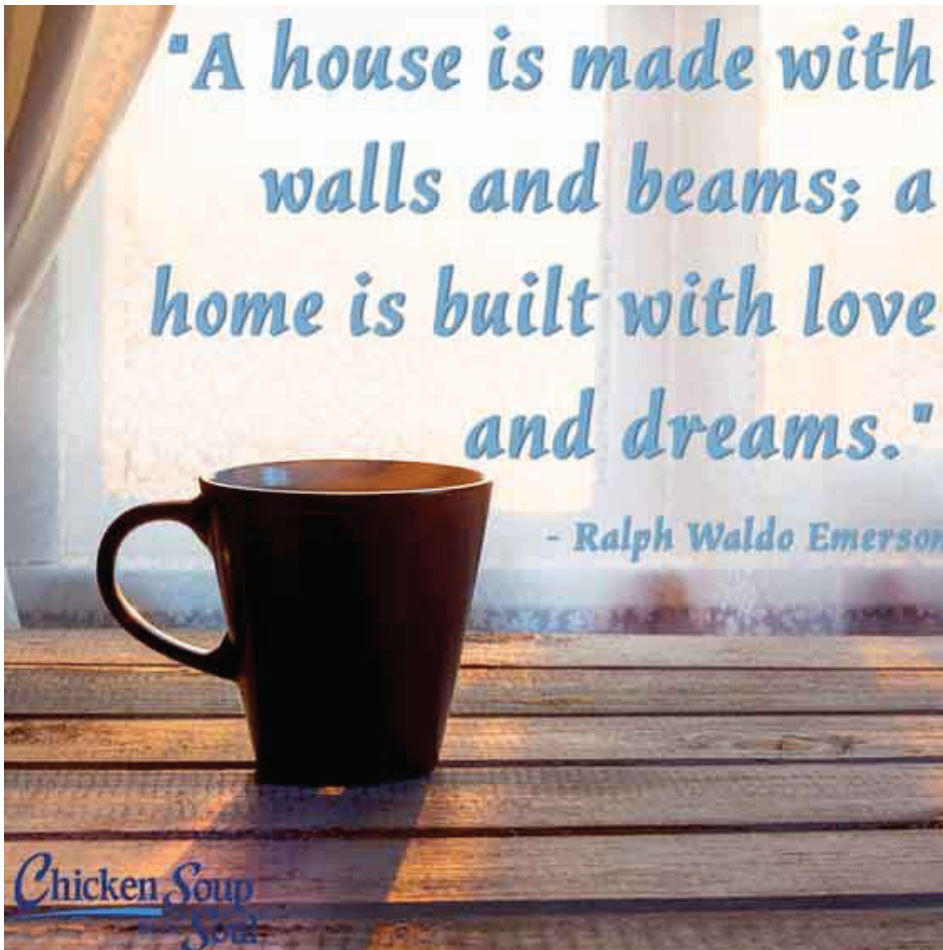


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Today's Event

State VB in Rapid City
7th grade GBB hosts Leola-Frederick at 5 p.m.
Debate and Oral Interp at Mitchell



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**

© 2017 Groton Daily Independent

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Blocker Construction Ad
- 2- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 3- 7th Mathcounts take first
- 4- November Gas Prices in Like a Lion, Out Like a Lamb
- 5- Attorney General Column
- 6- NSU: Seven to hit the mat
- 6- Farmers Union PSA
- 6- NSU FB staff changes
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Dog Licenses Available
- 8- Today's Forecast
- 9- Yesterday's Weather
- 9- Today's Weather Info
- 9- National Weather Map
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2018 Community Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

NEW SIGN-ON BONUSES!

★ ★ ★ **\$1,500 for CNAs** ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ **\$3,000 for LPNs** ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ **\$4,500 for RNs** ★ ★ ★

Contact Brynn Pickrel or Nellie Hatfield at 605-397-2365
or apply in person.

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



GROTON

CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

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

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Front row from left: Groton, 1st place, Ethan Clark, Jackson Dinger, Andrew Marzahn and Cole Simon.
Middle row from left: Warner, 2nd place, Isaac Hoeft, Carter Moen, Allison Ray, and Levi Scepaniak.
Back row from left: Roncalli, 3rd place, Nicolas Adolfson, Tyler Berndt, Garret Griffin, and Samuel Koch.

Seventh grade MathCounts take first at Roncalli

The Roncalli Invitational MathCounts Competition was held on Wednesday, October 25, 2017. Over 140 students from eight Aberdeen area schools (Britton-Hecla, Eureka, Holgate, Northwestern, Roncalli, Simmons, Warner, and Groton) participated in the event, which was sponsored by 3M of Aberdeen.

Ethan Clark, Jackson Dinger, Andrew Marzahn, and Cole Simon were awarded the first place trophies in the seventh grade team competition. Ethan Clark received the second place medal and Andrew Marzahn received the fifth place medal in the seventh grade individual/countdown round.

MathCounts is a nationwide coaching and competition program for middle school students that promotes excellence in mathematics.

The next junior high competition will be the Roncalli Invitational MathCounts Countdown Competition on Wednesday, December 6.

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November Gas Prices in Like a Lion, Out Like a Lamb

November 13, 2017 - At \$2.56, the national gas price average has increased nine cents inside of 13 days. Strong fall consumer gasoline demand has continued into November and is chipping away at national gasoline inventory. The Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports total gasoline inventories dropped by 3.3 million bbl in their latest report.

"Compared to the first half of November last year, gas prices this November are on average 39-cents more expensive," said Marilyn Buskohl, AAA spokesperson. "There's a lot of upward pressure, which is not really typical of a normal fall," Buskohl said. "However, while November gas prices have come in like a lion, AAA expects them to go out like a lamb."

Since November 1st the South Dakota gas price average average has fluctuated up to \$2.56 but is back down today to \$2.53.

The combination of high oil, high demand and falling inventories because of more driving is a combination of factors leading to the high prices.

On the week, gas prices increased for the majority of states across the country. However, only four states are seeing double-digit fluctuations at the pump: Florida (+13 cents), Indiana (-13 cents), Alaska (+12 cents) and Ohio (-10 cents).

Quick Stats

The nation's top ten states with the largest weekly changes: Florida (+13 cents), Indiana (-13 cents), Alaska (+12 cents), Ohio (-10 cents), Georgia (+7 cents), Oregon (+7 cents), North Carolina (+6 cents), Illinois (-6 cents), Texas (+6 cents) and South Carolina (+6 cents).

The nation's top ten states with the least expensive gas prices: Alabama (\$2.26), Mississippi (\$2.27), South Carolina (\$2.29), Louisiana (\$2.30), Arkansas (\$2.31), Texas (\$2.31), Virginia (\$2.32), Tennessee (\$2.34), Oklahoma (\$2.35) and Missouri (\$2.36).

Great Lakes and Central Region

Gas prices in the Great Lakes and Central states continue to see volatility across the region. Motorists in six states are paying less on the week: Indiana (-13 cents), Ohio (-10 cents), Illinois (-6 cents), Wisconsin (-2 cent), Missouri (-2 cents) and Kentucky (-1 cent). The remaining states in the region saw modest price jumps with Nebraska's gas price increasing the most with a five-cent increase. Michigan (\$2.74) and Illinois (\$2.72) are selling the most expensive gas in the region, while motorists in Kansas (\$2.40) and Missouri (\$3.36) are paying the least.

At 44.5 million bbl, the Great Lakes and Central region has seen gasoline inventories decline for six weeks straight and register at the lowest level since mid-November 2014.

Oil Market Dynamics

International markets opened Monday morning posting crude oil losses amid reports of the U.S. adding oil rigs that indicate increased U.S. investment and oil production. Oil-services firm Baker Hughes reported that drillers added nine rigs last week - the biggest increase since June of this year - bringing the total crude oil rig count to 738.

On Friday, an explosion at Bahrain's main pipeline shut down operations. Bahrain officials have labeled the explosion an act of terrorism and linked it to Iran. Over the weekend, the country was able to get the fire under control and shut off oil supplies to the pipeline. At this time, it is unclear when Bahrain will have its pipeline back up and running. Monday also saw a powerful earthquake hit the border of Iraq and Iran, killing 348 people. Both countries currently have search and rescue missions responding to earthquake. In the coming days, government officials will know more about the extent of the damage and whether any energy producing sectors were damaged during the quake.

Traders will continue to keep an eye on any supply disruptions in the Middle East, U.S. production and the impact it has on global supply and demand. At the closing of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI was down 43 cents to settle at \$56.74 per barrel.



Column from the Attorney General

Marty Jackley

South Dakota Attorney General (2009-Present)

United States Attorney for South Dakota (2006-2009)

Chairman of the National Association of Attorneys General (2015-2016)

Opioid Addiction

Many South Dakotans have a loved one that is or has struggled with addiction. It is painful, frustrating, and difficult to find answers and solutions. It is time we fight back with even more prevention efforts.

Each day we find ourselves inundated with the many news stories covering the growing opioid epidemic across our nation. We in South Dakota have not yet experienced the numbers that other states are dealing with, but we are faced with this growing problem.

Prevention will always be the key in dealing with addictive behavior. Recognizing those that are susceptible would be ideal, but that is challenging. The Attorney General's Office proactively addressed opioid abuse with the passage of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) during the 2010 legislative session. The purpose of this program is to improve patient care by providing physicians and pharmacists with a history of their patients drug use. In 2016, there were 1,487,156 million prescriptions and 97,593,730 million quantities of legally prescribed drugs in South Dakota. Through October 2017, there were 1,154,446 million prescriptions of 73,915,242 quantities of legally prescribed drugs in South Dakota.

Intertwined with the opioid addiction is the growing problem of heroin abuse and accidental drug overdoses. South Dakota remains relatively low in comparison to the national average, but our deaths did rise from 32 in 2013 to 51 in 2016. A numbing recent example occurred on November 1, 2017, when law enforcement responded to three drug overdoses in one night in the Vermillion area. This trend is one that likely will not change anytime soon. In an effort to address this trend, I sponsored legislation in 2015 that would enable all first responders to carry naloxone. Naloxone is a drug that reverses an overdose. Having naloxone available is a cost-effective way to save lives especially for our rural first responders.

It is also important that we work with other states to find solutions to combat this epidemic. In June 2017, a bipartisan group of Attorneys General announced an investigation to evaluate whether manufactures engaged in unlawful practices in the marketing and sale of opioids. In addition, in September 2017, my office joined 37 Attorneys General asking insurance providers to find ways to reduce opioid prescriptions and make it easier for patients to access other forms of pain management treatment. We have yet to see the impact of these efforts, but we will continue looking for such important opportunities.

America is facing a drug epidemic. Now more than ever we must join together in South Dakota in the fight against drug addiction, and support local community and state efforts to prevent drug abuse and addiction.



All auto owners!
Save \$2-\$4 /tank
& grow your local economy
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Super Premium E30's
94 octane, more power,
same mileage, fewer
carbon deposits, lower
maintenance costs,
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genotoxic, carcinogenic
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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")**

NSU: Seven Set to Hit the Mat

Aberdeen, S.D. – Northern State University Head Coach Rocky Burkett announced the signing of seven student-athletes for the 2018-19 season. Robert Coyle III (Watertown, S.D.), Adam De-Boer (Bismarck, N.D.), Collin Hushagen (Johnston, Iowa), Curtis LeMair (Shakopee, Minn.), Dayne Morton (Gaylord, Minn.), Kolton Roth (Graettinger, Iowa), and Garret Thompson (Logan, Iowa) are set to join the Wolves next fall.

"I'm excited to sign these seven student-athletes," noted Burkett. "We wanted to center our recruiting efforts on the upper Midwest and were able to sign these guys who are all good students and great wrestlers. They each have found success at the lower levels of wrestling, and I look forward to getting them into the wrestling room and to work next fall."

Northern State Football Announces Staff Changes

Aberdeen, S.D. - Northern State University head football coach Tom Dosch announced that Offensive Coordinator Mark Martin and Offensive Line Coach Ben Ehret have been relieved of their coaching duties, effective immediately.

"I would like to thank Mark and Ben for all of their hard work and dedication to NSU," stated Dosch. "All decisions made are what I feel is best for the program overall. After a careful review of where we are at as a program, I felt a change was needed in order to help us continue to elevate Wolves football."

A national search for both positions will begin immediately.

2018 DOG LICENSES AVAILABLE NOW!!



Licenses due by Dec. 29, 2017
Fines start Jan. 2, 2018



Please bring proof of rabies shot information for each dog to City Hall or
email to library@grotonsd.net or fax to 397-4498

Please contact City Hall as soon as possible if you no longer have any dogs

Spayed or neutered dogs are \$5 per dog,
otherwise \$10 per dog

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Today in Weather History

November 17, 1971: Snow fell off and on from the 16th through the 18th from west central Minnesota to north central Minnesota. A series of weak low-pressure waves moving northeast generally along a Sioux City to Rochester line caused heavy snow of more than 4 inches in a narrow band from Morris to Alexandria; then the snow band widened to 100 miles from Park Rapids northeast into Canada. Milbank, South Dakota received 3 inches of snow, while Wheaton, Minnesota went from no snow on the 15th to reporting eight inches on the morning of the 17th.

