

Groton Daily Independent

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“When you see that many people with a smile on their face, then you must be doing something right.”

-Greg Norman

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Dakota Brush Ad
- 1- Legion Thanksgiving Ad
- 2- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
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Thanks, Friends!

With greetings at Thanksgiving to you and your kin we're really grateful for your dropping in!

Groton American Legion Post #39

Lounge: 397-2603 • Downtown Groton

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**

NEW SIGN-ON BONUSES!

☆☆☆ **\$1,500 for CNAs** ☆☆☆

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GROTON

CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

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

111717

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

November 20, 2017 – 7:00pm

Groton Community Center

1. Minutes
2. Bills
3. October Finance Report
4. Gravel bids for 2018 to be open December 4, 2017
5. Safe Routes to School Remainder: \$6,512.50
6. Six Month Probation Period End Dec. 5 – Hope
7. Per Karyn Babcock – City Employee Christmas Party
8. Fees & Price List Revision
9. First Reading Ordinance # 715 Utility Amendment
10. Group Health Insurance Coverage for 2018
11. First Reading of Ordinance # 716 Salaries for 2018
12. Executive session - Personnel 1-25-2 (3)

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2017 Football Awards



All-State 1st Team

Luke Thorson (Defensive Linebacker) and
Brandon Keith (Defensive Linebacker)

All-State Honorable Mention: Brandon Keith
(Offensive Fullback)

(Photo by Tricia Keith)



Academic All-State Brandon Keith and Marshall Lane

(Photo by Tricia Keith)



Team Awards

Peyton Johnson- most improved defense
Marshall Lane-MVP Offense & Most Improved Offense
Brandon Keith- MVP defense
Luke Thorson-MVP Lineman
Korbin Blackmun-MVP Scout Team

(Photo by Tricia Keith)

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NEC All- Conference Team

From left to right, they are Peyton Johnson (honorable mention), Lucas Hinman (first team), Marshall Lane (first team), Brandon Keith (first team), Seric Shabazz (first team), Luke Thorson (first team) and Brandyn Anderson (honorable mention) (Photo by Tricia Keith)



Brandon Keith also received the Richard Duerre Memorial scholarship for the most outstanding senior football player. (Photo by Tricia Keith)



Tricia Keith received the Friends of Football Award from the South Dakota High School Activities Association for her dedication to the Groton Football team this season.

(Photo by Brandon Keith)

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings have proven, once again, that they are one of the best teams in the National Football League. Entering week 11, the game of the week was the Vikings versus the Los Angeles Rams – as both teams were 7-2 entering the game and leading their respective divisions. The Rams boasted the best offense in the league, while the Vikings have one of the best defenses. It was supposed to be a close game, a physical manifestation of an unstoppable force meeting an immovable object. It turned out to be anything but.

The game opened with the Rams getting the opening kickoff and driving 70-yards down the field to score a touchdown and go up 7-0. The Vikings ensuing possession was 12-plays long and took over seven minutes, yet it only managed 24 total yards and ended in a punt. It looked like it was going to be a long day for the team in purple and gold. Luckily, the Vikings defense stiffened up and forced a 3-and-out on the Rams second possession to give the Vikings the ball back. The Vikings then proceeded to score a touchdown to even the score – and that’s where the scoreboard stayed until the fourth quarter – when the Vikings scored 17 points and put the game away for good with a final score of 24-7.

The Vikings offense had 451 total yards against a stout Rams defense. Case Keenum got the start again, and he played well but not great – completing 27 of 38 passes for 280 yards and no touchdowns. He also didn’t have any interceptions, although there were a few of his passes that likely should have been picked off. Latavius Murray was the star of the game for the Vikings offense. He had 95 yards and two touchdowns on 15 carries (6.3 yards per carry), and he finally found the ability to run through contact. As a team, the Vikings had 171 rushing yards. Adam Thielen once again led the team in receptions (6) and receiving yards (123). Thielen also had an excellent catch and run in the fourth quarter, when he caught a short pass and outran the Rams defense 65-yards for the score. It was the final points of the game and really put the nail in the Rams coffin.

The Vikings defense had a big task ahead of them on Sunday, and they were up to the challenge – holding the Rams to only 7 points and 45 rushing yards, both season lows. The Vikings defensive line, led by Everson Griffen and Danielle Hunter, was putting pressure on Jared Goff all day. They forced him to move out of the pocket and throw on the move constantly, something he isn’t comfortable with. The Vikings game ball on defense goes to 39-year old Terence Newman, who had the best game of the season and led the team with two tackles for a loss on the day.

Looking ahead, the Vikings will travel to Detroit and take on the Lions. The game will be on Thanksgiving Day, and will start at 11:30 a.m. Central Time on Fox. ESPN has this game as a coin flip. This game will likely be for the NFC North, as it appears that only the Vikings (8-2) and the Lions (6-4) have a chance to take the division. The Vikings will be looking to avenge an earlier loss to the Lions, while the Lions will be looking to sweep the Vikings and get within a game of the division lead. The Vikings appear to be the better team, but the Lions seem to have the Vikings number, so anything can happen. My purple colored lenses won’t allow me to pick anyone but the Vikings, so here’s to hoping I’m right and they will be 9-2 entering week 12. Skol!

Have any questions or comments? Reach out to me on Facebook ([facebook.com/SkolJWright](https://www.facebook.com/SkolJWright)) or on Twitter (@SkolJWright)



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Thankful

This Thanksgiving, as we get together with family and friends, Jean and I would once again like to send our warmest wishes to all South Dakotans. During this festive time of the year, let's not forget that the first Thanksgiving was a time to thank the good Lord for all of our blessings. I am especially thankful for the opportunity to be able to work on your behalf in the United States Senate. Even when the debates on Capitol Hill get contentious, working for the people of South Dakota is a privilege that I'll never take for granted.

I'm also thankful for the love and support of my family as I do this job. I truly would not be able to do it without them. We're looking forward to spending Thanksgiving together at our house in Fort Pierre with many of our immediate and extended family members, including a few of our eight grandkids—we have to share them with their other grandparents sometimes! With such busy schedules these days, quality time with our family is the biggest blessing Jean and I could ask for.

Earlier this month, we celebrated Veterans Day. It is because of the men and women who serve, and their families who support them, that all of us are able to freely celebrate the holiday season with those we love. I'm incredibly thankful to our military community and our veterans for all they do and have done to protect our freedoms, and I pray for those who will be spending the holidays apart from their families. We can never repay them for their service and sacrifice, but as a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee, I'll continue working on legislation to improve the quality of life for South Dakota's veterans and members of the armed forces, along with their family members.

Especially during the holiday season, I encourage South Dakotans to find ways to give back to their communities. There are food pantries and churches in nearly every town collecting donations, so that all of our neighbors are able to put a good meal on their Thanksgiving table. Monetary donations and food donations are both helpful, and as winter in South Dakota sets in, coats and other cold-weather clothing items are needed for kids, teens and adults. A number of volunteer organizations, charities, churches and even many local businesses hold coat drives every year, starting around this time.

As we gather with our loved ones to give thanks and count our blessings, let's also say a prayer for those who are having a hard time this year and for those who are unable to spend the holiday with their families. Jean and I wish all South Dakotans a very happy Thanksgiving and holiday season.

Popping-corn Rhythm



By Richard P. Holm M.D.



"Every once in a while, my heart seems to be jumping out of my chest; I get a weak feeling and am short of breath," the patient explained. When I listened with my stethoscope, his rhythm was different than the usual lub-dub, foot-tapping sounds of the heart which are as regular as a band marching through town on a summertime parade. Instead, his heart had the irregular rhythm of popping corn—chaotic and unpredictable—and I couldn't tap my foot to it.

As predicted, the EKG showed the rhythm of atrial fibrillation, with the atrial rate running at 300-400 beats a minute. The ventricular rhythm was chaotic, or as the experts say, "irregularly-irregular", at about 150 beats per minute. Atrial fibrillation, or A-fib, is the most common abnormal heart rhythm condition; it afflicts about 1% of the total population—more than three million people in the US—and is most prevalent in people over the age of 40.

There are many causes for A-fib, including long standing high blood pressure, coronary artery blockage, sleep apnea, too-tight or leaky heart valves, too much or too little thyroid hormone, blood clots in the lung, or an inherited conduction system or wiring condition. Other factors can also increase a person's risk for A-fib, like excessive amounts of tobacco, coffee, alcohol, amphetamines, a viral infection involving the heart, stress of any kind, or just an old and weak heart.

There are two main reasons we need to do something about this rhythm abnormality. The most devastating can be that clots can form in the atria if they are not emptying effectively. These clots are responsible for something like 10-25% of all strokes. Secondly, it can be that the ventricles are not efficient pumps when atria are fibrillating, causing them to beat at rates above 150 beats per minute for extended periods of time, significantly reducing the heart's efficiency.

When we see a case of A-fib, the ultimate goal is to slow the heart down, thin the blood to prevent strokes, and sometimes even bring the rhythm back to normal when possible. While we are at it, physicians need to study the cause of A-fib for each particular case. It is a complex and interesting condition, and there is a lot of debate about what kind of blood thinners to prescribe, what kind of rhythm control drugs to use, and when to use fancy surgery and pacemaker treatments.

The bottom line about A-fib is that good treatment by your general or cardiology physician can prevent problems and allow a normal life, even with a heart rhythm as irregular as popping corn.

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

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

Today in Weather History

November 20, 1975: A storm center located in Oklahoma on Tuesday, November 18th, moved northeastward across Kansas into Iowa and Wisconsin on Wednesday the 19th and Thursday the 20th. Light rain began in the eastern half South Dakota on the morning of the 19th. The rain changed to snow during the afternoon and continued through the evening of the 20th. The winds increased, and blizzard conditions were reached by 6 pm CST on Wednesday the 19th. The snow was driven by sustained winds 40 to 50 miles per hour, gusting to 75 mph on some occasions, which reduced visibility to less than one-half mile. Heavy snow ranging from six to fifteen inches fell over an area southeast of a line from Todd to Aurora to Grant County. Traffic came to a standstill by Wednesday evening the 19th. The snow abruptly ended on the night of the 20th, but winds diminished rather slowly that night. Storm total snowfalls included 9 inches at Clear Lake and 7 inches at Watertown.

November 20, 1977: The second blizzard of the month began very early on Saturday, November 19th and continued through most of Sunday, November 20th. Wind speeds exceeding 50 mph caused much blowing and drifting snow. Visibility was reduced to near zero. Most of the roads in the northern and western parts of the state were blocked. Snowfall amounts north of Milbank and Pierre to Ardmore exceeded five inches. Most of the counties in the northwest and a significant portion of those in the north-central parts of the state reported snowfall amounts exceeding ten inches. Some drifts reached 4 to 5 feet. The highest reported snowfall was 20 inches in Eagle Butte. An eastbound train from Milbank had six freight cars derailed near Albee, in Grant County as a result of the storm. Snowfall totals from this blizzard included; 20 inches at Eagle Butte; 14 inches at Leola; 12 inches at Timber Lake and Britton; 11 inches 4NNE Victor and at Mobridge; 10 inches at 6SE McIntosh, 4W Mellette, Sand Lake, and Ipswich; 9.3 inches in Aberdeen; 9 inches 4NW Onida, at Sisseton, and 2N Onaka; 8 inches at Selby; 7 inches at McLaughlin and Wau-bay; 6 inches at Conde and Faulkton; 5 inches at Summit and Webster; 4 inches at Pierre, Wilmot and Highmore; and 3 inches at Watertown, Clear Lake, Miller, 3NE Raymond, Redfield, and Wheaton. The 9 inches at Sisseton helped to contribute to the snowiest November on record for Sisseton, which recorded 27.5 inches for November 1977.








1900: An unusual tornado outbreak in the Lower Mississippi Valley resulted in 73 deaths and extensive damage across Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee.

1985: Kate intensified to a major Category 3 Hurricane and as she moved west of Key West, Florida with top winds of 115 mph and a minimum central pressure of 954 millibars or 28.17 inches of mercury. The next day Kate made landfall between Panama City and Apalachicola, Florida. Tides ran 8 to 10 feet above normal. Many houses were damaged by fallen trees. Many power poles

and lines were downed. Several roads were washed out.

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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thanksgiving Day
						
Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Mostly Clear and Blustery	Mostly Sunny and Blustery then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Rain/Snow	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 56 °F	Low: 17 °F	High: 27 °F	Low: 10 °F	High: 35 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 42 °F

TODAY

Warm

50s, except low 60s west of the Missouri River






Bundle Up!

