

Groton Daily Independent

Friday, Nov. 07, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 117 ~ 1 of 56



Miranda Hanson (8) makes the set for Nicole Marzahn (4) as Marzahn attempts a kill attempt. The Lady Tigers defeated Milbank, 3-1. The win advances the Groton Area volleyball team to the Sweet 16 next Thursday. Groton Area will play Montrose/McCook Central at a site to be determined. (Photo by

Julianna Kosel)

Service Notice: Medora Quiggle

Services for Medora Quiggle, 95, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Saturday, November 4th at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Rev. Terry Kenny will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel.

Visitation will be held one hour prior to services on Saturday.

Medora passed away October 31, 2017 at Groton Care and Rehabilitation Center.

Groton Chiropractic Clinic

Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.

1205 N 1st St., Groton 397-8204

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**

We'll have the story and more photos in tomorrow's edition of the Groton Daily Independent.

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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

“The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see.”

-Alexandra K. Trenfor



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")**

Earlier Sunsets Bring Special Risks for Motorists as Daylight Saving Time Ends

As we prepare to turn our clocks back at 2 a.m. this Sunday, AAA South Dakota reminds motorists to think ahead about the hazards associated with driving during the night and early morning hours as Daylight Saving Time ends.

"Shorter days starting next week mean many of us will be driving home from work in the dark," said Marilyn Buskohl, spokesperson for AAA South Dakota. "The risk of drowsy driving also increases with the time change."

Motorists should be prepared for sun glare during morning commutes and while driving in the late afternoon. The morning sun can cause reflections off car windows, hoods and other metallic parts of vehicles, creating serious hazards. Sun glare tends to be worse in the morning and in the late afternoon. Sometimes the glare can cause temporary blindness.

To reduce the glare, AAA South Dakota recommends wearing high-quality sunglasses and adjusting the car's sun visors as needed. Late afternoon driving also presents a similar glare problem, so drivers are advised to heed the same recommendations. Use of the night setting on rearview mirrors can reduce glare from headlights approaching from the rear.

"The end of Daylight Saving Time can be risky for pedestrians, too," said Buskohl. "Those walking and jogging need to remember that motorists may not always see them at night as well as they can in the late morning and early afternoon. Pedestrians can help by practicing safe behaviors, such as wearing light-colored clothing, and by being aware that drivers may be fighting sun glare in the early morning and late afternoon hours."

AAA's Night-Time Driving Tips

Keep headlights, tail lights, signal lights, and windows (inside and out) clean.

Make sure headlights are properly aimed. If they're not, the lights can blind other drivers and reduce our ability to see the road.

Turn your headlights on. Lights will not help you see better in early twilight, but they'll make it easier for other drivers to see you.

Reduce your speed and increase your following distances. It is more difficult to judge other vehicles' speeds and distances at night.

When following another vehicle, keep your headlights on low beams so you don't blind the driver ahead of you.

If an oncoming vehicle doesn't lower its beams from high to low, avoid glare by watching the right edge of the road and using it as a steering guide.

Do not drive while fatigued, drinking alcohol, or after taking medicines that can cause drowsiness.

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Class A Volleyball Sweet 16

[Print Sweet 16](#)

The eight (8) winners of the Sweet 16 contests will be re-seeded for the State Tournament.

#1 SF Christian

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#5 Miller

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

#16 Mobridge-Pollock

#12 RC Christian

#2 Dakota Valley

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#6 Sioux Valley

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

#15 Elk Point-Jefferson

#11 Pine Ridge

Seed School	Seed Pts.
1 SF Christian	45.967
2 Dakota Valley	45.259
3 Belle Fourche	45.129
4 Madison	44.926
5 Miller	44.593
6 Sioux Valley	44.593
7 Parker	43.379
8 McCook Central/Montrose	43.333

Seed School	Seed Pts.
9 Groton Area	43.273
10 Redfield/Doland	43.214
11 Pine Ridge	42.607
12 RC Christian	42.357
13 Dell Rapids	42.296
14 Winner	41.643
15 Elk Point-Jefferson	41.462
16 Mobridge-Pollock	38.692

#3 Belle Fourche

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

#7 Parker

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

#14 Winner

#10 Redfield/Doland

#4 Madison

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

STATE QUALIFIER

STATE QUALIFIER

McCook #8 Central/Montrose

Scores:

Date: 11/7/2017
Time:
Site:

Scores:

#13 Dell Rapids

#9 Groton Area

Criteria set for SDHSAA sponsor, foundation donor benefits

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The South Dakota High School Activities Association took another step to separate its finances from those of the SDHSAA Foundation.

On Nov. 1 the SDHSAA Board of Directors formalized a set of criteria that lists the benefits afforded the association's corporate partners and foundation donors.

SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos said the donor benefit structure had been approved by the foundation as well as by a group of school superintendents.

Designed as a fundraising tool for the association, the SDHSAA Foundation has had a rocky beginning, particularly when member schools objected to the ways that the association wanted to fund the foundation.

In the past, schools have objected to a hike in ticket prices with the extra money going to the foundation as well as the recent interest from corporate sponsors to move their funding from the association to the foundation. The corporate sponsorships help fund some on-going expenses for member schools.

Swartos said the benefit structure "helps the foundation to offer something."

Corporate partners, contributing from \$50,000 to \$125,000, receive from 12 to 20 tickets for state events, advertisements in the event programs, logos on event-related clothing, help in the trophy presentations and announcements on the public address system.

Foundation donors, ranging in contributions from \$10,000 to \$125,000, receive tickets ranging from four to 12 and program advertisements.

Swartos said it was important to fill the corporate sponsorships first.

"At the end of the day, it's all for the athletes we have, the students and our member schools," Swartos said.

SDHSAA corporate sponsors include First Premiere Bank/Premiere Bank Card, Sanford Health, Farmers Union Insurance and the S.D. National Guard. Billion Auto makes an in-kind contribution of cars for the SDHSAA staff to use.

Kelly Glodt, foundation board member and superintendent of the Pierre School District, met with the board. Glodt said that while the Foundation doesn't have much money yet, he hopes for the day when he can report to the board "here's how much money we have to give you."

The foundation board, according to Glodt, does not want to earmark the money but would rather hear from the SDHSAA board and member schools about how the money should be allocated.

Board member Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley questioned the policy of limiting the number of corporate sponsors to five.

"That's a mistake that we're making," Klatt said.

Board chairman Bud Postma of Madison said the scale was different but his experience with finding sponsors for a new gym was the fewer the better.

"They didn't want a whole gym full of sponsors," Postma said. "They (sponsors) were not excited about having 50 signages in there."

Swartos said he would talk to the current corporate sponsors before making an attempt to add more sponsors.

—30—

Football schedule won't change for 4-H Finals Rodeo

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The safety of football players trumped the needs of the State 4-H Finals Rodeo when the South Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors met on Nov. 1.

The board was asked by Kasey Hanson, president of the board that oversees the State 4-H Finals Rodeo, to once again make an accommodation that allows football teams to play their first game of the season

a day early.

For the 2017 season, the board allowed football teams to move their first game of the year from Friday to Thursday. The provisions of the motion to make the accommodation said that both schools needed to agree on the change. It also said that the change was being made for only one year.

SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos said that six games were played early by West River schools. Hanson said that the first scheduled football game of 2018 is on Aug. 17, the first day of the 4-H Finals Rodeo.

"That's our championship for the whole season of rodeo," Hanson said, noting that the finals draw 550 participants. "It's a very large event."

The scheduling conflict between rodeo and the first football game causes students who take part in rodeo and play football to choose between the two sports, Hanson said. Athletes who ride bulls and bucking broncs are likely to also be football players.

"It affects the vast majority of our boys," Hanson said.

"At some point in time we need to set our calendar," said board chairman Bud Postma of Madison. "We can't keep coming back to the same question."

Hanson promised a long-term solution if an accommodation in the schedule could be made for 2018.

Board member Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley moved to make the accommodation once again in 2018 with the same terms.

SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand said moving the first game of 2018 also meant moving the first day of practice earlier than Monday, Aug. 3. Schools could choose Friday, with a two-day break before they went back to practice on Monday.

That would "destroy" the heat climatization plan designed to get football players accustomed to practicing in hot weather and avoid heat stroke, Krogstrand said. The plan is designed to acclimate students by having them practice on consecutive days.

Hearing Krogstrand's reasoning, Klatt rescinded her motion. A motion by Roger Bordeaux of Tiospa Zina Tribal School to allow the earlier football game died for the lack of a second.

—30—

Schools notice hotel price gouging at state tournaments

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The board of directors of the South Dakota High School Activities Association heard about exorbitant rates for hotel rooms in communities holding state tournaments.

"We had started to get quite a few complaints," SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand told the board at its Nov. 1 meeting.

Krogstrand showed the board a copy of a receipt from a Rapid City hotel that charged a school district \$586.27 for one night's stay during a state tournament.

One response Krogstrand said he got from hoteliers about the high rate was "that's supply and demand." He said hotel rates should be more in line with what school districts and the parents of athletes are able to pay.

Referring to the \$586.27 bill, SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos said, "This is a run-of-the-mill hotel. It's not a fancy hotel, by any means."

Board member Steve Morford of Spearfish said that there have been complaints about room rates in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls.

"Try getting a room somewhere during pheasant season," Morford said. Gesturing toward the bill that was displayed on a video screen he added, "That's going to be cheap."

Morford said part of the blame rests with the school official who booked the room without checking for the availability of rooms in adjacent communities. Morford said a room in Sturgis would have cost \$70.

Krogstrand said there has been a good response from some hotels that seem willing to work with the

association on room rates during state tournaments.

Krogstrand also noted that the next day, the room that went for more than \$500 was listed as available for \$69.

—30—

Sports cooperatives given OK

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The South Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors approved four athletic cooperatives at its meeting Wednesday.

The approved cooperatives for the 2017-2018 school year include:

- gymnastics for Milbank and Ortonville, Minn., high schools. The cooperative will follow a South Dakota gymnastics schedule.

- wrestling for Arlington, DeSmet and Lake Preston high schools.
- wrestling for Deuel and Deubrook high schools.
- wrestling for Ipswich, Leola and Bowdle high schools.

None of the cooperatives resulted in the teams changing competition classes, according to SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos.

The board also approved of Hamlin High School adding the sport of wrestling. Hamlin will compete in Region 1, Class B. Also approved was Lyman High School adding the sport of gymnastics, competing in Region 2, Class A. Both changes take effect in the 2017-18 school year.

The dissolution of two athletic cooperatives was also approved. The tennis cooperative between Douglas and St. Thomas More high schools will end in the 2017-18 school year as will the golf cooperative between Arlington and Lake Preston high schools.

During the meeting the board discussed how construction at the Spearfish golf course was having a domino effect on venues in the coming years. Because of the construction, the 2018 boys' A golf tournament will switch from Spearfish to Rocky Run at Dell Rapids. The 2019 girls' AA tournament will switch from Spearfish to Cattail Crossing at Watertown.

In 2019, the boys' A golf tournament will switch from Dell Rapids to Spearfish. The 2020 girls' AA tournament will switch from Watertown to Spearfish.

—30—

Today in Weather History

November 3, 2003: Heavy snow fell across the area. Snowfall of 6 to 9 inches fell across Big Stone County in Minnesota, with nine inches in Ortonville. Heavy snow of up to eight inches fell across Grant County in South Dakota. Six inches fell at Big Stone City, and 8 inches fell at Milbank. Heavy snow also fell from the early morning to around noon across parts of central South Dakota. Six inches of snow fell at Kennebec, Fort Thompson, Gann Valley, and Miller.

1966: An early season snowfall, which started on the 2nd, whitened the ground from Alabama to Michigan.

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.

Mobile, Alabama had their earliest snowflakes on record. Louisville, Kentucky measured 13.1 inches, Nashville; Tennessee reported 7.2 inches and Huntsville, Alabama had 4 inches of snow.

1927: Historical flooding occurred across Vermont from November 2nd through the 4th. This flood washed out 1285 bridges, miles of roads and railways, and several homes and buildings. Eighty-four people were killed from the flooding, including Lt. Governor S. Hollister Jackson.

1966: An early season snowfall, which started on the 2nd, whitened the ground from Alabama to Michigan. Mobile, Alabama had their earliest snowflakes on record. Louisville, Kentucky measured 13.1 inches, Nashville; Tennessee reported 7.2 inches and Huntsville, Alabama had 4 inches of snow.




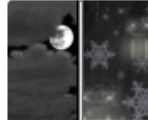



1987 - Twenty-one cities, mostly in the Ohio Valley, reported record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Columbus OH was their warmest reading of record for so late in the season. Showers and thundershowers associated with a tropical depression south of Florida produced 4.28 inches of rain at Clewiston in 24 hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A sharp cold front brought about an abrupt end to Indian Summer in the north central U.S. Up to a foot of snow blanketed Yellowstone Park WY, and winds in the mountains near the Washoe Valley of southeastern Wyoming gusted to 78 mph. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the south central U.S. Del Rio TX tied Laredo TX and McAllen TX for honors as the hot spot in the nation with a record warm afternoon high of 91 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Cold weather prevailed in the central U.S. Six cities in Texas, Minnesota, and Michigan, reported record low temperatures for the date. The low of 7 above zero at Marquette MI was their coldest reading of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary)

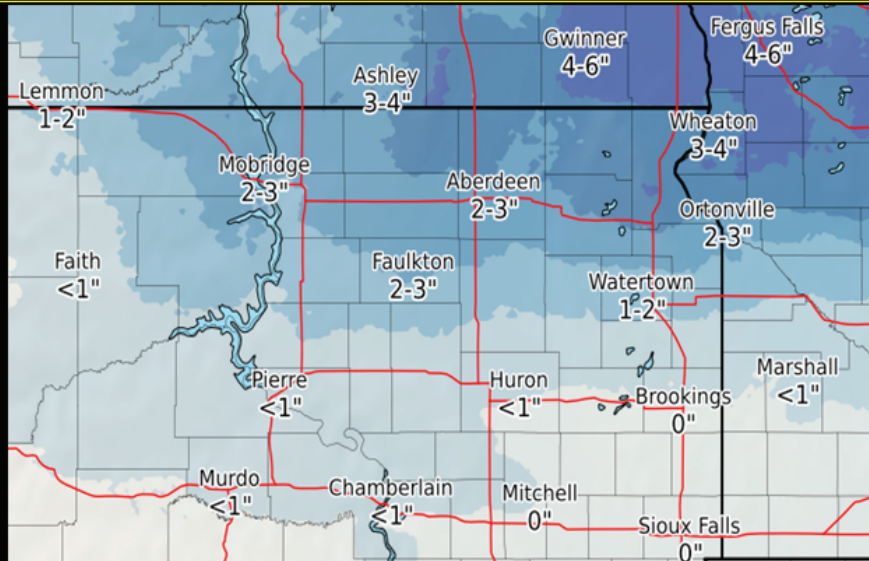
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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
60% → 90%	80% → 50%		20%			20% → 60%
Snow Likely then Snow	Snow then Chance Snow	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Rain/Snow	Partly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Slight Chance Snow then Snow Likely
High: 31 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 43 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 33 °F	Low: 14 °F	High: 29 °F

Areas Of Accumulating Snow Today/Tonight

Most Likely Snowfall Forecast



- **Highs: Low 30s north of Highway 212 / 30s & Low 40s South**
- **Mainly Light Snow w/ Limited Accumulation Today/Tonight**
- **Bands of Brief/Localized Heavy Snow Mid Day Through Evening**

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 11/3/2017 5:23 AM Central

Published on: 11/03/2017 at 5:29AM

A weak system will bring widespread light snow with a few pockets of heavier snow today and this evening before things taper off. Snow accumulations will probably vary widely with a few spots picking up a few inches while some others may be limited to a wet 'dusting' confined to grassy surfaces. Temperatures will also struggle today - with highs some 10 to 20 degrees below average.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 35.2

Low Outside Temp: 29.9

High Gust: 18

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 75° in 1903

Record Low: 1° in 1991

Average High: 48°F

Average Low: 25°F

Average Precip in Nov: .09

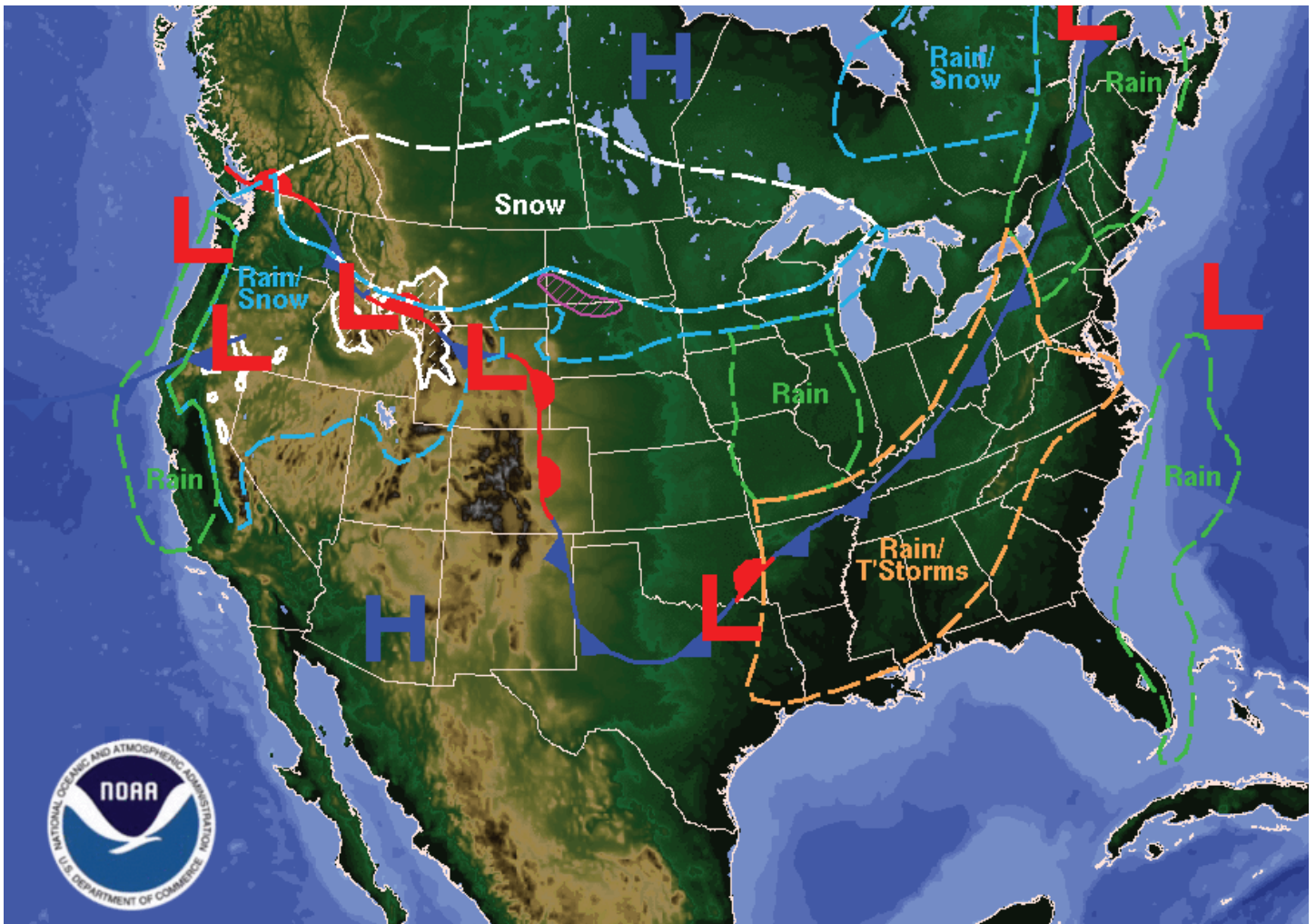
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 20.56

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 6:17 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:17 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Nov 03, 2017, issued 7:16 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)

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"NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP....."

