

# Groton Daily Independent

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**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**



**These are the tree ornaments that were presented in the GDI Festival Lighting Contest for 2017.**

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Merry Christmas everyone! Oh yes, it is indeed a Merry Christmas. We thank God for the many blessings he has given us in 2017 as we prepare now for 2018. It's been an awesome year in so many ways.

We acquired the fitness center, the laundromat, the building that now houses the fitness center and laundromat and moved our paper office down to the building.

In addition, I have been filling in as pulpit supply at Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden, for about two months. I've been serving the church in Pierpont now for about 14 years. We had successful Christmas services at both churches,

One of the big drawbacks going into 2018 is the insurance premiums. To make matters more challenging, is that we have over \$1,000 in our medflex

account that we have to spend or we end up losing it. Well, I think I found a way to spend it on Christmas Eve. Our Christmas tree in the living room had some strings of lights that quit working, so I was going to go up in the loft to see if I had lights up there. I wanted to get to the next level and since I had no ladder available, I thought I would hoist myself up. Great plan - not so great of idea.

The best way to describe what happened is if you have watched the Home Alone series, the second show, there is a perfect scene that depicts what happened to me. The scene is one of the villains who wants to jump up and grab the bottom rung of the ladder that is greased up. He jumps up, grabs the rung, only to slip off and fall to the ground. I tried to jump up to the next level, lost my balance, went down, swung under the loft, lost my grip and forgot by Superman cape. I dropped about 10 feet to the steps and bounced a couple of times to the floor.

My immediate reaction was to check to see if anything was broken. It had appeared not. Then I thought, "Boy, am I going to be stiff tomorrow." Strange thing to think about after the nasty tumble. Fearing I might pass out, I crawled up the steps and took deep breaths to keep me from passing out. I got up the steps and walked into the house. My side hurt, my ankle hurt and my arm hurt. As I entered the kitchen, I wasn't saying much except I was breathing heavily. At first, the girls thought I was faking it, but then they suddenly discovered that I was not faking it.

High levels of concern took over and after Tina examined me, I was heading into the emergency room. I was against the idea, but my side was bleeding and Tina said it had opened up.

So into the emergency room we went. Three hours later, they

## NEW SIGN-ON BONUSES!

★ ★ ★ **\$1,500 for CNAs** ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ **\$3,000 for LPNs** ★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ **\$4,500 for RNs** ★ ★ ★

### Alzheimer's Care Unit Director

### Medication Aid

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



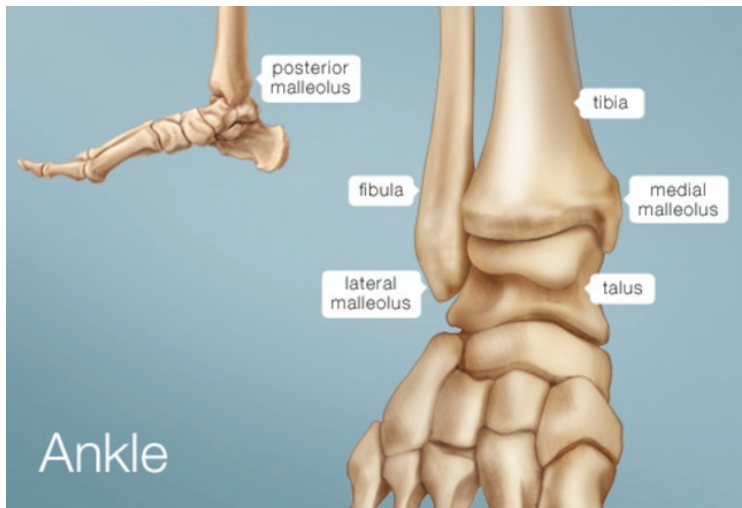
**GROTON**  
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

**1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton**

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had done a CT scan on my back and that was okay. The ended up putting three stitches in my side. They took an X-ray of my ankle and discovered that the fibula bone in my ankle was clearly broken, but still pretty much in line. They put a temporary cast on and I have to see a specialist tomorrow where they will decide the fate of my ankle.



When we got home last night, I had the girls help me with the paper routes. We will have to figure out what to do, especially if I will be laid up for several weeks - they say 8-12 weeks, which is how long it will take to heal a bone.