TUESDAY

Cold


25 to 31°

morning Wind Chills in the single digits



Breezy

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



WEDNESDAY

30s, except 40s and 50s
near and west of the Missouri River

Small chance of light rain or snow over northeastern SD/western MN

Graphic Created 11/20/2017 5:12 AM

Published on: 11/20/2017 at 5:21AM

Temperatures will be nearly 20 degrees above normal today, then quickly turn cold tonight and Tuesday behind a cold front. Bundle up Tuesday morning, as breezy winds help create single digit wind chills! The cold snap will be brief, with another warm up scheduled for the second half of the work week. Light rain or snow still possible Wednesday afternoon over northeastern SD/eastern ND/western MN. Little to no accumulation is expected at this time. Check out the latest forecast for your area at www.weather.gov/abr

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 50.3 at 2:29 PM

Low Outside Temp: 11.4 at 1:28 AM

High Gust: 19 at 9:36 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 69° in 1962

Record Low: -12° in 1978

Average High: 37°F

Average Low: 17°F

Average Precip in Nov: .53

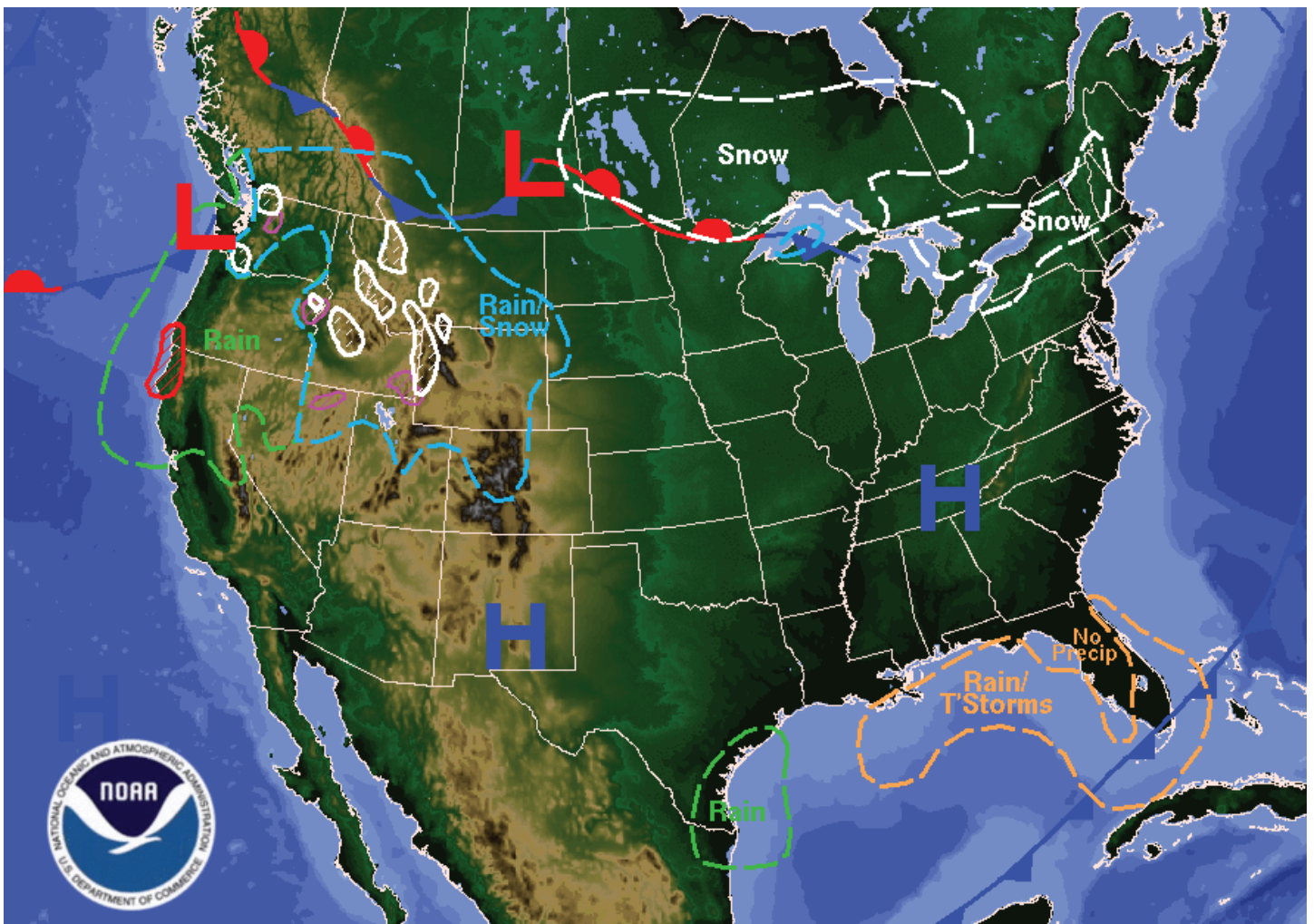
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.00

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 4:58 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:41 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Nov 20, 2017, issued 4:41 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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I DIDN'T HAVE ANYONE TO TURN TO

A young child had been lost in the woods. After a long search the rescue team found him and returned him to his anxious parents. With tear-filled eyes he looked at his mother and said, "Mom, when I was lost in the woods I had no one to turn to. Now that I'm back in your arms, I do!"

A Psalmist made the same statements: "Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing that I desire besides You."

No one or no thing can do for us what our Heavenly Father can do for us. Nor is there anyone anywhere who will ever mean more to us or be more for us than our Lord – if we allow Him.

Some, we know, turn to materialism rather than the Master. There is nothing wrong with having money but it is wrong when we worship money, allow our lives to be consumed with making money so we can acquire the things of this world. In the end, materialism consumes us because there is never enough to calm our fears or give us peace.

Others look for the answers to life in science. Science has provided many benefits and increased and made our lives more enjoyable. But science cannot cleanse us from sin or assure us of peace and hope in this world and a life with our Father in the world to come. Science can improve our earthly lives but it cannot impart eternal life.

Wisely the Psalmist reviewed his past carefully and realized that apart from God there was nothing worth living for.

Prayer: Help us to understand, Father, that in You we find peace and satisfaction, completeness and hope. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

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

Real estate agent promotes Rapid City after 50 years

By JIM HOLLAND, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Even after 50 years in the real estate business in Rapid City, Pat Hall's enthusiasm for his profession and his hometown still shines.

"I'm actually more excited now than I was then," Hall said of his long career.

"I think Rapid City is going to just keep growing," he said. "It's an outstanding town."

Hall saw the potential way back in 1967, when, as with most 21-year-olds, he yearned for bigger and better things.

The Rapid City Journal reports that Hall, now 71, remembers working his way through college holding down three jobs — one with Black Hills Packing Co., another at Haggerty's Department Store in the Baken Park Shopping Center and a third pumping gas at a Mobil service station, also in Baken Park.

He remembers taking note when local Realtor Ken Kirkeby drove up to the gas station, or came to Haggerty's to shop.

"When he came to Haggerty's to buy clothes, everybody in the store would try to catch him because they knew Ken Kirkeby was good for two suits," Hall said.

Kirkeby, with a telephone in his car (a rare luxury in 1967) and a penchant for nice clothes, impressed Hall, and Hall apparently made an impression on Kirkeby as well.

The real estate agent eventually asked him to consider selling real estate.

"Pat's a heck of a salesman and real good at talking about the product. That's where I bought my clothes," Kirkeby said during an interview this week.

Hall, a graduate of Rapid City Cathedral High School, had transferred to National College of Business (now National American University) by then and decided to try a real estate course at the school.

At the urging of an instructor at NCB, Hall took and passed the real estate test, becoming what was thought to be one of the youngest certified real estate sellers in the state, even receiving a congratulatory letter from then-South Dakota Gov. Nils Boe.

After signing his Realtor's license on Oct. 23, 1967, Hall took Kirkeby up on his offer and joined him and Larry Lewis in their firm.

Hall said his mentors were successful by being unafraid to challenge the norm.

Lewis, for instance, always believed in advertising real estate on Sundays, which ran contrary to industry rules at that time.

Hall said he was the designated fall guy, occasionally placing ads in Sunday papers, then being fined for doing so.

"I'd get more leads because of having those ads and those were worth more than the fines," Hall said with a laugh.

Hall went on to develop the Carriage Hills subdivision in southwest Rapid City, buying the property in the early '70s with a \$25,000 down payment.

More recently, his developments to the south led to the extension of Fifth Street to Catron Boulevard.

He also developed Kirkwood Townhomes and worked with Dream Design International developer Hani Shafai to build new high-rise student housing at South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

Hall and Shafai also teamed up on a proposal to locate Rapid City's second Walmart.

They overcame five rejections of the site by Walmart planners before finally sealing a deal to build the store there.

"He's one of the best ice-breaker people I've ever met. He knows how to start a conversation really well," Shafai said.

Hall's salesmanship led to a deal bringing Rapid City's first professional sports franchise, the Rapid City Thrillers of the Continental Basketball Association, to town in 1987.

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He took some heat from basketball fans when economics forced the Thrillers to move to Florida after a 10-year run in Rapid City, but that didn't stop him and other investors from stepping up to help an arena football franchise, the Rapid City Flying Aces, to complete the 2006 National Indoor Football League season.

Hall paid forward the mentoring he received from Kirkeby, Lewis and others by helping a new crop of real estate agents find their way in the profession.

Troy Ward remembers being tapped by Hall right out of college. They worked together at Coldwell Banker Real Estate for 14 years.

Hall can see potential in property development that others can't foresee, Ward said.

A case in point, Ward said, was the Sandstone Ridge complex on Sheridan Lake Road, originally designed as apartments. Hall wanted to develop that housing not as rentals but as condominiums for sale.

"A lot of folks didn't think that would work to convert that to condominiums. He had the vision for it and it did work. That was more than 20 years ago, and a lot of those folks still live there," Ward said.

Steve Anderson, now of Assist-2-Sell in Rapid City, first met Hall when he was a ball boy for the Thrillers. After a successful basketball career at Rapid City Central and the University of South Dakota, Anderson was also recruited by Hall.

"He knew the work ethic of an athlete and thought I'd be a good Realtor," Anderson said.

Anderson earned his Realtor's license in 2005, then signed to play professional basketball in Europe. He returned and went to work for Hall the following year.

"At one point, I needed to go back east and do some work and make some money before I went to Europe. My mom had breast cancer," Anderson recalled.

"He said 'No, stay with your mom. Here's the money,'" Anderson said.

That generosity is also apparent in other corners of the community. Hall helped the downtown City of Presidents statue project by purchasing three of the 43 life-sized presidential sculptures.

He sponsored the bronze of James Monroe in memory of his father and a statue of Abraham Lincoln in memory of his mother.

A statue of Lyndon Johnson was for three high school friends who died in the Vietnam war, he said.

At age 71, one would think Hall would be ready to kick back with fond remembrances of a long, rewarding career.

How long will he keep up his work schedule?

"I had someone ask me that, and I said I'll probably keep selling dirt until they throw it in my face," he said.

Until that day comes, don't bet against Hall being at the forefront of building and shaping Rapid City's future.

He gets excited talking about the current push to expand the core of downtown Rapid City east of Fifth Street to link with the School of Mines, which he calls one of the city's most underappreciated assets.

"I think some of the things I've been fortunate enough to be involved in wouldn't have happened if I hadn't been involved and pushed the envelope," he said.

"I'm betting on this community. I can just see it growing and doing well."

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

South Dakota community offers family support after car crash

By REILLY BIEL, Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — It's been shown time and time again that the Yankton community steps up whenever tragedy befalls one of its own.

A recent car crash that seriously injured four people is no exception.

In early October, a two-vehicle accident injured three members of a Yankton family: Matt and Tessa Hoefs and their 11-year old daughter, Tori Hansen. Tessa sustained a broken collarbone with Matt having a few broken ribs. Tori — who, despite wearing a seatbelt, was thrown from the vehicle — sustained the

most serious injuries, which included a broken arm and leg.

The accident happened on a Sunday morning while the family was driving to Sioux Falls for Tori's softball tournament. A member of the Yankton Gazelles White, the team was set to play a game that would determine their placing first or second in the overall tournament.

Tori's teammate and Yankton Middle School sixth-grade classmate, Taylor Alvarado, was shocked when the team received news of the accident.

"Our coach (Brad Moser) told us we didn't have to play if we didn't want to," she said.

"But they chose to play and fight for Tori because that's what she would have wanted," Taylor's mother, Becky, added.

The team placed second that day and quickly went about attempting to make Tori feel better by signing get-well cards and softballs for her and sending them to her hospital room, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported .

When Tessa and Matt returned home, a list was set up of people to take turns delivering meals to the family as they recovered. Taylor recently took over a Halloween bag with coloring books for Tori, who just came home from the hospital and hasn't returned to school since the accident.

"The community has really come together for them," Becky remarked.

However, the Alvarados wanted to do more.

"We came up with a fundraiser of shirts so everybody could show their support for Tori and her family," Becky said. "The funds can go toward whatever Tori needs."

Made by JJ Benji's Embroidery in Yankton, the pink T-shirts say "Team Tori" on the front, with a picture of a softball with "#Pray4Tori" below. On the back of the shirt is a verse from Genesis 50:20: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

Everything, from the color to the words, was selected by Tori and her family, Becky said. She plans on putting in the first order of shirts this coming Monday.

In addition, JJ Benji's is giving back one dollar per shirt to go toward the fundraiser.

"There are a lot of ways to support (the family)," Becky said.

Nebraska's Keystone XL vote may not be a clear yes or no

By GRANT SCHULTE, Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska regulators are set to decide Monday whether to approve or deny an in-state route for the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. It's the last major regulatory hurdle facing project operator TransCanada Corp.

The Nebraska Public Service Commission's ruling is on the Nebraska route TransCanada has proposed to complete the \$8 billion, 1,179-mile pipeline to deliver oil from Alberta, Canada, to Texas Gulf Coast refineries. The proposed Keystone XL route would cross parts of Montana, South Dakota and most of Nebraska to Steele City, Nebraska.

A vote in favor of the company's proposed route through Nebraska would give a boost to the long-delayed project, which was rejected by President Barack Obama in 2015, citing concerns about carbon pollution. President Donald Trump revived it in March, approving a permit.

The project has faced a barrage of criticism from environmental activists and some landowners for nearly a decade. A ruling against the company would cast renewed doubt on the proposal and could lead to another drawn-out legal fight.

Here are some things to know about the decision:

WHAT OPTIONS DOES THE COMMISSION HAVE?

The five-member Nebraska Public Service Commission is forbidden by law from factoring pipeline safety or the risk of spills into its decision because pipeline safety is a federal responsibility. So, it will not take into account a spill of 210,000 gallons of oil on the existing Keystone pipeline in South Dakota announced on Thursday.

