

Groton Daily Independent

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“Don't be dismayed at goodbyes. A farewell is necessary before you can meet again.”

-Richard Bach



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Tuesday, Nov. 28th

**JH GBB hosts Clark/Willow Lake
7th grade at 6 p.m., 8th grade at 7 p.m.**

Friday, December 1st

State Oral Interp at Aberdeen Central

Saturday, December 2nd

**Groton hosts JH GBB Jamboree
with Langford, Northwestern, Waubay-
Summit starting at 10 a.m.
Wrestling at Clark, 10 a.m.**

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**

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Groton is bustling with activity

Business owners downtown has been bustling with renewed activity. Jamie Simon has opened her photography studio in the upstairs part of Olde Bank Floral 'N More. GDI Living Heart Fitness has moved to the former Cozy Cafe area at 13 N Main while Rachel Crank is now renting the area vacated by the fitness center. Crank will be opening up her Project Fitness and has been busy painting and sanding the floor in anticipation of her open house later this week. Topper Tastad has been working on the overhang of Dakota Brush after the wind had torn the canopy.

It is nice to see activity downtown.

Even the churches around town are seeing new faces. After a long vacancy, Emmanuel Lutheran Church will be getting a new pastor. Pastor Young will be coming to Groton in the near future. The Christian Mission & Alliance Church has Josh Jetto serving that congregation after Pastor Bill Duncan served that church for a long time. Duncan's son, Doug, has served as interm pastor. Pastor Craig Grams has announced his retirement next summer and the call committee has been activated at St. John's Lutheran Church.

NEW SIGN-ON BONUSES!

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info, E30 prices\locations.

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

28-Point Victory over NYIT Leads to Sanford Pentagon Sweep

Sioux Falls, S.D. – The No. 25 Northern State University men's basketball team completed the weekend sweep from the Sanford Pentagon Classic, notching their largest victory of the season over New York Institute of Technology. The Wolves improve to 6-1 overall heading into the NSIC opener.

Northern took the lead early in the first half and rolled to a 28 point victory over the Bears. They shot 46.0 percent from the floor, 34.8 percent from the arc, and 56.5 percent from the foul line. NYIT shot 30.0 percent from the floor and 13.3 percent from the 3-point, as the Wolves held strong on defense. Northern forced 17 turnovers and notched 29 defensive boards in the win.

NSU out-rebounded NYIT 45-39 in the game, and recorded 22 assists to the Bears seven. The Wolves tallied 36 points in the paint, 33 points off the bench, 29 points off turnovers, 17 second chance points, and six fast break scores. A total of ten Wolves scored in the win, with three notching double-digit points.

DJ Pollard led the team with 16 points, shooting 5-of-7 from the floor and 2-of-3 from the arc. He added a team leading six assists, while notching five rebounds, two steals, and one block. Ian Smith followed with 12 points, a team leading two assists, and three assists. Bo Fries led the team off the bench with ten points. The junior shot 4-of-6 from the floor and added four rebounds and three assists.

Darin Peterka, Justin Decker, and Andrew Kallman each notched eight points apiece. Kallman shot 2-of-4 from the arc, while scoring a career high points and adding three rebounds. Gabe King followed with seven points, while Carter Evans notched six.

Logan Doyle led the team with seven rebounds, followed by Pollard, and Decker with five each. Doyle also notched a team leading two blocks, as the Wolves tallied five total as a team. Evans was second on the team with four assists, as six Wolves recorded multiple in the win.

The Wolves will open NSIC play next Friday and Saturday on the road at Minot State and U-Mary. Tip-off is scheduled for 8 p.m. on Friday versus the Beavers and 6 p.m. on Saturday against the Marauders.

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings have plenty to be thankful this season, and beating the Detroit Lions on Thanksgiving Day and essentially locking up the NFC North is the most recent. With the Vikings heading to Detroit with a 2-game lead in the division, this game was a must-win for the Lions. Detroit had confidence heading into the game, after sweeping the Vikings last season and going into Minnesota and beating the Vikings on their home turf. However, it was the Vikings who prevailed on Thursday – and they now have a commanding 3-game lead in the NFC North with only five games left to play this year.

The Vikings, led once again by Case Keenum, started out hot. The Lions got the ball to start the game, but they were forced into a three-and-out. The Vikings took their first drive 80-yards over the course of 14 plays to score a touchdown to make the score 6-0 (the extra point was missed). The Lions fumbled on the second play of their second drive, which led to a three-play, 39-yard touchdown drive by the Vikings. Before the Lions knew what hit them, the Vikings were up by 13 points. The end score was 30-23, but it was a much more lopsided game than the score would indicate. There were a few questionable calls that went the Lions' way and kept them in the game, but the Vikings were mentally tough enough to overcome and put the Lions away for good with a game-sealing interception by Xavier Rhodes.

Keenum completed 21 of 30 passes for 282 yards and two touchdowns, no interceptions, while also adding seven rushes for 20 yards and another touchdown. He has certainly earned the right to be Minnesota's starting quarterback for now, but he's on a short leash and will likely be pulled in favor of Teddy Bridgewater at the first sign of regression. Latavius Murray carried the ball 20 times for 84 yards and a touchdown, and the Vikings ran for 136-yards as a team. Kyle Rudolph was the recipient of Keenum's first touchdown toss, and he went back for seconds at the end of the first half to grab his second touchdown of the day.

The Vikings defense had perhaps their worse game of the season against Detroit, but they still held Matthew Stafford to 250 passing yards and closed the game out with the Xavier Rhodes interception. Speaking of Rhodes, he seems to have taken a step back as the season has worn on. He was primarily assigned to Marvin Jones, and Jones finished the game with six catches for 109 yards and two touchdowns. The Lions were unable to get anything going on the ground, but that was likely a combination of the Vikings run defense and the Lions ineptitude at running the ball (they are 30th in the league with only 78.3 yards per game).

Everson Griffen was the player of the game for the Vikings defense. He had four tackles, two sacks, two tackles for a loss, and three quarterback hits. Griffen also watched his son's birth via video chat while warming up for the game in Detroit. He then wrote "I just had a baby boy. What should we name him?" on his shirt below his jersey – which he displayed after his first sack. He will likely be fined for the act, but I'm sure it was well worth it!

Looking ahead, the Vikings travel to Atlanta to battle the Falcons. After losing the Superbowl last year, the Falcons started this season off slowly before turning things around recently – they started out 3-3, but have won four of their last five games. The Falcons are slight favorites, but I'm not sure why – The Vikings score more points per game, have more yards per game, while also allowing less points and yards per game on defense. If Xavier Rhodes can shake this funk he's going through, he'll be able to shut down Julio Jones and the Falcons offense will be one dimensional. If the Vikings can do that, they will likely win. Skoll!

If you have any questions or comments, reach out to me on Facebook ([facebook.com/SkolJWright](https://www.facebook.com/SkolJWright)) or on Twitter (@SkolJWright)



Regulatory Relief for Community Banks and Credit Unions

In South Dakota, our local banks and credit unions play an important role in helping our businesses thrive and our communities grow. Local financial institutions help families buy a home, start a new business or save for the future. As a member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, one of my priorities has been to relieve community banks and credit unions from the unnecessary regulatory burdens imposed on them.

I recently joined a bipartisan group of Banking Committee members to introduce a bill that would improve our nation's financial regulatory framework and promote a healthy economy. Since the enactment of the Dodd-Frank act, which was an overreaction to the 2008 financial crisis, our financial institutions and our economy have suffered. Our proposal begins to roll back some of Dodd-Frank's one-size-fits-all regulations, which have been disproportionately hurting small-and-medium sized institutions who had nothing to do with the financial crisis. While there is still work to be done, our proposal is a good step toward allowing community banks and credit unions to expand, and I'm happy that it includes a number of provisions that I introduced.

Included in our bipartisan bill is the Home Mortgage Disclosure Adjustment Act, which provides small banks and credit unions with data reporting relief. It also includes relief from Dodd-Frank capital rules that allows banks to count high-quality municipal bonds toward capital requirements. This will be helpful to both banks and local governments that issue debt.

Our legislation also contains provisions of my Community Bank Access to Capital Act that would free small banks from having to go through arduous and expensive tests mandated under Dodd-Frank and make it easier for banks with less than \$3 billion in assets to raise capital and grow. It also includes language that protects the credit of our military veterans who are awaiting delayed payments from the VA Choice program. Lastly, it provides rural appraisal relief for situations when borrowers apply for a loan of less than \$400,000 and have trouble finding a qualified appraiser.

In addition to our most-recent bipartisan proposal, I have also introduced a number of different stand-alone bills this year to help improve access to credit for South Dakotans and reduce the regulatory burden of Dodd-Frank on local financial institutions so they can better provide loans and other services to their customers. I continue working to move my TAILOR Act forward in the Senate—this bill would require regulatory agencies to take into account the risk profile and business models of individual financial institutions and tailor their regulations accordingly. This will help put a stop to the one-size-fits-all approach to rulemaking we've seen out of Washington during the previous administration.

Making sure South Dakota families and businesses have access to credit when they need it is critical as we work to grow a healthy American economy. Every step we can take to provide relief to our lenders is a win for South Dakota families and businesses who rely on them for credit. I look forward to continue working on legislation that will provide smart, targeted regulatory relief to our community banks and credit unions so they can better serve their customers and boost South Dakota's economic activity.

*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)*

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Today in Weather History

November 27, 1960: An ice storm occurred from 40 miles on either side of a line from Pipestone to Brainerd, Minnesota. Power and communication lines were downed, leaving at least 22 communities isolated. Ice coating reported ranged from one half to three fourth of an inch at Lake Benton. Heavy snow fell in eastern North Dakota with blizzard conditions throughout the state. In South Dakota, this storm began as freezing rain on the 27th and remained largely as such in the southeast quarter of the state. The remainder of the experienced blizzard conditions with 5 to 10 inches of snow and winds gusting to 30 to 60 mph. These horrible caused extensive closing of schools and businesses, blocked highways, and disrupted telephone and power services. Slippery highways caused many auto accidents. Some loss of livestock was reported, such as 1,000 turkeys in Gettysburg. Restoration of telephone service alone was estimated to have cost \$210,000 and required up to three days after the storm.

November 27, 1983: A weekend storm that began with light snow on the 26th continued to gather strength, culminating in a blizzard that was accompanied by thunder and lightning during the evening hours on the 27th. The heaviest snowfall occurred from Marshall County SSE to Gregory County in South Dakota, with the heaviest snow falling as thunder snow showers. Snow amounts ranged from 4 to 18 inches. Strong winds up to 50 mph created near zero visibilities and difficult driving conditions as numerous roads drifted shut with up to eight-foot drifts. Numerous accidents ensued, with many people forced to stay overnight in their stranded vehicles. Airlines were forced to cancel all flights as airports were closed into midday on the 28th. Almost all schools and businesses were closed on the 28th and even on the 29th in many areas. Storm total snowfall amounts included 8 inches at Clark; 7 inches at Artichoke Lake, Bryant 1NE, Clear Lake, Victor 4 NNE, and Browns Valley; 6 inches at Wheaton, Wilmot, and Harrold 12 SSW; 5 inches at Kennebec, Sisseton, and Mellette 4W; 4 inches at Watertown, Highmore 1W, Murdo, Redfield, Waubay, Ashton 2S, and Britton; and 3 inches at Aberdeen, Castlewood, Columbia 8N, Onida 4NW, and Pierre.








November 27, 1994:

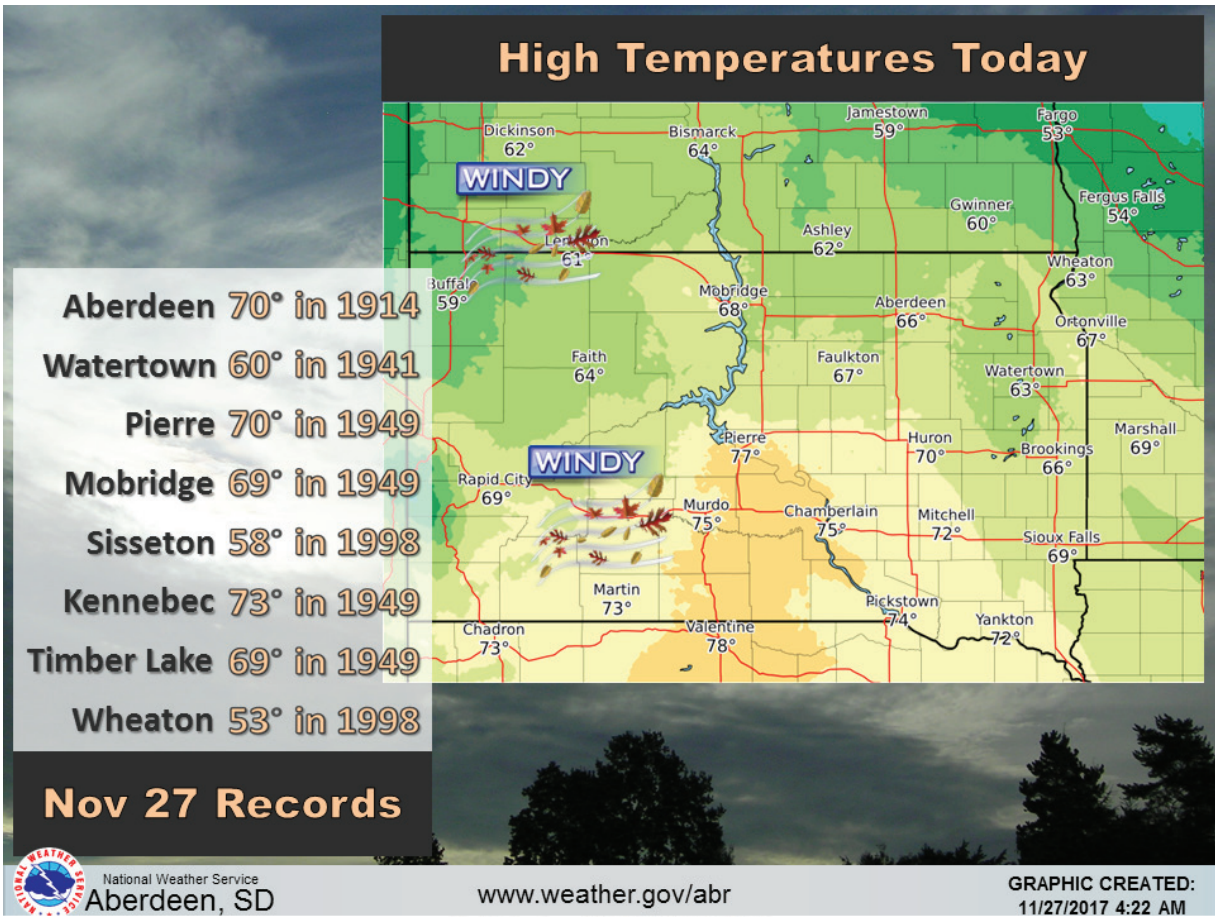
Low pressure developed over eastern Colorado late Saturday the 26th and strengthened over Kansas early on the 27th. By late in the day on the 27th, the low pressure system had developed into the first winter storm for Minnesota. By the early morning hours of the 28th, a swath of snow in excess of 6 inches had blanketed much of southwest through central into northeast Minnesota.