November 17, 1986: Three to six inches of snow fell across eastern South Dakota on the 17th and 18th with the heaviest amount reported in Sisseton. Numerous accidents occurred in the southeast part of the state. The slick roads were a factor in the vehicle death of a woman on Interstate 29, near Beresford in Lincoln County. Browns Valley reported four inches of snow, and Milbank received 7 inches.

1869 - Southwest winds of hurricane force swept the Berkshire and Green Mountains of New England causing extensive forest and structural damage. (David Ludlum)

1927: A tornado (at times to 260 yards wide) cut a seventeen-mile path through Alexandria, Virginia across the District of Columbia from the Navy yard to Benning Rd. & 19th St. NE and Northeast to East Riverdale, Maryland. This storm injured 31 people. The tornado struck the Naval Air Station where a wind gust of 93 mph was recorded.

1953 - The temperature at Minneapolis, MN, reached 71 degrees, their warmest reading of record for so late in the autumn. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A storm in the Rockies produced 21 inches of snow at the Monarch ski resort in Colorado, with 14 inches reported at Steamboat Springs CO. Early morning thunderstorms in the southeastern U.S. drenched Mary Esther FL with 4.43 inches of rain. Gale force winds over the Great Lakes Region gusted to 49 mph at Johnstown PA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)


1988 - Another in a series of storms brought heavy snow to the mountains of the western U.S. Totals ranged up to 17 inches at Bob Scott Summit in Nevada. Winds around Reno NV gusted to 80 mph. The Alta and Sundance ski resorts in Utah received 14 inches of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Freezing temperatures overspread the southeastern U.S. in the wake of the severe weather outbreak of the previous two days. Eight cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Gilbert AR with a reading of 8 degrees. A fast moving storm blanketed the Great Lakes Region and Upper Ohio Valley with snow during the night. Totals ranged up to 12 inches at Pellston MI and Little Valley NY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2013: An unusually powerful storm system spun up five dozen tornadoes from the Great Lakes to the Tennessee Valley. Two EF4 twisters struck Illinois, hitting the communities of Washington and New Minden.

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Slight Chance Rain then Mostly Cloudy	Decreasing Clouds	Mostly Sunny then Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 42 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 33 °F	Low: 17 °F	High: 45 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 49 °F


National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 11/17/2017 4:29 AM Central

Unsettled Weather Ahead 

Off and On Light Rain, possibly mixed
with Snow through this Evening

highest chance over SW and S Central SD this evening

weather.gov/abr

Published on: 11/17/2017 at 4:38AM

Expect unsettled weather through tonight, in the form of off and on light rain. A few snowflakes will also be possible this morning and this evening. The highest chance of precipitation will be over southwestern and south central South Dakota this evening as a cold front and upper level disturbance move across the area. Highs should be in the 40s today. Check out your site specific forecast at www.weather.gov/abr

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 45.1

Low Outside Temp: 18.9

High Gust: 36

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 72° in 1953

Record Low: -8° in 1959

Average High: 39°F

Average Low: 18°F

Average Precip in Nov: .46

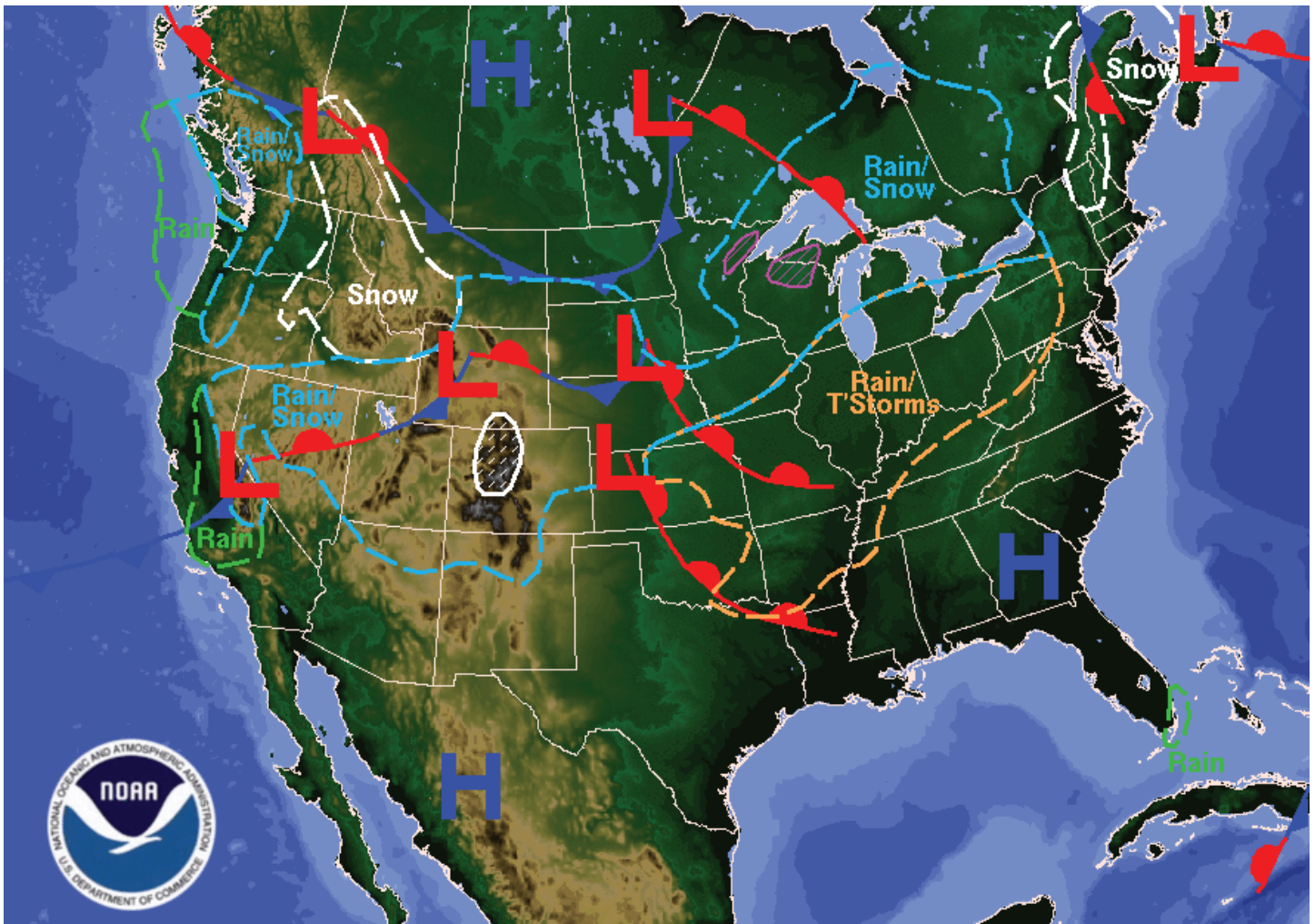
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 20.93

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 5:01 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:37 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Nov 17, 2017, issued 4:44 AM EST

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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CARDIO-CARE

Our hearts are amazing! The average adult heart beats 72 times a minute; 100,000 times a day; 3,600,000 times a year; and 2.5 billion times during a life time.

Although the adult heart only weighs about 11 ounces on average, a healthy heart pumps 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels each day. If laid out end to end it would circle the globe two times. It pumps blood to almost all of the body's 75 trillion cells. Only our cornea receives no blood. During an average lifetime, the heart will pump nearly 1.5 billion barrels of blood – enough to fill 200 train tank cars. And every day the heart creates enough energy to drive a truck 20 miles. In a lifetime, it will create enough energy to drive it to the moon and back.

When we consider all that our hearts do for us, its importance cannot be measured. Without its constant beating we could not live. It sustains our lives. Its every beat is a gift from God but we rarely think about it unless we have "heart-problems." Yet, physical-heart problems are not as serious as spiritual-heart problems. Only God can do miracles with "both" hearts.

The word "heart" occurs six times in Psalm 73. But in verse one it speaks of "those who are pure in heart" – those whose heart is completely committed to God and place Him first in their lives and love Him unconditionally.

Over this God-centered heart is the heart that Jeremiah describes: "a heart that is deceitful and beyond cure." A heart in this condition needs the Great Physician to cleanse it, restore it, live in it and fill it with His love.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to make room in our hearts for You – to allow Your Spirit to occupy it completely. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 73:1 Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

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

News from the Associated Press

Parking project will cost Sioux Falls more than expected

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A city-backed, mixed-use parking project in downtown Sioux Falls will cost the city more than expected.

The Argus Leader reports that the \$50 million project will cost the city nearly \$21 million, not \$18 million as initially anticipated.

The 13-story public-private parking ramp development called Village on the River is to have 525 spaces and an attached hotel and commercial space.

Community Development Director Daren Ketcham says the previous price estimate was based off a concept. He says the new figure is based off a schematic design.

The City Council must still approve. A decision could come Dec. 5.

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

Sanford pledges \$5M for regional science education center

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Sanford Health has pledged \$5 million to Northern State University for a regional science education center.

The gift includes a \$500,000 scholarship endowment for students and a \$200,000 faculty development endowment. The Aberdeen university says the gift should help advance education and research opportunities for the entire region.

Construction on the science center is to begin next spring. The \$25 million cost is being funded by private donations.

Sanford Health is based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Fargo, North Dakota. It bills itself as one of the largest health systems in the nation, with 45 hospitals and nearly 300 clinics in nine states and four countries.

Keystone pipeline leak days before Nebraska expansion ruling

By JAMES NORD

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — TransCanada Corp.'s Keystone pipeline leaked an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil onto agricultural land in northeastern South Dakota, but state officials don't believe the leak polluted any surface water bodies or drinking water systems.

State officials and pipeline operator TransCanada Corp. disclosed the leak Thursday, and the company shut down the pipeline.

TransCanada said it activated emergency response procedures after detecting a drop in pressure resulting from the leak south of a pump station in Marshall County. The cause was being investigated.

Discovery of the leak comes just days before Nebraska regulators are scheduled to announce their decision Monday whether to approve the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline, an expansion that would boost the amount of oil TransCanada is now shipping through the existing line, which is known simply as Keystone. The expansion has faced fierce opposition from environmental groups, American Indian tribes and some landowners.

Brian Walsh, an environmental scientist manager at the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the state has sent a staff member to the site of the leak in a rural area near the border with North Dakota about 250 miles (402 kilometers) west of Minneapolis.

"Ultimately, the cleanup responsibility lies with TransCanada, and they'll have to clean it up in compliance with our state regulations," Walsh said.

TransCanada said in its statement that it expected the pipeline to remain shut down as the company

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responds to the leak. It did not offer a time estimate, and a spokesman didn't immediately return a telephone message from The Associated Press.

The federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration didn't immediately return an email requesting additional information from The AP. Since 2010, companies have reported 17 spills bigger than the leak announced Thursday, topping 210,000 gallons (5,000 barrels) of crude oil or refined petroleum products, according to U.S. Department of Transportation records.

The existing Keystone pipeline transports crude from Canada to refineries in Illinois and Oklahoma, passing through the eastern Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri. It can handle nearly 600,000 barrels daily, or about 23 million gallons. TransCanada says on its website that the company has safely transported more than 1.5 billion barrels of oil, or about 63 billion gallons, through the system since operations began in 2010.

President Donald Trump issued a federal permit for the expansion project in March even though it had been rejected by the Obama administration. The Keystone XL project would move crude oil from Alberta, Canada, across Montana and South Dakota to Nebraska, where it would connect with existing pipelines feeding refineries along the Gulf Coast.

Kent Moeckly, a member of conservation and family agriculture group Dakota Rural Action, who opposed the Keystone pipeline, said he drove to land he owns near the site of the spill Thursday.

"There's a heck of a south wind up here today, and man it just stunk of crude oil," said Moeckly, whose property is crossed by the pipeline. "A mile away, but I'll tell you it was like it was next door."

A leak and spill in southeastern South Dakota in April 2016 prompted a weeklong shutdown of the pipeline. TransCanada estimated that just under 17,000 gallons (405 barrels) of oil spilled onto private land during that leak. Federal regulators said an "anomaly" on a weld on the pipeline was to blame. No waterways or aquifers were affected.

TransCanada said at the time that the leak was the first detected on the pipeline since it began operating, though there had been leaks at pumping stations. One of those leaks happened in southeastern North Dakota in May 2011, when 14,000 gallons (333 barrels) spilled after a valve failed at a pumping station near the South Dakota border.