One night before climbing into bed, Brad knelt with his mother to pray. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray Thee Lord, my soul to keep; if I should die before I wake..." There was a long pause and suddenly he stopped praying.

"Go on," said his mother to encourage him.

"I can't," he cried and ran from the room.

A few moments later he returned and finished the prayer, "I pray Thee Lord my soul to take."

"What happened?" his Mother asked.

"Well," he confessed, "just before we knelt to pray, I went into James' room and took all of his toy soldiers and hid them. Then I hid his tanks, cannons and trucks so he couldn't see them. And after I started to pray I had to stop and make everything right because I knew that God wouldn't hear me."

Many times we pray and get no answers. Often we think that God is not willing to hear us or unable to help us. But that is not true.

We cannot knowingly have sin in our hearts and lives and go to God and expect Him to answer our prayers. If we expect God to hear and answer our prayers we must make things right first.

Said the Psalmist, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." It is only when we willingly confess and forsake our sins that we can expect God to answer our prayers. It may be time to stop in the middle of a prayer, right some wrongs and then pray.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to accept the fact that we cannot expect You to answer our prayers if we keep sin in our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 66:18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- 11/18/2017-3/31/2018 Groton Lion's Club Wheel of 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

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News from the Associated Press

Authorities ID victim of head-on crash in Beadle County

WESSINGTON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Virgil man who died in a two-vehicle crash in Beadle County last weekend.

The Highway Patrol says 25-year-old Jeffrey Airheart was driving a pickup truck that crossed the center line on U.S. Highway 14 and collided head-on with another pickup Sunday afternoon. He was flown to a Sioux Falls hospital, where he later died.

The other driver suffered minor injuries.

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-21, 25-14, 25-17

Rapid City Central def. Sturgis Brown, 25-9, 25-14, 25-13

Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Brandon Valley, 29-27, 22-25, 20-25, 25-17, 15-11

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Aberdeen Central, 25-18, 23-25, 25-13, 31-29

Sioux Falls Washington def. Brookings, 25-18, 23-25, 25-13, 31-29

Watertown def. Yankton, 22-25, 22-25, 25-18, 25-22, 15-11

Region 1A

Finals

Groton Area def. Milbank, 23-25, 25-13, 25-18, 25-22

Redfield/Doland def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-22, 18-25, 25-16, 25-20

Region 2A

Finals

Madison def. Flandreau, 25-23, 25-7, 25-10

Sioux Valley def. Hamlin, 25-19, 25-13, 25-15

Region 3A

Finals

Dell Rapids def. Baltic, 17-25, 22-25, 25-14, 25-21, 15-12

Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-20, 25-12, 25-12

Region 4A

Finals

Dakota Valley def. Beresford, 25-10, 25-10, 25-18

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Tea Area, 25-22, 25-23, 23-25, 25-23

Region 5A

Finals

McCook Central/Montrose def. Wagner, 25-12, 25-19, 25-16

Parker def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-22, 25-15, 28-26

Region 6A

Finals

Miller def. Chamberlain, 25-14, 25-17, 25-8

Mobridge-Pollock def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-12, 25-14, 25-15

Region 7A

Finals

Pine Ridge def. Bennett County, 25-14, 25-23, 25-23

Winner def. Little Wound, 25-8, 25-13, 25-12

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Region 8A

Finals

Belle Fourche def. St. Thomas More, 25-8, 25-23, 25-11

Rapid City Christian def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-22, 24-26, 25-15, 25-20

Region 1B

Finals

Northwestern def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-20, 25-16, 26-24

Warner def. Langford, 25-14, 25-10, 25-10

Region 2B

Finals

Faulkton def. Sully Buttes, 25-22, 13-25, 25-23, 16-25, 15-12

Herreid/Selby Area def. Ipswich, 25-19, 23-25, 25-19, 18-25, 15-2

Region 3B

Finals

Arlington def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-10, 25-10, 25-23

Deubrook def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-21, 25-12, 26-24

Region 4B

Finals

Chester def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-18, 25-16, 25-13

Hanson def. Ethan, 25-20, 25-15, 25-21

Region 5B

Finals

Alcester-Hudson def. Gayville-Volin, 25-21, 25-13, 25-16

Bridgewater-Emery def. Freeman, 15-25, 25-23, 14-25, 25-13, 15-13

Region 6B

Finals

Burke/South Central def. Avon, 26-28, 25-16, 25-17, 25-22

Kimball/White Lake def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-18, 25-14, 17-25, 26-24

Region 7B

Finals

Kadoka Area def. Wall, 25-15, 21-25, 25-16, 25-19

Philip def. New Underwood, 31-33, 25-9, 25-11, 25-22

Region 8B

Finals

Faith def. Lemmon, 19-25, 26-24, 25-20, 25-14

Timber Lake def. Harding County, 20-25, 25-16, 25-14, 25-23

Ski industry concerned amid shifting trends in millennials

By **BILL ROZAK**, Tahoe Daily Tribune

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. (AP) — The ski and snowboard industry is healthy — at least for now.

But there is concern throughout the snow sports industry as the baby boomers and generation Xers get older, the millennials are not picking up the slack and hitting the slopes as often as the aging generations.

"The industry is extremely healthy, we've been really consistent for a long time," said Michael Reitzell, president of the California Ski Industry Association. "But we're not like hotels, we're not building new properties, and millennials, and even gen Xers, are going less often, less days per year than the previous generation."

Reitzell said millennials, people who range in age from 17 to 37, are approaching life differently than previous generations. They are waiting longer to purchase homes and to have kids — much longer than the baby boomers, ages 53 to 77. The more narrow generation X group ranges in age from 38-52.

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Reitzell said millennials want outdoor adventures but they look to do more than just hit the slopes while on vacation or on days off work. They may play in the snow one day and find other stuff to do on other days. Millennials make up the biggest group at resorts, said Reitzell, but they're not consistently strapping on the board or skis.

Some also say it's too expensive. But that perplexes Reitzell who says season pass prices today are as good as they've ever been.

"They are looking for outdoor adventures, but they're not buying tickets," Reitzell said. "It really does have a lot to do with demographics. What people are deciding to make as their priorities and do they want skiing to be part of their lives?"

The explosion of backcountry winter adventures is likely putting a dent into daily sales at resorts. Adventurers can earn their turns by hiking to a mountaintop and sliding down, avoiding lift ticket prices altogether, but also missing out on a leisurely ride up the slopes.

Additionally, adventures in the backcountry are not simple, or safe. Everybody who ventures into the snowy Sierra Nevada needs to have some education about essential gear and avalanche awareness.

Resorts are trying to get creative with how they market their product.

Sierra-at-Tahoe, an independently-owned resort about 20 minutes west of South Lake Tahoe off U.S. 50, wants their guests to leave their mountain with an "authentic and unique" experience, and be able to tell their story to others no matter what generation.

"We strongly believe that millennials along with others are driven by that 'experience' and being able to go home with a story," said Thea Hardy with Sierra-at-Tahoe. "We work hard to craft our interactions, messaging and on-mountain experience to be a part of that story and something that keeps them coming back. The 'millennial' skier and snowboarder are strong in presence here. We believe because of our convenience, history as the place to learn, Olympic heritage, great value and location makes us appealing to the millennial generation."

Heavenly Mountain Resort, owned by Vail Resorts, is reaching out to millennials by teaming with Tahoe Mountain Lab to "re-imagine the definition of 'work hard, play hard.'"

There is on-mountain shared workspace, about 600-square feet, with Wi-Fi for remote professionals who want to take a few runs then return to the mountain office.

Their guests can also be toured around the mountain by a certified ski and ride instructor while learning how to use a borrowed GoPro camera to capture their adventure.

"Millennials are attached to their technology," Reitzell said. "Resorts should tie that in with what they do, it helps people decide what resort they choose. They like to post photos and videos and they might get service at certain places and that affects their decisions."

Heavenly and Kirkwood mountain resorts senior communications manager Kevin Cooper wants to make it easier for people to have a good time. He says it's not about racing or competition, but to get out there, have fun and get away.

"We're looking for intimacy through social media and we want people to get what they want out of their experience," Cooper said.

With the ever-changing technology and new digital gadgets seemingly offered every few months, resorts are scrambling to keep up and trying to come up with fresh ideas to attract and keep people coming back, especially the millennials.

"Times are changing," Reitzell said. "We're going to have to start thinking about different ways to keep people in the sport. If you're a die-hard . you can show people how fun it is. As the industry goes, so does the community that it supports."

"We know our relevance and adaptability is key," Hardy said. "We will continue to grow with trends and create a welcoming and experience-driven ski environment that will keep them coming back."

EPA to hold hearing on climate plan repeal in West Virginia

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration announced Thursday it will hold a public hearing in West Virginia on its plan to nullify an Obama-era plan to limit planet-warming carbon emissions. The state is economically dependent on coal mining.

The Environmental Protection Agency will take comments on its proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan in Charleston, the state capital, on Nov. 28 and 29.

"The EPA is headed to the heart of coal country to hear from those most impacted by the CPP and get their comments on the proposed repeal rule," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "The agency looks forward to hearing from all interested stakeholders."

No other public hearings have yet been scheduled. EPA will also accept written comments about the proposed repeal through mid-January.

"We encourage stakeholders to participate, and submit comments online — including any requests for additional public meetings," said Liz Bowman, an EPA spokeswoman. "As this is a vital issue that affects people across the country, we will do our best to respond to requests for additional meetings."

Under the Obama administration, EPA held four multiday public hearings — in Washington, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and Denver — to collect feedback before issuing the Clean Power Plan in 2015. About two dozen conservative-leaning states and a battery of fossil-fuel companies immediately sued, successfully preventing the carbon reduction plan from taking effect prior to the election of Donald Trump, who as a candidate pledged to repeal it.

A Republican lawyer who previously served as the attorney general of Oklahoma, Pruitt was among those who fought the Clean Power Plan in court. Since his appointment by Trump to lead EPA, he has made the delay and reversal of recent environmental regulations negatively impacting the profits of coal and petrochemical companies a priority.

Though Trump, Pruitt and others have blamed environmental regulations for the loss of coal-mining jobs, many industry insiders concede that it has been the accelerating shift of electric utilities using cheaper and cleaner-burning natural gas that is the primary culprit.

Pruitt has also sought to cast doubt on the consensus of climate scientists that the continued burning of fossil fuels is the main driver of global warming. Scientists say climate change has already triggered rising seas and more extreme weather, including killer heat waves, worsened droughts and torrential rains.

A Government Accountability Office report released earlier this month concluded that the impacts from climate change are already costing the federal government money, and those costs will likely increase over time.

U.S. taxpayers spent more than \$350 billion over the last decade on disaster assistance programs and insurance payouts from floods and crop failures. That tally does not include the massive toll from this year's wildfires and three major hurricanes, expected to be among the most costly in the nation's history.

The report predicts these costs will only grow in the future, averaging a budget busting \$35 billion each year by 2050 — a figure that recent history would suggest is a conservative estimate.

Bill Price, an organizer for the Sierra Club based in West Virginia, worried that by holding the public hearing where support for both Trump and coal are the strongest, the administration hoped that those opposed to that agenda might be more reticent to speak out.

"There is a concern that the scheduled hearing in West Virginia has all the markings of a sham, that only gives a dying industry a venue to intimidate people," Price said. "It is our hope that the hearing will provide a safe place where all viewpoints can be heard."

Register to comment on the EPA's proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan:

<https://www.epa.gov/stationary-sources-air-pollution/electric-utility-generating-units-repealing-clean-power-plan>

Follow Associated Press environmental writer Michael Biesecker at <http://twitter.com/mbieseck>

Man sentenced to 50 years in fatal Rapid City motel beating

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City man has been sentenced to 50 years in prison for fatally beating an acquaintance at a motel last December.

The Rapid City Journal reports 34-year-old Clifford Gilbert was sentenced Thursday. Gilbert pleaded guilty in August to first-degree manslaughter in the death of 61-year-old Robert Smith at the Stardust Motel in Rapid City.

Police found Smith unconscious inside a room at the motel early on Dec. 27.

Gilbert was accused of using a walking stick to beat Smith. Prosecutors say Gilbert then used his fists and feet to deliver the fatal blows while the victim was on the floor.

According to court documents, Gilbert told investigators he “snapped” in anger while he was in a motel room with Smith and a woman.

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

Senate approves nominees for energy oversight commission

By MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate has approved two more members of the federal commission that oversees the nation’s power grid and natural gas pipelines, including President Donald Trump’s choice for chairman.

On voice votes Thursday, senators approved Republican Kevin McIntyre to chair the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Democrat Richard Glick to round out the five-member panel. The commission was without a quorum for six months and was unable to make decisions on interstate pipelines and other projects worth billions of dollars.

That changed in August when two GOP commissioners were approved. The panel now has the full five members.

Industry groups hailed the Senate action and urged commissioners to act on long-pending pipeline projects.

“The commission faces critical issues in approving infrastructure for getting natural gas to markets. With a full slate of commissioners, these approvals will be even stronger to withstand opposition from those who fight to keep natural gas in the ground,” said Barry Russell, president and CEO of the Independent Petroleum Association of America.

The commission also must decide on a Trump administration plan to bolster nuclear and coal-fired power plants.

The plan by Energy Secretary Rick Perry would reward nuclear and coal-fired power plants for adding reliability to the nation’s power grid. Perry says the plan is needed to help prevent widespread outages such as those caused by hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

The plan aims to reverse a steady tide of retirements of coal and nuclear plants, which have lost market share as natural gas and renewable energy flourish.

The proposal has drawn opposition from an unusual coalition of business and environmental groups who say it would interfere in the free market and drive up costs while promoting dirty and dangerous fuels.

Eight former FERC members — including five former chairs — oppose the plan.

FERC is expected to act on the proposal by mid-December.

Ex-Trump campaign official withdraws nomination for ag post

By KEN THOMAS and KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former Trump campaign official linked to the Russia investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller has withdrawn his nomination as the Agriculture Department's chief scientist.

Sam Clovis, a former Trump campaign national co-chairman and chief policy adviser, wrote in a letter Thursday to President Donald Trump that he does "not want to be a distraction or a negative influence."

Questions had been raised about Clovis' qualifications for the administration post. He is a self-described skeptic of climate change.

Republicans were preparing to hold a hearing on his nomination next week. But it was revealed this week that Clovis had communications with George Papadopoulos, a former Trump campaign foreign policy adviser who has admitted to lying to the FBI about his contacts with Russian intermediaries last year.

"There were some questions that our distinguished ranking member had for him that I think under the circumstances — and given the votes — his decision was a good one," said Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., chairman of the Agriculture Committee.

The panel's top Democrat, Michigan Sen. Debbie Stabenow, said Clovis' decision to back out was "the right thing to do," adding he "maybe, barely" had the votes to win confirmation.

In his letter, Clovis said the political climate in Washington "has made it impossible for me to receive balanced and fair consideration for this position."

"The relentless assaults on you and your team seem to be a blood sport that only increases in intensity each day," Clovis wrote to Trump. "As I am focused on your success and the success of this administration, I do not want to be a distraction or negative influence, particularly with so much important work left to do for the American people."

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said: "We respect Mr. Clovis' decision to withdraw his nomination."

Stabenow said Clovis' withdrawal was a "victory for science and our farmers who rely on agricultural research." Stabenow said Clovis' "lack of qualifications and long history of politically divisive statements were disqualifying, and the recent news surrounding his time as co-chair of the Trump campaign has raised even more questions."

The Union of Concerned Scientists, which helped organize a letter signed by more than 3,000 scientists opposing Clovis' nomination, said he had "failed to meet the most basic legal qualifications to serve as the chief scientist at the USDA."

Clovis was a professor of economics at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, before he joined the Trump campaign.

A lawyer representing Clovis confirmed this week that Clovis 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."

If his nomination had been confirmed, Clovis would have overseen the department's nearly \$3 billion investment in research and education grants. He would have helped set the research priorities for the department and ensure that research is conducted with integrity.

In 2008, Congress spelled out the qualifications of the department's chief scientist, saying that official should come "from among distinguished scientists with specialized training or significant experience in agricultural research, education, and economics."

Clovis has served as a senior adviser at the Agriculture Department since the earliest days of the Trump administration. About two dozen major farm groups had written lawmakers to support his nomination.

They said the department's researchers didn't need a peer, they needed someone who could champion their work to the administration and Congress.

Clovis said in his letter to Trump that he will remain a devoted and loyal supporter, and that he would continue to serve at the pleasure of the president and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue.

On Twitter follow Ken Thomas at @KThomasDC.

Dakota Access builder and Corps object to tribal proposal

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The builder of the Dakota Access oil pipeline and the federal agency that permitted the project are objecting to an effort by American Indian tribes to bolster protections for their water supply.

Lawyers for Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners and the Army Corps of Engineers argue separately in documents filed Wednesday in federal court in Washington, D.C., that the proposals by the Standing Rock Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux are unnecessary or unwarranted.

"Measures are already in place to achieve the objectives behind each proposed set of conditions," company attorneys wrote.

The dispute centers around the \$3.8 billion pipeline's crossing of the Missouri River's Lake Oahe reservoir in southern North Dakota.

