they passed through the waters on foot – come let us rejoice in Him!"

The children of Israel were on their way to the Promised Land. When they came to the coast, they made their camp. Suddenly they turned around and saw their enemy coming to destroy them. Before them was the sea. Behind them was their enemy. When they looked at their options, they came to the conclusion that they would either drown or be destroyed. But God was there.

And as He was with them He is with us! God is always between His children and the catastrophes of life. He never abandons us when we face the difficult decisions or demands of life.

If God could turn the sea into dry land and if the children of Israel were able to pass through the waters on foot, He can do the same for us today. With problems before us and danger behind us He can deliver us.

Prayer: Give us a faith, Father, that will overcome every fear we face trusting in You alone to deliver us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot — come, let us rejoice in him.

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 Meat- 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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 10 of 54

News from the Associated Press

Survey suggests more economic growth ahead for Midwest

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A monthly survey of business leaders suggests economic conditions continue to improve for nine Midwest and Plains states.

A report released Wednesday says the Mid-America Business Conditions Index rose to 58.8 in October from 58.2 in September. The August figure was 57.5.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss oversees the survey, and he says national and regional indices indicate the manufacturing sector is expanding at a very healthy pace.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth in that factor. A score below that suggests decline.

The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Tuesday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Mitchell, 25-17, 25-13, 25-20

Huron def. Brookings, 25-17, 25-17, 25-19

Pierre def. Brandon Valley, 25-23, 25-18, 25-18

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Yankton, 16-25, 25-19, 21-25, 25-16, 17-15

Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-20, 26-24, 25-17

Sturgis Brown def. Douglas, 25-13, 21-25, 26-24, 25-12

Watertown def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-22, 25-19, 19-25, 21-25, 15-13

Region 1A

First Round

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Sisseton, 25-19, 25-12, 25-14

Milbank def. Webster, 25-16, 25-11, 25-17

Redfield/Doland def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-6, 25-12, 25-9

Region 2A

First Round

Flandreau def. Deuel, 3-0

Region 3A

First Round

Baltic def. Garretson, 25-12, 25-22, 22-25, 25-15

West Central def. Tri-Valley, 25-14, 24-26, 26-24, 25-14

Region 4A

First Round

Beresford def. Lennox, 25-17, 25-20, 25-19

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Canton, 25-10, 25-16, 25-15

Tea Area def. Vermillion, 25-10, 25-10, 25-18

Region 5A

First Round

McCook Central/Montrose def. Bon Homme, 25-5, 25-9, 25-20

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Parkston, 17-25, 25-19, 22-25, 25-21, 15-12

Wagner def. Platte-Geddes, 25-13, 25-22, 25-16

Region 6A

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 11 of 54

First Round

Chamberlain def. Crow Creek, 24-23, 25-14, 25-10

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte def. Stanley County, 12-25, 25-20, 25-22, 25-13

Mobridge-Pollock def. McLaughlin, 25-19, 25-17, 25-23

Region 8A

First Round

Lead-Deadwood def. Hot Springs, 25-23, 25-22, 25-20

Rapid City Christian def. Hill City, 25-12, 25-14, 25-22

St. Thomas More def. Custer, 25-22, 25-22, 25-19

Region 1B

Quarterfinal

Langford def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-10, 25-17, 25-16

Northwestern def. Florence/Henry, 25-10, 25-19, 25-9

Warner def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-14, 25-11, 25-7

Waverly-South Shore def. Wilmot, 25-20, 25-22, 13-25, 16-25, 15-13

Region 2B

Quarterfinal

Faulkton def. Leola/Frederick, 25-18, 25-14, 25-19

Herreid/Selby Area def. Eureka/Bowdle, 25-8, 25-18, 25-7

Ipswich def. Potter County, 24-26, 25-17, 29-27, 25-22

Sully Buttes def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-19, 25-18, 25-16

Region 3B

Quarterfinal

Arlington def. Castlewood, 25-16, 25-15, 25-15

Deubrook def. Lake Preston, 25-10, 25-18, 25-10

Hitchcock-Tulare def. James Valley Christian, 25-21, 25-22, 24-26, 25-19

Wolsey-Wessington def. DeSmet, 25-21, 25-22, 21-25, 13-25, 15-10

Region 4B

Quarterfinal

Chester def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-6, 25-13, 25-15

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Colman-Egan, 22-25, 13-25, 25-22, 25-22, 15-10

Ethan def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 23-25, 25-20, 25-14, 25-16

Hanson def. Howard, 25-16, 25-6, 25-11

Region 5B

Quarterfinal

Alcester-Hudson def. Menno, 25-15, 27-25, 26-24

Bridgewater-Emery def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-21, 25-16, 25-16

Freeman def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 20-25, 25-18, 25-22, 25-17

Gayville-Volin def. Canistota, 25-18, 21-25, 25-23, 11-25, 15-12

Region 6B

Quarterfinal

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Colome, 25-4, 25-14, 25-20

Avon def. Gregory, 25-18, 25-15, 26-24

Burke/South Central def. Scotland, 25-15, 25-18, 25-22

Kimball/White Lake def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-10, 25-10, 25-18

Region 7B

Quarterfinal

Kadoka Area def. Lyman, 25-22, 25-12, 25-23

New Underwood def. Edgemont, 25-18, 20-25, 25-13, 25-12

Wall def. White River, 25-20, 25-16, 25-23

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 12 of 54

Region 8B
Quarterfinal
Faith def. Dupree, 25-13, 25-14, 25-20
Harding County def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-9, 25-8, 25-11
Lemmon def. Bison, 25-7, 25-18, 25-17
Timber Lake def. McIntosh, 23-25, 25-21, 25-15, 25-17

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

06-28-31-52-53, Mega Ball: 12, Megaplier: 4

(six, twenty-eight, thirty-one, fifty-two, fifty-three; Mega Ball: twelve; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

2 states warn Trump against big changes in sage grouse plan

By DAN ELLIOTT, Associated Press

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP) — Two Western governors on Tuesday warned the Trump administration against making big changes in a plan to protect a ground-dwelling bird across the West, saying it would send a message to states not to bother working together to save other imperiled species.

Colorado Democrat John Hickenlooper and Wyoming Republican Matt Mead said a 2015 conservation plan designed to save the greater sage grouse was the product of long negotiation among state and federal governments, conservation groups, industry and agriculture.

"If we go down a different road now with the sage grouse, what it says is, when you try to address other endangered species problems in this country, don't have a collaborative process, don't work together, because it's going to be changed," Mead said. "To me, that would be a very unfortunate circumstance."

Hickenlooper said, "We are both very concerned that the new administration is going to take away all the guide rails that allowed this collaboration to exist."

They appeared together at an energy conference at Colorado State University.

The 2015 plan is designed to protect the bird without putting it on the Endangered Species List, an outcome that most states try to avoid because it usually brings strict restrictions on oil and gas drilling, mining, agriculture and other activities to protect habitat.

But Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said in June his department would consider changing the plan to give states more flexibility to allow mining, logging and other economic development. Environmentalists have said the planned revision was just a back-door attempt to open up more land to mining and drilling.

Millions of sage grouse once lived across the U.S. West, but development, disease, livestock grazing and an invasive grass that encourages wildfires has reduced its number to fewer than 500,000.

The 2015 plan covers 11 states and had the approval of the Obama administration. It took years to negotiate and was hailed as a model for saving a species through cooperation, rather than the hammer of the Endangered Species Act.

The Interior Department has not released the full details of its planned revisions, but the agency announced in early October it would withdraw protections for about 15,600 square miles (40,000 square kilometers) of sage grouse habitat on federal lands to allow energy development.

Despite Mead's support for the 2015 plan, Interior Department spokeswoman Heather Smith said the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 13 of 54

department has been in contact with Wyoming officials "and many, many others who took serious issue with the Obama-era plans."

"We look forward to continuing to work with the governor on this and many other issues," Smith said in an email to The Associated Press.

Mead said protecting endangered species has become a serious problem, citing figures that show less than 2 percent of the species protected under the act since it was passed in 1973 have recovered enough to be removed from the list.

"Now, if you care about species, or you care about energy production or you care about commerce, we've got to do better than that, and a collaborative process that brings in Western states on endangered species, in my mind, is the best way to go," he said.

Not all Western governors support the 2015 plan. Idaho Republican C. L. "Butch" Otter filed a lawsuit shortly after the plan was released, contending the Obama administration illegally imposed federal land-use restrictions. A federal judge dismissed the lawsuit in January, but Otter has appealed.

This story has been corrected to show the Interior Department announced it would consider changing the plan in June, not August.

Follow Dan Elliott at <http://twitter.com/DanElliottAP>. His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/dan%20elliott>.

Judge gives reprieve to Montana coal mine, averting layoffs

By MATTHEW BROWN, Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A large Montana coal mine averted dozens of layoffs on Tuesday after a judge allowed work to proceed on an expansion, even as the government reconsiders the mine's contribution to climate change.

The ruling by U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy allows Signal Peak Energy to remove up to 170,000 tons of coal from federal leases adjacent to its Bull Mountain Mine north of Billings.

Attorneys for the Trump administration had joined Signal Peak in asking Molloy for a reprieve from an earlier ruling that had blocked the expansion. The company remains barred from selling or shipping fuel from the disputed area, pending a new environmental study by federal officials.

Environmentalists who sued over the project said Tuesday's ruling effectively renders the pending study meaningless.

Signal Peak executives had said 30 workers would be laid off by the end of October and up to 150 more in coming months as they ran out of work on existing leases. The expansion ultimately would give the company access to an estimated 176 million tons of coal that would take more than a decade to mine.

"We're extremely pleased with the decision and also for our employees," said Signal Peak spokesman Mike Dawson. "We will not have to lay people off."

Molloy in August said the Interior Department had understated the climate change impacts of burning fuel from Bull Mountain and overstated its economic benefits.

Bull Mountain is one of the largest underground mines in the U.S. and ships about 95 percent of its coal to Asia.

The Interior Department in 2015 determined that the expansion would not have a significant impact on the human environment. The agency said Bull Mountain's customers would simply go somewhere else if the expansion were not approved, meaning there would be no reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from burning the fuel.

That drew a lawsuit from the Western Environmental Law Center on behalf of the Montana Environmental Information Center and other groups. The environmentalists said the government had not looked closely enough at the effects of the expansion on waterways, air pollution and the health of people who live along the coal's shipping routes.

The new environmental study of the mine already is underway, with public comments due by Nov. 20. President Donald Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke have been outspoken in their support of U.S. coal mining — despite growing competition from natural gas and renewable fuels that's eroded market demand for coal.

Anne Hedges with the Montana Environmental Information Center expressed doubt that the administration would come down against the expansion given that mining in the area already will have started.

"They pull it out of the ground, they stockpile it and then they get to burn it down the road as soon as they get a pro forma analysis done by an agency that's already shown its willingness to bend over backward for them," she said. "The analysis is meaningless."

Signal Peak is jointly owned by Ohio-based utility FirstEnergy, Boiche Group and Gunvor Group, an international commodities trading firm.

Follow Matthew Brown on Twitter at www.twitter.com/matthewbrownap .

Artist, designer turning Flint water bottles into fashion

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — An artist and a fashion designer are planning to make clothing out of the water bottles piling up from the lead-tainted water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

Conceptual artist Mel Chin has teamed up with Detroit native Tracy Reese and the Queens Museum in New York City. They plan to turn Flint's water bottles into raincoats, swimwear and other clothing, the Flint Journal reported .

The bottles collected from homes, community centers and other Flint locations will be sent to Unifi Inc. in North Carolina and formed into thread and fabric. Those materials will then come back to Flint for seamstresses to put together.

Reese, who's known for designing the dress Michelle Obama wore at the 2012 Democratic National Convention, is designing the clothing patterns for the project. A fashion show is planned this spring in New York City, followed by a show in Flint and the potential for clothing production in the future.

Flint's water issues began after the city started tapping the Flint River for its water supply in 2014. The river water wasn't properly treated to prevent pipe corrosion, leading to elevated lead levels and residents' need to use bottled water.

Chin, who worked for years as part of the Fundred Dollar Bill project to eliminate lead poisoning in children, said it was important to think about what the city's future looks like beyond the water crisis.

"It's about something that is empty, like a water bottle, fulfilling the potential of jobs and manufacturing that has also been lost," he said, adding that opportunities "of hope and renewal occur here."

Laura Raicovich, executive director of the Queens Museum, said she admires the way artists like Chin "can contribute to the transformation of the really tough issues that we face as a society."

Information from: The Flint Journal, <http://www.mlive.com/flint>

Ballot question campaigns seek signatures as deadline looms

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota ballot question campaigns shopping their causes before voters are rushing to collect enough signatures to get on the 2018 ballot as the state's petition circulating window nears an end.

Initiative groups hoping to go before voters next year face a crucial Monday deadline to turn in thousands of names each to the Secretary of State's office for review. Volunteers and paid circulators across the state are working on issues ranging from open primary elections to legislative redistricting.

Plans to loosen marijuana laws, cap the price state agencies could pay for prescription drugs and ban out-of-state contributions for ballot questions are also among the dozen measures approved for petitioning. Initiated measures need nearly 14,000 valid signatures, while constitutional amendments require almost

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 15 of 54

28,000 names.

"We're scrambling as if we don't have enough, and that's our whole game plan for the rest of the week," said Charles Parkinson, sponsor of the independent redistricting constitutional amendment.

The South Dakota Democratic Party distributed amendment petitions to about 200 volunteers, while TakeItBack.Org co-founder Rick Weiland said the initiative group has more than 100 volunteers circulating petitions for it and two other measures. Weiland's group also received \$50,000 from former Democratic U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson's Senate committee for paid circulators for the amendment.

"These things aren't easy to get on the ballot, but I'm confident we'll qualify all three," said Weiland, referring to the redistricting and prescription drug measures and a vote-at-home plan.

The campaign for a trio of initiatives that would legalize medical and recreational marijuana and physician-assisted dying have an office in Sioux Falls and planned to gather signatures this week in Aberdeen, Flandreau and Sioux Falls, said Melissa Mentele, founder and director of New Approach South Dakota. Mentele said she's encouraging supporters — the group has about 300 volunteers — to mail back their petitions or bring them in.

Mentele, who estimated backers had about 15,000 signatures in hand for the medical marijuana proposal, said the group would also send out circulators to people who are housebound.

"You just have to give us a call, and we will make it work," she said.

"Death with Dignity" measure sponsor Angela Albonico said she plans to collect signatures on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian reservations this week as volunteers contact people who have expressed interest in signing on. She said if supporters "do make the ballot, it'll be by the skin of our teeth."

House Speaker Mark Mickelson, who is pursuing the ballot question campaign finance measure and a proposal to raise tobacco taxes to improve tech school affordability, said he's exceeded 15,000 signatures for both proposals, totals that he anticipated would continue to climb.

Open Primaries South Dakota Treasurer De Knudson said the campaign's goal is for volunteers to collect at least 2,000 signatures, part of a 40,000-signature objective. The constitutional amendment campaign received \$140,000 from a national nonprofit to help supporters gather signatures, and Knudson said others have also contributed.

"I'm doing this pretty much around the clock," she said.

Supporters of a government ethics constitutional amendment turned in more than 50,000 signatures for their measure in October. The Secretary of State's office conducts a random sampling of signatures to determine their validity.

Two proposed measures approved for circulation won't appear on the ballot: one would make it harder for the Legislature to tamper with voter initiatives and the other would legalize marijuana and establish April 20 as "Cannabis Day."

Former band director gets encore of fight song he penned

By MARK ANDERSEN, Rapid City Journal

BOX ELDER, S.D. (AP) — Tears rolled as the familiar first musical notes reached his failing 95-year-old ears. Hands which once had coaxed tempos from countless student bands brushed at the flood.

Leonard "Len" Borlaug first combined this pattern of notes 55 years ago when he created "Douglas Rouser," the Douglas High School fight song. The Brainerd, Minnesota, man hadn't delighted in hearing it since he dropped his baton at a final Douglas basketball game three years later.

Solvejg Seamon, Borlaug's daughter who watching from the side, hadn't seen her father cry since 2005, when her mother, Verlyce, died.

It had required a family conspiracy to surprise the old band master with the ultimate encore at Douglas High on Oct. 25. Borlaug had walked into the school not knowing what awaited him. Black Hills relatives, including niece Beth Massa of Sturgis and sister Connie Cleveland of Rapid City, had slyly suggested driving past Douglas that morning to view recent construction.

Inside was a cake, the bulk of the school's 87-piece band and two standing ovations for the fight song

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 16 of 54

creator, the Douglas band's first director and a World War II Army veteran. Cleveland had kept the honor a secret through daily telephone conversations with her brother.

Borlaug conveyed appreciation for the tune, and then members of the Douglas band readied their instruments again. This time, Borlaug raised his hands to bring forth his song. When silence returned, he shook his head in a kind of 'how about that' sentiment. Then, he beamed.

Borlaug told the Rapid City Journal that he wrote the song in an afternoon two weeks after the new school opened. Things were chaotic for teachers and students, and the district superintendent thought a fight song would raise morale.

"I loved it," Borlaug said of his creation. The superintendent thought it needed a bigger band. It had that big band sound at the October performance.