Sierra Club Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign director Kelly Martin said in a statement that the only way to protect against leaks in the future is for Nebraska to reject the Keystone XL pipeline.

"We've always said it's not a question of whether a pipeline will spill, but when, and today TransCanada is making our case for us," Martin said.

Associated Press reporter Matt Brown in Billings, Montana, contributed to this report.

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Class AA

State Quarterfinal

Harrisburg def. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 25-15, 25-18, 18-25, 25-23

Rapid City Stevens def. Huron, 13-25, 25-17, 25-21, 25-23

Sioux Falls Washington def. Mitchell, 25-15, 22-25, 17-25, 25-22, 15-10

Watertown def. Aberdeen Central, 25-21, 25-15, 25-18

Class A

State Quarterfinal

Belle Fourche def. Sioux Valley, 25-17, 16-25, 24-26, 25-23, 15-12

Dakota Valley def. Parker, 25-16, 25-12, 25-18

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Madison def. Miller, 25-17, 25-20, 19-25, 25-22

Sioux Falls Christian def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-19, 25-18, 28-30, 25-18

Class B

State Quarterfinal

Chester def. Deubrook, 25-21, 25-18, 25-17

Herreid/Selby Area def. Hanson, 25-14, 18-25, 25-21, 25-18

Northwestern def. Faith, 25-13, 25-17, 25-14

Warner def. Burke/South Central, 25-13, 25-7, 25-19

Keystone pipeline leaks 210K gallons of oil in South Dakota

AMHERST, S.D. (AP) — TransCanada Corp.'s Keystone pipeline leaked an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil onto agricultural land in northeastern South Dakota, the company and state regulators said Thursday, but state officials don't believe the leak polluted any surface water bodies or drinking water systems.

Crews shut down the pipeline Thursday morning and activated emergency response procedures after a drop in pressure was detected resulting from the leak south of a pump station in Marshall County, TransCanada said in a statement. The cause was being investigated.

Discovery of the leak comes just days before Nebraska regulators are scheduled to announce their decision Monday whether to approve the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline, an expansion that would boost the amount of oil TransCanada is now shipping through the existing line, which is known simply as Keystone. The expansion has faced fierce opposition from environmental groups, American Indian tribes and some landowners.

Brian Walsh, an environmental scientist manager at the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the state has sent a staff member to the site of the leak in a rural area near the border with North Dakota about 250 miles (402 kilometers) west of Minneapolis.

"Ultimately, the cleanup responsibility lies with TransCanada, and they'll have to clean it up in compliance with our state regulations," Walsh said.

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aquifers were affected.

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"We've always said it's not a question of whether a pipeline will spill, but when, and today TransCanada is making our case for us," Martin said.

Associated Press reporter Matt Brown in Billings, Montana, contributed to this report.

FCC approves changes to phone subsidies on tribal lands

By FELICIA FONSECA, Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — Federal regulators approved major changes Thursday to a program that discounts phone service for low-income residents on tribal land.

About 12.5 million people nationwide use Lifeline, a program created more than 30 years ago to improve access to phone service. It gives subscribers a \$9.25 monthly discount. About 500,000 of those subscribers on tribal lands get an extra \$25 off per month.

Three of the five Federal Communications Commission members said three changes that apply to tribal lands will help reduce waste, fraud and abuse, and expand communications networks that lag behind the rest of the country.

The two commissioners who voted no say the changes won't improve the lives of the most impoverished and vulnerable residents.

Here's a look at the program and upcoming changes:

WHAT IS LIFELINE?

The program started in 1985 when landline phones were in most households. Mobile service was added in 2005, and broadband in 2016. Subscribers can get either landline or mobile service, not both.

Lifeline doesn't give out free phones, but the roughly 2,000 service providers in the program often do.

Telecommunications companies pay into a fund to cover Lifeline, and that cost often gets passed on to customers. A single person making about \$16,000 a year alone or about \$33,000 for a family of four, or who participates in certain government assistance programs, qualifies.

Government reports show Lifeline provided subsidies of \$1.5 billion in 2016.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The FCC says the Lifeline program is in serious need of reform to cut down on waste, fraud and abuse. Federal investigators earlier this year reported they couldn't verify whether 1.2 million people who were signed up were eligible. The U.S. Government Accountability Office also found nearly 6,400 dead people had re-enrolled. Last year, the FCC issued a \$2 million fine to a wireless company in Hawaii that improperly registered thousands of people for the enhanced tribal subsidy.

Consumer advocates say the GAO's sample size was too small to apply to the whole program. They also say the report doesn't accurately characterize the program because it doesn't reflect some new reforms. They want the FCC to focus on expanding the program to people who are eligible and haven't signed up.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

The changes will drop the deeper tribal discount for phone providers that don't maintain their own networks and piggyback off existing infrastructure. The FCC also is considering limiting the program to those facilities-based providers nationwide.

The FCC says resellers have no incentive to expand communications networks on tribal land because they don't own them. Many people still live without electricity, running water and phone service on reservations.

People like Joe RedCloud of the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota say eliminating resellers will give Na-

tive Americans fewer or no options for mobile service. "This will be a travesty to Indian Country because it will turn back the clock to times when consumers had but one choice," he said this week.

The FCC also will redefine tribal lands. Right now, cities like Reno, Nevada, and Oklahoma City are included in tribal areas.

The third change will require independent verification of tribal residency.

The changes won't go into effect for at least 90 days.

No. 4 Kansas to sit Preston pending car investigation

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP) — No. 4 Kansas will keep forward Billy Preston on the bench at least until its investigation into an on-campus incident with a vehicle is completed.

"We're definitely going to hold him until we get to the bottom of this," coach Bill Self said Thursday, a day before the Jayhawks play South Dakota State.

Preston was held out of Tuesday's win over No. 7 Kentucky after the university's compliance department sought to get a "clearer financial picture" following a single-car incident involving him on Saturday. The school said Preston's car hit a curb, causing minor damage to the tires. No police report was filed.

The incident left enough questions that Self decided to keep Preston out of the Kentucky game not long before tipoff. Preston also missed the opener against Tennessee State after missing curfew and failing to attend classes the following day.

Asked who the car Preston was driving was registered to, Self couldn't provide an answer.

"I can't comment on any of that stuff, but when we have a resolution to it we'll be sure to let everybody know," Self said Thursday.

The timetable for Preston's return was unclear. Self acknowledged that there is some complexity to the situation, but said he believes it will be settled soon.

Self said he hasn't seen Preston since the team returned from Chicago as they didn't practice yesterday, but that he's been "very positive" when communicating via text.

If Preston is unable to go against the Jackrabbits, the Jayhawks will once again have to deal with the almost non-existent depth they had against Kentucky. Only seven scholarship players were available, and just two were part of the frontcourt.

"We've got to prepare like we're not going to have him," Self said. "And then it would be a bonus if you did. But we'll certainly prepare like we're not going to."

More AP college basketball: <http://collegebasketball.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_Top25

Transparency rules won't apply to all South Dakota day cares

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — New federal rules requiring states to publish vetted complaints against day care providers will leave many South Dakota parents in the dark.

That's because the federal rules only apply to registered day care facilities in South Dakota, where registering with the state is voluntary for in-home day cares with 12 or fewer children, the Argus Leader reported.

South Dakota permits more children to be under the care of unregistered and unlicensed in-home facilities than any other state in the U.S. In Sioux Falls, only half of the nearly 300 day cares in the city are registered.

The federal push for transparency is part of a measure to improve child care and safety standards. Under the new rules, staff at licensed day care facilities must complete criminal background checks and the facilities must undergo inspections every year, the results of which will be posted online with verified complaints.

South Dakota will have to enforce the new rules beginning Sept. 30. Jessica Tyler, an official with the state's social services department, noted that home providers have the option of being registered in the state.

In Sioux Falls, officials have withheld records on child care provider quality and kept information about revoking licenses secret. After Marsy's Law was approved last year, Sioux Falls officials removed records that could interfere with the new protections for crime victims to make them inaccessible to the public. The addresses where crimes were reported were part of those withheld records.

Parents and guardians are now restricted from looking up crimes reported at Sioux Falls day care centers.

Jay Nichols, spokesman for Child Care Aware of America, said South Dakota needs to work with Sioux Falls to make more information regarding the quality of day care providers available to the public.

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

Tribes make renewed push for pipeline protections

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Two American Indian tribes in the Dakotas are making a renewed push to bolster protections for their water supply while federal officials further study the potential impact of the recently completed Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Lawyers for the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes on Wednesday filed court documents urging a federal judge to reject the recent arguments of federal officials and the pipeline developer that the tribes' proposals are unnecessary or unwarranted.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg is requiring the Army Corps of Engineers to further review the pipeline's impact on tribal interests, but he's allowing oil to continue flowing while that work is done over the next several months.

The tribes fear any oil spill beneath the Lake Oahe reservoir on the Missouri River would contaminate their water supply. They want additional protections including implementation of an emergency spill response plan that incorporates tribal input and includes equipment staging.

The Corps and Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners maintain the pipeline is safe. Their attorneys argued in court documents earlier this month that the tribal proposals aren't needed, would duplicate other efforts or would be burdensome.

Tribal attorneys Jan Hasselman and Nicole Ducheneaux in their response Wednesday disputed that, calling their requests "modest."

"Neither (the company) nor the Corps even attempts to make the case that they present any hardship to either of them, or that the public interest would be disserved," the attorneys wrote.

It's not known when Boasberg might rule.

The \$3.8 billion pipeline began moving North Dakota oil through South Dakota and Iowa to a distribution point in Illinois in June, following months of delays caused by legal battles and more than half a year of on-the-ground protests in North Dakota that resulted in 761 arrests.

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

Ex-Standing Rock official appeals sexual abuse conviction

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A former Standing Rock Sioux official sentenced to 30 years in prison on child sexual abuse charges is appealing his conviction.

The Bismarck Tribune reports that the attorney for 55-year-old Robert Fool Bear Sr. says there was insufficient evidence and an error in jury instructions, among other complaints filed with the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Authorities say the former Cannon Ball district chairman repeatedly raped a girl over a four-year span. He was convicted in April on four charges.

Fool Bear is housed at a medium-security federal correction institution in Pekin, Illinois. He is eligible for supervised release after 25 years.

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

Bankers: economy to remain slow in rural parts of 10 states

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The economy will likely remain slow in rural parts of 10 Plains and Western states in the months ahead.

The overall Rural Mainstreet Index for the region remained in negative territory below 50 and declined to 44.7 in November from October's 45.3. The index is based on Creighton University's monthly survey of bankers.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss the current low commodity prices and declining farm income continue to weigh on the rural economy.

The index ranges between 0 and 100, with any number under 50 indicating a shrinking economy.

The index tracking the price of farmland and rangeland declined to 36.5 in November from October's already-weak 39.2.

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

Indiana official named South Dakota state epidemiologist

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — An official with Indiana's Health Department has been named South Dakota's next state epidemiologist.

South Dakota Health Secretary Kim Malsam-Rysdon says Joshua Clayton will succeed Lon Kightlinger, who retired earlier this month after serving 20 years with the department.

Clayton is a South Dakota native who previously spent five years with the state Health Department working in the disease prevention and public health preparedness programs.

In Indiana, he has served as deputy state epidemiologist and director of that state's Epidemiology Resource Center.

Before that he served with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an epidemic intelligence service officer assigned to Tennessee.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, Yankton, Nov. 13

Serving soldiers who serve us

Last Saturday, America honored its veterans with a holiday that beseeches us to remember our soldiers and the sacrifices they have made and continue to make for this country.

But our thoughts should not simply be about what these soldiers do or have done for us.

On Veterans Day, the Press & Dakotan published an article about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is inflicting a larger number of soldiers than many people may realize. When some soldiers return from a tour of duty, they have trouble adjusting to their "normal" civilian lives, or they have difficulty processing their experiences in war.

This has contributed to a startling suicide rate among returning troops. South Dakota Secretary of Veteran Affairs Larry Zimmerman said that this state averages two military suicides per month. This trend is by no means confined to South Dakota: In September, the Veterans Administration in Washington reported that veterans were at a 22 percent higher risk of suicide than civilians.

As a nation, we must dedicate ourselves to dealing with soldiers struggling with PTSD. If we are, as it appears, to remain in an ongoing war on terror with no end in sight, then dealing effectively with the mental consequences that military experience may create must be a priority.

This may be easier said than done.

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Frankly, America has been slow to recognize the existence and seriousness of mental health issues in general. Certainly, it's hard to place measurements on these conditions: They don't show up in X-rays or in blood work. Health insurance for years was reluctant to truly recognize mental illness as a legitimate health issue, and there are still people who place a stigma on the specter of mental health problems, in part because they may be unable to grasp what they have not personally experienced. As a result, some people who endure it may be reluctant to speak of it or even admit it to themselves.