Snowfalls of 6 inches or more occurred south of a line from Gunflint Lake in Cook County to near Ortonville in Big Stone County and along and north of a line from near Blue Earth in Faribault county to Red Wing in Goodhue county. The snow closed the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport for a short time on the 27th, and contributed to hundreds of accidents and at least three fatalities. The greatest snowfall was 14.1 inches in Duluth. In addition, very strong east winds gusted over 50 mph in Duluth causing blizzard conditions. The high winds brought waves in excess of 16 feet crashing against the Lake Superior shoreline in Duluth, covering the Duluth Canal Park Lake Walk with extensive debris. A buildup of ice and snow in combination with strong winds resulted in numerous downed power lines in southeast Minnesota. Widespread heavy snow fell over mostly the eastern half of South Dakota on November 27-28. Peak accumulations were 10 inches at Sioux Falls and 9 inches at Howard and near Canton. Damage resulted mainly from numerous minor traffic accidents. Storm snowfall amounts in this area included 8 inches at Eureka; 7 inches at Victor 4NNE, Leola, Onaka 2N, Roscoe, Faulkton, Columbia 8N, Aberdeen, and Selby; 6 inches at Redfield, Mellette 4W, Bryant 1NE, Blunt, Wheaton, and Raymond 3NE; 5 inches at Pollock, Miller, Milbank 2SSW, Ipswich, Harrold 12SSW, Eagle Butte, Clark, Artichoke Lake, and Onida 4NW; 4 inches at Mobridge, Timber Lake, McIntosh 6SE, Conde, Clear Lake, Pierre, and Ashton 2S; 3 inches at Sisseton, Webster, Waubay, Summit 1W, Presho 7NW, Kennebec, Highmore 1W, Gann Valley 4NW, Castlewood, Browns Valley, Watertown, and Wilmot.

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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
						
Mostly Sunny	Clearing Late	Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Cloudy	Sunny
High: 66 °F	Low: 34 °F	High: 47 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 49 °F	Low: 27 °F	High: 44 °F



An abnormally warm day is in store this afternoon, with record high temperatures possible across the region. Winds will shift from the south to the northwest this afternoon, becoming gusty, especially for areas along and west of the Missouri River. The gusty winds, very warm temperatures and dry conditions will result in high to very high fire danger today.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 53.1

Low Outside Temp: 22.6

High Gust: 12

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 70° in 1914

Record Low: -18° in 1985

Average High: 33°F

Average Low: 13°F

Average Precip in Nov: .68

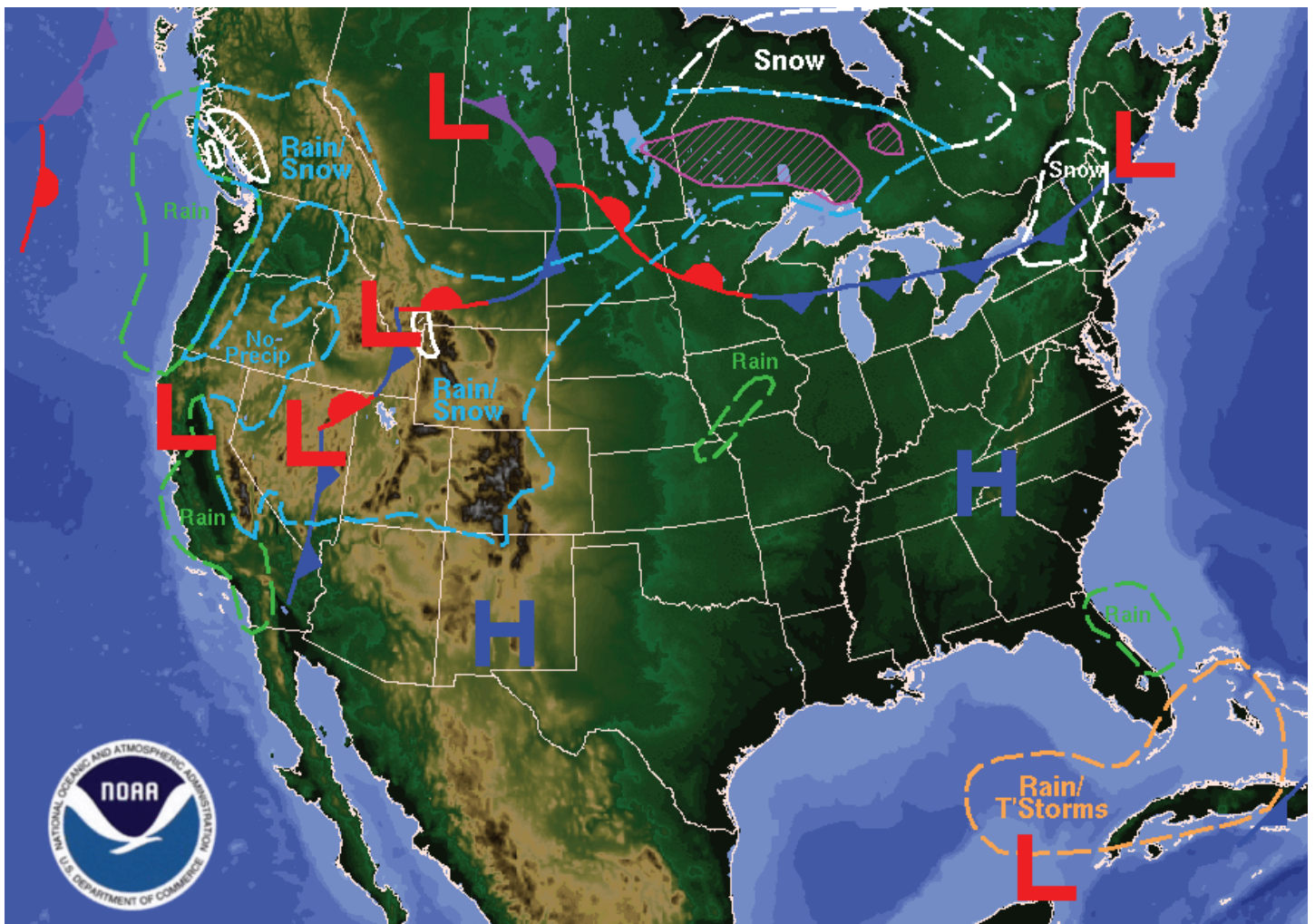
Precip to date in Nov: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.15

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 4:53 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:50 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Nov 27, 2017, issued 4:51 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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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.

2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

News from the Associated Press

Young driver injured following police chase

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a young driver was seriously injured when she fled from police and struck a concrete retaining wall.

The crash Sunday about 5 p.m. scattered large chunks of concrete across Interstate 229. The South Dakota Highway Patrol attempted to stop the girl for speeding on I-229. Police say the girl accelerated and passed other vehicles on the right shoulder before taking the 10th Street off ramp at about 80 mph, losing control and crashing into the wall on the overpass. She was taken to a local hospital.

The Argus Leader says the South Dakota Department of Transportation is assessing damage to the bridge.

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

South Dakota high school runs career program for 20 years

By SARA BERTSCH, The Daily Republic

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Every other day, more than 50 Mitchell High School students ditch school.

Not to hang out with friends or to skip classes, but these students participate in the World of Work program, put on by Mitchell High School.

For more than 20 years, the program — which allows students to work in a profession of interested — has been in existence at MHS. And for the past five years, Mitchell teacher Travis Carpenter said, the program has held a steady interest among MHS students, allowing more than 250 to test a career path before pursuing it after graduation.

And this year is no different, as more than 50 students are spending every other day in the Mitchell community working various jobs from health care to broadcasting, the Daily Republic reported .

This week marks approximately a month since the students have been out and about in their new jobs, which will last through the end of the semester, and for some, the rest of the school year, Carpenter said.

"The idea is they get to check stuff out before they go and spend time and money in college and they can make a decision before they get there," Carpenter said. "If they don't like it, I think that's probably the biggest benefit."

For the first six weeks of the course, Carpenter said students work in the classroom and learn about resumes, cover letters and job exploration. During this time, Carpenter reaches out to Mitchell businesses and organizations for student job placements.

Once placed, students work every other day from noon to 3:15 p.m. as an employee, Carpenter said. The schedule works with the high school's black and gold calendar, meaning some weeks students work Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and other weeks they work Tuesday and Thursday.

Carter Cavanaugh dreams of opening his own business.

And now the 18-year-old Mitchell senior is one step closer as he spends his afternoons working at Sun Gold Sports, a custom printing and sports apparel shop in Mitchell.

"It's definitely refreshing, and better than being in the classroom, for sure. The most enjoyable part for me is there are so many aspects to how a business is ran," Cavanaugh said, adding that he also is allowed to experiment with designs. "I get the whole enchilada."

Cavanaugh started doing "the simpler stuff" such as helping with advertisements and making shirts, is slowly expanding his horizons, he said. And this is typical of many businesses, Carpenter said, adding many employers start the students slow and work them to harder tasks.

But while Cavanaugh is working with printing designs, classmate Sam Edwards finds himself on the radio.

Edwards, 17, works at KORN radio in Mitchell, helping with recordings for news and sports, and also shadowing live broadcasts during area sport events. His goal is to become a sports broadcaster.

"I'm really into sports and stuff like that," Edwards said. "And we can just see if we like the career field or not."

And Edwards, like Cavanaugh, hasn't been strayed yet, both thoroughly enjoying their chosen career fields. Edwards has plans to go to the University of South Dakota in Vermillion or South Dakota State University in Brookings for his post-secondary education. Cavanaugh is also considering USD, and recently the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Other than Sun Gold Sports and KORN, Carpenter said there are numerous other places in town where students are working, including the hospital and police station.

And each is glad to take on a student.

"The employers in Mitchell and business in Mitchell are receptive and pretty awesome to work with," Carpenter said. "To take on a student is a big deal, and they typically do a really good job in showing them what is all entailed in the business and not using them for free workers. They do a great job with our kids."

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

South Dakota sisters launch handwritten card business

By JIM HOLLAND, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Who would have expected a pair of young women — millennials assumed to be consumed in the era of social media — to get so nostalgic for sending handwritten greeting cards and letters?

OMG! R U kidding me?

All kidding aside, Leah Nixon of Rapid City and her sister, Grace Nixon Peterson, now living in Florida, indeed belong to the generation which can tap out a text faster with two thumbs than most can type with 10 fingers. But you're just as likely to catch them applying a postage stamp to an envelope with a handwritten letter or card and dropping it into a mailbox.

"I think it's something my mom raised me with," said Grace, 31. "You send a handwritten thank-you note. You express in words what someone means to you. We grew up knowing this is something important to do."

That love of personal expression was powerful enough for the two siblings, daughters of Bob and Glenda Nixon of Rapid City, to launch their own business dedicated to helping others experience what parents and grandparents have known all along, the joy of real correspondence: a handwritten and personalized card or letter.

"When I see a photo printed out and something in someone's handwriting, I think this is just so special. It's way more amazing than seeing a text message," said Leah, 28.

On Oct. 18, Grace and Leah introduced their first release of greeting cards and custom stationery under the name of Tiny and Snail.

Their Signature Collection, a 22-piece line of custom stamps, card and stationery sets, features original illustrations from both women, the Rapid City Journal reported .

"We really want our cards to be an interaction between us and the senders and allow them to partake in this magical process of sending meaningful mail," Grace said.

Ironically, the women so enamored with old-fashioned correspondence rely entirely on modern e-commerce to market their brand of nostalgia. At least for now, their cards and stationery are available online at tinyandsnail.com, with links also found on Instagram and Facebook.

"I love technology so much," Grace said. "It allows us to have this business online and to reach anyone. It's a meld of old and new."

Grace divides the year between New York and Florida with her husband, a golf professional, and Tiny and Snail is her full-time occupation. Leah pitches in evenings and weekends after working her day job, building homes with Habitat for Humanity.

They hope to eventually market their products wholesale through stores and set up parties where people can gather, pick out envelopes and make cards for their friends.

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Grace's initial foray into greeting cards started with her attempt to hand-paint individual cards until she encountered problems with her wrist.

"I actually ended up ruining my hand doing that. I gave myself a repetitive stress injury because I was doing so much detail work," she said.

Her sister stepped up to help. Leah, who studied art at Washington University in St. Louis and learned web design on her own, helped produce digital files of the original art for high-quality reproduction by a printing firm in Florida.

Inspiration for their company name, Tiny & Snail, came from a comic drawn by the young daughter of family church friends.

The names were a perfect fit. Tiny refers to Leah's trendy tiny home she built in Kentucky and recently moved to Rapid City, where she works for Black Hills Habitat for Humanity.

"Leah's tiny and I've been into snail mail for as long as I can remember," Grace said. "It sounds like a law firm so that's extra hilarious."

Their first collaboration came while Leah was still attending St. Thomas More High School in Rapid City where she graduated in 2007.

Leah and Grace, a 2004 STM graduate, called themselves the Ladybug Ladies in a successful project to raise \$100,000 for Habitat for Humanity.

"We really complement each other well," Leah said. "I think I'd want her as a business partner even if she wasn't my sister."