"I wish I would have had even half of you," Borlaug told the students. Only the University of Indiana has anything better, he added.

His lyrics, he said, were another matter. They wouldn't pass muster in a high school poetry class, Borlaug said.

Flutist Dakota Small, a senior, called Borlaug's visit "a huge honor for everyone here." Playing his song for him made her nervous.

She likes his song.

"It brings me pride every time I hear it," Small said.

Borlaug quit college to join the U.S. Army soon after the 1941 attack at Pearl Harbor. As a soldier in Gen. George Patton's Third Army, he was among the first Americans to enter Dachau Concentration Camp, a horror he never speaks about.

After returning home to complete degrees in music and history, he also led school bands in his native North Dakota and in Minnesota.

Current Douglas Band Director Jennifer Larson first heard about Borlaug's pending visit the week before it occurred. She was amazed to learn Borlaug had taken only an afternoon to write the song she has led at countless pep rallies and school games during her 22 years with the district.

"The students who were here today will never play the school song the same way again," she said.

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

Wealthy residents transform South Dakota city

By PATRICK ANDERSON, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Robert Stefani watched as workers smoothed a porous concrete mix in a pit that would eventually become a vinyl-lined pool.

A biting autumn wind signaled the end of another season. Stefani's team has five pools left to install before the ground freezes. Though that number depends on who you ask and what's actually possible, Stefani said with one of his affable half-smiles.

It's been a busy season. Busier than any Stefani can remember in his 18 years with Combined Pool and Spa, and usually the workload includes more jobs outside the metro area, he said.

"Every year it's gone up," Stefani told the Argus Leader. "It really let loose this year."

The last decade has brought a distinct rise in the number of high-income earners in Sioux Falls, and with it, rising demand for luxury goods and services. But one economic development official worries the gap between the rich and poor is widening, thinning out the middle class.

Want a sign that more Sioux Falls residents are bringing home big paychecks? Just follow demand for in-ground pools.

Pool builders were exceptionally busy in the Sioux Falls market in the three years leading up to the housing market's 2007 collapse, according to building permits filed with City Hall. Interest cooled during the Great Recession, but city permits show it returned with a vengeance in 2015 and has remained strong.

Bigger homes dot the landscape on the southern, eastern and western outskirts of town. And behind

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 17 of 54

dozens of those arched, peaked and window-laden facades is a handiwork of pool builders.

"It makes it difficult to sell a million dollar home without putting a swimming pool in it," said Jeff Carlson, co-owner of Combined Pool and Spa.

Corresponding with the renaissance of backyard pools is a dramatic shift in the yearly salaries of the city's residents.

Draw a line at \$75,000 — thousands of dollars above the metro's median income — and nearly all of the growth in the last decade has happened in the top half of that line, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

High-end cars and homes are also on the rise. Flat sales tax revenue caught City Hall sideways last year. But Sioux Falls spent nearly \$11 million more on eating out at restaurants.

Local salaries are tracked and split into 10 different buckets by the U.S. Census Bureau. The fastest-growing group of earners between 2005 and 2015 were those households bringing in between \$150,000 and \$199,999 a year, followed immediately by households in the highest category tracked by the Census Bureau: \$200,000 a year or higher.

"If you kind of take it at face value and go, 'OK, this looks like Sioux Falls is creating an awful lot of higher income opportunities,'" said Slater Barr, executive director of the Sioux Falls Development Foundation.

The easiest explanation for the influx of highly paid households and their penchant for taking backyard dips is the city's demand for health care workers.

"The most logical answer is probably medical," Barr said. "Again I don't have any data that ties that back specifically."

The two hospitals in town are some of the city's biggest employers. Hundreds of millions of dollars of donations and spending in medicine created thousands of jobs as both Sanford Health and Avera Health expand services and add clinics and specialty care facilities.

But there are other industries in Sioux Falls that have also created jobs with higher incomes.

Mark Fiechtner, a general contractor and real estate agent, lives in a \$1.5 million home he built in southern Sioux Falls' Prairie Hills development.

The modern-style house won honors in the spring Parade of Homes tour, sponsored by the Home Builder Association of the Sioux Empire and is surrounded by homes in a similar price range or higher.

"In this neighborhood, I could throw a rock and hit a million-dollar home," Fiechtner said.

Sioux Falls' growing interest in high-end homes was enough to catch the attention of the Wall Street Journal last year. Yes, it seems like the medical community is contributing to the trend, Fiechtner said. But not all of his neighbors are doctors.

"There's a lot of entrepreneurs; a lot of business owners," Fiechtner said.

Homes listed and sold in the million-or-above price range continue to become increasingly common in the Sioux Falls housing market.

Developers continue to break ground on luxury subdivisions far removed from the core, with big lots, winding roads and plenty of privacy. There is Prairie Hills to the south, Cherry Lake to the west and Arbor's Edge to the east.

The city's real estate market had just eight homes listed at \$1 million or higher in 2007. Last year, there were 21 homes listed in that price range.

More wealth means more opportunity for some Sioux Falls residents and businesses. For others, however, questions linger about potential breaks in the path between a low-paying job and the house on the hill.

"What concerns me is I just don't think we're getting the job done in creating enough middle class," said Slater Barr, executive director of the Sioux Falls Development Foundation.

Barr is concerned about what he describes as a resulting "bifurcation" of salaries in the city.

Most of the job opportunities in Sioux Falls are at the high end of the spectrum or at the low-end, working in service and retail jobs.

The local trend reflects what's happening across the country, Barr said.

"It's an America that's being divided into the kind of haves and have-nots," Barr said.

The four-county metro area has experienced steady job growth in the retail and food service industry, but so far it doesn't seem to have widened the city's pay divide.

While the middle class is shrinking, last year marked a steep drop in Sioux Falls' poverty rate. Long-term, there was also a drop in the percentage of households in the lowest income brackets.

Barr's organization facilitated the acquisition of a \$20 million, 820-acre piece of land in northwestern Sioux Falls for an industrial park. Foundation Park opened in 2015 and went without an anchor tenant until this spring when the Development Foundation announced interest from a local developer in opening a \$40 million food distribution warehouse on the site.

Attracting more manufacturers to Sioux Falls could help bridge the gap between the low and high ends of the spectrum when it comes to local salaries, Barr said.

"We've got to create a ladder of opportunities for both training, and a ladder of opportunity for jobs for those people to move up," Barr said.

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

Hunters meet in South Dakota to discuss grouse conservation

By NICK LOWREY, Capital Journal

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Three hunters approached a cedar tree standing sentinel from a hill overlooking a gravel road that bordered a scraggly field of alfalfa.

A covey of 10 prairie chickens exploded from beneath the cedar tree as the hunters reached a rusty barbed-wire fence. Two shots rang out, each dropped a bird. Two hunters finished out their daily limit of prairie grouse. A final bird tried to escape in the confusion, squirting out from under the tree to flee back over the alfalfa. He was brought down by a quick shot from the third hunter in the party.

Rarely are there more perfect moments in upland hunting, particularly when the birds being hunted are greater prairie chickens. As the name implies, prairie chickens are birds of the great, wide-open spaces found in North America's Great Plains. As such, they evolved to see threats from a long way off and act accordingly, i.e., jumping into the air and high-tailing it to safer ground.

Their evolutionary peculiarities include hearts that are roughly a third larger than a ring-neck pheasant's; darker, more oxygen-rich muscle tissue; and a tendency to travel in groups. These adaptations serve prairie chickens well when evading predators. What they're not so great at is helping the birds adapt to the alterations that people have made to their world.

As it happens, human-driven changes to prairie chicken habitat were part of the reason why the trio of hunters — Oklahoma conservation banker Wayne Walker, California food writer and award-winning chef Hank Shaw and Sioux Falls hunting guide Chance Stoesser, who works part time at his friend Quenton McEntee's ranch — wound up chasing chickens southwest of Iona, South Dakota on the first Saturday of October 2017.

They'd been invited to take part in the North American Grouse Partnership's first-ever dream grouse hunt. The focus was on prairie grouse. For hunters in South Dakota, that usually means greater prairie chickens and sharptail grouse but the term can be applied to the lesser prairie chicken of the southern Great Plains and sage grouse of the great sagebrush seas of the American West. There are sage grouse in northwest South Dakota, too, but they're limited in number and the hunting season was closed for 2017.

Two out of the four species of prairie grouse, lesser prairie chickens and sage grouse, are facing steep population declines. In the last three years, both species have found themselves candidates for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act, the Capital Journal reported .

Sage grouse narrowly avoided being placed on the list in 2015. Mostly that was due to an unprecedented partnership between 11 states, several conservation organizations and, though some will deny it, the mining, oil and gas industries. The partnership's formation and the state management plans that resulted from it led to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pulling sage grouse from its list of candidates for the endangered species list.

A year earlier, in 2014, the lesser prairie chicken actually was placed on the federal threatened- and-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 19 of 54

endangered species list. As much as 84 percent of the lesser prairie chicken's original range, which covers parts of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico had been lost to crops, invaded by foreign plants or fragmented by oil and gas wells as well as wind turbines

Then, in 2015, a federal court in Texas vacated the listing. The judge presiding over the case said USFWS hadn't accounted adequately for a multi-state lesser prairie chicken conservation effort. In 2016, the USFWS officially removed the birds from the list.

Greater prairie chickens haven't found themselves so close to the brink, likely because they currently inhabit larger grasslands further to the north that haven't yet been subject to as much energy development, crop expansion and invasive-tree infestations. Still throughout most of their current range, greater prairie chickens are in decline.

South Dakota is one of the greater prairie chicken's few strongholds. The Fort Pierre National Grassland, in fact, is one of the few places where the prairie chicken population has been growing over the long term. That the state still is home to a strong prairie chicken population and an even stronger sharptail grouse population was one of the biggest reasons for the North American Grouse Partnership to host its first hunt in the state.

South Dakota is home to four grouse species: prairie chickens, sharptails, sage grouse and ruffed grouse. There are 12 grouse and ptarmigan species that can be found only in North America. That amounts to a lot of work for the North American Grouse Partnership.

The organization was originally founded in 1999 by a bunch of falconers, some of the same people, in fact, who founded and led the effort to bring the American peregrine falcon back from the brink of extinction. Falconers like to hunt prairie grouse in particular. The NAGP started out trying to be much like their older, bigger cousins Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever. The idea was to recruit members and raise money for direct action on grouse habitat starting with the most imperiled species — prairie grouse.

As it turns out, die-hard prairie grouse hunters are few and far between. It took a while for NAGP to get off the ground. In 2016, the organization's leader decided to change things a little bit. They hired the organization's first full-time executive director, Steve Belinda, and switched gears from being focused on their own habitat projects to working on conservation policy and helping other groups get their projects up and going.

Belinda organized the hunt. The idea was to raise a little money for NAGP but more important was the chance to bring a few people together who like hunting and believe in conservation. Among the folks who attended the hunt were Pheasants Forever CEO Howard Vincent, Secretary of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department Kelly Hepler and 12 others including Shaw, Walker and Stoesser.

That Saturday evening, after the hunting was done, the assembled minds turned to the tasks at hand — conservation. And a fine dinner featuring prairie chicken and a couple of sharptails prepared by Shaw.

Belinda led the conversation off with a brief history of NAGP and a rundown of some of the things on which the organization is working. One of the biggest problems facing prairie grouse today is national conservation policy or the lack of effective policies when it comes to the Great Plains.

In most places where both varieties of prairie chickens exist, the vast majority of land is privately owned. So the challenge becomes how to work with private landowners to preserve prairie chicken habitat without having to force them to do it, Belinda said.

In sage grouse country, the battle often is with oil, gas and increasingly, wind energy interests on public lands.

In large part, the problem comes down to money. In most years, industrial agriculture tends to provide farmers and ranchers with a higher income from their land than federal conservation programs. There also are relatively few disincentives to plowing up grasslands to make room for corn, soybeans or any of a wide range of cash crops.

The same generally holds true for livestock. Though cattle and grouse can and, in many places do, have a symbiotic relationship, in some places, notably in Kansas' and Texas' lesser prairie chicken habitat, the practice of burning off pastures every spring has become a problem, said NAGP Policy Director Terry Riley.

While fires have always been a regular part of grassland life and are a good thing in the right amounts,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 20 of 54

burning every year throws off the balance of grass species, which leads to tougher nesting conditions. Also, the burning usually is done during the early spring, prairie chicken nesting season, Riley said.

Energy development in lesser prairie chicken and sage grouse habitats has been just as destructive. It helps fragment habitat and because prairie chickens need large, relatively contiguous blocks of land to survive, it helps decrease their numbers. Energy development, whether it's oil, gas or wind, also is a lot more lucrative than conservation. Which is why farming, ranching and energy interests fought so hard to keep lesser prairie chickens and sage grouse off the endangered species list, which would mean a lot of restrictions on what can and can't be done.

"A lot of people that are in business are threatened by these issues," Riley said.

For hunters such as those who belong to conservation organizations like NAGP, an endangered species listing means they're no longer allowed to hunt such birds as sage grouse. Lesser prairie chickens are in enough trouble that no state allows hunting them anymore. The goal for NAGP is to ensure that there are populations of all grouse that can be hunted. It is, after all, an organization of hunters.

Conservation programs that can compete reliably with agriculture and energy probably aren't going to come from the government anytime soon, Belinda said. Given the roughly \$20 trillion in national debt, the fight over health care and the current presidential administration's actions so far on conservation, such as trying to change the multi-state plan that kept sage grouse off the endangered list, the time may be to turn to private investors, he said.

"We need to figure out a way to service the needs of the private investment community," Belinda said.

Private investment in conservation is what brought conservation banker Wayne Walker to the NAGP hunt. He runs Common Ground Capital, a company that coordinates conservation banks in the southern Great Plains. Their focus is on the lesser prairie chicken.

The basic idea of a conservation bank is to use private-investor money to help pay a landowner enough that it becomes a good financial decision to set aside prime habitat for wildlife such as the lesser prairie chicken. Once the land is set aside, the investor can turn around and sell conservation credits to developers so they can develop energy resources. This keeps at least some habitat on the ground and gives landowners another way to make money.

Walker said he's had some success but what makes developers buy the credits, which give his investors the chance to make a profit, is the threat of the federal government shutting down energy development to protect an endangered species.

"The unfortunate reality is unless you have the threat of a federal hammer, you're not going to have an impetus for change," Walker said. "They (energy developers) just aren't going to do the right thing without someone forcing them to."

Compounding the problem of adequately funding conservation is the continued decline in the number of hunter in the U.S. For decades, the number of people who hunt has been on a slow downward track, Belinda said.

"There were 2.2 million hunters lost in the last five years," he said.

In North America, hunters and anglers, the folks who most directly use wildlife resources such as prairie grouse, have been the driving force behind conservation funding. That goes back to 1937 and the Pittman-Robertson Act, which charged an excise tax on guns, ammo and later, archery equipment specifically to fund state conservation and hunting programs through grants.

The act also required states that receive grants through the Pittman-Robertson Act to dedicate all the money from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses to wildlife management and conservation.

So as the number of hunters declines, the amount of money to manage and conserve wildlife dwindles, too. That has a lot of folks worried. And as do most conversations about conservation these days, the conversation at the NAGP hunt eventually found its way to what can be done about the decline of hunting.

The consensus was that there are no silver bullets.

Hearing for proposed merger begins in North Dakota

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The Federal Trade Commission and the North Dakota Attorney General's Office have made their case for a preliminary injunction in U.S. District Court to block a proposed merger of Dakotas-based Sanford Health and Bismarck's Mid Dakota Clinic.

Regulators filed a federal complaint in June, saying a merger would violate antitrust law. They seek to halt it until a formal FTC hearing scheduled for Nov. 28 is held in Washington.

A four-day hearing on the matter began on Monday in Bismarck and consisted of opening statements and largely closed testimony by FTC witnesses, The Bismarck Tribune reported.

In their opening statement, the FTC said a merger would control the lion's share of the market for primary care, pediatric, obstetrics, gynecology and general surgery. The agency also argued that the merger would increase the providers' bargaining leverage with insurance companies, which they said could lead to higher rates, increased premiums and higher co-pays, deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses.

Sanford and Mid Dakota argued that the "powerful buyer," Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota, would be keeping rates in line.

But Thomas Dillickrath, of the FTC trial council, said BCBS can thwart any attempt to raise prices, which "inflates the powerful buyer definition."

Sanford's lawyer Bob Cooper said FTC's arguments ignore "the market dynamics at play" in the state.

Sanford Health was formed in 2009 when South Dakota-based Sanford merged with North Dakota-based MeritCare. Sanford now bills itself as one of the largest health systems in the nation.

Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

Kansas gas companies told to speed up pipeline replacement

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — The Kansas Corporation Commission has rejected a request from three gas companies, sticking to its original ruling that they need to speed up the replacement of obsolete pipeline deemed a safety risk.

The commission ruled in September that Atmos Energy, Black Hills Energy and Kansas Gas Service needed to create a 10-year plan to replace unprotected and bare steel pipes. The companies also have to recoup funds at up to 40 cents per month per customer, the Topeka Capital-Journal reported .

The ruling ended a years-long look at whether Kansas gas companies needed to tackle the obsolete pipeline in their systems at a faster rate and whether they needed additional funding mechanisms to finish the work.