However, this has gradually changed during the last 25 years, with a greater recognition of mental health issues developing. But a lot of work remains.

PTSD is not confined to military personnel; it can happen to anyone who has been subjected to a traumatic experience. A government study reported last year that 8 percent of all Americans suffer from PTSD at some point in their lives. But for veterans, that number rises into the double digits, ranging up to 20 percent in some instances.

Still, it can be perplexing territory, not only for the general public but also for the victims of mental illness, who may not understand what they are enduring and may be ashamed or afraid of seeking help. In that sense, perhaps soldiers grappling with PTSD are really no different than civilians who are also dealing with depression or thoughts of suicide.

Our soldiers see things and endure things that many civilians cannot understand or imagine, and that makes the impact of PTSD even more profound — and more isolating.

The issue of soldiers struggling to deal with their wartime experiences is nothing new, but there is a brighter spotlight on it now than ever before. It's no longer something smothered in silence

America cannot look away from this issue. If we train men and women to fight for us and defend us, we owe it to them to offer any help any of them may need when they return home.

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Nov. 16

Mayor's survey on city budget worth doing

Whether you agree with Mayor Steve Allender's policies or not, he deserves credit for a willingness to make a case for what he believes in and then working to that end, which makes him more transparent than most politicians.

Allender, now in his second term as Rapid City's mayor, has made numerous power-point presentations recently throughout the community about the status of the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center's Barnett Arena. For those who took the time to attend one of them, the mayor spelled out the options — rebuild or repair — and why he believes a new arena is in the city's best long-term interest.

In the case of the arena and with proposed policy changes or new initiatives, the mayor uses Facebook, Twitter and his blog to articulate his positions on these matters. If anyone chooses to pay attention, it's not hard to learn what Allender is thinking on the major issues of the day. Those who follow him also have likely noticed that he can get frustrated with a public that often is only peripherally aware of the mechanics of government yet has plenty to say about it.

Recent postings on his blog (theother98cents.com — inspired by the Journal's Your Two Cents feature that often has reader complaints about politicians or government) lamented low voter turnout for local elections while challenging excuses to not vote, the importance of consultants to government agencies, and an explanation on funding for a new Barnett Arena. While not in President Trump's league, he tweets frequently about city issues.

The object of his latest concern is the city budget. The mayor, an advocate of priority-based budgeting, believes too many residents and council members responded with their hearts rather than their heads when his proposed funding cuts to the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, the Allied Arts Fund and Journey Museum were rejected after supporters mounted campaigns to preserve them. Now, the city council's approval of a plan to increase water rates by 43 percent over the next five years faces the prospect of a challenge from a citizen's group in a special election.

In a likely response to the push back from those outside the circles of city government, Allender has unveiled a survey that he hopes will shine light on the budgeting process from his perspective. He also

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hopes the exercise will help residents understand “emotion makes terrible public policy.”

While a survey might be more useful and certainly scientific if the city had hired a consultant to do it, it still gives the public a chance to weigh in on priorities in a broad sense and let the mayor know what residents care about before the next budget is proposed in 2018.

The survey is on the homepage of the city’s website (rcgov.org) and 3,000 additional surveys will be mailed to randomly selected residents. It consists of 14 questions and allows for additional comments throughout. It can easily be completed in less than 20 minutes. Allender also has promised to share the results with the city council. The deadline to respond is Dec. 22.

While it is everyone’s right to criticize government, those critiques carry more weight from an informed citizenry. One of the biggest threats to democracy and America is apathy — fewer people are voting and participating in civic affairs and more seem angry about the state of affairs.

While filling out a survey won’t change that dynamic overnight, it nonetheless presents an opportunity to get more engaged in government while demanding more from our elected and non-elected officials. Tell the mayor what you believe is important. He promises to listen.

American News, Aberdeen, Nov. 15

Time to be thankful for successes sparked by hard work

When November rolls around, it’s a good time to remember to be thankful.

Today, much of our thanks is directed to the many people, ideas and work that have recently filled our pages with good news. Each example shows how people across the region truly care about where they live and work and that hard work pays off.

Four-legged veteran: While we paused last week to express appreciation and applaud all of those who have served in the armed forces, there was a special four-legged veteran honored during a Friday school program.

Lex, a 12-year-old German Shepherd, recently retired after serving 10 years as a combat training dog. He now lives with a family in Aberdeen. During his years of service, Lex was deployed five times. When he retired, he outranked his handler.

Richmond dam: Needed repairs are underway on the Richmond Lake dam, which should ensure the safety of hundreds and maybe even thousands of people who live downstream.

The dam was built in 1936 and maintenance is an obvious key to longevity and making sure it doesn’t fail. The repairs will extend the dam’s lifespan by at least 20 years, said Ryan Brunner, state commissioner of school and public lands.

Paying attention to the dam didn’t start when the repair word did. A visit to Pierre five years ago by members of the Richmond Lake Homeowners Association got the ball rolling.

It’s great to see people rewarded for getting involved in the governmental process.

Strong educators in the Dakotas: As a teacher, FFA adviser and female farmer, Bailey Coats of Doland well earned the 2017 Young Gun of Ag Award from South Dakota Women in Agriculture.

Coats not only lives agriculture, she shares her knowledge and passion with all ages of students and prepares future generations to farm and ranch. Her contributions help ensure that women continue to earn more respect in the industry, which she said makes her long hours worthwhile.

Tara Steiner was named the Title I teacher of the year in North Dakota. She teaches at Oakes Elementary School. She was humble in noting that the school is doing well because of more than her efforts.

“I’m honored to accept the award . but I know it truly is a team effort, that we work together. It’s a team of teachers and I’m just one piece of that puzzle,” Steiner said.

Brave effort: The Britton-Hecla football team earned the Class 9A state championship in a game that was as entertaining as it was exciting.

The Braves beat Corsica-Stickney 44-26 in overtime. They never led in regulation but scored a touch-down, then recovered a fumble in overtime to procure the title. Congratulations to coach Pat Renner and his players. Well done.

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3M volunteers: Each year many of our local businesses give back to the communities in which their employees live. 3M Aberdeen continues to stand out as its 650-plus employees volunteer more than 5,000 hours per year.

In three of the last four years an Aberdeen plant worker has been honored with a 3Mgives Volunteer Award. This year's recipient was Andy Rehder, who estimates he volunteers around 25 hours per month by serving on various boards, coaching soccer, helping in classrooms and more.

Only 26 of the awards are given out each year, with 10 to 12 in the U.S, said Janet Hedges, human resources supervisor at 3M Aberdeen.

Woman gets probation for not reporting reservation slaying

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A woman who didn't report a fatal shooting she witnessed on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation last year has been sentenced to five years of probation.

The Rapid City Journal reports that 27-year-old Tyler Brewer earlier pleaded guilty to concealing information in the September 2016 death of 34-year-old Annie Colhoff in Pine Ridge. She was sentenced Wednesday.

Brewer in a statement to the court said Colhoff was killed by a male acquaintance following an argument at Colhoff's home. Brewer then went to Denver with the man and others.

Thirty-seven-year-old Orlando de Macias has pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in Colhoff's killing. The Colorado man told authorities Colhoff was armed with a knife when he shot her during their argument.

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

Bison man posts \$1M cash bond in kidnapping, rape case

BISON, S.D. (AP) — A Bison man has posted \$1 million in cash to bond out after being charged with kidnapping and rape.

The Capital Journal reports that a Perkins County grand jury's indictment of 55-year-old Richard Seidel stems from a Nov. 2 incident. Seidel also faces domestic violence and gun-related charges.

Seidel was released on Monday after posting the \$1 million in cash via certified funds.

Defense attorney Tim Rensch says that Seidel will plead not guilty at his arraignment scheduled for Dec. 5. Seidel faces felony counts that include a maximum sentence of life in prison if he were to be convicted.

Information from: Pierre Capital Journal, <http://www.capjournal.com>

Senior Chinese envoy in North Korea amid chill in ties

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) — The highest-level Chinese envoy to North Korea in two years arrived in the country's capital on Friday to try to improve relations that have soured over Beijing's tightening of sanctions and expressions of support for U.S. President Donald Trump's calls for more pressure on the North to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

Song Tao's official mission is to brief North Korean officials on the outcome of China's ruling Communist Party congress held last month. He is visiting as President Xi Jinping's special envoy, according to Chinese and North Korean state media, but no other details about his itinerary or whether he will meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have been announced.

After arriving, Song met with Choe Ryong Hae, a vice chairman of the ruling party and one of the most senior leaders after Kim.

The visit is seen as an effort by Xi to explore a new approach in relations and likely also reflects Xi's desire to head off further pressure from Washington.

China's relations with North Korea have deteriorated under Kim, who has ignored Beijing's calls to end the North's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile tests and return to disarmament talks.

North Korea staged its sixth nuclear test on Sept. 3, detonating what it said was a hydrogen bomb, and

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most recently launched a ballistic missile on Sept. 15, firing it over the Japanese island of Hokkaido into the Pacific Ocean.

China, North Korea's largest trading partner, says its influence with Kim's government is often exaggerated by the U.S. and others. Beijing is opposed to measures that could bring down Kim's regime and lead to a refugee crisis along its border, and while enforcing harsh new U.N. sanctions targeting North Korea's sources of foreign currency it has called for steps to renew dialogue.

The visit comes as Joseph Yun, the U.S. envoy for North Korea, met Friday with his South Korean counterpart, Lee Do-hoon, on the resort island of Jeju in South Korea.

"China, of course, has a big role to play on Northeast Asia security issues," Yun was quoted by South Korea's Yonhap news agency as saying, adding that he hopes China "regards the denuclearization as a critical goal. We do hope that special envoy will forward that goal."

Song's visit to North Korea also comes as China and South Korea are repairing their relations that soured over Seoul's deployment of a U.S. anti-missile system.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in is to visit China next month for talks with Xi.

Song is the first ministerial-level Chinese official to visit North Korea since October 2015, when Politburo Standing Committee member Liu Yunshan delivered a letter to Kim from Xi expressing hopes for a strong relationship, although the respite in frosty ties proved short-lived. Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin visited Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, in October last year.

Song heads the Communist Party's International Department.

Franken apologizes after woman says he kissed, groped her

By **MATTHEW DALY** and **JULIET LINDERMAN**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Minnesota Sen. Al Franken faced a storm of criticism and a likely ethics investigation after a Los Angeles radio anchor accused him of forcibly kissing her and groping her during a 2006 USO tour. He was the first member of Congress caught up in the recent wave of allegations of sexual abuse and inappropriate behavior.

Franken apologized Thursday, but there were no signs the issue would go away any time soon. Fellow Democrats swiftly condemned his actions, mindful of the current climate as well as the prospect of political blowback.

Republicans, still forced to answer for the multiple allegations facing Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore, joined in pressing for an investigation. Franken said he would welcome it.

Leeann Tweeden posted her allegations, including a photo of Franken and her, on the website of KABC, where she works as a news anchor for a morning radio show. The photo shows Franken posing in a joking manner, smiling at the camera with his hands on her chest as she naps wearing a flak vest aboard a military plane. Both had been performing for military personnel in Afghanistan two years before the one-time "Saturday Night Live" comedian was elected to the Senate.

Tweeden said Thursday that before an earlier show Franken had persisted in rehearsing a kiss and "aggressively stuck his tongue in my mouth." Now, she said, "every time I hear his voice or see his face, I am angry." She's angry with herself, too, she said, for not speaking out at the time "but I didn't want to rock the boat."

On Friday, Tweeden said she didn't come forward with the hope that Franken would step down.

"That's not my call," Tweeden told ABC's "Good Morning America." She later added: "I think that's for the people of Minnesota to decide."

Franken, 66, was the latest public figure to be caught in the deluge of revelations of sexual harassment and misconduct that have crushed careers, ruined reputations and prompted criminal investigations in Hollywood, business and beyond. The swift rebukes from both Republican and Democratic lawmakers suggest that momentum from the online #MeToo movement has begun to spur a culture shift on Capitol Hill, where current and former staffers say misogynistic and predatory behavior has long been an open secret.

In a statement Thursday, Franken apologized to Tweeden and his constituents while maintaining that he

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remembered the rehearsal differently. Tweeden said she accepted his apology.

"Coming from the world of comedy, I've told and written a lot of jokes that I once thought were funny but later came to realize were just plain offensive," Franken wrote.

"I respect women. I don't respect men who don't," he added. "And the fact that my own actions have given people a good reason to doubt that makes me feel ashamed."

Of the photo, Franken said: "I look at it now, and I feel disgusted with myself. It isn't funny. It's completely inappropriate. It's obvious how Leeann would feel violated by that picture."

President Donald Trump ridiculed Franken in tweets Thursday night: "The Al Frankenstien picture is really bad, speaks a thousand words. Where do his hands go in pictures 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 while she sleeps? And to think that just last week he was lecturing anyone who would listen about sexual harassment and respect for women. Lesley Stahl tape?"

