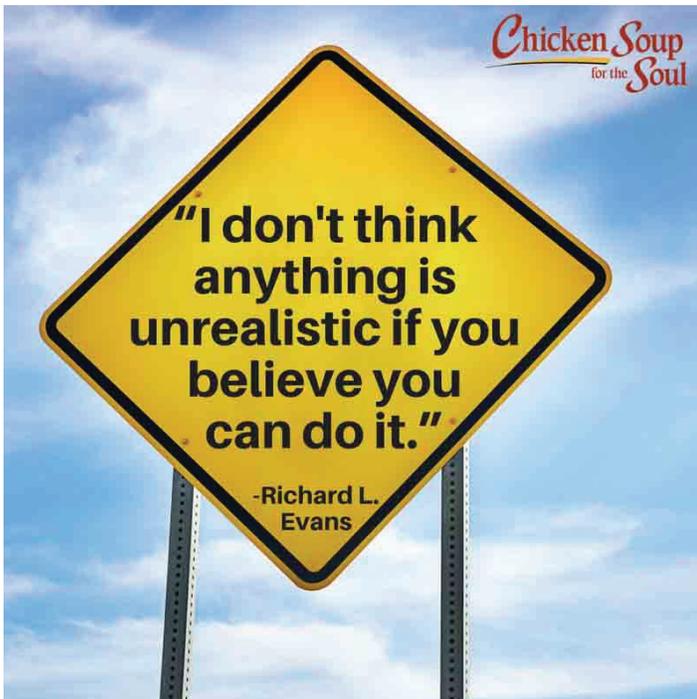


Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 1 of 35



- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Hanlon Brothers Ad
- 2- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 2- Friendly Fellows & Daisies 4-H
- 3- Peterka Records 1,000th Career Point for NSU
- 4- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column
- 5- Rev. Synder's Column
- 6- Olive Grove Holiday Party
- 7- Farmers Union PSA
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Today's Forecast
- 9- Yesterday's Weather
- 9- Today's Weather Info
- 9- National Weather Map
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2018 Community Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

Hanlon Brothers
Gravel Hauling
New & Cleaning of
Stockdams with our
60' reach trackhoe
605/395-6531

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East
Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper
recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 2 of 35

Friendly Fellows and Daisies

The Friendly Fellows and Daisies 4-H club met on Nov 12 at the Claremont Methodist Church. The meeting was called to order by Collin Frey.

The American Pledge was led by Braden Boe and the 4-H Pledge by Mallory Miller. There were 24 members present who answered roll call, which was Thanksgiving food.

The Treasurer's Report was approved by Hanna Miller and 2nd by Clay Crawford.

The Secretary Report was approved by Dylan Frey and 2nd by Austin Crawford.

Old business was discussion on recognition event and Record books

For new business Leader Mike Frey read the newshound and discussed the Christmas Party plans.

The meeting was adjourned by Braden Boe and 2nd by Kamryn Fliehs

Talks and Demonstrations were given by Logan Warrington- How to Frame a Puzzle, Ashlyn Warrington- Proper Plate Setting and Jordan Zoellner- Rifle Deer Hunting.

Lunch was served by Hanna, Mallory and Tucker Miller

Submitted by Kamryn Fliehs, Club Reporter

NEW SIGN-ON BONUSES!

☆☆☆ **\$1,500 for CNAs** ☆☆☆

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or apply in person.

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



GROTON

CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

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

Peterka Records 1,000th Career Point in Win over Missouri Southern

Sioux Falls, S.D. – In their first game from the Sanford Pentagon Classic, the No. 25 Northern State University men's basketball team defeated Missouri Southern 81-68. The Wolves improve to 5-1 overall, and currently on a four game win streak. Darin Peterka became the 53rd member of the NSU 1,000 point club notching is second three pointer of the win.

The Wolves led a majority of the contest, with their largest lead of 17 points coming at the seven minute mark in the first half. Northern shot 50.0 percent from the floor, 40.0 percent from the 3-point line, and 68.0 percent from the charity stripe. Defensively they held the Lions to a 33.8 field goal percentage and 27.8 3-point percentage.

NSU tallied a game leading 34 points in the paint and 21 points off the bench. They added five fast break points, five points off turnovers, and seven second chance points. The Wolves out-rebounded the Lions, 45-38, in the win with 37 defensive boards. Northern also recorded 20 assists, to Missouri Southern's six.

Ian Smith led the team with 15 points, shooting 71.4 percent from the floor. Smith tallied a team leading four assists, while notching three of the Wolves ten 3-pointers. Peterka followed with 14 points of his own, notching three 3-pointers and a team second best three assists. The senior added two steals, and shot 33.3 percent from the arc.

The Northern State big men Logan Doyle and Carter Evans tallied 12 points each. The pair combined for 25 rebounds, including a game high 15 from Doyle. Evans shot a team leading 85.7 percent from the floor, while Doyle knocked down 10-of-14 from the foul line.

DJ Pollard was the final Wolf in double figures with ten points and a team third best six rebounds. He was followed by Gabe King with nine, and Bo Fries and Andrew Kallman with five and four. Pollard and Fries each added a team leading four assists, while Doyle led the team with three blocks.

Northern returns to the Pentagon tomorrow for a 5:30 p.m. match-up against New York Institute of Technology.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Small Businesses are a Not-So-Small Part of South Dakota's Economy

Whether it's Sioux Falls or Rapid City or any city in between, the communities dotting South Dakota's landscape have far more in common than just a shared area code. It doesn't matter if it's a blink-and-you'll-miss-it town or a multiple-exits-on-the-interstate city, you're likely going to pass or visit a South Dakotan-owned small business along the way.

In fact, it wouldn't be out of the ordinary if the only businesses in some communities were small family-owned operations. They help keep gas tanks, coffee mugs, and lunchboxes full, and they help keep cars, trucks, and farm equipment on the road and in the field. They're the lifeblood for many South Dakota communities.

There are more than 83,000 small businesses across South Dakota, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. These businesses, of which nearly one-third are owned by hard-working South Dakota women, employ nearly 60 percent of South Dakota's private workforce and account for more than 96 percent of all the businesses in the entire state. Of all the South Dakota companies that exported goods in 2013, more than 75 percent of them were small businesses, according to the U.S. International Trade Administration.

In addition to being a large part of South Dakota's economy, small businesses play an important role in the American Dream, too.

After my grandfather and his brother immigrated to the United States, they laced-up their boots, looked for work, and found jobs as railroad workers as the transcontinental railroads made their way across the country. They worked hard, saved up, and opened a hardware store in Mitchell. My grandfather then moved to Murdo, my hometown, to run another hardware store. My mom and dad worked there for years, too, and although the ownership has changed over the years, the Mitchell store still bears the Thune family name.

All that to say, small businesses are a big deal here in South Dakota, and they have a long history here, too.

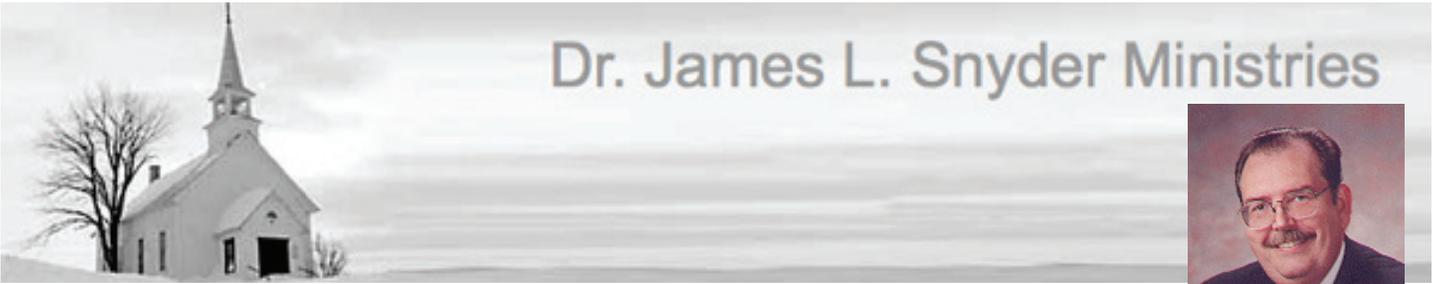
There's a lot to be thankful for this time of year, including the contributions small business owners make to the communities in which they operate. That's a large part of why Small Business Saturday – the Saturday after Thanksgiving – has become such a popular event in communities around the country.

Being a small business owner means far more than flipping the sign on the front door from "open" to "closed" and earning a paycheck. It means more than just working in a community. It means being part of a community. These are the same folks who support the local booster club, help organize the local Fourth of July parade, and greet hometown heroes when they return home from war.

There are already plenty of good reasons to show small businesses that this kind of local support is mutual, but by shopping small on Small Business Saturday, we can collectively send that message loud and clear.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 5 of 35



Black Friday Always Results in Red Monday

I'm not sure who come up with this term "Black Friday" but I am definitely not for it. To me, Black Friday is rather devious and I know the only purpose is to get their teeth into my money, which is a sacred area to me.

When it comes to shopping, I certainly am not a fan. I really do not like shopping. I get nervous when I'm in the shopping mall, start sweating and have to leave and sit in my car for at least half an hour to regain composure.

I have many interests and passions in life, but trust me, shopping is not one of them. I can live my whole life without ever shopping.

On the other side of our residence, it is a different story.

I am not sure, but I suspect shopping is second nature to the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She has it down to a science; she collects coupons and whatever else is associated with it all year long.

She is always boasting about how much money she has saved. Because I enjoy our life together and I enjoy living, I always go along with her. But, and it's a big but, I'm not sure it's legitimate.

For example, one time she came from a shopping spree and showed me on the receipt she had saved \$79.43. I studied the receipt and realized that in order to save that much money she had to spend over \$200. Now, my dilemma is, do I point this out to her and encourage a scolding look back at me? Or, do I smile and keep on enjoying living?

Here is the difference between my wife and me. All year long, she saves coupons for this shopping spree that she enjoys. I, on the other hand, save up money all year long to enable her shopping spree.

I am beginning to think I am an enabler. Is she a Shopaholic? Is this a disease?

Don't tell her I'm thinking about this, but I believe I am enabling her in this Shopaholic lifestyle.

One thing about being a Shopaholic is that it's not contagious. It is outrageous, but not contagious.

For me, black Friday always ends on red Monday.

On Friday, my checkbook is all in the black. Come Monday afternoon, it is all in the red.

Of course, I must say it has been working out very well for someone like me who does not like to go shopping. If I liked to go shopping, we might be in competition and that could create some stress. As it stands, she loves shopping and I love her enough to support her shopping. Can you think of a better scenario?

The reason I do not like shopping, especially at the mall, is because of all of the people crowding the stores in the hallways. Although I don't like to shop, there are times when I must go shopping and when I go shopping, I like to ponder carefully what I'm shopping for.

I do not buy the first thing I see. I used to do that and got into a lot of trouble. But now, I need to think through what I'm buying and make sure it's the exact gift I want to purchase. When there are all kinds of people crowding the store, it does not give me the space to ponder my purchase. I like my personal space.

Not only that, but when I am shopping I want to get the best price and maybe there is another store across town that has the same item for a lot cheaper price. After I buy an item, it always worries me that maybe I could have bought it cheaper at another place.

My thinking about shopping begins when I start shopping. The other side of our marital bliss does it completely different. She thinks about shopping weeks and sometimes months ahead of the purchase date.

When she goes shopping, she has everything thought through and all she has to do is go and pick it up,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 6 of 35

give them a coupon and pay the bill.

I wish I could be that put together when it comes to shopping. My wife can shop for everybody at the same time and keep all the gifts in order.