The companies filed a petition for reconsideration on Oct. 26, outlining issues with both the 10-year time period and the 40-cent cap of the rate mechanism.

"Black Hills requested reconsideration of any findings suggesting Black Hills' natural gas distribution system is not safe or that the gas utility has not shown a commitment to the operational safety of its system," the filing said.

But the commission rejected the request last week. The agency said the companies needed to return with a tentative accelerated replacement plan within three months and a final plan in six months.

"Had Atmos and Black Hills attempted to demonstrate to this commission that they had undertaken serious efforts to significantly accelerate the pace of replacement prior to seeking an alternative rate mechanism to reduce regulatory lag to the benefit of the shareholders, the commission might be more sympathetic today," the appeal rejection said.

The petition for reconsideration was the final step the companies had to appeal to the commission. Any more action would require filing with the Kansas Court of Appeals.

Information from: The Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal, <http://www.cjonline.com>

Trade board urges tariffs, quotas on solar imports

By **MATTHEW DALY**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. trade commission recommended on Tuesday that the Trump administration impose tariffs as high as 35 percent to slow an influx of low-cost solar panels imported from China and other countries.

The four-member International Trade Commission split over the exact nature of the remedies but agreed that a surge in imported solar cells and panels has caused serious harm to U.S. manufacturers.

The panel's chairwoman, Rhonda Schmittlein, recommended tariffs ranging from 10 percent to 35 percent on selected imports, while two other commissioners recommended 30-percent tariffs to be phased down over four years. A fourth commissioner recommended quotas on imports of solar products to the U.S.

The commission's non-binding recommendations follow a unanimous vote in September that the imports are harmful. President Donald Trump is expected to make a final decision by mid-January.

Georgia-based Suniva Inc. and Oregon-based SolarWorld Americas brought the trade case, saying the imports have pushed them to the brink of extinction. Suniva has declared bankruptcy, while SolarWorld had to lay off three-quarters of its workforce.

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

The main trade group for the solar industry and many governors oppose tariffs, saying they could cause a sharp price hike that would lead to a dramatic drop in solar installations and cause massive layoffs in the solar industry.

The National Electrical Contractors Association, whose members build, frame and maintain solar projects, called the recommendations "extremely troubling" and said they put "the entire solar supply chain and tens of thousands of jobs at risk."

Solar energy is "a proven job creator for electrical workers nationwide who install utility-scale and rooftop solar systems around the country," said John Grau, the group's CEO. "These are good, middle-class jobs that promote apprenticeship, community-based hiring and veterans. We urge President Trump to reject" tariffs or other restrictions.

The Solar Energy Industries Association, which represents about 1,000 U.S. solar companies, said the proposed tariffs "would be intensely harmful to our industry," but expressed relief that the recommended rates were lower than many in the industry feared.

"We are encouraged by three commissioners' reference to alternative funding mechanisms, including our import license fee proposal," said Abigail Ross Hopper, the group's president and CEO.

Hopper and other industry leaders have said the United States should not be helping foreign-owned companies such as Suniva and SolarWorld.

Suniva's majority owner is based in China, while SolarWorld Americas is a subsidiary of German solar giant SolarWorld.

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

Governors of four solar-friendly states — Nevada, Colorado, Massachusetts and North Carolina — oppose tariffs, warning they could jeopardize the industry.

Suniva called the trade commission's recommendations disappointing. Solar panel makers have "suffered serious injury at the hands of foreign imports," the company said, and the remedies recommended by the trade commission "simply will not fix the problem the ITC itself identified."

Suniva declared bankruptcy this spring after laying off 190 employees and closing production sites in Georgia and Michigan. SolarWorld Americas, meanwhile, has trimmed its workforce from 1,300 to 300, with more cuts likely.

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

2 Florida men sentenced for capturing endangered Key deer

KEY WEST, Fla. (AP) — Two Florida men have been sentenced by a federal judge after pleading guilty to violating the U.S. Endangered Species Act for tying up three tiny Key deer in the back of a car.

Court records show a federal judge on Tuesday sentenced 18-year-old Eric Damas Acosta to a year in prison followed by 200 hours of community service. The judge sentenced 23-year-old Tumani Young to 180 days of home confinement and 200 hours of community service.

Court records show the pair lured the deer on Big Pine Key with food in July, tied them up and put them in the trunk and back seat of their car. The deer were discovered when they were stopped for a traffic violation. One of the deer had to be euthanized.

Information from: The Key West (Fla.) Citizen, <http://www.keysnews.com>

California gas tax rises 12 cents to pay for road repairs

By JONATHAN J. COOPER, Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California gas prices are about to go up.

Gasoline taxes will rise by 12 cents per gallon Wednesday — and diesel taxes by even more — to raise money for fixing roads and highways.

It's the first of several tax and fee hikes that will take effect after Democratic lawmakers approved them earlier this year, a vote that Republicans see as a key issue in the 2018 election.

The price increase for gasoline will be mitigated because it coincides with the annual shift to a winter blend of gasoline, which generally reduces prices by about 6 cents per gallon, said Marie Montgomery, a spokeswoman for AAA of Southern California.

It's tough to predict how much prices will rise overnight, Montgomery said, but past gas tax increases have generally led to gradual price increases.

"We don't know. We've seen gas prices increase in the last week, so they could be already building that increase in," Montgomery said. "Or we may see a sizeable hike on Wednesday."

Diesel taxes will go up by 20 cents a gallon and diesel sales taxes will rise by 4 points to 13 percent.

Californians will also have to pay a fee of \$25 to \$175, depending on the value of their vehicle, when they renew their registration next year. Zero-emission vehicle owners will pay \$100 per year starting in 2020 since they don't pay gas taxes.

The gas tax increase passed with support from nearly all legislative Democrats and one Republican, capping a yearslong effort by Gov. Jerry Brown to line up support for a dedicated source of road maintenance dollars.

The measure has emboldened Republicans, who have watched their influence diminish as California tilts increasingly to the left. They see higher gas taxes as a winning election issue that could motivate their base and win over voters frustrated with California's high cost of living.

Republicans put the gas tax at the center of a campaign to recall Sen. John Newman, a Fullerton Democrat who narrowly won his seat last year. Republican candidates for governor and for Congress are backing competing initiatives to repeal the gas tax, one of which would also require voter approval for any future increases.

Californians already pay some of the highest gas prices in the country. On Tuesday, California's statewide average of \$3.04 per gallon was about 57 cents higher than the national average and the highest in the continental U.S., according to AAA.

Assemblyman Travis Allen, a Huntington Beach Republican who has made opposition to the gas tax a centerpiece of his campaign for governor, said the money won't widen or extend freeways to relieve traffic.

"Californians will still be stuck in the worst-in-the-nation traffic. We'll just be paying a lot more for it," Allen said.

The taxes are projected to raise about \$5 billion a year to be split between state and local governments. Much of it will pay for fixing potholes and rebuilding crumbling roads and bridges. Some will also pay for

public transportation, biking and walking trails, and other projects.

Wednesday's increase will put the state gasoline tax at 41.7 cents on top of the unchanged federal gas tax of 18.3 cents.

The price of gasoline is driven much more by global supply and demand affecting oil prices than by taxes, said Roger Dickinson, executive director of Transportation California, an advocacy group funded by construction companies and trade unions that lobbied for the tax increases.

"When it's a price change because of the cost of a barrel of oil, it's the oil companies or producers that get all the benefits," Dickinson said. "In this case, the people are going to get a great benefit."

Conservation group appeals wildlife area recreation ruling

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin conservation alliance is appealing a federal judge's ruling that allows off-road motorcycle racing, Army helicopter training and other high-impact activities at a state-owned wildlife property.

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance argues the activities could cause irreparable harm to Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, the Baraboo News Republic reported. The group wants the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to restrict the activities until lawsuits regarding the property's management are settled next spring.

The hearing before the Chicago-based appellate court is set for Nov. 9.

The group filed a lawsuit against the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in December 2016 and a separate lawsuit against the General Services Administration and the federal Department of Interior's National Park Service in January.

The suits allege the federal agencies didn't properly supervise the DNR when management of the 3,400-acre property was transferred from federal to state control. The suits accuse the agencies of violating federal law by permitting the DNR to include high-impact recreation in the property's management plan without analyzing the environmental effects.

The alliance sought a preliminary injunction in the U.S. District Court of Western Wisconsin in June, but the request was denied. A similar request in Sauk County Circuit Court was also denied in March.

"We don't feel like we were given a fair consideration of our request for this temporary injunction of those high-impact activities," said Charlie Luthin, the alliance's executive director. "The fact that they are willing to listen to our arguments is important because I'm sure that the appellate court is bombarded with requests for appeals."

A DNR spokesman declined comment on the pending litigation.

Information from: Baraboo News Republic, <http://www.wiscnews.com/bnr>

Power plant to no longer be built in Nebraska

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — An Omaha energy developer has withdrawn its application to build a natural gas-fired power plant in Nebraska.

Bluestem Energy Solutions had submitted an application to the state to plan, build and operate a 38-mega-watt plant and then sell electricity to Beatrice, a city in southeast Nebraska. The company recently withdrew its permit application from the Nebraska Power Review Board, the Omaha World-Herald reported.

Beatrice still plans to purchase electricity from the new plant, even though it won't be built in the state.

The Omaha Public Power District and Nebraska Public Power District told the board last year that state law prohibits private entities from building power plants in Nebraska that would serve residents. Nebraska is a 100 percent public-power state.

The utilities also argued they already own more electric generation than they need and that allowing another plant would result in "unnecessary duplication of facilities."

Officials with Bluestem and the city of Beatrice said they disagreed with the utilities.

Beatrice attempted to get cost-saving proposals from the utilities that already own generation in Ne-

braska. But with the new gas plant, the city hoped to reach a better deal for its customers than under its existing contract with Nebraska Public Power District.

City officials decided to break with the utility after negotiations in which the company refused to include price guarantees in a long-term contract.

The \$38.5 million plant will now be built elsewhere in the Southwest Power Pool's 14-state territory. The power pool operates the regional electric grid and wholesale market in which electricity producers buy and sell power.

Beatrice City Administrator Tobias Tempelmeyer said the city would save 10 percent on its energy costs by purchasing power from the proposed plant. Details are still unclear on where the plant's new location will be and how competitive it will be with Beatrice's first site choice.

Information from: Omaha World-Herald, <http://www.omaha.com>

Details of South Dakota nuclear-missile accident released

By **SETH TUPPER**, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Bob Hicks was spending a cold December night in his barracks 53 years ago at Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City when the phone rang.

It was the chief of his missile maintenance team, who dispatched Hicks to an incident at an underground silo.

"The warhead," the team chief said, "is no longer on top of the missile."

Hicks eventually learned that a screwdriver used by another airman caused a short circuit that resulted in an explosion. The blast popped off the missile's cone —the part containing the thermonuclear warhead —and sent it on a 75-foot fall to the bottom of the 80-foot-deep silo.

The courageous actions Hicks took that night and over the next several days were not publicized. The accident was not disclosed to the public until years later, when a government report on accidents with nuclear weapons included seven sentences about it. The report listed the accident as the nation's first involving a Minuteman missile.

Fifty-three years after he responded to a nuclear-missile accident near Vale, Bob Hicks returned to the site of the former accident and also visited the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site near Wall.

Further details were reported publicly for the first time, drawn from documents obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests by the Rapid City Journal and others, and from Hicks himself, who is now 73 years old and living in Cibolo, Texas.

When Hicks was sent to the accident on Dec. 5, 1964, he was only 20 years old, and the cryptic statement from his team chief was the only information he was given.

"That was enough to cause me to get dressed pretty quickly," Hicks recalled.

The trouble began earlier that day when two other airmen were sent to a silo named Lima-02. It was 60 miles northwest of Ellsworth Air Force Base and 3 miles southeast of the tiny community of Vale, on the plains outside the Black Hills.

Lima-02 was one of 150 steel-and-concrete silos that had been planted underground and filled with Minuteman missiles during the previous several years in western South Dakota, where the missiles were scattered across 13,500 square miles. There were hundreds more silos in place or soon to be constructed in North Dakota, Missouri, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska, eventually bringing the nation's Minuteman fleet to a peak of 1,000.

The original Minuteman missiles, called Minuteman I, were 56 feet tall and weighed 65,000 pounds when loaded with fuel. The missiles were capable of traveling at a top speed of 15,000 miles per hour and could reach the Cold War enemy of the United States, the Soviet Union, within 30 minutes.

Each missile was tipped with a thermonuclear warhead that was many times more powerful than either of the two atomic bombs that the United States dropped on Japan during World War II. One government agency reportedly estimated that the detonation of an early 1960s-era Minuteman warhead over Detroit

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 26 of 54

would have caused 70 square miles of property destruction, 250,000 deaths and 500,000 injuries.

The two airmen who visited the Lima-02 silo on Dec. 5, 1964, were part of a young Air Force missile corps that was responsible for launching and maintaining the missiles. The two airmen's names are redacted — as are many other names — from an Air Force report that was filed after the accident.

At noon that Saturday, the airmen received orders to troubleshoot and repair the Lima-02 security system. They made the long drive and arrived at 2 p.m.

The rectangular, north-south aligned, 1-acre silo site was surrounded by a chain-link fence that was topped with strands of barbed wire. The unremarkable-looking place consisted mostly of a flat expanse of gravel. Toward the south end were several low-slung tops of underground concrete structures.

One of the structures was a 3 1/2-foot-thick, 90-ton slab that covered the missile and would have been blasted aside during a launch. A couple of paces away from that was a circular, steel-and-concrete vault door, about the diameter of a large tractor tire. The door concealed a 28-foot-deep shaft leading to the underground work area known as the equipment room.

Working in 24-degree conditions above ground, the airmen began a series of steps with special tools and combination locks that allowed them to open the massive vault door. Next, they climbed the ladder down to the equipment room, which encircled the upper part of the silo and missile like a doughnut.

The airmen worked in the roughly 5 feet of space between the steel launch tube and the equipment-room wall, among racks of electronics and surfaces painted mostly in pale, institutional green. Though the launch tube was between them and the missile, the missile was not much more than an arm's length away.

According to the Air Force report on the accident, one of the airmen removed a fuse as part of a check on a security alarm control box. The report said the airman was "lacking a fuse puller," so he used a screwdriver to pry the fuse from its clip.

When the fuse was re-inserted, the report said, it was supposed to click. The sound of a click indicated good contact with the holder. But there was no click, so the airman repeated the procedure. Still not certain he heard a click, he pulled the fuse out a third time and pushed it back into the holder again.

"At 1500 hours MST," the report said, referencing 3 p.m. Mountain Standard Time, "simultaneously with the making of this contact, a loud explosion occurred in the launch tube."

Hicks arrived at the silo later and heard a simpler story from his team chief. According to that story, it was merely the removal of the fuse with a screwdriver — not the insertion of the fuse — that caused the problem. Hicks said the metal of the screwdriver contacted the positive side of the fuse and also the fuse's grounded metal holder, causing a short circuit that sent electricity flowing to unintended places.

"It would be just like you taking your car battery and you touch a screwdriver to the positive terminal on the battery and you touch the frame of the car," Hicks explained. "You have just put voltage potential on your entire car."

Hicks and the accident report agree that the wrong tool was used. In the language of the report, "The technician did not use the authorized, available tool to remove the fuse."

The resulting short circuit might not have been problematic had it not been for some wiring in one of the missile's retrorockets that was later found to be faulty. According to Hicks, some weakly insulated or exposed wiring may have been in contact with the metal casing of a retrorocket, allowing for a jolt of electricity that caused the retrorocket to fire.

The retrorockets were housed below the cone of the missile. They were supposed to fire when the missile was in outer space, to separate the third and final fuel stage from the cone, allowing the cone and its warhead — which were collectively called the "re-entry vehicle" — to fall toward the target.

When one of the retrorockets fired inside the missile in the Lima-02 silo, pressure built up in the space where the retrorockets were housed, and the cone of the missile — which was about 5 feet tall, nearly 3 feet in diameter at its base, and about 750 pounds in weight — burst off and fell down in the few feet of space between the missile and the silo wall.

The cone hit the wall of the silo, bounced back toward the missile and grazed it in two spots along the second fuel stage, hit two of the three suspension cables that supported the missile, and finally crashed to the concrete floor of the silo and came to rest on its side. Luckily, the cone did not do enough damage

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 27 of 54

to the missile to cause the missile to explode.

Neither of the airmen immediately knew what had happened. The bureaucratically written accident report said they "expeditiously evacuated" after hearing the explosion, as the silo filled with gray smoke.

In later years, Buddy Smith, who now lives in Texas and is a friend of Hicks, received training about the South Dakota accident before working in the missile fields of Wyoming.

"I wasn't there," Smith said of the explosion, "but I know there were two technicians who ruined their underwear. 'Cause that ain't supposed to happen."

Bob Dirksing, who was Hicks' roommate at Ellsworth and now lives in the Cincinnati area, said the two airmen who were in the silo when the explosion happened were lucky to survive.

"It could've been a lot worse," Dirksing said. "If the short had gone to the missile instead of to the retrorockets, it would've been a completely different story. I'm sure there would've been fatalities. The boys who were down there would've been fried."