Trump, who misspelled the name Frankenstein, referred to a New York magazine story from 1995 in which Franken, while a writer for "Saturday Night Live," suggested a skit in which "60 Minutes" commentator Andy Rooney would muse about drugging correspondent Leslie Stahl and taking pictures of her.

Trump has been publicly silent about the allegations against Moore, the Republican nominee in Alabama's special Senate election. Through a spokeswoman, he called the allegations of sexual misconduct against the former judge "very troubling" but stopped short of calling on Moore to drop out.

The accusations against Franken come just days after the Senate unanimously adopted mandatory sexual harassment training for members and staffs amid a flood of stories about harassment, sexual misconduct and gender hostility from staffers, aides and even female elected officials.

Senate Democrats spoke with one voice in describing Franken's actions as unacceptable and calling for an ethics probe.

Franken's fellow Minnesota Democrat, Amy Klobuchar, said, "This should not have happened to Leeann Tweeden. I strongly condemn this behavior, and the Senate Ethics Committee must open an investigation."

Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri, who is facing a tough re-election next year, said she was "shocked and concerned." She said, "Comedy is no excuse for inappropriate conduct, and I believe there should be an ethics investigation."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and the top Democrat, Chuck Schumer of New York, called for an ethics inquiry.

Tweeden said Franken wrote a skit for the pair that was filled with "sexual innuendo," and had brought a woman's thong as a prop that he waved around during their performance. Part of the skit included a kiss, she said, and he insisted they practice during a rehearsal despite her protests.

"We did the line leading up to the kiss and then he came at me, put his hand on the back of my head, mashed his lips against mine and aggressively stuck his tongue in my mouth," she wrote.

Associated Press writers Kyle Potter and Amy Forliti in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

Roethlisberger throws 4 TDs, Steelers drill Titans 40-17

By WILL GRAVES, AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Another uninspiring half in the books in a season littered with them for a team that expects to play deep into January and beyond, Ben Roethlisberger decided he had seen enough.

So the Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback decided it was time to speak up. The defense had kept the Tennessee Titans and star Marcus Mariota in check, yet a game that had the makings of a blowout didn't feel like one mostly because the offense kept squandering chance after chance.

No more.

"He didn't call anyone out, he called all of us out," guard David DeCastro said. "Linemen. Receivers. Himself. Running backs. Purely positive. It was a challenge. He challenged us. The guys responded."

None better than the 35-year-old Roethlisberger. Running the no-huddle offense to near perfection, Roethlisberger threw for 299 yards and four touchdowns, three to Antonio Brown, as the Steelers pulled

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away for a 40-17 victory.

"I don't care if you're old or young, just someone has to step up and make a play for this team or else we are going to keep relying on our defense," said Roethlisberger, who went 20 of 23 for 185 yards and three touchdowns in the second half. "It is time that we step up and do something."

Brown caught 10 passes for 144 yards and the three scores, including an acrobatic grab in the back of the end zone in which he pinned the ball to his helmet before bringing it in to put Pittsburgh up 20 in the fourth quarter as the Steelers set a season-high for points and margin of victory.

"We've talked so much about having the potential in this room, but we can still strive for more," said defensive end Cam Heyward, who had two of Pittsburgh's five sacks. "We're a hungry group that still has a lot to prove. We're chasing ghosts. We're trying to be the best defense. That's what we strive for."

For long stretches, the Steelers (8-2) looked the part while extending their winning streak to five.

Though Mariota ran for a touchdown and threw for another, he was also picked off a career-high four times as the Titans (6-4) saw their four-game winning streak come to a crashing halt. Mariota finished 22 of 33 for 306 yards but was under pressure much of the night.

"When you play teams that are this caliber that are contenders, that win week in and week out, that's the blueprint," Mariota said. "We're going to learn from it. We're going to get better from it and hopefully we'll see them again."

There's plenty to work on. Tennessee appeared to be in it when Mariota found Matthews with a 75-yard touchdown pass on the first play of the second half to get to 16-14.

Then Roethlisberger and the NFL's highest-paid offense got going. Finally. Roethlisberger dropped some very not subtle hints that he wanted the freedom provided by the no-huddle after the Steelers used it to pick the Colts apart during the winning drive last Sunday in Indianapolis.

Offensive coordinator Todd Haley appeared to be listening.

Pittsburgh opened in the no huddle and needed just six plays to take the lead as Roethlisberger took advantage of a free play and hit Brown with a 41-yard rainbow. Mike Hilton then returned Mariota's interception to set up the first of Chris Boswell's four field goals and the Steelers appeared on the verge of another prime-time blowout at home.

The blowout did eventually arrive, just not quickly.

The offense ground to a halt for the rest of the half, held in check by former defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau. The Hall of Famer spent 12 years building a defense that helped Pittsburgh to two Super Bowl victories before being ushered out in favor of protege Keith Butler in January 2015. The 80-year-old is in the middle of his latest project with the steadily improving Titans.

Yet the gap between Tennessee and Pittsburgh remains significant. The proof came after Mathews' long catch-and-run appeared to give the Titans momentum.

The Steelers reeled off three straight touchdown drives. Roethlisberger found a leaping Brown for a 5-yard score restored a nine-point lead, executed a perfect play-action fake at the goal line before flipping it to a wide-open Jesse James for a 1-yard strike and put the Titans away with a lob to the back corner of the end zone that Brown somehow hauled in from 10 yards out that made it 37-17.

Pittsburgh rookie JuJu Smith-Schuster knelt down and bowed to Brown during the giddy celebration. Hard to blame the 20-year-old. For the first time all season, the Steelers put it all together and looked every bit like a team with a legitimate threat to live up to its own hype.

UP NEXT

Titans: Visit Indianapolis on Nov. 26. Tennessee beat the Colts 36-22 on Oct. 16.

Steelers: Welcome the Green Bay Packers on Nov. 26, the second of four straight prime-time games for Pittsburgh.

More AP NFL: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL

Iraqi forces retake the country's last IS-held town

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi forces backed by the U.S.-led coalition retook on Friday the last town in the country that was held by the Islamic State group, more than three years after the militants stormed nearly a third of Iraq's territory, the Defense Ministry said.

At dawn, military units and local tribal fighters pushed into the western neighborhoods of Rawah in western Anbar province, and after just five hours of fighting they retook the town, according to Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool, the ministry's spokesman.

Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi congratulated his forces on retaking Rawah. In a statement released on Friday afternoon, Al-Abadi said Iraqi forces liberated Rawah in record time and were continuing operations to retake control of Iraq's western desert and the border area with Syria.

Rawah, 175 miles (275 kilometers) northwest of Baghdad, lies along the Euphrates River Valley near the border town of Qaim that Iraqi forces retook from IS earlier this month.

U.S.-led coalition forces supported the operations to retake Rawah and Qaim with intelligence, airstrikes and advisers, coalition spokesman Ryan Dillon said.

IS blitzed across Iraq's north and west in the summer of 2014, capturing Iraq's second-largest city of Mosul and advancing to the edges of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad. Later that year the United States began a campaign of airstrikes against the militants that fueled Iraqi territorial gains, allowing the military to retake Mosul in July this year.

All that now remains of IS-held Iraq are patches of rural territory in the country's vast western desert along the border with Syria.

IS has steadily been losing ground across the border in Syria as well where its so-called "caliphate" has basically crumbled with the loss of the city of Raqqa, the former Islamic State group's capital, which fell to the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in October.

Both the U.S. and Russia have embedded special forces with their respective partners and are supporting their advances with airstrikes. Russia backs Syrian government forces of President Bashar Assad.

The last urban areas controlled by the militants in Syria are parts of the border town of Boukamal and a patch of territory near the capital, Damascus, and in central Hama province.

Syrian government forces, backed by Russian troops and Iranian-backed militias, originally pushed IS out of Boukamal earlier this month, but the militants retook a large part of the town, mostly its northern neighborhoods days later. Since then, IS has repelled government forces trying to push back into the town.

Meanwhile, U.S.-backed Kurdish-led forces are also approaching Boukamal from the eastern side of the Euphrates.

Despite IS' significant territorial losses, the group's media arm remains intact, allowing it to still recruit supporters and inspire new attacks. Iraqi and American officials say IS militants are expected to continue carrying out insurgent-style attacks in Syria, Iraq and beyond.

Associated Press writer Sarah El Deeb in Beirut contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. GOP LAWMAKING VICTORY AROUND THE CORNER

House passes \$1.5 trillion overhaul of Americans' business and personal income taxes, helping Trump and the Republicans get closer to their first major legislative triumph

2. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

Trump has quickly condemned accusations against Minnesota Democratic Sen. Al Franken, but he remained conspicuously silent over claims leveled against Alabama Republican Roy Moore.

3. WHO HAS BEEN SEEN IN PUBLIC

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Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe made his first appearance since the military put him under house arrest this week, attending a graduation ceremony, even as the military pushes toward his departure.

4. ANOTHER SET OF ALLEGATIONS

Jeffrey Tambor is denying allegations of sexual misconduct by another actor on "Transparent."

5. WHERE ARE RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN DANGER

Activists are describing a drastic deterioration in China's treatment of human rights campaigners as the country's most powerful leader in a generation associates China's rise as a global power with highly authoritarian, one-party rule.

6. A REAL DON IS GONE

Mafia 'boss of bosses' Salvatore 'Toto' Riina has died at age 87 while serving multiple life sentences. He was born in the mountain town of Corleone made famous by "The Godfather" films.

7. THE TUBE MAY HAVE A HOLE IN IT

The Keystone pipeline leaked an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil onto agricultural land in northeastern South Dakota, though surface water sources are not thought to have been affected.

8. WHICH COUNTRY WAS FETED ON MUSIC AWARDS NIGHT

The Latin Grammy Awards were a love letter to Puerto Rico, with several artists dedicating their performances and awards to the island hard hit by Hurricane Maria.

9. DOME GOING DOWN AS STADIUM ASCENDS

The Georgia Dome is set to be imploded as the NFL's Atlanta Falcons complete their Mercedes-Benz Stadium despite delays over its complex retractable roof.

10. BASEBALL'S BEST

Baseball writers choose the Houston Astros' Jose Altuve and Giancarlo Stanton of the Miami Marlins as most valuable players in their respective leagues.

Mugabe makes 1st public appearance amid talks on departure

By FARAI MUTSAKA and CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe made his first public appearance since the military put him under house arrest this week, attending a graduation ceremony to applause, even as the military announced "significant progress" on talks for his departure and arrested some of his allies.

The appearance came during an extraordinary series of negotiations with regional leaders over Mugabe's departure after 37 years in power.

Zimbabwe's military is taking pains to show respect for the 93-year-old leader, the world's oldest head of state, by referring to him as the president and the commander-in-chief. At the same time, it said Friday it was arresting and pursuing some people close to Mugabe and his wife.

Friday's graduation event appeared to allow Mugabe to project the image of leadership, even as calls for his departure grow stronger. Some Zimbabweans worried that Mugabe, the only leader many have ever known, would somehow find a way to stay on.

Mugabe didn't make a speech at the ceremony, merely announcing its opening to applause after joining the crowd in the national anthem. Arriving in suit and tie, he put on an academic gown and hat and walked slowly in a red-carpet procession to a podium as a marching band played.

The military statement reported by the state-run Herald newspaper and Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation said military leaders are "engaging with the Commander-in-Chief President Robert Mugabe on the way forward and will advise the nation of the outcome as soon as possible."

"Significant progress has been made in their operation to weed out criminals around President Mugabe," the statement said, adding that the military had arrested some while others remained at large. Those sought had been "committing crimes that were causing social and economic suffering in Zimbabwe."

The military is seeking Cabinet ministers and other top officials who had been associates of first lady Grace Mugabe, part of a clique dubbed the G40 because many were in their 40s and 50s. They are of a different generation from the one that fought for independence from white minority rule.

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Grace Mugabe's rapid political rise had alarmed many who feared she could succeed her husband after he fired his longtime deputy, Emmerson Mnangagwa, last week. That firing set off the military's moves, and Mnangagwa is expected to lead any new government.

There was no sign of the first lady at Friday's graduation ceremony.

Army troops and armored vehicles continued to patrol the capital, Harare, as Zimbabweans went about their daily business. Residents said they had feared at first when the military moved in but praised the current calm.

Headlines in some local newspapers declared the Mugabe era over. "Dawn of a new era," one said. "Mugabe remembered for brutal 37-year rule," said another.

The ongoing negotiations appear to be trying to get Mugabe to agree to hand over to a new government. But difficulties could include the timing. The ruling party is set to meet next month, and Mugabe's term ends next year. An election date has not been set.