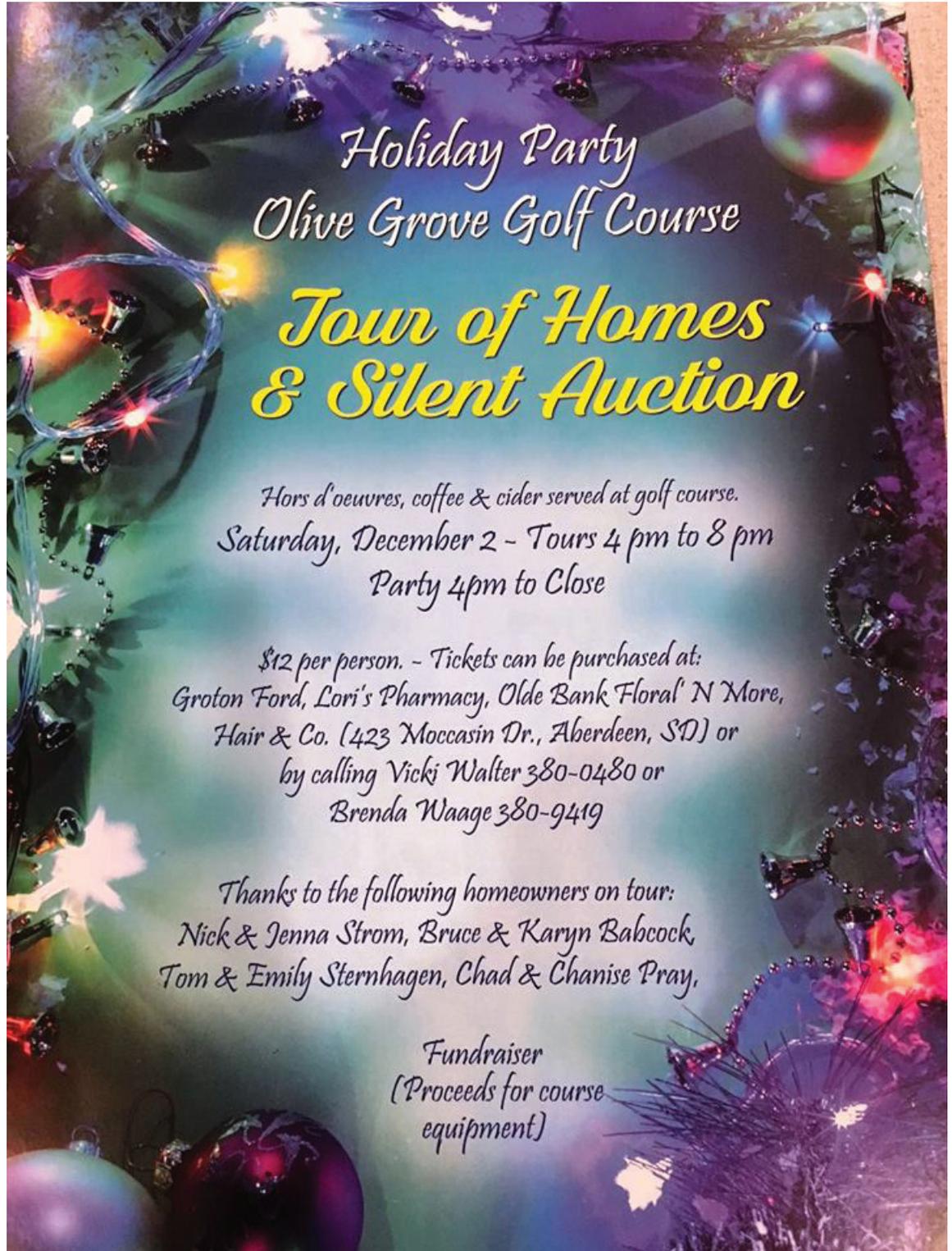
I can never do that. I have to think of one present and I cannot think of the next one until I purchased the first present. It takes me forever to do any kind of Christmas shopping. That is just the way my clock ticks.

Through the years, I have come to a wonderful solution to this problem. I have one present to buy at Christmas time and that is for my wife. All the other presents for all the other members of the family are negotiated quite successfully by my wife.

I sweat and ponder the proper gift to give. I'm not sure if I have ever given the proper gift, but she always opens it and smiles and says "Thank you." That's all I need.

I like what David said about giving. "Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:1-2).

I may not be very good at giving presents, but I'm trying to become a better giver of thanks to God.



*Holiday Party
Olive Grove Golf Course*

***Tour of Homes
& Silent Auction***

Hors d'oeuvres, coffee & cider served at golf course.

*Saturday, December 2 - Tours 4 pm to 8 pm
Party 4pm to Close*

*\$12 per person. - Tickets can be purchased at:
Groton Ford, Lori's Pharmacy, Olde Bank Floral' N More,
Hair & Co. (423 Moccasin Dr., Aberdeen, SD) or
by calling Vicki Walter 380-0480 or
Brenda Waage 380-9419*

*Thanks to the following homeowners on tour:
Nick & Jenna Strom, Bruce & Karyn Babcock,
Tom & Emily Sternhagen, Chad & Chanise Pray,*

*Fundraiser
(Proceeds for course
equipment)*

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 7 of 35



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 26, 1989: Snow began falling in western South Dakota during the early evening of the 26th and swept across the state and into west central Minnesota that night and through much of the 27th. Almost two feet of snow fell in parts of the Black Hills, while one to two inches fell in the southeast part of South Dakota. Icy roads caused by rain that preceded the snow in central and eastern parts of the state combined with strong northerly winds on the 27th to make for dangerous traveling conditions. Numerous accidents were reported, and many cars went into ditches. Some of the heavier snow amount in central, north central, and northeast South Dakota were reported at Leola with 6 inches; Mellette and Onida with 5 inches; and Eureka, Faulkton, and Aberdeen with 4 inches.

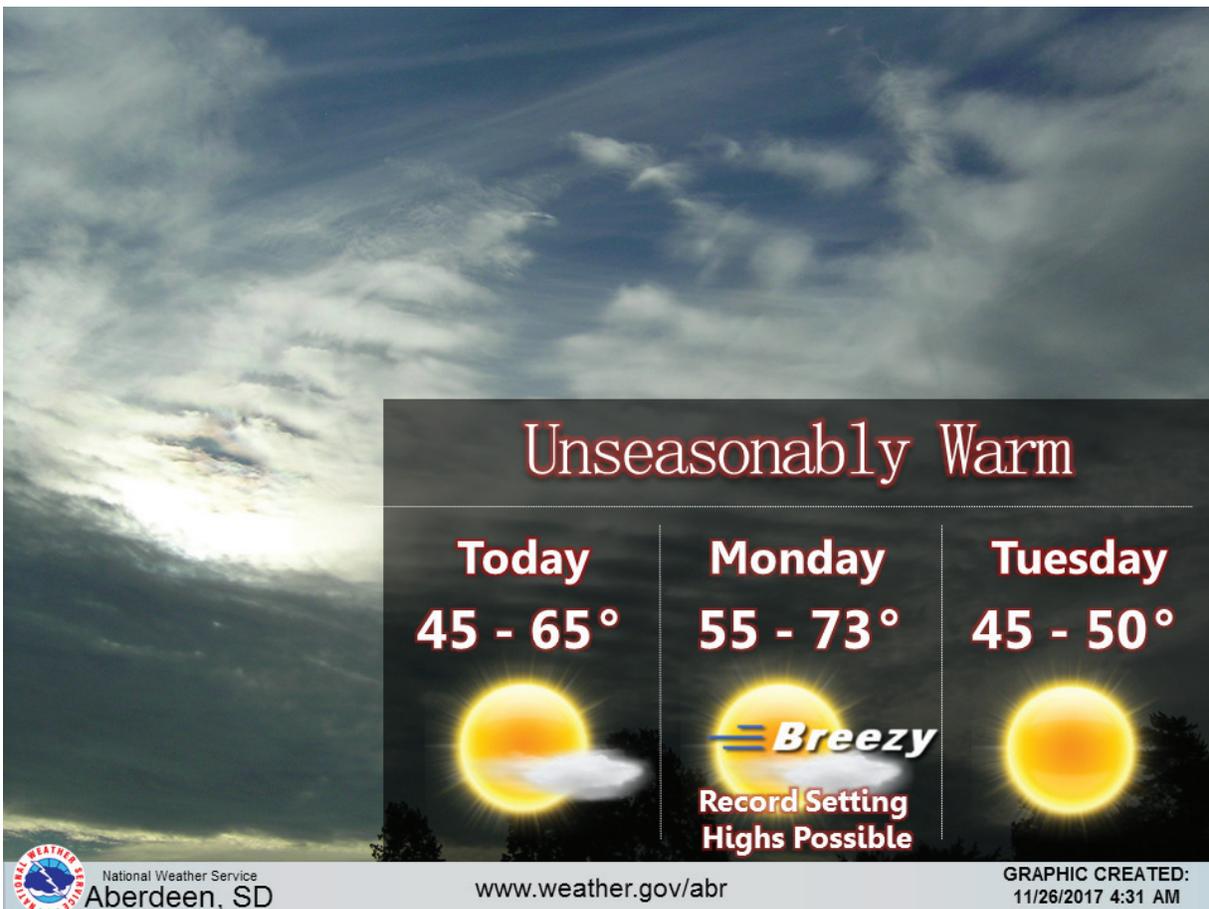
November 26, 2001: Heavy snow of 6 to 12 inches, along with strong north winds of 20 to 40 mph, caused near-blizzard conditions and challenging travel conditions across most of central and northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Snowfall amounts were 6 to 12 inches in South Dakota and 10 to 14 inches in west central Minnesota. Most schools were closed or started late on both the 26th and 27th and some businesses were also closed. Many flights were also delayed or canceled. Some snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Eagle Butte, Fort Thompson and Webster; 7 inches at Eureka, Onida, Doland, and Watertown; 8 inches at Highmore, Miller, Onaka, Castlewood, and Selby; 9 inches at Sisseton and Peever; 10 inches at Ortonville, Faulkton, Blunt, Murdo, Kennebec, and Stephan; 11 inches at Victor and Gettysburg; 12 inches at Milbank, White Rock, and Clear Lake; 13 inches at Wheaton; and 14 inches at Browns Valley.

Lightning and heavy rain delay the start of the Monday Night Football game at Pittsburgh's Heinz Field between the Miami Dolphins and the Pittsburgh Steelers by 25 minutes. The muddy field conditions contribute to one of the lowest scoring NFL games won by the Steelers, 3-0. The teams combined 375 yards, and the winning field goal occurred with 17 seconds left in the game.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 8 of 35

Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny
High: 52 °F	Low: 34 °F	High: 63 °F	Low: 31 °F	High: 48 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 49 °F



Unseasonably Warm

Today	Monday	Tuesday
45 - 65°	55 - 73°	45 - 50°
	 Breezy Record Setting Highs Possible	

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

www.weather.gov/abr

GRAPHIC CREATED:
11/26/2017 4:31 AM

Published on: 11/26/2017 at 4:44AM

An unseasonably warm air mass will move into the region today and Monday as a low pressure system approaches the region. In fact, temperatures may be nearing record high values Monday afternoon. Mild and dry conditions persist through the remainder of the week.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 9 of 35

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 45.9

Low Outside Temp: 19.9

High Gust: 12

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 63° in 1914

Record Low: -24° in 1996

Average High: 33°F

Average Low: 14°F

Average Precip in Nov: .66

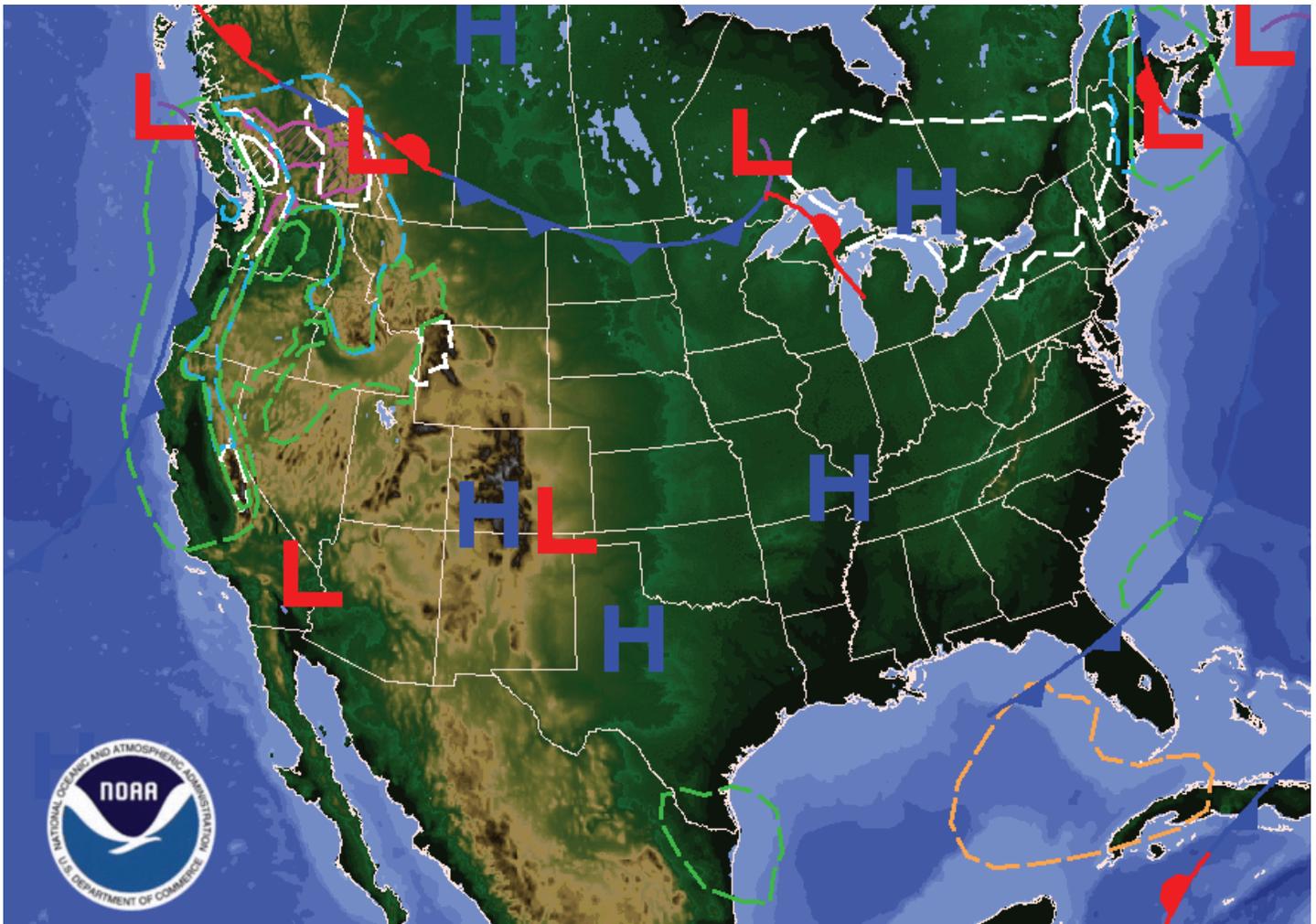
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.13

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 4:54 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:48 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Nov 26, 2017, issued 3:51 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Orrison with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 10 of 35



THE MARVELS OF MEMORIES

The mind has a mind of its own. Occasionally, it takes little trips and goes on interesting journeys that bring back memories from long ago. Memories that are both pleasant and painful. Memories that are both welcomed and worrisome. Memories that must have been stored there by God to help us remember His mercy and, at times, His judgment.