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

South Dakota State cruises past NAIA foe Dakota State 92-60

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Mike Daum scored 16 points and South Dakota State defeated Dakota State 92-60 on Sunday.

Reed Tellinghuisen added 14 points, Brandon Key added a career-high 13 with seven assists and David Jenkins also scored 13 as South Dakota State (6-2) led by as many as 41 points against the Trojans of the NAIA.

The Jackrabbits' deeper bench outscored Dakota State's 46-24.

Keeon Johnson led the Trojans with 11 points and Brady Elder added 10 and Kevin Daniels had five assists.

Daum and Tellinghuisen combined to make nine of 24 field goals, but the Jackrabbits finished with 56 percent shooting (35 of 63) and connected on nine 3-pointers, Jenkins with three. The bigger size inside gave South Dakota State a 48-16 scoring edge on points in the paint and 14-5 edge on second-chance baskets.

South Dakota dumps Youngstown St. 81-53

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Brandon Armstrong scored 16 points and Matt Mooney had 14 and South Dakota pummeled Youngstown State 81-53 on Sunday on the third day of the Stanford Pentagon Showcase.

Tyler Peterson made a 3-pointer with 6:20 before halftime and South Dakota led 26-14. The Coyotes — who never trailed — built a 45-24 halftime lead. Youngstown State (2-5) never threatened in the second half, and Peterson's layup with 12:13 to play extended the lead to 60-35. Peterson was perfect shooting, making all four of his field goals — and a pair of free throws — to contribute 10 points.

South Dakota (6-2) was 31 for 57 from the field and made 10 of 19 3-pointers.

Cameron Morse led Youngstown State (2-5) with 12 points and Jeremiah Ferguson added 10. The Penguins shot 37.7 percent and just 3 of 19 from 3-point range.

Firm gets 700 applications for pink slime' worker aid fund

DAKOTA DUNES, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota meat producer has received 700 applications for aid from former workers.

The Dakota Dunes-based company in September set up a \$10 million fund for employees who lost jobs when the company closed three plants in 2012 over reports of a beef product critics dubbed "pink slime."

BPI general counsel Rich Jochum tells the Sioux City Journal the applications will be reviewed to determine how much aid former employees will receive.

The company laid off about 750 workers and closed plants in Texas, Kansas and Iowa in 2012, saying ABC's coverage of the producer's lean, finely textured beef product misled consumers into believing the product is unsafe. ABC stood by its reporting.

BPI sued ABC for defamation. Terms of a June settlement are confidential.

Northern Colorado wins 77-63, sweeps tournament field

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Anthony Johnson scored 26 points and Northern Colorado beat Southern Miss 77-63 Sunday on the final day of the Sanford Pentagon Showcase.

Johnson shot 11 of 17 from the field, including 4 of 8 on 3-point tries. Jordan Davis added 14 points, going over the 1,000 career mark, and had seven rebounds and six assists. Jonah Radebaugh scored 12 points and grabbed 10 rebounds and Andre Spight added 10 points. The Bears shot 54 percent and were 12 of 27 for 44 percent from the arc.

The Bears (5-2) completed a sweep of their three opponents in Sioux Falls and won their fifth straight game.

Cortez Edwards scored 20 points with six rebounds for the Golden Eagles (3-3) with Tyree Griffin adding 15 points.

The Bears, leading by one with under 13 minutes left, went on a 15-0 run over the next three minutes with Johnson and Radebaugh scoring six points each to go up 59-43. Edwards had a bucket to get the Eagles within eight with 1:23 left but the Bears scored the last six points on free throws.

South Dakota school district addresses suicide policy

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Officials in a western South Dakota school district are addressing their suicide-prevention policies after three male students killed themselves between July and September.

The Rapid City Area School District is looking to improve training, raise awareness of warning signs, institute a culture of reporting and define a better path to recovery. The district will continue to hold public meetings to identify a community approach to better address suicide, the Rapid City Journal reported .

The three recent incidents revealed holes and inconsistencies in the district's existing policy, said Matt Seebaum, assistant superintendent for educational services at Rapid City Area Schools.

"We were dealing with it reactively," Seebaum said.

District officials received 77 reports of suicide concern from the beginning of the school year through Nov. 9. Of those, 18 involved elementary school students, 14 involved middle school students and 45 involved high school students.

The reports identify concerns around transitions, like fifth grade and ninth grade, which can be difficult for students who don't feel prepared.

District officials contacted national experts in school suicide, Scott Poland and Richard Lieberman, to provide insight into intervention and prevention. Poland and Lieberman discussed danger points and seasonal trends, noting that the winter holidays and the spring can bring higher rates of suicide.

"We can't predict the future, but we can anticipate," said Seebaum. "What we have works for now, but what we can have can be so much better."

South Dakota already has a high suicide rate, particularly among youth. The rates have increased over the last two decades.

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

Memorial to honor former Gov. William H. McMaster

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Efforts are underway in a southeast South Dakota city to memorialize former Gov. William H. McMaster.

A statue honoring the former Republican governor is on track to be unveiled in Yankton this June, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported. McMaster, who moved to Yankton in 1901, served as the state's governor from 1921 to 1925, and later served in the U.S. Senate. He also served in the state Legislature and as lieutenant governor.

The Yankton County Historic Preservation Commission is working with a local business to make the memorial unique. The marker will be attached to the Meridian Bridge because McMaster helped build bridges across the Missouri River. McMaster also presided over the dedication of Meridian Bridge, which will be noted in his marker.

"The marker is being made as we speak," said Bernie Hunhoff, a member of the commission. "Instead of just sticking (the plaque) on a metal pole, we're going to do something a little more creative."

Yankton officials have been trying to honor McMaster for the past three years.

Tony Venhuizen, the current governor's chief of staff, said some of South Dakota's former governors were honored with historic markers in their hometowns, while others were not.

"It was really just a matter of whether a given town had taken the initiative and put it up or not," Venhuizen said.

The county's historic preservation commission voted unanimously in May to memorialize McMaster and fundraise between \$2,000 and \$3,000 for the project.

Hunhoff said commissioners nearly met their fundraising goals to pay for the marker, though they could still use donations to cover final expenses. He said local residents have been very giving.

"It's not surprising," Hunhoff said. "Yankton is a community that is, first of all, always generous, and secondly, very interested in preserving the community's history."

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. TRUMP'S MAR-A-LAGO STAY A WELCOME BREAK FROM DC CHALLENGES

The president draws a wiggly line between work, play and business at the private club he calls his "winter White House."

2. FBI LEAVES U.S. TARGETS OF RUSSIAN HACKERS IN THE DARK

The Associated Press has found that the FBI failed to tell scores of U.S. officials about attempts to hack into their personal Gmail accounts.

3. WHO IS VISITING CATHOLICS IN ASIA

Pope Francis is visiting Myanmar and Bangladesh to encourage their tiny Catholic communities and reach out to some of Asia's most peripheral and poor.

4. WHY 22 VILLAGES MUST EVACUATE IN INDONESIA

Indonesian authorities order a mass evacuation of people from an expanded danger zone around an erupting volcano on Bali.

5. MEN CLEARED OF TERROR TIES IN HIGH-PROFILE BORDER CASE

Documents obtained by The Associated Press reveal the six Middle Eastern men were fleeing violence and persecution in their homelands and were cleared of any terrorism ties.

6. REPLACING LYMPH NODES TO EASE PAINFUL LEGACY OF CANCER CARE

Some doctors are using lymph node replacement to ease lymphedema, a debilitating condition that gets little attention and has no cure.

7. CONGRESSMAN GIVES UP HOUSE JUDICIARY POST

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Michigan Rep. John Conyers acknowledges that a congressional probe into allegations of sexual harassment made against him had become an unwelcome distraction.

8. HOW PAKISTAN PROTEST WAS AFFECTED BY MINISTER

Pakistani Islamists announce they are disbanding their sit-in near Islamabad after the country's law minister resigned

9. WHICH CONTESTANT IS CROWNED MISS UNIVERSE

Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, who represents South Africa, wins the Miss Universe crown.

10. PLAYOFFS SET TO START IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL THIS WEEKEND

For just the second time in the 81-year history of the AP college football poll, four games in one weekend will match teams ranked in the top 10.

Indonesia volcano forces mass evacuation, shuts Bali airport

By **FIRDIA LISNAWATI** and **STEPHEN WRIGHT**, Associated Press

KARANGASEM, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesian authorities ordered a mass evacuation of people Monday from an expanded danger zone around an erupting volcano on Bali that has forced the island's international airport to close, stranding tens of thousands of travelers.

Mount Agung has been hurling clouds of white and dark gray ash about 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) into the atmosphere since the weekend and lava is welling up in the crater, sometimes reflected as a reddish-yellow glow in the ash plumes. Its explosions can be heard about 12 kilometers (7 1/2 miles) away.

Videos released by the National Disaster Mitigation Agency showed a mudflow of volcanic debris and water known as a lahar moving down the volcano's slopes. It said lahars could increase because it is rainy season and warned people to stay away from rivers.

The agency raised the volcano's alert to the highest level early Monday and expanded the danger zone to 10 kilometers (6 miles) in places from the previous 7 1/2 kilometers. It said a larger eruption is possible.

Spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho told a news conference in Jakarta that the extension of the danger zone affects 22 villages and about 90,000 to 100,000 people. He said about 40,000 people have evacuated but others have not left because they feel safe or don't want to abandon their livestock.

"Authorities will comb the area to persuade them," he said. "If needed we will forcibly evacuate them." About 25,000 people were already living in evacuation centers after an increase in tremors from the mountain in September sparked an evacuation.

Lava rising in the crater "will certainly spill over to the slopes," Sutopo said.

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

Villager Putu Sulasmi said she fled with her husband and other family members to a sports hall that is serving as an evacuation center.

"We came here on motorcycles. We had to evacuate because our house is just 3 miles from the mountain. We were so scared with the thundering sound and red light," she said.

The family had stayed at the same sports center in September and October when the volcano's alert was at the highest level for several weeks but it didn't erupt. They had returned to their village about a week ago.

"If it has to erupt let it erupt now rather than leaving us in uncertainty. I'll just accept it if our house is destroyed," she said.

Bali's airport was closed early Monday after ash, which can pose a deadly threat to aircraft, reached its airspace.

Flight information boards showed rows of cancellations as tourists arrived at the busy airport expecting to catch flights home.

Airport spokesman Air Ahsanurrohim said 445 flights were canceled, stranding about 59,000 travelers. The closure is in effect until Tuesday morning though officials said the situation will be reviewed every six hours. It had a ripple effect across Indonesia, causing delays at other airports because Bali's I Gusti Ngurah Rai airport is a national hub with many transiting flights.

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China said there were 17,000 Chinese tourists on Bali before the latest eruption. The Chinese consulate said on its website that airlines and travel services were arranging 100 buses to take Chinese tourists to catch ferries to neighboring Java.

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.

Some flights to and from Bali were canceled on Saturday and Sunday but most had continued to operate normally as the towering ash clouds were moving east toward the neighboring island of Lombok.

"We now have to find a hotel and spend more of our money that they're not going to cover us for when we get home unfortunately," said Canadian tourist Brandon Olsen, who was stranded at Bali's airport with his girlfriend.

Indonesia's Directorate General of Land Transportation said 100 buses were being deployed to Bali's international airport and to ferry terminals to help travelers stranded by the eruption.

The agency's chief, Budi, said major ferry crossing points have been advised to prepare for a surge in passengers and vehicles. Stranded tourists could leave Bali by taking a ferry to neighboring Java and then traveling by land to the nearest airports.

Indonesia's tourism ministry said member hotels of the Indonesia Hotel and Restaurant Association will provide a night's free accommodation to people affected by the airport closure.

Ash has settled on villages and resorts around the volcano, and soldiers and police distributed masks over the weekend.

In Karangasem district that surrounds the volcano, tourists stopped to watch the towering plumes of ash as children made their way to school.

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 mountain, which prompted more than 140,000 people to leave the area. The alert was lowered on Oct. 29 after a decrease in activity, but about 25,000 people remained in evacuation centers.

Wright reported from Jakarta. Associated Press writer Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta contributed to this report.

Prince Harry and actress Meghan Markle to wed next year

By SYLVIA HUI and GREGORY KATZ, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Actress, humanitarian campaigner, lifestyle blogger — and, next spring, a royal.

Palace officials announced Monday that Prince Harry is engaged to Meghan Markle, confirming months of rumors that the couple was close to tying the knot.

Harry's brother, Prince William, and his pregnant wife Kate welcomed Markle to the royal family.

"We are very excited for Harry and Meghan," they said in a statement. "It has been wonderful getting to know Meghan and to see how happy she and Harry are together."

The announcement means another grand royal wedding is in the offing — the first since William and Kate married in 2011.

In some ways, Markle — a mixed-race American raised in California, an outspoken full-time actress, and a divorcee — makes a surprising addition to Britain's monarchy.

But the institution has moved on with the times, and the romance between Markle and Harry — who has repeatedly stressed his wish to lead as "normal" a life as he could — has a decidedly unstuffy, modern feel to it.

Markle, best known for her role as an ambitious paralegal in the hit U.S. legal drama "Suits," surprised many when she shared her feelings for Harry in a September cover story for Vanity Fair. Asked about the media frenzy surrounding their courtship, the 36-year-old said: "At the end of the day I think it's really simple ... we're two people who are really happy and in love."

Describing Harry as her "boyfriend," Markle said that while she expected that she and Harry would have to "come forward" about their relationship at some point, the two were just a couple enjoying time spent

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with each other.

"Personally, I love a great love story," she said.

Harry — once known for his "bad boy" antics, including being photographed playing strip billiards in Las Vegas — has largely won over the British public with his winning smile, his military career and his devotion to charities aimed at helping disabled veterans and other causes.

The 33-year-old prince recently won praise with his work campaigning for more openness about mental health issues. Speaking candidly about his personal struggle to cope with the loss of his mother, Princess Diana, when he was only 12, he encouraged others to talk about their own problems rather than keeping them bottled up inside.

Markle's Vanity Fair interview broke new ground. It is unusual for a royal love interest to speak so publicly — and candidly — before becoming engaged. Harry's past reported girlfriends all shied away from the media limelight, and his sister-in-law, formerly known as Kate Middleton, stayed silent until she and Prince William gave a formal televised interview at Buckingham Palace after their engagement became public.