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The simplest choice is a yes-or-no vote on TransCanada's "preferred route" through a dozen Nebraska counties. But the commission could include major caveats that would add years to the project's timetable.

Commissioners could tweak TransCanada's proposed route, or pick one of the company's "alternative" routes. Company officials have said their preferred route causes the least amount of disruption.

If the commission denies the request outright, state law gives TransCanada a 60-day window to revise and resubmit its proposal for another review.

"It's not as simple as a 'guilty' or 'not guilty' verdict," said Brian Jorde, an attorney for Nebraska landowners who are fighting the project.

No matter what the commission decides, any group that presented arguments at an August hearing could appeal the decision to a state district court. The case would likely end up before the Nebraska Supreme Court.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE DECISION?

The commission's vote could play a pivotal role in whether TransCanada moves ahead with the pipeline. After years of lobbying for the project, TransCanada acknowledged in a July conference call that executives won't decide until late November or early December whether to begin construction.

TransCanada spokesman Matthew John reiterated that timeline on Wednesday.

"We're going through the process with every intention to get this project built," John said. "But there are factors that we need to work out prior to making that decision," including regulatory approval in Nebraska.

John said the company also needs to finalize its contracts with shippers that want to use the pipeline.

TransCanada has been working to line up long-term contracts for the pipeline, which can carry an estimated 830,000 barrels a day. The company has not announced the results of its open season bidding process, which ended Oct. 26.

WILL THERE BE PROTESTS IF THE COMMISSION APPROVES THE PIPELINE?

Opponents in August vowed to stage mass protests against the pipeline if Nebraska regulators approve it, but say they will exhaust legal options first.

Pipeline opponents have lined parts of the proposed route with obstacles, including trees, solar panels, sacred corn from the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and a barn powered by renewable energy. Some opponents may try to physically block construction and have likened their resistance to the activists who protested the Dakota Access Pipeline in Standing Rock, North Dakota.

IS KEystone XL STILL FEASIBLE?

Despite low oil prices and repeated delays, TransCanada has a strong financial incentive to keep pursuing the pipeline, said Zachary Rogers, a Houston-based analyst for Wood Mackenzie, an energy research and consulting firm.

Rogers said Western Canadian producers have been forced to ship their product by train, which is more expensive than a pipeline, and Keystone XL would reduce costs and improve their bottom line.

At the same time, Texas refineries face uncertainty because of political instability in Venezuela, one of their top oil sources, and a slowdown in Mexican production.

"Western Canada has been held captive by geography and hasn't been able to cheaply access the markets," Rogers said. "Any opportunity for them to get better access will buoy their margins."

Follow Grant Schulte on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/GrantSchulte>

Minnesota farm provides fresh shrimp to local restaurants

By HANNAH YANG, Agri News

SPRING VALLEY, Minn. (AP) — Aaron TerBeest, of Spring Valley, runs his own farm, but his livestock is a little bit on the shrimpy side.

The 31-year-old man runs a shrimp farm called Kedron Valley Farm, and has been officially licensed since May 2017. This past season marked the first time that TerBeest was able to harvest his shrimp for direct-to-consumer and direct-to-restaurant sales.

"There's always some risk that comes with any sort of farming operation," the 2004 Kingsland graduate told the Agri News. "Aquaculture is no exception."

TerBeest graduated from Winona State University in 2009 with a psychology degree. However, it was the background through his stepfather's dairy farm that got him gradually interested in pursuing agriculture.

This career move was something he never thought of for himself.

"No, never," he said with a laugh. "Never crossed my mind. I've never been to the ocean myself. I've got a background in arborist with orchards and things like that. This kind of popped up. I thought to myself 'Well, that's kind of interesting.' It was working well for some other small producers. ... This never would've crossed my mind."

But how did TerBeest get into shrimp farming? It all started with reading an article on small-scale shrimp farms that began popping up throughout the Midwest. Then slowly, he began taking classes and attended seminars to learn about the feasibility and diversifying farming.

While Minnesota is known for dairy and harvesting corn and soybeans, shrimp may not necessarily register as a potential livestock in the area, let alone Spring Valley. TerBeest said he's been amused by the response he receives from customers at the Rochester Farmers Market.

"People see the 'fresh shrimp sign,' they ask 'What truck did the shrimp come out of?'" he said. "We then tell them, 'No we've come from 25 miles away in Spring Valley.' They kinda do a double take, and then listen to how we produce our food."

TerBeest usually orders his shrimp eggs from a hatchery based in California. His main type of shrimp that's harvested in Spring Valley is called Pacific white shrimp, more commonly known as "white-leg shrimp."

"They're usually the size of an eyelash, when we get them," he added.

The farm uses a four-phase system with a couple different sized tanks stacked on top of each other, along with a nursery at the very top. When TerBeest receives the shrimp from the hatchery — around 20,000 — in shipments. Usually, 70 percent of the shrimp survive during a four-month production cycle.

For TerBeest, one of the most important aspects of raising shrimp is to feed them high-quality shrimp feed without antibiotics or other chemicals. He also said that the farm reuses its water to be more environmentally conscious.

The farm could see anywhere between 60,000 to 70,000 live shrimp ready to be harvested out of the more than 30,000 gallons of salt water, and be taken to be sold directly to their consumers or restaurants around the Rochester area.

"We just started marketing to restaurants like Forager," TerBeest said. "They're really big on local foods and local producers. A lot of places were really excited to try some fresh, local shrimp and we've been at the farmer's market to sell directly to the consumer. We've just got a deal with People's Food Co-op downtown."

Currently with the major construction that's happening at a local road, TerBeest is mostly delivering the shrimp to his clients if orders are placed over the phone. His shrimp had repeat customers and positive feedback.

It goes to show, the smallest critters often have the biggest flavor.

"They can't believe the difference in taste and texture from fresh shrimp versus the peeled and deveined pre-thawed ones at the typical grocery store," he said. "Chefs love fresh ones. ... People can see what they're missing out on from something close by."

___ Information from: Agri News, <http://www.agrinews.com/>

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Oil pipeline protesters gather ahead of Nebraska's decision

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — More than 100 protesters gathered Sunday to speak out against the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline before Nebraska regulators issue their ruling on the project.

The protesters gathered on the steps of the state Capitol building in Lincoln on Sunday. The Nebraska Public Service Commission is scheduled to announce its decision on the pipeline's route on Monday.

Karin Carlson of Omaha says she doesn't think the pipeline would benefit the state much.

TransCanada proposed the 1,179-mile crude oil pipeline to transport crude oil from Canada south to connect to another pipeline in southern Nebraska.

TransCanada officials have said their preferred route is the most direct way to transport oil and crosses few major bodies of water.

TransCanada sends more crews to Keystone pipeline leak

AMHERST, S.D. (AP) — TransCanada Corp. says the company has sent additional crews and equipment to the site of a 210,000-gallon oil spill in South Dakota from its Keystone pipeline.

TransCanada said Saturday it is making progress in its investigation into the spill cause on farmland in Marshall County, near the North Dakota border, about 250 miles (402 kilometers) west of Minneapolis. But the company did not elaborate on the cause. The company says additional equipment and workers continue to be dispatched to the site.

Company spokesman Terry Cunha said Sunday that about 150 people are now at the site. Cunha said a gravel road has been completed to handle heavy equipment.

Cunha said a drainage ditch near the leak was protected by a berm and not polluted by the spill. State officials earlier said they did not believe the spill has polluted any surface water bodies or drinking water systems. A drainage ditch is clearly visible in aerial footage taken by DroneBase on Friday.

Crews shut down the pipeline Thursday after discovering the leak.

TransCanada says the leak is under control and there is no significant environmental impact or threat to the public.

Nebraska regulators vote Monday on a proposed Keystone XL route, an expansion that also would be operated by TransCanada.

South Dakotan among students chosen as Rhodes Scholars

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakotan who graduated from the University of South Dakota in 2017 is among the latest group of U.S. Rhodes scholars.

Joshua Arens of Yankton is among 32 men and women chosen for post-graduate studies at Oxford University in England.

Arens graduated from USD with an undergraduate degree in chemistry and a 4.0 grade point average. An advocate for science-based policymaking, Arens researches a wide range of environmental problems and solutions, including the role of automobiles in society. He led a campaign to name the university in Vermillion a sanctuary campus.

Arens also is a Truman Scholar and a Fulbright Scholar. The fifth-generation South Dakotan grew up on a cattle and crop farm. While at Oxford he plans to pursue an advanced research degree in environmental change and management.

South Dakota tribal meeting facility remains unfinished

FORT PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A federally funded facility north of Fort Pierre intended for tribal meetings remains unfinished.

Construction began on the Wakpa Sica Reconciliation Place in the early 2000s but didn't finish as scheduled in 2010, the Capital Journal reported. The facility was intended to be a place that all nine tribes in South Dakota could use.

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Fort Pierre and the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe have tried to refurbish portions of the structure. Neither have the millions of dollars needed to complete the project.

The Cheyenne River Sioux tribe has been working to generate interest among the state's other tribes to spark the revitalization of the facility, said Remi Bald Eagle, a spokesman for the tribe.

The building is furnished and has electric service, Bald Eagle said. Ad hoc tribal meetings are held at the facility about once every two months, Bald Eagle said.

Bald Eagle said the facility was meant to serve as a physical symbol of the reconciliation process between Native Americans and non-Native American people.

"It was a great start and great concept but it's only half done. What was started should be finished — that would go a long ways toward reconciliation," Bald Eagle said.

The unfinished wing was intended to hold a supreme court system for several of the tribes, which currently have their own specific laws and policies.

In 2002, Bill Fischer, then-president of the American State Bank in Pierre, said creating a supreme court for all the tribes would help bring about uniformity and credibility to the system.

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

South Dakota university to offer 18-day intensive courses

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A university in western South Dakota is introducing an unconventional schedule for students interested in completing a college course in 18 days.

Black Hills State University-Rapid City will offer block courses for students who want to focus on and finish one subject at a time, the Rapid City Journal reported.

University officials said the offering will be the first of its kind in South Dakota.

Traditionally, college courses are held at different times based on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday or a Tuesday-Thursday schedule, and vary by semester.

Under the new block system, students will meet for three hour chunks at the same time in the morning or afternoon for 18 consecutive days. Each course will be separated by breaks of four days. Students will need to enroll in four blocks to qualify as full time.

Gene Bilodeau, director of BHSU-RC, said that there's evidence learning under the 18-day approach is the same as under the traditional structure, if not more encouraging.

"It's imperative that students leave knowing the material," said Bilodeau. "It's not about shoving it down people's throats; it's about learning the material."

BHSU-RC is a commuter campus that serves working families and single parents. Bilodeau said it can be hard for a working student to adjust when classes meet at different times each semester.

The traditional course structure can also deter military students from enrolling because they can be deployed at short notice. The 18-day block is less risky than the usual 16-week course.

Faculty members have expressed concern over trying to squeeze 16 weeks of teaching into 18 days, according to Bilodeau. The university is offering teachers a stipend to develop new approaches.

The university plans to offer seven 18-day courses between Jan. 8 and May 2, and more next fall if the courses become popular.

North Dakota ready to change online sales tax collection

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota could level the playing field between online retailers and brick and mortar businesses should any federal changes to sales tax collection be made.

North Dakota is among several states to have joined South Dakota in pushing for the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider if retailers should be required to collect sales taxes in a state where they're not physically located.

If a court ruling is made or federal law passes, North Dakota is ready to act, the Bismarck Tribune reported.

The Legislature passed a measure in its latest session that would permit the tax department to imme-

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diately require online retailers to collect sales tax, should federal law change.

Mike Rud, president of the North Dakota Retail Association, said the law is critical. "Now we're ready as soon as the case is heard by the Supreme Court," Rud said.

"This is a pretty serious issue and everyone is becoming quite aware something needs to be done here," said Rud.

U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp is one of many lawmakers that wrote to the Supreme Court to ask for the issue to be considered.

According to Heitkamp, retailers without a physical presence have a price advantage of up to 8.5 percent over brick and mortar stores.

"When these retailers can charge lower prices, our small businesses and jobs are at risk," the North Dakota Democrat wrote with other lawmakers.

The state tax commissioner's office estimates up to \$30 million wasn't collected in 2012 because online retailers weren't required to collect. Considering that online sales have grown by up to 50 percent since then, Rud said the recent losses are likely between \$30 million to \$40 million.

Jeff Hinz, who owns Ace Hardware in Bismarck, said it doesn't seem fair because online retailers still use North Dakota's roads to ship their items but they don't help cover the tax burden associated with maintaining them.

"UPS, the Postal Service and Fedex are their brick and mortar," Hinz said.

Bush administration alums rising in Trump's orbit

By KEN THOMAS and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For all the lingering tensions between President Donald Trump and former President George W. Bush, Trump's White House shares one thing in common with his Republican predecessor's: People.

Trump has installed more than three dozen veterans of the Bush administration, putting them in charge of running agencies, implementing foreign policy and overseeing his schedule. While hiring from the last administration controlled by the same party is common, Trump's staffing moves are notable given his pledges to change politics-as-usual and the frosty relations between the current and former Republican standard-bearers.

The Bush influence has only grown stronger recently, as Trump nominated Alex Azar to lead the Health and Human Services Department, where he served under the Bush administration, and tapped Jerome "Jay" Powell to be chairman of the Federal Reserve. Powell served in the Treasury Department under President George H.W. Bush.

While the White House says this is standard practice, some Trump allies say the hires don't fit with the president's non-traditional style.

"If Donald Trump's presidency fails it will be because he has perhaps inadvertently surrounded himself with" Bush associates, said longtime Trump associate Roger Stone.