Psalm 77 is very egocentric. Take time, if you will, and count the number of times the personal pronoun "I" occurs. It is rather amazing.

It begins with the writer carefully reviewing many instances of feeling forsaken and abandoned by God. He writes of calling for help – but no voice responded. His eyes would not close – and he was reminded of tragedies he wanted to forget. He felt rejected and unloved and even gave up on God ever being faithful or kind to him again.

Then, suddenly, his mind called things to a halt. God seemed to awaken him and he said, "I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes I will remember Your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all Your works and consider all Your mighty deeds."

Our minds do wander and walk through dark valleys filled with deep sorrows and painful valleys. And when it does, it only takes a moment, if we choose, to turn things around and change the shadows and sorrows and valleys in to sunlight and smiles and mountain tops. God did this for the Psalmist. He wants to do the same for us: recall His miracles in our lives that give us eternal hope.

Prayer: Remind us, Lord, that in all things and through all things we know You will always bring good from evil. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 77:11, 12 I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 11 of 35

2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 12 of 35

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash
07-12-14-16-23
(seven, twelve, fourteen, sixteen, twenty-three)
Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$132 million

Powerball
08-13-27-53-54, Powerball: 4, Power Play: 2
(eight, thirteen, twenty-seven, fifty-three, fifty-four; Powerball: four; Power Play: two)
Estimated jackpot: \$149 million

Weber State steamrolls Black Hills State 105-52

OGDEN, Utah (AP) — Brekkott Chapman poured in a career-high 29 points and Jerrick Harding added 24 points as Weber State rolled to a 105-52 victory over Division II member Black Hills State on Saturday night.

Chapman, a junior who had 22 points his freshman season, was just one point shy of his career high by halftime. He knocked down 7 of his 8 3-pointers, all four of his free throws and buried 9 of 12 shots for the game. Harding, meanwhile, made 9 of 10 shots, including all five of his 3-point attempts. The Wildcats (4-2) shot 65 percent (39 of 60) from the floor, including 19 of their 29 3-pointers (65.5 percent).

Fraser Malcolm topped the Yellow Jackets with 14 points, while reserve Patrick Mendes contributed 12 points.

Weber State led 58-35 by halftime and put the game out of reach with a 16-2 run to open the second half. Harding hit three 3-pointers and added a 3-point play during the run.

Two Makaleb McInnis free throws were all Black Hills State managed to start the second half until Zach McLemore buried a jumper with 11:53 to play.

Spight lifts Northern Colorado over South Dakota 63-62

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Andre Spight had a career-high 28 points on Saturday and hit the go-ahead free throws with four seconds left to help Northern Colorado beat South Dakota 63-62 in the second night of the Sanford Pentagon Showcase.

Northern Colorado (4-2) trailed for most of the final 10 minutes after the Coyotes (5-2) went in front at 42-40. But the Bears stayed close and tied it at 54, 57 and 59 before first taking the lead at 61-60 on Jonah Radebaugh's pair of free throws with 29 seconds left.

South Dakota briefly retook the lead on Matt Mooney's jumper with 10 seconds left and also had Mooney's 3-point attempt that missed the rim at the buzzer.

Jordan Davis added 23 points for Northern Colorado, finishing eight short of 1,000 for his career.

Triston Simpson had 18 points, Tyler Hagedorn added 14 points and 13 rebounds, and Mooney scored 12 for South Dakota.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 13 of 35

S. Dakota recovers late goal-line fumble, advances 38-31

THIBODAUX, La. (AP) — South Dakota's defense forced a goal-line fumble in the final 27 seconds and recovered it in the end zone for a wild 38-31 finish in the school's first-ever playoff game, defeating another first-timer in Nicholls State on Saturday.

South Dakota (8-4) will meet sixth-seeded Sam Houston Saturday in Huntsville, Texas.

Chris Streveler hit Brandt Van Roekel with a 10-yard TD pass, breaking a 31-31 tie with less than six minutes left.

Nicholls began its last-chance drive with 3:19 to play, needing to travel 55 yards to score. Chase Fourcade, on fourth-and-3 from the 4-yard line, rolled right on a keeper and was slammed to a stop at about the 1. The play was reviewed and the Colonels had a first-and-goal at the 1 by half the length of the football.

On the next play, Kyran Irvin powered through left tackle but in the swarm of defenders, one South Dakota player appeared to get a hand out to pop the ball loose, Phillip Powell slammed into Irvan, stopping him short of the end zone, and the Coyotes — again after review — recovered the ball and hung on for the win.

Streveler passed for 378 yards and four touchdowns, breaking the Missouri Valley Conference single-season record for total offense with 4,283 yards. The Coyotes forced four turnovers, also intercepting Fourcade three times.

Irvin carried the ball 20 times for 88 yards and a touchdown.

Southern Miss holds on to beat Youngstown State 71-64

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Kevin Holland nailed five shots from beyond the arc for 17 points as Southern Miss held on to defeat Youngstown State 71-64 in the Sanford Pentagon Showcase on Saturday afternoon.

Holland was perfect on his first five shots from distance with his first miss coming with 7:32 remaining. He hit 6 of 11 from the floor. Cortez Edwards had 18 points, four assists and three steals. Tyree Griffin, who made seven free throws down the stretch, added 17 points with six assists, two steals and a block.

Southern Miss (3-2) led until Youngstown State tied it at 54-54 with 7:53 left. Eddie Davis III drove for a layup, Edwards added two free throws and Davis hit a second layup to give the Golden Eagles a 60-57 lead with 3:59 left. The Penguins missed seven straight shots in the closing minutes.

Cameron Morse had 24 points for Youngstown State (2-4).

Nared leads No. 12 Tennessee women over South Dakota State

CANCUN, Mexico (AP) — Tournament MVP Jaime Nared had 11 points, nine rebounds, three assists and two blocks as No. 12 Tennessee won the Cancun Challenge on Saturday with a 69-49 win over South Dakota.

Rennia Davis and Anastasia Hayes had 12 points apiece and Mercedes Russell 10 for the Lady Vols (6-0), who went 3-0 in the tourney, starting with a 101-99 win over No. 20 Marquette in overtime.

Tennessee scored the first seven points of the game and the last 10 of the first quarter, making 9 of 11 shots, to lead 24-9. The Lady Vols added an 8-0 run in the second half and closed with the last seven to lead 41-18 at the half. They shot 56 percent (14 of 25), making 4 of 6 3s and 9 of 10 free throws. South Dakota shot 26 percent and had 10 turnovers.

Monica Arens led the Coyotes (3-3) with 10 points.

Nared finished the tournament with 58 points, 34 rebounds, 12 assists, six blocks and five steals.

Forest Service hiring nearly 1,000 temporary jobs in region

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The U.S. Forest Service is taking applications for over 900 temporary jobs that will be filled in the region next year.

The Forest Service plans to hire that many temporary workers to help at national forests and grasslands in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming next year.

The jobs include a variety of duties, including firefighting, wildlife, recreation, forestry and administrative

support.

Applications can be submitted for firefighting and other early-season jobs from Dec. 15 to Dec. 21. Applications for the other jobs will be taken from Jan. 26 to Feb. 1.

The job listings are available online at www.fs.usda.gov/main/r2/jobs . Applications can be submitted at www.usajobs.gov .

In Indian Country, honoring flag might mean different anthem

By **FELICIA FONSECA, Associated Press**

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — As fierce debate rages about “taking a knee” during the national anthem to protest social injustice, Native Americans have a unique take on the issue as the ethnic group with the highest military-service rate, and an enduring regard for warriors.

Supporters of the movement say it’s not intended as a criticism of the military. But such a protest would be unthinkable for many at tribal events because the flag and veterans are so deeply intertwined - and revered.

“I’ll stand. I’ll do whatever I think is appropriate to honor them first, and then over there, I can debate about whether the country is living up to its side of the deal when it comes to treaty rights, water rights, social issues that affect a lot of the tribes,” said Erny Zah, a singer, powwow emcee and dancer from the Navajo Nation in the Southwest. “Very rarely do I hear anything that negates the veterans’ services, or the country’s disparagement of whatever social issues might be happening at the time.”

American Indians have served in the U.S. military at higher rates per capita than any other ethnic group despite a history of suffering at the hands of Europeans, and even in times when they were denied U.S. citizenship and the right to vote. Serving in the military and protecting one’s homeland is considered a continuation of warrior traditions.

Many tribes even have their own national anthems known as flag songs that focus on veterans. They’re popular among Plains tribes from which the modern powwow originated, said Dennis Zotigh of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. Powwows are social gatherings, generally with competitive dancing.

Other tribes including the Lumbee, Eastern Cherokee, Mohegan and Pequot on the East Coast, and Cochiti, Jemez and Taos pueblos in the Southwest also composed their own flag songs, telling their stories and admiration for the U.S. flag, Zotigh said.

The reverence on display is almost sacred, he said. Warriors are blessed through ceremonies before they encounter enemies, and welcomed back with parades, giveaways, eagle feathers, cleansing ceremonies and songs. Powwows often have a grand entry solely for veterans, who line up and can take hours to introduce themselves by name, military affiliation and years served.

Singers sit around a drum, starting a melody and slow beat before the words of flag songs repeat.

“The president’s flag will stand forever,” reads a portion of a Sioux song.

“Our country, our land is the most powerful country in the world,” says a Hidatsa song.

“Under the nation’s flag, generations will stand forever. So do I,” says another composed on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota and first sung in a World War II victory celebration.

While the U.S. flag is displayed prominently as a reminder of the warrior societies from which powwows originated, so too is the eagle staff - a universal flag of people native to North America, said Zotigh, who is Kiowa, Santee Dakota and Ohkay Owingeh. The flag songs also are sung while the U.S. flag is lowered and raised on tribal land, many times by veterans and using a flag given to a deceased veteran’s family.

“When our people have their own doings, we’re going to go along with those folks,” said Herb Adson, a Pawnee from Oklahoma and singer with Southern Thunder. “If they want to raise the flag, that flag song is sung, everyone is going to stand up.”

America’s 567 federally recognized tribes are considered sovereign - nations within but separate from the U.S. and states, with the right to govern themselves.

Some ancient flag songs pre-date the United States and were composed during times of intertribal war-

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 15 of 35

fare to welcome warriors back to camp, Zotigh said. Others were composed by soldiers stationed overseas defending the U.S. - a Lakota soldier on a train coming home after World War II or a Hidatsa soldier in Europe during WWII, for example. Others are of unknown origin.

American Indians and Alaska Natives make up about 2 percent of the U.S. population, and Census figures from 2016 show nearly 136,500 of them are veterans who identify solely as Native. They weren't considered citizens during WWI, which meant those who served did so illegally but proudly, Zotigh said. American Indians were granted U.S. citizenship in 1924 but not all were allowed to vote until the early 1960s, well after WWII ended.