But then, unlike some other "commoners" romantically linked to Britain's royals, Markle is no stranger to media exposure and the world of show business.

The actress's most successful role is the feisty Rachel Zane in the TV legal show "Suits," now in its seventh season. Her career has included small parts on TV series including "Fringe," "CSI: Miami," "Knight Rider" and "Castle," as well as movies such as "Horrible Bosses." Outside of acting, Markle founded a lifestyle blog called TheTig.com (which closed down in April without explanation), and has lent her celebrity status to humanitarian causes.

She has campaigned with the United Nations on gender equality, written in Time magazine about girls' education and the stigma surrounding menstruation, and has traveled to Rwanda as global ambassador for the charity World Vision Canada. She has described how her mother took her to the slums of Jamaica to witness poverty first-hand, saying experiences like that shaped her social consciousness and charity work.

To some degree that mirrors the experience of Harry, who was also inspired by his mother's humanitarian work and embraced the types of charities Diana favored in the final years of her life before her 1997 death in a Paris car crash.

Harry and Markle held hands for their first official appearance together in September in Toronto at the Invictus Games, a sporting event for wounded service personnel that Harry spearheaded.

Both were dressed casually in jeans, smiling and chatting as they arrived for a tennis match. Several days later, Harry was photographed kissing Markle on the cheek as he joined the actress and her mother in a luxury box to watch the event's closing ceremony.

Markle said she met Harry through friends in London in July 2016, and that they had been dating quietly for several months before the romance hit the headlines.

The media attention then became so intense that Harry took the unusual step of officially confirming the romance in order to warn the media off. In a strongly worded statement issued through the palace, the prince pleaded for reporters to stop intruding on his girlfriend's privacy. He condemned "outright sexism and racism" in some online comments, and said some articles with "racial undertones" had crossed the line.

Some tabloids had alluded to Markle's mixed-race heritage, pointing out she has an African-American mother and a white father.

Markle herself has spoken out about coming to terms with being biracial — both growing up, and in her Hollywood career.

In a March interview with Allure magazine, she said studying race at college was "the first time I could put a name to feeling too light in the black community and too mixed in the white community.

"For castings, I was labeled 'ethnically ambiguous,'" she said.

Markle was born Aug. 4, 1981, to a clinical therapist mother and television lighting director father. She grew up in Los Angeles, and now lives in Toronto.

She studied at a girls' Roman Catholic high school before attending Northwestern University in Illinois, where she studied theater and international relations.

Markle married film producer Trevor Engelson in 2011, but the pair divorced two years later.

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It wouldn't be first time that a British royal has married an American — or a divorcee. In 1936, Edward VIII famously abdicated after he was forced to choose between the monarchy and his relationship with twice-divorced American socialite Wallis Simpson.

In her Vanity Fair interview, Markle made clear the world's attention on her romance did not faze her. "I'm still the same person that I am, and I've never defined myself by my relationship," she said. "The people who are close to me anchor me in knowing who I am. The rest is noise."

Pope's trip to Myanmar, Bangladesh turns on 1 word: Rohingya

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Pope Francis arrived Monday on a visit to Myanmar and Bangladesh to encourage their tiny Catholic communities and reach out to some of Asia's most peripheral and poor, but the big question looming is whether he'll utter the word "Rohingya" while he's here.

The "will he or won't he?" issue has dominated debate before Francis' trip, which began Monday and ends with a youth rally in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on Dec. 2.

Upon arrival in Yangon, the pope was greeted by local Catholic officials and his motorcade passed by thousands of Myanmar's Catholics, who lined the roads, wearing traditional attire and playing music.

Children in traditional dress greeted him as he drove in a simple blue sedan, chanting "Viva il papa!" (Long live the pope) and waving small plastic Burmese and Holy See flags. Posters wishing Francis "a heartiest of welcome" lined the route into town.

En route from Rome, Francis greeted journalists on the plane and apologized for the expected heat, which was 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 Celsius) upon his arrival and is expected to rise during his stay.

In Myanmar, Francis will meet separately with the country's civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, its powerful military chief and Buddhist monks. He'll greet a delegation of Rohingya Muslims and meet with Bangladesh's political and religious leadership in Dhaka. Masses for the Catholic faithful and meetings with the local church hierarchy round out the itinerary in each country.

Myanmar's local Catholic Church has publicly urged Francis to avoid using the term "Rohingya," which is shunned by many locally because the ethnic group is not a recognized minority in the country. Rohingya in recent months have been subject to what the United Nations says is a campaign of "textbook ethnic cleansing" by the military in poverty-wracked Rakhine state.

Francis, though, has already prayed for "our Rohingya brothers and sisters," and any decision to avoid the term could be viewed as a capitulation to Myanmar's military and a stain on his legacy of standing up for the most oppressed and marginalized of society, no matter how impolitic.

"Being a religious leader — Catholic leader — means that he is well-regarded, but of course there is this worry if he says something, people might say, 'OK, he just came to meddle,'" said Burmese analyst Khin Zaw Win, a former political prisoner. "So, I think a lot of diplomacy is needed, in addition to the public relations."

The trip was planned before the latest spasm of violence erupted in August, when Rohingya militants attacked security positions in Rakhine. Myanmar security forces responded with a scorched-earth campaign that forced more than 620,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh, where they are living in squalid refugee camps.

In the Kutupalong refugee camp in southern Bangladesh, Senu Ara, 35, welcomed Francis' arrival for what he might be able to do for the refugees.

"He might help us get the peace that we are desperately searching for," she said. "Even if we stay here he will make our situation better. If he decides to send us back, he will do so in a peaceful way."

The signals from the Vatican going into the trip were mixed about how Francis would address the refugee plight: The Vatican spokesman used the term "Rohingya" in a pre-trip briefing and said "It's not a prohibited word" as far as the Vatican was concerned. But the Holy See's top diplomat, Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, avoided it in an interview with Vatican media on the eve of the trip.

The debate isn't just semantic: Myanmar's government and most of the Buddhist majority consider them Bengali migrants from Bangladesh living illegally in the country, though Rohingya have lived there for generations.

"It's going to be a tricky situation (if he uses the word), I think because most of the people can't accept it," said farmer Win Myaing.

Seaman Kyaw Thu Maung said the issue is difficult because the term "Rohingya" carries so much political weight for all of Myanmar's people.

"But my feeling is that if the pope is going to talk about the Rakhine issue, the people aren't going to like the pope anymore," he said.

Associated Press journalists Min Kyi Thein in Yangon and Rishabh R. Jain in Kutupalong refugee camp, Bangladesh, contributed to this report.

Conyers gives up Judiciary post amid sex harassment probe

By HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Even while fiercely denying allegations of sexual harassment, Michigan Rep. John Conyers is giving up his leadership position as top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, acknowledging a congressional probe into his possible misconduct had become an unwelcome distraction.

The 88-year-old lawmaker indicated he would not resign from Congress and would keep fighting the allegations first made public a week ago that he sexually harassed female staff members.

"I very much look forward to vindicating myself and my family," Conyers said in a statement Sunday, pledging full cooperation with the House Ethics Committee. The longest-serving active member of Congress, Conyers is the only African-American to have held the position of chairman or ranking member on the Judiciary panel, which oversees a range of U.S. law enforcement issues from civil rights and impeachment of federal officials to sexual harassment.

"I cannot in good conscience allow these charges to undermine my colleagues in the Democratic Caucus, and my friends on both sides of the aisle in the Judiciary Committee and the House of Representatives," Conyers said. He urged lawmakers to afford him "due process" before issuing a judgment.

His sudden announcement came as a scandal-weary Congress prepared to return from its Thanksgiving break, with increasing attention on the issue of sexual misconduct involving multiple men in entertainment, media and politics. Along with Conyers, Democratic Sen. Al Franken of Minnesota and Republican Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore also are the subject of accusations.

"We are at a watershed moment on this issue, and no matter how great an individual's legacy, it is not a license for harassment," House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi said in a statement Sunday.

News website BuzzFeed reported last Monday that Conyers' office paid a woman more than \$27,000 under a confidentiality agreement to settle a complaint in 2015 that she was fired from his Washington staff because she rejected his sexual advances. BuzzFeed also published affidavits from former staff members who said they had witnessed Conyers touching female staffers inappropriately — rubbing their legs and backs — or requesting sexual favors.

The House Ethics Committee is reviewing the allegations of harassment and age discrimination as well as using "official resources for impermissible personal purposes."

This week, the House will vote on requiring anti-harassment and anti-discrimination training for all members and their staffs. Pelosi said Sunday that Congress should also act "to put an end to the days of secret settlements paid for by taxpayer dollars," similar to the one signed by Conyers.

The Senate has already approved a measure requiring all senators, staff and interns to be trained on preventing sexual harassment.

"We must ensure the Congress has a climate of dignity and respect with zero tolerance for sexual harassment," Pelosi said.

Conyers, first elected to the House in 1964, made clear he would prefer to keep his Judiciary post but

had come to realize he could not "in light of the attention drawn by recent allegations made against me."

At least one House Democrat, Rep. Kathleen Rice of New York, has called on Conyers to resign from Congress. Two others, Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y., who is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., co-chairman of the largest group of congressional liberals, had said Conyers should at least step aside from his leadership role on the Judiciary panel.

Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., who sponsored legislation to overhaul the system by which sexual complaints are made and settled on Capitol Hill, said Congress must show a greater commitment to addressing sexual misconduct. Last month, she shared her own story of being sexually assaulted by a high-level aide while she was a staffer.

"This is absolutely a priority that we must focus on in terms of fixing the system," she said on ABC's "This Week." "We say zero tolerance, but I don't believe that we put our money where our mouths are."

Earlier Sunday, Pelosi had defended Conyers as an "icon" for women's rights and told NBC's "Meet the Press" that he will do the "right thing."

"This is about going forward," Pelosi said. "We also have to address it for every person, every workplace in the country, not just in the Congress of the United States. And that's very important. And a good deal of that would be done by the Judiciary Committee."

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., is the next most-senior Democrat on the committee.

"Even under these unfortunate circumstances, the important work of the Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee must move forward," Nadler said. "I will do everything in my power to continue to press on the important issues facing our committee, including criminal justice reform, workplace equality, and holding the Trump administration accountable."

"Ranking Member Conyers has a 50-year legacy of advancing the cause of justice, and my job moving forward is to continue that critical work," he added.

On Sunday evening, a group of 12 female former Conyers staff members released a statement in support of the embattled congressman. The statement did not dispute any of the allegations against Conyers and supported the ethics investigation, but vouched for Conyers' behavior and character.

"While we do not pass judgment on the specific allegations reported in the press or the women who brought them, our experiences with Mr. Conyers were quite different than the image of him being portrayed in the media," the statement said. "Mr. Conyers was a gentleman and never behaved in a sexually inappropriate manner in our presence. He was respectful, valued our opinions, challenged our thinking, and treated us as professionals."

Follow Hope Yen on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/hopeyen1>

Justices ponder need for warrant for cellphone tower data

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Like almost everyone else in America, thieves tend to carry their cellphones with them to work.

When they use their phones on the job, police find it easier to do their jobs. They can get cellphone tower records that help place suspects in the vicinity of crimes, and they do so thousands of times a year.

Activists across the political spectrum, media organizations and technology experts are among those arguing that it is altogether too easy for authorities to learn revealing details of Americans' lives merely by examining records kept by Verizon, T-Mobile and other cellphone service companies.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court hears its latest case about privacy in the digital age. At issue is whether police generally need a warrant to review the records.

Justices on the left and right have recognized that technology has altered privacy concerns.

The court will hear arguments in an appeal by federal prison inmate Timothy Carpenter. He is serving a 116-year sentence after a jury convicted him of armed robberies in the Detroit area and northwestern Ohio.

Investigators helped build their case by matching Carpenter's use of his smartphone to cell towers near

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Radio Shack and T-Mobile stores that had been robbed. The question is whether prosecutors should have been required to convince a judge that they had good reason, or probable cause, to believe Carpenter was involved in the crime. That's the standard set out in the Constitution's Fourth Amendment, which also prohibits unreasonable searches. Prosecutors obtained the records by meeting a lower standard of proof.

The American Civil Liberties Union, representing Carpenter, said in court papers that the records "make it possible to reconstruct in detail everywhere an individual has traveled over hours, days, weeks or months."

In Carpenter's case, authorities obtained cellphone records for 127 days and could determine when he slept at home and where he attended church on Sunday, said the ACLU's Nathan Freed Wessler.

Courts around the country have wrestled with the issue. The most relevant Supreme Court case is nearly 40 years old, before the dawn of the digital age, and the law on which prosecutors relied to obtain the records dates from 1986, when few people had cellphones.

The judge at Carpenter's trial refused to suppress the records, and a federal appeals court agreed. The Trump administration said the lower court decisions should be upheld.

Nineteen states supporting the administration said the records "are an indispensable building block" in many investigations. There is no evidence the records have been used improperly and requiring a warrant for them would result in more crimes going unsolved, the states said.

The administration relied in part on a 1979 Supreme Court decision that treated phone records differently than the conversation in a phone call, for which a warrant generally is required.

The court said in *Smith v. Maryland* that telephone users have no privacy right to the numbers they dial. Not only must the phone company complete the call using its equipment, but it also makes a record of calls for billing and other purposes, the court said.

But that case involved a single home telephone.

More recently, the justices have acknowledged that the wonders of technology also can affect Americans' privacy, and also struggled with striking the right balance.

Speaking in New Zealand last summer, Chief Justice John Roberts said he and his colleagues are not experts in the rapidly changing field. But he also reaffirmed his view as expressed in a 2014 opinion that generally requires police to get a warrant to search the cellphones of people they arrest.

"I'll say it here: Would you rather have law enforcement rummaging through your desk drawer at home, or rummaging through your iPhone?" Roberts asked. "I mean, there's much more private information on the iPhone than in most desk drawers."

Justices Samuel Alito and Sonia Sotomayor also have written about their concerns over technology's effect on privacy.