The Bush alums in the administration include Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, who served as Bush's labor secretary, and Dina Powell, the deputy national security adviser who oversaw presidential personnel and later served in Bush's State Department as an assistant secretary under Condoleezza Rice. Even the president's schedule and day-to-day operations are overseen by a former member of Bush's inner circle: Joe Hagin, who served as deputy White House chief of staff.

Of course, hiring staffers from a past administration brings needed experience.

"These are complex jobs and the time is limited," said Mike Leavitt, a former Utah governor and Health and Human Services secretary under Bush. He pointed to the importance of understanding the complexities of federal regulations, the budget and congressional relations. "If everyone has to learn it anew the chances of implementing an agenda are substantially reduced and the quality of government isn't as good."

Still, the commingling follows a campaign in which Trump repeatedly dismissed Bush's handling of the Iraq war and his administration's focus on nation-building overseas and branded his brother, former Florida

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Gov. Jeb Bush, as “low-energy Jeb” during the Republican primaries.

In a pointed speech last month, George W. Bush — without mentioning Trump by name — denounced bigotry coursing through present-day American politics, warning that “we’ve seen nationalism distorted into nativism,” and the “return of isolation sentiments, forgetting that American security is directly threatened by the chaos and despair of distant places.”

Trump vented his frustration about Bush’s speech to a former adviser, arguing that it represented another attack aimed at undermining his presidency, according to a person familiar with the conversation who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the private conversation.

Traveling aboard Air Force One at the start of his recent trip to Asia, Trump was asked by reporters to respond to Mark K. Updegrave’s new book, “The Last Republicans,” in which the elder Bush calls Trump a “blowhard” and George W. Bush wonders if he would be the last Republican president.

“I’ll comment after we come back. I don’t need headlines. I don’t want to make their move successful,” Trump said. The president has yet to comment on the recent Bush criticism.

Of course, not all former Bush advisers are jumping into the current administration. Bush’s former top adviser Karl Rove, for example, has been a vocal critic of Trump, and many former Bush foreign policy advisers denounced Trump’s views during the campaign.

Trump allies, like Stone, question if the hires are shifting Trump’s policies away from his campaign pledges. He said there has been a softening of Trump’s isolationist policies, noting his missile strike in Syria and agreement to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan. Stone also questioned the plans to limit tax deductions for state and local taxes as part of a proposed tax overhaul approved Thursday by the House.

“If you told me that a Republican president was going to get elected and his tax reform would have me paying more? That’s George Bush. He said read my lips, no more new taxes,” Stone said of the 41st president. “What genius came up with repealing state and local? That’s just a tone deaf idea.”

White House officials said it was only natural for Trump to cultivate former members of the Bush administration.

“I have to imagine there is going to be overlap since he was the last Republican president,” said Marc Short, the White House’s director of legislative affairs who worked in the Homeland Security Department during the Bush administration. Indeed, the list is long.

Trump’s labor secretary, Alex Acosta, was appointed by Bush to the National Labor Relations Board and later served in the Justice Department’s civil rights division and as a top federal prosecutor in South Florida. Dan Coats, a former Indiana senator and U.S. ambassador to Germany under Bush, is Trump’s director of national intelligence.

When the president grappled with a series of debilitating hurricanes in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico this year, his most high-profile responders were from Bush’s network, including Tom Bossert, the administration’s homeland security adviser; Brock Long, the administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and Elaine Duke, who took over Homeland Security on an acting basis when Trump named John Kelly his chief of staff.

Trump’s nominee to head Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen, worked for the agency during the Bush administration.

“Republicans who have White House experience or broader administration experience, they either got it under Bush 43, or they’re pretty old,” said Josh Bolten, White House chief of staff under Bush. “So it’s a natural place to look. It is the farm system.”

On Twitter follow Ken Thomas at @KThomasDC and Catherine Lucey at @Catherine_Lucey.

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Charles Manson, whose cult slayings horrified world, dies

By JOHN ROGERS, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In the summer of 1969, a scruffy ex-convict with a magnetic hold on young women sent some of his disciples into the night to carry out a series of gruesome killings in Los Angeles. In so doing, Charles Manson became the leering face of evil on front pages across America and rewrote the history of an era.

Manson, the hippie cult leader who died of natural causes Sunday at age 83 after nearly half a century behind bars, orchestrated the slayings of pregnant actress Sharon Tate and six other people, butchered at two homes on successive August nights by intruders who scrawled "Pigs" and "Healter Skelter" (sic) in the victims' blood.

The slaughter horrified the world. To many, the collateral damage included the era of peace, love and flower power.

The Manson Family killings, along with the bloodshed later that year during a Rolling Stones concert at California's Altamont Speedway, seemed to expose the violent and drug-riddled underside of the counter-culture and sent a shiver of fear through America.

"Many people I know in Los Angeles believe that the Sixties ended abruptly on August 9, 1969," author Joan Didion wrote in her 1979 book "The White Album."

Manson was every parent's worst nightmare. The short, shaggy-haired man with hypnotic eyes was a charismatic figure with a talent for turning middle-class youngsters into mass murderers.

At a former movie ranch outside Los Angeles, he and his devotees — many of them young runaways who likened him to Jesus Christ — lived commune-style, using drugs and taking part in orgies. Children from privileged backgrounds ate garbage from supermarket trash.

"These children that come at you with knives, they are your children. You taught them; I didn't teach them. I just tried to help them stand up," he said in a courtroom soliloquy.

It was the summer of the first moon landing. War raged in Vietnam. Hippies flooded the streets of San Francisco and gathered in upstate New York for the Woodstock music festival. But many remember the time for Los Angeles' most shocking celebrity murders.

Fear swept the city after a maid reporting for work ran screaming from the elegant home where Tate lived with her husband, "Rosemary's Baby" director Roman Polanski. Scattered around the estate were blood-soaked bodies.

The beautiful 26-year-old actress, who was 8½ months pregnant, was stabbed and hung from a rafter in her living room. Also killed were Abigail Folger, heiress to a coffee fortune; Polish film director Voityck Frykowsi; Steven Parent, a friend of the estate's caretaker; and celebrity hairdresser Jay Sebring, killed by Manson follower Charles "Tex" Watson, who announced his arrival by saying: "I am the devil, and I'm here to do the devil's work."

The next night, wealthy grocer Leno LaBianca and his wife, Rosemary, were stabbed to death in their home in another neighborhood.

Manson was arrested three months later.

Why he ordered the killing of strangers remained a mystery. Prosecutors said Manson wanted to foment a race war, an idea he supposedly got from a twisted reading of the hard-rocking Beatles song "Helter Skelter." Others said he was getting even because music producer Terry Melcher, who once lived in the house Tate later occupied, had refused to record Manson's music.

Manson's childhood was a blueprint for a life of crime. He was born in Cincinnati on Nov. 12, 1934, to a teenager, possibly a prostitute. When he was 5, his mother went to prison for armed robbery. By the time he was 8, he was in reform school. He spent years in and out of penal institutions.

"My father is the jailhouse. My father is your system," he said in a monologue on the witness stand. "I am only what you made me. I am only a reflection of you."

Manson's chaotic trial in 1970 transformed a courtroom into a theater of the absurd.

He and three female followers, Susan Atkins, Patricia Krenwinkel and Leslie Van Houten, sang and chanted, and Manson at one point launched himself across the counsel table at the judge. Many of his followers

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camped outside the courthouse, threatening to immolate themselves if he was convicted.

When Manson carved an "X" in his forehead, his co-defendants did the same, saying they were "Xed out of society." He later changed his "X" to a swastika.

Despite the overwhelming evidence, he maintained his innocence.

"I have killed no one, and I have ordered no one to be killed," Manson said.

He and the three women were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. Another defendant, Charles "Tex" Watson, was convicted later. All were spared execution and given life sentences after the California Supreme Court struck down the death penalty in 1972. Manson also was convicted in the killings of stuntman Donald "Shorty" Shea and musician Gary Hinman.

Manson and his female followers appeared sporadically at parole hearings where their bids for freedom were repeatedly rejected.

At a 2012 parole hearing Manson boycotted, he was quoted as telling a prison psychiatrist: "I'm special. I'm not like the average inmate. ... I have put five people in the grave. I am a very dangerous man." The parole board decided he should stay behind bars for at least 15 more years.

The killings inspired movies and TV shows, and Manson prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi wrote a best-selling book about the murders, "Helter Skelter." Manson's face has appeared on T-shirts. The macabre shock rocker Marilyn Manson borrowed part of his stage name from the killer.

"The Manson case, to this day, remains one of the most chilling in crime history," prominent criminal justice reporter Theo Wilson wrote in her 1998 memoir, "Headline Justice: Inside the Courtroom — The Country's Most Controversial Trials."

"Even people who were not yet born when the murders took place," Wilson wrote, "know the name Charles Manson, and shudder."

AP writer Michelle A. Monroe contributed to this story. This story contains biographical information compiled by former AP Special Correspondent Linda Deutsch. Deutsch covered the Tate-La Bianca killings and the Manson trial for The Associated Press and has written about the Manson family for four decades.

Musicians unite at AMAs in wake of tumultuous year

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

The 2017 American Music Awards marked a night of unison, positive vibes and American pride as musicians spoke about coming together in a year dominated by natural disasters, violence and divisive politics.

Kelly Clarkson and Pink kicked off the three-hour show Sunday with a performance honoring those affected by tragic events of the year, from hurricanes to hate crimes. First responders stood behind Jamie Foxx, who gave a heartfelt speech before the pop stars sang R.E.M.'s "Everybody Hurts."

This year "was a year that tested our faith. In these moments of crisis, heroes emerged," he said. "As this year comes to a close, we look forward to 2018 with hope ... together we can unite as a people and a nation."

"Black-ish" actress Tracee Ellis Ross said the show — taking place in the wake of multiple sexual allegations against powerful men in Hollywood, the media, business and politics — would honor women who "own our experiences, our bodies and our lives."

"This is the country I know, which is of powerful women, talking about our women, talking about empowering our LGBTQ youth," said Dan Reynolds of the band Imagine Dragons, which won favorite pop/rock duo or group. "May we continue to progress as a nation as one of love and equality. No divide. There's been way too much of that this last year."

Before her performance, Demi Lovato said, "There's so much hate in this world. We have to rise above and never say sorry for who you are." And while Lady Gaga performed "The Cure," a song about healing, she told the audience: "Who's gonna be there? We got to be there for each other America. Hands up!"

Gaga sang from her concert in Washington, D.C. Later in the show, she was in tears when she was named favorite female pop/rock artist.

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"If you feel different ... don't you dare give up on who you are," she said.

Bruno Mars was also not in attendance at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. Mars, who is on tour in South America, picked up seven awards, including artist of the year.

"I wish I could be partying with y'all," said Mars, who appeared in a video.

Iconic entertainer Diana Ross was honored with Lifetime Achievement Award, and she received touching video messages from Barack and Michelle Obama, and Taylor Swift.

The 73-year-old was cheerful and energetic as she ran through well-known songs onstage like a veteran, singing "I'm Coming Out" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," among other hits, with her signature big hair. Foxx, Berry Gordy, Smokey Robinson and others sang along, while some of Ross' grandchildren danced onstage near the end of the performance.

"This is all about love," said Ross, who had several members of her family standing behind her. "This says it all. This is my family."

Pink was also impressive as she continued to show her athleticism and acrobatic skills during a second performance at the AMAs, performing from the side of a high-rise building alongside aerial dancers. The K-pop group BTS, who have a feverish and fanatic social media following, earned the night's loudest applause after they performed their song, "DNA."

Another highlight of the night came when Linkin Park — whose lead singer Chester Bennington killed himself earlier this year — won favorite alternative rock artist.

"We want to dedicate this award to him, to his memory, to his talent, to his sense of humor, to his joy," band member Mike Shinoda said onstage. "I want you guys to take a moment to appreciate what you've got and make Chester proud."

Selena Gomez, who had a kidney transplant this year due to her struggle with lupus, sang "Wolves" while lying on the floor in a short nightgown. Her knees, hands and forehead covered in faux bruises and blood.

Christina Aguilera was shaky when she sang a medley of Whitney Houston's songs to honor the 25th anniversary of Houston's film, "The Bodyguard." The band Portugal. The Man, who sang their pop hit "Feel It Still," opened their performance with the words: "No computers up here, just live instruments." And rapper Macklemore gave his grandmother a birthday shout out at the end of his performance.

Like Mars, Keith Urban also won multiple awards, including favorite country album, country male artist and country song.

"Absolutely you should be sharing these, my love," the country singer said as "This Is Us" actor Justin Hartley passed two of the trophies to Urban's wife, actress Nicole Kidman, who sat in the audience.

Shawn Mendes won favorite adult contemporary artist, beating Mars and Ed Sheeran.

"Ed and Bruno are basically the two reasons I started singing," he said.

Former One Direction singer Niall Horan won new artist of the year; the Chainsmokers were named favorite electronic dance artist; and Luis Fonsi, Daddy Yankee and Justin Bieber won collaboration of the year for the hit song "Despacito."

DJ Khaled won favorite rap/hip-hop song for "I'm the One," his No. 1 hit featuring Bieber, Quavo, Chance the Rapper and Lil Wayne.

While the performers at the AMAs were evenly split between men and women, the nominees were not — a reflection of the year in pop music where male acts dominated.

Online:

<https://www.theamas.com/>

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. CHARLES MANSON, WHOSE CULT SLAYINGS HORRIFIED WORLD, DIES

The imprisoned hippie cult leader, who orchestrated the gruesome murders of pregnant actress Sharon

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Tate and six others in Los Angeles during the summer of 1969, was 83.

2. MUGABE WON'T GO QUIETLY; MORE PROTESTS VOWED

The longtime authoritarian president ignores a midday local deadline set by Zimbabwe's ruling party to step down or face impeachment proceedings.