Perhaps the most well-known American Indian veterans are the Code Talkers, who were recruited from various tribes to develop military codes based on their native languages. A Pima Indian, Marine Cpl. Ira Hayes, was among the group that raised the U.S. flag at Iwo Jima in World War II. The first female soldier to die in the Iraq War, Lori Piestewa, was a member of the Hopi Tribe of Arizona.

William Runsabove, a singer and enrolled member of the Northern Cheyenne tribe of Montana, said the pride Native veterans have for serving the U.S. eclipses any feelings about the U.S. president, politics or social injustice.

"You can't take away from pride a Native American has for service," he said. "And, of course, the tough times ... a big percentage of people aren't happy with the way things are going now, but you can't take away that pride."

Head-on collision near Belle Fourche kills 2 men

BELLE FOURCHE, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say two men are dead after a head-on collision near Belle Fourche.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the accident happened at 3:13 p.m. Friday on U.S. Highway 212, about three miles east of Belle Fourche.

The patrol says a 52-year-old man driving a Dodge Caravan crossed the center line and struck a Cadillac Seville driven by a 63-year-old man.

Both men were pronounced dead at the scene.

South Dakota art counters Native American stereotypes

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — New public art in a western South Dakota city is being celebrated as a counter to Native American stereotypes.

The Rapid City Journal reports that bronze busts in the First Nations Sculpture Garden in Rapid City depict four members of Sioux tribes: Charles Eastman, Nicholas Black Elk, Oscar Howe and Vine Deloria Jr.

The men break away from the stereotype of Native Americans as one-dimensional warriors, said Edward Valandra, board member of nonprofit First Nations Sculpture Garden Inc.

"They are proof that we are intellectual thinkers and achievers, despite incredible odds that were arrayed against them and against us," said Valandra.

Eastman was a physician who cared for the victims of the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890. Black Elk was a religious figure who became a spokesperson for the preservation of traditional ceremonies and language. Howe was a painter and teacher who defended the survival of Sioux ceremonies, philosophies and mythologies. Deloria was a legal scholar who critiqued the politics of American law as applied to indigenous people.

Local author Elizabeth Cook-Lynn championed the project, which was initially met with resistance from several city officials. Cook-Lynn said it took raising around \$240,000 to finance the garden and the sculptures.

She said the busts are symbols of a people rooted in the land with a proud past, present and future.

"We did not come here from somewhere else, and we're not going anywhere, either," Cook-Lynn said. "We're going to be here. This is who we are. This is where we belong."

Sioux Falls sees decline in students going to college

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Data from a student research organization says a growing number of high school graduates in a southeast South Dakota city didn't enroll in college in the two years after earning their diploma.

More than a third of Sioux Falls graduates in 2015 didn't enroll in college, up from a quarter of graduates in 2009, according to the National Student Clearinghouse.

The decline is "eye-opening," said Kate Parker, president of the Sioux Falls School District school board. "It's nothing we can ignore," she said.

The college enrollment decline runs counter to statewide goals aimed at preparing for a future in which more of the state's jobs require credentials beyond a high school diploma, the Argus Leader reported.

It's unclear what may be causing the decline. National trends show that college enrollment rises during difficult economic times and falls as markets improve. Sioux City had a 2.5 percent unemployment rate in 2016, a sharp decline in the rate five years prior. College tuition has also increased since 2009, which may further motivate students to go directly into the workforce.

"I think we have a number of folks in the trades that wouldn't mind hiring our kids right out of high school," Superintendent Brian Maher said.

The Sioux Falls School District aims to ensure kids are college and career ready.

"We want every student to be prepared, and then if they choose to go (to college) or not go, it's a personal decision," Maher said.

The district doesn't set specific targets for the number of graduates who go on to college, Maher said.

"I know college isn't for everyone," said Cynthia Mickelson, a Sioux Falls school board member. "But I think we can do better."

The statewide percentage of students going to college has remained at around 33 percent for the past five years.

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

Man accused of abusing horses sentenced to 30 days in jail

HERMOSA, S.D. (AP) — A 62-year-old South Dakota man has been sentenced to 30 days in a county jail for mistreating more than a dozen horses.

The Rapid City Journal reports that LeRoy James, of Hermosa, was convicted at trial earlier this month on three misdemeanor counts of neglect, abandonment or mistreatment of an animal. Authorities say the abuse took place in Meade County between September 2016 and January 2017.

Magistrate Judge Francy Foral sentenced James on each count to 360 days in jail with 350 days suspended, as well as 360 days of probation.

James still owns 15 horses. The judge says he has until March 1 to show that the horses are in good shape or he will be forced to sell them.

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

Bali volcano dusts resorts in ash; Lombok airport closes

By FIRDIA LISNAWATI, Associated Press

KARANGASEM, Indonesia (AP) — A volcano on the Indonesian island of Bali has rumbled to life with eruptions that dusted nearby resorts and villages with ash and forced the closure of the small international airport on neighboring Lombok island as towering gray plumes drifted east.

Mount Agung erupted on Saturday evening and three times early Sunday, lighting its cone with an orange glow and sending ash 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) into the atmosphere. It is still gushing and the ash

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 17 of 35

clouds have forced the closure of Lombok island's airport until at least 6 a.m. Monday, an official at the airport said.

Most scheduled domestic and international flights were continuing Sunday at Bali's busy airport after a rash of cancellations on Saturday evening.

Disaster officials said ash up to half a centimeter (less than half an inch) thick settled on villages around the volcano and soldiers and police had distributed masks.

Authorities warned anyone still in the exclusion zone around the volcano, which extends 7.5 kilometers (4.5 miles) from the crater in places, to leave.

Made Sugiri, an employee at Mahagiri Panoramic Resort, located around 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the crater, said a thin layer of volcanic ash reached the area.

"We are out of the danger zone, but like other resorts in the region, of course the eruptions cause a decrease in the number of visitors," he said.

"I think these latest eruptions are more dangerous, given the thick clouds it's releasing," he said. "Certainly we worry, but we have to wait and see. Hopefully there is no significant eruption."

Government volcanologist Gede Suantika said a red-yellow light visible in ash above the mountain was the reflection of lava in the crater. Suantika said Agung could spew ash for at least a month but did not expect a major eruption.

Bali is Indonesia's top tourist destination, with its gentle Hindu culture, surf beaches and lush green interior attracting about 5 million visitors a year. Nearby Lombok is relatively undeveloped as a tourist destination, receiving fewer than 100,000 international visitors a year.

Australian airline Jetstar, which canceled nine flights to and from Bali on Saturday evening, said most of its flights would operate normally Sunday after its senior pilots assessed it was safe to fly. However, it warned that the movement of ash cloud is highly unpredictable and that flights could still be canceled at short notice. Virgin, KLM and AirAsia Malaysia also canceled several flights on Saturday and AirAsia canceled more than 30 flights on Sunday.

Several thousand people were affected by Saturday's flight cancellations.

"We weren't notified by Jetstar in advance of us getting here (to Bali's airport)," said Australian tourist George Bennick. "So we are very disappointed about that."

Agung also had a minor eruption on Tuesday, but authorities have not raised its alert status from the second-highest level, which would widen the exclusion area and prompt a large evacuation of people.

About 25,000 people have been unable to return to their homes since September, when Agung showed signs of activity for the first time in more than half a century.

The volcano's last major eruption, in 1963, killed about 1,100 people.

Indonesia sits on the "Pacific Ring of Fire" and has more than 120 active volcanoes.

Mount Agung's alert status was raised to the highest level in September following a dramatic increase in tremors from the volcano, which doubled the exclusion zone around the crater and prompted more than 140,000 people to leave the area. The alert was lowered on Oct. 29 after a decrease in activity.

Associated Press writers Ali Kotarumalos and Stephen Wright in Jakarta, Indonesia, contributed to this report.

1 job, 2 people: Who'll be in charge at consumer agency?

By BERNARD CONDON, AP Business Writer

Who's the boss? That's the awkward question after the departing head of a government agency charged with looking after consumer rights appointed a deputy to temporarily fill his spot. The White House then named its own interim leader.

One job, two people — and two very different views on how to do it.

The first pick is expected to continue the aggressive policing of banks and other lenders that have angered Republicans. The second, President Donald Trump's choice, has called the agency a "joke," an example of

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 18 of 35

bureaucracy run amok, and is expected to dismantle much of what the agency has done.

So come Monday, who will be leading the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau?

Senior Trump administration officials said Saturday that the law was on their side and they expect no trouble when Trump's pick for temporary director of the CFPB shows up for work. Departing director Richard Cordray, an Obama appointee long criticized by congressional Republicans as overzealous, had cited a different rule in saying the law was on his side.

In tendering his resignation Friday, Cordray elevated Leandra English, who was the agency's chief of staff, into the deputy director position. Citing the Dodd-Frank Act that created the CFPB, he said English, an ally, would become acting director upon his departure.

Cordray's move was widely seen as an attempt to stop Trump from shaping the agency in the months ahead.

The White House cites the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998. Administration officials on Saturday acknowledged that some other laws appear to clash with Vacancies Act, but said that in this case the president's authority takes precedence.

Who prevails in the legal wrangling is seen as important even though this involves just a temporary posting. Getting a permanent replacement approved by the Senate could take months.

The president's pick for temporary appointee, Mick Mulvaney, had been widely anticipated. Mulvaney, currently director of the Office of Management and Budget, has been an outspoken critic of the agency and is expected to pull back on many of Cordray's actions in the six years since he was appointed.

Trump announced he was picking Mulvaney within a few hours of Cordray's announcement on Friday.

"The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB, has been a total disaster as run by the previous Administrations pick," Trump tweeted Saturday from his private Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, where he is spending a long Thanksgiving weekend. "Financial Institutions have been devastated and unable to properly serve the public. We will bring it back to life!"

The Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel had already approved Trump's appointment of Mulvaney, administration officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the White House's thinking.

In issuing a memo about its opinion Saturday, the Office of Legal Counsel said the president has the power to appoint an acting director of the agency. Steven A. Engel, newly confirmed head of the office, wrote that, while the deputy director may serve as acting director under the statute, the president still has authority under the Vacancies Reform Act.

"Even when the Vacancies Reform Act is not the 'exclusive' means for filling a vacancy, the statute remains an available option, and the president may rely upon it in designating an acting official in a manner that differs from the order of succession otherwise provided by an office-specific statute," he wrote in a memo.

The clashing appointments raise the question: What happens when the two new heads show up and try to sit at the same desk and give orders?

One of the administration officials said Mulvaney was expected to start working Monday and that English was expected to also show up — but as deputy director.

The agency has been tangled in partisan politics since its creation, with the two competing appointees a reflection of that.

English is a trusted lieutenant of Cordray's who has helped investigate and punish financial companies in ways that many Republicans, Mulvaney in particular, think go too far. In his announcement Friday, Cordray highlighted English's "in-depth" knowledge of the agency's operations and its staff. Before joining the CFPB, English served at the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management.

"Leandra is a seasoned professional who has spent her career of public service focused on promoting smooth and efficient operations," Cordray said in the statement.

Mulvaney was a South Carolina representative to the House before becoming head of the budget office. A founder of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, he was elected in 2010 as part of a tea party wave that brought many critics of the U.S. budget deficit to office. He has taken a hard line on federal spending matters, routinely voting against increasing the government's borrowing cap and pressing for major cuts

to benefit programs as the path to balancing the budget.

He also has been unsparing in his criticism of the CFPB. In a widely quoted comment, he once blasted the agency as “joke,” saying its lack of oversight by Congress and its far-reaching regulations had gone too far.

“The place is a wonderful example of how a bureaucracy will function if it has no accountability to anybody,” he told the Credit Union Times in 2014. “It turns up being a joke in a sick, sad kind of way.”

U.S. Rep. Jeb Hensarling, chairman of the powerful House Financial Services Committee and a longtime critic of Cordray, said Mulvaney would “fight not only to protect consumers from force, fraud, and deception but will protect them from government interference with competitive, innovative markets and help preserve their fundamental economic opportunities and liberties.”

Democrats have seized upon Mulvaney’s words in criticizing his appointment to the agency.

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters of California, the top Democrat on the Financial Services Committee, issued a statement Saturday calling Mulvaney “unacceptable” to lead the CFPB because of his “noxious” views toward its mission to protect consumers.

“He was also the original co-sponsor of a bill to completely eliminate the Consumer Bureau,” she wrote, “and supported other legislation to harmfully roll back Wall Street reform.”

Egypt’s options dwindling in its fight against militants

By HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The scale of the bloodshed was vastly higher than past militant attacks but the Egyptian government response the same: three days of mourning, reassuring messages in the media that things are under control, and the president promising vengeance.

The identical pattern in the aftermath of Friday’s attack on a mosque in Sinai, which killed 305 people, raises the question whether Egypt has any options left in the fight against Islamic militants.