Both tribes get water from the lake and fear contamination should the pipeline leak. They are among four Dakotas tribes suing to shut down the pipeline that began moving North Dakota oil to a distribution point in Illinois on June 1.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg is requiring the Corps to further review the project's impact on tribal interests, but he's allowing oil to continue flowing while that work is done over the next several months. In the meantime, the tribes are seeking increased public reporting of pipeline issues such as repairs, and implementation of an emergency spill response plan at the lake crossing with tribal input. The spill response plan will include equipment staging.

ETP said it already has emergency equipment and personnel staged "near" the crossing and has also "taken steps to include the tribes in response planning." The company said it is willing to continue working with them on a voluntary basis.

Corps attorneys argue that the tribal request is "unnecessary, duplicative and burdensome" and note that "the court has already upheld the Corps' conclusion that the risk of a spill is low."

In a separate legal dispute in federal court in North Dakota, landowners who claim ETP deceived and defrauded them while acquiring land easements for the pipeline will appeal the dismissal of their lawsuit.

U.S. District Judge Daniel Hovland in October sided with a subsidiary of ETP and the land acquisition consulting business Contract Land Staff. Both businesses disputed the claims of the 21 landowners who were seeking more than \$4 million in damages.

The landowners have filed a notice of appeal to the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Attorney Peter Zuger declined to discuss their argument until a formal appeal brief is filed in the next couple of months.

ETP spokeswoman Vicki Granado said the company does not comment on pending legal matters.

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

Remains of Korean War veteran laid to rest in South Dakota

WHITE RIVER, S.D. (AP) — The remains of a South Dakota veteran killed during the Korean War have been returned home and laid to rest.

Hundreds of Native Americans, veterans and local residents paid tribute to Sgt. Philip James Iyotte in a procession that took the fallen Lakota warrior's remains from a Rapid City funeral home to a family plot

in Two Kettle.

"When we arrived at Kirk Funeral Home there were probably 75 people waiting, including the Black Hills Chapter of the American Legion Motorcycle Riders, two honor guards including Chauncey Eagle Horn and the Rosebud Legion Post honor guard, and the Oglala Sioux Tribe veteran's group," Iyotte's niece, Dera, told The Rapid City Journal.

Iyotte enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1950 at age 20. Iyotte disappeared after being captured as a prisoner of war in 1951. His remains were finally identified earlier this year by U.S. and Chinese officials.

Dera called the big ceremony "amazing" and "the most beautiful moment of my life."

"This was a man they never met, but a warrior, a hero," Dera said of the late October ceremony. "They came out en masse to greet him. I loved the unity and happiness he brought to the whole state of South Dakota."

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

Settlement talks continue in suit over 13-year-old oil leak

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN, Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A company that has failed to stop a 13-year-old oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico is asking for more time to negotiate a settlement that could allow it to recover millions of dollars it set aside for work to end the leak.

A court filing Thursday says Taylor Energy Co. representatives and U.S. officials have met four times in the past year to discuss possible terms of a settlement that would resolve the company's lawsuit against the federal government.

The results of recent surveys and scientific studies at the leak site could have an impact on settlement talks, the filing says.

U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge Nancy Firestone agreed in May to temporarily suspend the lawsuit so talks could continue. She ordered the parties to provide an update this week. On Thursday, Justice Department attorneys joined the company in asking the judge for more time to negotiate.

New Orleans-based Taylor Energy sued in January 2016, claiming regulators violated a 2008 agreement requiring the company to deposit approximately \$666 million in a trust to pay for leak response work. The company argued the government must return the remaining \$432 million.

In its lawsuit, the company argued the 2008 trust agreement should be dissolved and the funds returned because it is "impossible" to meet its obligations under the agreement.

The leak began off Louisiana's coast after a Taylor Energy-owned oil platform toppled during Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Waves whipped up by Ivan triggered an underwater mudslide that buried a cluster of oil wells under treacherous mounds of sediment, preventing the company from using conventional techniques to plug its wells.

Taylor Energy has claimed nothing can be done to completely eliminate chronic sheens at the site. Regulators have warned that the leak could last a century or more if left unchecked.

The company has lobbied for years to recover at least a portion of the money remaining in its trust. But federal authorities rebuffed the company's settlement overtures in 2015 and ordered it to perform more work at the site.

Taylor Energy said in its lawsuit that it had spent more than \$480 million on its efforts to stop the leak, with \$234 million of that money coming from the trust.

Thursday's court filing says company and government officials met in December 2016, April, June and September to negotiate a settlement. Scott Angelle, director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, attended the Sept. 26 meeting. Angelle served as an elected member of Louisiana's public utility regulatory board before joining the federal agency in May.

"The parties represent that they have had good faith substantive discussions so far, particularly with the personal involvement of (Angelle), but, at the same time, recognize that such discussions cannot continue

indefinitely," the filing says.

Government scientists conducted a "series of studies" at the leak site early this year, and a report on those studies is nearing completion, according to the filing.

Regulators also used a "remotely operated vehicle" to conduct an underwater survey of the leak site in September. The government believes those survey results "will be useful in working towards an amicable solution," the filing says. Taylor has asked for another settlement meeting in early December, it adds.

A 2015 investigation by The Associated Press revealed evidence that the leak is worse than the company, or government, have publicly reported during their secretive response. Presented with AP's findings that year, the Coast Guard provided a new leak estimate that was about 20 times larger than one cited by the company in a 2014 court filing.

Using satellite images and Coast Guard pollution reports, West Virginia-based watchdog group SkyTruth estimated in 2015 that between 300,000 gallons (1.1 million liters) and 1.4 million gallons (5.3 million liters) of oil had spilled from the site since 2004.

Alaskans differ as Senate debates drilling in Arctic refuge

By MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would create jobs and enhance energy security, while maintaining important environmental protections and conserving caribou and other wildlife, Alaska's governor and congressional delegation said Thursday.

But a leader of an Alaska Native tribe told a Senate hearing that oil development would threaten the refuge's pristine coastal plain, "the sacred place where life begins" and home to caribou that provide the tribe's subsistence.

Sam Alexander of the Gwich'in Nation said tribe members "are the caribou people. Caribou are how we survive ... and how we define ourselves."

Drilling in the Arctic refuge would "destroy our way of life," he said.

A budget measure approved by the Republican-controlled Congress allows lawmakers to pursue legislation allowing oil and gas exploration in the remote refuge on a majority vote.

At a hearing Thursday, Gov. Bill Walker said opening a small section of the 19.6 million-acre site to drilling would provide billions of dollars in revenue to Alaskans and the rest of the nation, create thousands of jobs and "significantly improve our national security and international influence while fully protecting the wildlife and environment of the coastal plain."

Walker, an independent, said that after 50 years of "successful and safe development" of oil on lands near the Arctic refuge, along with "decades of advancement in both oil and gas technology and environmental mitigation measures, it is time that Congress acts to honor the longstanding promise in these areas available for the benefit of Alaska, the country and the world."

Alaska's all-Republican congressional delegation agreed. Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan and veteran Rep. Don Young said drilling in the Arctic refuge would bolster American energy production, economic growth and national security.

Murkowski chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and led Thursday's hearing on the drilling plan.

Sen. Maria Cantwell of Washington state, senior Democrat on the energy panel, said drilling was not worth the risks to a fragile ecosystem that serves as important habitat for polar bears, caribou and migratory birds.

The Arctic refuge is "one of the most pristine areas of the United States," Cantwell said, and sacrificing it "for oil that we don't need ... is not worth it."

The wildlife refuge has been the focus of a political fight for more than three decades. President Bill Clinton vetoed a GOP plan to allow drilling in the refuge in 1995, and Cantwell-led Democrats defeated a similar GOP plan in 2005.

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The Trump administration and congressional Republicans are pushing to revive the drilling plan as a way to help pay for proposed tax cuts promised by President Donald Trump. The GOP-approved budget includes \$1 billion in revenue from drilling leases over 10 years.

Democrats scoffed at that claim, saying the plan would generate far less revenue at a time when oil prices are down and production in the lower 48 states, especially Texas and North Dakota, is booming. Royal Dutch Shell abandoned an oil exploration program in the Arctic Ocean in 2015 amid concerns that lower global oil prices made drilling in the remote region a risky investment.

Greg Sheehan, acting director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, said the Trump administration believes the drilling plan would bolster the nation's energy independence and national security, provide economic opportunity for Alaskans and "provide much-needed revenue to both the state of Alaska and the federal government."

Alexander, the Gwich'in Nation representative, said talk of balancing oil development and environmental protections rang hollow. "Why is the balance being put on the backs of my people?" he asked.

Cantwell and Murkowski generally work well together, but disagreement over the Arctic refuge has tested that good will. Cantwell said at the end of Thursday's hearing that Murkowski had "stacked" the session with speakers in favor of drilling. Murkowski responded that the selection of speakers reflected the party in the majority.

"In no way did I feel it was stacked," Murkowski told reporters, noting that three of 12 speakers at the nearly five-hour hearing oppose drilling.

Murkowski said she hopes to move quickly on a pro-drilling bill, with a committee vote likely within two weeks.

Western Colorado natural gas drilling may never boom again

By **BEN MARKUS**, Colorado Public Radio

DENVER (AP) — The one constant in the oil and gas industry is the boom-bust cycle. Prices spike, drillers rush in. Prices drop and the drilling ends.

But what if the boom doesn't come back?

Some in the industry say that's the unique situation facing Colorado's Western Slope, a previous hot bed of drilling development that's struggled in a prolonged price downturn. Drillers here have become a victim of their own successes.

Boom-bust cycles are such a part of the industry's DNA that some guys can measure their career by them. Don Simpson, a senior vice president of Ursa Operating Company, is one of those longtime oil men. Sometimes a bust lasts just a year or sometimes "they last a lot longer," he says.

"I've been through probably six or seven cycles since I've been doing oil and gas work."

When drilling on the West Slope was booming 10 years ago, prices were double and even triple where they are now, around \$3 per million British thermal units. Drilling naturally stopped, and the Grand Junction area lost about 10,000 jobs that never came back. Simpson still seems optimistic, probably in part because of the region's abundant resources.

"We're producing at lower costs than we normally have, and it's a cleaner burning fuel for the U.S.," Simpson says.

A U.S. Geological Survey analysis in 2016 found 66 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas in the Piceance Basin in western Colorado. That's enough to power the entire country for two years. It's the second largest gas reserve in the country.

So there's plenty of natural gas. But most importantly, the drillers have figured out how to lower the cost of drilling, so even with low prices, they can make a profit.

David Ludlam, director of the Western Slope Colorado Oil and Gas Association, has seen a "silent resurgence" with just about 10 drill rigs operating in the region.

"Just a few years ago, we were at two," he says.

That's nothing like the 90 plus rigs of a decade ago, but he's not picky at this point.

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The prolonged downturn forced some companies to turn their focus to more profitable gas fields, like in Texas, Ludlam says, opening the door to a new set of operators. "They have transformed the Piceance Basin into a truly low cost natural gas producing region."

These new operators really understand the geology of where they're drilling and they've perfected their process.

"One of the things about a market where prices are depressed is the most efficient operator wins," says Bernadette Johnson, an analyst with DrillingInfo in Littleton. "Your ability to cut your costs, to do things better and faster really starts to matter. It's not just our industry, it's any industry."

Even with those advances and efficiencies, not every company can make it work in western Colorado — the costs are just too high. Part of the problem is much of the land is federal, meaning lengthy approval times for drilling. The Trump Administration has signaled a desire to move much quicker, but according to the most recent data, it can take two and three times longer for the feds to approve a permit compared to regulators at the State of Colorado for private land development.

Environmentalists say those delays are for a good reason. Sometimes the land is valued wilderness space. There are lengthy studies required, but even when a permit is issued, environmentalists often fight these developments in court. They most recently sued to stop a development near Paonia, where it has taken 10 years just to get the final approval.

Even if permit times improve, western Colorado is probably never going to be the cheapest place to produce natural gas. It's competing with gas finds everywhere.

"So the problem is the resource on the Western Slope is massive, but the resource in the northeast is massive," Johnson says. "And the resource in the Permian is massive. And the resource in Louisiana is massive. And the resource on the Gulf of Mexico is still massive."

New technologies have opened up drilling on previously unreachable gas reserves. That's why there's renewed interest in exporting and the potential of the Jordan Cove export terminal in Oregon. Just recently the company refiled for a project permit after several failed attempts. Colorado has a pipeline that runs near the area.

That makes Asia a tantalizing customer for all this energy. Johnson points out that new demand is important because "today it's a buyer's market."

"We can grow as much production as demand will grow," she says. "Demand is the limiter."

When demand spikes operators can increase production so quickly that gas prices soon fall again. That's great news for customers since natural gas is a key for electricity generation and heating. It's not great for drillers though.

"It puts an upward lid on prices," says industry trade representative David Ludlam. "If you get a signal much higher than \$3 and .50 cents a lot of new drilling comes online."

And here's another twist: oil producers on the Front Range, and in Texas, are also finding a lot natural gas, almost as a byproduct. New, unconventional techniques like horizontal drilling are adding new supply to the market. A greater supply pushes prices down. That's just another natural gas source competing with the Piceance Basin.

Information from: KCFR-FM, <http://www.cpr.org/news>

Groups want protections restored for Louisiana black bear

By KEVIN MCGILL, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Environmental groups put federal officials on notice Thursday that they intend to file legal action to return the Louisiana black bear back to a list of threatened species.

Officials announced removal of the bear from the list in March 2016. Then-Interior Secretary Sally Jewell touted the move, along with various state and federal officials, while visiting the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge in north Louisiana. Authorities heralded the decision as the culmination of years of work involving federal and state governments, along with private landowners, to protect or restore some 750,000

acres of habitat for the bear.

The Louisiana black bear is one of 16 subspecies of the American black bear. There are an estimated 700 in Louisiana now.

Some conservationists and environmentalists opposed the move when it was announced. On Thursday, the Washington-based Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility released copies of its letter to the Department of the Interior, announcing plans to sue under provisions of the Environmental Protection Act unless the department's Fish and Wildlife Service restores federal protections for the bear and its habitat. Other groups involved include the Sierra Club's Delta Chapter and the Louisiana Crawfish Producers Association-West.

The letter says scientific data were neglected when the bear and its habitat were removed from Endangered Species Act protections. It revives issues raised last year by opponents of the "de-listing" of the species. For instance, the environmentalists contend that one area said to be inhabited by Louisiana black bears — the Upper Atchafalaya River Basin — is actually home to a similar Minnesota subspecies introduced to the area in the 1960s.

"The connection of the UARB population with Louisiana black bear populations should not be considered to constitute sufficient recovery, and in fact threatens the remaining Louisiana black bears with hybridization," the PEER letter said. The letter also states that the Fish and Wildlife Service recovery plan does not adequately provide for "corridors" of forest land connecting different black bear population areas.

Fish and Wildlife Service spokesman Phil Kloer declined comment on points in PEER's lawsuit notice but said the service stands by the "de-listing" decision.

"We stand by the conservation work of our Fish and Wildlife Service team, the state of Louisiana, private landowners and many other partners whose commitment made this recovery real," Kloer said in a telephone interview from the service's Atlanta office.

Sheriff: Man dies after fight at Watertown bar

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a Watertown man is dead after a bar fight last weekend. Codrington County Sheriff Brad Howell says 40-year-old Jeremy Buol died Wednesday. An autopsy was planned, and the sheriff says more charges might be filed once the investigation is complete.

The Watertown Public Opinion reports Buol was in a fight with a 28-year-old man at the South Fork Lounge in Watertown early Sunday. Buol was flown to a hospital in Sioux Falls.

The other man also is from Watertown and was arrested for simple assault. He's being held without bond. The South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation is assisting in the investigation.

Wyoming tribal officials rebury centuries-old remains

RIVERTON, Wyo. (AP) — Tribal officials on Wyoming's Wind River Indian Reservation have reburied centuries-old human remains discovered during digging for a water line project.

Workers found the remains in September. Tribal officials reburied the bones Oct. 27 at an undisclosed location in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, said David Oldman with the Northern Arapaho Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

"They went through the proper burial procedures," Oldman told the Riverton Ranger.

Such burials typically involve prayers and are attended by tribal elders, spiritual leaders and representatives of his office, Oldman said.

Investigators determined the remains belonged to a 40- to 50-year-old Native American woman who stood 4 feet, 10 inches tall. She lived between 250 and 3,000 years ago and originally had been deliberately buried in a grave.

The bones were excavated soon after their discovery with the help of forensic anthropologists and senior students from the University of Wyoming.

The university experts were unable to determine how the woman died but the death was likely natural, Fremont County Coroner Mark Stratmoen said.

Finding ancient bones buried on the reservation is relatively rare. The Northern Arapaho usually receive remains transferred from museums and universities for reburial, Oldman said.

Information from: The (Riverton, Wyo.) Ranger, <http://www.dailyranger.com>

Seeing lack of women in fly fishing, Colorado group responds

By SETH BOSTER, The Gazette

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP) — From Skaguay Reservoir, the women with fly rods hike about 2 miles through the valley, following upstream to find their very own place.

Meet the Pikes Peak Women Anglers, the Colorado Springs group representing fly fishing's under-represented gender.

Among American practitioners of the most specialized form of angling, nearly 70 percent are men, says the latest recreation participation study from the Outdoor Foundation. Women's participation has remained stagnant over the past five years.

Local enthusiasts sense there's a long way to go before reaching "50/50 on the water" by 2020 — a goal announced by Orvis, fly fishing's leading retailer.

"It's not close," says Sharon Wright, known as the Fly Fishing Cowgirl at Angler's Covey, where she works.

"A long ways away," adds fellow guide Kristina Dougherty on the way to the stream.

If they sound hopeless, they're not. On the contrary, they see progress; at least they're not wearing men's waders and boots as they did decades ago when they were teenagers growing interested in fly fishing at a time when the industry didn't even make gear for them.

And at least today they have seven others with them — among the most dedicated Pikes Peak Women Anglers making these monthly trips. By organizing the group, Wright and Dougherty hope they're advancing interest in the technical activity that they describe as therapeutic, an escape from the real world that women struggle in every day.

To them, it's no wonder that Casting for Recovery, the Western-based nonprofit that introduces fly fishing to women with breast cancer, has grown. Another nonprofit, the Denver-based Colorado Woman Flyfishers, is celebrating 20 years of building camaraderie on the river.

That camaraderie is what the Springs' Joan Bennett was searching for a few years ago after her husband died. She wanted to keep fishing, "but I wasn't crazy about fishing alone," she says. "I think a lot of women aren't crazy about fishing by themselves."

She found a local co-ed group but worried about the competition that men might bring. She found the Pikes Peak Women Anglers to be "extremely friendly and supportive," she says as she rigs her line by the stream. "Everybody wants to help everybody else."

In this group, no one keeps secrets about the flies they use. No spot is reserved, though it can be annoying when a man so casually enters their space.