3. WASHINGTON MAY NOT HAVE SEEN THE LAST OF 'THE MOOCH'

Anthony Scaramucci, the short-lived White House communications chief, tells AP he remains in close touch with the Trump administration and sees himself working with the president again in the future.

4. WHITE HOUSE OPEN TO STRIKING HEALTH PROVISION FROM TAX BILL

The provision would repeal a requirement that everyone in the U.S. have health insurance or pay a fine, but is opposed by Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, whose vote the White House needs.

5. WHY TRUMP ISN'T STUMPING FOR MOORE

The president isn't calling for the Alabama Senate candidate to leave the race but won't campaign for the Republican because of "discomfort" with the sexual misconduct allegations against Moore.

6. HOW SUU KYI VIEWS GLOBAL INSTABILITY

Myanmar's leader, whose country is accused of violently pushing out minority Rohingya Muslims, says the world is facing conflict in part because illegal immigration spreads terrorism.

7. 'IT NEVER REALLY LEAVES YOU'

In the worst opioid epidemic in U.S. history, addiction recovery may be toughest for pain patients who must find safer ways to manage their conditions, AP learns.

8. TEEN TRANSGENDER MOVEMENT MORE WIDESPREAD THEN THOUGHT

Although the concept that children can be transgender has been discussed in the open only recently, one study estimates that about 150,000 teenagers in the U.S. identify as transgender, AP finds.

9. HARD TO BELIEVE: 'OBAMACARE' CAN BE HAD FOR FREE

Due to a quirk in the system, consumers are getting the word that taxpayer-subsidized health plans are widely available for next year for no monthly premium or little cost.

10. WOMEN DOMINATE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS, BUT NOT AS NOMINEES

Women instead took over the show with powerful, incredible, emotional and inspiring performances from Diana Ross, Pink, Kelly Clarkson, Lady Gaga and more.

Suu Kyi blames world conflicts partly on illegal immigration

By ESTHER HTUSAN, Associated Press

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP) — Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi said Monday that the world is facing instability and conflict in part because illegal immigration spreads terrorism, as her country faces accusations of violently pushing out hundreds of thousands of unwanted Rohingya Muslims.

Suu Kyi did not directly mention the refugee exodus in a speech to European and Asian foreign ministers in Myanmar's capital, Naypyitaw. But her speech highlighted the views of many in the country who see the Rohingya as illegal immigrants and accuse them of terrorist acts.

The ongoing Rohingya exodus is sure to be raised by the visitors at the meetings Monday and Tuesday.

Suu Kyi said the world is in a new period of instability as conflicts around the world give rise to new threats and emergencies, citing "Illegal immigration's spread of terrorism and violent extremism, social disharmony and even the threat of nuclear war. Conflicts take away peace from societies, leaving behind underdevelopment and poverty, pushing peoples and even countries away from one another."

Myanmar has been widely criticized for the military crackdown that has driven more than 620,000 Rohingya to flee Rakhine state into neighboring Bangladesh. The United Nations has said the crackdown appears to be a campaign of "ethnic cleansing," and some have called for re-imposing international sanctions that were lifted as Myanmar transitioned from military rule to elected government.

Foreign ministers and representatives of 51 countries are meeting in Naypyitaw in a forum that aims to further political and economic cooperation but takes place against the backdrop of the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis.

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A flurry of diplomatic activity preceded Monday's opening, with the foreign ministers of Germany and Sweden joining the EU's foreign policy chief in a visit to the teeming refugee camps in Bangladesh. China's Wang Yi was also in Bangladesh and met privately with Suu Kyi on Sunday in Myanmar following that trip.

Suu Kyi is Myanmar's foreign minister and state councilor, a title created for the country's once-leading voice for democracy since she is constitutionally banned from the presidency. She does not command the military and cannot direct its operations in northern Rakhine state, but her remarks in seeming support of the brutal crackdown have damaged her global reputation.

In her speech to the visiting foreign ministers, Suu Kyi also cited natural disasters caused by climate change as compounding the world's problems. She said mutual understanding of problems like terrorism would be crucial for peace and economic development.

"I believe that if policymakers develop a true understanding on each of those constraints and difficulties, the process of addressing global problems will become easier and more effective," she said. "It is only through mutual understanding that strong bonds of partnership can be forged."

The European Union's top diplomat said earlier Monday that she is encouraging Suu Kyi to implement the recommendations of an expert panel on ensuring stability in Rakhine state and work was still needed on that.

The commission, led by former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, called for promoting investment and community-directed growth to alleviate poverty in Rakhine, which Myanmar officials have supported. But it also called for Myanmar to grant citizenship and ensure other rights to the Rohingya, which are hotly disputed and effectively render most of them stateless.

The commission, established last year at Suu Kyi's behest, issued its report the day before a Rohingya insurgent group killed dozens in attacks on multiple police posts on Aug. 25. The military's response has been called disproportionate and a textbook example of ethnic cleansing. Rohingya now in Bangladesh have described indiscriminate shootings, rapes and arsons that wiped out whole villages. Some survivors bear wounds from gunshots and land mines.

"Stopping the violence, stopping the flow of refugees and (guaranteeing) full humanitarian access to Rakhine state and safe, sustainable repatriation of the refugees is going to be needed," said Federica Mogherini, the high representative for EU foreign policy.

She said the EU was encouraging Bangladesh and Myanmar to work on that issue.

Women dominate American Music Awards, but not as nominees

By KRISTIN M. HALL, Associated Press

This year's American Music Awards was a reflection of the year in pop music, with women dominating the show, but not as nominees or winners.

In categories like artist of the year and favorite pop/rock album, where men and women compete, no female acts were in contention. Only six female artists or groups that include women won in the more than two dozen fan voted awards handed out Sunday night. However, the legendary Diana Ross was given a lifetime achievement award, which former President Barack Obama rightfully noted was an overdue honor.

But the women instead took over the show with powerful, incredible, emotional and inspiring performances from Ross, Pink, Kelly Clarkson, Lady Gaga and more.

Here's a look at the top moments at the American Music Awards:

I'M COMING OUT

The anticipation for the performance by style icon, singer and actress Diana Ross escalated all evening with plenty of hype from her daughter and the show's host actress Tracee Ellis Ross. Ross noted that they were making history as the first mother and daughter to both host the awards show and even donned one of her mother's sequined tops during the show.

The Detroit-born singer who started her career as a member of the Supremes received video messages from the Obamas as well as Taylor Swift. And she did not disappoint when she appeared draped in a

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purple, fluffy tulle coat and long black gloves. She delivered an upbeat and inspiring medley of her hits, including "I'm Coming Out," "Take Me Higher" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough."

She ended the performance by inviting her children and grandchildren on stage as she poured her heart out to her fans. "This is my family and I am sending love out to all of you our global family and I really, really love to be here," Ross said. "And I feel so humbled by this."

TRUE HEROES

In a year marked by tragedies, from devastating hurricanes to mass shootings, the show started with a great homage to those who are the first to help in those situations, from police officers, to firefighters, to paramedics and the military. Actor Jamie Foxx put it succinctly that 2017 tested everyone's faith, but that unity was more important now than ever.

Two of pop music's powerful vocalists, Pink and Kelly Clarkson, performed an epic version of R.E.M.'s "Everybody Hurts," with images from the recent tragedies on screens behind them. At the end of the performance, the two singers embraced in a hug and the crowd rose to its feet.

It was not only a great performance, but set the tone for a night of uplifting and positive messages.

WOMEN ROCK

Host Tracee Ellis Ross explained in her opening monologue that this was a night for women to shine after a year in which women all over the world have been empowered to "own our experiences, our bodies and our lives."

"This is going to be an incredible night, filled with nostalgia, featuring earth shaking, ground breaking women," Ross said. "And there's going to be some men singing too."

Christina Aguilera took on the daunting task of singing a medley of hits from Whitney Houston's "Bodyguard" soundtrack, while Demi Lovato's performance of "Sorry, Not Sorry," even had the Korean group BTS dancing in their seats. Kelly Clarkson, who was the first winner of "American Idol," killed her songs "Miss Independent" and "Love So Soft."

Lady Gaga, who performed via telecast from a tour stop in Washington D.C., told her fans that "If you feel different, or feel not understood, don't you dare give up on who you are."

SUPERHERO IN PINK

Pop singer Pink is well-known for her high-flying stage performances, where she often flies over her crowds or twists and twirls on long ribbons. But she took it to a superhero level when she performed on the side of a high-rise hotel in Los Angeles with aerial dancers. During her performance of "Beautiful Trauma," Pink and the dancers performed acrobatic flips and poses while their graceful movement reflected off the building's glass windows like they were dancing on water.

It was epic, unique and dramatic. And nobody had a better view than the hotel guests peaking out behind the glass as Pink and the dancers skipped across the glass like Spiderman.

Follow Kristin M. Hall on Twitter at twitter.com/kmhall

Zimbabwe's Mugabe passes deadline to resign; now impeachment

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA and FARAI MUTSAKA, Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Longtime President Robert Mugabe ignored a midday deadline set by the ruling party to step down or face impeachment proceedings, while Zimbabweans stunned by his lack of resignation during a national address vowed more protests to make him leave.

"Arrogant Mugabe disregards Zanu PF," one newspaper headline said.

Opposition activists and the influential liberation war veterans association announced more demonstrations to pressure the 93-year-old Mugabe, the world's oldest head of state, to step down after 37 year in power.

"Your time is up," veterans association leader Chris Mutsvangwa said at a press conference. "You should

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have the dignity and decency to spare the country of further turmoil by simply announcing your departure immediately.”

He also suggested that the military, even though it put Mugabe under house arrest days ago, was still beholden to him and compelled to protect him because he is officially their “commander in chief.”

Zimbabweans were astonished that Mugabe, flanked by the military in his national address Sunday night, remained defiant.

The war veterans’ association will go to court to argue that Mugabe is “derelict of his executive duty,” Mutsvangwa said.

Some ruling party members said an impeachment process likely wouldn’t lead to Mugabe’s immediate resignation and could take days to complete. Mugabe was stripped of his party leadership on Sunday by the Central Committee of the ruling ZANU-PF but said in his speech he would preside over a party congress next month.

The congress is expected to ratify his firing as party chief, the expulsion of the unpopular first lady and the naming of Mugabe’s recently fired deputy to succeed him.

Amid the confusion, some people in the capital, Harare, are now more cautious about talking to reporters. That contrasts with the jubilation and open condemnation of Mugabe over the weekend, when the bulk of Harare’s population of roughly 1.6 million appeared to be in the streets, dancing and taking selfies with soldiers in an event backed by the military.

At the University of Zimbabwe on Monday, students protested and refused to sit for exams, singing and demanding that Mugabe step down. The spokesman for the Zimbabwe National Students Union, Zivai Mhetu, said they want all universities shut down until he does.

Mugabe in his speech acknowledged “a whole range of concerns” of Zimbabweans about the chaotic state of the government and its collapsed economy, but he stopped short of what many in the southern African nation were hoping for — a statement that he was stepping down.

The once-formidable Mugabe is now a virtually powerless figure, making his continued incumbency all the more unusual and extending Zimbabwe’s political limbo. He is largely confined to his private home by the military.

Yet the president sought to project authority in his speech, which he delivered after shaking hands with security force commanders. The army commander himself, whose threat to “step in” last week led to Mugabe’s house arrest, leaned over a couple of times to help the president find his place on the page he was reading.

Mugabe has discussed his possible resignation on two occasions with military commanders after they effectively took over the country on Tuesday. The commanders were troubled by his firing of his longtime deputy and the positioning of unpopular first lady Grace Mugabe to succeed him.

“I, as the president of Zimbabwe, as their commander in chief, do acknowledge the issues they have drawn my attention to, and do believe that these were raised in the spirit of honesty and out of deep and patriotic concern for the stability of our nation and for the welfare of our people,” Mugabe said.

The deputy whom Mugabe fired, former Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, is positioned to become Zimbabwe’s next leader after the party committee made him its nominee to take over from Mugabe, who has ruled since independence from white minority rule in 1980.

The military appears to favor a voluntary resignation to maintain a veneer of legality in the political transition. Mugabe, in turn, is likely using whatever leverage he has left to try to preserve his legacy or even protect himself and his family from possible prosecution.

White House open to striking health provision from tax bill

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House says it’s willing to strike a health-care provision from Senate legislation to cut taxes and overhaul the tax code if the provision becomes an impediment to passing one of President Donald Trump’s top legislative priorities.

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The provision would repeal a requirement that everyone in the U.S. have health insurance or pay a fine, but has emerged as a major sticking point for Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, whose vote the White House needs. Collins said Sunday that the issue should be dealt with separately.

Trump's budget director, Mick Mulvaney, said the White House is open to scrapping the provision, which would repeal a key component of the Affordable Care Act health law enacted by President Barack Obama. Trump had pressed for the provision to be added to the bill, partly to show progress on the GOP goal of undoing the health care law following Congress' failed attempts to repeal it earlier this year.

"I don't think anybody doubts where the White House is on repealing and replacing Obamacare. We absolutely want to do it," Mulvaney said Sunday. "If we can repeal part of Obamacare as part of a tax bill and have a tax bill that is still a good tax bill that can pass, that's great.

"If it becomes an impediment to getting the best tax bill we can, then we're OK with taking it out," Mulvaney added.

Legislative director Marc Short said Sunday that the White House "is very comfortable with the House bill," which does not include the so-called individual mandate. But Short also said the White House views the mandate as a tax and "we like the fact that the Senate has included it in its bill."

At issue is a provision to repeal the requirement that everyone in the U.S. have health insurance or pay a fine. Eliminating the individual mandate would add an estimated \$338 billion in revenue over 10 years that Senate tax-writers used for additional tax cuts.