The military has thrown tanks, fighting vehicles, fighter-jets, warships and helicopter gunships along with tens of thousands of security forces in three years of conflict with extremists, including an affiliate of the Islamic State group in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula.

The area has been under emergency law for several years and the entire country since April. Security forces have forcibly evacuated areas adjacent to the border with Gaza, razing residents’ houses and farmlands. They have blown up underground tunnels that authorities believe jihadis used to smuggle weapons and fighters in from neighboring Gaza, ruled by the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

These measures have shown few tangible results.

The firepower and troop deployments in Sinai have kept militants from holding territory but have not prevented them from carrying out assassinations that terrorize the population and launching deadly attacks on military and police posts and convoys and recently a daylight robbery in Sinai’s largest town.

In a televised address, a livid Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, Egypt’s general-turned-president, pledged the use of “brute force” in response to Friday’s attack. “The armed forces and police will forcefully take revenge for our martyred sons and restore security and stability in the short period ahead,” he vowed.

There is little public discussion of how to conduct the war and northern Sinai area is closed off to journalists, making it difficult to assess what’s going on. In the overwhelmingly pro-government media, talk about the conflict is largely focused on cheering the military and police, commemorating their “martyrs” and urging the public to rally around el-Sissi.

The closest authorities came to admitting shortcomings was last month when el-Sissi removed the armed forces’ chief of staff and top police generals after a planned attack on militants in the Western Desert went disastrously wrong. The operation left over a dozen counterterrorism police officers dead and exposed poor coordination among security and intelligence agencies.

It also illustrated the problem posed by Egypt’s long desert border with Libya — a country mired in chaos and rife with armed Islamic militant groups — through which weapons and fighters can be smuggled. That has fueled a second front of militant violence in the west, with signs of arms movements to the Sinai extremists.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 20 of 35

Egypt's response has been in line with a longstanding model of fighting a conventional war against an opposing army. Indeed, recent years have seen up to \$15 billion in arms deals, largely for big-ticket items such as two helicopter carriers, submarines, assault helicopters and fighter jets.

But critics have called for a counterterrorism strategy in Sinai rather than the reliance on a conventional deployment of overwhelming force. There are some trained counterterrorism soldiers and police deployed, but most are poorly trained regular troops and police conscripts whose main skill is manning a checkpoint. Warplanes and attack helicopters have limits in a rugged mountain terrain that the militants know far better than the military does. And forces moving with tanks and heavy vehicles are often ambushed by the more agile militants using light arms, machine guns, roadside bombs and suicide bombers.

El-Sissi recently said security forces are hampered by the presence of civilians in Sinai, requiring extreme caution which benefits the insurgents. But critics say the military has been heavy-handed as is, deepening the distrust of local tribes who have long claimed discrimination.

Male family members are sometimes arrested if another member is suspected of militancy, according to Sinai rights activists. Soldiers and police at checkpoints are notorious for mistreating people, they say. Roads are often blocked and mobile phone services disrupted. Houses have been razed to clear zones for military control and people forcibly evacuated. Even those who oppose the militants become less likely to help security forces.

At the same time, the militants brutally intimidate residents from cooperating with security forces, kidnapping suspected collaborators and dumping their decapitated bodies on the streets of el-Arish, Rafah and other north Sinai towns for all to see.

So the locals provide the military with little actionable intelligence.

One suggestion has been for the military to arm local Sinai tribesmen hostile to the militants — like the Sunni Arab "Awakening" militias in Iraq that were created by the U.S. military and were a key part of defeating al-Qaida in the 2000s. Given the anger many tribesmen now feel after Friday's massacre, it's a scenario that is becoming less unthinkable.

The military, however, fears armed tribesmen could eventually turn against it.

Critics also contend the government's country-wide campaign against Islamists has pushed some young people toward the Islamic State group affiliate. The crackdown was launched against the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013 after the military ousted President Mohammed Morsi, a Brotherhood member. Since then, thousands of Brotherhood members and other Islamists have been jailed. There have been accounts of younger Islamists being radicalized, some in prison, and turning to IS support.

The government contends that the Brotherhood is a terrorist group, intertwined with militants from the start.

Some believe the militants are gambling as they turn ever more brutal, risking a revolt by the populace. Hassan Khalaf, a local tribal elder, said many of those killed were already cooperating with the army and that they were likely targeted as an intimidation tactic. "People are more determined now to stand against that inhuman and heartless bunch," he said.

Associated Press writer Maggie Michael contributed to this report from Ismailia, Egypt.

Explosion in Chinese port city kills 2, injures 30

By JOE McDONALD, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — An explosion in a port city south of Shanghai on Sunday killed two people and injured at least 30 others, knocked down buildings and left streets littered with damaged cars and debris, the government and news reports said.

The early morning explosion struck a riverfront neighborhood in Ningbo, one of China's busiest ports, the official Xinhua News Agency and other outlets reported.

Firefighters traced the blast to a hole in the ground where a toilet had been but the cause still was

under investigation, state television said on its website. It gave no indication whether the explosion site was inside a building.

Two people were killed and two more seriously injured, the district office announced on its social media account. It gave no details.

At least 30 others were taken to hospitals, according to Huanqiu.com, a website operated by the Global Times newspaper.

China suffers frequent deadly fires and industrial accidents, often blamed on negligence.

Official safety crackdowns have improved conditions in some areas, but many companies still cut corners. In 2015, an explosion traced to improperly stored chemicals killed at least 173 people in Tianjin, a port east of Beijing.

Sunday's blast knocked down residential buildings, but they were vacant and in the process of being demolished, Huanqiu.com said. It said there might have been people in the area collecting scrap for recycling.

Bystanders said the explosion might have been caused by a gas pipeline that was damaged during demolition work, but the Ningbo gas company said it had no lines in the area, the China Youth Daily newspaper reported on its website.

Photos on News.163.com showed an injured woman being carried away on a man's back and what appeared to be the body of man lying in the debris of a wrecked building.

Video clips on multiple websites showed a white cloud of smoke rising above the explosion site and rolling across nearby buildings.

A photo on news.ifeng.com showed a room in an industrial building with a floor-to-ceiling hole blown through an exterior wall. Other photos showed apartments with windows blown out and glass littering the floors.

Egypt reeling from attack on mosque in Sinai that killed 305

By MAGGIE MICHAEL and HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt was reeling Sunday from the horrific militant attack on a mosque in northern Sinai that killed 305 people two days earlier — the deadliest assault by Islamic extremists in its modern history and a grim milestone in a long-running fight against the insurgency led by an Islamic State affiliate.

Survivors and Egypt's top prosecutor have given accounts of the massacre that unfolded as more than two dozen assailants, carrying a black IS banner, unleashed gunfire and explosions during Friday prayers at the Al-Rawdah Mosque in a sleepy village by the same name near the small town of Bir al-Abd.

The attackers arrived in five SUVs, took positions across from the mosque's door and windows, and just as the imam was about to deliver his sermon from the pulpit, they opened fire and tossed grenades at the estimated 500 people inside.

The worshippers screamed and cried out in pain. A stampede broke out in the rush toward a door leading to the washrooms. Others tried desperately to force their way out of the windows. Those who survived spoke of children screaming as they saw parents and siblings mowed down by gunfire or shredded by the blasts.

When the violence finally stopped, 305 people, including 27 children, had been killed and 128 wounded.

One of the witnesses, Ebid Salem Mansour, recalled how the attackers shouted Allahu Akbar, or God is great, as they fired on the worshippers.

So composed were the militants that they methodically checked their victims for any sign of life after the initial round of blazing gunfire. Those still moving or breathing received a bullet to the head or the chest, the witnesses said. When the ambulances arrived they shot at them, repelling them as they got back into their vehicles and fled.

Friday's attack targeted a mosque frequented by Sufis, members of a mystic movement within Islam. Islamic militants, including IS, consider Sufis heretics because of their less literal interpretations of the faith.

Egypt's chief prosecutor, Nabil Sadeq, said the attackers, some masked, numbered between 25 and 30. Those with bare faces sported heavy beards and long hair, his statement added. Clad in military-style

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 22 of 35

camouflage pants and black T-shirts, one of them carried a black banner with the declaration of the Muslim faith — there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.

Despite the banner, IS still has not claimed responsibility for the attack.

Survivors of the bloodshed spoke to The Associated Press on Saturday in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, where some of the wounded are hospitalized.

"We knew that the mosque was under attack," said Mansour, a 38-year-old worker in a nearby salt factory who had settled in Bir al-Abd three years ago to escape the bloodshed and fighting elsewhere in northern Sinai. He suffered two gunshot wounds to his legs on Friday.

"Everyone lay down on the floor and kept their heads down. If you raised your head you get shot," he said. "The shooting was random and hysterical at the beginning and then became more deliberate. Whoever they weren't sure was dead or still breathing was shot dead."

President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi vowed that the attack "will not go unpunished" and that Egypt would persevere with its war on terrorism. He did not specify what new steps might be taken. On Saturday, he ordered that a mausoleum be built in memory of the victims of Friday's attack and cancelled a visit to the Gulf Sultanate of Oman that was scheduled for next week.

Egypt's military and security forces have already been waging a tough and costly campaign against militants in the towns, villages and desert mountains of northern Sinai, and Egypt has been in a state of emergency since April. Across the country, thousands have been arrested in a crackdown on suspected Islamists as well as against other dissenters and critics, raising concerns about human rights violations.

Seeking to spread the violence, militants over the past year have carried out deadly bombings on churches in the capital of Cairo and other cities, killing dozens of Christians. Egypt's IS affiliate has also claimed responsibility for the 2016 downing of a Russian passenger jet that killed 224 people over Sinai. That attack decimated the country's already ailing tourism industry.

Friday's assault was the first major militant attack on a Muslim congregation, and it eclipsed past attacks, even dating back to a previous Islamic militant insurgency in the 1990s. The death of so many civilians in one day recalls the killing of at least 600 in August 2013, when Egyptian security forces broke up two sit-in protests in Cairo by supporters of Mohammed Morsi, an Islamist president ousted by the military the previous month.

The local IS affiliate has targeted Sufis in the past. Last year, the militants beheaded a leading local Sufi figure, the blind sheikh Suleiman Abu Heraz, and posted photos of the killing online. In the January edition of an IS online magazine, the Sinai affiliate vowed to target Sufis, accusing them of idolatry and heretical "innovation" in religion and warning that the group will "not permit (their) presence" in Sinai or Egypt.

Millions of Egyptians belong to Sufi orders, which hold sessions of ritual chanting and dancing to draw the faithful closer to God. Sufis also hold shrines containing the tombs of holy men in particular reverence.

Islamic militants stepped up their campaign of violence in northern Sinai after the military ousted the elected but divisive Morsi. Authorities followed up with a fierce crackdown on his Muslim Brotherhood group, jailing thousands.

The result has been a long, grinding conflict centered on el-Arish and nearby villages and towns in north Sinai. The militants have been unable to control territory, but the military and security forces have also been unable to bring security, as the extremists continuously carry out surprise attacks, mostly targeting outposts and convoys.

Nepalese vote in 1st provincial polls amid democracy hopes

By **BINAJ GURUBACHARYA, Associated Press**

CHAUTARA, Nepal (AP) — Nepalese in mountain villages and foothill towns voted Sunday in the Himalayan nation's first provincial polls that promise to bring government closer to rural and remote areas.

Some 3.2 million voters were choosing lawmakers in seven newly-formed federal states as well as the national assembly and turnout is expected to be high.

The lawmakers who are elected on Sunday and Dec. 7 in the remaining part of the country will be able

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 23 of 35

to name their states, draft provincial laws and choose local leaders.

"The central government is finally moving to our region. We will be closer to the government now with the state assemblies," said schoolteacher Swasthani Thapa, who was among the voters lining outside the polling station at Chautara, 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Kathmandu, even before it opened at 7 a.m.

Chautara was one of the areas hardest hit by the 2015 earthquake. People in the mountain regions complained they did not get enough help from the central government because their voices were not heard. Two years later, destroyed and damaged houses are still scattered around Chautara and surrounding areas.

"This is a historic day for us. The setting up of states will give final shape to the democracy process, which should finally bring stability and development for our country," said businessman Surya Lal Shrestha.

Nepal's slow path to democracy began in 2006, when protesters forced the king to give up his rule. Two years later, Nepal officially abolished the centuries-old monarchy and decided that a federal system would best deliver services to all corners of the nation, which remains one of the poorest in the world.

But bickering among political parties delayed until 2015 the implementation of the new constitution, which declared Nepal a republic.

Security has been stepped with thousands of police and army soldiers deployed for the elections. According to the Home Ministry, more than 400 people were detained in days leading up to the vote.

Soon after the constitution was implemented in 2015, protests by ethnic groups in southern Nepal turned violent and left some 50 people dead.