The explosion triggered a flurry of activity over the next seven hours. A potential "broken arrow" was declared, which is military-speak for an accident involving a nuclear weapon. A strike team was deployed to set up a 2,000-foot cordon around the silo, including a road block. Medics were dispatched to the scene. Three sergeants were flown in by helicopter.

The sergeants went down to the equipment room after the smoke cleared and made two observations: Everything was covered in gray dust, and the missile was missing its top.

A radiation-monitoring team went down next and did not detect alarming radiation levels but did find the missile's cone, which contained the warhead, damaged and lying at the bottom of the silo.

By about 10 p.m., the scramble to assess the situation was over. Nobody was injured. The missile was slightly damaged but otherwise intact. The warhead was safe inside its cone, although the cone was damaged. And except for some Vale-area residents who probably saw the commotion and wondered what was going on, the public knew nothing.

The emergency was over, and it was time to plan a salvage operation. Sometime before midnight at Ellsworth, the phone rang for Bob Hicks.

Hicks had enlisted less than two years earlier as a skinny, 6-foot-tall, 19-year-old farm boy from Somerset, Texas, a small town about 20 miles south of San Antonio. He was the youngest in a family of 13 children, which included six boys who served more than a combined 90 years on Air Force active duty from World War II to Vietnam and beyond.

After basic training, Hicks had been sent to nuclear weapons maintenance school in Colorado. By October 1963 — eight months after his enlistment — he was installing warheads and guidance packages atop Minuteman missiles in the silos of western South Dakota.

The silos had been rushed into existence after a groundbreaking ceremony in 1962, with Americans still reeling from the shock of seeing the Soviets launch their Sputnik satellite in 1957. If the Soviets could put a satellite into orbit, American leaders reasoned, it would not be long until they could launch a missile on an arcing path through outer space to the United States.

When Hicks got the call about the accident on Dec. 5, 1964, he and another airman jumped into the specially equipped truck-and-trailer rig that they typically used to transport warheads. They sped into the night, traveling on the newly constructed Interstate 90 toward Sturgis. It wasn't long before Hicks had to pull over when he saw a state trooper's cruiser lights flashing in his rearview mirrors.

"He said, 'Ya'll seem to be in a hurry,'" Hicks recalled.

Hicks did not divulge that he was en route to a potential nuclear disaster, and the trooper inquired no further.

But the trooper did mention some smoke emitting from one of the rig's wheels. Hicks and his companion traced the problem to some bad brake hoses. They made an impromptu fix and sped off again toward Sturgis.

After passing through Sturgis and heading east, Hicks steered the rig north around the hulking, dark mass of Bear Butte and motored across the quiet countryside to Vale before finally reaching the silo.

There were perhaps a dozen people at the scene.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 28 of 54

"As we later joked," Hicks recalled in his slight Texas drawl, "They were standing around not knowing whether to scratch their watch or wind their butts."

According to Hicks, the missile had not yet been rendered safe, and his team chief said somebody had to do it. Hicks volunteered.

When he saw the missile was fully upright, Hicks was relieved. If it had fallen against the silo, the missile might have been weakened to the point of a collapse and explosion. But that disaster had been avoided.

Incredible as it may sound to a civilian, Hicks said he spent no time worrying about the thermonuclear warhead. He had been convinced by his training that it was nearly impossible to detonate a warhead accidentally. Among other things, he said, the warhead had to receive codes from the launch-control officers, had to reach a certain altitude, and had to detect a certain amount of acceleration and G-force. There were so many safeguards built in, Hicks later joked, that a warhead might have been lucky to detonate even when it was supposed to.

That's not to say his trip down the silo was without danger. The missile, which contained a load of fuel, had been grazed and damaged by the falling cone. And with only a few years of history behind the Minuteman missile program and no known nuclear accident involving a Minuteman until the one Hicks was confronting, he was heading into the unknown.

Nevertheless, he climbed down the shaft and into the equipment room that encircled the upper part of the underground silo. Next, he lowered the so-called "diving board," which extended from the launch tube toward the missile and allowed Hicks to essentially walk the plank at a height of about 60 feet above the silo floor.

He also installed a work cage, which was a man-sized steel basket that could be hung from motorized cables on the inner wall of the launch tube. The cable assembly not only moved the cage vertically but could also move horizontally on a track around the launch tube, allowing airmen to access every part of the missile.

Hicks maneuvered the cage down the side of the missile and started the procedure to "safe" it. At each point between the missile's three fuel stages, Hicks inserted a long metal rod with a socket-like head and turned the rod to break the electrical connections between the stages, rendering them incapable of firing.

With the missile "safe," it was time to figure out what to do about the warhead.

Hicks said there was a particularly high-ranking officer at the scene who had been flown in by helicopter. After Hicks had rendered the missile safe, Hicks came back to the surface and heard the officer asking some other men how to retrieve the warhead.

Hicks heard no response, so he piped up. Cargo nets were sometimes used to move heavy equipment in and out of the silo, he said. He suggested that a net could be lowered to the bottom of the silo, and the cone with its warhead could be rolled into the net. The net could then be hoisted up on a cable by a crane.

The officer did not appreciate the boldness of Hicks, whose rank was airman second class.

"He said, 'Airman, when I want an opinion from you, I'll ask you,'" Hicks recalled.

Hicks retreated to his truck and awaited further orders. Later, Hicks said, he was recalled to the officer's side and asked to explain the idea again.

The cargo-net method was eventually chosen as the plan, but Hicks said the Air Force wanted the procedure to be practiced in another silo. The practice proceeded over the next couple of days.

Following the practice, the operation was green-lighted, and a crew assembled at Lima-02 on Wednesday, Dec. 9, 1964 — four days after the accident — to retrieve the damaged missile cone and its thermonuclear warhead.

First, some jagged edges on the cone that were caused by its violent separation from the missile were covered in padding, and the cone was hoisted about a foot off the silo floor while a mattress pad was slid underneath it. Next, two cargo nets, which were layered one on top of the other under the pad, were pulled up around the cone and hooked to the cable.

Then began the painstaking process of raising the cone up out of the 80-foot-deep silo, in the few feet of space between the missile and the silo wall, without hitting the missile and causing an explosion. The crane did the lifting, but three men also held tight to a hemp rope that was connected to the cone in case

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 29 of 54

of any problems with the crane, cable or net.

"Up very slow," reads a portion of a minute-by-minute account of the operation, as printed in the later accident report. "Dead slow. Stop. Up very slow. Stop. Up slow. Stop."

And on it continued like that for about two hours until the cone emerged from the silo late that afternoon. The cone and its inner warhead were placed on top of some mattresses, Hicks said, in a truck-and-trailer rig. There the cone and warhead sat overnight, in the trailer.

The next day — Thursday, Dec. 10 — a convoy assembled to escort the truck to Ellsworth Air Force Base. According to Hicks, he drove the truck, in part because nobody else at the scene seemed to know how.

The warhead was eventually transported to Medina Annex at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio for disassembly. The written record is not as clear about the fate of the missile, but the accident report indicates it may have been removed from the silo the next day, Friday, Dec. 11.

Also on Dec. 11, 1964, the Air Force appointed a board of officers to investigate the accident. The board filed its report seven days later, on Dec. 18, and listed "personnel error" as the primary cause. The report said the cost of the damage was \$234,349, which would equate to about \$1.85 million in inflation-adjusted 2017 money.

Large sections of the report's findings and recommendations are redacted, and the non-redacted portions do not disclose the fate of the two airmen who were at the silo when the explosion happened.

Several months after the accident, in March 1965, Hicks was selected as the maintenance man of the month for his division. A short article about the honor in the base newspaper did not disclose that a missile accident had occurred, but it vaguely referenced Hicks' role in rendering a missile safe and transporting "damaged components."

That same month, Hicks was awarded an Air Force Commendation Medal for acts of courage. The written citation with the medal briefly summarized the accident and the role Hicks played in responding to it.

"By his personal courage and willingness to risk his life when necessary in the performance of dangerous duties," the citation said, in part, "Airman Hicks has reflected credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

The accident did not scare Hicks away from dangerous jobs. Shortly after receiving his medal, he trained in explosive ordnance disposal and was eventually sent to Guam during the Vietnam War, where he disarmed and extracted bombs that failed to release from B-52 planes.

Hicks went on to work for the Office of Special Investigations, which is the Air Force equivalent of the FBI. He retired from active duty during the 1980s and was hired to work as a civilian agent for OSI until his final retirement in 2005. Along the way, he and his wife, Janet, had two sons.

The missile silos in western South Dakota were decommissioned following the 1991 signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty by the United States and the Soviet Union. By 1996, all but one of South Dakota's silos had been imploded. The last remaining silo, called Delta-09, is now host to an unarmed missile and is part of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, which includes three attractions spread out along Interstate 90 east of Wall — the silo, a preserved launch-control center called Delta-01, and a visitor center.

The former Lima-02 silo site near Vale has passed into private ownership and is now home to a honey-extracting business. The fence that formerly surrounded the silo complex is still there, kept intact by the landowner.

Although South Dakota's Minuteman missiles now belong to history, the United States still has 400 Minutemans ready to launch from silos in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska. Each of the missiles is a Minuteman III — two generations advanced from the Minuteman I that was in the Lima-02 silo in 1964.

The Minuteman III fleet is just one part of the U.S. nuclear-weapons triad, which has 5,113 nuclear warheads in all, including some in storage and others that are deployed and ready for use from land, sea or air.

To opponents of nuclear armament, that's a lot of accidents waiting to happen. The U.S. government has officially acknowledged 32 accidents involving nuclear weapons since the 1950s, while additional accidents, incidents, mishaps and close calls have been uncovered by journalists and activists.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 30 of 54

And accidents continue to happen. In 2014, three airmen were conducting maintenance on a Minuteman III missile at a silo in Colorado when an accident caused \$1.8 million worth of damage to the missile — roughly the same amount of damage, taking inflation into account, as the 1964 accident in South Dakota. The few known details of the 2014 accident were revealed only after persistent requests for information from The Associated Press.

None of the accidents suffered by the nation's nuclear-weapons program has ever caused a nuclear detonation. That there was not a detonation at Lima-02 in 1964 is an indication of the safety and reliability of the Minuteman missile program, according to Bob Hicks, who did not sour on nuclear weapons after the accident.

Hicks views the nuclear triad as a necessary and effective deterrent against attacks from nations such as North Korea, whose leader Kim Jong Un is provoking worldwide anxiety about his development of nuclear weapons.

As the future of nuclear weaponry unfolds, the world may need more unflappable people like Hicks, who considers himself lucky rather than unfortunate to have been called to the site of a nuclear missile accident.

"A career is made up of opportunities," Hicks said. "Being in the right place, at the right time."

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

Dems ask for EPA info after scientists kept from speaking

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Several Democratic members of Congress are asking the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency whether three agency scientists were prevented from speaking at a conference because it included a discussion of climate change.

In a letter to EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt released Tuesday by the office of Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, members of the Rhode Island and Massachusetts delegations ask why the scientists were prevented from speaking at last week's conference on the health of Narragansett Bay.

They also asked who made the decision and how it was made. They also asked for all communications related to the decision.

The EPA did not explain the decision but said it was not an agency conference.

The letter also requests EPA's policy on scientists' participation in conferences.

Possible jurors queried in Bundy standoff trial in Nevada

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Prospective jurors are being questioned for a second day in the trial of rancher Cliven Bundy, two sons and one other co-defendant facing federal charges in an April 2014 armed standoff with federal agents.

More than 50 prospective jurors were in court Tuesday, after a separate group of 49 was questioned Monday.

Chief U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro has said she expects it'll take several days to pick a panel for a planned four-month trial.

Bundy, sons Ryan and Ammon Bundy, and Ryan Payne of Montana are accused of leading a self-styled militia to stop federal agents at gunpoint from enforcing court orders to remove Bundy's cattle from public rangeland.

Bundy refuses to pay grazing fees to a federal government that he maintains has no authority over land in the states.

GOP tax writers delay rollout as Trump sets rapid timetable

By MARCY GORDON and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republicans struggled to complete work on a sweeping tax proposal, delaying its public release by a day as President Donald Trump set an ambitious, by-Christmas timetable for passage of the legislation.

The GOP tax-writers strained to make last-minute changes to the proposed legislation, working Tuesday through the day and night to produce the first major overhaul of the U.S. tax system in three decades. But they couldn't finalize details in time for their Wednesday deadline for a public rollout, and so moved it to Thursday.

The delay was announced Tuesday night by Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, chairman of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee.

"We are making excellent progress. We are very close," Brady told reporters. "A lot of work remains with the drafters, they are continuing to work through the night. We are moving forward."

The tax-writers have worked for weeks to reach compromises to ease objections by groups of rank-and-file Republican lawmakers, whose votes on final legislation are critical.

Trump has intensified his lobbying for the nearly \$6 trillion tax overhaul plan, driven to score a major legislative achievement after the collapse of the Republicans' attempted repeal of the Obama-era health care law. Republicans see taxes as a political imperative that will determine whether they keep their majorities in the House and Senate in next year's midterm elections.

At the White House, an official said Trump looked forward to seeing legislation this week, adding that the administration was confident the delay wouldn't affect the ultimate timing of the bill. Brady said his committee plans to vote on the bill next week.

Although they had settled on some key details — such as a cut in the corporate tax rate to 20 percent and maintaining the top personal income tax rate for the wealthy of 39.6 percent — other elements still had to be resolved, including the income levels for each tax bracket.

The president set an aggressive timetable for the legislation and predicted a grand signing ceremony before Christmas at "the biggest tax event in the history of our country."

Late Tuesday after word came of the delay, Trump renewed his cheerleading on Twitter.

"The Republican House members are working hard (and late) toward the Massive Tax Cuts that they know you deserve. These will be biggest ever!"

The plan outline released last month by Trump and Republican leaders in Congress called for shrinking the number of tax brackets from seven to three or four, with respective tax rates of 12 percent, 25 percent, 35 percent and to be determined. The tax system would be simplified, and most people would be able to file their returns on a postcard-sized form.

The plan calls for nearly doubling the standard deduction used by most average Americans to \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for families, and increasing the per-child tax credit. In addition to slashing the corporate tax rate, it also seeks to repeal inheritance taxes on multimillion-dollar estates, a big break for the wealthy.

The plan drew immediate criticism from Democrats, who complained it was too favorable to the wealthy and contradicted Trump's rhetoric of bringing relief and economic benefit to the stressed middle class.

Brady did not answer directly when he was asked — while leaving House Speaker Paul Ryan's suite earlier Tuesday — whether the drop in the corporate tax rate would happen immediately or be phased in. But, he said: "I want as much growth right from Day One as I can."

With the House Republicans deep in negotiations at the Capitol, Trump made his pitch.

"The process is complicated but the end result will not be that complicated," he said in the White House's Roosevelt Room, joined by more than a dozen leaders from the business and trade worlds. "It's going to be: People are going to pay less tax by a lot, companies are going to pay less tax by a lot — that's a big difference — and companies are going to start rebuilding and they're going to stay here."

Trump said he's directing Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, White House economic adviser Gary Cohn

and other administration officials to stay behind when he heads for Asia on Friday so they can help sell the tax proposal. The White House said Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter and adviser, had canceled plans to accompany the president to China and South Korea to help push the package.

The president said he was hopeful the House will approve the tax bill by Thanksgiving. But his overly optimistic timetable didn't address the concerns of lawmakers from states such as New York and New Jersey, who have opposed a proposal to eliminate the federal deduction for state and local taxes, arguing it would hurt their constituents and subject them to being taxed twice.

A battle has continued over contributions to 401(k) retirements accounts. The financial industry and some Republican lawmakers insist that the GOP plan not change the tax benefits of the popular savings vehicles, as has been floated by GOP leaders.

Associated Press writers Erica Werner, Ken Thomas, Catherine Lucey and Jill Colvin contributed to this report.

Putin arrives in Iran for talks with Tehran, Azerbaijan

By NASSER KARIMI, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Iran on Wednesday for trilateral talks with Tehran and Azerbaijan, a meeting that comes as the Islamic Republic's nuclear deal is threatened by U.S. President Donald Trump's refusal to re-certify the accord.

The talks in Tehran are to focus on regional matters, as well as terrorism and security issues. The three countries all share the Caspian Sea and railway and road projects are expected to be discussed at their meeting as well.

Putin landed at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport for the one-day meeting. It's his third visit to Iran after previously making trips in November 2015 and in 2007.

Putin also is expected to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters.

The two countries have many mutual interests in the region. Russia and Iran have both backed embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's long civil war.

Prior to Putin's arrival, Russia's armed forces chief, Gen. Valery Gerasimov, met with his Iranian counterpart, Gen. Mohammad Hossein Bagheri, and discussed defense and security issues, Iranian state television reported on Wednesday, without elaborating.

Russia also has helped Iran's nuclear power program, taking part in construction of two more nuclear power reactors in the southern port city of Bushehr, home of the first Iran's nuclear power plant that went online in 2011 with Moscow's assistance. The project is estimated to cost some \$8.5 billion, with each reactor producing 1,057 megawatts of electricity.