In that same 2014 case, Alito said Congress is better situated than the courts to address the concerns. Two years earlier, Sotomayor said the court may need to bring its views in line with the digital age. "I for one doubt that people would accept without complaint the warrantless disclosure to the Government of a list of every Web site they had visited in the last week, or month, or year," she wrote in a 2012 case about police installation of a tracking device on a car without a warrant.

Trump's Mar-a-Lago stay a welcome break from DC challenges

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump draws a wiggly line between work, play and business at the private club he calls his "winter White House."

Like George H.W. Bush and his family compound in Kennebunkport, Maine, or George W. Bush with his ranch in Crawford, Texas, Trump has made Mar-a-Lago his refuge from Washington. It's where he slips back into the role of glad-handing host that he played for years before waging his winning presidential campaign.

Club members described Trump as being in an especially good mood over the past five days, as he kicked off Palm Beach's winter social season surrounded by family and (mostly paying) friends and golfed with some of the game's greats.

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His Thanksgiving dinner felt more like a homecoming, with more than 500 club members and guests packed into Mar-a-Lago's enormous, gilded ballroom for a meal that included traditional turkey, stuffing and mashed potatoes, as well as local favorites like Florida stone crab.

Trump sat at a long table in the middle of the room, according to several attendees. A photo posted by one showed the table set with a glittering tablecloth and bright blooms.

"Everybody was there," said Toni Holt Kramer, a Mar-a-Lago member who founded a boosters' group called Trumpettes U.S.A. and is a loyal Trump supporter.

"It was very thrilling, because when the president and first lady entered, without anybody saying anything, the whole room rose and everyone started applauding. And they didn't stop, and it was just overwhelming. And you just sort of choked, because it was so beautiful," she said. "The unity was overwhelming."

The club's Saturday dinner service also was packed, with guests spilling into the patio, the dining room and supplemental space. Among those spotted in the crowd: Fox News anchor Bret Baier and his wife, golfing legend Jack Nicklaus, whom Trump had played with earlier in the day at his nearby West Palm Beach course, and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.

Kramer described the president circling the room, saying hellos, shaking everyone's hands and posing for photos.

"He is the president of the United States," she said, but "he's the same person as he was when he was just plain old Mr. Trump."

Trump's only public events took place Thursday, when the president held a video conference call with service members stationed around the world and visited a nearby Coast Guard station to hand out lunches.

During Trump's private time, the line between work, play and business is ill-defined.

Behind closed doors, Trump fired off angry tweets in many directions, singling out CNN, the former head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, protesting football players, and the father of a UCLA basketball player accused of shoplifting in China, whom he blasted as an "Ungrateful fool!"

He also placed calls to world leaders, offering condolences following the deadly attack on an Egyptian mosque and announced in a call with the president of Turkey that the U.S. would be cutting off its supply of arms to Kurdish fighters in Syria.

The president also spoke with several members of Congress to push his tax reform plan, and held phone calls with members of his Cabinet, said Lindsay Walters, a White House spokeswoman.

But there was also time for play. On each of the five days he was in Florida, Trump visited one of his nearby golf properties, playing Friday with Tiger Woods, Dustin Johnson and Brad Faxon at his course in Jupiter and playing Saturday in West Palm Beach with Nicklaus and Nicklaus' pro-golfer son.

In a break from past administrations, the Trump White House does not typically disclose when the president is golfing — let alone who he is golfing with — leaving reporters scrambling to comb social media for clues.

Trump and his aides are also deeply sensitive about suggestions that the president is vacationing during the long stretches he spends away from Washington — at his Bedminster, New Jersey, golf club in the summertime and at Mar-a-Lago during the Palm Beach winter social season.

"Will be having meetings and working the phones from the Winter White House in Florida (Mar-a-Lago)," he tweeted at the start of his trip.

When a reporter traveling with the president sent a report to fellow reporters quoting Walters saying she expected a "low-key" Wednesday, the pushback was swift.

"A correction to the earlier pool report," read an update not long after. "While the White House communications staff expects the press pool to have a 'low-key day,' the president will NOT have a low-key day and has a full schedule of meetings and phone calls. "

Trump later spent nearly five hours at his West Palm Beach golf course.

Trump's election has been both a boon and challenge for the club, whose members have the chance to rub elbows with and influence the president. Club members clamor for dinner reservations on nights they know he'll be in town, and membership fees have increased. But many of the charities and groups

that have long held events at the resort have pulled their business, especially amid anger over Trump's response to the white supremacist marches in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The president's visits take a financial toll on the area, prompting flight restrictions, police overtime and traffic jams as Trump's motorcade snakes its way back and forth across the bridge that separates exclusive Palm Beach from more down-to-earth West Palm Beach.

Members, by now, are used to the ramped-up security that comes with hobnobbing with the president: Cars are checked for bombs, and signs posted at the entrance advise the prohibition of explosives, weapons and ammunition — along with laser pointers, toy guns and pepper spray.

For Trump, it was all a welcome distraction from the stack of Washington problems and challenges he returned to Sunday night after his five-day retreat.

Follow Colvin on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

Suit seeks to stop Trump from naming acting director of CFPB

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government official President Donald Trump wants to pass over as acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau with his own budget chief is asking a federal court to block the president's appointment.

Leandra English, who was elevated to the position of interim director of the CFPB by its outgoing director, filed a lawsuit Sunday night in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. She asks for a declaratory judgment and a temporary restraining order to block White House budget director Mick Mulvaney from taking over the bureau.

English cited the Dodd-Frank Act, which created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. She said that as deputy director, she became the acting director under the law and argued that the federal law the White House contends supports Trump's appointment of Mulvaney doesn't apply when another statute designates a successor.

English was chief of staff to bureau director Richard Cordray when he named her deputy director as he prepared to resign last Friday. Cordray was appointed to the position by President Barack Obama and has been long criticized by congressional Republicans as overzealous.

Mulvaney, a former congressman, has called the agency a "joke" and an example of bureaucracy run amok. He is expected to dismantle much of what the bureau has done.

The White House, with the support of an opinion issued Saturday by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, maintained that the president has the power to appoint an acting director. 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.

A new director must be confirmed by the Senate. Earlier Sunday, Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, the third-ranking GOP leader, pledged swift action whenever Trump nominates a successor to Cordray. Meanwhile, Thune said he expected that Mulvaney "will be on the job and he'll be calling the shots over there," but acknowledged the issue could end up in court.

Beyond the fight over who's in charge is the future direction of the bureau, created after the 2008 financial crisis and given a broad mandate as a watchdog for consumers when they deal with banks and credit card, student loan and mortgage companies, as well as debt collectors and payday lenders.

"All Americans should be deeply concerned about the White House's cynical decision to flout the law and attempt to put the ringleader of its dangerous, anti-consumer protection policies in charge," House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California said in a statement issued before the lawsuit was filed.

Taking aim at Mulvaney, she said the public deserves "a champion that protects them from predatory bankers and lenders, not the leadership of a Wall Street pawn who denigrates consumer protection as a 'sick, sad joke.'"

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer joined Pelosi in arguing that English was the rightful acting director. He accused Trump of ignoring the law "in order to put a fox in charge of a hen house."

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Thune said he hoped eventually to see "reforms to that agency, which has essentially very little accountability to the Congress or anybody else." Another Republican, Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, said he thinks Trump was on "good ground" to pick Mulvaney for the job and hopes Mulvaney "will ride herd on these folks."

Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, said putting Mulvaney in charge was part of an effort to destroy the bureau.

"Wall Street hates it like the devil hates holy water," Durbin said. "And they're trying to put an end to it with ... Mulvaney stepping into Cordray's spot. But the statute is specific, it's clear, and it says that the deputy shall take over."

Thune appeared on "Fox News Sunday" while Durbin and Graham spoke on CNN's "State of the Union."

Miss Universe contestants speak on sexual harassment issue

By REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Miss Universe Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters didn't shy away when asked to comment on sexual harassment just after being crowned.

"If women take hands and stand together, we are unbreakable," said the 22-year-old representative from South Africa, "and we can say no to the things that are wrong in the workplace, at home or wherever you might go."

In the U.S., dozens of politicians, Hollywood executives and actors, and media personalities are facing accusations of sexual misconduct, sparked by a wave of allegations against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

The topic arose during Sunday's competition when a fan-submitted question asked why it's important for men and women to work together to address the issue of sexual misconduct.

Miss Jamaica Davina Bennett said men and women should come together to make sure no form of abuse, including sexual harassment, is tolerated.

"Sexual harassment is a form of abuse, and no abuse should be tolerated whether in the workplace or in society," Bennett said.

Nel-Peters, who recently earned a business management degree, was crowned during the event at The AXIS theater at Planet Hollywood casino-resort on the Las Vegas Strip.

The runner-up was Miss Colombia Laura Gonzalez, while Bennett finished as the second runner-up.

Nel-Peters is from the South African coastal community of Sedgefield in the Western Cape province. She helped develop a program to train women in self-defense in various situations after she was robbed at gunpoint a month after she was crowned as Miss South Africa.

She also said she wants to champion other causes during her yearlong reign.

"HIV/AIDS is a very big problem in my country South Africa, so I hope to stand as an advocate for that," she said after the event.

She is the second woman from her home country to earn the crown.

Ninety-two women from around the world participated in the decades-old competition. This year's edition had the most contestants ever, including the first representatives in its history of Cambodia, Laos and Nepal.

Steve Harvey returned as the show's host despite botching the 2015 Miss Universe crowning. On Sunday, he poked fun at his mistake throughout the night. Three days after people in the U.S. celebrated Thanksgiving, Harvey told the audience he is "grateful for the Oscars," referring to the best-picture flub at this year's Academy Awards.

Grammy-Award winner Fergie performed her new song "A Little Work" while the contestants walked down the stage wearing evening gowns. This year's judges included YouTube star Lele Pons, former judge of "America's Next Top Model" Jay Manuel and Wendy Fitzwilliam, the 1998 Miss Universe winner from Trinidad and Tobago.

Nel-Peters earned a yearlong salary and a luxury apartment in New York City for the duration of her reign as well as more prizes.

Donald Trump formerly co-owned The Miss Universe Organization with NBCUniversal. But the network and the Spanish-language broadcaster Univision quickly cut ties with him in 2015, when he offended Hispanics with anti-immigrant remarks in announcing his bid for the White House. Trump sued both networks, eventually settling and selling off the entire pageant to talent management company WME/IMG.

Egyptian village where mosque was attacked had been warned

By HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Elders of a village in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula where militants killed 305 people in a mosque had been warned by Islamic State operatives to stop collaborating with security forces and to suspend rituals associated with Islam's mystical Sufi movement, security officials and residents said.

The latest warning came as recently as a week ago, telling villagers in Al-Rawdah not to hold Sufi rituals on Nov. 29-30 to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, according to residents and the officials who work for security and military intelligence agencies operating in Sinai.

Local operatives of the Islamic State group's affiliate in Sinai consider Sufis to be heretics who should be killed. Ahmed Saqr, an expert on the Sinai insurgency, said militants had publicly identified the mosque, which also serves as a Sufi center, as a target months ago.

He wrote on Saturday in a Facebook post that the selection of the Al-Rawdah mosque as a target "raises questions about those who read, analyze and prepare in our security agencies" and whether anything could have been done to prevent the "untold horrors."

Mohammed Ibrahim, a university student from the village, said militants had warned residents a few days before Friday's attack not to collaborate with security forces. The warning, he told The Associated Press by telephone Sunday from the nearby town of Bir al-Abd, followed the detention three weeks ago by villagers of three suspected militants who were handed over to security forces.

The militants also distributed leaflets several times ordering villagers not to cooperate with security forces and to abandon Sufism, he said.

Another Al-Rawdah resident, Mohammed Darwish, 30, said militants stormed the home of village tribal leader Sheikh Hussein al-Jerir twice this year.

"They threatened him not to hold Sufi gatherings, and last week, they came on motorbikes and asked residents not to participate in Sufi rituals," Darwish said.

Egypt's military and security forces have been waging a tough and costly campaign against militants in the towns, villages and desert mountains of northern Sinai. Across the country, thousands have been arrested in a crackdown on suspected Islamists and other dissenters and government critics.

In the past year, militants have bombed churches in the capital of Cairo and other cities, killing dozens of Christians. The IS affiliate is also believed to be behind the 2016 downing of a Russian passenger jet that killed all 224 people on board, decimating Egypt's vital tourism sector.

The bloodshed at the Al-Rawdah mosque was the first major militant attack on a Muslim congregation, and it eclipsed violence in the country dating back to an Islamic militant insurgency in the 1990s.

The mosque is frequented by Sufis and is the local headquarters of the prominent Sufi sect, or tareeqah, founded by the local al-Jerir clan, a branch of the powerful Al-Sawarkah tribe.

The deadliest attack by Muslim extremists in Egypt's modern history came less than a week before the Prophet Muhammad's birthday on Thursday. Celebrations climax on Wednesday and Thursday, when millions of the Sufi movement's followers are expected to gather for rituals in mosques, shrines and squares across much of this majority Muslim country.

Militants from the IS affiliate have targeted Sufis before. Last year, they beheaded a leading Sufi religious figure, Sheikh Suleiman Abu Heraz, who was believed to be over 90 years old. They posted photos of the killing online.

Islamic State propaganda often denounces Sufis. In the January edition of an IS online magazine, a figure purporting to be a high-level official in the group's Sinai affiliate vowed to target Sufis, accusing them of idolatry and heretical "innovation" in religion, warning that the group will "not permit (their) presence"

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in Sinai or Egypt.

Perhaps as many as 15 million Egyptians belong to Sufi orders, which hold sessions with chanting, poetry readings and ritual dancing meant to draw the faithful closer to God. Sufis also revere the tombs of holy men.

Islamic hard-liners view such practices as improper, even heretical, and militants in the region often destroy Sufi shrines, saying they encourage idolatry because people pray to those buried there.

The austere, one-story Al-Rawdah mosque sits on a main road. Its Friday prayers routinely attract villagers, travelers and workers from a nearby salt factory. About 500 men and boys were thought to have been in the mosque and an adjacent plaza at the time of the attack.

According to official figures, 305 people, including 27 children, were killed, with 128 wounded.