The ethnic Madhesi groups protested for months saying they did not get enough territory in the province assigned to them. They said they deserved more land because they represented a bigger population. Their protest blocked the border with India for months, cutting off fuel and other supplies in Nepal.

Funeral held for US border agent whose death not explained

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — Family, friends and law enforcement officers converged on an adobe Catholic church in El Paso, Texas, Saturday to mourn a Border Patrol agent whose death last weekend in the rugged and remote Big Bend area has not been explained.

Bagpipes played as Border Patrol pallbearers in green uniforms carried the U.S. flag-draped coffin of Rogelio Martinez, 36, into Our Lady of Guadalupe Church for a private funeral Mass. He died in a hospital Sunday of head and other injuries.

"It honors him to see law enforcement agencies from across the United States" attend the service, Border Patrol spokesman Ramiro Cordero told reporters outside the church.

Martinez was found Nov. 18 in a culvert along with his seriously injured partner, whose name has not been released, in a rugged area near Van Horn, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from the border with Mexico and 110 miles (175 kilometers) southeast of El Paso.

Attorney General Jeff Session was scheduled to attend the funeral but it was not clear if he was there. Following the funeral, a graveside ceremony was held at Restlawn Cemetery in El Paso.

Speculation about the cause of death has run rampant with several politicians saying the agent was attacked, including President Donald Trump, who used the death to highlight his support for building a wall on the border with Mexico. Special Agent in Charge Emmerson Buie Jr. in the FBI's El Paso office has said investigators were treating the incident as a "potential assault," but they could not rule out other scenarios.

Representatives from the border patrol's union have insisted that the incident was an attack, based on the accounts of other agents who responded to the scene. Chris Cabrera, a spokesman for the National Border Patrol Council, told The Associated Press that agents responding to the scene called it "grisly."

However, a U.S. official with knowledge of the investigation told The Associated Press on Monday that the agents may have fallen, and that the surviving agent had no memory of his duty-shift. The official spoke on condition of anonymity and is not authorized to speak publicly.

After the death of Martinez, his father told the El Paso Times that his son loved his job. Jose Martinez said his son would call him every day to say goodbye for the night.

"And I would tell him, 'Take care of yourself son. God bless you,'" the father said.

Information from: El Paso Times, <http://www.elpasotimes.com>

Who's the boss come Monday at consumer agency?

By BERNARD CONDON, AP Business Writer

Who's the boss? That's the awkward question after the departing head of a government agency charged with looking after consumer rights appointed a deputy to temporarily fill his spot. The White House then named its own interim leader.

One job, two people — and two very different views on how to do it.

The first pick is expected to continue the aggressive policing of banks and other lenders that have angered Republicans. The second, President Donald Trump's choice, has called the agency a "joke," an example of bureaucracy run amok, and is expected to dismantle much of what the agency has done.

So come Monday, who will be leading the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau?

Senior Trump administration officials said Saturday that the law was on their side and they expect no trouble when Trump's pick for temporary director of the CFPB shows up for work. Departing director Richard Cordray, an Obama appointee long criticized by congressional Republicans as overzealous, had cited a different rule in saying the law was on his side.

In tendering his resignation Friday, Cordray elevated Leandra English, who was the agency's chief of staff, into the deputy director position. Citing the Dodd-Frank Act that created the CFPB, he said English, an ally, would become acting director upon his departure.

Cordray's move was widely seen as an attempt to stop Trump from shaping the agency in the months ahead.

The White House cites the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998. Administration officials on Saturday acknowledged that some other laws appear to clash with Vacancies Act, but said that in this case the president's authority takes precedence.

Who prevails in the legal wrangling is seen as important even though this involves just a temporary posting. Getting a permanent replacement approved by the Senate could take months.

The president's pick for temporary appointee, Mick Mulvaney, had been widely anticipated. Mulvaney, currently director of the Office of Management and Budget, has been an outspoken critic of the agency and is expected to pull back on many of Cordray's actions in the six years since he was appointed.

Trump announced he was picking Mulvaney within a few hours of Cordray's announcement on Friday.

"The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB, has been a total disaster as run by the previous Administrations pick," Trump tweeted Saturday from his private Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, where he is spending a long Thanksgiving weekend. "Financial Institutions have been devastated and unable to properly serve the public. We will bring it back to life!"

The Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel had already approved Trump's appointment of Mulvaney, administration officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the White House's thinking.

In issuing a memo about its opinion Saturday, the Office of Legal Counsel said the president has the power to appoint an acting director of the agency. Steven A. Engel, newly confirmed head of the office, wrote that, while the deputy director may serve as acting director under the statute, the president still has authority under the Vacancies Reform Act.

"Even when the Vacancies Reform Act is not the 'exclusive' means for filling a vacancy, the statute remains an available option, and the president may rely upon it in designating an acting official in a manner that differs from the order of succession otherwise provided by an office-specific statute," he wrote in a memo.

The clashing appointments raise the question: What happens when the two new heads show up and try to sit at the same desk and give orders?

One of the administration officials said Mulvaney was expected to start working Monday and that English was expected to also show up — but as deputy director.

The agency has been tangled in partisan politics since its creation, with the two competing appointees

a reflection of that.

English is a trusted lieutenant of Cordray's who has helped investigate and punish financial companies in ways that many Republicans, Mulvaney in particular, think go too far. In his announcement Friday, Cordray highlighted English's "in-depth" knowledge of the agency's operations and its staff. Before joining the CFPB, English served at the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management.

"Leandra is a seasoned professional who has spent her career of public service focused on promoting smooth and efficient operations," Cordray said in the statement.

Mulvaney was a South Carolina representative to the House before becoming head of the budget office. A founder of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, he was elected in 2010 as part of a tea party wave that brought many critics of the U.S. budget deficit to office. He has taken a hard line on federal spending matters, routinely voting against increasing the government's borrowing cap and pressing for major cuts to benefit programs as the path to balancing the budget.

He also has been unsparing in his criticism of the CFPB. In a widely quoted comment, he once blasted the agency as "joke," saying its lack of oversight by Congress and its far-reaching regulations had gone too far.

"The place is a wonderful example of how a bureaucracy will function if it has no accountability to anybody," he told the Credit Union Times in 2014. "It turns up being a joke in a sick, sad kind of way."

U.S. Rep. Jeb Hensarling, chairman of the powerful House Financial Services Committee and a longtime critic of Cordray, said Mulvaney would "fight not only to protect consumers from force, fraud, and deception but will protect them from government interference with competitive, innovative markets and help preserve their fundamental economic opportunities and liberties."

Democrats have seized upon Mulvaney's words in criticizing his appointment to the agency.

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters of California, the top Democrat on the Financial Services Committee, issued a statement Saturday calling Mulvaney "unacceptable" to lead the CFPB because of his "noxious" views toward its mission to protect consumers.

"He was also the original co-sponsor of a bill to completely eliminate the Consumer Bureau," she wrote, "and supported other legislation to harmfully roll back Wall Street reform."

Pakistan TV: Army summoned to disperse Islamist protesters

By ANJUM NAVEED and ZARAR KHAN, Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan called in the army to restore order on Saturday, hours after a violent clash between police and crowds protesting an omitted reference to the Prophet Muhammad in a parliamentary bill left six dead and many dozens wounded, state TV reported.

The Interior Ministry did not specify when the troops would be deployed, and no soldiers were visible on the streets late Saturday.

Supporters of an Islamist group have been camped out at a key intersection outside the capital for the last 20 days, and the protest has triggered similar demonstrations across the country.

Hundreds of police in riot gear moved in to clear the intersection linking Islamabad with the garrison city of Rawalpindi after a deadline expired at midnight, doctors at local hospitals said.

The violence sent scores of police and protesters to hospitals with injuries caused by stoning and respiratory problems from tear gas. Hospital officials said near 200 people were hurt, most of them police.

Dr. Masood Safdar of Benazir Bhutto Hospital said five civilians were shot and killed. Dr. Tariq Niazi of the Holy Family Hospital confirmed the death of a young man who was shot in head.

News of the police intervention spread quickly, prompting sympathizers in cities round the country to take to the streets in a show of solidarity with the Islamabad protesters. The situation prompted the country's regulatory body for electronic media to take TV broadcasts off the air. Key social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were also blocked. Government officials were not immediately available for comment.

The supporters of the Tehreek-i-Labaik Ya Rasool Allah party, who have been camped out at the intersection for the last 20 days, are demanding the resignation of a law minister over an omitted reference

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 26 of 35

to the prophet in a parliamentary bill. The minister, Zahid Hamid, apologized for the omission — a phrase saying that Muhammad is the last prophet in Islam — saying it was a clerical error that was later corrected.

But protest leaders were adamant and refused to clear the intersection unless the law minister resigned. Saturday's action came after a court ordered an end to the protest because it was disrupting daily life.

Television footage showed police initially taking control of the bridge where the demonstrators were camped out. Some protesters could be seen throwing stones at police. The images showed an area engulfed in thick smoke from tear gas and black smoke from burned tents.

Later in the morning, seminary students from Rawalpindi reinforced the demonstrators who pushed back police and Frontier Constabulary forces. Witnesses said a group of baton-carrying protesters snatched a tear gas gun and a few shells from a constable and lobbed them at police.

Enraged protesters also torched three police vans, two civilian vehicles, three two motorcycles and damaged two television station vehicles. They also ransacked a newly built metro bus terminal near the venue.

Later in the day, more supporters joined protesters at the site, and civil administrators met to come up with a solution.

Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal, meanwhile, told state television that the government had shown patience in dealing with the protesters.

"The administration is taking action under court order but still we are open for talks with them," he said, referring to the protesters. Ahsan said that some among the protesters wanted to create chaos and destabilization in the country.

Some protesters who escaped the operation later gathered at a main street in Rawalpindi blocking it and suspending traffic by throwing stones at moving vehicles.

In Karachi, groups gathered at three crucial venues blocking streets in protest against the police action in Islamabad. When police used tear gas to disperse them amid the traffic rush hours, protesters threw stones wounding 20 people, including two journalists.

Protesters also took to the streets in Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, Khanewal, Layyah, Vihari, Dera Ghazi Khan and others cities in Punjab province and in the northwestern city of Peshawar, as well as in southern city of Hyderabad, to show solidarity with the Islamabad protesters.

In Lahore, an unruly mob torched a vehicle and damaged others with stoning and staged sit-ins at four key areas in the city.

Malik Mohammad Ahmed, the spokesman for Punjab government, said enraged protesters in Rawalpindi attacked the residence of the former interior minister, Chaudhry Nisar, damaging the main gate. He added that they wounded lawmaker Javed Latif in Shaikhupura, hitting him in the head with a stone, and that a furious crowd attacked Law Minister Zahid Hamid's villa in Pasroor, ransacking the place.

Associated Press writers Zaheer Babar in Lahore, Pakistan, Adil Jawad in Karachi, Pakistan, and Iram Asim in Multan, Pakistan, contributed to this report.

Congress coming back to crush of business in a fraught time

By **ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The crush of unfinished business facing lawmakers when they return to the Capitol would be daunting even if Washington were functioning at peak efficiency.

It's an agenda whose core items — tax cuts, a potential government shutdown, lots of leftover spending bills — could unravel just as easily as advance in factionalism, gamesmanship and a toxic political environment.

There's only a four-week window until a Christmas deadline, barely enough time for complicated negotiations even if December stays on the rails. And that's hardly a sure bet in President Donald Trump's capital.

Trump and congressional leaders plan a meeting Tuesday to discuss how to sidestep a shutdown and work through the legislative to-do list.

For the optimistic, it's plain that Democrats and Republicans have reasons to cooperate, particularly on

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 27 of 35

spending increases for the Pentagon and domestic agencies whose budgets otherwise would be frozen. An additional round of hurricane aid should be bipartisan, and efforts to reauthorize a popular health care program for children seem to be on track.

Republicans are advancing their cherished tax cut measure under special rules that mean Senate Democrats cannot use delaying tactics. The measure passed the House just before the Thanksgiving break and moves to the Senate floor this coming week.

After the Senate GOP's failure on health care this summer, the majority party is under enormous pressure to produce a victory on taxes. Still, GOP deficit hawks such as Sens. Bob Corker of Tennessee and Jeff Flake of Arizona remain uneasy about the overhaul.

While Democrats are largely sidelined on taxes, they hold leverage over a mix of budget-related issues. First, there's the need to avert a government shutdown after a temporary spending bill expires on Dec. 8. The most likely scenario, congressional aides say, is for an additional extension until Christmas. On a parallel track are talks to raise spending limits that are keeping agency budgets essentially frozen unless those caps are raised. If that happens, then negotiations could begin in earnest on a massive catchall spending measure in hopes of having it signed into law by year's end.