Moscow has stood by Tehran as well while Trump has refused to re-certify the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers including Russia. The other parties to the accord — Britain, China, France, Germany and the European Union — also have all urged Trump to stay in the deal.

Tehran-based political analyst Saeed Leilaz said Putin's visit to Tehran also can lead to more investment in the oil industry and other infrastructure projects that "may encourage European and Chinese and even American companies to enter Iranian market."

NYC truck attack: Investigators scour driver's background

By COLLEEN LONG and MATT SEDENSKY, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Investigators worked through the night to determine what led a truck driver to plow down people on a riverfront bike path near the World Trade Center, brandishing air guns and yelling "God is great" in Arabic as his deadly route of terror ended with a crash, authorities said.

Eight people were killed and 11 seriously injured in a Halloween afternoon attack that the mayor called

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 33 of 54

"a particularly cowardly act of terror." The driver — identified by officials as an immigrant from Uzbekistan — was in critical condition but expected to survive after a police officer shot him in the abdomen.

A roughly two-mile stretch of highway in downtown Manhattan was shut down for the investigation. Authorities also converged on a New Jersey home and a van in a parking lot at a New Jersey Home Depot store. Authorities were scrutinizing a note found inside the attacker's rented truck, according to two law enforcement officials who were not authorized to discuss the ongoing investigation and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Police and the FBI urged members of the public to give them any photos or video that could help. The attack echoed a strategy that the Islamic State group has been suggesting to its followers. While police didn't specifically blame any group for the strike, President Donald Trump railed against the Islamic State and declared "enough!" and "NOT IN THE U.S.A.!"

The victims reflected a city that is a melting pot and a magnet for visitors: One of the dead was from Belgium. Five were from Argentina and were celebrating the 30th anniversary of a school graduation, according to officials in those countries. The injured included students and staffers on a school bus that the driver rammed.

"This was an act of terror, and a particularly cowardly act of terror aimed at innocent civilians, aimed at people going about their lives who had no idea what was about to hit them," said Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat.

Officials who were not authorized to discuss the investigation and spoke on the condition of anonymity identified the slight, bearded attacker as Sayfullo Saipov, a 29-year-old who came to the U.S. legally in 2010. He has a Florida driver's license but may have been staying in New Jersey, they said.

Records show Saipov was a commercial truck driver who formed a pair of businesses in Ohio. He had also driven for Uber, the ride-hailing company said. An Ohio marriage license shows that a truck driver with one of Saipov's addresses and his name, spelled slightly differently, married a fellow Uzbek in 2013.

During his time in Fort Myers, Florida, several years ago, Saipov was "a very good person," an acquaintance, Kobiljon Matkarov, told The New York Times.

"He liked the U.S. He seemed very lucky, and all the time, he was happy and talking like everything is OK. He did not seem like a terrorist, but I did not know him from the inside," Matkarov said. He said Saipov later moved to New Jersey and began driving for Uber. San Francisco-based Uber said he started over six months ago.

Police said the attacker rented the truck at about 2 p.m. at a New Jersey Home Depot and then went into New York City, entering the bike path about an hour later and speeding toward the World Trade Center, the site of the deadliest terror attack in U.S. history.

He barreled along the bike path in the truck for the equivalent of about 14 blocks, or around eight-tenths of a mile, before slamming into a small yellow school bus.

"A person hopped out of the car with two guns and started yelling and screaming," said a 12-year-old student who had just left a nearby school. "They were yelling 'Allahu Akbar.'"

The student, whose mother asked that his name be withheld, said he ran back into the school, where students cried and huddled in a corner.

Video shot by bystanders showed Saipov walking through traffic wielding what looked like two handguns, but which police later said were a paintball gun and a pellet gun. A police officer shot Saipov when he wouldn't drop the weapons, police said.

The mayhem set off panic in the neighborhood and left the pavement strewn with mangled bicycles and bodies that were soon covered with sheets.

"I saw a lot of blood over there. A lot of people on the ground," said Chen Yi, an Uber driver.

The note inside the truck was handwritten in a foreign language, according to one of the two law enforcement officials who spoke about the document. Both said its contents were being investigated but supported the belief the act was terrorism.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, called Tuesday's carnage a "lone wolf" attack and said there was no evidence to suggest it was part of a wider plot.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 34 of 54

Statements of support and condolences rolled in from around the world Wednesday.

Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev sent his condolences to the president and the families of the victims, and offered his country's assistance in investigating the attack.

Similar statements were issued by Iran's Foreign Ministry, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar.

New York and other cities around the globe have been on high alert against attacks by extremists in vehicles. England, France and Germany have seen deadly vehicle attacks in the past year or so.

Associated Press writers Sadie Gurman in Washington; Jake Pearson, Tom Hays, Adam Geller, Jennifer Peltz, Kiley Armstrong and Tom McElroy in New York; Michael Balsamo in Los Angeles; Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and Michael R. Sisak in Philadelphia contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. 'A PARTICULARLY COWARDLY ACT OF TERROR'

Investigators are working to determine what led a 29-year-old Uzbek immigrant driver to plow down people on a bike path in New York City, killing eight.

2. ATTACK SUSPECT AN UZBEK IMMIGRANT WITH VARIED US FOOTPRINT

Sayfullo Saipov, the lone man eyed as the perpetrator of the lower Manhattan bike path attack, was a native of Uzbekistan who drove trucks and also drove for Uber.

3. WHAT COURT PAPERS SAY ABOUT GEORGE PAPADOPOULOS

They outline the former campaign adviser's frequent contacts with senior officials and with foreign nationals who promised access to the highest levels of the Russian government.

4. HOUSE REPUBLICANS STRUGGLE TO COMPLETE TAX PROPOSAL

Lawmakers delay its public release by a day as Trump sets an ambitious, by-Christmas timetable for the politically driven legislation.

5. TRUMP SKIPPING DMZ; TO VISIT US BASE IN SOUTH KOREA

Trump will be forgoing a traditional visit to the demilitarized zone dividing the Korean Peninsula as he sets out on his maiden Asia trip.

6. HONG KONG DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST ISSUES WARNING

Joshua Wong, 21, says China's rise means human rights are in greater danger of being overshadowed globally by business interests.

7. UK CENTURY-OLD DOCUMENT STILL CAUSING CONSTERNATION

The Balfour Declaration, Britain's promise to Zionists to create a Jewish home in what is now Israel, turns 100 this week — and hardens a rift between the Israelis and Palestinians.

8. HOLLYWOOD'S SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ABUSE SCANDAL WIDENS

Beverly Hills police launch investigations into alleged conduct by film mogul Harvey Weinstein and writer-director James Toback.

9. WHY DAY OF THE DEAD FESTIVITIES WILL BE SOMBER

The Mexican tradition is opening with a sadder tone than usual as people remember those killed in the massive earthquake that hit Mexico City in September.

10. NOTHING BETTER IN SPORTS: A GAME 7

The Los Angeles Dodgers and the Houston Astros will play for a winner-take-all championship as the World Series is pushed to the limit.

AP Interview: Wong says China rise means trade trumps rights

By KELVIN CHAN and YI-LING LIU, Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Young Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong warned Wednesday that China's rise means human rights are in increasingly greater danger of being overshadowed globally by business interests.

He was responding to questions about his expectations for an upcoming Asian tour by U.S. President Donald Trump, who will visit China and four other countries.

The 21-year-old Wong, Hong Kong's most famous activist, is out on bail while he appeals a prison sentence related to his involvement in massive 2014 pro-democracy protests.

"Business interests override human rights," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "It unfortunately seems to be a common trend in the world" under a rising China.

During Trump's Asian trip, he said there's likely to be "a lot of uncertainty. No one can expect what will suddenly be published on his Twitter." But he urged Trump to not let human rights lose out to commercial considerations, hinting that U.S. business interests could also someday be directly affected by China's rising clout.

As an example, he referred to the recent case of British human rights activist Benedict Rogers, who was barred from entering Hong Kong on what many suspect to be Beijing's request, and said it might happen again.

"The day may come for U.S. politicians to be blocked from entering Hong Kong and when politicians or businessmen from the U.S. might not be possible to enter such an international financial center, how can they keep silent on the erosion of Hong Kong autonomy?" he said.

Beijing promised to let Hong Kong maintain wide autonomy and civil liberties after its 1997 handover from Britain under the "one country, two systems" blueprint, but pro-democracy activists and lawmakers fear that China's Communist rulers are renegeing on their pledge.

Wong urged the U.S. and other Western countries to pay closer attention to "how the China model threatens Asia-Pacific stability."

The China model is a reference to economic development without corresponding democratic reforms, as well as the name of a controversial booklet praising China's one-party rule that the Hong Kong government planned to distribute in 2012 to schools as part of "moral and national education." Wong helped lead protests that forced the government to shelve those plans.

Wong was given bail last week, two months into a six-month prison sentence. He and a fellow activist, Nathan Law, were both sent to prison after the justice secretary won a legal challenge overturning more lenient sentences. The move sparked fears Hong Kong's independent judiciary is under threat. They are due in court Nov. 7 to appeal the sentences.

Wong, who is also awaiting sentencing in another case, is prepared to go back to jail. He turned 21 while behind bars and said it "might not be the last time I will celebrate my birthday inside prison."

Though he has become synonymous with Hong Kong's democracy movement, Wong said it was important not to forget others who are also paying a price but haven't attracted the same international spotlight. About two dozen other young activists are serving prison sentences longer than his, "just because they were asking for democracy, freedom and human rights by non-violent civil disobedience," he said.

During his time behind bars, Wong did compulsory marching exercises 30 minutes a day and ate with a spoon because forks, knives and chopsticks are banned.

Asked if the prison guards singled him out for harsher treatment, he said, "They treated me fairly with swear words and foul language."

Not allowed a phone, he couldn't update his popular social media accounts but said being unplugged allowed him the opportunity for "spiritual reflection." Prison news was limited to Hong Kong's pro-Beijing publications, but he read books such as "I Am Malala" by 20-year-old Pakistani activist and Nobel Peace laureate Malala Yousafzai. Letters from supporters in places like New York, London and Berlin helped buoy his spirits.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 36 of 54

Out of prison, he is making the most of time, hanging out with his parents and girlfriend, playing video games and enjoying favorite local foods like Hong Kong-style milk tea.

Wong plans to keep fighting for full democracy in Hong Kong. In the short term, he said his political party, Demosisto, will announce a candidate as early as next week to run in an election next year to fill a seat in the city's semi-democratic legislature vacated when Law was disqualified because of a government legal challenge.

In the long run, he said there's plenty of work to do getting Hong Kongers to "adjust their mindset" to resist Beijing's tightening grip.

"I still believe Hong Kong people can overcome, even though we are inside the prison set by China."

Follow Kelvin Chan on Twitter at twitter.com/chanman and Yi-ling Liu at twitter.com/yilingliu95.

Dodgers beat Astros 3-1, force World Series to Game 7

By RONALD BLUM, AP Baseball Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Joc Pederson sliced a drive over the left-field wall, pounded his chest and danced around the bases, taking as many twists and turns as this World Series itself.

Of course, the Los Angeles Dodgers forced the Houston Astros to Game 7.

Chris Taylor hit a tying double off Justin Verlander during a two-run rally in the sixth inning, Corey Seager followed with a go-ahead sacrifice fly and the Dodgers beat the Astros 3-1 on Tuesday night to push this dramatic Fall Classic to the ultimate game.

Pederson homered in the seventh against Joe Musgrove, connecting off the right-hander for the second time in three games and making it a record 24 long balls that have been hit in this Series. Pederson pranced all the way to the plate, pointing at the Dodgers' dugout and rubbing his thumbs and index fingers together to indicate what a money shot it was.

"You kind of black out in a situation like that. So I'm going to have to re-watch it to see what I did," Pederson said.

It was the third home run of the World Series for Pederson, demoted to the minors from mid-August until early September, then left off the NL Division Series roster. He had hit just one previous opposite-field homer in the big leagues this season, and teammates offered to pay him to go the other way.

"People are trying to get me encouraged to using the whole field," he said. "I'm not very good at it."

Yu Darvish starts Wednesday for the Dodgers, trying to win their first title since 1988, and Los Angeles ace Clayton Kershaw will be ready in the bullpen after getting knocked out in the fifth inning of Game 5.

"I can give you 27 innings," Kershaw said. "I'll be ready to go, whatever they need."

Lance McCullers Jr. gets the ball for the Astros in the first World Series Game 7 ever at Dodger Stadium and the first since 1931 between teams that won 100 games during the regular season.

Darvish was chased in the second inning of Game 2, when McCullers pitched Houston to a 5-3 victory.

"You've got two teams with a bunch of dogs in the clubhouse. No one is afraid," McCullers said.

Two nights after a 13-12, 10-inning slugfest under the roof at Minute Maid Park, pitching dominated.

George Springer's third-inning home run against starter Rich Hill had given a 1-0 lead to Verlander and the Astros, trying for the first championship in their 56-season history. On Halloween night, a title for a team with orange in its colors seemed appropriate.

But it served only to set up the 10th blown lead of the Series, the fifth by Houston, as Verlander fell to 9-1 with the Astros.

Dodgers relievers combined for 4 1/3 scoreless innings. Brandon Morrow retired Alex Bregman on a grounder to strand the bases loaded in the fifth, winner Tony Watson got Marwin Gonzalez to line out to leaping second baseman Chase Utley with two on and two outs in the sixth, and Kenta Maeda escaped two-on trouble in the seventh when third baseman Justin Turner gloved Jose Altuve's grounder and made a short-hop throw that first baseman Cody Bellinger scooped just in time.

"The pick is big," Houston manager A.J. Hinch said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 37 of 54

After wasting a ninth-inning lead in Game 2 and losing Game 5, Kenley Jansen retired six straight batters on 19 pitches for the save and ended it by striking out 40-year-old pinch-hitter Carlos Beltran.

This will be the third World Series Game 7 in four years. The home team had won nine straight since 1979 before San Francisco triumphed at Kansas City in 2014 and the Chicago Cubs captured their first title since 1908 at Cleveland last year.

Ten of the last 12 teams that won Game 6 to force a seventh game also won the title, but the Dodgers lost the previous six World Series in which they trailed 3-2. They have won just one of their six championships at home, in 1963.

A heat wave over and the skies overcast, the temperature dropped to 67 degrees at game time from 103 for last week's opener, and there was a slight drizzle in the middle innings.

Los Angelenos with a laid-back reputation were on their feet for two-strike counts against Astros batters, a wave in Pantone 294 — also known as Dodger blue.

"We feed off the crowd, for sure," Taylor said. "We feel we have a huge home-field advantage."

Yuli Gurriel, who made a racist gesture toward Darvish in Game 3, was booed loudly during introductions and each time he batted, and Hill stepped off the rubber to allow the crowd extra time to jeer.

Verlander has 11 postseason wins but dropped to 0-4 in the Series with Detroit and Houston, which acquired him from the Tigers on Aug. 31 to win on nights like this. He allowed just one baserunner before Austin Barnes singled leading off the sixth. Verlander bounced a pitch that hit Utley on the front of his right foot, and Taylor sent a 97 mph fastball down the right-field line as Barnes came home. Seager followed with a sacrifice fly to the warning track, a ball that likely would have landed in the pavilion in last week's hot air.

Verlander prevented more damage when Turner fouled out and the right-hander fanned Bellinger, who struck out four times for the second time in the Series.

Springer homered for the third straight game and fourth time in the Series, one shy of the record set by Reggie Jackson in 1977 and matched by Utley in 2009.

Brian McCann singled leading off the fifth and Gonzalez doubled past Turner and down the left-field line. Hill struck out Josh Reddick and Verlander, and Springer was intentionally walked to load the bases.

Morrow relieved as the crowd booed manager Dave Roberts' decision, and Hill slapped at four cups of liquid in the dugout, sending them spraying against the wall.

"With Verlander on the mound, that was going to be the game," Roberts said.

Appearing in his sixth straight Series game, Morrow got Bregman to ground to shortstop on his second pitch.

Watson walked Reddick leading off the seventh, Evan Gattis pinch hit for Verlander and Maeda relieved. Gattis bounced to shortstop, just beating Utley's throw from second to avoid a double play. Springer reached on an infield single, and Bregman's fly to deep center allowed pinch-runner Derek Fisher to tag up and advance to third, bringing up Altuve.

Walking down the dugout steps after his groundout, Altuve slammed his helmet.

Afterward, attention quickly turned to Wednesday.

"I think it seems fitting," Roberts said. "These two teams mirror one another."

Pederson sat in the interview room with his older brother, Champ, who has Down Syndrome.

"I have a feeling that everything is possible," Champ said. "I'm not going to say they have it, but I'm just going to say they will find a way."

More AP baseball: <https://apnews.com/tag/MLBbaseball>

Former Trump adviser's guilty plea could rattle White House

By ERIC TUCKER and CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump dismissed George Papadopoulos as a “liar” and a mere campaign volunteer, but newly unsealed court papers outline the former adviser’s frequent contacts with senior officials and with foreign nationals who promised access to the highest levels of the Russian government.

They also hint at more headaches for the White House and former campaign officials. Papadopoulos is now cooperating with special counsel Robert Mueller as he investigates possible coordination between Russia and Trump’s 2016 White House campaign.