"I've seen them kind of butt in because they feel like you're just a woman, you're not gonna catch that fish anyway," says Deb Wetherbee, among those introduced to fly fishing through the group. "So they try to squeeze you out. Try to."

Other men express how impressed they are — reactions that Wright and Dougherty don't remember much from years ago. Still, those are surprised responses, and they are problematic.

However much it seemed the sport wasn't meant for them, the two guides persisted on their career paths. The "intimidation factor" was there, Wright says. "The good ol' boy mentality" was apparent to Dougherty, who would go into fly fishing shops with her dad and ask questions, only for the answers to be returned to her dad, as if she were invisible.

"I didn't really care that it was male-dominated," she says. "I was proud of that ponytail sticking out of my hat."

She started going to Denver's Fly Fishing Show and felt more inspired: "I'd look around, and there wasn't a lot of women around, so I thought I could throw my hat in the ring."

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She's seen more women attend over the years, with the introduction of the women's showcase. Still, she goes and wishes for more technical presentations. "It's all still about being a woman in fly fishing or being safe on the river, which is good, but ..."

But she wants to be taken seriously. As does Jen Lofgren, who manages an Orvis store in Denver with 30 years as a guide and retailer. While the industry clearly is trying to draw women to fly fishing, she's worried that the focus is on fashion more than function, perpetuating a stereotype.

"I don't want a pink vest; I don't want pink waders; I don't need pink," Lofgren says. "That to me sends a message that you don't think I'm serious about what I'm doing."

She recalls taking "lumps" on her climb through the guiding ranks. She was the only woman in her training class, and once hired, she saw more trips doled out to men — perhaps due to some perception that she wasn't strong enough for the physical rigors of the backcountry.

"I don't mean to sound like a victim or something," Lofgren says. "It's just something that, for some women, it's taken time. I think that's changed a lot."

Still, Wright and Dougherty at Angler's Covey meet male clients who appear crestfallen at the sight of them. Wright repeats the questions she's heard: "Do you really know what you're doing? Can you really get me onto a fish?"

And often the guides meet women who seek their tutelage because their husband, or boyfriend, does not fly fish — as if a man is the one to teach them. Wright and Dougherty are happy to do so, and they tell them to tag along with the Pikes Peak Women Anglers.

"It's so great to see people become independent," Wright says. "To see that light go on: 'I can do it.'"

After a long wait at the stream, she hooks a brown trout — small, maybe 6 inches. "Needs to grow is all," she says as she releases it. "A future champion."

Information from: The Gazette, <http://www.gazette.com>

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

The Capital Journal, Pierre, Nov. 1

Problems at Revenue Department might be sign of bigger issue

Six sets of problems being identified in an audit of a state agency certainly isn't good news but the fact that those problems were discovered in the state Department of Revenue should cause a bit of pause in everyone.

These six problems were discussed earlier this week during the state legislature's Government Operations and Audit Committee. They were discovered by the Department of Legislative Audit. Bob Christianson, a state government audit manager, delivered a report on the audit to GOAC on Monday. Reporter Bob Mercer covered the meeting for the Capital Journal.

Revenue Secretary Andy Gerlach did not, it appears, disagree with the audit's findings and has submitted correction plans for each of the six problem areas identified. Still, the members of GOAC have asked to meet with Gerlach on Dec. 18 to hear from him directly about what happened.

Sen. Deb Peters, R-Hartford, who chairs GOAC, went so far as to say "My concern is that we never had a finding like this before."

She is right to be concerned. The problems noted in the audit included money owed to municipal governments for sales taxes; inadequate handling of taxpayer checks in the Pierre center; lack of a form for motor-fuel tax waivers; evidence missing for revenue corrections; inadequate controls for reconciliation and calculation of motor vehicle fees; and inadequate controls on bank-franchise taxes.

What caused these problems in the first place? GOAC member Rep. Susan Wismer, D-Britton, seems to think that the revenue department's struggle to fill a position that was open for six months may have had something to do with it. She tied the struggle to hire someone to low pay.

Wismer's argument has more than a little merit. Anyone in Pierre who has tried to fill an open position,

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especially one that requires some sort of specialization such as, say, accounting, will tell you just how hard it can be to get someone to consider moving to central South Dakota. The task is made more difficult if you can't pay them a reasonable salary for their chosen profession.

It is becoming more difficult for state government to compete for talent. The problem probably isn't confined to the Department of Revenue, either. A search of job openings on the South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources website shows one position with the Department of Labor and Regulation in Pierre as having been open since Jan. 19, 2017. It's listed as open until filled. A total of 14 of the 37 state job listings for Pierre have been open for more than a month and are listed as open until filled.

Does this mean the state ought to look at paying its employees a little more? Maybe. We're a small state so lower pay is to be expected but if the folks we count on to collect our tax dollars are having trouble keeping up with the job, it might be time to look seriously at how we compensate our employees. They work for us, after all and part of being a good boss includes paying your employees a fair wage.

American News, Aberdeen, Nov. 1

Brown County pumps up interest in E30 blend for its fleet

Count us among those interested in — and supportive of — Brown County government experimenting with a 30-percent ethanol fuel blend in its vehicle fleet.

The idea was pitched by Watertown-based Glacial Lakes Energy at a Brown County Commission meeting in October. Glacial Lakes, which operates ethanol plants in Mina and Watertown, made the proposal as part of its E30 Challenge, which asks all drivers to try the 30-percent blend.

The company claims that, based on testing, vehicles on E30 blend saved an average of \$3 to \$5 per tank of fuel.

Now Brown County will devise a plan to switch.

It's a good plan, for two key reasons:

— Agriculture is the economic driver in this region and state.

"With Brown County being one of the biggest corn-producing areas in the area, the ethanol plants have done tremendous things for this county," county commission Chairwoman Rachel Kippley said at the Oct. 17 meeting. "We should be investing in ourselves."

We should be investing in ourselves.

That feels like a real light bulb statement, right? So simple, and so correct.

— There is a lot of mistrust and misunderstanding out there about higher ethanol blends. Everything from "The miles per gallon are lower" to "ethanol freezes in the winter" to "I hear a knocking noise."

We do not claim to be ethanol experts. However, we do know that many drivers do use higher ethanol blends, and anything that supports local and gets us further away from our oil addiction is worth experimenting with.

There is an uphill battle on education. Andy Wicks, mechanical expert and test facilitator for Glacial Lakes, told commissioners that "vehicles back to 1996" can be adapted to higher ethanol blends. And the higher the blend, the better the outcome, he said.

The county highway department's fleet numbers 20 — "Ten of them are 2011 or newer and 10 of them should've been thrown in the junk yard a long time ago," Highway Superintendent Dirk Rogers said — and that is a pretty good sample size.

By driving down this path, the county can show in dollars and cents exactly what kind of benefit E30 can have. Brown County government could be a leader for residents who have been resistant to switching to E30.

This is worth the effort, but a strict monitoring process would need to be in effect.

This seems such a no-brainer plan, we are a little disappointed no one had brought it up before. What made this company's pitch sound better than before? Well, maybe it hasn't come up in a bold way before. It's never too late to change, and we will be intensely interested in the outcome.

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Madison Daily Leader, Madison, Nov. 1

Law banning e-ballots is sound move by state

The South Dakota Board of Elections has endorsed potential legislation that would block electronic voting in the state.

South Dakota doesn't currently allow electronic voting, either by terminal at a polling site or by any other method over the internet or by phone. Paper ballots are used throughout the state, although some counties (including Lake County) use electronic vote counting equipment.

The legislation essentially prevents the use of electronic voting systems unless the Legislature passes new legislation to the contrary at a later date.

This seems like an easy vote for the Legislature. Hacking into systems in all parts of American life appears to be growing rapidly. Concerns about hacking into voting systems specifically is equally disturbing.

At a time when high profile hacks are harming Americans, as well as when indictments concerning Russian interference in the 2016 election have been issued, there is no reason to expose such an important element of democracy.

Just because something can be done over the internet doesn't mean it should be done. The Legislature and the governor should ensure that voting in South Dakota stays the way it is by passing this legislation during the 2018 session.

Farm family sues Dakota Access over farmland damage

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota farming family has sued the Dakota Access pipeline company, alleging it reneged on promises to restore farmland damaged during the oil pipeline's construction.

Slack Family Properties accuses Dakota Access LLC of fraud, deceit, breach of contract and taking property without authorization.

The Argus Leader reports the Harrisburg-area family says five parcels of its farmland were damaged, causing the loss of corn and soybean crops for two growing seasons.

The lawsuit was filed this week in Lincoln County Circuit Court.

In easement agreements with landowners, Dakota Access promised to compensate farmers for any losses tied to the pipeline's construction and to restore all farmland to its previous condition.

Dakota Access spokeswoman Vicki Granado says the company doesn't comment on pending legal matters.

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

Conviction upheld for man who killed Adrian Peterson's son

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the murder conviction of a man serving a life prison sentence for killing the 2-year-old son of NFL running back Adrian Peterson.

Joseph Patterson was convicted in 2015 of second-degree murder in the 2013 beating death of Tyrese Ruffin. Tyrese's mother was dating Patterson. Peterson has said he learned the child was his son about two months before the boy's death.

The state Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that a lower court didn't abuse its discretion or err in deciding any issues Patterson raised in his appeal.

Patterson argued in part that the court shouldn't have allowed prosecutors to present evidence that he allegedly abused other children.

A defense attorney didn't immediately return a telephone message requesting comment Thursday from The Associated Press.

South Dakota woman sentenced for stealing from funeral fund

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota woman has been sentenced to about three months in jail for stealing money raised to pay funeral expenses for a friend's daughter.

Authorities say 33-year-old Stephanie Blaine of Sioux Falls kept the \$3,600 from a GoFundMe account she set up after a September 2016 vehicle crash that killed her friend's daughter.

Her attorney says Blaine decided the grieving mother didn't deserve the money after the mother had made what Blaine considered questionable spending decisions.

The Argus Leader reports that Blaine pleaded guilty to grand theft in a deal under which prosecutors dropped a habitual criminal charge. She had previously been convicted of embezzlement, forgery and burglary.

She was sentenced Wednesday to 100 days in jail.

The GoFundMe website eventually reimbursed the grieving mother.

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

Mitchell man pleads not guilty to suffocating wife

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A Mitchell man accused of suffocating his wife has pleaded not guilty to charges of murder and manslaughter.

Thirty-nine-year-old James Brinker is charged in the death last month of 36-year-old Marie Brinker. The Daily Republic reports that he entered his pleas Wednesday and trial was scheduled for Feb. 13.

Court documents allege Brinker wrapped his wife in a blanket, placed her on a mattress, then put a sock in her mouth and tied a belt around her head to hold the sock in place. He allegedly then left the residence, picked up the couple's three children and had two sons go inside the home and call 911.

Brinker allegedly was staying at the residence despite a protection order filed against him.

He remains jailed in lieu of \$750,000 bond.

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

Accused pediatrician wants court to throw out evidence

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A former Pine Ridge Indian Reservation pediatrician accused of child sex crimes is asking the court to throw out evidence seized from his Spearfish home.

The Rapid City Journal reports 68-year-old Stanley Weber maintains that police used a defective search warrant.

Prosecutors say police acted in good faith despite errors in drafting the warrant, and they want the court to deny Weber's request.

The former Indian Health Service doctor faces numerous sexual abuse-related charges. Federal court documents allege he molested four children younger than 16 between 1998 and 2011. He has pleaded not guilty.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Daneta Wollmann will rule on Weber's request after lawyers submit written arguments.

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

North Dakota, South Dakota celebrate same-day birthday

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Thursday is the birthday for both Dakotas.

President Benjamin Harrison signed papers admitting North Dakota and South Dakota as the 39th and 40th states in the union on Nov. 2, 1889. Legend says Harrison shuffled the statehood papers before signing them.

The two states are now 128 years old. They initially were part of the Dakota Territory created in 1861,

which also included much of the present-day states of Montana and Wyoming.

Female lawmakers allege harassment by colleagues in House

By ERICA WERNER and JULIET LINDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For years, Republican Rep. Mary Bono endured the increasingly suggestive comments from a fellow lawmaker in the House. But when the congressman approached her on the House floor and told her he'd been thinking about her in the shower, she'd had enough.

She confronted the man, who she said still serves in Congress, telling him his comments were demeaning and wrong. And he backed off.

Bono, who served 15 years before being defeated in 2012, is not alone.

As reports flow almost daily of harassment or worse by men in entertainment, business and the media, one current and three former female lawmakers tell The Associated Press that they, too, have been harassed or subjected to hostile sexual comments — by fellow members of Congress.

The incidents occurred years or even decades ago, usually when the women were young newcomers to Congress. They range from isolated comments at one hearing, to repeated unwanted come-ons, to lewd remarks and even groping on the House floor. Coming amid an intensifying national focus on sexual harassment and gender hostility in the workplace, the revelations underscore that no woman is immune, even at the highest reaches of government.

"This is about power," said former California Sen. Barbara Boxer, after describing an incident at a hearing in the 1980s where a male colleague made a sexually suggestive comment. The colleague, using the traditional congressional parlance, said he wanted to "associate" himself with her remarks — adding afterward that he also wanted to "associate with the gentle lady."

Boxer said the comment was met with general laughter and an approving second from the committee chairman. She said she later asked that it be removed from the record.

"That was an example of the way I think we were thought of, a lot of us. ... It's hostile and embarrasses, and therefore could take away a person's power," she said.

Boxer and the other female lawmakers spoke on the record to tell their stories in the wake of revelations about Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein's serial attacks on women, as well as disclosures from current and former Capitol Hill staffers about harassment by lawmakers and aides. Those accounts, published in The Washington Post and elsewhere, revealed that Congress has few training or reporting requirements in place to deal with sexual harassment.

Largely untold before now is that some female lawmakers themselves say they have been harassed by male colleagues. While rare, the accounts raise troubling questions about the boys' club environment in Congress where male lawmakers can feel empowered to target not only staffers but even their own peers.

The lawmakers declined to identify the perpetrators by name, but at least two of the men continue to serve in the House. None of the female lawmakers interviewed reported what happened, and some noted it was not clear where they would lodge such a complaint. At least three of the four told friends or aides about the incidents, which in some cases were witnessed by other lawmakers.

"When I was a very new member of Congress in my early 30s, there was a more senior member who outright propositioned me, who was married, and despite trying to laugh it off and brush it aside it, would repeat. And I would avoid that member," said Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Calif. She added that she would warn other new female members about the lawmaker in question, but she declined to identify him, while saying he remains in Congress.

"I just don't think it would be helpful" to call the lawmaker out by name, Sanchez said. "The problem is, as a member there's no HR department you can go to, there's nobody you can turn to. Ultimately they're employed by their constituents."

Sanchez also said that a different male colleague repeatedly ogled her, and at one point touched her inappropriately on the House floor, while trying to make it appear accidental. She declined to identify the lawmaker but said he was no longer in Congress.

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Bono said she ultimately confronted her colleague on the House floor after he'd made repeated harassing comments.

Bono, who arrived in the House at age 36 to replace her husband Sonny Bono after he died in a skiing accident, said it seemed like the lawmaker didn't know how to talk to a woman as an equal. "Instead of being 'how's the weather, how's your career, how's your bill,' it was 'I thought about you while I was in the shower.' So it was a matter of saying to him 'That's not cool, that's just not cool.'"

Bono declined to identify the lawmaker, saying the behavior stopped after she finally challenged him. He still serves in Congress, she said.

"It is a man's world, it's still a man's world," Bono said. "Not being a flirt and not being a bitch. That was my rule, to try to walk that fine line."

Former Rep. Hilda Solis, now a Los Angeles County supervisor, recalls repeated unwanted harassing overtures from one lawmaker, though she declined to name him or go into detail.

"I don't think I'm the only one. What I tried to do was ignore it, turn away, walk away. Obviously it's offensive. Are you supposed to be flattered? No, we're adults. Not appropriate," said Solis, who left Congress in 2009 to join the Obama administration as labor secretary.

"It's humiliating, even though they may have thought they were being cute. No, it's not. It's not appropriate. I'm your colleague, but he doesn't see me that way, and that's a problem," Solis said.

The experiences occurred against the backdrop of broader gender inequities in Congress, where women remain a distinct minority, making up only about 20 percent of members in the House and Senate. That's up from fewer than 10 percent in the quarter-century since politics' Year of the Woman in 1992. That election season, large numbers of women sought office following hearings by the then-all-male Senate Judiciary Committee over Anita Hill's testimony about alleged sexual harassment by Clarence Thomas, who was subsequently confirmed to the Supreme Court, albeit by a narrow margin.

The increase in numbers and the prominence of a few individual women, such as House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, has not resulted in parity in all measures, nor eliminated the potential for male members to demean or even harass their female counterparts. Nonetheless, a few former female lawmakers contacted by The AP expressed surprise and even disbelief at the notion that lawmakers themselves could be victims of harassment.

Rep. Jackie Speier of California has recently gone public with an account of being sexually assaulted by a male chief of staff while she was a congressional staffer. She has criticized the vague rules in place on the issue and is preparing legislation to mandate sexual harassment training for congressional offices, among other changes. In a video posted to Twitter last week, she called Congress "a breeding ground for a hostile work environment" and encouraged others to come forward.

Yet when it comes to lawmakers themselves, Speier said: "I think the women in Congress are big girls. The equalizer that exists in Congress that doesn't exist in other settings is that we all get paid the same amount and we all have a vote, the same vote. So if you have members that are demeaning you it's because you're letting them."

Former Rep. Ellen Tauscher of California flatly argued that harassment can't take place between members of Congress. "Female members and male members are equals, they don't sexually harass each other," Tauscher said.

In fact, the law specifies that harassment can occur between equals, said Jennifer Drobac, a professor at the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, who teaches a course in sexual harassment law.

"Formally, two members of Congress may have the same status. That doesn't change the fact that sexual harassment can occur between peers," Drobac said, noting that numerous other factors can come into play, including the difference in age and length of service between the members, and the mere fact that men have more power in society than women.

Indeed the harassment or hostile incidents experienced by current and former lawmakers occurred when they were young newcomers to Congress, with less seniority than the men who targeted them. Yet the fact that some dispute whether harassment could even occur between members of Congress underscores the complexity of the issue and the fraught questions surrounding it.

Bono said she found power in confronting her harasser, and that after she did so it never happened again. She emphasized that she understood her experience was different than those of young staffers who may face harassment from someone they rely on for a job, and that she was fortunate because as an equal elected by her constituents, she would not fear retaliation.

But Bono strongly disputed any suggestion that she or any other female lawmaker could not be harassed by their peers.

"My career didn't suffer, I didn't suffer," Bono said. "But it did happen."