In another striking image of the fluidity of the political situation, the Zimbabwe Herald on Thursday published photos of Mugabe jovially shaking hands with army commander Constantino Chiwenga, the general who ordered the president's arrest.

Others pictured in the first round of talks at State House, the president's official residence, include Defense Minister Sydney Sekeramayi, Intelligence Minister Kembo Mohadi, South African Cabinet ministers who are acting as mediators and a local Catholic priest, Fidelis Mukonori, whom Mugabe has used as a mediator before. Grace Mugabe was not pictured.

The military wants the process of establishing the new government to appear to be constitutional in order to maintain a veneer of legality and the approval of the 16-nation regional bloc, the Southern African Development Community, and the African Union.

As a landlocked country, regional sanctions by the bodies could be harmful to Zimbabwe's already ailing economy.

A committee of SADC on Thursday has recommended an emergency summit of heads of state to discuss the Zimbabwe situation. It was not clear when that would take place.

Moore targets female accusers as critics decry intimidation

By STEVE PEOPLES and KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Ever defiant, Republican Roy Moore's campaign lashed out at the women accusing him of sexual misconduct, declaring "let the battle begin." Women's advocates decried the talk as worn intimidation tactics in a desperate attempt to keep his imperiled Senate bid alive.

Moore ignored mounting calls from Washington Republicans concerned that he may not only lose a seat they were sure to win but also may do significant damage to the party's brand among women nationwide as they prepared for a difficult midterm election season.

Moore's team showed no such concerns Thursday.

"You ask me if I believe the girls. No, I don't believe the girls. I believe Judge Moore," Moore strategist Dean Young said. "Let the battle begin. ... Get ready to fight Mitch McConnell. We're going to fight you to the death on this."

President Donald Trump, through a spokeswoman, called the allegations of sexual misconduct against the former judge "very troubling." The Republican president stopped short of calling on Moore to quit the race, however, breaking with most Republican leaders in Washington, including McConnell, the Senate majority leader.

"He thinks that the people of Alabama should make the decision on who their next senator should be," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said, declining to clarify whether Trump continued to back Moore.

Trump did take time to publicly ridicule Democratic Sen. Al Franken, who apologized Thursday after a woman who had traveled with him on a USO tour in 2006 accused him of forcibly kissing her and then groping her for a photograph taken while she was sleeping on a transport plane. Trump tweeted that the

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photo was "really bad" and that "just last week he was lecturing anyone who would listen about sexual harassment and respect for women."

In Alabama, Moore appeared alongside more than a dozen religious leaders, who took turns bashing the Christian conservative's many critics — especially his female accusers.

"This is a man who does not lie. Compare that to his accusers," charged Gordon Klingenschmitt of the group Pray in Jesus' Name.

With Moore looking on, Klingenschmitt quoted the Ten Commandments in a message aimed at two women he called out by name — one has said she was 14 and the other that she was 16 when Moore initiated sexual contact as a district attorney in his 30s.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness," Klingenschmitt declared.

Another Moore supporter, professor Joel Brind of Baruch College, singled out Gloria Allred, the attorney for one of the accusers, for supporting an agenda designed to "enable serial child predators" — a reference, Brind said, to Allred's support for abortion rights.

Moore called the allegations "unsubstantiated," "unproven" and "fake." "They're not only untrue, but they have no evidence to support them," he insisted, refusing to answer any questions from reporters about the allegations.

Moore has given a single media interview about the allegations to Fox News Channel host Sean Hannity. His campaign website has added a form asking people to report "inappropriate news organization contact."

Still, he has repeatedly hinted that his team has gathered evidence against his critics. He cited evidence of "collusion" soon after the initial report surfaced last week.

His wife circulated a fake report earlier in the week that reporters were offering to pay thousands of dollars for women to come forward with new claims against Moore. In a subsequent social media post, she described the media's actions as "an all-out assault, which is why we are suing them."

Moore's attorney has demanded that one of the accusers, Beverly Young Nelson, release a yearbook she contends Moore signed so it can be analyzed by a handwriting expert to prove its authenticity. Nelson says that Moore aggressively groped her in a locked car when she was 16.

The Moore campaign dug up Nelson's divorce papers, which had been signed by Moore, and held them up to cameras suggesting she had copied the signature.

It was unclear whether the campaign was taking other steps to probe the background of his accusers. Moore strategist Dean Young said "no" when asked Thursday whether the campaign had hired a private investigator.

Gloria Allred, Nelson's attorney, said she and her client were prepared for Moore's "slash and burn" approach.

"If in fact his attempt is to intimidate her or me, he has failed miserably," she said. "We prepared. We knew that this would be a battle for the truth, that this is someone who most likely will fight to the end."

At least three new allegations of misconduct surfaced on Wednesday, including one by Tina Johnson, who told AL.com that Moore groped her during a 1991 meeting in his law office. Two others told The Washington Post they were young women when Moore courted them as a district attorney in his 30s. Three other women told the newspaper last week that they were teens when Moore tried to initiate romantic relationships. One said she was 14 when Moore touched her over her bra and underwear.

The Alabama Republican Party also reiterated its support for Moore on Thursday, a day after its 21-member steering committee privately contemplated the situation.

The state GOP has the power to revoke Moore's GOP nomination and ask election officials to ignore ballots cast for him, although the state party has little interest in alienating Moore's followers a year before statewide elections.

Meanwhile, the National Organization For Women condemned the attacks against Moore's accusers, suggesting that the tactics help explain why many victims of sexual harassment are afraid to go public.

Chandler reported from Montgomery, Alabama. Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Catherine Lucey in Washington contributed to this report.

Selective outrage: Trump criticizes Franken, silent on Moore

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is displaying selective outrage over allegations of sexual harassment against prominent men in politics, as his own tortured past lingers over his response.

Trump moved quickly Thursday to condemn accusations against Minnesota Democratic Sen. Al Franken as “really bad,” but he has remained conspicuously silent on the more serious claims leveled against Roy Moore, the Republican in Alabama’s special Senate race who faces allegations he sexually assaulted teenage girls decades ago.

Trump has repeatedly declined to follow Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Paul Ryan in calling on Moore to quit the race. Both had said they believe Moore’s accusers.

With the nation confronting revelations of sexual impropriety by powerful men in entertainment and politics, Trump is an inconsistent as well as an unlikely critic of alleged offenders.

More than a dozen allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct were leveled against him in the waning days of the 2016 presidential campaign. Trump was caught on tape in conversation with “Access Hollywood” boasting in graphic detail of sexually harassing women.

Trump has repeatedly dismissed the allegations against him as fake news, most recently telling reporters on Oct. 16: “It’s just fake. It’s fake. It’s made-up stuff.”

That didn’t deter Trump from scoring a blow on a reeling detractor.

Leeann Tweeden, now a Los Angeles radio host, on Thursday accused Franken of forcibly kissing and groping her during a 2006 USO tour. She released a photo showing the comedian turned senator posing in a joking manner with his hands on her chest as she naps wearing a flak vest aboard a military plane.

In a pair of tweets Thursday night, Trump spotlighted the accusations against Franken, saying the photo “speaks a thousand words.”

“Where do his hands go in pictures 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 while she sleeps?” Trump tweeted. “And to think that just last week he was lecturing anyone who would listen about sexual harassment and respect for women.”

Hours before the tweets appeared, Franken moved swiftly to apologize and embrace bipartisan calls for an ethics investigation into his actions.

As Trump assailed Franken, Moore was digging in, pledging to fight the accusations against him as the state GOP in Alabama reaffirmed its support for the embattled candidate. Two women have come forward by name accusing Moore of initiating sexual contact with them when they were 14 and 16, respectively.

On Tuesday, the Republican National Committee pulled its financial support for Moore, following similar action last week by the National Republican Senatorial Committee. The White House said Trump supported the RNC’s decision, which came as the party absorbed polling data showing Moore trailing Democrat Doug Jones in the Republican stronghold.

In recent days, GOP officials sought to explain away Trump’s refusal to call on Moore to step aside as an effort not to add more fuel to the anti-establishment fires boosting Moore’s campaign. They also suggested that Trump was wary of wading into issues of sexual impropriety given the previous claims against him. But the strike against Franken indicated a more political rationale. The former “Saturday Night Live” writer and cast member has been an outspoken critic of Trump’s administration.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders repeatedly declined Thursday to say whether Trump believed Moore’s accusers, even after the president’s daughter, Ivanka Trump, told The Associated Press that she had no reason to doubt their claims against him.

“He thinks that the people of Alabama should make the decision on who their next senator should be,” Sanders said of the president, who dodged questions from reporters on the subject twice earlier in the week. Sanders also refused to say whether Trump was pulling his endorsement of the candidate.

GOP closer to big win with House tax vote; Senate unclear

By ALAN FRAM and MARCY GORDON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans have stretched closer to delivering the first big legislative victory for President Donald Trump and their party, whisking a \$1.5 trillion overhaul of business and personal income taxes through the House. Thorny problems await in the Senate, though.

The House passage of the bill Thursday on a mostly party-line 227-205 vote also brought nearer the biggest revamp of the U.S. tax system in three decades.

But in the Senate, a similar measure received a politically awkward verdict from nonpartisan congressional analysts showing it would eventually produce higher taxes for low- and middle-income earners but deliver deep reductions for those better off.

The Senate bill was approved late Thursday by the Finance Committee and sent to the full Senate on a party-line 14-12 vote. Like the House measure, it would slash the corporate tax rate and reduce personal income tax rates for many.

But it adds a key feature not in the House version: repeal of the Affordable Care Act's requirement that everyone in the U.S. have health insurance. Elimination of the so-called individual mandate under the Obama health care law would add an estimated \$338 billion in revenue over 10 years that the Senate tax-writers used for additional tax cuts.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has projected that repeal of the mandate would result in 13 million more uninsured people by 2027, making it a political risk for some lawmakers.

The Senate panel's vote came at the end of four days of often fierce partisan debate. It turned angrily personal for Chairman Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, as he railed against Democrats' accusations that the legislation was crafted to favor big corporations and the wealthy.

"I come from the poor people. And I've been working my whole stinking career for people who don't have a chance," Hatch insisted.

After the panel's approval, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell declared, "For the millions of hard-working Americans who need more money in their pockets and the chance of a better future, help is on the way."

The analysts' problematic projections for the Senate bill came a day after Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson became the first GOP senator to state opposition to the measure, saying it didn't cut taxes enough for millions of partnerships and corporations. With at least five other Republican senators yet to declare support, the bill's fate is far from certain in a chamber the GOP controls by just 52-48.

Even so, Republicans are hoping to send a compromise bill for Trump to sign by Christmas.

"Now the ball is in the Senate's court," Vice President Mike Pence said after the House vote. Speaking at a conservative Tax Foundation dinner in Washington, Pence said, "The next few weeks are going to be vitally important and they're going to be a challenge."

"We're going to get it done" before year's end, he said.

A White House statement that "now is the time to deliver" also underscored the GOP's effort to maintain momentum and outrace critics. Those include the AARP lobby for older people, major medical organizations, realtors — and, in all likelihood, every Senate Democrat.

Despite controlling both chambers of Congress and the White House, the Republicans are still smarting from this summer's crash of their effort to dismantle President Barack Obama's health care law. They see a successful tax effort as the best way to avert major losses in next year's congressional elections. House Republicans concede they are watching the Senate warily.

"Political survival depends on us doing this," said Rep. Kevin Cramer, R-N.D. "One of the things that scares me a little bit is that they're going to screw up the bill to the point we can't pass it."

The House plan and the Senate Finance bill would deliver the bulk of their tax reductions to businesses.

Each would cut the 35 percent corporate tax rate to 20 percent, while reducing personal rates for many taxpayers and erasing or shrinking deductions. Projected federal deficits would grow by \$1.5 trillion over 10 years.

As decades of Republicans have done before them, GOP lawmakers touted their tax cuts as a boon to

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families across all income lines and a boost for businesses, jobs and the entire country.

"Passing this bill is the single biggest thing we can do to grow the economy, to restore opportunity and help those middle-income families who are struggling," said House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin.

Ryan also said he'd seek to add tax breaks to help Puerto Rico recover from recent hurricanes to a House-Senate compromise.

Democrats said the tax measure would give outsized benefits to the wealthy and saddle millions of moderate-income Americans with tax increases. Among other things, the House legislation would reduce and ultimately repeal the tax Americans pay on the largest inheritances, while the Senate would limit that levy to fewer estates.

The bill is "pillaging the middle class to pad the pockets of the wealthiest and hand tax breaks to corporations shipping jobs out of America," declared House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California.

Thirteen House Republicans — all but one from high-tax California, New York and New Jersey — voted "no" because the plan would erase tax deductions for state and local income and sales taxes and limit property tax deductions to \$10,000. Defectors included House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-N.J., who said the measure would "hurt New Jersey families."

Trump traveled to the Capitol before the vote to give House Republicans a pep talk.