Collins said Sunday that the tax advantage that some middle-income consumers would reap under the tax bill could be wiped out by repealing the mandate. She said they would face higher insurance premiums coupled with the loss of federal subsidies to help them afford coverage.

"The fact is that if you do pull this piece of the Affordable Care Act out, for some middle-income families, the increased premium is going to cancel out the tax cut that they would get," Collins said.

Collins said she hasn't decided how to vote on the bill because it will be amended before it reaches the Senate floor. But her vote is crucial in a chamber where Republicans hold a slim 52-48 advantage.

Last week, Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin became the first Republican to declare opposition, saying the plan wouldn't cut business taxes enough for partnerships and corporations. GOP Sens. Bob Corker of Tennessee, John McCain and Jeff Flake of Arizona, and Rand Paul of Kentucky have also expressed concerns.

Republicans can lose just two senators on the final vote, which would allow Vice President Mike Pence to cast a tie-breaking 51st vote in his capacity as president of the Senate. Democrats are not expected to support the bill, as was the case when the House passed its version last week.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the mandate amounts to "an unfair tax on poor people."

"The president thinks we should get rid of it. I think we should get rid of it," he said, but added: "We're going to work with the Senate as we go through this."

Mulvaney and Collins were interviewed on CNN's "State of the Union." Mnuchin spoke on "Fox News Sunday." Collins also appeared on ABC's "This Week," as did Short.

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WH: Trump not stumping for Moore due to discomfort with bid

By HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump isn't campaigning for Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore because of "discomfort" with the sexual misconduct allegations made by several women but isn't calling on the controversial judge to drop out of the race because the state's voters should decide, the White House says.

Ultimately, Trump doesn't know who to believe following decades-old allegations made one month before the Dec. 12 election, according to his aides.

One Republican senator urged Alabama voters to reject Moore in the special election even if that could mean ceding the seat to a Democrat and narrowing the GOP's 52-48 Senate edge. A second GOP lawmaker suggested there was "a strong possibility" that a write-in candidate — "a proven conservative" — could

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win, though no name was mentioned.

"We are uncomfortable with the explanations that Roy Moore has given to date," said White House legislative director Marc Short. Speaking of Trump's position, Short said: "Obviously if he did not believe that the women's accusations were credible, he would be down campaigning for Roy Moore."

Still, Short added the "38-year-old allegations" were virtually unprovable. "At this point, we think he has been a public figure in Alabama for decades, and the people of Alabama will make the decision, not the president, not the leader of the Senate, not members in Congress."

Moore, a former state Supreme Court justice twice removed from office, has denied the accusations that have surfaced only recently, and pledged to remain in the race. The special election will determine who fills the remainder of Attorney General Jeff Sessions' term, until January 2020.

Before the allegations emerged, Trump had backed current GOP Sen. Luther Strange in the Sept. 26 primary to determine Sessions' successor and campaigned in the state, a Republican stronghold.

After Moore's victory, Trump made clear he would back the anti-establishment candidate enthusiastically promoted by former White House chief strategist Stephen K. Bannon. But since the allegations aired, the White House has said Moore should drop out if they were true. Moore faces Democrat Doug Jones, a former prosecutor, in the Dec 12 race.

Budget director Mick Mulvaney said while the White House had "serious concerns," it was hard to weigh in against Moore. Moore's name cannot be removed from the ballot before the special election even if he withdraws from the race, though a write-in campaign remains possible.

Trump "doesn't know who to believe. I think a lot of folks don't," Mulvaney said.

Short, pressed repeatedly about whether Trump still supported Moore, said: "I don't think you have seen him issue an endorsement. You have not seen him issue robocalls." Short added, "I think you can infer by the fact that he has not gone down to support Roy Moore his discomfort in doing so."

Moore has forcefully denied the charges as "unsubstantiated" and "fake" even as more women have come forward to make complaints of sexual improprieties. Two women by name have said Moore molested them in the 1970s when one was 14 and the other 16 and he was a local district attorney in his 30s, and three others said he pursued romantic relationships with them around the same time.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., are among the many national Republicans who have urged Moore to step aside. Sessions told Congress last week he has "no reason to doubt" the women.

"I hope that the voters of Alabama choose not to elect him," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine. "I don't know Doug Jones at all, but I've never supported Roy Moore. And I hope that he does not end up being in the United States Senate."

Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., said "it is in the best interest of the country, as well as the state of Alabama, from my perspective, for Roy Moore to find something else to do." Scott said he thinks there was "a strong possibility with a new candidate, a new Republican candidate, a proven conservative, that we can win that race."

Moore's candidacy has left GOP officials in a bind, especially after GOP Gov. Kay Ivey said she will not postpone the election and will vote for Moore. The Alabama Republican Party has also thrown its support behind Moore.

A Moore victory would saddle GOP senators with a colleague accused of abusing and harassing teenagers, a troubling liability heading into the 2018 congressional elections.

McConnell has said Moore would almost certainly face a formal ethics complaint in the Senate if he were elected. Such an ethics complaint could lead to a Senate vote on expelling him.

Short appeared on ABC's "This Week," Mulvaney spoke on NBC's "Meet the Press," Collins was on ABC and CNN's "State of the Union" and Scott spoke on "Fox News Sunday."

Wentz, Eagles roll over Cowboys 37-9 after losing kicker

By SCHUYLER DIXON, AP Pro Football Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — No kicker, no problem for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Carson Wentz threw for two touchdowns and three 2-point conversions after Philadelphia lost kicker Jake Elliott to a head injury, and the Eagles all but wrapped up the NFC East with a 37-9 victory over the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday night.

The Eagles (9-1) outscored the Cowboys 30-0 in the second half while extending their winning streak to eight games, their longest since 2003-04 and tied with New Orleans for the best current run in the NFL.

Philadelphia leads the second-place and defending division champion Cowboys (5-5) by four games with six to play after handing Dallas its worst home loss at 8-year-old AT&T Stadium.

Dallas' Dak Prescott threw a career-high three interceptions and lost a fumble that was returned for a touchdown in his second straight loss without star running back Ezekiel Elliott, serving a six-game suspension for alleged domestic violence.

Jake Elliott's injury wasn't a factor for nearly a half because the NFL-leading Eagles couldn't get in scoring position. They failed to get a first down on five straight first-half drives, starting with one at the Dallas 15 when Elliott missed a 34-yard attempt and soon after left the field.

Trailing 9-7 at halftime, Wentz led the Eagles on scoring drives of 75, 90 and 85 yards, the middle one boosted by Jay Ajayi's 71-yard run against his hometown team in his second game since getting traded by Miami.

"The biggest thing was sticking with the game plan," said Wentz, who is up to 25 touchdown passes with just five interceptions. "The big boys up front kind of came out angry. We ran the ball the second half really effectively."

Ajayi had 91 yards on seven carries and LeGarrette Blount added 57 on 13 carries, including a 30-yarder leading to the last offensive touchdown.

Eagles coach Doug Pederson declared at halftime that he would go for every fourth down and try 2-point conversions after every touchdown.

It came into play right away when Corey Clement scored on an 11-yard run to open the second half and ran in a screen pass behind three blockers for the 2-pointer.

The first fourth-down try was Wentz's 17-yard touchdown pass to Alshon Jeffery for a 29-9 lead. That 2-point pass failed. Torrey Smith had the other TD catch, an 11-yarder.

After Derek Barnett hit Prescott's leg and arm as he was throwing, Nigel Bradham picked up the loose ball and ran it 37 yards for a touchdown. Wentz's 2-point pass to Trey Burton provided the final margin.

"We got some nice 2-point conversions," said Wentz, who was 14 of 27 for 168 yards. "Now we've got to go back to the drawing board with our 2-point plays."

The Cowboys appeared to have fixed the problems of missing injured left tackle Tyron Smith and 2016 All-Pro linebacker Sean Lee from a week earlier, when they allowed eight sacks of Prescott along with three Atlanta scoring drives following Lee's injury in a 27-7 loss to the Falcons.

But after protecting Prescott fairly well before halftime, Dallas allowed three sacks and 180 of Philadelphia's season-high 215 yards rushing in the second half. Lee's replacement at weakside linebacker, Anthony Hitchens, left with a groin injury after halftime.

Prescott was 18 of 31 for 145 yards for a career-worst 30.4 passer rating before backup Cooper Rush took mop-up duty.

"It's no excuses," said Prescott, who teamed with Elliott in a remarkable rookie season that is now a distant memory with already two more losses and three more interceptions than Prescott had a year ago. Elliott won't be back until the final two games of the regular season.

"We're not saying injuries or any of that's bothering us. We're not saying it's the reason we're not winning is because of those guys."

NO RUST THIS TIME

The Eagles had a focus on being better following the bye after losing nine of 11 last season after a 3-0 start going into the break. Now Philadelphia will take a shot at the best record in the NFL with history on

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its side when starting this strong. The Eagles have two NFL championships (1949, 1960) and two trips to the Super Bowl (1980, 2004, both losses) following 9-1 starts.

SECOND-HALF MELTDOWNS

The Cowboys have been outscored 47-0 in the second half the past two weeks following a three-game winning streak that seemed to have Dallas back on track following an NFC-best 13-3 record last season.

"It would be pretty tough not to panic, but I don't think we are panicking," said running back Alfred Morris, who had 91 yards filling in for Ezekiel Elliott. "It's been two tough losses, ugly losses on top of that. But at the same time, I know the character of this team and the fight we have."

EMERGENCY KICKER

Linebacker Kamu Grugier-Hill is the emergency kicker for the Eagles. But he completely missed the safety net on a practice try on the sidelines, sending the ball into the stands. He did reach the goal line with his first kickoff, though.

UP NEXT

Eagles: Home against Chicago next Sunday.

Cowboys: Los Angeles Chargers visiting for annual Thanksgiving game.

Corrects previous versions with Philadelphia kicker Jake Elliott, not Luke Elliott.

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

Border agent dies after being injured in Texas

VAN HORN, Texas (AP) — Authorities are searching Texas' Big Bend area for potential suspects and witnesses after a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent was fatally injured responding to activity there.

Border Patrol spokesmen said they could not provide any details Sunday on what caused the agent's injuries or what led to them. Spokesman Carlos Diaz said the FBI has taken over the investigation.

Another spokesman, Douglas Mosier, said Agent Rogelio Martinez, 36, and his partner were transported to a local hospital, where Martinez died. Martinez's partner is in serious condition. His name wasn't released. Martinez had been a border agent since August 2013 and was from El Paso.

President Donald Trump commented about the incident on Twitter Sunday night amid a series of unrelated tweets.

"We will seek out and bring to justice those responsible," Trump's tweet read. He also reiterated his call for a wall at the U.S. border with Mexico.

Border Patrol records show Big Bend accounted for about 1 percent of the more than 61,000 apprehensions its agents made along the Southwest border between October 2016 and May 2017. The region's mountains and the Rio Grande make it a difficult area for people to cross illegally into the U.S. from Mexico.

The Border Patrol website lists 38 agents who have died since late 2003 — some attacked while working along the border and others killed in traffic accidents. It lists one other agent death in the line of duty this year.

Many Christian conservatives are backing Alabama's Roy Moore

By JAY REEVES, Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Alabama's Christian conservatives see Roy Moore as their champion. He has battled federal judges and castigated liberals, big government, gun control, Muslims, homosexuality and anything else that doesn't fit the evangelical mold.

The Republican Senate candidate has long stood with them, and now, as he faces accusations of sexual impropriety including the molestation of a 14-year-old girl, they are standing with him.

That steadfastness is shocking to many outside Alabama who wonder how any voter who claims to be Christian can stand with a man accused of such acts. The answer is both complicated and deeply rooted

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in the DNA of a state that prides itself on bucking norms.

The state's motto — "We dare defend our rights" — is an upfront acknowledgement of a fighting spirit that has put Alabamians at odds with the rest of the nation for generations.

Perhaps more importantly, there is a deep-seated trust that leaves many willing to accept Moore's denials and discount the word of women speaking out weeks before the Dec. 12 election after decades of public silence. For some, Moore is more like a biblical prophet speaking out for God than a politician.

Introducing Moore during a "God Save America" rally at a south Alabama church this week, pastor Mike Allison said his support wasn't wavering because Moore never has.

"He has staunchly defended the Constitution of the United States, he has stood for the word of God ... he is against the murder of the unborn by abortion. He is for the defunding of Planned Parenthood. He is against a redefinition of marriage and believes firmly that it is only between a man and a woman. And he is against all threats against the traditional family," Allison said. "He is a fighter and a champion for right"

Since the allegations of sexual misconduct surfaced, leading Washington Republicans - though not President Donald Trump - have abandoned him.

At home, polls have shown a tightening race as some otherwise loyal GOP voters publicly disavow Moore on social media; GOP Sen. Richard Shelby has said he will write-in someone rather than vote for Moore.

Yet Moore still holds almost magical appeal for many. Fearful of angering Moore's supporters, the Alabama GOP has stuck with him, and voters like Larry Gibbs are putting their confidence in the Vietnam veteran long known as the "Ten Commandments judge," for putting shrines to the commandments in his courtroom and then in the Supreme Court rotunda.

"He comes up here to the church and he's quoting scripture and he relates to us," said Gibbs, who attended the pro-Moore rally where Allison spoke.

Even a relative of one of Moore's accusers is publicly siding with Moore.

"He fought like hell to keep the Ten Commandments in the damn courthouse," said a Facebook live video by Darrel Nelson. Nelson said his father, John Alan Nelson, is married to Beverly Young Nelson, who publicly accused Moore of sexually assaulting her as a teen.