Follow Erica Werner on Twitter @ericawerner and Juliet Linderman @julietlinderman

Syria says its troops liberated eastern city of IS militants

By ALBERT AJI and ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — The Syrian army announced on Friday it liberated the long-contested eastern city of Deir el-Zour from the Islamic State group, marking another defeat of the extremists as their self-proclaimed "caliphate" crumbles and almost all their urban strongholds in Syria and Iraq have been lost.

The recapture of Deir el-Zour on the west bank of the Euphrates River is also another victory for President Bashar Assad's forces, though largely symbolic in the Syrian military's bigger fight to capture most of the oil-rich province along the border with Iraq.

Deir el-Zour, which had been divided into a government-held and an IS-held part for nearly three years, is the largest city in eastern Syria and the capital of the province with the same name. It is also the largest to be recaptured by the Syrian government from IS.

The extremist group has lost more than 90 percent of the territory it once held in Iraq and Syria at the height of its power in 2014 and 2015, including Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in northern Syria. It also comes as Iraqi forces and allied Shiite militiamen are chasing IS remnants inside the town of Qaim, on the Iraqi side of the border.

The militants, routed from one urban stronghold after another, have recently been moving deeper into Syria's remote desert, where experts say they are regrouping and preparing to return to guerrilla-style attacks including scattered hit-and-run and suicide bombings.

In a statement, the Syrian military said it was now in full control of the city, after a weeks-long campaign carried out with allied forces. It said army units were now removing booby traps and mines left behind by the extremist group in the city.

Syrian government forces and their pro-government allies first broke the militant group's siege of their part of the city in September in a Russian-backed offensive, and have been advancing against IS positions since then. The city is the largest in eastern Syria and the capital of the province with the same name.

The Syrian army, backed by Russia and Iran, and Kurdish-led Syrian forces, backed by the United States, are now racing to take the rest of the oil-rich eastern province of Deir el-Zour, including the key town of Boukamal near the Iraqi border.

The Islamic State's last territorial stronghold in Iraq was the town of Qaim, across the border from the Syrian town of Boukamal.

An Iraqi officer in Iraq's western Anbar region said Friday that Iraqi forces have reached the border with Syria as they continue to close in on the pocket of militant-held territory.

The Iraqi forces are now pushing into western neighborhoods of Qaim, the joint command said and Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi pledged the battle will be finished within days.

Qaim, about 320 kilometers (200 miles), west of Baghdad in the Euphrates River Valley and has been used by IS to ferry fighters and supplies between the two countries at the height of the caliphate, when IS held nearly a third of both Iraq and Syria.

A statement posted on the Islamic State's news agency Amaq on Friday claimed IS fighters have repulsed an attempted attack by the Iraq army south of Qaim, with IS fighters allegedly destroying an

armored military vehicle and two other vehicles mounted with heavy machineguns.

Moscow's military involvement in the Syrian war since 2015 has propped up Assad's forces and turned the conflict in his favor, while Russian mediation earlier this year launched cease-fire talks in Astana, Kazakhstan. The talks, sponsored jointly with Iran and Turkey, have brokered local deals that have significantly reduced violence in the war-torn country.

"Army units, in cooperation with allied forces, liberated the city of Deir al-Zour completely from the Daesh terrorist organization," the Syrian military statement said, using the Arabic name for IS.

Footage posted on the website of the Syrian state news agency SANA shows the last moments of the fighting between the Syrian army and IS in Deir el-Zour, including shelling by Syrian tanks and plumes of smoke rising over the city's IS-held and mostly destroyed neighborhoods of Jamiyat and Jabiliyeh before they were liberated.

Karam reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Susannah George in Baghdad and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo contributed to this report.

Spanish judge mulls arrest warrant for ex-Catalan leader

MADRID (AP) — A Spanish judge is deliberating Friday on whether to issue an international arrest warrant for Catalonia's ousted leader a day after she jailed nine former members of the region's separatist government.

Catalan ex-president Carles Puigdemont flew to Brussels this week after Spanish authorities removed him and his 13-member Cabinet from office for pushing ahead with secession despite repeated warnings that it was illegal.

If an arrest warrant is issued, Puigdemont will fight extradition without seeking political asylum, according to his Belgian lawyer.

A panel of National Court judges will also consider on Friday an appeal to release two separatist activists who were jailed last month in a sedition investigation.

Assemblea Nacional Catalana leader Jordi Sanchez, and Omnium Cultural's Jordi Cuixart, are investigated in a sedition case for allegedly orchestrating protests in mid-September that hindered efforts to prevent a banned independence referendum.

Puigdemont was due to appear at Spain's National Court on Thursday to answer questions in a rebellion case brought by Spanish prosecutors, but he didn't show up.

Investigative magistrate Carmen Lamela sent eight of nine Catalan ex-officials who appeared for questioning, including former regional vice president Oriol Junqueras, to jail without bail.

On Friday, the judge ordered the release of Santi Vila, the former regional minister for business, after he posted bail of 50,000 euros (about \$58,000). His passport was confiscated and Vila needs to show up in court regularly as the rebellion, sedition and embezzlement probe continues.

Vila resigned in protest a day before Catalonia's parliament voted in favor of a declaration of independence on Oct. 27.

Prosecutors also requested an international warrant seeking Puigdemont's arrest. Under Spain's legal system, investigating judges can have suspects detained while a comprehensive probe, sometimes taking months, determines if they should be charged.

The jailing of the former Catalan government officials set off a new round of protests back in northeastern Catalonia. Several thousand people gathered on Thursday night in the main city of Barcelona and other towns to call for their release.

Puigdemont and his Cabinet were removed by Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy last week a day after the Catalan parliament voted in favor of a declaration of independence. Rajoy used extraordinary powers given to him by the Senate to depose the separatists, dissolve the regional legislature and call a regional election for Dec. 21.

Puigdemont surfaced in Belgium on Tuesday with some of his ex-ministers, saying they were seeking

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“freedom and safety” there. He and four of the officials remained in Brussels on Thursday.

Spain’s Supreme Court is also investigating six members of Catalonia’s parliament. The court postponed a hearing Thursday until next week to allow more time for them to prepare their defenses in the case.

In all, Spanish prosecutors are investigating 20 regional politicians for rebellion and other crimes that would be punishable by up to 30 years in prison.

The Catalan secession push is the worst institutional crisis to hit Spain in nearly four decades.

Spain’s central bank said on Thursday that a protracted political conflict could damage Spain’s, and especially Catalonia’s, economy. More than 1,000 companies have already relocated their headquarters from Catalonia to other parts of Spain because of the uncertainty.

Spain’s Ministry of Employment and Social Security said Friday that Catalonia led Spain’s 17 autonomous communities in job loss in October with nearly 15,000 more people out of work.

Joseph Wilson contributed to this report from Barcelona.

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. CONGRESS IS NO EXCEPTION

Current and former female members of Congress tell the AP they have been sexually harassed or subjected to hostile sexual comments by their male colleagues while serving in the House.

2. FROM THE WEST WING TO THE FAR EAST

President Trump’s first official visit to Asia gets underway Sunday in Japan. North Korea’s missile and nuclear weapons program is likely to dominate the first part of his trip, which also includes Seoul and Beijing.

3. HOMAGE TO THE VICTIMS

The eight people killed in a truck driver’s rampage were honored by friends and strangers with a night-time walk down the riverfront esplanade as both investigators and terror-weary New Yorkers tried to make sense of the crime.

4. WHICH CITY HAS BEEN FREED FROM IS

Syrian state media say the army has liberated the eastern city of Deir el-Zour from the Islamic State group, the latest loss for the retreating and decimated militants.

5. WHO COULD BE AFFECTING LEGAL SYSTEM

President Trump’s tweets are affecting court decisions as judges take account of his tweets and other seemingly unscripted remarks to assess the motivations beyond policies.

6. WHERE THE MALE SNIP IS BEING ENCOURAGED

Uganda, an African leader in taking on global health issues like AIDS, is turning to “champion men” to promote vasectomies in family planning.

7. GLASS-CEILING SHATTERING ECONOMIST SHUNTED ASIDE

Despite glowing reviews, President Trump is not offering Janet Yellen a second term, making her the first Fed chair in nearly 40 years not to be asked back.

8. WHOSE TIME MAY BE RUNNING OUT

A Spanish judge may issue an international arrest warrant for Catalonia’s ousted leader Carles Puigdemont after she already jailed nine former members of the region’s separatist government.

9. ITALIAN TOUR REACHING HOLY LAND

The famed annual multi-stage bicycle race Giro d’Italia, or Tour of Italy, will make its start next May in Jerusalem as organizers navigate a political obstacle course to map the race route.

10. LAST RUN AROUND THE FIVE BOROUGHS

Meb Keflezighi, the face of American long-distance running, wraps up his marathon career where it began in 2002 on the streets of New York on Sunday.

US bombers from Guam conduct exercise over Korean Peninsula

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Two U.S. supersonic bombers flew over the Korean Peninsula for bombing exercises that are also a show of force against North Korea ahead of President Donald Trump's first official visit to Asia.

A South Korean military official said Friday the B-1B bombers based in Guam were escorted by two South Korean F-16 fighter jets during the drills Thursday at a field near the South's eastern coast. The drills simulated attacks on land targets, but didn't involve live weapons, said the official, who did not want to be named, citing office rules.

North Korea's state media denounced the exercise as a "surprise nuclear strike drill" and says "gangster-like U.S. imperialists" are seeking to ignite a nuclear war.

The North Korean nuclear threat will likely overshadow Trump's trip to Asia, which starts Sunday in Japan and will include stops in South Korea, China, Vietnam and the Philippines.

In recent months, North Korea has tested intercontinental ballistic missiles that could reach the U.S. mainland with further development and has conducted its most powerful nuclear test. It also flew powerful new midrange missiles over Japan and threatened to launch them toward Guam, the U.S. Pacific territory and military hub.

The United States has responded by sending its strategic assets to the region more frequently for patrols or drills. That has angered North Korea, whose foreign minister said in September the North had "every right" to take countermeasures, including shooting down the U.S. warplanes, though many experts doubt it has the actual intent or ability to do so.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said Friday that the "U.S. imperialist warmongers" should not act rashly.

"The U.S. imperialists are making last-ditch efforts to check the dynamic advance of the DPRK by deploying their nuclear strategic assets in succession, but its army and people are never frightened at such moves," the report said, referring to North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Attack victims honored as city, investigators, seek answers

By DEEPTI HAJELA and ROBERT BUMSTEAD, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The eight people killed in a truck driver's rampage were honored by friends and strangers Thursday with a nighttime walk down the riverfront esplanade where the victims died as both investigators and terror-weary New Yorkers tried to make sense of the crime.

Some of the marchers carried candles as city lights twinkled on the water. Others pushed bicycles in solidarity with the victims, who were cut down on the long bike path that runs the length of Manhattan's Hudson River waterfront.

The mourners included Harry Kassen, a student at the Manhattan school where one of the victims, Nicholas Cleves, 23, worked part-time.

"You never think it is going to be someone you know," said Kassen, 17. He said he'd just recently worked with Cleves on lighting and sound for a school performance.

"We were up in the tech booth, chatting. Then, two weeks later, here we are. And he's gone," Kassen said.

The march began near the spot where authorities say Sayfullo Saipov, 29, an immigrant from Uzbekistan, steered a rented truck onto a bike path and sped south toward the World Trade Center, striking cyclists and pedestrians in his path. He was shot by a police officer after crashing the truck into a school bus and arraigned Wednesday on terrorism charges.

Two women carried the flag of Argentina, in remembrance of the five people from that country who were killed when Saipov's truck plowed into a group of friends who had come to New York together to celebrate the 30th anniversary of their high school graduation.

The memorial walk and vigil took place hours after several of the Argentinian survivors of the attack visited a severely injured and hospitalized member of their group, Martin Marro, of Newton, Massachusetts,

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to tell him for the first time which of his friends had died.

"I think Martin had to know the truth. Maybe he already imagined that but now he knows and is a step that his friends wanted to take before returning to Argentina," Argentina's consul in New York, Mateo Estreme, told reporters in Spanish. "It was something very emotional for all of them."

New York officials on Thursday began to put up temporary concrete barriers at 57 locations where it is possible for vehicles to turn onto the bike path where the attack took place.

Long stretches of the path are shielded from traffic by berms planted with trees and shrubs, but vehicles have gotten onto it before. A cyclist was killed at nearly the same spot where some of the victims were struck in 2006 when a drunk driver entered the path by mistake.

For years, the city and private property owners concerned about truck bombs and other attacks have been gradually installing thousands of metal posts to block vehicles from getting onto sidewalks and public plazas. In May, one of those bollards halted a car speeding down a crowded sidewalk in Times Square, but not until it had killed one person and injured more than 20.

The New York Police Department's top counterterrorism official, John Miller, said investigators still hadn't uncovered evidence that Saipov had any accomplices in the attack, but said information was still being gathered.

A propaganda arm of the Islamic State group called Saipov "a soldier of the caliphate." A message in an Islamic State weekly newspaper used the term in an item published late Thursday. That item then was translated by the SITE Intelligence Group. The Islamic State group has an interest in taking credit for attacks carried out by individuals who are self-radicalized.

In their search for clues, FBI investigators have questioned Saipov's wife and some of his acquaintances, including a fellow immigrant from Uzbekistan, Mukhammadzoi Kadirov, who said he had gotten to know him when they were both Uber drivers.

On Thursday, Kadirov released a statement to The Associated Press through a person in touch with his family condemning the plot.

"It is so sad and unbelievable. This not from our religion. It is not acceptable. We as Muslims completely reject this kind of actions. No human being who has a heart can do this," the statement said.

Two mosques in Paterson, New Jersey, where Saipov lived, said they have been receiving threats since the attack. The Islamic Center of Passaic County said it has gotten eight telephone threats to burn the center down and kill its occupants, prompting extra police patrols.

President Donald Trump tweeted out messages early Thursday calling for Saipov's execution.

In a highly unusual instance of a president weighing in on the fate of a defendant awaiting trial, Trump wrote that prosecutors "Should move fast. DEATH PENALTY!"

The comments could give defense attorneys grounds to argue that Trump has poisoned the minds of potential jurors, but some legal experts said they doubted judges in Manhattan's federal courts would let the president's remarks derail the case in a courthouse with a quarter-century record of swift terrorism prosecutions with mostly airtight outcomes.

Lawyers differed over whether Trump was out ethically out of bounds.

"Even presidents are entitled to First Amendment rights," said Michael Wildes, a former federal prosecutor.

Joshua Dratel, a veteran defense attorney in terrorism cases, said the tweets should disqualify prosecutors from seeking the death penalty.

"It's inconceivable that it would be fair to seek the death penalty when the president has expressed it twice in a tweet," he said. "It poisons the jurors, all the prospective jurors."

Meanwhile, Saipov's court-appointed lawyer, David Patton, said he hopes "everyone lets the judicial process play out."

Associated Press writers Claudia Torrens, Tamara Lush, Colleen Long, Larry Neumeister and Karen Matthews contributed to this report.

Questions arise over departure of first woman to lead Fed

BY CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly four years into Janet Yellen's history-making turn as the first woman to lead the Federal Reserve, the economy is growing, the unemployment rate is low and the stock market is setting record highs.

President Donald Trump says Yellen is a "spectacular person" and doing a "terrific job." But he's not offering her a second term, making her the first Fed chair in nearly 40 years not to be asked back.

Some are questioning why the president is moving aside the glass-ceiling-shattering economist.

"You have to guess gender has something to do with this," said Heidi Hartmann, president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research. "I would hazard a guess that most Fed leaders who have done as well as Janet have not been replaced."

Hartmann, an economist who pushed for Yellen's appointment, added that former chair Alan Greenspan "managed to transcend parties. Why can't Janet?"

Trump announced Thursday that that he would replace Yellen at the end of her term in early February. He is nominating Republican board member Jerome "Jay" Powell to take over the powerful job, which steers interest-rate policy and plays an essential role in maintaining economic stability.

The past three chairs of the Fed have all served two or more terms, winning approval of presidents from both parties. Yellen was nominated in 2013 by President Barack Obama, after serving as vice chairwoman.

Trump, who attacked Yellen on the campaign trail, has been more positive of late.

As the president announced he was going elsewhere for a Fed chair, he said of Yellen: "For the past four years, she has served with dedication and devotion and we are grateful for her total commitment to public service."

But Yellen has not always been in line with Trump's interests, for example, taking a cautious approach to raising interest rates. She has been an outspoken advocate for the stricter financial regulations that took effect in 2010 to prevent another crisis.

Stephen Moore, an economist at the Heritage Foundation who was a senior economic adviser to Trump's campaign, said Trump wants someone who will support loosening regulations. He also said the president simply wanted his own person in place.

"The job of the Fed chair is not just to be the lead person on monetary policy. This is the chief economic voice of the nation," said Moore. "She's not with the program."

Ever a showman, Trump teased his plans for months. He publicly considered several alternatives to Yellen — all men — but also praised her during a recent interview with Fox Business.

"You like to make your own mark, which is maybe one of the things she's got a little bit against her, but I think she is terrific. We've had a great talk and we are obviously doing great together, you look at the markets," Trump said.

To Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., Trump's decision shows "his focus is not on creating jobs or raising wages or stopping another financial crisis, but on reversing any decision President Obama made."

Diane Swonk, chief economist at DS Economics, praised Yellen's legacy saying that "she got to make the pivot from crisis-era policies to stamina. Under her we got our second wind."

Swonk said not giving Yellen another term was "highly unusual" given her qualifications. But she added that "every president does have the right to choose their own Fed chair."

Yellen, who headed the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco and has been an economics professor at the University of California at Berkeley, sought to pave the way for more diversity within her profession. In a speech at Brown in May, she noted that "even in my own field of economics, women constitute only about one-third of Ph.D. recipients, a number that has barely budged in two decades."

Dean Baker, co-founder of the Center for Economic and Policy Research think tank, said Yellen's focus on diversity has "really mattered." He also praised her leadership record, saying that by "any objective measure" there has been major progress with the economy.

Baker said passing over Yellen was notable. He added: "There has been a tradition of reappointing people unless they've been a disaster."

Yellen herself issued a statement congratulating Powell. She said she was "committed to working with him to ensure a smooth transition."

But she did not attend the Rose Garden announcement of her successor, as past Fed chairs have done.

Despite tough talk, Trump follows Obama on terror suspects

By SADIE GURMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump promised he would fill the military prison at Guantanamo Bay with "bad dudes" and slammed the Obama administration for prosecuting terrorists in U.S. courts. But so far, Trump has treated terror suspects just as President Barack Obama did, passing on Guantanamo in favor of having his own Justice Department lawyers try them in federal court.