Records made public Monday in Papadopoulos’ case list a gaggle of people who were in touch with him during the campaign but only with such identifiers as “Campaign Supervisor,” “Senior Policy Advisor” and “High-Ranking Campaign Official.” Two of the unnamed campaign officials referenced are in fact former campaign chairman Paul Manafort and his business associate Rick Gates. Both were charged with financial crimes in an indictment unsealed Monday.

The conversations described in charging documents reflect Papadopoulos’ efforts to arrange meetings between Trump aides and Russian government intermediaries and show how he learned the Russians had “dirt” on Hillary Clinton in the form of “thousands of emails.”

Though the contacts may not by themselves have been illegal, the oblique but telling references to unnamed people — including “Professor” and “Female Russian National” — make clear that Mueller’s team has identified multiple people who had knowledge of back-and-forth outreach efforts between Russians and associates of the Trump election effort.

It’s a reality that challenges the administration’s portrait of Papadopoulos as a back-bench operator within the campaign, an argument repeated Tuesday by White House press secretary Sarah Sanders, who dismissed him as a “volunteer” with a minimal role.

In charging the 30-year-old Papadopoulos with lying to the FBI, Mueller’s team is warning of a similar fate for anyone whose statements deviate from the facts.

“I think everyone to whom Mueller and his team wanted to send a message heard loud and clear the message,” said Jacob Frenkel, a Washington defense lawyer.

The White House had braced over the weekend for an indictment of Manafort and for allegations of financial misconduct that it could dismiss as unrelated to the campaign or administration. Then came the unsealing of Papadopoulos’ guilty plea and an accompanying statement of facts that detailed his efforts to set up a meeting between Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, and his cooperation with prosecutors since his arrest at an airport last summer.

The extent of the contacts is substantial. During a six-month period ending Aug. 15, Papadopoulos met, telephoned, Skyped or emailed his three foreign contacts or five different Trump campaign officials a total of 29 times. He also traveled twice to London and once to Italy. Another trip to Moscow was canceled.

There are clear indications prosecutors used Papadopoulos to gather more information about the campaign as they probe possible criminal activity.

He was arrested in July, but the case was not unsealed until Monday, giving prosecutors weeks to debrief him for information and use him to get deeper into the campaign. He was initially arrested on false statements and obstruction of justice allegations, but as part of a plea deal, pleaded guilty only to lying to the FBI, a possible token of leniency in exchange for further cooperation.

In court papers, prosecutors have said prematurely making the case public would hurt his ability to be a “proactive cooperator,” which legal experts say could include surreptitious techniques like wearing a microphone to record conversations.

“I would infer from that that he was working proactively on behalf of the prosecutors, which would mean going out and obtaining evidence,” said former Justice Department prosecutor Peter Zeidenberg.

Though the campaign officials and other people referenced in the complaint are not named, it’s nonetheless possible to ferret out the identities of several.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 39 of 54

For instance, Joseph Mifsud is the "London professor" who figures prominently in the case, according to a comparison of court papers and emails obtained by The Associated Press. Mifsud confirmed to The Telegraph newspaper that he is the professor mentioned as a would-be link between the Trump campaign and Russia.

In court papers, Mifsud is described only as a "London professor" who met repeatedly with Papadopoulos and offered to set up meetings with Russian officials who could provide "thousands of emails" with damaging information about Clinton.

The professor is also credited in the document with introducing Papadopoulos to a woman referred to as a "female Russian national" who served as a potential link to the Russian government. Papadopoulos described her incorrectly in emails to Trump campaign officials as Putin's niece. She has not yet been identified publicly.

Mifsud, a vocal Putin backer, told the newspaper the FBI case lacks credibility and that he did not tell anyone he could produce emails that would weaken the Clinton campaign.

Papadopoulos' place on the Trump campaign was formalized in March when Trump adviser Sam Clovis released the names of eight foreign policy advisers amid public pressure on Trump to disclose his foreign policy team.

A lawyer representing Clovis confirmed in a statement that he was the person, identified as the "Campaign Supervisor" in court papers, who brought Papadopoulos onto an advisory committee on national security. In court papers, the unnamed supervisor receives some of Papadopoulos' email exchanges about his attempts to line up a meeting with the Russians, appearing to encourage the effort at one point by responding "Great work." He also later encouraged Papadopoulos to travel to Russia on his own.

The lawyer's statement said Clovis opposed any trip to Russia for Trump or his campaign staff but noted that Clovis may not have made his opposition known when "a volunteer made suggestions on a foreign policy matter."

The foreign policy advisory council on which Papadopoulos sat met on a monthly basis throughout the spring and summer for a total of about six times, according to an official involved with the group. Papadopoulos, who was based in London at the time, did not attend all of the meetings, but he did attend a dinner meeting of the advisers in late June at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington with Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Trump released a photo of the meeting on social media.

Papadopoulos, who had no formal responsibilities, communicated most with Clovis and Manafort, according to an official involved with the group who was unauthorized to disclose internal campaign activities. Papadopoulos angered some on the foreign policy team in early May by urging former British Prime Minister David Cameron to apologize after calling Trump "divisive, stupid and wrong."

Associated Press writers Steve Peoples in Washington and Greg Katz in London contributed to this report.

Bergdahl defense nears end of its sentencing arguments

By JONATHAN DREW, Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP) — Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl's attorneys are nearing the end of their defense for the soldier who pleaded guilty to endangering his comrades by walking away from his remote post in Afghanistan in 2009.

So far, Bergdahl has testified, apologizing to the troops that were wounded in the search for him. And two military agents who debriefed Bergdahl testified Tuesday about how much valuable intelligence he provided when he was returned in a prisoner swap.

Prosecutors presented evidence that the wounds to the troops who searched for him merit stiff punishment. Bergdahl faces up to life in prison. The military judge hearing the case has wide discretion on his punishment because Bergdahl didn't strike a plea agreement with prosecutors when he admitted to desertion and misbehavior before the enemy.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 40 of 54

The defense plans to call three more witnesses Wednesday. Closing arguments are expected later this week.

The two debriefing specialists said Bergdahl helped the military better understand insurgents and how they imprison hostages.

Amber Dach, who spent 16 years in military intelligence, was the primary analyst assigned to Bergdahl's case for the five years after he disappeared. She described how eager he was to help intelligence officials at a hospital in Germany days after he was returned to U.S. authorities.

"He was very motivated to just download all of the details that he recalled," she testified. "It was a gold mine. It really reshaped the way we did intel collection in the area."

An official from the military agency that helps reintegrate former captives and develops survival training for service members testified that information Bergdahl provided him was invaluable.

Terrence Russell developed a 1,200-page transcript from debriefing Bergdahl that was turned into a database. The information produced reports on tactics used by insurgents and hostage-takers in the region that are still used by the military.

Russell said he'd like to learn even more from Bergdahl but the soldier's legal case has impeded that.

"Can you give him to me tomorrow? I need him. I need him now," he said to a defense attorney. "The fact that I can't get that information is wrong. I need that."

He said he'd like to add Bergdahl to a roster of about 30 service members taken captive in recent conflicts dating to the Gulf War who can provide videos or lectures for military survival training.

He also reaffirmed his previous statements that Bergdahl's captivity was worse than any American prisoner of war has experienced since the Vietnam era.

On Monday, Bergdahl began the defense's sentencing presentation to apologize to those wounded searching for him. He also described the brutal conditions he faced, including beatings with copper wire and unending bouts of gastrointestinal problems brought on by squalid conditions. He said he was kept in a cage for four out of the five years in captivity after several escape attempts. He said his muscles became so weak he could barely stand or walk.

Russell, who's debriefed more than 100 former hostages and prisoners of war, said Bergdahl's time in the cage was damaging psychologically because he was kept in isolation nearly the entire time.

"They simply shut the door. Long-term isolation. Psychological abuse," he said. "It was extreme neglect. They just let him nearly rot inside that cage for four years."

The 31-year-old soldier from Hailey, Idaho, was brought home by President Barack Obama in 2014 in a swap for five Taliban prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. Obama said at the time the U.S. does not leave its service members on the battlefield. Republicans roundly criticized Obama, and Donald Trump went further while campaigning for president, repeatedly calling Bergdahl a "dirty, rotten traitor" who deserved to be executed by firing squad or thrown out of a plane without a parachute.

Follow Drew at www.twitter.com/jonldrew

AP NewsBreak: Gov't won't pursue talking car mandate

By JOAN LOWY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration has quietly set aside plans to require new cars to be able to wirelessly talk to each other, auto industry officials said, jeopardizing one of the most promising technologies for preventing traffic deaths.

The Obama administration proposed last December that all new cars and light trucks come equipped with technology known as vehicle-to-vehicle communications, or V2V. It would enable vehicles to transmit their location, speed, direction and other information 10 times per second. That lets cars detect, for example, when another vehicle is about to run a red light or coming around a blind turn in time to prevent a crash.

The administration has decided not to pursue a final V2V mandate, said two auto industry officials who have spoken with White House and Transportation Department officials and two others whose organiza-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 41 of 54

tions have spoken to the administration. The industry officials spoke on condition of anonymity so as not to jeopardize their relations with the administration.

The White House and the Department of Transportation declined to comment, but the proposal has been dropped from the White House Office of Management and Budget's list of regulations actively under consideration and instead has been relegated to its long-term agenda.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which is part of the Transportation Department, said in a statement that it is still reviewing more than 460 comments on the proposed mandate before deciding its next step and that no final decision has been made. Industry officials said decisions on the matter are being made at higher levels of the administration.

Administration officials indicated their decision was based on several factors, including general wariness of imposing costly mandates on industry, even though most automakers support requiring V2V, industry officials said. President Donald Trump has made reducing government regulations, which he sees as a drain on the economy, a guiding principle of his administration.

The Transportation Department estimates the technology has the potential to prevent or reduce the severity of up to 80 percent of collisions that don't involve alcohol or drugs. V2V was also expected to provide an extra layer of safety for self-driving cars since it can detect even vehicles hidden by buildings or beyond the range of the sensors and cameras of autonomous vehicles. And it was expected to ease traffic congestion since vehicles could communicate with traffic signals, turning them green to prevent needless waiting, save fuel and reduce emissions.

V2V is one of the "most important tools" for reducing traffic fatalities, but the Trump administration "is locking it in the trunk if they're not going to put out the mandate," said Deborah Hersman, president of the National Safety Council, a congressionally chartered advocacy group. "The only way you're going to get it adopted and deployed in a widespread manner is by having a mandate."

The Obama administration shares some of the blame because it waited years to propose the mandate, she said.

Traffic fatalities have surged over the past two years to 37,461 deaths in 2016, up nearly 5,000 deaths from 2014.

Another reason administration officials are allowing the V2V proposal to languish is strong opposition from the cable and tech industries, auto industry officials said.

The government set aside the 5.9 GHz spectrum band for transportation technologies in 1999. It went unused while the government and automakers spent over a decade and more than \$1 billion developing and testing V2V.

Spectrum is finite and in short supply. Cable and tech companies have been seeking permission to use the 5.9 GHz spectrum for additional wireless bandwidth. Automakers say they need the entire 5.9 GHz spectrum for V2V and other safety uses.

The Federal Communications Commission has been conducting tests to see if the spectrum can be shared without interfering with the safety signals. The first test results are expected to be released soon.

Automakers wanted the mandate partly because it would establish V2V protocols to ensure that Fords could talk to Toyotas which could talk to Volkswagens, and so on.

The mandate was also intended to get the technology onto roads faster. It called for half of new vehicles to have V2V within two years after a final rule was issued, and all new vehicles within four years. The more vehicles equipped with V2V, the more collisions that could be avoided. It would still take many years before there were enough vehicles with V2V to reap the technology's full promise. That might be accelerated by after-market devices that would bring V2V to older vehicles.

Automakers can put V2V in vehicles without a mandate. General Motors has put the technology in its Cadillac CT6 sedans. Toyota has put V2V in vehicles in Japan and Volkswagen plans to put it in cars in Europe starting in 2019. But it will be more difficult for automakers to protect the 5.9 GHz spectrum and deployment will be far slower without a mandate, industry officials said.

Some European manufacturers say they want V2V, but it might be better to wait super-fast 5G cellular

technology to achieve it instead of currently available technology. But 5G is still being developed. Years of testing would be required after it's ready before it could go into cars.

"The longer we wait, the more people die," said Kirk Steudle, director of the Michigan Department of Transportation. "We need to move forward with it."

Follow Joan Lowy on Twitter at http://www.twitter.com/AP_Joan_Lowy

Trump chooses visit to military base over DMZ **By JILL COLVIN and MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — It has become something of a ritual for U.S. presidents trying to demonstrate their resolve against North Korea's ever-escalating aggression.

Beginning with Dwight Eisenhower's visit to the front lines of wartime Korea, U.S. leaders have traveled to the barbed and mined demilitarized zone dividing the Korean Peninsula, peering across the barren north through binoculars, hearing broadcast propaganda, and reaffirming their commitment to standing with the South.

After leaving the possibility of the visit dangling, the White House announced definitively Tuesday that President Donald Trump would not be following in their footsteps and will be forgoing a visit to the DMZ as he sets out on his maiden Asia trip.

A senior administration official told reporters during a White House briefing that Trump will instead be visiting Camp Humphreys, a military base about 40 miles south of Seoul, to highlight the U.S.-South Korean partnership and South Korea's burden-sharing. His tight schedule, officials said, wouldn't accommodate both stops.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details ahead of the trip, noted that several Trump administration officials, including Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Vice President Mike Pence, had already made the trip to the border that has separated the North and South for 64 years.

Trump's trip comes amid escalating tensions and rhetoric with North Korea, which has continued to pursue its missile and nuclear programs and ramped up its missile testing. In a recent speech at the United Nations, Trump said he would "totally destroy" the nation, if necessary. He has also derided North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as "little Rocket Man." Kim has returned the favor, calling Trump a "mentally deranged U.S. dotard."

The White House has played down the notion that its hesitation to send Trump to the DMZ stemmed from security concerns. But two people familiar with the administration's thinking said that security issues had been discussed. The Secret Service, which advises on the president's itinerary, did not immediately respond to a request for comment on its recommendations.

U.S. and South Korean officials also argued that a visit to Camp Humphreys, also known as United States Army Garrison-Humphreys, at the invitation of South Korean President Moon Jae-in, serves as a fitting symbol of the countries' ties and South Korea's commitment to contributing to its own defense — a theme the president often pressed during his campaign.

Some experts on the region also breathed a sigh of relief, arguing the trip could have further inflamed tensions between Trump and Kim.

"I would probably be begging him not to (go). No Secret Service likes to," said Dean Cheng, a China expert with the Heritage Foundation. He said that, given the recent exchange of words between Kim and Trump, a visit was "probably more fraught with risk than your average presidential visit."

Others pointed to the symbolism of the president's visit to the base.

"To me it was a no-brainer that he should go to Humphreys, this new base that they've poured all this money into," said Jim Schoff, a former Pentagon adviser on East Asia policy and now senior fellow in the Asia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Schoff said the base was "perfect" for Trump: "It's a big, massive real estate project and it's South

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 43 of 54

Korean-funded. It's the big story of the alliance in recent times and it's a great opportunity to highlight that," he said.

Troy Stangarone, a senior director at the Korea Economic Institute in Washington, agreed that, with the move of United States Forces Korea to Camp Humphreys almost complete, "a visit there sends a stronger signal about U.S. commitment to defend South Korea." A trip to the DMZ, he said, "could instead be misinterpreted and raise tensions on the Korean peninsula."

Visiting the wooded, craggy terrain inside the DMZ is like going back in time to 1953. In July of that year, the Korean War armistice agreement was signed at Panmunjom, the so-called "truce village" bisected by a marker that is the official dividing line between North and South Korea. This is the only area inside the DMZ where soldiers of North and South can stand nose to nose.

In 1983, Ronald Reagan became first U.S. president to enter the DMZ — with South Korean artillery gunners standing poised to fire if necessary to protect him — and every president, barring one, has made the trip since. Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, visited during a 2012 trip to Seoul and told troops stationed at the border that "the contrast between South Korea and North Korea could not be clearer, could not be starker, both in terms of freedom but also in terms of prosperity."

In 1993, Bill Clinton stood closer to North Korean territory than any Western leader, walking out on the "Bridge of No Return" and looking through binoculars at North Koreans about 50 yards away.

He later recalled seeing young North Korean soldiers looking back at him and thinking: "I wish you could walk over this bridge and I hope it won't be long until you can, until we put down the threat of nuclear war and open up the hand of friendship."

Pence said his visit earlier this year let North Koreans "see our resolve in my face."

But Evans Revere, a former senior State Department official for East Asia, said that he was disappointed by Trump's decision. He said a visit would have helped the president understand the human toll of any potential military action and see for himself just how close Seoul is to the border.

"By not visiting the DMZ, President Trump can only remind our allies, once again, that he does not view our alliance commitments in the same way as did every one of his predecessors," he said.

Associated Press National Security Writer Robert Burns contributed to this report.

Women rescued by Navy defend their account of ordeal at sea

By CALEB JONES, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Two women from Hawaii who were rescued after being lost at sea defended their account of the ordeal, insisting that a storm was whipping up 30-foot waves and near hurricane-force winds on the night they set sail, despite records that show no severe weather in the area at the time.