Nelson's lawyer, Gloria Allred, refused comment on any relationship between her client and Darrel Nelson. But Beverly Nelson's son Spencer Harris has referred to Darrel Nelson as his stepbrother in his own Facebook posts supporting his mother.

Moore is polarizing — a big reason his fans like him — and local opponents see him as a Bible-thumping opportunist playing on peoples' religion. Moore lost badly in bids for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 2006 and 2010.

Moore was considered an odd loner by fellow members of his cadet company at West Point. A yearbook passage from the academy referred to Moore as an "individualist by nature" who was worthy of respect "among those who really know him."

That reputation carried over to Etowah County, where Moore was an assistant prosecutor and circuit judge. He didn't typically join in the banter common in so many small-town, Southern courtrooms.

With a conservative view of religion at his core, Moore instead fought the American Civil Liberties Union over courtroom prayer and the wooden Ten Commandments plaque in his courtroom and rode the publicity to election as Alabama's chief justice.

He was removed from the job twice for violating state judicial ethics — once for ignoring a federal court order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the state's judicial building and again over opposing gay marriage after the U.S. Supreme Court effectively legalized it.

Conservative backers view those ousters as badges of honor. Longtime Moore supporter John Giles said Moore doesn't bend or change, and his voters value that.

"Every election cycle there's this tendency among the electorate to say 'Let's get rid of these rascals. They say one thing and govern another way,'" said Giles, who runs a super PAC that supports Moore. "The one thing about this man is what he says he means, and at all cost."

In his role as an outsider and fighter, Moore is a bit like George C. Wallace, the one-time segregationist who served four terms as Alabama's governor.

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But the closest any of Alabama's previous populist politicians might have come to the current allegations against Moore might have been those made against Gov. Jim Folsom in the 40s, said retired University of Alabama historian William H. Stewart. "Kissing Jim" was alleged to have had a son out of wedlock and was known for kissing women on the campaign trail.

"But we haven't had any instances of a candidate dating or making sexual overtures to a girl as young as 14," said Stewart.

AP video journalist Johnny Clark contributed to this report from Jackson, Alabama.

France wrestles with the line between seduction, harassment

By THOMAS ADAMSON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France is in a bind over where seduction ends and sexual harassment begins.

Since the allegations of rape and sexual harassment emerged against Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein, the country synonymous with love has been stumbling as it addresses the issue of sexual harassment and violence against women.

Some have wondered if France can address men's behavior toward women without throwing out its Don Juan national identity.

"France is a country of men who love women," Guillaume Bigot, who has written about the Weinstein fallout in France, told The Associated Press. "Seduction is a profound part of our national identity ... the culture of the 'French lover' and the 'French kiss' is in danger because of political correctness."

Yet many women in France reject his viewpoint, favoring instead the thoughts of French feminist writer Simone de Beauvoir on the oppression of women.

Even before the hashtag #MeToo went viral, a cruder French version known as #balancetonporc ("squeal on your pig") appeared online and set off a deluge of anonymous accounts from women denouncing alleged abusers with unprecedented openness. It seemed to signal France could lead the way in the fight against harassment, since the posts numbered in the hundreds of thousands and spoke of ubiquitous sexism and predation in France's cultural, political and business worlds.

But so far it appears the Don Juanists have prevailed.

Although the accused include a former French government minister, the former president of the Young Socialists movement, a former TV news editor and members of a world-renowned startup school, most have denied the allegations. More significantly, no powerful figures in France have lost their jobs or their reputations.

Philosopher Bernard Henri-Lévy has criticized the online movement, saying it's unfair to compare alleged attackers to "pigs." And French defenders of seduction have warned against a puritanical, American-style backlash that could demonize romance.

Bigot pointed to France's national symbol — the young, busty Marianne — as proof of France's state-sponsored obsession with beautiful women, noting that in 1969, bombshell Brigitte Bardot was chosen as Marianne's physical embodiment. Others chosen to represent her include siren Catherine Deneuve and supermodel Laetitia Casta.

French Culture Minister Françoise Nyssen, meanwhile, has provoked ire by defending director Roman Polanski amid calls to cancel a screening of his movies at a French cultural institute.

Nyssen urged the French "to not condemn the work" of the Polish-born director who in the 1970s pleaded guilty to having sex in the U.S. with a 13-year-old girl whom he plied with champagne and Quaaludes. The institute said its role was not to moralize.

This year, Polanski was even honored as president of the Cesar awards, France's answer to the Oscars.

In another dispute, Justice Minister Nicole Belloubet provoked consternation by suggesting that a legal minimum age of 13 for sexual consent "is worth considering." Activists protested in Paris to demand that the age of consent be set at 15.

For decades, the French have seen it as a point of honor to separate the public and private lives of

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French politicians and artists. Some say this has protected men such as former President Francois Mitterrand, who had a mistress and secret love child, and Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the former International Monetary Fund chief accused by a New York hotel maid of sexual assault.

Such perceived apathy has triggered an outcry from French feminists, who laud the U.S. outpouring against harassment and accuse France of having normalized sexism.

"Often in France, we hide behind the idea of gallantry for men. But this is constructed to make us hide the violence and think it is seduction," said prominent feminist Caroline de Haas.

She called the French government's response to the allegations of sexual harassment "radio silence" when compared with other countries such as Britain or the U.S.

French President Emmanuel Macron has urged women to speak out against sexual assault, and moved quickly to strip Weinstein of the Legion of Honor award he won for producing the Oscar-winning French film "The Artist."

"We must change the whole way of thinking of our society. We must calm the impulses of domination that some men have, this sexual violence," Macron said Friday.

But feminists say symbolic moves are not enough to combat the engrained sexism in France.

The author of a French essay on seduction had to spell it out in an interview with the Madame Figaro magazine last week that harassment is not seduction and is not ever a positive thing.

"A harasser is a predator, not a seducer," said Gilles Lipovetsky.

Thomas Adamson on Twitter: [Twitter.com/ThomasAdamson_K](https://twitter.com/ThomasAdamson_K)

Figure known as 'Crocodile' could replace Zimbabwe president

By ANDREW MELDRUM, Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Emmerson Mnangagwa, elected Sunday as the new leader of Zimbabwe's ruling political party and positioned to take over as the country's leader, has engineered a remarkable comeback using skills he no doubt learned from his longtime mentor, President Robert Mugabe.

Mnangagwa served for decades as Mugabe's enforcer — a role that gave him a reputation for being astute, ruthless and effective at manipulating the levers of power. Among the population, he is more feared than popular, but he has strategically fostered a loyal support base within the military and security forces.

A leading government figure since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, he became vice president in 2014 and is so widely known as the "Crocodile" that his supporters are called Team Lacoste for the brand's crocodile logo.

The 75-year-old "is smart and skillful, but will he be a panacea for Zimbabwe's problems? Will he bring good governance and economic management? We'll have to watch this space," said Piers Pigou, southern Africa expert for the International Crisis Group.

Mugabe unwittingly set in motion the events that led to his own downfall, firing his vice president on Nov. 6. Mnangagwa fled the country to avoid arrest while issuing a ringing statement saying he would return to lead Zimbabwe.

"Let us bury our differences and rebuild a new and prosperous Zimbabwe, a country that is tolerant to divergent views, a country that respects opinions of others, a country that does not isolate itself from the rest of the world because of one stubborn individual who believes he is entitled to rule this country until death," he said in the Nov. 8 statement.

He has not been seen in public but is believed to be back in Zimbabwe.

For weeks, Mnangagwa had been publicly demonized by Mugabe and his wife. Grace, so he had time to prepare his strategy. Within days of the vice president's dismissal, his supporters in the military put Mugabe and his wife under house arrest.

When Mugabe refused to resign, a massive demonstration Saturday brought thousands of people into the streets of the capital, Harare. It was not a spontaneous uprising. Thousands of professionally produced posters praising Mnangagwa and the military had been printed ahead of time.

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"It was not a last-minute operation," Pigou said. "The demonstration was orchestrated."

At the same time, Mnangagwa's allies in the ruling ZANU-PF party lobbied for the removal of Mugabe as the party leader. At a Central Committee meeting Sunday, Mnangagwa was voted in as the new leader of the party, which had been led by Mugabe since 1977.

In an interview with The Associated Press years ago, Mnangagwa was terse and stone-faced, backing up his reputation for saying little but acting decisively. Party insiders say that he can be charming and has friends of all colors.

Mnangagwa joined the fight against white minority rule in Rhodesia while still a teen in the 1960s. In 1963, he received military training in Egypt and China. As one of the earliest guerrilla fighters against Ian Smith's Rhodesian regime, he was captured, tortured and convicted of blowing up a locomotive in 1965.

Sentenced to death by hanging, he was found to be under 21, and his punishment was commuted to 10 years in prison. He was jailed with other prominent nationalists including Mugabe.

While imprisoned, Mnangagwa studied through a correspondence school. After his release in 1975, he went to Zambia, where he completed a law degree and started practicing. Soon he went to newly independent Marxist Mozambique, where he became Mugabe's assistant and bodyguard. In 1979, he accompanied Mugabe to the Lancaster House talks in London that led to the end of Rhodesia and the birth of Zimbabwe.

"Our relationship has over the years blossomed beyond that of master and servant to father and son," Mnangagwa wrote this month of his relationship with Mugabe.

When Zimbabwe achieved independence in 1980, Mnangagwa was appointed minister of security. He directed the merger of the Rhodesian army with Mugabe's guerrilla forces and the forces of rival nationalist leader Joshua Nkomo. Ever since, he has kept close ties with the military and security forces.

In 1983, Mugabe launched a brutal campaign against Nkomo's supporters that became known as the Matabeleland massacres for the deaths of 10,000 to 20,000 Ndebele people in Zimbabwe's southern provinces.

Mnangagwa was widely blamed for planning the campaign of the army's North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade on their deadly mission into the Matabeleland provinces. Mnangagwa denies this.

He is reputed to have amassed a considerable fortune and was named in a United Nations investigation into exploitation of mineral resources in Congo and has been active in making Harare a significant diamond trading center.

In 2008, he was Mugabe's election agent in balloting that was marked by violence and allegations of vote-rigging. He also helped broker the creation of a coalition government that brought in opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai as prime minister.

In recent years, Mnangagwa has promoted himself as an experienced leader who will bring stability to Zimbabwe. But his promises to return Zimbabwe to democracy and prosperity are viewed with skepticism by many experts.

"He has successfully managed a palace coup that leaves ZANU-PF and the military in charge. He's been Mugabe's bag man for decades," said Zimbabwean author and commentator Peter Godwin. "I have low expectations about what he will achieve as president. I hope I will be proved wrong."

Godwin, who has followed Mnangagwa for years, said he has little of Mugabe's charisma or talent for public speaking.

Todd Moss, Africa expert for the Center for Global Development, also expressed reservations.

"Despite his claims to be a business-friendly reformer, Zimbabweans know Mnangagwa is the architect of the Matabeleland massacres and that he abetted Mugabe's looting of the country," Moss said. "Mnangagwa is part of its sad past, not its future."

Mixed signals sent on fate of tax bill's health provision

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two of President Donald Trump's leading economic advisers sent mixed signals Sunday on the fate of a health care provision in the Senate version of a \$1.5 trillion measure to overhaul business and personal income taxes that is expected to be voted on after Thanksgiving.

The provision to repeal a requirement that everyone in the U.S. have insurance has emerged as a major sticking point for Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who has said that issue should be dealt with separately from the push by Trump and fellow Republicans to overhaul the tax code.

Collins' vote is crucial in a chamber where Republicans hold a slim 52-48 edge.

Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wis., has already declared his opposition to the bill, saying last week that it doesn't cut business taxes enough for partnerships and corporations. GOP Sens. Bob Corker of Tennessee, John McCain and Jeff Flake of Arizona, and Rand Paul of Kentucky also have concerns about the bill.

Republicans cannot afford to lose more than two senators on the final vote, which would allow Vice President Mike Pence to cast a tie-breaking 51st vote in his capacity as president of the Senate. Democrats are not expected to support the bill, as was the case when the House passed its version last week.

Asked whether the health care provision will be removed to keep Republicans on board, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin indicated that the current plan is to keep the provision in the bill. The provision is not in the House version of the legislation.

"The president thinks we should get rid of it. I think we should get rid of it," Mnuchin said. "It's an unfair tax on poor people. To think that you put a penalty on people who can't afford to buy medical policies, it's just fundamentally unfair."

He added: "But we're going to work with the Senate as we go through this."

Budget director Mick Mulvaney said the White House is open to scrapping the provision, which would repeal a key component of the Affordable Care Act health care law enacted by President Barack Obama. Trump has pressed for the provision to be added to the bill, partly to show progress on undoing the health care law. Congress fell short during previous attempts earlier this year to repeal the overall health care law.

"I don't think anybody doubts where the White House is on repealing and replacing Obamacare. We absolutely want to do it," Mulvaney said. "If we can repeal part of Obamacare as part of a tax bill and have a tax bill that is still a good tax bill that can pass, that's great."

"If it becomes an impediment to getting the best tax bill we can, then we're OK with taking it out," Mulvaney added.

Legislative director Marc Short said the White House "is very comfortable with the House bill," which does not include what's known as the "individual mandate." But Short said the White House views the individual mandate as a tax and "we like the fact that the Senate has included it in its bill."

At issue is a provision to repeal the requirement that everyone in the U.S. have health insurance. Eliminating the so-called individual mandate under "Obamacare" would add an estimated \$338 billion in revenue over 10 years that the Senate tax-writers used for additional tax cuts.

Collins said Sunday that the tax advantage that some middle-income consumers would get under the broader bill could end up being canceled out by repealing the mandate. They would face higher insurance premiums coupled with the loss of federal subsidies to help them afford the cost of insurance, she said.