Besides Johnson, Republican Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Jeff Flake and John McCain of Arizona, Bob Corker of Tennessee and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska have yet to commit to backing the tax measure.

Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation estimated the Senate plan would mean higher taxes beginning in 2021 for many families earning under \$30,000 annually. By 2027, families making less than \$75,000 would face tax boosts while those making more would enjoy cuts.

Republicans attributed the new figures to two provisions: one ending the measure's personal tax cuts starting in 2026 and the other abolishing the "Obamacare" requirement that people buy health coverage or pay tax penalties.

Ending the personal tax cuts for individuals in 2026, derided as a gimmick by Democrats, is designed to pare the bill's long-term costs to the Treasury. Legislation cannot boost budget deficits after 10 years if it is to qualify for Senate procedures that bar bill-killing filibusters.

Other features:

—Both chambers' bills would nearly double the standard deduction to around \$12,000 for individuals and about \$24,000 for married couples and dramatically boost the current \$1,000 per-child tax credit.

—Both would erase the current \$4,050 personal exemption and reduce or cancel other tax breaks. The House would limit interest deductions to future home mortgages of up to \$500,000, down from today's \$1 million. The Senate would end deductions for moving expenses and tax preparation.

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking, Richard Lardner and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Doing nothing, Trump may witness US goal in Mugabe's ouster

By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Without lifting a finger, the Trump administration may be witnessing the culmination of nearly two decades of U.S. efforts to pry Zimbabwe from the powerful grasp of its authoritarian President Robert Mugabe. Yet with Mugabe's fate and Zimbabwe's political future in limbo, neither Trump nor previous administrations can claim credit or celebrate.

The past three American leaders have actively and outspokenly sought to isolate Mugabe and his ruling clique for human rights abuses, hoping to encourage a democratic transition. Since January, however, it's been virtual crickets. Now the 93-year-old is under house arrest with his rule nearing an end, a victim not of U.S. and Western pressure but of domestic infighting.

After staying silent through the first day of Zimbabwe's possible coup with the exception of warning American citizens there, Trump's State Department weighed in Wednesday by voicing concern about the

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military's actions.

The department urged Zimbabwe's leaders "to exercise restraint, respect the rule of law and uphold the constitutionally-protected rights of all citizens." It encouraged leaders "to quickly resolve differences to allow for a rapid return to normalcy." The U.S. does not take sides in Zimbabwe's internal politics, it said, while stressing that it also "does not condone military intervention in political processes."

Mugabe on Thursday was meeting a South African delegation at the state house as negotiations continued for a resolution to the political turmoil. South Africa President Jacob Zuma, speaking in parliament, said the political situation "very shortly will be becoming clear."

The negotiations unfolded as African foreign ministers gathered in Washington for a regional summit focused largely on democracy and the rule of law. Moussa Faki Mahamat, the chairman of the African Union Commission, wouldn't say explicitly whether Mugabe should step down, but said nations on the continent were working expeditiously to resolve the crisis.

"We believe we will find a solution which will be within constitutional legality," the AU leader told The Associated Press on Thursday.

If that indeed translates into Mugabe's ouster, it's a result the United States has long hoped for.

Washington started acting against Zimbabwe toward the end of President Bill Clinton's administration in 2000, condemning Mugabe's moves to consolidate power by suppressing dissident voices, often violently, and implementing controversial seizures of white-owned land. The U.S. then began restricting aid, international loans and weapons sales, eventually cutting off virtually all nonhumanitarian assistance to the country.

In 2003, then-President George W. Bush declared a national state of emergency with respect to Zimbabwe and signed the first of three executive orders he would issue while in office, authorizing sanctions against senior Zimbabwean officials deemed to be undermining democracy. Following national elections in 2008 that Bush called "a sham," the U.S. took a lead in encouraging a power-sharing arrangement between Mugabe and Zimbabwe's main opposition leader. When that failed, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said it was "well past time" for Mugabe to leave power.

Former President Barack Obama maintained the pressure, annually extending the Bush-era state of emergency authorizing sanctions. When elections in 2013 saw Mugabe re-elected, Obama's administration pronounced them "deeply flawed" and the U.S. president himself said he was "heartbroken" at deteriorating conditions in Zimbabwe. Obama's two secretaries of state, Hillary Clinton and John Kerry, and U.N. ambassadors, Susan Rice and Samantha Power, all delivered speeches that scathingly criticized Mugabe.

But for the past 10 months, top U.S. officials have spoken nary a word about Zimbabwe. They've imposed no new sanctions. They've engaged in no known, behind-the-scenes efforts to escalate pressure on Mugabe or his government.

At a lunch for African leaders on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in September, Trump mentioned by name Ivory Coast, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan and Uganda. He didn't mention Zimbabwe.

In fact, until Thursday, the only times the words "Zimbabwe" or "Mugabe" appear to have been used by senior Trump administration officials were in April and in June.

The first time was when the State Department released a three-sentence written statement from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson congratulating the Zimbabwean people on the country's April 18 independence day. The second was when U.N. envoy Nikki Haley mentioned Zimbabwe and Mugabe in a speech that excoriated the U.N. Human Rights Council for failing to address despotic regimes.

The Trump White House doesn't seem to have mentioned the country at all in 2017.

The only White House mention of Zimbabwe in 2017 was in the waning days of Obama's presidency, when he extended the Bush-era state of emergency and sanctions for another year. That decision enabled the U.S. to impose further penalties on Zimbabwe's leadership. The only action by Trump's Treasury Department, however, has been to remove two retired officials from the sanctions list.

Associated Press writer Josh Lederman contributed to this report.

GOP, Democratic senators back bill to bolster FBI gun checks

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican and Democratic senators have joined forces on legislation to strengthen the FBI database of prohibited gun buyers after the Air Force failed to report the criminal history of the gunman who slaughtered more than two dozen people at a Texas church.

Congress has taken no steps on guns in the weeks after deadly shootings in Las Vegas and Sutherland Springs, Texas. The bill, which has the backing of the Senate's No. 2 Republican, John Cornyn of Texas, would ensure that federal agencies, such as the Defense Department, and states accurately report relevant criminal information to the FBI.

The Air Force has acknowledged that the Texas shooter, Devin P. Kelley, should have had his name and domestic violence conviction submitted to the National Criminal Information Center database.

The bill would penalize federal agencies that fail to properly report required records and reward states that comply by providing them with federal grant preferences.

Cornyn said agencies and state governments have for years failed to forward legally required records without consequences.

"Just one record that's not properly reported can lead to tragedy, as the country saw last week in Sutherland Springs, Texas," Cornyn said. "This bill aims to help fix what's become a nationwide, systemic problem so we can better prevent criminals and domestic abusers from obtaining firearms."

Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut, a fierce proponent of gun restrictions, said much more needs to be done on the issue of gun violence, but he believes the bill will help ensure that thousands of dangerous people are prevented from buying guns.

"It represents the strongest update to the background checks system in a decade and provides the foundation for more compromise in the future," Murphy said.

The measure's prospects in the Senate are unclear despite Cornyn's backing, and it faces an uncertain future in the GOP-run House.

The bill would penalize agencies that fail to forward required information by prohibiting political appointees from receiving any bonus pay. The legislation also seeks to improve accountability by publicly reporting which agencies and states fail to provide the required records.

Anyone who buys a gun from a federally licensed dealer must pass a background check. People convicted in any court of domestic violence are prohibited from buying a gun, but the Air Force has acknowledged that it failed to tell the FBI about the assault conviction of Kelley, a former airman who killed more than two dozen in the Texas church on Nov. 5. That failure made it possible for Kelley to acquire weapons that federal law prohibited him from buying or possessing after his 2012 conviction.

The Army has also said it failed to alert the FBI to soldiers' criminal history in a "significant amount" of cases.

Peter Ambler, executive director of an organization named for former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., said the bill was a step in the right direction. Giffords survived being shot in the head while meeting with constituents in a Tucson-area parking lot in 2011.

"It's an important signal to states and federal agencies that Congress means business when it comes to ensuring a strong, effective background check system," said Ambler, whose organization works to strengthen gun laws.

A National Rifle Association official applauded Cornyn's effort, saying the bill would ensure the records of prohibited individuals are entered into the background check system while providing a relief valve for those wrongly included.

"The NRA will continue to support efforts to make the background check system instant, accurate and fair, while protecting the rights of law-abiding gun owners," said Chris W. Cox, executive director of the group's political and lobbying arm.

Trump urges 3 UCLA players to thank China leader for release

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump urged three suspended UCLA basketball players on Thursday to thank China's president for their freedom after they shoplifted in China.

The president's suggestion came a day after he tweeted: "Do you think the three UCLA basketball players will say thank you President Trump. They were headed for 10 years in jail."

The trio apologized that day and publicly thanked Trump, who was in Asia last week, for his help. On Thursday morning, the president sent another tweet: "You're welcome. go out and give a big Thank You to President Xi Jinping of China who made your release possible."

In the same tweet, Trump said, "HAVE A GREAT LIFE! Be careful, there are many pitfalls on the long and winding road of life!"

Later in the day, as he rallied House Republicans before a crucial vote on a tax overhaul, Trump talked about his efforts to release the players

Rep. Steve Womack of Arkansas said Trump "personally engaged the Chinese president and it turned out the way it did," with the players released. He said China is known for being "extremely punitive" with criminal suspects, adding: "This could have been a disaster for those families."

Freshmen LiAngelo Ball, Jalen Hill and Cody Riley were detained in Hangzhou for questioning last week before the Bruins beat Georgia Tech in their season-opening game in Shanghai. The rest of the team returned home Saturday.

Athletic director Dan Guerrero said the shoplifting occurred when the team had 90 minutes of free time on Nov. 6 in Hangzhou. He said the three took items from three stores.

The players are suspended indefinitely, and coach Steve Alford says they will have to earn their way back onto the team.

Climate nemesis, carbon, could become valuable resource

By FRANK JORDANS, Associated Press

ESSEN, Germany (AP) — On a dreary November morning, a small party of visitors from around the world boards a boat for an hour-long ride around what was once one of the most polluted waters in the Ruhr valley.

Lake Baldeney has become a symbol for the efforts Germany is making to revive its western industrial heartland, and the gleaming white vessel is meant to showcase where the journey is heading: toward a cleaner, sustainable future.

The boat is the first in the world to be fitted with an electric engine powered by a fuel cell containing methanol — a form of alcohol that inevitably prompts "booze cruise" jokes among passengers. What makes the boat really stand out, though, is the fact that the methanol is produced using a chemical process which draws carbon out of the air.

The technology, though still relatively new, is being touted by some as a weapon in the fight against man-made climate change, caused to a large degree by carbon emissions from fossil fuel use.

Levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere have steadily increased since the industrial revolution, contributing to the greenhouse effect that is spurring global warming.

The U.N.'s panel of scientific advisers on climate change has predicted that unless carbon emissions peak within the coming years, average temperatures around the world will rise by more than 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) with potentially catastrophic results.

The boat is one of three prototypes designed to show that carbon converted to methanol — in this case with power from a nearby hydroelectric plants — can serve as an eco-friendly fuel of the future. The others are a car that can run for 500 kilometers (310 miles) on methanol and a house capable of producing and storing all the electricity it needs to be self-sufficient.

Similar projects are springing up around the world and several were showcased on the sidelines of the global climate meeting in Bonn, Germany, while delegates were hammering out rules needed to implement the landmark Paris climate accord. The 2015 agreement, since denounced by President Donald Trump but

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backed by every other government on the planet, set a goal of keeping global warming significantly below 2 degrees Celsius, but didn't lay down many of the practical details needed to ensure the treaty works.

Among the pioneers that have been getting the most attention is Swiss company call Climeworks, which operates a site near Zurich that draws carbon dioxide from the air and pumps it to a nearby plant nursery. While the saplings would naturally absorb CO₂, Climeworks is effectively providing them with fertilizer and speeding up the removal of carbon at the same time.

Daniel Egger, the company's head of sales, said the operation should break even within two years and can be scaled up easily. Climeworks is also experimenting with a different type of carbon capture at a site in Iceland, where CO₂ is harvested from the air and pumped deep underground. There, it bonds with limestone to form a solid that stays safely out of the atmosphere.

Analysts such as Andrew Jones say such systems can at best make a small contribution to achieving the Paris goals.

"If your basement is flooding, your top priority is to turn off the faucets, not reach for the mops and buckets," said Jones, who is co-director of Climate Interactive, a think tank that uses computer models to simulate solutions to global warming.

Jones said that removing 10 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year, as some models suggest will be necessary, would require the energy equivalent of 1,200 new nuclear plants, or more than all of the wind and solar power forecast by the International Energy Agency to be available by 2040.

"While we should study these machines, the world runs the risk of being distracted by the fantasy of large-scale carbon dioxide removal when the priority should be a war-scale effort at preventing greenhouse gas emissions in the first place," he said.