Taxes have gotten all the attention so far, but the showdown over a potential shutdown right before Christmas could soon take center stage. Democrats are counting on GOP fears of a holiday season closure to ensure Republican concessions during December talks.

Both sides would have to make concessions that may upset partisans in either party. Just as House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., fears a revolt on the right, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California risks an uprising on her left. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Senate Minority leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., round out the quartet of top negotiators.

"Everybody's got complicated politics. The chance of short-term failure is pretty high — short-term failure being a shutdown," said Steve Elmendorf, a Democratic lobbyist. "But the four of them, assuming they don't want to shut the government down for a long time, are going to have to come to an accommodation."

Talks on the spending caps are stuck, however, aides say. A GOP offer to lift the Pentagon budget by more than \$54 billion next year and nondefense limits by \$37 billion was rejected by Democrats demanding balance between the two sides of the ledger.

Long-delayed battles over immigration and Trump's promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico border are huge obstacles. Many Democrats whose votes are needed on the spending bills insist they won't vote for any legislation that includes the wall. Trump remains dead set on his \$1.6 billion request for a down payment on the project.

Those same Democrats also insist that Congress must act by year's end to protect immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children and whose protected status is set to lapse next year. Trump backs the idea despite issuing an executive order reversing the Obama administration protections, starting next spring. Conservatives oppose drawing in the immigration issue to legislation to keep the government running.

Hurricane relief is adding one more wrinkle.

Congress has approved more than \$50 billion in aid in response to a series of devastating hurricanes. The most recent request by the White House is the largest yet at \$44 billion, but it's not nearly enough to satisfy the powerful Texas delegation, which is pressing behind the scenes for more.

"Completely inadequate," said Rep. John Culberson, R-Texas. "We must do far more to rebuild, repair and allow Texans to return to normal as quickly as possible."

Trump is a wild card. He warmed to the idea of cutting deals with Democrats after a September pact with Schumer and Pelosi to lift the government's debt ceiling.

He promised Democratic leaders that he would sign legislation to give the young immigrants legal status — provided border security is addressed as well.

But that demand on border security came with a long list of conditions subsequently added by the White House. Among them: building his Mexico border wall, overhauling the green card system and strengthening measures against people who stay after their visas expire.

Trump has not really engaged on the year-end agenda, however, and his impulsiveness could be a li-

ability. He almost disowned an omnibus spending bill in May after media accounts portrayed the measure as a win for Democrats.

Zimbabwean minister describes raid during military takeover

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Zimbabwe's former finance minister testified Saturday that armed, masked men in uniform abducted him from his home during the military operation leading to the ouster of long-time leader Robert Mugabe and held him for a week in an unidentified location, fueling debate about the legality of the popular, mostly peaceful takeover by the armed forces.

The account by Ignatius Chombo came a day after a High Court judge, a retired general, ruled that the military's actions last week, which commanders described as a move against "criminals" around Mugabe, were legal. While some critics said it set a dangerous precedent, the decision by Judge George Chiweshe reinforced the military's assertion that it acted within the law even though it set off events, including impeachment proceedings and street demonstrations against the 93-year-old Mugabe, that ended his 37-year rule.

The joyful inauguration on Friday of President Emmerson Mnangagwa, a former top aide to Mugabe, showed that most Zimbabweans are happy to have a new leader who might take steps to revive the shattered economy and grant them more freedoms. Even so, perceptions that the abrupt political transition was constitutionally sound are important to Zimbabwe's new leadership, which must prepare for 2018 elections and seeks to attract foreign investment.

However, Chombo and two leaders of the ruling ZANU-PF party's youth league who said they were abducted by the military before being handed over days later to the police described experiences reminiscent of human rights violations that were a routine occurrence during Mugabe's rule. The three men have been linked to a party faction loyal to Mugabe's wife, Grace, whose presidential ambitions triggered the military intervention.

"I was in the custody of armed persons who were dressed in soldiers' uniforms," said Chombo, who has been charged with corruption. "I don't know where I was taken to."

He described in court how the raid in the early morning of Nov. 15 began with two explosions, one of which shook his home. Men entered his bedroom with AK-47 assault rifles pointed at him, his wife and his maid, then handcuffed and hustled him out of the house through a smashed living room window, blindfolding him with his own T-shirt, Chombo said.

A one-hour drive to an unidentified location led to days of custody during which interrogators told him that he had performed badly in his role as a government official and ruling party leader, he said. He said he was blindfolded most of the time and never saw his captors' faces. He was not assaulted and saw a doctor after requesting pills, but suffered lacerations during the forced exit from his home, falling several times while barefoot.

Several days ago, his captors told him to pack his things and they drove him home, he said. There, two cars with police were parked.

"They said, 'You are under arrest,'" Chombo said.

Defense lawyer Lovemore Madhuku said it was obvious that Chombo was originally taken by state agents, likely the military, and that his constitutional rights had been violated because he was not taken to court within 48 hours of his detention. The police arrest, he said, was designed to provide legal cover for an illegal act.

"The military must know that there is a constitution in this country," Madhuku said. "There's no such thing as a military arrest."

However, state prosecutor Edmore Nyazamba said the police arrest of Chombo was lawful and that there was no evidence the "armed men" who previously held him belonged to the military.

The detained youth leaders, Kudzanai Chipanga and Innocent Hamandishe, have been accused of denigrating the military. All three men are now in police custody.

Associated Press writer Farai Mutsaka in Harare contributed.

Follow Christopher Torchia on Twitter at www.twitter.com/torchiachris

Egypt's options dwindling in its fight against militants

By **HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press**

CAIRO (AP) — The scale of the bloodshed was vastly higher than past militant attacks but the Egyptian government response the same: Three days of mourning, reassuring messages in the media that things are under control, and the president promising vengeance.

The identical pattern in the aftermath of Friday's attack on a mosque in Sinai, which killed over 300 people, raises the question: Does Egypt have options left?

The military has thrown tanks, fighting vehicles, fighter-jets, warships and helicopter gunships along with tens of thousands of security forces in three years of conflict with extremists, including an affiliate of the Islamic State group in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula.

The area has been under emergency law for several years and the entire country since April. Security forces have forcibly evacuated areas adjacent to the border with Gaza, razing residents' houses and farmlands. They have blown up underground tunnels that authorities believe jihadis used to smuggle weapons and fighters in from neighboring Gaza, ruled by the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

These measures have shown few tangible results.

The firepower and troop deployments in Sinai have kept militants from holding territory but have not prevented them from carrying out assassinations that terrorize the population and launching deadly attacks on military and police posts and convoys and recently a daylight robbery in Sinai's largest town.

In a televised address, a livid Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, Egypt's general-turned-president, pledged the use of "brute force" in response to Friday's attack. "The armed forces and police will forcefully take revenge for our martyred sons and restore security and stability in the short period ahead," he vowed.

There is little public discussion of how to conduct the war and northern Sinai area is closed off to journalists, making it difficult to assess what's going on. In the overwhelmingly pro-government media, talk about the conflict is largely focused on cheering the military and police, commemorating their "martyrs" and urging the public to rally around el-Sissi.

The closest authorities came to admitting shortcomings was last month when el-Sissi removed the armed forces' chief of staff and top police generals after a planned attack on militants in the Western Desert went disastrously wrong. The operation left over a dozen counterterrorism police officers dead and exposed poor coordination among security and intelligence agencies.

It also illustrated the problem posed by Egypt's long desert border with Libya — a country mired in chaos and rife with armed Islamic militant groups — through which weapons and fighters can be smuggled. That has fueled a second front of militant violence in the west, with signs of arms movements to the Sinai extremists.

Egypt's response has been in line with a longstanding model of fighting a conventional war against an opposing army. Indeed, recent years have seen up to \$15 billion in arms deals, largely for big-ticket items such as two helicopter carriers, submarines, assault helicopters and fighter jets.

But critics have called for a counterterrorism strategy in Sinai rather than the reliance on a conventional deployment of overwhelming force. There are some trained counterterrorism soldiers and police deployed, but most are poorly trained regular troops and police conscripts whose main skill is manning a checkpoint. Warplanes and attack helicopters have limits in a rugged mountain terrain that the militants know far better than the military does. And forces moving with tanks and heavy vehicles are often ambushed by the more agile militants using light arms, machine guns, roadside bombs and suicide bombers.

El-Sissi recently said security forces are hampered by the presence of civilians in Sinai, requiring extreme caution which benefits the insurgents. But critics say the military has been heavy-handed as is, deepening the distrust of local tribes who have long claimed discrimination.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 30 of 35

Male family members are sometimes arrested if another member is suspected of militancy, according to Sinai rights activists. Soldiers and police at checkpoints are notorious for mistreating people, they say. Roads are often blocked and mobile phone services disrupted. Houses have been razed to clear zones for military control and people forcibly evacuated. Even those who oppose the militants become less likely to help security forces.

At the same time, the militants brutally intimidate residents from cooperating with security forces, kidnapping suspected collaborators and dumping their decapitated bodies on the streets of el-Arish, Rafah and other north Sinai towns for all to see.

So the locals provide the military with little actionable intelligence.

One suggestion has been for the military to arm local Sinai tribesmen hostile to the militants — like the Sunni Arab “Awakening” militias in Iraq that were created by the U.S. military and were a key part of defeating al-Qaida in the 2000s. Given the anger many tribesmen now feel after Friday’s massacre, it’s a scenario that is becoming less unthinkable.

The military, however, fears armed tribesmen could eventually turn against it.

Critics also contend the government’s country-wide campaign against Islamists has pushed some young people toward the Islamic State group affiliate. The crackdown was launched against the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013 after the military ousted President Mohammed Morsi, a Brotherhood member. Since then, thousands of Brotherhood members and other Islamists have been jailed. There have been accounts of younger Islamists being radicalized, some in prison, and turning to IS support.

The government contends that the Brotherhood is a terrorist group, intertwined with militants from the start.

Some believe the militants are gambling as they turn ever more brutal, risking a revolt by the populace. Hassan Khalaf, a local tribal elder, said many of those killed were already cooperating with the army and that they were likely targeted as an intimidation tactic. “People are more determined now to stand against that inhuman and heartless bunch,” he said.

Associated Press writer Maggie Michael contributed to this report from Ismailia, Egypt.

France to tackle violence on women; Italy grapples with same

By **ELAINE GANLEY** and **FRANCES D’EMILIO**, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday launched an initiative to combat violence and harassment against women in France, aiming to erase a sense of shame that breeds silence among victims and changing what he said is the country’s sexist culture.

In a nearly hour-long speech at the Elysee Presidential Palace, Macron noted that 123 women died in attacks against them in France last year. Holding a moment of silence for them, he declared: “It is time for shame to change camps.”

In neighboring Italy, the head of the Chamber of Deputies marked International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women by noting with dismay that the “Weinstein case” hasn’t inspired women to speak out on workplace harassment or assault like it has in the United States and other parts of Europe.

Laura Boldrini was referring to the onslaught of revelations after sexual harassment and assault allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein were made public.

“The Weinstein case lifted the lid on the shame of (sexual) abuse” in the glamorous world of U.S. cinema, “setting off an avalanche in many other areas of society,” Boldrini said, addressing a special gathering in which all the 630 seats, usually occupied by lawmakers in Parliament’s lower house, were instead filled by guests who came to speak of their rebellion against being victims of men.

Among the invited: a woman who survived being stabbed repeatedly in the back by an ex-beau; the mother of a college student who was strangled and her corpse set ablaze by her former lover after she broke up with him; a woman whose child was slain by her estranged husband to avenge their failed marriage; a Moroccan immigrant whose abusive husband burned down their home after she found the courage

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 31 of 35

to flee to safety with their children; a Nigerian who was trafficked into a prostitution ring the day she set foot in Italy.

Boldrini lamented that Italy hasn't seen a similar outpouring of accusations of workplace harassment.

"In Italy, this certainly hasn't had the same effect," she said, adding: I'd like to think that this has happened because there aren't molesters, but I'm afraid that's not the way it is."

She explained the tendency toward silence, including about rape, saying that women "know that in this country there persists a strong prejudice against them" in terms of their credibility.

In France, Macron's plan would encourage women to take action, strengthen laws against offenders and educating citizens on the issue — starting from nursery school.

He noted that violence takes on other forms, notably in the workplace, a result of inequality and a false sense of men's superiority.

"What should be sanctuaries today becomes a hunting ground simply because (men) can use ... age, authority, their post, or simply force," the French president said.

But Macron cautioned against France becoming a society where every interaction between a man and a woman can come under suspicion. "We are not a Puritan society," he said.

Among proposed measures, Macron said legal complaints will be rushed through the system, and the statute of limitations for suspected sexual crimes against minors would be moved to 30 years from 20 currently as part of a bill to be presented in 2018.