Security officials say IS militants infiltrated the area of Bir al-Abd and Al-Rawdah several months ago, opening a new front in the mostly desert region away from the main theater of operations in el-Arish and the towns of Rafah and Sheikh Zuwayl to the east.

They have since waged deadly attacks on police and military forces, although the region has yet to attract the kind of heavy security seen elsewhere in the trouble spots of northern Sinai, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

"The expansion of the militants to Bir al-Abd shows that they can go anywhere," said Hassan Khalaf, a tribal leader in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, where some of the wounded from Friday's attack were taken.

"There are security flaws. ... We need to wage an all-out offensive to crush them."

Associated Press writers Samy Magdy in Cairo and Maggie Michael in Ismailia, Egypt, contributed to this report.

Trump chooses legislative agenda over GOP repulsion of Moore

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Sunday that electing a Democrat as Alabama's next senator "would be a disaster," making clear the success of his legislative agenda outweighs widespread GOP repulsion at the prospect of seating Republican Roy Moore, who is dogged by allegations of sexual misconduct.

The allegations, including claims that the 70-year-old Moore sexually assaulted or molested two teenage girls while he was in his 30s, have made the Dec. 12 election a referendum on "the character of the country" that transcends partisan politics, said GOP Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina, as the party establishment cringed at Trump's latest intervention in the closely contested race.

"In my opinion, and in the opinion of many Republicans and conservatives in the Senate, it is time for us to turn the page because it is not about partisan politics. It's not about electing Republicans versus Democrats," Scott said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

"It's about the character of our country," he said.

Trump on Sunday once again plunged himself into the race, declaring in a pair of tweets — without mentioning Moore by name — that electing Moore's Democratic opponent, Doug Jones, would "be a disaster."

"The last thing we need in Alabama and the U.S. Senate is a Schumer/Pelosi puppet who is WEAK on Crime, WEAK on the Border, Bad for our Military and our great Vets, Bad for our 2nd Amendment, AND WANTS TO RAISES TAXES TO THE SKY," he wrote from Florida, referring to Democrats' congressional leaders Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi.

Jones, speaking to reporters in Birmingham, shrugged off Trump's criticisms, saying he would not be a partisan voter. He said Alabamians are focused on issues such as the economy, education and health care.

"My record speaks for itself ... I think I am very strong on the issues that the people of Alabama care for," Jones said.

Jones, a former federal prosecutor, said he would be an independent voice in the U.S. Senate, similarly to his political mentor, the late U.S. Sen. Howell Heflin, who represented the state for nearly 20 years.

Jones' campaign issued a more biting statement saying, "Roy Moore was unfit for office even before

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nine Alabama women served as witnesses to all Alabamians of his disturbing conduct.”

Two women have accused Moore of sexually assaulting or molesting them decades ago, when he was in his 30s and they were teenagers. Moore has denied the accusations. At least five others have said he pursued romantic relationships when they were teenagers and he was a prosecutor. Moore has said he never dated “underage” women.

Moore has had few public appearances since the accusations surfaced earlier this month, but his campaign quickly touted the president’s tweets, adding “We will defeat him on Dec. 12,” a reference to Jones.

Trump had stayed silent on Moore for days until all but endorsing him while departing for Washington last week. The president dismissed questions from reporters about his willingness to back a Republican accused of sexual assault over a Democrat.

Trump, who won election despite facing more than a dozen accusations of sexual misconduct himself, appeared last Tuesday to shrug off the allegations against Moore, saying, “Forty years is a long time.”

Trump has no campaign events for Moore scheduled at this time, said White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters.

Top Republicans in Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Paul Ryan, have called for Moore to leave the race, and the Republican National Committee and the National Republican Senatorial Committee have pulled their support for his campaign.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, who has also called for Moore to step down, said Sunday on CNN’s “State of the Union” that Trump is “definitely trying to throw a lifeline to Roy Moore.”

But Graham said when it comes to Moore, it’s unclear “what winning looks like.”

“If he wins, we get the baggage of him winning and it becomes a story every day about whether or not you believe the women or Roy Moore, should he stay in the Senate, should he be expelled. If you lose, you give the Senate seat to a Democrat at a time we need all the votes we can get,” he said, referring to Republicans’ current 52-48 majority in the Senate.

“The moral of the story is: Don’t nominate somebody like Roy Moore who could actually lose a seat that any other Republican could win,” Graham said.

Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, the No. 3 Republican in the Senate, said he’d like to see Trump “come out and support what many of us have said and that is that Roy Moore needs to step aside” and “allow somebody else to be a write-in candidate.”

He said on “Fox News Sunday” that if Moore ends up winning and comes to Washington in January, he will be the immediate subject of an ethics investigation, “which is going to be a cloud that he’ll be operating in and it’s going to be a distraction for us and for our agenda.”

Other Republican leaders worry a write-in candidate could wind up helping Jones by splitting the GOP vote.

Trump backed incumbent Sen. Luther Strange in the September Alabama Republican primary but moved quickly to embrace Moore after he won. The seat opened up after Republican Jeff Sessions was tapped as U.S. attorney general.

Follow Colvin in Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

Iran TV videos target 2 detainees accused of espionage

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iranian state television aired videos Sunday targeting a Briton and an American serving time on espionage charges, likely trying to pressure the U.S. and Britain as London considers making a \$530 million payment to Tehran.

The case of Iranian-British national Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe has gained momentum in recent weeks as British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson faces tremendous criticism at home over his handling of it.

Meanwhile, state television aired footage of an emotional Chinese-American national Xiyue Wang as U.S. President Donald Trump continues his hard line against Tehran and its nuclear deal with world powers.

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, already serving a five-year prison sentence for allegedly planning the “soft toppling”

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of Iran's government while traveling there with her toddler daughter, faces new charges that could add 16 years to her prison term.

On Thursday, Iranian state television aired a seven-minute special report on Zaghari-Ratcliffe. It included close-ups of an April 2010 pay stub from her previous employer, the BBC World Service Trust.

It also included an email from June 2010 in which she wrote about the "ZigZag Academy," a BBC World Service Trust project in which the trust trained "young aspiring journalists from Iran and Afghanistan through a secure online platform."

Zaghari-Ratcliffe left the BBC in 2011 and then joined the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of the news agency. Both her husband, Richard Ratcliffe, and Thomson Reuters repeatedly have stressed she was not training journalists or involved in any work regarding Iran while there.

The state television report comes as the British foreign minister faces criticism after he told a parliamentary committee that Zaghari-Ratcliffe was "teaching people journalism" when she was arrested last year. Though Johnson later corrected himself, the Iranian television report made a point to highlight them.

Speaking to The Associated Press on Sunday, Zaghari-Ratcliffe's husband said the report and other Iranian comments about his wife seemed timed to exert as much pressure as possible on the British government. He said the material appeared to be from his wife's email, which investigators from the hard-line Revolutionary Guard immediately got access to after her arrest.

"It's trying to justify the new charges," Ratcliffe said.

The report comes as Britain and Iran discuss the release of some 400 million pounds held by London, a payment Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi made for Chieftain tanks that were never delivered. The shah abandoned the throne in 1979 and the Islamic Revolution soon installed the clerically overseen system that endures today.

Authorities in London and Tehran deny that the payment has any link to Zaghari-Ratcliffe. However, a prisoner exchange in January 2016 that freed Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian and three other Iranian-Americans also saw the United States make a \$400 million cash delivery to Iran the same day. That money too involved undelivered military equipment from the shah's era, though some U.S. politicians have criticized the delivery as a ransom payment.

Late Sunday, Iranian state TV aired a feature focused on Wang, a Chinese-born American graduate student at Princeton who is accused of passing confidential information about Iran to the U.S. State Department. He was arrested while conducting research on the Qajar dynasty that once ruled Iran for his doctorate in late 19th and early 20th century Eurasian history, according to Princeton officials, who confirmed to the AP that he was in Iran to learn Farsi and conduct research for his dissertation.

Authorities have alleged he scanned some 4,500 pages of digital documents, paid thousands of dollars to access archives he needed and sought access to confidential areas of Tehran libraries. State TV aired footage of him in what appeared to be an Iranian courtroom, those around him blurred out, as well as footage of him emotional and later talking to a camera, as well as an image of his Iranian visa and a school ID.

"About Iran in that regard, the more knowledge the United States possesses about Iran, the better for its policy toward Iran," he said in the footage. "There is no doubt about it. It is quite obvious."

Wang was arrested on Aug. 8, 2016. Princeton, his wife and others had been quietly working toward his release when Iran publicly announced his prison sentence in July.

Wang's wife, Hua Qu, told The Associated Press on Sunday that she hasn't spoken with the U.S. State Department about the video but she's reiterating the allegations against her husband are untrue. Qu notes the video's airing come just before the mid-December deadline for Congress to decide whether economic sanctions lifted under the Iran nuclear accord should be re-imposed.

Analysts and family members of those detained in Iran have suggested that hard-liners in the Islamic Republic's security agencies use the prisoners as bargaining chips for money or influence. A U.N. panel in September described "an emerging pattern involving the arbitrary deprivation of liberty of dual nationals" in Iran.

Others with ties to the West detained in Iran include Iranian-Canadian national Abdolrasoul Dorri Esfahani, a member of Iran's 2015 nuclear negotiating team, is believed to be serving a five-year prison sentence

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on espionage charges.

Iranian businessman Siamak Namazi and his 81-year-old father Baquer, a former UNICEF representative who served as governor of Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan province under the U.S.-backed shah, are both serving 10-year prison sentences on espionage.

Iranian-American Robin Shahini was released on bail last year after staging a hunger strike while serving an 18-year prison sentence for "collaboration with a hostile government." Shahini is believed to still be in Iran.

Also in an Iranian prison is Nizar Zakka, a U.S. permanent resident from Lebanon who advocates for internet freedom and has done work for the U.S. government. He was sentenced to 10 years last year on espionage-related charges.

In addition, former FBI agent Robert Levinson, who vanished in Iran in 2007 while on an unauthorized CIA mission, remains missing.

Bruce Shipkowski in New Jersey contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellap . His work can be found at <http://apne.ws/2galNpz> .

AP Top 25: Clemson is No. 1, Oklahoma 2nd after 'Bama falls

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

Clemson is the new No. 1 in The Associated Press college football poll , taking a close vote with Oklahoma after the top two teams in the rankings lost in the same weekend for the first time since 2012.

The Tigers jumped from fourth to No. 1 after blowing out South Carolina on Saturday night. Clemson received 27 first-place votes and No. 2 Oklahoma had 24. No. 3 Wisconsin received 10 first-place votes.

Auburn rose to No. 4 after beating Alabama, which had been No. 1 since the preseason . The Crimson Tide slipped to fifth. Georgia moved up a spot to No. 6 and Miami fell five spots to No. 7. The Hurricanes lost for the first time this season on Friday at Pittsburgh.

The last time the top two teams in the AP poll lost on the same regular-season weekend was Nov. 17, 2012. Then, No. 1 Oregon lost to No. 14 Stanford and No. 2 Kansas State went down to Baylor.

Ohio State, Penn State and TCU round out the top 10.

POLL POINTS

— Defending national champion Clemson is No. 1 for the first time since finishing atop the AP poll last season and ninth time overall. The Tigers were No. 1 for five weeks in 2015, entering the College Football Playoff title game against Alabama that way before losing.

— Alabama's loss means there still will be only two teams in the history of the AP poll to go from pre-season to final poll as No. 1: Florida State was first to do it in 1999 and Southern California did it in 2004.

— Wisconsin has its best ranking since the Badgers were No. 2 on Oct. 21, 1963.

UP

— No. 14 Stanford moved up six spot after beating Notre Dame .

DOWN

— Notre Dame dropped six spots to No. 15.

— No. 21 Washington State fell seven spots after being routed by Washington , which moved up two spots to No. 13.

— No. 24 Mississippi State dropped eight spots after losing to rival Mississippi on Thanksgiving night.

IN

— No. 25 Fresno State was the only team to move into the rankings this week. The Bulldogs replaced Boise State after beating the Broncos on Saturday. Fresno State is ranked for the first time since spending

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most of the 2013 season in the Top 25.

CONFERENCE CALL

SEC — 5

Big Ten — 5

Pac-12 — 4

ACC — 3

American — 3

Big 12 — 3

Mountain West — 1

Independent — 1

RANKED vs. RANKED

Championship weekend will feature four games on Saturday matching teams ranked in the top 10 of the AP poll. That's happened only one other time before bowl season. On Nov. 24, 1973, these four games were played: No. 1 Ohio State tied No. 4 Michigan, 10-10; No. 2 Alabama defeated No. 7 LSU, 21-7; No. 3 Oklahoma defeated No. 10 Nebraska, 27-0; No. 8 UCLA lost to No. 9 Southern California, 23-13.

This week's lineup of game matching ranked teams:

No. 1 Clemson vs. No. 7 Miami, ACC championship in Charlotte, North Carolina. The winner likely goes to the College Football Playoff.

No. 2 Oklahoma vs. No. 10 TCU. Big 12 championship in Arlington, Texas. The Sooners beat the Horned Frogs in Norman and now have to do it again in the return of the Big 12 title game.

No. 3 Wisconsin vs. No. 8 Ohio State, Big Ten championship in Indianapolis. The last time the Buckeyes and Badgers played in the conference title was 2014 and Ohio State won 59-0 to lock up a playoff spot.

No. 4 Auburn vs. No. 6 Georgia, SEC championship in Atlanta. The Tigers handed the Bulldogs their only loss earlier this month in Auburn.

No. 11 Southern California vs. No. 14 Stanford, Pac-12 championship in Santa Clara, California. USC beat the Cardinal in September.

No. 12 UCF vs. No. 16 Memphis, American championship game in Orlando, Florida. The Knights try to stay unbeaten against the Tigers, whom they beat in September.

Follow Ralph D. Russo at www.Twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP

More AP college football: www.collegefootball.ap.org and www.twitter.com/AP_Top25

Advocates say Texas exploiting day laborers after Harvey

By **NOMAAN MERCHANT, Associated Press**

HOUSTON (AP) — Guillermo Miranda Vazquez starts his day in a parking lot near the Home Depot where he easily finds work alongside other day laborers who are cleaning up Houston after Hurricane Harvey.