The Coast Guard is reviewing records from the days after Jennifer Appel and Tasha Fuiava put to sea in a 50-foot sailboat, but NASA satellite images for the days around their departure show no organized storms in the region where they planned to travel.

There was a tropical cyclone, but it was near Fiji, thousands of miles west of Hawaii. Localized squalls are known to pop up, but a storm lasting three days would have been visible on satellite and would have elicited mass warnings to the public to brace for the weather.

"We got into a Force 11 storm, and it lasted for two nights and three days," Appel said Tuesday.

Coast Guard officials told The Associated Press on Monday that the two women had an emergency beacon but never turned it on because they did not fear for their lives. If they had, rescue would have been headed their way in a matter of minutes.

The woman "stated they never felt like they were truly in distress, like in a 24-hour period they were going to die," Coast Guard spokeswoman Petty Officer 2nd Class Tara Molle said Monday.

The women said Tuesday that they did not use the beacon because they never felt they were in immediate danger, yet they have been quoted as saying they did not think they would survive another day, and that they were fearful during a dramatic tiger shark attack that lasted for six hours. Furthermore, the pair

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 44 of 54

said they had been flagging vessels and sending distress signals for at least 98 days.

"We knew we weren't going to make it," Appel said. "So that's when we started making distress calls."

The Coast Guard outlined other inconsistencies, most notably on the timing of events.

Appel's mother, Joyce, told the AP that she called the Coast Guard to report her daughter missing a week and a half after they departed for what they believed would be an 18-day trip to Tahiti.

However, the Coast Guard never got a call from the elder Appel. They received a call from a "family friend" they identified as a male on May 19, still several days before the women expected to arrive.

The women said they filed a float plan listing their course and other details with some friends and relatives. However, in an interview with the Coast Guard, the women said they had filed no float plan.

They also defended their claims that their boat would not fit into harbors on some Hawaiian islands, places where much larger vessels come and go regularly.

Their description of 20- to 30-foot tiger sharks ramming their boat in a coordinated attack for more than six hours could simply be misperception, but scientists who study sharks say that behavior has never been recorded and that tiger sharks grow to only about 17 feet in length.

University of Hawaii professor and veteran shark researcher Kim Holland has never heard of any kind of shark repeatedly attacking a boat hull throughout a night. He also said tiger sharks never jump out of the water and do not make coordinated attacks.

Sometimes sharks will congregate around a food source like a whale carcass, but Holland said that was unlikely in this case "if there's nothing there to attract the animals. I mean this is just an inert boat hull."

As time goes on, new details emerge in the women's account, and other details change. They have now reported making contact with someone at Wake Island but previously said no one responded to their calls for help.

Their account of receiving a tow from a Taiwanese fishing vessel changed as well. They originally said the crew was kind, but later said they were worried for their safety and thought that the crew might be making an attempt to harm them.

They added that the fishing boat had backed into their sailboat, causing significant damage.

"I also believe that they knew they were damaging the boat. And if we couldn't get additional help, that boat would sink, and they would get ... two girls to do whatever they wanted to," Appel said.

The captain of the fishing vessel, the Fong Chun No. 66, who identified himself as Mr. Chen in a satellite phone call from the AP, said his boat received a mayday radio call but did not understand it. They then saw someone waving a white object on a boat about a nautical mile away.

When they approached, the women asked to use the satellite phone on the fishing vessel and for a tow to Midway Island. The larger vessel towed the smaller sailboat overnight. In the morning, the women wanted to stop the towing and called for a naval vessel.

"We offered to get them on board the fishing boat and asked whether they needed water or food, but they refused," the captain said.

The fishermen left after the arrival of the U.S.S. Ashland.

Hawaii sailing experts say the trip itself was a bad idea.

Mike Michelwait, owner of the Honolulu Sailing Company, a sailing school and charter company, has sailed the route from Hawaii to Tahiti several times. He said the trip would normally take about 17 days with sailors who could stay on course.

But, Michelwait said, he would not take such a trip with any less than three experienced sailors.

"There's only two of them on board, and it's a 50-foot boat," he said. "That's a lot of boat to handle."

At some point, Appel joined the Hawai'i Actors Network, noting on the group's website that she has "been known to do almost any skydiving or motorcycle stunt — camera optional." Through the group, she found work as an extra in the former TV series "Off the Map" and the former sitcom "Cougar Town," appearing in that show in a pink bikini in the background of a season finale.

A call to the actors' network was not returned.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 45 of 54

Associated Press writers Ken Moritsugu in Naha, Japan, and Rachel D'oro and Mark Thiessen in Anchorage, Alaska, contributed to this report.

New criminal probe for Weinstein as harassment scandal grows

By LYNN ELBER and MARK KENNEDY, AP Entertainment Writers

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood's widening sexual harassment crisis saw new allegations leveled against Kevin Spacey and Jeremy Piven, while police in Beverly Hills announced they have launched criminal investigations over complaints received about Harvey Weinstein and writer-director James Toback.

The Beverly Hills Police Department did not specify the nature of the assault complaints, but Tuesday's announcement comes less than a month after numerous women accused Weinstein of sexually harassing them at hotels in the city in an expose by the New York Times.

Weinstein has denied engaging in any non-consensual sexual contact. His representative Sallie Hofmeister had no immediate comment on the Beverly Hills investigation. The department said late Tuesday that it was investigating Weinstein and Toback after receiving "multiple complaints," although the department did not specify the nature of the complaints.

Dozens of women, including actresses Selma Blair and Rachel McAdams, have alleged that Toback sexually harassed or assaulted them.

Toback has denied the allegations. He does not have a representative to field inquiries about the criminal investigation.

Allegations against Weinstein have led to a cascade of harassment allegations against other entertainment industry figures, with Spacey becoming the latest big name to draw scrutiny for alleged conduct decades ago.

Netflix suspended production on its final season of "House of Cards" on Tuesday amid allegations star Spacey made a sexual advance on actor Anthony Rapp in 1986 when he was 14.

On Monday, Netflix said it would end "House of Cards" after its upcoming sixth and final season, although the streaming network said the decision was made before Sunday's BuzzFeed News report on Rapp's allegations.

Spacey responded by saying he doesn't remember the alleged encounter but if he acted the way Rapp alleges, "I owe him the sincerest apology for what would have been deeply inappropriate drunken behavior." He also spoke publicly for the first time about being gay, which drew backlash from some observers as an attempt at deflection.

The decision to pause production Tuesday came before a second actor leveled allegations against Spacey.

Mexican actor Roberto Cavazos wrote on his Facebook page that he encountered Spacey at the bar of London's Old Vic Theatre, where Spacey was artistic director from 2004-15, and the actor tried to fondle him against his will.

"It was more common for this guy, when he was in the bar of his theater, grabbing whoever caught his attention," Cavazos wrote. "I didn't stand for it, but I know some people who were afraid to stop it."

Cavazos declined an interview request. There was no immediate reply to a request for comment from representatives for Spacey.

In a statement Tuesday, the theater expressed "deep dismay" at the allegations and said "inappropriate behavior by anyone working at The Old Vic is completely unacceptable."

In recent weeks, Hollywood has reacted swiftly to allegations of sexual harassment and assault: Weinstein was fired from the company he founded within days after initial reports of sexual harassment were published in The New York Times earlier this month.

Netflix's actions involving "House of Cards" are rare in an industry that puts commerce first.

Shows are infrequently derailed by concerns other than their ratings performance, said TV historian and former network executive Tim Brooks.

"It usually depends on how popular the show is, not to put too fine a point on it," Brooks said Tuesday. He added that an actor's popularity with his cast mates can also determine his fate.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 46 of 54

"If they like him, if they get along with him, it's easy enough to say, 'If I don't get my career ruined in this, I'll stick with him,'" he said.

Netflix has not commented on plans for a Gore Vidal biopic starring Spacey that is currently in production. Also Tuesday, CBS said it is "looking into" accusations by actress and reality star Ariane Bellamar that Emmy-winning "Entourage" star Piven groped her on two occasions.

On her Twitter account Monday, Bellamar alleged that one encounter took place in Piven's trailer on HBO's "Entourage" set and the other occurred at the Playboy Mansion.

Piven, who stars in the new CBS series "Wisdom of the Crowd," said in a statement that he "unequivocally" denies the "appalling allegations being peddled about me."

"It did not happen. It takes a great deal of courage for victims to come forward with their histories, and my hope is that the allegations about me that didn't happen, do not detract from stories that should be heard," he said.

In a Monday interview with The Associated Press, Piven said he was glad people had come forward with allegations against Weinstein and that he had never been in that situation.

HBO, which aired the 2004-11 series, said in a statement that it was unaware of Bellamar's allegations until they were reported by media.

"Everyone at HBO and our productions is aware that zero tolerance for sexual harassment is our policy. Anyone experiencing an unsafe working environment has several avenues for making complaints that we take very seriously," the channel said.

Kennedy reported from New York. AP Writer John Carucci in New York and Berenice Bautista in Mexico City contributed to this report.

Halloween parade marches on amid heavy security after attack

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER** and **JENNIFER PELTZ**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City's always-surreal Halloween parade marched on Tuesday evening under the shadow of real fear, hours after a truck attack killed eight people on a busy city bike path in what authorities called an act of terror.

Security was heavy as the Greenwich Village parade stepped off Tuesday about a mile (1.6 kilometers) away and four hours after the truck mowed down pedestrians and cyclists along the bike path near the World Trade Center memorial. But the raucous spectacle rolled along with its floats, bands, anything-goes sensibility and thousands of spectators.

"I'm not going to let it scare me," Cathryn Strobl, a 23-year-old New Yorker, said as she waited for the parade to start in her Buffy the Vampire Slayer costume. "You can't let it stop you from living your life."

Police said they added extra officers, heavy weapons teams and sand trucks as protective blockers along the parade route. But officials emphasized that New Yorkers should feel safe.

Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo visited the route as the parade started, and Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio assured residents and visitors earlier that police were out in force.

"We are going to go about our business in the city, and we are not going to be deterred," de Blasio said.

Still, the mayor urged New Yorkers to be vigilant: "Tell an officer immediately if you see anything unusual, anything that worries you."

The parade, which is open to anyone wearing a costume, began in 1973 with a puppeteer marching with his family and grew into a televised extravaganza.

Ghosts, goblins, zombies, superheroes, men on stilts, a bunch of human bumblebees and a float of topless people were among those making their way up Sixth Avenue as spectators bobbed to drumming and Caribbean music.

Still, the crowds seemed thinner than usual to Tamia Gholston. As for why: "the terrorist attack, maybe," said the New Yorker, who was dressed as Batgirl.

Em Weiss was in town from Seattle on business when her phone started buzzing Tuesday with worried

people trying to reach her after hearing about the attack. Still, she donned a cat-ear headband, drew whiskers on her face and came out to the parade.

"Even though we're shaking, we're still strong. ... We're not living in fear," said Weiss, 28, who said the police presence kept her from feeling too nervous.

"It sends a message terrorism doesn't win."

Mexico's Day of the Dead mourns quake victims

By MARIA VERZA, Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's traditional Day of the Dead is opening with a sadder tone than usual Wednesday.

People in Mexico City and nearby states are marking this year's holiday by remembering the 369 people killed in the Sept. 19 earthquake, 228 of them in the capital, where 38 buildings collapsed.

Mexico's traditional view of the dead is not ghoulish or frightful — rather they are seen as the "dear departed," people who remain close even after death. On the Nov. 1-2 holiday, Mexicans set up altars with photographs of the dead and plates of their favorite foods in their homes. They gather at their loved ones' gravesides to drink, sing and talk to the dead.

But this time many of the dead departed so recently that the grief is still fresh.

Nayeli Flores struggled to bring up her two children, working as a legal aide and studying law, so she never had time or money to set up an elaborate Day of the Dead altar as her son, Julian, wanted to do. This year Flores will fulfill his wish for an altar — dedicated to the 11-year-old boy and his 6-year-old sister, Ximena, who died when the quake collapsed their apartment building into a pile of rubble on the city's south side. The two kids had stayed home from school that day while their mom was working.

"My son always complained because we didn't put up an altar," Flores said between sobs. "So this year I am going to do it, in his memory."

Altars are always personalized, with a photo of the dead and candles. Offerings for adults often include their favorite food, drink and even cigarettes. For kids, it is the same, only with candy or toys.

"One of Julian's friends brought me a bag of candy, as a donation for earthquake victims," said Flores, who has kept herself busy since the quake by distributing donated aid. "But I am going to take a few for the altar" for Julian.

Flores wants to make sure there are stuffed animals on the altar, too. "They used to love them; they would fight over them," she remembered.

Many of the residents of the 1960s-era apartment complex Flores called home are still living in tents beside buildings that survived. Some of the structures can be repaired, but others will have to be torn down.

Seven other people died along with Flores' kids in the building that fell. Survivors are erecting a big altar honoring the nine. Yet another altar commemorates all the quake's victims.

"This is going to be difficult, because it is all very recent, but in the end we are honoring their memories," said Carlos Luz, one of Flores' neighbors. "It means a lot to the people who lost family members."

There are already impromptu memorials at the collapse site: floral wreaths, balloons and candles, and painted hands on the plywood wall around the collapse site, which is also decorated with photos of the victims.

The quake hit particularly hard in the string of ancient villages on Mexico City's southern outskirts where people had kept up particularly colorful and authentic Day of the Dead celebrations. Several people were killed, the local parish church was damaged and many of single-family homes made of adobe or brick collapsed.

"Everyone is very sad, their lives have been destroyed," said Rev. Francisco Efren Castellanos, the parish priest in San Gregorio.

There is no money for the elaborate offerings of food, drink, flowers and candles that people normally make. Still, there will be offerings, no matter how simple.

"This year there is a sense of determination, even if it is just beans and tortillas," said Castellanos.

Drought may have aided storm that walloped Maine, Northeast

By **PATRICK WHITTLE, Associated Press**

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — Drought conditions across much of Maine may have contributed to the large numbers of trees that toppled during a storm that walloped the Northeast this week, officials said.

The storm cut power to nearly 1.5 million homes and businesses in the region at its peak. It left more Mainers in the dark than even the infamous 1998 ice storm, but the long-term effects will likely be much different.

Because of dry conditions, the trees' roots weren't healthy, and ground conditions along with foliage that remained on the trees made them more susceptible to wind, said Peter Rogers, acting director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency.

Virtually all of New England is either experiencing a moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The driest conditions are along the coast, where the wind gusts were the strongest.

"It was kind of a perfect storm," Rogers said.

Republican Maine Gov. Paul LePage will be touring storm-damaged areas on Wednesday. He had declared a state of emergency on Monday, the day the storm peaked during the early morning hours.

Maine's two major utilities were still reporting more than 200,000 customers without power early Wednesday morning. But they said favorable weather and extra crews will allow them to complete the task of restoring power this weekend.

Other states in the Northeast are also still cleaning up from the storm.

Chris Gamache, chief of the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails, said all-terrain vehicle trails in the state took "a direct hit." Democratic Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo said utility National Grid was probably "caught a little flat-footed" by an unexpectedly strong storm.

The scope of the damage in Maine made comparisons to the 1998 ice storm inevitable. According to the Maine Emergency Management Agency, that storm resulted in six deaths and caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage to public utilities, private property and the forest industry. All 16 Maine counties were declared federal disaster areas.

Tree limbs fell from the weight of the ice during that storm, while this storm took down entire trees, said Tom Hawley of the National Weather Service.

Many people affected by that disaster also were affected by this week's storm.

Roger Pomerleau turned his business into a makeshift shelter after the ice storm, allowing employees of his home furnishings store to use the washing machines and refrigerators while their homes were without power.

This time around, the Hallowell, Maine, resident is the one waiting for the power to come back on. But he and others who suffered through both storms said this one will likely be less of an ordeal.

"The temperature is in our favor right now. Those were cold temperatures back then," Pomerleau said. "Freezing temperatures. Sump pumps weren't working, cellars were filling up with water. Very different now."

Associated Press writers David Sharp in Portland, Maine, Marina Villeneuve in Augusta, Maine, and Kathy McCormack in Concord, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

New allegations leveled against actors Spacey, Piven

By **LYNN ELBER and MARK KENNEDY, AP Entertainment Writers**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood's widening sexual harassment crisis brought forth a second actor's allegation against Kevin Spacey on Tuesday, halted production on his Netflix series "House of Cards" and prompted CBS to check into an actress' claim she was groped by Jeremy Piven.

Mexican actor Robert Cavazos wrote on his Facebook page that he encountered Spacey at the bar of

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 49 of 54

London's Old Vic Theatre, where Spacey was artistic director, and the actor tried to fondle him against his will.

"It was more common for this guy, when he was in the bar of his theater, grabbing whoever caught his attention," Cavazos wrote. "I didn't stand for it, but I know some people who were afraid to stop it."

Cavazos declined an interview request. There was no immediate reply to a request for comment from representatives for Spacey, who was artistic director from 2004-15.

In a statement Tuesday, the theater expressed "deep dismay" at the allegations and said "inappropriate behavior by anyone working at The Old Vic is completely unacceptable."