Doing so, however, would mean ending all use of fossil fuels by the year 2050 at the latest, a plan that few governments and businesses are willing to get behind.

To most, the notion of going "carbon neutral" by the middle of the century will require a broad mix of measures, from reducing emissions to recapturing some and even using technologies that haven't been invented yet.

A half-hour drive from Lake Baldeney lies one of Europe's oldest steelworks. The site in Duisburg, next to the Rhine river, was founded in 1891 and to this day a vast mesh of pipes, railways and chimneys covers the 10-square-kilometer (four-square-mile) site.

It is operated by Thyssenkrupp, a company that once made cannons for the German kaiser but is now struggling to compete against cheaper rivals from India and China. One solution, according to its chief technology officer, Reinhold E. Achatz, has been relentless innovation. Recently, that has included devising a way to utilize the carbon dioxide released in the steelmaking process and turning it into fuel, fertilizer or plastic.

A new facility scheduled to open in April will cut down 10 million tons of CO₂ emissions a year, Achatz said. Replicated across steel plants worldwide, the process could save 50 times as much while providing a raw material that would cut down on the need for oil.

"Carbon dioxide isn't a waste," Achatz said. "It's a resource."

Tesla wants to electrify big trucks, adding to its ambitions

By DEE-ANN DURBIN, AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — After more than a decade of making cars and SUVs — and, more recently, solar panels — Tesla Inc. wants to electrify a new type of vehicle: big trucks.

The company unveiled its new electric semitractor-trailer Thursday night near its design center in Hawthorne, California.

CEO Elon Musk said the semi is capable of traveling 500 miles (804 kilometers) on an electric charge — even with a full 80,000-pound (36,287-kilogram) load — and will cost less than a diesel semi considering fuel savings, lower maintenance and other factors. Musk said customers can put down a \$5,000 deposit for the semi now and production will begin in 2019.

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"We're confident that this is a product that's better in every way from a feature standpoint," Musk told a crowd of Tesla fans gathered for the unveiling. Musk didn't reveal the semi's price.

The truck will have Tesla's Autopilot system, which can maintain a set speed and slow down automatically in traffic. It also has a system that automatically keeps the vehicle in its lane. Musk said several Tesla semis will be able to travel in a convoy, autonomously following each other.

Musk said Tesla plans a worldwide network of solar-powered "megachargers" that could get the trucks back up to 400 miles of range after charging for only 30 minutes.

The move fits with Musk's stated goal for the company of accelerating the shift to sustainable transportation. Trucks account for nearly a quarter of transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S., according to government statistics.

But the semi also piles on more chaos at the Palo Alto, California-based company. Tesla is way behind on production of the Model 3, a new lower-cost sedan, with some customers facing waits of 18 months or more. It's also ramping up production of solar panels after buying Solar City Corp. last year. Tesla is working on a pickup truck and a lower-cost SUV and negotiating a new factory in China. Meanwhile, the company posted a record quarterly loss of \$619 million in its most recent quarter.

On Thursday night, Tesla surprised fans with another product: An updated version of its first sports car, the Roadster. Tesla says the new Roadster will have 620 miles of range and a top speed of 250 mph (402 kph). The car, coming in 2020, will have a base price of \$200,000.

Musk, too, is being pulled in many directions. He leads rocket maker SpaceX and is dabbling in other projects, including high-speed transit, artificial intelligence research and a new company that's digging tunnels beneath Los Angeles to alleviate traffic congestion.

"He's got so much on his plate right now. This could present another distraction from really just making sure that the Model 3 is moved along effectively," said Bruce Clark, a senior vice president and automotive analyst at Moody's.

Tesla's semi is venturing into an uncertain market. Demand for electric trucks is expected to grow over the next decade as the U.S., Europe and China all tighten their emissions regulations. Electric truck sales totaled 4,100 in 2016, but are expected to grow to more than 70,000 in 2026, says Navigant Research.

But most of that growth is expected to be for smaller, medium-duty haulers like garbage trucks or delivery vans. Those trucks can have a more limited range of 100 miles (160 kilometers) or less, which requires fewer expensive batteries. They can also be fully charged overnight.

Long-haul semi trucks, on the other hand, would be expected to go greater distances, and that would be challenging. Right now, there's little charging infrastructure on global highways. Without Tesla's promised fast-charging, even a mid-sized truck would likely require a two-hour stop, cutting into companies' efficiency and profits, says Brian Irwin, managing director of the North American industrial group for the consulting firm Accenture.

Irwin says truck companies will have to watch the market carefully, because tougher regulations on diesels or an improvement in charging infrastructure could make electric trucks more viable very quickly. Falling battery costs also will help make electric trucks more appealing compared to diesels.

But even lower costs won't make trucking a sure bet for Tesla. It faces stiff competition from long-trusted brands like Daimler AG, which unveiled its own semi prototype last month.

"These are business people, not fans, and they will need convinced that this truck is better for their balance sheet than existing technology. It probably is, based on the specs provided, but this isn't necessarily a slam dunk," said Rebecca Lindland, an executive analyst at Kelley Blue Book.

Musk said Tesla will guarantee the semi's powertrain for one million miles to help alleviate customers' concerns.

Asian shares mostly higher on US earnings, tax progress

By KELVIN CHAN, AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — Asian shares were mostly higher Friday, extending global gains after Wall Street reported a round of healthy earnings and U.S. politicians took a step forward on President Donald Trump's tax reform plan.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 added to gains a day after a big, adding 0.2 percent to 22,404.85. South Korea's Kospi added 0.2 percent to 2,539.25. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gained 0.7 percent to 29,224.42 but the Shanghai Composite index lost 0.4 percent to 3,385.33. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.3 percent to 5,958.80.

EARNINGS ROUNDUP: Strong third-quarter earnings reports from big U.S. companies helped lift investor sentiment. Retailers Wal-Mart Stores and Gap and network equipment maker Cisco Systems beat analyst expectations with their earnings results.

U.S. TAXES: Trump's overhaul for corporate and personal taxes made some progress as U.S. House Republicans voted to pass the \$1.5 trillion package but it still faces many more steps. The Senate still has to approve its own, different version. One big feature of both versions is that they would slash the 35 percent corporate tax rate to 20 percent.

THE TAKE: "Of course, now it still has to pass the U.S. Senate, which is proving a little trickier," Rabobank's Asia-Pacific Strategist Michael Every wrote in a commentary. "But it is momentum at least, which we can expect to be carried through into Asian markets today after a positive U.S. session."

WALL STREET: The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.8 percent to 2,585.64. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 0.8 percent to 23,458.36. The Nasdaq added 1.3 percent to 6,793.29.

CURRENCIES: The dollar weakened to 112.43 yen from 113.03 yen on Thursday. The euro rose to \$1.1820 from \$1.1773.

ENERGY: Oil futures were mixed. Benchmark U.S. crude rose 17 cents to \$55.31 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract slipped 19 cents to settle at \$55.14 a barrel on Thursday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, slid 20 cents to \$61.16 a barrel in London.

20 injured in fire at Pennsylvania senior living community

WEST CHESTER, Pa. (AP) — A massive fire at a senior living community in Pennsylvania injured at least 20 people and forced dozens more, many of whom were unable to walk, into the cold night air.

Firefighters were still dousing hot spots Friday, even though the inferno was declared under control just before 1:30 a.m.

The blaze was reported around 11 p.m. Thursday at Barclay Friends Senior Living Community in West Chester, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) west of Philadelphia.

The town's fire chief would not comment Friday on the extent of the injuries or if there were any deaths. He did say the blaze is under investigation.

The fire quickly spread to multiple buildings and flames could be seen shooting from the roofs and windows of the structures. Residents were forced to evacuate outside into the cold, with temperatures overnight hovering in the low 40s. News helicopter video showed dozens of residents on the lawn or along the street, wrapped in blankets. Many of them had been pushed in wheelchairs or rolled on beds to safety.

Chester County emergency officials said at least 20 people were taken to area hospitals for treatment. The extent of their injuries was not immediately known.

A spokeswoman for Main Line Health, a not-for-profit health system, said one of its hospitals also was prepared to provide shelter to some additional residents of the senior living community. Some residents were taken to nearby West Chester University.

According to its website, Barclay Friends offers various levels of care including memory care, skilled nursing and post-acute rehab.

Early Friday morning, the local chapter of the American Red Cross said on Twitter that it had multiple teams

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on the scene and that it was working with county officials and facility staff to assist displaced residents.

A cause of the fire remained under investigation.

Messages left for West Chester Mayor Jordan Norley and Assistant to the Mayor and Chief of Police Rachelle Sellers weren't immediately returned.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Nov. 17, the 321st day of 2017. There are 44 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 17, 1917, French sculptor Auguste Rodin (roh-DAN') died in Meudon at age 77.

On this date:

In 1558, Elizabeth I acceded to the English throne upon the death of her half-sister, Queen Mary, beginning a 44-year reign.

In 1800, Congress held its first session in the partially completed U.S. Capitol building.

In 1869, the Suez Canal opened in Egypt.

In 1889, the Union Pacific Railroad Co. began direct, daily railroad service between Chicago and Portland, Oregon, as well as Chicago and San Francisco.

In 1925, actor Rock Hudson was born Roy Harold Scherer Jr. in Winnetka, Illinois.

In 1934, Lyndon Baines Johnson married Claudia Alta Taylor, better known as Lady Bird, in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman, in an address to a special session of Congress, called for emergency aid to Austria, Italy and France. (The aid was approved the following month.)

In 1968, NBC outraged football fans by cutting away from the closing minutes of a New York Jets-Oakland Raiders game to begin the TV special "Heidi" on schedule. (After being taken off the air, the Raiders came from behind to beat the Jets, 43-32.)

In 1973, President Richard Nixon told Associated Press managing editors in Orlando, Florida: "People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook."

In 1979, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the release of 13 black and/or female American hostages being held at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

In 1987, a federal jury in Denver convicted two white supremacists of civil rights violations in the 1984 slaying of radio talk show host Alan Berg. (Both men later died in prison.)

In 1997, 62 people, most of them foreign tourists, were killed when militants opened fire at the Temple of Hatshepsut (haht-shehp-SOOT') in Luxor, Egypt; the attackers were killed by police.

Ten years ago: U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte (neh-groh-PAHN'-tee) delivered a blunt message to Pakistan's military ruler, President Gen. Pervez Musharraf (pur-VEHZ' moo-SHAH'-ruhv), telling him emergency rule had to be lifted and his opponents freed ahead of elections. A Nobel-winning U.N. scientific panel said in a landmark report released in Valencia, Spain, that the Earth was hurtling toward a warmer climate at a quickening pace.

Five years ago: Israel destroyed the headquarters of Hamas' prime minister and blasted a sprawling network of smuggling tunnels in the southern Gaza Strip, broadening a blistering four-day-old offensive against the Islamic militant group. A speeding train crashed into a bus carrying Egyptian children to their kindergarten, killing 48 children and three adults.

One year ago: President-elect Donald Trump, at Trump Tower in New York, held his first meeting with a world leader, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (SHIN'-zoh AH'-bay), and received advice from former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Today's Birthdays: Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., is 83. Rock musician Gerry McGee (The Ventures) is 80. Singer Gordon Lightfoot is 79. Singer-songwriter Bob Gaudio is 76. Movie director Martin Scorsese (skor-SEH'-see) is 75. Actress Lauren Hutton is 74. Actor-director Danny DeVito is 73. "Saturday Night Live"

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producer Lorne Michaels is 73. Baseball Hall of Famer Tom Seaver is 73. Movie director Roland Joffe is 72. Former Democratic National Chairman Howard Dean is 69. Former House Speaker John Boehner (BAY'-nur) is 68. Actor Stephen Root is 66. Rock musician Jim Babjak (The Smithereens) is 60. Actress Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio is 59. Actor William Moses is 58. Entertainer RuPaul is 57. Actor Dylan Walsh is 54. National Security Adviser Susan Rice is 53. Actress Sophie Marceau is 51. Actress-model Daisy Fuentes is 51. Blues singer/musician Tab Benoit (behn-WAH') is 50. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ronnie DeVoe (New Edition; Bell Biv DeVoe) is 50. Rock musician Ben Wilson (Blues Traveler) is 50. Actor David Ramsey is 46. Actor Leonard Roberts is 45. Actress Leslie Bibb is 44. Actor Brandon Call is 41. Country singer Aaron Lines is 40. Actress Rachel McAdams is 39. Rock musician Isaac Hanson (Hanson) is 37. Actor Justin Cooper is 29. Musician Reid Perry (The Band Perry) is 29. Actress Raquel Castro is 23.

Thought for Today: "Education is a private matter between the person and the world of knowledge and experience, and has little to do with school or college." — Lillian Smith, American writer and social critic (1897-1966).