"The fact is that if you do pull this piece of the Affordable Care Act out, for some middle-income families, the increased premium is going to cancel out the tax cut that they would get," Collins said.

Collins said she hasn't decided how to vote on the bill because it will be amended before the final vote.

Mnuchin, meanwhile, said he's had "very good discussions" with Collins, Corker and Johnson about the bill. He said he wants to make sure their views are heard and incorporated before the final vote.

Mnuchin spoke on "Fox News Sunday." Mulvaney and Collins were interviewed on CNN's "State of the Union." Collins also appeared on ABC's "This Week."

Truex leads a quartet of veterans in NASCAR's title race

By JENNA FRYER, AP Auto Racing Writer

HOMESTEAD, Fla. (AP) — NASCAR has spent so much time this year ushering in a new generation of fresh-faced, young drivers. Now that it's championship time, it's the same old — really old — in the championship four.

The finalists for NASCAR's championship race Sunday at Homestead-Miami Speedway are veterans looking to cement their place in history.

Kevin Harvick, who turns 42 next month, has 609 races, 17 seasons and the 2014 championship on his resume. Martin Truex Jr. is 37, a NASCAR journeyman with two second-tier titles and a favorite for the first time to win the Cup championship.

Kyle Busch started so young, he was sidelined to meet the minimum-age requirement of 18. Nearly 15 years later, he's the 2015 champion and has nearly 200 victories in NASCAR's three national series. Brad Keselowski has the least amount of time in the Cup Series among his rivals, but he's 33, has a 10-year career and was the 2012 champion.

So Ryan Blaney, Chase Elliott, Kyle Larson and Austin Dillon will have to wait their turn. The high-profile stars of NASCAR are the show Sunday.

The highest finisher of the four contenders will take the title, and few expect anyone from this bunch to be rattled.

"These guys are (not) going to cave in and give up on what they're doing," Harvick said. "Three of us have won championships, and Martin has won a lot of races this year. Our intention is to go down there and win the championship, and I think if you're one of those four and you don't have that mentality, you're not prepared for what you're getting into."

Indeed, Sunday has the makings of one of the better showings in NASCAR's championship history.

Truex has won seven races this year and leads the series in nearly every statistical category. He has been the fastest of the contenders all weekend, and anything short of a victory would be a deflating end to a dream season.

"I'm ready to go," Truex said after leading Saturday's final practice.

Truex and the Denver, Colorado-based Furniture Row Racing team have excelled through adversity all season: Truex's longtime partner, Sherry Pollex, had a recurrence of ovarian cancer; a mechanic died of a heart attack the night before Truex's win last month at Kansas; and team owner Barney Visser is sidelined in Colorado because of emergency heart surgery a week ago.

Then Truex scraped the wall during Saturday practice and his crew — with a borrowed mechanic from Toyota teammate Busch's team — had to hammer away any damage.

"The teamwork has been amazing all year long, and that's what's got us to this point, both of us really," Truex said.

Dale Earnhardt Jr., who will retire from full-time racing after Sunday, is openly rooting for his hunting buddy. Earnhardt gave Truex his start in the sport, and Truex went on to win a pair of second-tier titles driving for Earnhardt's team.

"Drivers have such big egos, all of us do, but Martin is not on that list," Earnhardt said. "He just doesn't abuse the opportunity and what the sport has provided him. I just think that says so much about his character as a person and a man."

"I don't know how you put into words what it would mean for him to win. It is bigger than words. It would be popular among his peers and around the garage and the industry for sure because everybody knows what kind of person he is. I think that whole team has that reputation."

Busch and Truex both drive Toyotas, and this championship finale is between them and a pair of Ford drivers. For Harvick, it is his first year in the partnership between Stewart-Haas Racing and Ford and gives the organization the chance to become the first since Cale Yarborough in 1978 to win in the inaugural year with a new manufacturer.

The victory also would be the third championship for SHR since 2011, when Tony Stewart signed on as

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a co-owner.

Keselowski is seeking to give Team Penske a sweep of the two major American series — Josef Newgarden won the IndyCar title in September — and complete one of the best seasons in Penske history. The organization has 31 victories this year across all its racing programs.

A win by either Harvick or Keselowski would give Ford its first title since 2004.

But it is the Toyota camp that fiercely believes the championship belongs to them. Toyota drivers have won 15 of 35 races this year, seven of the first nine playoff races. And, the manufacturer is still stinging over last year's defeat.

Toyota had two chances last season with Busch and Carl Edwards, and Edwards was on his way to the win when a late caution cost him the victory. He was in a violent wreck on the restart, Jimmie Johnson won a seventh title in a Chevrolet, and Edwards retired about two months later.

"It would be crushingly disappointing to not win Sunday," said David Wilson, president of Toyota Racing Development. "I still go back to last year, and every time, I still get angry. I'm still angry right now."

"We should be the favorites, but we all know it is one race, and you really have to detach yourself from your statistics. But to be honest, we will be very disappointed if we don't seal this with a championship."

More AP Auto Racing: <http://racing.ap.org>

Hard to believe: Some consumers find free health insurance

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Consumers are getting the word that taxpayer-subsidized health plans are widely available for next year for no monthly premium or little cost, and marketing companies say they're starting to see an impact on sign-ups.

"Free Obamacare Coverage in 2018," says an online pitch from insurance broker eHealth, showing a young woman with a big smile. "See if you qualify."

HealthSherpa, a private website that focuses on signing people up for Affordable Care Act coverage, said nearly 1 in 5 of its customers thus far will be paying no monthly premium. That's a change from last year, when the share was about 1 in 7. More consumers also are finding plans for under \$25 a month.

Analysts say the odd phenomenon is a wild card that could boost enrollment in the program, although it's too soon to tell. The ACA offers taxpayer-subsidized private insurance to low- and middle-income people who don't have coverage on the job. About 10 million people are enrolled.

It's another twist in a year in which the Obama health law has managed to survive despite rising premiums, dwindling insurer participation and President Donald Trump's predictions of a swift and sure demise.

What's more, experts say wider availability of no-premium plans is the unintended consequence of Trump administration actions to undermine the ACA.

The president stopped reimbursing insurers for reduced copays and deductibles, available to people with modest incomes purchasing a "silver" ACA plan. Sure enough, that has boosted premiums for silver plans. But government subsidies also shot up, because they're pegged to the cost of silver plans.

The bigger available subsidies mean that cheaper "bronze" plans can increasingly be had for no monthly premium, after consumers subtract their subsidy from the list price.

It's like pushing down on one end of a see-saw, and the other end goes up.

In some cases, "gold" plans offering enhanced protection against the costs of illness are also available for free to people whose incomes qualify them for financial assistance.

Dillon Vatick said he couldn't believe it as he shopped online recently for next year's health plan. Vatick is a computer science student who lives in Jacksonville, Florida. He qualified for a monthly subsidy of about \$280 and he found a bronze plan with a premium of less than \$270.

"My health care is technically free," said Vatick.

"Was it too good to be true?" he said he asked himself when he first saw the numbers. "Sure enough, it wasn't."

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Vatick said bronze plans aren't for everybody because they come with very high deductibles. But he's in his 20s and figures he won't be going to the doctor much. He said he had been paying about \$80 a month for coverage.

At Lighthouse Insurance Group, an agency with national reach, CEO Jason Farro said they're seeing a shift to bronze plans. The share of customers picking bronze has more than doubled this sign-up season, to about 27 percent from under 12 percent last year.

Online insurance broker eHealth says it is seeing a similar trend among younger consumers aged 18-24. "The shift in young people in particular tells me that we are seeing new people come out," said Nate Purpura, vice president of marketing at eHealth. "That's been the toughest segment to get into this market, and nothing sells like free."

Brokers and insurers could play a bigger role in sign-ups this year, because the Trump administration has made it easier for them to process enrollments. That might offset cuts in government funding for nonprofit sign-up counselors. Open enrollment is off to a solid start, with about 1.5 million people signed up in the first two weeks.

At HealthSherpa, a technology company that focuses on ACA enrollments, CEO George Kalogeropoulos said he's been paying the staff overtime to keep up with what has been unexpectedly strong consumer demand.

"There's a narrative that this coverage is unaffordable," said Kalogeropoulos. "But for most of the people signing up it is affordable by most metrics. It's been too politicized."

Standard & Poor's analyst Deep Banerjee said it's possible that "free" plans or simply more knowledge about the subsidies may drive enrollment higher, but it's too early to tell.

The federal Health and Human Services Department said at this point it doesn't have the data breakouts to tell if there is a broader shift to bronze plans this year.

The free coverage angle may seem like a cruel joke to nearly 7 million people who buy individual health insurance plans but aren't eligible for financial assistance from the government. They're left facing sticker price premiums that in some cases rival the size of a mortgage payment.

Insurance brokers say some of those people appear to be turning to short-term plans that offer temporary coverage with limited benefits. It's unclear if a bipartisan Senate bill that aims to reduce ACA premiums will advance in a polarized Congress.

"Clearly the ACA isn't perfect — it needs fixes," said Kalogeropoulos. "Our view is that the ACA is landmark legislation, but it's going to take three or four revisions to get it right."

Open enrollment for next year ends Dec. 15.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Nov. 20, the 324th day of 2017. There are 41 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 20, 1947, Britain's future queen, Princess Elizabeth, married Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, at Westminster Abbey.

On this date:

In 1620, Peregrine White was born aboard the Mayflower in Massachusetts Bay; he was the first child born of English parents in present-day New England.

In 1789, New Jersey became the first state to ratify the Bill of Rights.

In 1910, the Mexican Revolution of 1910 had its beginnings under the Plan of San Luis Potosi issued by Francisco I. Madero.

In 1925, Robert F. Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts.

In 1945, 22 former Nazi officials went on trial before an international war crimes tribunal in Nuremberg,

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Germany. (Almost a year later, the International Military Tribunal sentenced 12 of the defendants to death; seven received prison sentences ranging from 10 years to life; three were acquitted.)

In 1959, the United Nations issued its Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

In 1967, the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Clock at the Commerce Department ticked past 200 million.

In 1969, the Nixon administration announced a halt to residential use of the pesticide DDT as part of a total phaseout. A group of American Indian activists began a 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay.

In 1975, after nearly four decades of absolute rule, Spain's Generalissimo Francisco Franco died, two weeks before his 83rd birthday.

In 1976, the boxing drama "Rocky," a United Artists release starring Sylvester Stallone, premiered in New York.

In 1985, the first version of Microsoft's Windows operating system, Windows 1.0, was officially released.

In 1992, fire seriously damaged Windsor Castle, the favorite weekend home of Queen Elizabeth II.

Ten years ago: A judge in St. George, Utah, sentenced polygamous-sect leader Warren Jeffs to five years to life in prison for his role in the arranged marriage of an underage girl to her older cousin. (Jeffs' conviction was overturned by the Utah Supreme Court in 2010; prosecutors decided against a re-trial because Jeffs was already serving a life sentence in Texas in a separate case.) Scientists in Japan and the U.S. reported creating the equivalent of embryonic stem cells from ordinary skin cells. Ian Smith, the last white prime minister of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), died near Cape Town, South Africa, at age 88.

Five years ago: Former boxing champion Hector "Macho" Camacho was shot while sitting in a car in his hometown of Bayamon, Puerto Rico. (Camacho died four days later after doctors removed him from life support.) "Elmo" puppeteer Kevin Clash resigned from "Sesame Street" amid allegations of sexually abusing underage boys, which Clash denied. Jack Taylor, a guard for the Grinnell College basketball team, shattered the NCAA scoring record with a 138-point performance as the Division III school beat Faith Baptist Bible, 179-104.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, concluding his final official world tour in Peru, told a news conference in Lima he didn't intend to become his successor's constant critic — but reserved the right to speak out if President-elect Donald Trump or his policies breached certain "values or ideals." At the American Music Awards in Los Angeles, Ariana Grande was named artist of the year; Zayn was named new artist of the year.

Today's Birthdays: Actress-comedian Kaye Ballard is 92. Actress Estelle Parsons is 90. Comedian Dick Smothers is 79. Singer Norman Greenbaum is 75. Former Vice President Joe Biden is 75. Actress Veronica Hamel is 74. Broadcast journalist Judy Woodruff is 71. Actor Samuel E. Wright is 71. Singer Joe Walsh is 70. Actor Richard Masur is 69. Opera singer Barbara Hendricks is 69. Former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton is 69. Actress Bo Derek is 61. Former NFL player Mark Gastineau is 61. Reggae musician Jim Brown (UB40) is 60. Actress Sean Young is 58. Pianist Jim Brickman is 56. Rock musician Todd Nance (Widespread Panic) is 55. Actress Ming-Na is 54. Actor Ned Vaughn is 53. Rapper Mike D (The Beastie Boys) is 52. Rapper Sen Dog (Cypress Hill) is 52. Actress Callie Thorne is 48. Actress Sabrina Lloyd is 47. Actor Joel McHale is 46. Actress Marisa Ryan is 43. Country singer Dierks (duhkr) Bentley is 42. Actor Joshua Gomez is 42. Actress Laura Harris is 41. Olympic gold medal gymnast Dominique Dawes is 41. Country singer Josh Turner is 40. Actress Nadine Velazquez is 39. Actress Andrea Riseborough is 36. Actor Jeremy Jordan is 33. Actor Dan Byrd is 32. Actress Ashley Fink is 31. Rock musician Jared Followill (Kings of Leon) is 31. Actor Cody Linley is 28. Pop musician Michael Clifford (5 Seconds to Summer) is 22.

Thought for Today: "We are always doing something for posterity, but I would fain see posterity do something for us." — Joseph Addison, English essayist and poet (1672-1719).