The strongest sign yet that he is retreating from his earlier promise came Thursday, when Trump conceded that the civilian courts offer a swifter way to bring terror suspects to justice in the communities they attacked.

A day after he assailed the U.S. criminal justice system as a "joke" and a "laughingstock," Trump backed off his threat to send the suspect in Tuesday's New York bike path rampage to the troubled military commission system at Guantanamo.

"Statistically that process takes much longer than going through the Federal system," Trump said in an early morning tweet, adding that there is "also something appropriate" about keeping him "in the home of the horrible crime he committed."

It was legally questionable whether the Trump administration could have sent 29-year-old Sayfullo Saipov to Guantanamo, in part because the courts have not ruled whether the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force — which permits the government to detain enemy combatants for the duration of a military conflict — applies to the Islamic State and its followers. And no one held within the U.S. has been sent to Guantanamo since the detention center opened in January 2002 to hold suspected members of al-Qaida and the Taliban.

Trump has passed on other chances to send suspects there, including earlier this week, when the Justice Department said a militant captured in Libya and accused of playing an instrumental role in the 2012 Benghazi attacks would be prosecuted in federal court in Washington, where a trial for the alleged mastermind is already under way.

On Wednesday, the U.S. announced that a man arrested in Bosnia had been brought to New York to face charges that he abandoned the United States in 2013 to join the Islamic State group. And the administration this summer sent an al-Qaida suspect linked to a plot to kill a Swedish cartoonist from Spain to Philadelphia to face terrorism charges in federal court, another break from Trump's tough-on-terror talk.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who has long argued that terror suspects should be prosecuted at the military prison, expressed confidence Thursday that the U.S. justice system can handle terror suspects like Saipov, an immigrant from Uzbekistan who authorities say was inspired by the Islamic State.

Sessions said the administration would "use all lawful tools at our disposal" in the fight against terror, leaving open the possibility of sending suspects to Guantanamo, but touting for the first time the hundreds of terrorism-related convictions the Justice Department has secured since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Trump's early record is a far cry from the rhetoric of his fellow Republicans who for years demanded terror suspects be held as enemy combatants.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said Thursday he was "dumbfounded as to why the Trump administration still follows the Obama playbook when it comes to dealing with terror suspects." Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona made a similar call for Saipov to be interrogated as an enemy combatant, without some of the protections afforded under the American legal system.

Trump's argument that Saipov should be tried in the same place where he committed his attack closely resembles the one Obama and former Attorney General Eric Holder made in trying to move the five men accused in the Sept. 11 attacks from Guantanamo to New York for trial in a civilian court. That effort that was derailed by political opposition. The men remain at Guantanamo and have yet to be tried. Their cases

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are likely years from resolution.

Holder expressed vindication after Trump changed course Thursday, writing on Twitter: "Those who criticized my decision to try 9/11 plotters in federal system take note. I was right. 16 years-no justice. Use courts-not Gitmo."

Just seven men have been convicted at Guantanamo either by trial before military commission or through plea bargains, including four whose convictions were later overturned on appeal or invalidated.

Mary McCord, who oversaw the Justice Department's National Security Division before her departure in April, said she hoped Trump and Sessions were beginning to recognize the long and successful track record of federal terrorism prosecutors.

"It's a good sign that the president and the attorney general are listening to the advice of counterterrorism prosecutors, career professionals who have a lot to offer" when it comes making decisions about where to try such suspects.

But the Justice Department said only that such decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and wouldn't say whether the recent cases are a sign of any formal policy. It remains to be seen how the administration will handle a U.S. citizen picked up on the Syrian battlefield in September for allegedly fighting with Islamic State militants.

In at least a physical sense, there are no practical reasons why the U.S. couldn't hold someone at Guantanamo. The detention center, which reached a maximum population of about 680 in the summer of 2003, is now down to just 41.

Cuba official accuses US of lying about sonic attacks

By LUIS ALONSO LUGO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Cuba's foreign minister on Thursday accused the United States of lying about mysterious sonic attacks that U.S. diplomats in Havana say left them with ailments including headaches, hearing problems and concussions.

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez said the U.S. was "deliberately lying" about the attacks, which Cuba's government has denied any knowledge of.

Speaking at a news conference, Rodriguez alleged the issue has been used "as a political pretext for damaging bilateral relations and eliminating the progress made" under U.S. President Barack Obama.

Rodriguez said the dispute has caused delays in proposed public health cooperation and technical meetings on agriculture as well as cultural, sporting and student events.

The Trump administration has said that 24 U.S. officials or their relatives were subjected to deliberate attacks by a still-undetermined culprit. Many officials reported being subjected to loud, grating noises before falling ill.

The U.S. has not accused Cuba's government of carrying out the attacks, but says it has not met its obligation to protect diplomats on its territory.

Cuba has said it does not possess any technology capable of carrying out a sonic attack, and Rodriguez said the broad range of symptoms reported indicates they could not have a single cause.

The U.S. has cut staffing at its Havana embassy by 60 percent in response to the incidents, expelled Cuban diplomats from their embassy in Washington, issued a travel warning for Americans going to Cuba and stopped issuing visas for Cubans in Havana.

The measures have sent U.S.-Cuba relations plummeting from a high point under Obama and cut into the increasingly important flow of tourists to Cuba, whose economy went into recession last year for the first time in more than two decades.

Frizzy-haired, smaller-headed orangutan may be new great ape

By **STEPHEN WRIGHT** and **ANDI JATMIKO**, Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A remote population of frizzy-haired orangutans on the Indonesian island of Sumatra seems to be a new species of primate, scientists say.

But the purportedly newest member of the family tree of advanced animals that include humans may not be around much longer. Their numbers are so small, and their habitat so fragmented, that they are in danger of going extinct, say the scientists who studied them.

A study published Thursday in the journal *Current Biology* said there are no more than 800 of the primates, which researchers named *Pongo tapanuliensis*, making it the most endangered great ape species.

The researchers say the population is highly vulnerable and its habitat is facing further pressure from development.

"If steps are not taken quickly to reduce current and future threats to conserve every last remaining bit of forest we may see the discovery and extinction of a great ape species within our lifetime," they said.

It's the first great ape species to be described by scientists in nearly 90 years. Previously, science has recognized six great ape species: Sumatran and Bornean orangutans, eastern and western gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos. Some scientists also classify humans as great apes but others argue for a separate categorization.

The research is based on analysis of the skeleton of an adult male killed in a conflict with villagers, a genetic study indicating the population's evolutionary split from other orangutans occurred about 3.4 million years ago, and analysis since 2006 of behavioral and habitat differences.

The primates are confined to a range of about 1,100 square kilometers (425 square miles) in the Batang Toru forest in the Tapanuli districts of Northern Sumatra. Historically, the population had low levels of interbreeding with Sumatran orangutans further north but that completely ceased 10,000 to 20,000 years ago, according to the genetic study.

Aside from genetic evidence and the physical differences that include frizzier hair and a smaller head, other unique characteristics include diet, restriction of habitat to upland areas and the male's long call.

There is no standardized international system for recognition of new species, but to be taken seriously a discovery requires at least publication in a credible peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Primatologist Russell Mittermeier, head of the primate specialist group at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, called the finding a "remarkable discovery" that puts the onus on the Indonesian government to ensure the species survives.

Mittermeier, who was not one of the 37 authors of the study, said he was "very excited" by the research.

Last year, the IUCN classified Bornean orangutans as critically endangered due to a precipitous population decline caused by destruction of their forest habitat for palm oil and pulp wood plantations. Sumatran orangutans have been classified as critically endangered since 2008.

Matthew Nowak, one of the study's authors, said the Tapanuli orangutans live in three pockets of forest that are separated by non-protected areas.

"For the species to be viable into the future, those three fragments need to be reconnected via forest corridors," he said.

Additionally, the authors are recommending that development plans for the region including a hydropower plant be stopped by the government.

"It is imperative that all remaining forest be protected and that a local management body works to ensure the protection of the Batang Toru ecosystem," Novak said.

Wiratno, the director general of conservation of natural resources and ecosystems at Indonesia's Forestry and Environment Ministry, told a news conference in Jakarta that most of Batang Toru forest was designated as protected in December 2015.

He said its management will be a priority and is a "great challenge."

"We are deeply committed to maintaining the survival of this species," said Wiratno, who uses one name.

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The Batang Toru orangutan population was found during a field survey by researcher Erik Meijaard in 1997 and a research station was established in the area in 2006.

It was not until 2013, when the adult male skeleton became available, that scientists realized how unique the population was, which sparked the largest genomic study of wild orangutans ever carried out to provide further evidence of a third orangutan species.

Wright reported from Bangkok.

US rate for gun deaths increases for second straight year

By MIKE STOBBE, AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. rate for gun deaths has increased for the second straight year, following 15 years of no real change, a government report shows.

Roughly two-thirds of gun deaths are suicides and those have been increasing for about 10 years. Until recently, that has been offset by a decline in people shot dead by others. But there's been a recent upswing in those gun-related homicides, too, some experts said.

Overall, the firearm death rate rose to 12 deaths per 100,000 people last year, up from 11 in 2015, according to the report released Friday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Before that, the rate had hovered just above 10 — a level it had fallen to in the late 1990s.

In the early 90s, it was as high as 15 per 100,000 people.

In the past two years, sharp homicide increases in Chicago and other places that have been large enough to elevate the national statistics. According to the FBI's raw numbers, the tally of U.S. homicides involving guns rose to nearly 11,000 last year, from about 9,600 the year before.

Overall, there were more than 38,000 gun deaths last year, according to the CDC. That's up from about 36,000 in 2015, and around 33,500 each year between 2011 and 2014.

The latest CDC report means the nation is approaching two decades since there's been any substantial improvement in the rate of gun deaths, said Dr. Garen Wintemute, a prominent gun violence researcher at the University of California, Davis.

The rate for the first three months of this year was about what it was for the same period last year. Hopefully, it's a sign it will level off again, Wintemute said.

Most gun deaths tend to happen in warm weather so it's too early to know what is happening this year, said Bob Anderson, the CDC's chief of mortality statistics.

The CDC also reported a continued increase in the death rate from drug overdoses, which hit 20 per 100,000 last year, up from 16 the year before. Heroin and other opioids are driving the deadliest drug epidemic in U.S. history.

Online:

CDC report: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>

Spain judge jails Catalan ministers, mulls leader's arrest

By CIARAN GILES and ARITZ PARRA, Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — A Spanish judge jailed nine former members of Catalonia's separatist government Thursday and was deliberating a possible international arrest warrant for the region's ousted president, who remained in Belgium while the others appeared in a Madrid court for questioning about their efforts to break away from Spain.

Former President Carles Puigdemont and his 13-member Cabinet are being investigated for rebellion, sedition and embezzlement stemming from their pursuit of Catalan independence. The Spanish government removed them from office on Oct. 27 and they were summoned to appear in Spain's National Court on Thursday.

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After the nine Catalan Cabinet members who showed up were questioned, a judge sent eight of them to jail without bail. One was ordered held in lieu of 50,000 euros (\$58,300) in bail. The seven men and two women were taken from the court in police vans hours later and assigned to prisons in the Madrid area.

Thousands of protesters took to the streets of Catalan towns to condemn the pre-charge detentions, which fellow separatist politicians and elected officials criticized as an attack on ideas.

"We won't give up, we won't fail, we will fight till the end," Marta Rovira, an increasingly prominent politician in Catalonia's republican-left ERC party, said.

"We have all the right in the world to live in a country with more justice, dignity and freedom," she told reporters as tear welled in her eyes.

The Spanish government said it does not comment on judges' decisions in deference to the separation of powers.

Investigative magistrate Carmen Lamela ordered the officials into custody at the request of prosecutors, who also asked Thursday for an international warrant seeking Puigdemont's arrest. Under Spain's legal system, investigating judges can have suspects detained while a comprehensive probe, sometimes taking months, determines if they should be charged.

Puigdemont surfaced in Belgium on Tuesday with some of his ex-ministers, saying they were seeking "freedom and safety" there. He and four of the officials remained in Brussels on Thursday.

Asked whether Puigdemont would turn himself in if the arrest warrant is granted, his lawyer in Belgium, Paul Bekaert, told The Associated Press: "Certainly. Or the police will come get him." Bekaert said Puigdemont intends to cooperate with Belgian police.

Also Thursday, six Catalan lawmakers appeared for a parallel session in the Spanish Supreme Court. They were given a week to prepare their defenses and instructed to return for questioning on Nov. 9.

In all, Spanish prosecutors are investigating 20 regional politicians for rebellion and other crimes that would be punishable by up to 30 years in prison.

In a written ruling, the National Court judge said the eight jailed without bail had planned and executed a roadmap since 2015 to create an independent Catalan republic.

The ruling said the activities of those under investigation were "meditated and perfectly prepared and organized, repeatedly disobeying systematically over two years Constitutional Court resolutions in favor of the independence."

The judge said the eight were being jailed without the possibility of bail because of the risk of them fleeing prosecution or hiding or destroying evidence.

Lawyers for the jailed officials said they planned to appeal Lamela's order. Jaume Alonso-Cuevillas, who represents Puigdemont and four more of the ousted Cabinet members, said the judge's decision to send them to jail "lacked justification" and was "disproportionate."

The Catalan officials' supporters and party aides in Madrid were seen crying outside the courthouse when the judge's decision was announced. They shouted "Freedom! Freedom!" and sang the Catalan official anthem, "Els Segadors," which translates to "The Reapers" in English.

Spain took the unprecedented step of triggering constitutional powers allowing it to take over running Catalonia following a declaration of independence by the regional parliament on Oct. 27. Madrid dismissed the Catalan Cabinet, dissolved the parliament and called a new regional election for Dec. 21.

Junqueras, in a tweet sent shortly after the judge's decision, called on Catalans to cast ballots to defeat unionists.

"Do every day everything that is in your hands in order for good to defeat evil in the ballots of Dec. 21," the tweet posted through Junqueras' account said. "Standing up, with determination and onward to victory."

Puigdemont, also in a tweet, wrote that "the legitimate government of Catalonia has been jailed for its ideas."

Javier Melero, a lawyer representing some of the separatist lawmakers investigated in the Supreme Court, criticized Puigdemont and the four ministers who skipped court. He said their actions would be damaging for his clients, three lawmakers who are members of Puigdemont's PDeCAT party.

"Not being at the service of the judiciary when you are summoned is always damaging for the rest of those being investigated," Melero said.

About two dozen politicians and elected officials from Catalan separatist parties gathered at the gates of the Supreme Court in a show of support for the lawmakers under investigation.

"If the question is if in Spain you can trust the judicial system, my answer is no," said Artur Mas, a former president of the Catalan government. "From the personal point of view and also for my personal experience, I don't think that there are all the guarantees to have a fair trial."

Mas was banned by a Barcelona court from holding public office for two years after he ignored a Constitutional Court ruling and went ahead with a mock vote on Catalonia's independence in 2014.

Across the street, half a dozen protesters with Spanish flags were stopped by police. They shouted at the Catalan politicians, "cowards" and "to jail, to jail."

The protracted political crisis over Catalonia, Spain's worst in decades, could have an impact on the country's economic growth, Spain's central bank warned in a report published Thursday.

Sylvain Plazy in Belgium, Paolo Santalucia in Madrid, and Elena Becatoros in Barcelona, contributed to this report.

Trump's tweets seen as unlikely to slow New York terror case

By COLLEEN LONG and LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump's tweets calling for the death penalty for the man charged in the New York truck rampage could give defense attorneys grounds to argue that Trump has poisoned the minds of potential jurors. But some legal experts doubt that argument will slow the case.

In a highly unusual instance of a president weighing in on the fate of a defendant awaiting trial, Trump said on Twitter that 29-year-old Sayfullo Saipov "SHOULD GET DEATH PENALTY!" in the attack that left eight people dead. In another tweet, Trump said prosecutors "Should move fast. DEATH PENALTY!"

Some legal experts Thursday said judges in Manhattan's federal courts will not let the president's remarks slow the case or throw it off track, especially in a courthouse with a quarter-century record of swift terrorism prosecutions with mostly airtight outcomes.

"Nothing slows down the train," said James Cohen, a professor at Fordham Law School. He said the yet-to-be-assigned judge will question prospective jurors to ensure they can be fair despite anything they might have heard or read.

Lawyers differed over whether Trump was out of bounds.

"Even presidents are entitled to First Amendment rights," said Michael Wildes, a former federal prosecutor.

Joshua Dratel, a veteran defense attorney in terrorism cases, would not predict what a judge might do, but he said the tweets should disqualify prosecutors from seeking the death penalty.

"It's inconceivable that it would be fair to seek the death penalty when the president has expressed it twice in a tweet," he said. "It poisons the jurors, all the prospective jurors."

In bringing terrorism charges against Saipov, federal prosecutors Wednesday said the Uzbek immigrant used a rental truck to mow down people along a bike path after being inspired by Islamic State propaganda videos.

Investigators continued poring over Saipov's phone records and online contacts and combing surveillance footage to reconstruct his movements in the weeks before the rampage.

They were also interviewing acquaintances and family, including his wife, who according to a law enforcement official was cooperative and claimed she did not know about the attack beforehand. The official who was not authorized to discuss the investigation and spoke on condition of anonymity.

At one point, the FBI put out a bulletin seeking any information on a fellow Uzbek immigrant, Mukhammadzoi Kadirov, but quickly canceled it after locating him.

The law enforcement official said Kadirov was a friend of Saipov's and may not have a role in the case at all, but authorities got suspicious because he "went off the radar" when they went to speak with him.

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He was questioned and released.

John Miller, the New York Police Department's deputy commissioner for counterterrorism and intelligence, told CBS that authorities so far believe Saipov acted alone.

A propaganda arm of the Islamic State group called Saipov "a soldier of the caliphate." A message in an Islamic State weekly newspaper used the term in an item published late Thursday. That item then was translated by the SITE Intelligence Group. The Islamic State group has an interest in taking credit for attacks carried out by individuals who are self-radicalized.

Also Thursday, Attorney General Jeff Sessions told members of law enforcement in New York in a visit scheduled before the attack that the U.S. justice system can handle suspects like Saipov.

He noted over 500 defendants have been convicted of terrorism-related crimes since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Saipov is being held without bail at a Manhattan federal lockup next to the courthouse. His attorney, David Patton, has said he hopes "everyone lets the judicial process play out." He did not respond to a request for comment Thursday.

On Thursday, about 100 mourners remembered the victims in a candlelight vigil and march along the route where Saipov's vehicle entered the bike path and crashed into the bus.

On Wednesday, Trump called the U.S. justice system a slow-moving "joke" and "laughingstock" and said he would be open to seeing Saipov transferred to the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where enemy combatants are tried by military tribunals.