Macron also wants to rectify "intolerable ambiguities" in the penal code surrounding the legal age of consent. Outrage followed a ruling in an assault case that an 11-year-old was of the age of consent. He suggested the age of 15 — the legal age of sexual adulthood in France, and the age at which Macron met his future wife, Brigitte, his school's drama teacher.

To encourage more women to speak out, Macron said that from the start of next year, an online alarm system will be set up for instant contact with police.

Nursery school teachers will be trained to address "non-negotiable" equality between the sexes.

Macron said violence against women is most often committed where women "should feel protected" — be it at home, in the street or in the office — and the "deafening silence" must end.

Several of those inspiring other women in Italy to refuse to accept violence at the hands of male companions or relatives, carry their scars of being attacked themselves, like Lucia Annibali, a lawyer whose face was devoured by acid tossed by two attackers hired by her ex-boyfriend, and who now advises the Italian government on legislature measures such as anti-stalking laws.

This rebellion by women marks a stunning turnaround in Italy, where a generation ago, the Italian penal code prescribed lenient prison sentences for men who killed women out of jealousy or to preserve "family honor."

Frances D'Emilio reported from Rome.

Las Vegas looks outside the casinos to draw in millennials

By REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Casinos in Las Vegas are upping the ante in their pursuit of coveted millennial visitors with new attractions designed to wow them, provide them Instagram-worthy moments and maybe even get them to gamble a little.

In 2018, a zip line across the street from Caesars Palace and an e-sports arena at the Luxor will join the city's entertainment repertoire geared toward those generally up to age 34. They are becoming majority spenders in today's economy but aren't necessarily interested in traditional casino gambling, such as blackjack and craps.

Fresh out of bankruptcy, Caesars Entertainment plans to build a 1,050-foot-long zip line above its outdoor promenade anchored by the Linq hotel-casino and the world's tallest observation wheel. The attraction —

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 32 of 35

the third of its kind in Sin City, but first on the Las Vegas Strip — will feature 10 lines that will allow thrill seekers to ride seated or Superman-style.

“It’s an efficient use of space, but it’s exciting,” Linq Promenade general manager Shaun Swanger said. “Our core audience is millennials. During the day, you see a lot broader range and a lot more families, but as the sun goes down, it gets a little bit younger, and as midnight approaches, it’s one big party.”

The ride will begin at the top of a 114-foot-tall launch tower that Caesars will build at the west end of the promenade. Photos and video of the rides, bound for social media, will be available.

Las Vegas casinos have invested in numerous non-gambling amenities to attract the elusive millennials, from rooms with bunk beds for cost-conscious young travelers to a Wi-Fi-equipped co-working space and a lounge that features pool and air hockey tables.

They also have embraced the outdoors by building a park and public promenades, counter to their long-held strategy of trying to keep people inside casinos, losing track of time as they buy more chips.

It has become increasingly common to bring zip lines — traditionally an outdoor adventure activity — into urban settings, said Andrew Lepp, an associate professor in the recreation, park and tourism management program at Kent State University. In Las Vegas, however, the thrill may last beyond the seconds-long ride.

“You get that adrenaline rush, and then you might be more likely to hit the blackjack table,” he said. “Both are forms of calculated risk taking.”

Casino operators for years have been luring young visitors with nightclubs and day clubs that regularly feature world-class DJs, some of whom have long-term contracts once reserved for stars the likes of Celine Dion.

These days, interest in the outdoors is such that Wynn Resorts Ltd. plans to begin the transformation next year of its 18-hole, par-70 golf course into a development that will feature a 38-acre lagoon.

Elsewhere on the Strip, MGM Resorts International is transforming a former nightclub into an arena for competitive gaming. The facility at the Luxor is expected to have a competition stage, LED video wall, daily gaming stations and a streaming and television-quality production studio.

MGM created a committee several years ago dedicated to reimagining the gambling experience with millennials in mind. What will become the second e-sports arena in the gambling oasis can hold 1,000 people at a time. It will have areas for people 21 and older and other spots for a crowd 16 and up.

And for young visitors who want to spend time on the casino floor but find the average slot machine unappealing, operators have adopted skill-based machines. Unlike traditional slots that depend solely on luck, a player’s skill can influence whether he or she wins on the new-age machines.

MGM Grand patrons can try a version of the popular Frogger arcade game, while Caesars property Planet Hollywood unveiled new games on its casino floor last month, including versions of the smartphone games “Catapult King” and “Into the Dead.”

The machines hit U.S. casinos for the first time a year ago in New Jersey, but casinos are still tweaking how to market them.

Chemical company’s response to water worries: Silence

By EMERY P. DALESIO, AP Business Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Americans have grown accustomed to hearing apologies from everyone from cheating car-makers to cheating presidents, but a Fortune 500 chemical company with a pollution problem in North Carolina is following a different model: don’t apologize, don’t explain.

For six months, Wilmington, Delaware-based Chemours Co. has faced questions about an unregulated chemical with unknown health risks that flowed from the company’s plant into the Cape Fear River, which provides drinking water for hundreds of thousands of people.

The company has said virtually nothing in its own defense about chemicals it may have discharged for nearly four decades, and it skipped legislative hearings looking into health concerns.

Earlier this month, North Carolina environmental regulators said they might fine Chemours, revoke its license to discharge treated wastewater into the nearby river and open a criminal probe. State officials

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 33 of 35

said the company chose silence over reporting a chemical spill last month as required.

In a rare response, Chemours said it's committed to operating the plant, which employs about 900, "in accordance with all applicable laws and in a manner that respects the environment and public health and safety."

New tests have detected the chemical GenX, used to make Teflon and other industrial products, at levels beyond the state's estimated but legally unenforceable safety guidepost in 50 private water wells near Chemours' Fayetteville plant and at a water treatment plant in Wilmington, about 100 miles (62 kilometers) downstream. There are no federal health standards addressing GenX and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency classifies it as an "emerging contaminant" to be studied.

Lack of information about the chemical, its prevalence and health effects has disturbed people across eastern North Carolina.

John Fisher, 77, said when he moved into his home 20 years ago the company's predecessor, DuPont, would invite neighbors through the gates for picnics and plant tours. But the only contact he's had with Chemours was a notice a couple of weeks ago that his water well needed testing, and its outside vendor arranging to drop off bottled water.

"They haven't officially gotten a hold of us saying, hey, we feel sorry for you, this is what we're going to do for you," Fisher said.

Fisher said he wonders whether GenX or other chemicals in his well water caused the cancer deaths of his dog and his daughter's dogs next door.

"They would get big balls hanging off their bellies and they were all cancerous," Fisher said. "We couldn't figure out why all our dogs were dying of cancer."

DuPont began using GenX to replace another fluorinated compound after neighbors of the company's Parkersburg, West Virginia, plant claimed in more than 3,500 lawsuits that the compound made them sick. DuPont spun off Chemours into a separate company two years ago. A jury in July 2016 found the two companies liable for a man's testicular cancer that he said was linked to a chemical emitted by the West Virginia plant.

The two companies this year agreed to pay nearly \$671 million to settle further lawsuits.

Chemours' zipped-lip strategy is likely a defensive crouch against the threat of costly lawsuits at a time when its financial future looks bright, said Geoffrey Basye, a public affairs consultant and former Federal Aviation Administration spokesman under President George W. Bush. Bond rating agency Moody's has upgraded its opinion of the company and Chemours' stock price has more than doubled since the start of the year.

"Not only can a stock's performance play a pivotal role in how a company chooses to respond, or not respond, major shareholders and the board can also influence a company's public affairs posture," Basye said.

The company's caution could make people think it's hiding something, he said, but he noted that industrial companies like Chemours tend to have a different culture from enterprises that deal directly with consumers.

"Companies who tend to operate in the shadows before a crisis occurs have a tendency to stay in the shadows once the crisis hits," Bayse said.

Chemours' silence runs contrary to legal lessons and social science research that suggest addressing mistakes eases hard feelings and saves corporations money, said Maurice Schweitzer, a Wharton business school professor who teaches negotiation and corporate decision-making.

Studies have found an apology for medical mistakes can be enough to satisfy aggrieved patients, leading to fewer malpractice actions, greater willingness to settle lawsuits and lower demand for damages, Schweitzer said.

"The natural tendency to keep a low profile, hope things blow over, is exactly what anyone who's been harmed by some action doesn't want," he said.

Follow Emery P. Dalesio on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/emerydalesio>. His work can be found at <https://>

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 34 of 35

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 26, the 330th day of 2017. There are 35 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 26, 1917, the National Hockey League was founded in Montreal, succeeding the National Hockey Association.

On this date:

In 1789, Americans observed a day of thanksgiving set aside by President George Washington to mark the adoption of the Constitution of the United States.

In 1864, English mathematician and writer Charles Dodgson presented a handwritten and illustrated manuscript, "Alice's Adventures Under Ground," to his 12-year-old friend Alice Pleasance Liddell; the book was later turned into "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland."

In 1933, a judge in New York ruled the James Joyce book "Ulysses" was not obscene and could be published in the United States.

In 1941, U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull delivered a note to Japan's ambassador to the United States, Kichisaburo Nomura (kee-chee-sah-boor-oh noh-moo-rah), setting forth U.S. demands for "lasting and extensive peace throughout the Pacific area." The same day, a Japanese naval task force consisting of six aircraft carriers left the Kuril Islands, headed toward Hawaii.

In 1942, the Warner Bros. motion picture "Casablanca," starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, had its world premiere at the Hollywood Theater in New York.

In 1950, China entered the Korean War, launching a counteroffensive against soldiers from the United Nations, the U.S. and South Korea.

In 1965, France launched its first satellite, the 92-pound Asterix, into orbit.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon's personal secretary, Rose Mary Woods, told a federal court that she'd accidentally caused part of the 18-1/2-minute gap in a key Watergate tape.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan appointed a commission headed by former Senator John Tower to investigate his National Security Council staff in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair.

In 1990, Japanese business giant Matsushita (mat-soosh-tah) Electric Industrial Co. agreed to acquire MCA Corp., owner of Universal Studios, for \$6.6 billion.

In 1991, the Stars and Stripes were lowered for the last time at Clark Air Base in the Philippines as the United States abandoned one of its oldest and largest overseas installations, which was damaged by a volcano.

In 1992, the British government announced that Queen Elizabeth II had volunteered to start paying taxes on her personal income, and would take her children off the public payroll.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush met separately at the White House with the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority a day ahead of a major Mideast peace conference in Annapolis, Maryland. President Bush greeted the 2007 Nobel Prize winners — including former Vice President Al Gore — in the Oval Office. Mississippi Sen. Trent Lott announced his retirement after a 35-year career in Congress. Washington Redskins star safety Sean Taylor, 24, was mortally wounded during a botched armed robbery at his home in Palmetto Bay, Florida. (Taylor died the next day.) Hall of Fame jockey Bill Hartack died in Freer, Texas, at age 74.

Five years ago: Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak abruptly quit politics, saying in a surprise announcement, "I feel I have exhausted my political activity, which had never been a special object of desire for me." New Jersey Republican Gov. Chris Christie announced that he would be seeking re-election, so he could continue to guide the state through a recovery from Superstorm Sandy.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 140 ~ 35 of 35

One year ago: Cuba said it would observe nine days of mourning for Fidel Castro, including a three-day journey by his ashes along the route taken by the rebel army he'd led on a victorious march across the island in 1959. Tony Award-winning character actor Fritz Weaver died in New York at age 90.

Today's Birthdays: Impressionist Rich Little is 79. Singer Tina Turner is 78. Singer Jean Terrell is 73. Pop musician John McVie is 72. Actress Marianne Muellerleile is 69. Actor Scott Jacoby is 61. Actress Jamie Rose is 58. Country singer Linda Davis is 55. Actor Scott Adsit is 52. Blues singer-musician Bernard Allison is 52. Country singer-musician Steve Grisaffe is 52. Actress Kristin Bauer is 51. Actor Peter Facinelli is 44. Actress Tammy Lynn Michaels Etheridge is 43. DJ/record label executive DJ Khaled (KAL'-ehd) is 42. Actress Maia (MY'-ah) Campbell is 41. Country singer Joe Nichols is 41. Contemporary Christian musicians Anthony and Randy Armstrong (Red) are 39. Actress Jessica Bowman is 37. Pop singer Natasha Bedingfield is 36. Country singer-musician Mike Gossin (Gloriana Rock) is 33. Rock musician Ben Wysocki (The Fray) is 33. Singer Lil Fizz is 32. Singer Aubrey Collins is 30. Actress-singer-TV personality Rita Ora is 27.

Thought for Today: "Some minds remain open long enough for the truth not only to enter but to pass on through by way of a ready exit without pausing anywhere along the route." — Sister Elizabeth Kenny, Australian nurse (1886-1952).