Some days, he clears rotted drywall and hauls out furniture and carpet destroyed by Harvey's floodwaters. Other days, he chops fallen trees or helps to lay the foundations for new homes. He ventures daily into homes wearing a T-shirt, work pants and tennis shoes, often while surrounded by the pungent stench and raw sewage that flowed into homes during the flooding.

"I always wash and scrub myself, and I use alcohol or something similar so that I don't get infected," said Miranda, a native of Guatemala. "I haven't gotten sick yet."

Hundreds of day laborers like Miranda have quietly become an integral part of the recovery from Harvey, toiling in dangerous conditions amid the fear of being picked up by immigration authorities.

Harvey damaged or destroyed 200,000 homes and flooded much of Houston and smaller coastal communities with record amounts of rain and high winds. In a construction industry that already had labor shortages before the storm, it created a massive demand for the kind of work that day laborers have long performed after hurricanes and tropical storms.

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Day laborers interviewed by The Associated Press said they've been hired by a mix of individual homeowners, work crews from out of state, and subcontractors working on residential and commercial buildings. Mostly immigrants, they operate in plain sight, gathering early in the morning in parking lots near construction stores and gas stations, and waiting to be offered work.

Advocates from the National Day Laborer Organizing Network recently fanned out to these sites with pens and clipboards to survey the workers about the conditions they're experiencing. Interviews suggested most are routinely exposed to mold and contamination, and aren't aware of legal protections they have even if they're not in the country legally. Advocates have been passing out flyers with information and holding worker trainings.

About a quarter of the more than 350 workers surveyed said they had been denied wages promised for cleanup work after Harvey, sometimes by employers who abandoned them at work sites after they had completed a job, according to a report on the survey by Nik Theodore, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Around 85 percent had not received safety training.

More than 70 percent of the day laborers are in the U.S. illegally, some of them having previously been deported, the survey found. Their wages have stayed at around \$100 a day, according to the survey, though some individual laborers said they were being paid more after the hurricane.

The problems they face have cropped up after every major recent storm. Day laborers were an integral part of Houston's rebuilding after Hurricane Ike in 2008 and more recent storms that flooded neighborhoods in 2015 and 2016. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, one survey found that workers without legal authorization were being paid less and were less likely to have protective equipment than those who were in the country legally.

But while the federal government temporarily suspended some work-authorization laws after Katrina, the Trump administration ramped up immigration-related arrests this year and resumed field operations after Harvey. And Texas this year passed a law that prohibits police departments from stopping their officers from asking people about their legal status or cooperating with federal immigration authorities. Much of the law took effect a month after Harvey hit, when an appeals court overruled a federal judge's ruling against it.

Martin Mares, a native of Mexico who settled in Houston in 1995, said he's not worried about police stopping him or turning him over to immigration authorities while in the city, which joined several others in fighting the new law in court. But he said he's concerned about working in the suburbs or outlying areas, where law enforcement was more supportive of it.

The demand for labor has also drawn in people who are unaccustomed to the work and untrained in basic safety measures, Mares said. He recently saw a pregnant woman cleaning an apartment building that had flooded without wearing gloves.

"People don't analyze it. They don't see the consequences," Mares said. "They go to work without knowing whether the business will even pay them."

In Houston, which has an estimated 600,000 residents who are in the country illegally, community leaders worry about the impact of immigration policies on worker safety. Even day laborers without legal residency are entitled to federal protections against wage theft and safety hazards.

"These people are scared," said Stan Marek, who owns a Houston-based construction company and has long pushed for a program to legalize workers. "They're not going to go to the police if they get robbed. It's a formula for disaster in our community."

Sitting on the curb outside the Home Depot recently, Miranda said he has often dealt with employers — or "patrones" — who didn't pay what they promised, but that he hadn't reported anyone to the police.

"This is a country where I'm here as an immigrant. I don't have anything," Miranda said. "The day they catch me, they'll deport me."

Follow Merchant on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/nomaanmerchant> .

This story corrects the name of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.

Refugees thank adoptive North Dakota city by feeding hungry

By **DAVE KOLPACK, Associated Press**

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Maria Modi's journey from South Sudan to a new life in Fargo included a stop at a refugee camp in Cairo. She and her seven siblings know what it is like to be hungry.

"My mother and father work 12-hour shifts and still sometimes we don't get enough food at home to last us a week," said Modi, a Fargo North High School senior who plans to study music and theater in college next year.

She and a group of other students, most from poor refugee families, spent the Thursday before Thanksgiving handing out turkey and cranberries to the hungry of Fargo, which welcomed their arrival from places such as Nepal, Sudan and Liberia. The students, nearly all of whom qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches, recently opened a food pantry as part of the Legacy Children's Foundation, a nonprofit that helps them earn diplomas while finding out what they're good at doing.

"I come from a little, poor country," said Fargo North sophomore Puja Chhertri, one of the food pantry organizers whose family emigrated from Nepal. "There are people on the street there who are eating from garbage."

The Legacy students have done numerous public service projects, including making and distributing hand-tied fleece blankets to the homeless, running a school carnival and helping at nursing homes and day care centers. This is their first attempt at feeding those in need.

"It's about hungry kids serving hungry neighbors," said Mary Jean Dehne, the group's executive director.

Fargo takes in more refugees than most American cities, as a proportion of its population. In the past decade, the Lutheran Social Services program has resettled an average of 450 refugees per year in North Dakota, about 70 percent of whom ended up in Fargo, the state's biggest city.

The Legacy students have tabbed their operation K.I.D.S., for Kindness Is Doing Service. They order the food from the Great Plains Food Bank, stock the shelves, follow a budget and recruit others for food drives. Once a week, they hand out food from a garage in the city's Golden Ridge section, which is home to many low-income families. They also deliver food to some homes.

"Not to sound cliché, but it feels good just giving back," said Quame' Rauls, a Legacy student who is not from a refugee family.

Peter Saintal, 23, a second-generation refugee who went through the Legacy program and is now its president, said he "saw what poor looks like" when he returned to Haiti with his family three years ago. He said many people in Fargo would be surprised to learn they have neighbors who are suffering.

"I mean, there are people out there who don't get meals or food," Saintal said. "There's a misconception out there that it's only homeless people who need food, but that's not it. There's a lot of people who go hungry, whether they have a house or a car or whatever the case may be."

In its first two weeks in operation, the pantry served about 150 children and 125 adults. They gave away 1,500 pounds of groceries as well as personal hygiene items and laundry detergent. They are focusing on providing protein-rich foods to families whose diets are overloaded with carbohydrates such as ramen noodles and macaroni and cheese.

"The people who come here are so happy," Chhertri said. "It just makes your day when they smile and say thank you. You know you are making a little bit of difference in the community."

The group also handed out turkey and cranberries before Thanksgiving, an American holiday the Legacy students have learned to appreciate.

"We're doing something for people who might not have a Thanksgiving otherwise," Saintal said. "It's something that we should be thankful for."

UNICEF: Vaccines cargo to blockaded Yemen can't be one-off

By KARIN LAUB, Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The U.N. child agency said Sunday that it has flown 1.9 million doses of vaccines to war-torn Yemen, its first aid delivery since a Saudi-led coalition fighting Shiite rebels tightened a sea and air blockade earlier this month.

Regional UNICEF director Geert Cappelaere described Saturday's shipment as a "very small step" at a time of immense need and warned that it must not be a one-off.

The coalition had promised to reopen Yemen's main airport in the capital of Sanaa and the Red Sea port of Hodeida to humanitarian traffic by late last week.

However, two UNICEF vessels carrying food, water purification tables and medicines heading to Hodeida have not yet received clearance to dock, Cappelaere said.

"We hope all will live up to their promises," Cappelaere told reporters in the Jordanian capital of Amman. "These supplies are urgently needed."

More than 11 million children in Yemen are in dire need of aid, and it is estimated that every 10 minutes a child in Yemen dies of a preventable disease, he said.

New alarms were raised by an outbreak of diphtheria, with suspected cases already reported in five governorates, said Cappelaere. Cholera and acute watery diarrhea spread rapidly in recent months, including among children, with close to 1 million suspected cases reported.

"The war in Yemen is sadly a war on children," he said. "Yemen is facing the worst humanitarian crisis I have ever seen in my life."

Yemenis have endured an intensified 2-1/2-year war.

It involves Iranian-backed Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, who control many population centers in western Yemen, and an internationally recognized government that has the backing of Saudi Arabia and several other key Persian Gulf states.

The Saudi-led coalition tightened its Yemen blockade on Nov. 6, in response to rebel missile fire toward the Saudi capital.

Since then, the coalition has come under growing international pressure to ease the restrictions.

Last week, it said it would reopen Sanaa airport and the port of Hodeida to humanitarian aid shipments by the end of that week.

U.N. flights to Sanaa resumed Saturday, including the shipment of vaccines.

Cappelaere said the 1.9 million doses are meant to vaccinate 600,000 children across Yemen against diphtheria, meningitis, whopping cough, pneumonia and tuberculosis.

Close to 180 cases of diphtheria have been reported in the past two months, starting from the governorate of Ibb, but spreading to four other districts.

The delivery of vaccines Saturday "cannot be a one-off," he said, adding that many more supplies, including vaccines, are needed.

Like other aid officials in recent months, he appealed for a swift end to the war. "The absence of a political solution to the Yemeni crisis is deplorable," he said.

Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation, has been caught up in the rivalry between regional powerhouses Saudi Arabia and Iran that has also helped fuel conflicts elsewhere, including in Syria.

AP Top Heat Check: After shakeup, greatest Saturday ever

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

No need to wait until New Year's Day. The playoffs start in college football this weekend.

For just the second time in the 81-year history of the AP college football poll, four games in one weekend will match teams ranked in the top 10. That's cool. What makes it even better is all of those games have major playoff ramifications for both participants. Basically, it is quarterfinals weekend, but adding to the intrigue is not everyone will advance.

You could call it the greatest Saturday in college football history.

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And Alabama won't be playing, though the Crimson Tide will loom large over the games. The Tide relinquished the top spot in the AP poll on Sunday after losing to Auburn the day before. Alabama, No. 1 since preseason, slipped to No. 5. The Tide was eliminated from Southeastern Conference championship contention but not necessarily from the College Football Playoff race.

One and two (Miami) both lost this past weekend, something that hasn't happened since 2012. With that the AP poll voters got a chance to sort of take a fresh look at the rankings. Clemson is the new No. 1, taking a close vote with No. 2 Oklahoma. Wisconsin is No. 3 and Auburn moved up to fourth.

Heat check takes a look at the reboot.

No. 1 Clemson (11-1)

The Tigers are ranked No. 1 for the ninth time in the AP poll history. The first two came during their 1981 championship season. The last seven have been since November 2015.

Next: vs. No. 7 Miami, ACC championship.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 2 Oklahoma (11-1)

The Sooners just missed being No. 1, trailing Clemson by 18 points and three first-place votes (27-24). Maybe it's better off. The last time the Sooners were No. 1 heading into the Big 12 championship was 2003 — when they were upset by Kansas State.

Next: vs. No. 10 TCU, Big 12 championship.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 3 Wisconsin (12-0)

Badgers have their best ranking since being No. 2 in the 1963 and they finished a regular season unbeaten for the first time since 1912.

Next: vs. No. 8 Ohio State, Big Ten championship.

Heat check: Still, just a touch too hot.

No. 4 Auburn (10-2)

The Tigers put up 896 yards against Georgia and Alabama in the last three weeks, teams that are allowing a combined average of 528 yards per game.

Next: vs. No. 6 Georgia, SEC championship.

Heat check: Little cold. Flip-flop with Wisconsin.

No. 5 Alabama (11-1)

Turns out, the Crimson Tide really were vulnerable.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 6 Georgia (11-1)

Expect a much better effort by the Bulldogs this time around against Auburn.

Next: vs. No. 4 Auburn, SEC championship.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 7 Miami (10-1)

Can the Hurricanes be the second straight team to lose to Pitt and win a national title?

Next: vs. No. 1 Clemson, ACC championship.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 8 Ohio State (10-2)

How many missed throws in the Big Ten championship game by J.T. Barrett before Buckeyes fans start calling for Dwayne Haskins?

Next: vs. No. 3 Wisconsin, Big Ten championship.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 9 Penn State (10-2)

Two losses by a combined four points, both on the road. Heat check is not endorsing expansion of the playoff, but Penn State is the reason you could argue to expand the playoff.

Next: TBD.

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Heat check: Just right.

No. 10 TCU (9-2)

The Horned Frogs get a second chance at Oklahoma and the opportunity to make the Big 12 look foolish for bringing back its championship game.

Next: vs. No. 2 Oklahoma, Big 12 championship.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 11 Southern California (10-2)

USC probably would have preferred a chance to avenge its loss to Washington State in the Pac-12 title game rather than having to beat Stanford twice, this time with an improving quarterback.

Next: vs. No. 14 Stanford, Pac-12 championship, Friday.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 12 UCF (11-0)

Maybe the most entertaining offense in college football.

Next: vs. No. 16 Memphis, AAC championship.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 13 Washington (10-2)

The Huskies' 10 wins lack the oomph of signature victories, but dominating Washington State and Oregon always makes for a successful season in Seattle.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 14 Stanford (9-3)

The Cardinal tend to get better as the season goes along. Though maybe coach David Shaw should have switched to QB K.J. Costello a little sooner.

Next: vs. No. 11 Southern Cal, Pac-12 championship, Friday.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 15 Notre Dame (9-3)

Still could snag a New Year's Six spot. Could probably use Oklahoma to rough up TCU.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 16 Memphis (10-1)

Lost 40-13 to UCF in September, but Memphis has enough offense to make the return match far more competitive.

Next: at No. 12 UCF, AAC championship.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 17 LSU (9-3)

Sure, he's a game-manager, but LSU got a pretty good season out of quarterback Danny Etling (14 TD pass, two INTs, 9.2 yards per attempt).

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 18 Oklahoma State (9-3)

A bowl victory would give the Cowboys three straight 10-win seasons.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 19 Michigan State (9-3)

The Spartans held the ball for almost 48 minutes against Rutgers, which seems next to impossible.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 20 Northwestern (9-3)

The Wildcats end the season with a seven-game winning streak and consecutive blowouts.

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Next: TBD.

Heat check: Just right.