But the president appeared to reverse course a day later, tweeting that "statistically that process takes much longer than going through the Federal system."

Justice can, in fact, be swift in Manhattan's federal courts. Two weeks ago, a jury took four hours to convict a man in a September 2016 bombing in New York City that wounded 30 people.

In 1994, four men were sentenced to life in prison 15 months after they carried out a February 1993 World Trade Center bombing that killed six people and injured over 1,000 others.

Attorney Ron Kuby, who represented a blind Egyptian sheik sentenced to life in prison after a Manhattan terrorism trial, said Trump's tweets, if anything, could work against his desire to see the death penalty.

"Particularly in New York, if he's for it, we're against it," Kuby said.

Associated Press writers Jennifer Peltz, Tom Hays, Karen Matthews and Kiley Armstrong in New York contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show that Saipov's wife said she did not know about the attack beforehand.

Officials disagree on Puerto Rico power restoration timeline

By DANICA COTO, Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Officials in the U.S. and Puerto Rico gave differing views Thursday on when power will be fully restored to the U.S. territory after Hurricane Maria hit as a Category 4 storm more than a month ago.

Ricardo Ramos, director of the state-owned power company, said the utility has restored 35 percent of the electrical system's regular output and expects to reach 50 percent by mid-November and 95 percent by mid-December. But Ray Alexander, director of contingency operations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said the corps' goal is to have 50 percent restored by the end of November and 75 percent by the end of January.

"We are focused on executing the mission we've been assigned," Alexander said at a hearing in Washington, adding that the agency has been working with the U.S. Department of Energy to help develop a more resilient electrical grid for Puerto Rico.

Gov. Ricardo Rossello criticized the Army Corps of Engineers earlier this week for what he said was a

lack of urgency in responding to Puerto Rico's island-wide blackout.

The discrepancy came as President Donald Trump cleared the way for additional federal funding for Puerto Rico by amending a September disaster declaration to increase the share of rebuilding and recovery costs borne by the U.S. government.

Trump had already authorized the Federal Emergency Management Agency to pay 100 percent of some cleanup and emergency costs for 180 days. Washington will now pay 90 percent of the additional cost of rebuilding Puerto Rico, including repair of public infrastructure like hospitals, bridges and roads and restoration of the island's devastated power grid.

Typically, U.S. states cover 25 percent of those costs, with federal taxpayers covering 75 percent. Puerto Rico's finances were in shambles even before the storm made landfall in September.

A large swath of the island still has no electricity, and complaints are widespread among business owners who say losses are mounting and from parents who say their children need to start school. Nearly 20 percent of the island remains without water since Maria hit Sept. 20 with winds of up to 154 mph, killing at least 55 people. Tens of thousands have lost their jobs and some say more than 470,000 people could leave the island in upcoming years.

"If we don't re-establish power and other basic services, the damage to our economy will be even greater," said Puerto Rico's public affairs secretary, Ramon Rosario. "We cannot allow that, and we have established clear goals."

The difference in estimates came two days after the state-owned utility canceled a heavily scrutinized \$300 million contract awarded to Whitefish Energy Holdings. The Montana-based company is located in the hometown of U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and had only two full-time employees before the storm hit. Crews subcontracted by Whitefish will finish their projects before Nov. 30, officials said.

Ramos continued to praise Whitefish despite local and federal audits of the contract. "They've performed very well," he said.

Ramos said he is recommending that Oklahoma-based Cobra Acquisitions, which has a \$200 million contract with the government, subcontract the workers Whitefish had employed if the contract allows for it. Ramos also said Cobra's contract is "practically" the same as the one awarded to Whitefish.

He said the power company sent letters requesting help and received responses from the American Public Power Association and Edison Electric Institute. In addition, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Thursday that his state's power authority would send 350 workers and 220 bucket trucks next week along with special equipment. It also is sending a tactical power restoration team that includes 28 engineers and 15 damage assessment experts.

The Army Corps of Engineers said it also expects about 2,100 workers to arrive by mid-November to help restore power.

Suspect walked off job hours before Colorado Walmart attack

By P. SOLOMON BANDA and KATHLEEN FOODY, Associated Press

THORNTON, Colo. (AP) — A man accused of opening fire inside a suburban Denver Walmart, killing three people, abruptly walked away from his roofing company job hours before the attack, his former boss said Thursday.

Scott Ostrem's employer and neighbors painted a somewhat dueling portrait of the suspect.

Ostrem worked at a metal fabrication shop for the last three years without any problems, said David Heidt of B&M Roofing. He called Ostrem a quiet worker who was skilled at making metal flashing for roofs. But midmorning Wednesday, he left his work station without explanation.

Two men and a woman were killed at the store that evening.

Though quiet at work, Ostrem's neighbors described him as a hostile loner who cursed at them and often carried a shotgun in and out of his third-floor unit.

Police arrested Ostrem, 47, following a brief chase Thursday morning in the northern Denver suburb of Thornton, several blocks from his apartment building and about 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the Walmart.

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Ostrem was handcuffed at a crowded intersection about 14 hours after the shooting that sent dozens of shoppers and workers fleeing in panic from the busy store. Police spokesman Victor Avila declined to say whether Ostrem had a weapon.

Killed were Pamela Marques, 52, Carlos Moreno, 66, and Victor Vasquez, 26, the coroner said. None were Walmart employees, and all were Hispanic.

Ostrem is white. Police offered no possible motive for the shooting other than to say there was nothing to suggest it was related to terrorism.

Ostrem was identified as a suspect after investigators reviewed surveillance video, police said, though they first had to rule out "a few" other people who drew weapons when the gunman opened fire. Avila said he didn't know if any of the people were security officers employed by Walmart.

At the Samuel Park Apartments building where Ostrem lived, most tenants talk to each other, but renter Teresa Muniz said Ostrem never returned her greetings and swore at people for sitting on exterior stairways and leaving laundry in communal machines.

"He didn't seem to have anybody," she said. "Being angry all the time. That's what he seemed like, always angry."

Muniz said she sometimes saw Ostrem carrying a shotgun or a bow and set of arrows to and from the building, which faces the back side of a liquor store, a dollar store and a cellphone store.

Gerald Burnett, a 63-year-old retiree who lives in a first-floor unit, said he was sitting on the stairs drinking coffee one morning when Ostrem came down, told him to move and cursed at him.

"Dude had an attitude, big time," Burnett said. "He's the type of person if you said, 'Good morning,' he wouldn't say nothing. If you greeted him, he wouldn't say anything back. I just learned not to even talk to the clown."

Thornton is a mostly blue-collar community where about a third of its 136,000 residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. It's about 10 miles (16 kilometers) north of downtown Denver.

Ostrem had minor run-ins with police dating to the 1990s, including a December 1999 charge of resisting arrest in Denver that was dismissed the following year.

In September 2015, Ostrem filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and listed his income for the previous year as \$47,028.00. He estimated that he owed more than \$85,000, including credit card debt.

There was no evidence Ostrem had ever worked for Walmart, spokesman Ragan Dickens said.

Witnesses said the shooter walked calmly into the store, opened fire and fled.

Marlena and Jason Fobb said they were paying for a vacuum and contact lenses when a man at a nearby register was shot.

"We were all looking at each other like, 'Oh gosh, this is it,'" Marlena Fobb said.

The couple and others hid in a small storage room, she said. When officers arrived, they told them to "hurry and run" and not look at bodies, she added.

Associated Press writers Tatiana Flowers, Nicholas Riccardi and Colleen Slevin in Denver and news researchers Jennifer Farrar, Randy Herschaft and Monika Mathur in New York contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to state that the suspect's age is 47, not 37.

GOP tax plan may offer little aid for many in middle class

By JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republicans have stressed that the tax plan they unveiled Thursday is tailored to benefit America's middle class. Just how much it would remain uncertain based on the details that have been provided so far.

What is clear is that many of the benefits for the middle class could dwindle over time, even while companies and wealthy individuals could enjoy lasting tax advantages.

The plan promises tax savings next year of \$1,182 for a typical household of four with gross income of

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\$59,000, leaving their tax bill at \$400.

"We are focused on increasing paychecks in a major way," said Rep. Kevin Brady, the Republican chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

But the proposal's conflicting provisions and phase-outs of certain benefits suggest that taxes could rise for some middle class earners over time. And for many, the income gains being touted by President Donald Trump are unlikely to materialize.

Some of these complications arise because under the budget instructions, the planned tax cuts can't increase the national debt by more than \$1.5 trillion over the next decade. Anything above \$1.5 trillion would force Republicans to amend their plan to generate more revenue — a change that would likely prove difficult.

Trump has frequently said that this would be the biggest tax cut in U.S. history. But outside analyses show that that's not the case.

The tax plan's primary beneficiaries would be wealthier Americans, who would enjoy lower tax rates despite the elimination of some breaks, a repeal of the so-called alternative minimum tax and the termination of the estate tax.

"With the details they've presented to us so far, it looks like the tax cut benefits the wealthy and major corporations," said Martin Sullivan, chief economist at Tax Analysts and a former staff economist at the Treasury Department. "In fact, if you have a large family, given the facts that we have now, that you would pay more in taxes."

Here's why:

A married couple making less than \$90,000 would be taxed at a 12 percent rate, instead of the current 15 percent. The size of their standard deduction would nearly double to \$24,000.

But that same couple would lose personal exemptions — deductions that largely benefit families with multiple children. The child tax credit would rise to \$1,600 from \$1,000 — short of the \$2,000 that Sullivan said would be needed to make many families whole.

The tax plan would also repeal the deduction of substantial medical costs, including what families might spend on nursing home care. Nor could people with student loans deduct the interest paid on the debt anymore.

And the plan would cap the deduction of state and local taxes. It also would use a less generous measure of inflation, so that more middle class taxpayers would creep into a higher bracket over several years.

All told, nearly 70 percent of the tax cuts would go to businesses over 10 years, according to an analysis by the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. The rest of the tax cuts appear to favor the wealthy.

Gary Cohn, the president's top economic adviser, said Thursday at the Economic Club of Washington that the objective was to help the middle class. But he declined to say whether the wealthy would benefit.

"The hard part about taxes is everyone has got their own unique set of circumstances," Cohn said.

The plan is already showing some splintering along ideological lines.

The conservative Tax Foundation's analysis of how different families would fare under the plan suggested that the largest cuts as a percentage of taxes paid would go next year to sample couples earning between \$48,000 and \$85,000. Even a married couple with two children earning \$165,000 would receive a reduction.

But liberal groups stressed the analysis of nonpartisan groups that the benefits would flow largely flow to major companies and the top 1 percent of earners over time as tax breaks such as a new family credit would expire after five years.

"Tax cuts for the well-off are forever," said Gene Sperling, a former top economic aide in the Obama and Clinton presidencies. "Tax cuts for the middle class are a small, a maybe and some-time thing that can be cut off in their plan."

The overarching promise made to the middle class by Trump and congressional Republicans is that lower taxes would fuel faster economic growth, which, in turn, would cause incomes to rise. Kevin Hassett, chair of Trump's White House Council of Economic Advisers, estimates that lowering the corporate tax rate to 20 percent from 35 percent would lead to an average income gain of \$4,000 a year.

But most mainstream economists have disputed that claim. Kent Smetters, faculty director of the Penn Wharton Budget Model, estimates that the income growth after a decade would range between \$500 to \$1,500.

Some tax experts say the tax overhaul might also hurt those who aspire to be middle class. The bottom half of taxpayers now pay no net income tax, according to Treasury Department figures. Many receive refunds via the Earned Income Tax Credit. The plan unveiled Thursday would require eligible taxpayers to provide their Social Security Number to receive this benefit, thereby creating a possible delay in receiving a refund as the IRS enforces this provision.

David Kamin, a former Obama White House official who now teaches law at New York University, said the plan seems to have "no significant help of any kind for about the bottom 35 percent of income earners."

He added that the proposal could also "run up deficits significantly that would eventually have to be paid for and could threaten programs that do help low and middle income Americans whether that be health care coverage, Social Security, or investments like in infrastructure."

AP sources: Texans QB Watson out for season with ACL tear

By KRISTIE RIEKEN, AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson sustained a season-ending knee injury in practice on Thursday, two people familiar with the situation told The Associated Press.

The rookie suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in one of his knees and will go on injured reserve. The people spoke on the condition of anonymity because the team hadn't announced the injury.

His injury is the latest blow to a team that lost three-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year J.J. Watt and linebacker Whitney Mercilus to season-ending injuries on Oct. 8.

The former Clemson standout had been a bright spot in a challenging season for the Texans (3-4). The 12th overall pick in this year's draft was the AFC offensive player of the month after throwing for 1,171 yards with 16 touchdowns and running for 145 yards and another score.

Clemson coach Dabo Swinney, talked about Watson's injury, and noted that he rebounded from the same injury when he was with the Tigers.

"I talked to Deshaun late this afternoon and we are disappointed," Swinney said. "But, he is a person who has had some setbacks in his life, and always comes back stronger. Since he went through the rehab before, he knows what it takes."

Watson also tore his ACL in 2014 as a freshman at Clemson.

"All he did after the injury in 2014 was come back and lead us to the national championship game twice and of course we won it last year," Swinney said. "He started all 30 games the last two years here. I have no doubt he will come back from this. He has the resolve. His work ethic and drive are incredible."

Many people took to Twitter to express dismay at the injury and wish Watson well.

Watt tweeted: "Minor setback for a major comeback. We've all seen what's possible, can't wait to see what's next. With you every step of the way 4,".

NBA superstar LeBron James tweeted a link to a story about his injury and wrote: "This seriously just made me sad man!! Get well and stronger asap."

Watson's development this season had been a revelation for a team that has featured a revolving door at quarterback over recent years. The Texans signed Brock Osweiler to a \$72 million contract before last season, but he was benched before the season was over and shipped to Cleveland in the offseason.

When Houston traded up 13 picks to take Watson, many assumed he'd be the starter to open the season. But Coach Bill O'Brien insisted he back up Tom Savage.

Watson's time as a backup was short-lived as Savage struggled in the opener and was benched at halftime, making the former Clemson standout the ninth quarterback the Texans have played in the past five years.

Watson made his first start in Week 2 and immediately excelled, leading the Texans to a 13-9 win on the road against the Bengals.

Since then, he's turned a team known for defense into one with a high-flying offense. Under his guid-

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ance, the Texans had scored 30 or more points in five straight games to set a franchise record.

Watson's 19 touchdown passes are tied for the league lead and are the most in NFL history through a player's first seven games. He leads all quarterbacks this season with 21 touchdowns overall and has thrown four or more touchdown passes in three games this season to join Fran Tarkenton as the only rookies in NFL history to do so.

Now with his brilliant season cut short, the Texans will look to Savage to salvage this injury-plagued season and try to reach the playoffs for the third straight season.

The Texans host the Colts (2-6) on Sunday and Indianapolis announced earlier Thursday that franchise quarterback Andrew Luck had been placed on injured reserve as he recovers from a shoulder problem that hasn't allowed him to play at all this season.

The Texans will sign Matt McGloin to back up Savage, a person familiar with the move told The AP on the condition of anonymity because the team hadn't announced it. McGloin, who played for O'Brien at Penn State, was released by the Eagles on Sept. 1.

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

Big GOP tax bill would cut rates _ but also popular breaks

By ALAN FRAM and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With fanfare and a White House kickoff, House Republicans unfurled a broad tax-overhaul plan Thursday that would touch virtually all Americans and the economy's every corner, mingling sharply lower rates for corporations and reduced personal taxes for many with fewer deductions for home-buyers and families with steep medical bills.

The measure, which would be the most extensive rewrite of the nation's tax code in three decades, is the product of a party that faces increasing pressure to produce a marquee legislative victory of some sort before next year's elections. GOP leaders touted the plan as a sparkplug for the economy and a boon to the middle class and christened it the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

"We are working to give the American people a giant tax cut for Christmas," President Donald Trump said in the Oval Office. The measure, he said, "will also be tax reform, and it will create jobs."

It would also increase the national debt, a problem for some Republicans. And Democrats attacked the proposal as the GOP's latest bonanza for the rich, with a phase-out of the inheritance tax and repeal of the alternative minimum tax on the highest earners — certain to help Trump and members of his family and Cabinet, among others.

"If you're the wealthiest 1 percent, Republicans will give you the sun, the moon and the stars, all of that at the expense of the great middle class," said House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

And there was enough discontent among Republicans and business groups to leave the legislation's fate uncertain in a journey through Congress that leaders hope will deposit a landmark bill on Trump's desk by year's end.

Underscoring problems ahead, some Republicans from high-tax Northeastern states expressed opposition to the measure's elimination of the deduction for state and local income taxes. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch of Utah called the House measure "a great starting point" but said it would be "somewhat miraculous" if its corporate tax rate reduction to 20 percent — a major Trump goal — survived. His panel plans to produce its own tax package in the coming days.

The House Republicans' plan, which took them months to craft in countless closed-door meetings, represents the first step in their effort to reverse what's been a politically disastrous year in Congress. Their drive to obliterate President Barack Obama's health care law crashed, and GOP lawmakers concede that if the tax measure collapses, their congressional majorities are at risk in next November's elections.

The package's tax reductions would outweigh its loophole closers by a massive \$1.5 trillion over the coming decade. Many Republicans were willing to add that to the nation's soaring debt as a price for claiming a resounding tax victory. But it was likely to pose a problem for others — one of several brushfires leaders

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will need to extinguish to get the measure through Congress.

Republicans must keep their plan's shortfall from spilling over that \$1.5 trillion line or the measure will lose its protection against Democratic Senate filibusters, bill-killing delays that take 60 votes to overcome. There are just 52 GOP senators and unanimous Democratic opposition is likely.

The bill would telescope today's seven personal income tax brackets into just four: 12 percent, 25 percent, 35 percent and 39.6 percent.

— The 25 percent rate would start at \$45,000 for individuals and \$90,000 for married couples.

— The 35 percent rate would apply to family income exceeding \$260,000 and individual income over \$200,000, which means many upper-income families whose top rate is currently 33 percent would face higher taxes.

— The top rate threshold, now \$418,400 for individuals and \$470,700 for couples, would rise to \$500,000 and \$1 million.

The standard deduction — used by people who don't itemize, around two-thirds of taxpayers — would nearly double to \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for couples. That's expected to encourage even more people to use the standard deduction with a simplified tax form Republicans say will be postcard-sized.

Many middle-income families would pay less, thanks to the bigger standard deduction and an increased child tax credit. Republicans said their plan would save \$1,182 in taxes for a family of four earning \$59,000, but features like phase-outs of some benefits suggest their taxes could grow in the future.