In recent days, Hollywood has reacted swiftly to allegations of sexual harassment and assault: Harvey Weinstein was fired from the company he founded within days after initial reports of sexual harassment were published in The New York Times earlier this month.

Weinstein has denied engaging in any non-consensual sexual contact.

Dozens of women, including actresses Selma Blair and Rachel McAdams, have alleged that writer and director James Toback sexually harassed or assaulted them.

Toback has denied the allegations.

On Tuesday, however, the Beverly Hills Police Department said it was investigating both men after receiving "multiple complaints," although the department did not specify the nature of the complaints.

On Monday, Netflix said it would end "House of Cards" after its upcoming sixth and final season, although the streaming network said the decision was made before the BuzzFeed News report on Spacey last weekend. The network has not commented on plans for a Gore Vidal biopic starring Spacey that is currently in production.

The pause in production Tuesday shadows the fate of the last season.

Also Tuesday, CBS said it is "looking into" a claim by actress and reality star Ariane Bellamar that Emmy-winning "Entourage" star Piven groped her on two occasions.

On her Twitter account Monday, Bellamar alleged that one encounter took place in Piven's trailer on HBO's "Entourage" set and the other occurred at the Playboy Mansion.

Piven, who stars in the new CBS series "Wisdom of the Crowd," said in a statement that he "unequivocally" denies the "appalling allegations being peddled about me."

"It did not happen. It takes a great deal of courage for victims to come forward with their histories, and my hope is that the allegations about me that didn't happen, do not detract from stories that should be heard," he said.

In a Monday interview with The Associated Press, Piven said he was glad people had come forward with allegations against Harvey Weinstein and that he had never been in that situation.

HBO, which aired the 2004-11 series, said in a statement that it was unaware of Bellamar's allegations until they were reported by media.

"Everyone at HBO and our productions is aware that zero tolerance for sexual harassment is our policy. Anyone experiencing an unsafe working environment has several avenues for making complaints that we take very seriously," the channel said.

Bellarmer's credits include "Suicide Squad" and "The Hangover Part III" and the reality series "Beverly Hills Nannies."

Netflix's actions involving "House of Cards" are rare in an industry that puts commerce first.

Shows are infrequently derailed by concerns other than their ratings performance, said TV historian and former network executive Tim Brooks.

"It usually depends on how popular the show is, not to put too fine a point on it," Brooks said Tuesday.

The widespread tumult has prompted unusual actions, such as Weinstein being booted from industry organizations, and created a climate of uncertainty. But a look back shows that Hollywood has dealt with disruption before, with even beloved shows and actors fighting to keep their balance amid controversy.

During the 1950s "red scare," Brooks said, "I Love Lucy" star Lucille Ball was accused of being a communist sympathizer. The sitcom co-starred her husband, Desi Arnaz, who took action.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 50 of 54

"Desi came out before a studio taping and said, 'The only thing red about Lucy is her hair, and even that's not real,'" using humor to effectively defuse the situation, Brooks said. The show's No. 1 status also helped.

Popularity and audience acceptance of a star's personal issues aided "Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer" when lead actor Stacey Keach served six months in jail for a drug-related arrest in England in the mid-1980s.

The 1984-85 season was cut short but the series returned in 1986 with Keach aboard and a revised title, "The New Mike Hammer." It aired until 1987 on CBS.

"Grey's Anatomy" was swamped by controversy in late 2006 when an on-set scuffle broke out between stars Patrick Dempsey and Isaiah Washington over Washington's use of a gay slur regarding another cast member.

After Washington repeated the slur at the 2007 Golden Globes while denying he had used it, ABC rebuked him publicly, as did co-star Katherine Heigl. He was subsequently fired, and the medical drama from TV hitmaker Shonda Rhimes sailed on even as Washington blamed racism for his treatment.

Bill Cosby has felt the professional as well as legal brunt of multiple accusations of decades-old sexual offenses.

Three years ago, when multiple women accused Bill Cosby of decades-old sexual offenses, the comedian's ambitious standup comedy tour was dotted with cancellations, NBC dropped development of a new show with him and Netflix pulled the plug on a stand-up special.

An actor's popularity with his cast mates can determine his fate, Brooks said.

"If they like him, if they get along with him, it's easy enough to say, 'If I don't get my career ruined in this, I'll stick with him,'" he said.

How Spacey's cast mates are reacting to the allegations remains to be seen. Robin Wright, who stars opposite Spacey as his wife, hasn't commented publicly, but her Twitter feed includes a number of posts backing social issues including female rights and education.

Netflix and "House of Cards" producer Media Rights Capital had already decided to end the series at the end of next season, its sixth, but on Tuesday they chose to pause the production, which is filmed in Baltimore, "to give us time to review the current situation and to address any concerns of our cast and crew." Spacey was not scheduled to work that day.

The move comes after actor Anthony Rapp came forward with claims Spacey made inappropriate sexual advances toward him in 1986, when he was 14.

Spacey responded by saying he doesn't remember the alleged encounter but if he acted the way Rapp alleges, "I owe him the sincerest apology for what would have been deeply inappropriate drunken behavior." He also spoke publicly for the first time about being gay, which drew backlash from some observers as an attempt at deflection.

The fallout for Spacey also included the loss of an award he was going to get later this month by The International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. The group says "it will not honor Kevin Spacey with the 2017 International Emmy Founders Award," which is to honor "an individual who crosses cultural boundaries to touch humanity." Spacey was to get it at a gala on Nov. 20 in New York City. Past recipients include Rhimes, Steven Spielberg, and J.J. Abrams.

A release date for the final "House of Cards" episodes has yet to be announced. Netflix is developing a possible spinoff of the award-winning drama that helped put the streaming service on the TV series map.

Earlier Tuesday, British media reported that police have widened their investigation into sexual assault claims against Weinstein.

The Independent newspaper, Press Association and Sky News say London's Metropolitan Police is now investigating allegations against Weinstein by seven women over incidents that reportedly took place from the 1980s to 2015. Weinstein is also being investigated by police in New York and Los Angeles.

Kennedy reported from New York. AP Writer John Carucci in New York and Berenice Bautista in Mexico City contributed to this report.

Postal Service eyes next-day Sunday delivery for holidays

By HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As consumers demand ever-quicker and convenient package delivery, the U.S. Postal Service wants to boost its business this holiday season by offering what few e-commerce retailers can provide: cheap next-day service with packages delivered Sundays to your home.

Retail giant Walmart says it is considering the Sunday option, which could reshape weekend shopping trips to the mall.

The program, available in 20 major U.S. cities, allows consumers to place online orders with participating retailers before a cutoff time Saturday, the Postal Service said. Postal carriers pick up merchandise from local stores for delivery the following day, similar to the Sunday package deliveries it now handles almost exclusively for online leader Amazon in much of the U.S.

The Postal Service hasn't disclosed which stores may sign onto the new pilot program, launched in advance of retailers' most competitive time of the year.

"It's one of the ideas Walmart is looking at," company spokesman Ravi Jariwala told The Associated Press, citing the big-box chain's recent focus on getting goods to shoppers' front doors quickly. In recent months, Walmart has announced added shipping options to better compete with Amazon, from acquiring a same-day delivery service in New York to testing drop-offs of packages by Uber drivers and Walmart employees.

Best Buy and Target, which recently added speedier holiday shipping options, declined to comment on the program.

The next-day weekend service is part of the Postal Service's aggressive push into the parcel business at a time when its more lucrative first-class mail is declining in the digital age. With Amazon continuing to raise the bar of "free shipping" conveniences, from one- or two-day package arrivals to keyless in-home delivery via couriers, the financially beleaguered post office is billing itself as the trusted, low-cost carrier already serving every U.S. household.

The expanded Sunday delivery is aimed at consumers like Susan Dennis, 68, of Seattle. Weary of weekend trips to the mall where she often ends up stuck in traffic or waiting too long in line, the retiree says she buys online whenever possible and isn't wedded to just Amazon, if the product quality is good and the delivery "fast and inexpensive."

"More Sunday deliveries would be one of the sweetest deals ever — give me the URL and I will buy whatever," Dennis said.

Bolstered by e-commerce growth and its Sunday operations, the Postal Service will reach new highs this year in holiday package delivery, with nearly 850 million U.S. parcels delivered from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve, according to figures compiled by industry tracker ShipMatrix Inc. for the AP. That 13 percent increase from 2016 would exceed the single-digit percentage growth for UPS and FedEx, putting the post office on track to capture 45.6 percent market share in peak holiday deliveries, ShipMatrix said.

The post office's growth is due in large part to its established network in the "last mile," the final and usually most expensive stretch of a package's journey to a customer's door. UPS and FedEx already subcontract a chunk of their last-mile deliveries to the post office. Due to slower growth this holiday season, the two private carriers are expected to drop in market share, to 31.3 percent and 17.8 percent, respectively, according to the ShipMatrix analysis.

UPS, in a dig at the post office's financial woes, says it is focused on profitable growth and less concerned about expanding market share, "especially if it were to involve loss-making service expansions." FedEx said it had no comment on market share and would boost operations during the holiday season to meet customer needs.

Courier services, such as Uber and Deliv, are expected to rise, delivering about 5.2 percent of the peak holiday packages.

"Having a Postal Service driver on every street every day making deliveries, you can't really beat that," said Satish Jindel, founder and president of ShipMatrix.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 52 of 54

The holiday plans include added postal delivery on Sundays beginning Nov. 26 and delivery on Christmas Day in some cities, the postal service said. It also offers a new online tool that allows consumers to reschedule package deliveries to ensure someone is home to receive them.

The Postal Service also bucked the shipping industry by keeping package rates largely unchanged for the holidays. UPS for the first time is imposing holiday surcharges on ground shipments to homes during peak periods, such as the weeks leading into Black Friday and Christmas, while FedEx is raising rates for certain oversized packages.

"The Postal Service is well-prepared to meet our customers' needs during the holiday season, especially as demand for package deliveries continues to grow," said Megan Brennan, postmaster general.

Analysts have cheered the Postal Service's promise in the digital age, noting that there now is little talk of ending Saturday mail delivery given rising package demands. "The future of USPS probably hasn't been better in a long time," said David G. Ross, a shipping analyst at Stifel Financial Corp.

Still, its parcel success hasn't translated into profits.

An independent agency of government, the Postal Service has lost money for 10 years, primarily due to costs of its pension and health-care obligations. And while online shopping has led to years of double-digit growth in its package-delivery business, it hasn't offset declines in first-class mail. The post office is seeking flexibility to raise the price of mailing letters, and needs Congress to free it from a 2006 requirement that it pre-fund retiree health benefits.

"The future is bright for the Postal Service — if it doesn't go bankrupt first," said Ravi Shanker, an equity analyst at Morgan Stanley.

Follow Hope Yen on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/hopeyen1>

Asian shares rise on optimism on growth, Wall Street gains

By YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were higher Wednesday on optimism about global economic growth following gains on Wall Street.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 added 1.4 percent in morning trading to 22,324.64. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.5 percent to 5,938.90. South Korea's Kospi gained 1.1 percent to 2,551.12. Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose 0.7 percent to 28,429.65, while the Shanghai Composite climbed 0.1 percent to 3,397.15. Shares in Taiwan and Southeast Asia were higher.

WALL STREET: U.S. shares are getting a boost from stronger-than-expected corporate profits. The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 0.1 percent to 2,575.26, the latest tick higher in what's been a remarkably smooth ride this year. The index closed out October with its seventh straight month of gains, the longest such streak in more than four years. The Dow Jones industrial average picked up 0.1 percent to 23,377.24, and the Nasdaq composite gained 0.4 percent to 6,727.67, a record.

GOOD EARNINGS: More than half the companies in the S&P 500 have reported their results for the July-through-September quarter, and most have topped Wall Street forecasts. Several big names are still on the docket for this week, with Facebook set to report on Wednesday and Apple on Thursday.

ANALYST VIEWPOINT: "Solid U.S. markets and the ongoing rally in the oil price should deliver a firm open for stocks this morning. However, recent data has been mixed and buyer optimism may remain subdued," Ric Spooner of CMC Markets said in a commentary.

CENTRAL BANKS: Several of the world's largest central banks are meeting this week, and the Bank of Japan decided on Tuesday to keep its interest rates at ultra-low levels. The Bank of England is expected to raise interest rates on Thursday, which would be the first increase in a decade. The U.S. Federal Reserve wraps up a two-day meeting Wednesday, though most economists expect it to wait until its December gathering to raise rates for the third time this year. Meanwhile, attention is on President Donald Trump's choice for the next Fed chair.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude oil added 28 cents to \$54.66 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 23 cents to settle at \$54.38 per barrel overnight. Brent crude, the in-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 53 of 54

ternational standard, rose 30 cents to \$61.24 per barrel.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose 113.88 yen from 113.12 yen late Tuesday in Asia. The euro inched down to \$1.1635 from \$1.1638.

AP Business Writer Stan Choe in New York contributed to this report.

AP Business Writer Yuri Kageyama can be reached at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

Her work can be found at <https://www.apnews.com/search/yuri%20kageyama>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 1, the 305th day of 2017. There are 60 days left in the year. This is All Saints Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 1, 1512, Michelangelo's just-completed paintings on the ceiling of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel were publicly unveiled by the artist's patron, Pope Julius II.

On this date:

In 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was established.

In 1604, William Shakespeare's tragedy "Othello" was presented at Whitehall Palace in London.

In 1765, the Stamp Act, passed by the British Parliament, went into effect, prompting stiff resistance from American colonists.

In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln named Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan General-in-Chief of the Union armies, succeeding Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott.

In 1936, in a speech in Milan, Italy, Benito Mussolini described the alliance between his country and Nazi Germany as an "axis" running between Rome and Berlin.

In 1949, an Eastern Airlines DC-4 collided in midair with a Lockheed P-38 fighter plane near Washington National Airport, killing all 55 people aboard the DC-4 and seriously injuring the pilot of the P-38.

In 1950, two Puerto Rican nationalists tried to force their way into Blair House in Washington, D.C., in a failed attempt to assassinate President Harry S. Truman. (One of the pair was killed, along with a White House police officer.)

In 1952, the United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb, code-named "Ivy Mike," at Enewetak (en-ih-WEE'tahk) Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

In 1967, the prison drama "Cool Hand Luke," starring Paul Newman, was released by Warner Bros.-Seven Arts.

In 1979, former first lady Mamie Eisenhower died in Washington, D.C., at age 82.

In 1989, East Germany reopened its border with Czechoslovakia, prompting tens of thousands of refugees to flee to the West.

In 1991, Clarence Thomas took his place as the newest justice on the Supreme Court.

Ten years ago: Retired U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets, who piloted the B-29 bomber Enola Gay that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, died in Columbus, Ohio, at age 92. Less than a week after workers ratified a new contract, Chrysler announced 12,000 job cuts, or about 15 percent of its work force.

Five years ago: Israel, lifting a nearly 25-year veil of secrecy, acknowledged it had killed Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's deputy in a 1988 raid in Tunisia. (Khalil al-Wazir, who was better known by his nom de guerre Abu Jihad, founded Fatah, the dominant faction in the Palestine Liberation Organization.)

One year ago: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon fired the commander of the peacekeeping force in South Sudan after an independent investigation sharply criticized the military response to deadly attacks in July on a U.N. compound housing 27,000 displaced people. Most of an African-American church in Greenville, Mississippi, was destroyed by an arson fire; the building was spray-painted with the words "Vote Trump." The Chicago Cubs forced a deciding Game 7 in the World Series as they defeated the Cleveland Indians 9-3.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 01, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 115 ~ 54 of 54

Today's Birthdays: World Golf Hall of Famer Gary Player is 82. Country singer Bill Anderson is 80. Actress Barbara Bosson is 78. Actor Robert Foxworth is 76. Magazine publisher Larry Flynt is 75. Country singer-humorist Kinky Friedman is 73. Actress Jeannie Berlin is 68. Music producer David Foster is 68. Actress Belita Moreno is 68. Rhythm-and-blues musician Ronald Khalis Bell (Kool and the Gang) is 66. Country singer-songwriter-producer Keith Stegall is 63. Country singer Lyle Lovett is 60. Actress Rachel Ticotin is 59. Rock musician Eddie MacDonald (The Alarm) is 58. Apple CEO Tim Cook is 57. Actress Helene Udy is 56. Rock singer Anthony Kiedis (Red Hot Chili Peppers) is 55. Pop singer-musician Mags Furuholmen (a-ha) is 55. Rock musician Rick Allen (Def Leppard) is 54. Country singer "Big Kenny" Alphin (Big and Rich) is 54. Singer Sophie B. Hawkins is 53. Rapper Willie D (Geto Boys) is 51. Country musician Dale Wallace (Emerson Drive) is 48. Actress Toni Collette is 45. Actress-talk show host Jenny McCarthy is 45. Rock musician Andrew Gonzales is 45. Actor David Berman is 44. Actress Aishwarya Rai (ash-WAHR'-ee-ah rye) is 44. Rock singer Bo Bice is 42. Actor Matt Jones is 36. Actress Natalia Tena is 33. Actor Penn Badgley is 31. Actor Max Burkholder is 20. Actor-musician Alex Wolff is 20.

Thought for Today: "God give me strength to face a fact though it slay me." — Thomas Huxley, English biologist (1825-1895).