No. 21 Washington State (9-3)

The Cougars' losses have come by an average of 27 points.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 22 Virginia Tech (9-3)

The Hokies' winning streak against Virginia is now 14 games and it kind of feels as if they might never lose to the Cavaliers again.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too cold.

No. 23 South Florida (9-2)

The Bulls lost to UCF, but might have played their best game of the season. But those special teams. Yuck.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 24 Mississippi State (8-4)

Star quarterback gets injured. Lose the rivalry game. Coach leaves. Tough weekend for Bulldogs fans.

Next: TBD.

Heat check: Too hot.

No. 25 Fresno State (9-3)

Welcome back, Bulldogs. First-year coach Jeff Tedford guided Fresno State to the best turnaround in the country, going from 1-11 last year to playing for the Mountain West title.

Next: vs. Boise State, MWC championship.

Heat check: Just right.

Instead of Mississippi State how about North Carolina State?

Follow Ralph D. Russo at www.Twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP

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

FBI leaves US targets of Russian hackers in the dark

By **RAPHAEL SATTER, JEFF DONN and DESMOND BUTLER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The FBI failed to notify scores of U.S. officials that Russian hackers were trying to break into their personal Gmail accounts despite having evidence for at least a year that the targets were in the Kremlin's crosshairs, The Associated Press has found.

Nearly 80 interviews with Americans targeted by Fancy Bear, a Russian government-aligned cyberespionage group, turned up only two cases in which the FBI had provided a heads-up. Even senior policymakers discovered they were targets only when the AP told them, a situation some described as bizarre and dispiriting.

"It's utterly confounding," said Philip Reiner, a former senior director at the National Security Council, who was notified by the AP that he was targeted in 2015. "You've got to tell your people. You've got to protect your people."

The FBI declined to discuss its investigation into Fancy Bear's spying campaign, but did provide a statement that said in part: "The FBI routinely notifies individuals and organizations of potential threat information."

Three people familiar with the matter — including a current and a former government official — said the FBI has known for more than a year the details of Fancy Bear's attempts to break into Gmail inboxes. A senior FBI official, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the hacking operation because of its sensitivity, declined to comment on when it received the target list, but said the bureau was overwhelmed by the sheer number of attempted hacks.

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"It's a matter of triaging to the best of our ability the volume of the targets who are out there," he said. The AP did its own triage, dedicating two months and a small team of reporters to go through a hit list of Fancy Bear targets provided by the cybersecurity firm Secureworks.

Previous AP investigations based on the list have shown how Fancy Bear worked in close alignment with the Kremlin's interests to steal tens of thousands of emails from the Democratic Party. The hacking campaign disrupted the 2016 U.S. election and cast a shadow over the presidency of Donald Trump, whom U.S. intelligence agencies say the hackers were trying to help. The Russian government has denied interfering in the American election.

The Secureworks list comprises 19,000 lines of targeting data. Going through it, the AP identified more than 500 U.S.-based people or groups and reached out to more than 190 of them, interviewing nearly 80 about their experiences.

Many were long-retired, but about one-quarter were still in government or held security clearances at the time they were targeted. Only two told the AP they learned of the hacking attempts on their personal Gmail accounts from the FBI. A few more were contacted by the FBI after their emails were published in the torrent of leaks that coursed through last year's electoral contest. But to this day, some leak victims have not heard from the bureau at all.

Charles Sowell, who previously worked as a senior administrator in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and was targeted by Fancy Bear two years ago, said there was no reason the FBI couldn't do the same work the AP did.

"It's absolutely not OK for them to use an excuse that there's too much data," Sowell said. "Would that hold water if there were a serial killer investigation, and people were calling in tips left and right, and they were holding up their hands and saying, 'It's too much'? That's ridiculous."

"IT'S CURIOUS"

The AP found few traces of the bureau's inquiry as it launched its own investigation two months ago.

In October, two AP journalists visited THCServers.com, a brightly lit, family-run internet company on the former grounds of a communist-era chicken farm outside the Romanian city of Craiova. That's where someone registered DCLeaks.com, the first of three websites to publish caches of emails belonging to Democrats and other U.S. officials in mid-2016.

DCLeaks was clearly linked to Fancy Bear. Previous AP reporting found that all but one of the site's victims had been targeted by the hacking group before their emails were dumped online.

Yet THC founder Catalin Florica said he was never approached by law enforcement.

"It's curious," Florica said. "You are the first ones that contact us."

THC merely registered the site, a simple process that typically takes only a few minutes. But the reaction was similar at the Kuala Lumpur offices of the Malaysian web company Shinjiru Technology, which hosted DCLeaks' stolen files for the duration of the electoral campaign.

The company's chief executive, Terence Choong, said he had never heard of DCLeaks until the AP contacted him.

"What is the issue with it?" he asked.

Questions over the FBI's handling of Fancy Bear's broad hacking sweep date to March 2016, when agents arrived unannounced at Hillary Clinton's headquarters in Brooklyn to warn her campaign about a surge of rogue, password-stealing emails.

The agents offered little more than generic security tips the campaign had already put into practice and refused to say who they thought was behind the attempted intrusions, according to a person who was there and spoke on condition of anonymity because the conversation was meant to be confidential.

Questions emerged again after it was revealed that the FBI never took custody of the Democratic National Committee's computer server after it was penetrated by Fancy Bear in April 2016. Former FBI Director James Comey testified this year that the FBI worked off a copy of the server, which he described as an "appropriate substitute."

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"MAKES ME SAD"

Retired Maj. James Phillips was one of the first people to have the contents of his inbox published by DCLeaks when the website made its June 2016 debut.

But the Army veteran said he didn't realize his personal emails were "flapping in the breeze" until a journalist phoned him two months later.

"The fact that a reporter told me about DCLeaks kind of makes me sad," he said. "I wish it had been a government source."

Phillips' story would be repeated again and again as the AP spoke to officials from the National Defense University in Washington to the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado.

Among them: a former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, retired Lt. Gen. Patrick Hughes; a former head of Air Force Intelligence, retired Lt. Gen. David Deptula; a former defense undersecretary, Eric Edelman; and a former director of cybersecurity for the Air Force, retired Lt. Gen. Mark Schissler.

Retired Maj. Gen. Brian Keller, a former director of military support at the Geospatial Intelligence Agency, was not informed, even after DCLeaks posted his emails to the internet. In a telephone call with AP, Keller said he still wasn't clear on what had happened, who had hacked him or whether his data was still at risk.

"Should I be worried or alarmed or anything?" asked Keller, who left the spy satellite agency in 2010 and now works in private industry.

Not all the interviewees felt the FBI had a responsibility to alert them.

"Perhaps optimistically, I have to conclude that a risk analysis was done and I was not considered a high enough risk to justify making contact," said a former Air Force chief of staff, retired Gen. Norton Schwartz, who was targeted by Fancy Bear in 2015.

Others argued that the FBI may have wanted to avoid tipping the hackers off or that there were too many people to notify.

"The expectation that the government is going to protect everyone and go back to everyone is false," said Nicholas Eftimiades, a retired senior technical officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency who teaches homeland security at Pennsylvania State University in Harrisburg and was himself among the targets.

But the government is supposed to try, said Michael Daniel, who served as President Barack Obama's White House cybersecurity coordinator.

Daniel wouldn't comment directly on why so many Fancy Bear targets weren't warned in this case, but he said the issue of how and when to notify people "frankly still needs more work."

"CLOAK-AND-DAGGER"

In the absence of any official warning, some of those contacted by AP brushed off the idea that they were taken in by a foreign power's intelligence service.

"I don't open anything I don't recognize," said Joseph Barnard, who headed the personnel recovery branch of the Air Force's Air Combat Command.

That may well be true of Barnard; Secureworks' data suggests he never clicked the malicious link sent to him in June 2015. But it isn't true of everyone.

An AP analysis of the data suggests that out of 312 U.S. military and government figures targeted by Fancy Bear, 131 clicked the links sent to them. That could mean that as many as 2 in 5 came perilously close to handing over their passwords.

It's not clear how many gave up their credentials in the end or what the hackers may have acquired.

Some of those accounts hold emails that go back years, when even many of the retired officials still occupied sensitive posts.

Overwhelmingly, interviewees told AP they kept classified material out of their Gmail inboxes, but intelligence experts said Russian spies could use personal correspondence as a springboard for further hacking, recruitment or even blackmail.

"You start to have information you might be able to leverage against that person," said Sina Beaghley,

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a researcher at the RAND Corp. who served on the NSC until 2014.

In the few cases where the FBI did warn targets, they were sometimes left little wiser about what was going on or what to do.

Rob "Butch" Bracknell, a 20-year military veteran who works as a NATO lawyer in Norfolk, Virginia, said an FBI agent visited him about a year ago to examine his emails and warn him that a "foreign actor" was trying to break into his account.

"He was real cloak-and-dagger about it," Bracknell said. "He came here to my work, wrote in his little notebook and away he went."

Left to fend for themselves, some targets have been improvising their cybersecurity.

Retired Gen. Roger A. Brady, who was responsible for American nuclear weapons in Europe as part of his past role as commander of the U.S. Air Force there, turned to Apple support this year when he noticed something suspicious on his computer. Hughes, a former DIA head, said he had his hard drive replaced by the "Geek Squad" at a Best Buy in Florida after his machine began behaving strangely. Keller, the former senior spy satellite official, said it was his son who told him his emails had been posted to the web after getting a Google alert in June 2016.

A former U.S. ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul, who like many others was repeatedly targeted by Fancy Bear but has yet to receive any warning from the FBI, said the lackluster response risked something worse than last year's parade of leaks.

"Our government needs to be taking greater responsibility to defend its citizens in both the physical and cyber worlds, now, before a cyberattack produces an even more catastrophic outcome than we have already experienced," McFaul said.

Donn reported from Plymouth, Massachusetts. Associated Press writers Vadim Ghirda in Carcea, Romania, Chad Day in Washington, Frank Bajak in Houston, Justin Myers in Chicago and Lori Hinnant in Paris contributed to this report.

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EDITOR'S NOTE — Raphael Satter's father, David Satter, is an author and Russia specialist who has been critical of the Kremlin. His emails were published last year by hackers and his account is on Secureworks' list of Fancy Bear targets. He was not notified by the FBI.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Nov. 27, the 331st day of 2017. There are 34 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 27, 1967, the Beatles album "Magical Mystery Tour" was released in the United States by Capitol Records.

On this date:

In 1815, the constitution for the Congress Kingdom of Poland was signed by Russian Czar Alexander I, who was also king of Poland.

In 1901, the U.S. Army War College was established in Washington, D.C.

In 1910, New York's Pennsylvania Station officially opened.

In 1924, Macy's first Thanksgiving Day parade — billed as a "Christmas Parade" — took place in New York.

In 1937, the musical revue "Pins and Needles," produced by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, opened in New York.

In 1942, during World War II, the Vichy French navy scuttled its ships and submarines in Toulon (too-

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LOHN') to keep them out of the hands of German troops.

In 1945, General George C. Marshall was named special U.S. envoy to China by President Harry S. Truman to try to end hostilities between the Nationalists and the Communists.

In 1953, playwright Eugene O'Neill died in Boston at age 65.

In 1962, the first Boeing 727 was rolled out at the company's Renton Plant.

In 1978, San Francisco Mayor George Moscone (mahs-KOH'-nee) and City Supervisor Harvey Milk, a gay-rights activist, were shot to death inside City Hall by former supervisor Dan White. (White served five years for manslaughter; he committed suicide in Oct. 1985.)

In 1983, 181 people were killed when a Colombian Avianca Airlines Boeing 747 crashed near Madrid's Barajas airport.

In 1989, a bomb blamed on drug traffickers destroyed a Colombian Avianca Boeing 727, killing all 107 people on board and three people on the ground.

Ten years ago: Israeli and Palestinian leaders meeting at a Mideast conference in Annapolis, Maryland, agreed to formally restart peace talks. Washington Redskins safety Sean Taylor died a day after being shot in his Florida home by an intruder. Bill Willis, a Hall of Fame guard with the Cleveland Browns and Ohio State's first black football All-American, died in Columbus, Ohio, at age 86. Dr. J. Robert Cade, inventor of Gatorade, died at age 80.

Five years ago: U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice met privately with three Republican senators who had indicated they would block her possible nomination to be U.S. secretary of state; they said afterward that they were even more troubled by her initial explanation of the attack that killed four Americans in Benghazi, Libya. (The following month, Rice withdrew from consideration to be secretary of state.) The government said consumer confidence reached its highest level in nearly five years, with the help of rising home values, more hiring and lower gas prices.

One year ago: President-elect Donald Trump claimed that "millions" had voted illegally in the national election, scoffing at Hillary Clinton's nearly 2 million edge in the popular vote and returning to his campaign mantra of a rigged race even as he prepared to enter the White House in less than two months. Argentina won its first Davis Cup title when Federico Delbonis swept past Ivo Karlovic in straight sets to complete a stunning 3-2 comeback win over Croatia.

Today's Birthdays: Author Gail Sheehy is 80. Footwear designer Manolo Blahnik is 75. Academy Award-winning director Kathryn Bigelow is 66. TV host Bill Nye ("Bill Nye, the Science Guy") is 62. Actor William Fichtner (FIHK'-nuhr) is 61. Caroline Kennedy is 60. Academy Award-winning screenwriter Callie Khouri is 60. Rock musician Charlie Burchill (Simple Minds) is 58. Jazz composer/big band leader Maria Schneider is 57. Former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty is 57. Rock musician Charlie Benante (Anthrax) is 55. Rock musician Mike Bordin (Faith No More) is 55. Actor Fisher Stevens is 54. Actress Robin Givens is 53. Actor Michael Vartan is 49. Rapper Skoob (DAS EFX) is 47. Actor Kirk Acevedo is 46. Rapper Twista is 45. Actor Jaleel White is 41. Actor Arjay Smith is 34. Actress Alison Pill is 32. Actress Lashana Lynch (TV: "Still Star-Crossed") is 30. Actress-singer Aubrey Peeples is 24.

Thought for Today: "You must be in tune with the times and prepared to break with tradition." — James Agee, American author, poet and critic (born this date in 1909, died 1955).