"The plan clearly chooses corporate CEOs and hedge fund managers over teachers and police officers," said Rep. Bill Pascrell, D-N.J.

One trade-off for the plan's reductions was its elimination of breaks that millions have long treasured. Gone would be deductions for people's medical expenses — especially important for families facing nursing home bills or lacking insurance — and their ability to write off state and local income taxes. The mortgage interest deduction would be limited to the first \$500,000 of the loan, down from the current \$1 million ceiling.

Led by Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the authors retained the deductibility of up to \$10,000 in local property taxes in a bid to line up votes from Republicans from the Northeast. The panel planned to begin votes on the proposal next Monday.

"It's progress, but I want more," said Rep. Leonard Lance, R-N.J., who represents one of his state's wealthier, higher-cost districts and wants the entire property tax deduction restored.

On the business side, the House would drop the top rate for corporations from 35 percent to 20 percent. American companies operating abroad would pay a 10 percent tax on their overseas subsidiaries' profits. Cash that those firms have amassed abroad but now return home would face a one-time 12 percent tax.

Also reduced to 25 percent would be the rate for many "pass-through" businesses, whose profits are taxed at the owners' individual rate.

But some of those companies would face higher rates. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., said that disparity was "just not acceptable," and the National Federation of Independent Business said it opposed the bill because it "does not help most small businesses."

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce praised the measure but said "a lot of work remains to be done." The group's chief policy officer, Neil Bradley, said pass-throughs were one concern.

AP reporters Andrew Taylor, Zeke Miller and Kevin Freking in Washington and Mike Catalini in Trenton, New Jersey, contributed.

This story has been corrected to say 52 GOP senators, not 50.

Russia hackers pursued Putin foes, not just US Democrats

By RAPHAEL SATTER, JEFF DONN and JUSTIN MYERS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It wasn't just Hillary Clinton's emails they went after.

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The hackers who disrupted the U.S. presidential election last year had ambitions that stretched across the globe, targeting the emails of Ukrainian officers, Russian opposition figures, U.S. defense contractors and thousands of others of interest to the Kremlin, according to a previously unpublished digital hit list obtained by The Associated Press.

The list provides the most detailed forensic evidence yet of the close alignment between the hackers and the Russian government, exposing an operation that went back years and tried to break into the inboxes of 4,700 Gmail users — from the pope's representative in Kiev to the punk band Pussy Riot in Moscow. The targets were spread among 116 countries.

"It's a wish list of who you'd want to target to further Russian interests," said Keir Giles, director of the Conflict Studies Research Center in Cambridge, England, and one of five outside experts who reviewed the AP's findings. He said the data was "a master list of individuals whom Russia would like to spy on, embarrass, discredit or silence."

The AP findings draw on a database of 19,000 malicious links collected by cybersecurity firm Secureworks, dozens of rogue emails, and interviews with more than 100 hacking targets.

Secureworks stumbled upon the data after a hacking group known as Fancy Bear accidentally exposed part of its phishing operation to the internet. The list revealed a direct line between the hackers and the leaks that rocked the presidential contest in its final stages, most notably the private emails of Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta.

The issue of who hacked the Democrats is back in the national spotlight following the revelation Monday that a Donald Trump campaign official, George Papadopoulos, was briefed early last year that the Russians had "dirt" on Clinton, including "thousands of emails."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the notion that Russia interfered "unfounded." But the list examined by AP provides powerful evidence that the Kremlin did just that.

"This is the Kremlin and the general staff," said Andras Racz, a specialist in Russian security policy at Pazmany Peter Catholic University in Hungary, as he examined the data.

"I have no doubts."

THE NEW EVIDENCE

Secureworks' list covers the period between March 2015 and May 2016. Most of the identified targets were in the United States, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia and Syria.

In the United States, which was Russia's Cold War rival, Fancy Bear tried to pry open at least 573 inboxes belonging to those in the top echelons of the country's diplomatic and security services: then-Secretary of State John Kerry, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, then-NATO Supreme Commander, U.S. Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove, and one of his predecessors, U.S. Army Gen. Wesley Clark.

The list skewed toward workers for defense contractors such as Boeing, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin or senior intelligence figures, prominent Russia watchers and — especially — Democrats. More than 130 party workers, campaign staffers and supporters of the party were targeted, including Podesta and other members of Clinton's inner circle.

The AP also found a handful of Republican targets.

Podesta, Powell, Breedlove and more than a dozen Democratic targets besides Podesta would soon find their private correspondence dumped to the web. The AP has determined that all had been targeted by Fancy Bear, most of them three to seven months before the leaks.

"They got two years of email," Powell recently told AP. He said that while he couldn't know for sure who was responsible, "I always suspected some Russian connection."

In Ukraine, which is fighting a grinding war against Russia-backed separatists, Fancy Bear attempted to break into at least 545 accounts, including those of President Petro Poroshenko and his son Alexei, half a dozen current and former ministers such as Interior Minister Arsen Avakov and as many as two dozen current and former lawmakers.

The list includes Serhiy Leshchenko, an opposition parliamentarian who helped uncover the off-the-books payments allegedly made to Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort — whose indictment was unsealed

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Monday in Washington.

In Russia, Fancy Bear focused on government opponents and dozens of journalists. Among the targets were oil tycoon-turned-Kremlin foe Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who spent a decade in prison and now lives in exile, and Pussy Riot's Maria Alekhina. Along with them were 100 more civil society figures, including anti-corruption campaigner Alexei Navalny and his lieutenants.

"Everything on this list fits," said Vasily Gatov, a Russian media analyst who was himself among the targets. He said Russian authorities would have been particularly interested in Navalny, one of the few opposition leaders with a national following.

Many of the targets have little in common except that they would have been crossing the Kremlin's radar: an environmental activist in the remote Russian port city of Murmansk; a small political magazine in Armenia; the Vatican's representative in Kiev; an adult education organization in Kazakhstan.

"It's simply hard to see how any other country would be particularly interested in their activities," said Michael Kofman, an expert on Russian military affairs at the Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington. He was also on the list.

"If you're not Russia," he said, "hacking these people is a colossal waste of time."

WORKING 9 TO 6 MOSCOW TIME

Allegations that Fancy Bear works for Russia aren't new. But raw data has been hard to come by.

Researchers have been documenting the group's activities for more than a decade and many have accused it of being an extension of Russia's intelligence services. The "Fancy Bear" nickname is a none-too-subtle reference to Russia's national symbol.

In the wake of the 2016 election, U.S. intelligence agencies publicly endorsed the consensus view, saying what American spooks had long alleged privately: Fancy Bear is a creature of the Kremlin.

But the U.S. intelligence community provided little proof, and even media-friendly cybersecurity companies typically publish only summaries of their data.

That makes the Secureworks' database a key piece of public evidence — all the more remarkable because it's the result of a careless mistake.

Secureworks effectively stumbled across it when a researcher began working backward from a server tied to one of Fancy Bear's signature pieces of malicious software.

He found a hyperactive Bitly account that Fancy Bear (which Secureworks calls "Iron Twilight") was using to sneak thousands of malicious links past Google's spam filter. Because Fancy Bear forgot to set the account to private, Secureworks spent the next few months hovering over the group's shoulder, quietly copying down the details of the thousands of emails it was targeting.

The AP obtained the data recently, boiling it down to 4,700 individual email addresses, and then connecting roughly half to account holders. The AP validated the list by running it against a sample of phishing emails obtained from people targeted and comparing it to similar rosters gathered independently by other cybersecurity companies, such as Tokyo-based Trend Micro and the Slovakian firm ESET .

The Secureworks data allowed reporters to determine that more than 95 percent of the malicious links were generated during Moscow office hours — between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The AP's findings also track with a report that first brought Fancy Bear to the attention of American voters. In 2016, a cybersecurity company known as CrowdStrike said the Democratic National Committee had been compromised by Russian hackers, including Fancy Bear.

Secureworks' roster shows Fancy Bear making aggressive attempts to hack into DNC technical staffers' emails in early April 2016 — exactly when CrowdStrike says the hackers broke in.

And the raw data enabled the AP to speak directly to the people who were targeted, many of whom pointed the finger at the Kremlin.

"We have no doubts about who is behind these attacks," said Artem Torchinskiy, a project coordinator with Navalny's Anti-Corruption Fund who was targeted three times in 2015. "I am sure these are hackers controlled by Russian secret services."

THE MYTH OF THE 400-POUND MAN

Even if only a small fraction of the 4,700 Gmail accounts targeted by Fancy Bear were hacked successfully, the data drawn from them could run into terabytes — easily rivaling the biggest known leaks in journalistic history.

For the hackers to have made sense of that mountain of messages — in English, Ukrainian, Russian, Georgian, Arabic and many other languages — they would have needed a substantial team of analysts and translators. Merely identifying and sorting the targets took six AP reporters eight weeks of work.

The AP's effort offers "a little feel for how much labor went into this," said Thomas Rid, a professor of strategic studies at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

In response to the AP's investigation, the DNC issued a statement saying the evidence that Russia had interfered in the election was "irrefutable."

Rid said the investigation should put to rest any theories like the one then-candidate Donald Trump floated last year that the hacks could be the work of "someone sitting on their bed that weighs 400 pounds."

"The notion that it's just a lone hacker somewhere is utterly absurd," Rid said.

Donn reported from Plymouth, Massachusetts. Myers reported from Chicago. Chad Day, Desmond Butler and Ted Bridis in Washington, Frank Bajak in Houston, Lori Hinnant in Paris, Maggie Michael in Cairo and Erika Kinetz in Shanghai contributed to this report. Novaya Gazeta reporters Nikolay Voroshilov, Yana Surinskaya and Roman Anin in Moscow also contributed.

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Editor's Note: Satter's father, David Satter, is an author and Russia specialist who has been critical of the Kremlin. His emails were published last year by hackers and his account is on Secureworks' list of Fancy Bear targets.

Bin Laden files back up US claims on Iran ties to al-Qaida

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The CIA's release of documents seized during the 2011 raid that killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden appears to bolster U.S. claims that Iran supported the extremist network leading up to the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

U.S. intelligence officials and prosecutors have long said Iran formed loose ties to the terror organization starting in 1991, something noted in a 19-page al-Qaida report in Arabic that was included in the release of some 47,000 other documents by the CIA.

For its part, Iran has long denied any involvement with al-Qaida, and its foreign minister disparaged the documents in a tweet late Thursday: "A record low for the reach of petrodollars: CIA & FDD fake news w/ selective AlQaeda docs re: Iran can't whitewash role of US allies in 9/11."

The report included in the CIA document dump shows how bin Laden, a Sunni extremist from Iran's archrival Saudi Arabia, could look across the Muslim world's religious divide to partner with the Mideast's Shiite power to target his ultimate enemy, the United States.

"Anyone who wants to strike America, Iran is ready to support him and help him with their frank and clear rhetoric," the report reads.

The Associated Press examined a copy of the report released by the Long War Journal, a publication backed by the Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a think tank fiercely critical of Iran and skeptical of its nuclear deal with world powers. The CIA gave the Long War Journal early access to the material.

The material also included never-before-seen video of bin Laden's son Hamza, who may be groomed

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to take over al-Qaida, getting married. It offers the first public look at Hamza bin Laden as an adult. Until now, the public has only seen childhood pictures of him.

The release comes as President Donald Trump has refused to recertify Iran's nuclear deal with world powers and faces domestic pressure at home over investigations into Russian interference in the 2016 election.

The 19-page report included in the CIA release was available online Wednesday. The CIA later issued a warning about the files on its website, saying that since the material "was seized from a terrorist organization ... there is no absolute guarantee that all malware has been removed." The CIA then took down the files entirely early Thursday, saying they were "temporarily unavailable pending resolution of a technical issue."

"We are working to make the material available again as soon as possible," the CIA said.

The unsigned 19-page report is dated in the Islamic calendar year 1428 — 2007 — and offers what appears to be a history of al-Qaida's relationship with Iran. It says Iran offered al-Qaida fighters "money and arms and everything they need, and offered them training in Hezbollah camps in Lebanon, in return for striking American interests in Saudi Arabia."

This coincides with an account offered by the U.S. government's 9/11 Commission, which said Iranian officials met with al-Qaida leaders in Sudan in either 1991 or early 1992. The commission said al-Qaida militants later received training in Lebanon from the Shiite militant group Hezbollah, which Iran backs to this day.

U.S. prosecutors also said al-Qaida had the backing of Iran and Hezbollah in their 1998 indictment of bin Laden following the al-Qaida truck bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 224 people, including 12 Americans.

Al-Qaida's apparent siding with Iran may seem surprising today, given the enmity Sunni extremists like those of the Islamic State group have for Shiites.

But bin Laden had run out of options by 1991 — the one-time fighter against the Soviets in Afghanistan had fallen out with Saudi Arabia over his opposition to the ultraconservative kingdom hosting U.S. troops during the Gulf War. Meanwhile, Iran had become increasingly nervous about America's growing military expansion in the Mideast.

"The relationship between al-Qaida and Iran demonstrated that the Sunni-Shiite divisions did not necessarily pose an insurmountable barrier to cooperation in terrorist operations," the 9/11 Commission report would later say.

Before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, Iran would allow al-Qaida militants to pass through its borders without receiving stamps in their passports or with visas gotten ahead of time at its consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, according to the 19-page report. That helped the organization's Saudi members avoid suspicion. They also had contact with Iranian intelligence agents, according to the report.

This also matches with U.S. knowledge. Eight of the 10 so-called "muscle" hijackers on Sept. 11 — those who kept passengers under control on the hijacked flights — passed through Iran before arriving in the United States, according to the 9/11 Commission.

However, the commission "found no evidence that Iran or Hezbollah was aware of the planning for what later became the 9/11 attack."

For its part, Iran has denied having any relationship with al-Qaida since the 1998 attacks on the embassies. Iran quietly offered the U.S. assistance after the Sept. 11 attacks, though relations would sour following President George W. Bush naming it to his "axis of evil" in 2002.

On Thursday, Iran's semi-official Fars news agency, which is close to the hard-line paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, dismissed the CIA documents as "a project against Tehran."

The 19-page report describes Iranians later putting al-Qaida leaders and members under house arrest sometime after the Sept. 11 attacks. It mentions the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, saying it put increasing pressure on Iran, especially with the rise of al-Qaida in Iraq.

"They decided to keep our brothers as a card," the report said.

That would come true in 2015 as Iran reportedly exchanged some al-Qaida leaders for one of its dip-

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lomats held in Yemen by the terror group's local branch. While Yemen described it as a captive exchange, Tehran instead called it a "difficult and complicated" special operation to secure the Iranian diplomat's freedom from the "hands of terrorists."

"The repercussions ... of the Sept. 11 attacks were undoubtedly very large and perhaps above (our) imagination," the al-Qaida report said.

Associated Press writer Amir Vahdat in Tehran contributed to this report.

Jon Gambrell on Twitter: www.twitter.com/jongambrellap . His work can be found at <http://apnews/2galNpz> .

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Nov. 3, the 307th day of 2017. There are 58 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 3, 1900, the first major U.S. automobile show opened at New York's Madison Square Garden under the auspices of the Automobile Club of America.

On this date:

In 1839, the first Opium War between China and Britain broke out.

In 1903, Panama proclaimed its independence from Colombia.

In 1911, the Chevrolet Motor Car Co. was founded in Detroit by Louis Chevrolet and William C. Durant. (The company was acquired by General Motors in 1918.)

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won a landslide election victory over Republican challenger Alfred "Alf" Landon.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 2, the second manmade satellite, into orbit; on board was a dog named Laika (LY'-kah), who was sacrificed in the experiment.

In 1960, the Meredith Willson musical "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" opened on Broadway with Tammy Grimes in the title role.

In 1961, Burmese diplomat U Thant (oo thahnt) was appointed acting U.N. Secretary-General following the death of Dag Hammarskjold (dahg HAWM'-ahr-should). President John F. Kennedy established the U.S. Agency for International Development.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson soundly defeated Republican Barry Goldwater to win a White House term in his own right.

In 1970, Salvador Allende (ah-YEN'-day) was inaugurated as president of Chile.

In 1979, five Communist Workers Party members were killed in a clash with heavily armed Ku Klux Klansmen and neo-Nazis during an anti-Klan protest in Greensboro, North Carolina.

In 1986, the Iran-Contra affair came to light as Ash-Shiraa, a pro-Syrian Lebanese magazine, first broke the story of U.S. arms sales to Iran.

In 1992, Democrat Bill Clinton was elected the 42nd president of the United States, defeating President George H.W. Bush. In Illinois, Democrat Carol Moseley-Braun became the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

Ten years ago: Gen. Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency in Pakistan. United Auto Workers agreed to a tentative contract with Ford Motor Co. Two astronauts conducted a successful spacewalk to save a ripped solar wing on the international space station.

Five years ago: The lights came back on in lower Manhattan to the relief of residents who'd been plunged into darkness for nearly five days by Superstorm Sandy, but there was deepening resentment in the city's outer boroughs and suburbs over a continued lack of power and maddening gas shortages. New York's newly relocated NBA team, the former New Jersey Nets, hosted the first regular-season game by a major sports team in Brooklyn since the Dodgers left in 1957; the Brooklyn Nets beat the Toronto Raptors 107-100.

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One year ago: Democratic vice presidential nominee Tim Kaine delivered a speech entirely in Spanish as he addressed a small crowd in a largely Hispanic area of Phoenix as part of Hillary Clinton's push into traditionally Republican Arizona. China's plans for a permanent space station remained firmly on track with the successful launch of its new heavy-lift Long March 5 rocket.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Peggy McCay is 90. Actress Lois Smith is 87. Actress Monica Vitti is 86. Former Massachusetts Gov. Michael S. Dukakis is 84. Actor-dancer Ken Berry is 84. Actor Shadoe Stevens is 71. Singer Lulu is 69. Comedian-actress Roseanne Barr is 65. Actress Kate Capshaw is 64. Comedian Dennis Miller is 64. Actress Kathy Kinney is 64. Singer Adam Ant is 63. Director-screenwriter Gary Ross is 61. Actor Dolph Lundgren is 60. Rock musician C.J. Pierce (Drowning Pool) is 45. Actor Francois Battiste (TV: "Ten Days in the Valley") is 41. Olympic gold medal figure skater Evgeni Plushenko is 35. Actress Julie Berman is 34. Actress Antonia Thomas (TV: "The Good Doctor") is 31. Alternative rock singer/songwriter Courtney Barnett is 30. TV personality Kendall Jenner (TV: "Keeping Up with the Kardashians") is 22.

Thought for Today: "All politics are based on the indifference of the majority." — James Reston, American journalist (born this date in 1909, died 1995).