It is the first time I have ever broken anything in my body and the first time I've ever had a major hospital visit. I even discovered later that my ring is no longer circular, but a little oval. Tina had crutches that I'm using. But when I first got home, it was easier for me to crawl up the steps on my knees than it was to try and use crutches. I am getting the hang of crutches, but still not sure if I will resort to crawling up and scooting down the steps.

I can only thank God that my injuries were not any worse than what they are. I even woke up this morning not stiff and feeling pretty good. So I'm happy with that.

I had Tina bring the computer home this morning. We were hosting Christmas so I've been working on the paper in spurts.

The staff at Avera St. Luke's in Aberdeen was very friendly and fun to be around. That makes the battle much more easier to fight.

It's going to be more of a challenge doing the Livestreaming events going up and down the steps. It's a good thing I have good help with the girls and Justin. And by then, I should be able to maneuver around a little easier once I have mastered the crutches

It will be a Christmas to be remembered!



All auto owners!  
**Save \$2-\$4 /tank**  
& grow your local economy  
by choosing low carbon  
**Super Premium E30's**

94 octane, more power,  
same mileage, fewer  
carbon deposits, lower  
maintenance costs,  
slashed benzene & related  
genotoxic, carcinogenic  
tailpipe emissions;

\*see sdfu.org's E30 tab for  
info, E30 prices\locations.

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

## Kenny receives second place in GDI Lighting Contest



The Terry and Kristin Kenny home at 610 N Main St. in Groton took second place in the second annual GDI Lighting Contest sponsored by the Groton Daily Independent. The Kenny's received a tree ornament reflecting the second place and also a \$20 gift certificate from the Groton Dairy Queen and Subway of Groton. Jeslyn (left) and Julianna (right) presented the award to Terry Kenny.



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## Today in Weather History

December 25, 1983: Winds of 20 to 30 mph, with occasionally higher gusts, combined with very light falling snow and loose surface snow to cause near-blizzard conditions and dangerously low wind chills in most of South Dakota, as well as in southwest and west central Minnesota, from the early evening of the 23rd into Christmas morning. Visibilities were frequently near zero and four- to five-foot drifts closed the vast majority of roads, making travel impossible. Hundreds of motorists became stranded during the evenings of December 23rd and 24th. In Minnesota, many holiday travelers heading west from Minneapolis and St. Paul drove to central Minnesota before conditions became too severe to continue. Winds and severe cold in the western part of Minnesota caused several power outages as well as the loss of livestock.

In South Dakota, at least 70 vehicles were stalled at one point over a 14-mile stretch of Interstate 90 between Kennebec and Reliance in Lyman County. The Pierre Airport in Hughes County was closed twice on the 23rd as visibility was reduced to zero. Most flights were canceled at Sioux Falls Airport in Minnehaha County, stranding numerous holiday travelers. Sub-zero temperatures, combined with gusts of over 60 mph, produced wind chill indices in the 60 to 100 below zero range. Several cases of frostbite were reported, propane gas solidified, fuel jelled, and water pipes and tanks froze as a result of the extreme cold. In Minnehaha County at Wall Lake, electrical outages of 12 hours were experienced from power lines snapping as a result of the cold and winds.

December 25, 1776: Thomas Jefferson noted that the first winter snow fell on Dec. 20, but did not last on the ground one day. Temperatures dropped to 30 degree or colder on Christmas Day. That night, 22 inches of snow fell. From the 25th of December until March 6, 10 snows covered the ground and some of them were deep. The first rain came on the 9th of March. In Frederick County, two feet of snow was recorded.

1926 - A hurricane came inland near Daytona Beach, FL. The hurricane caused 2.5 million dollars damage in eastern Florida, including the Jacksonville area. (David Ludlum)

1939 - The temperature at Lewiston, ID, hit 117 degrees to establish an all-time record high for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1943 - On a whim, and flying a single engine AT-6, Lieutenant Ralph O'Hair and Colonel Duckworth were the first to fly into a hurricane. It started regular Air Force flights into hurricanes. (The Weather Channel)

December 25, 1987: Since 1894, Tucson, Arizona has seen snow on Christmas Day four times. The most recent event occurred in 1987 when Tucson saw 2.6 inches.

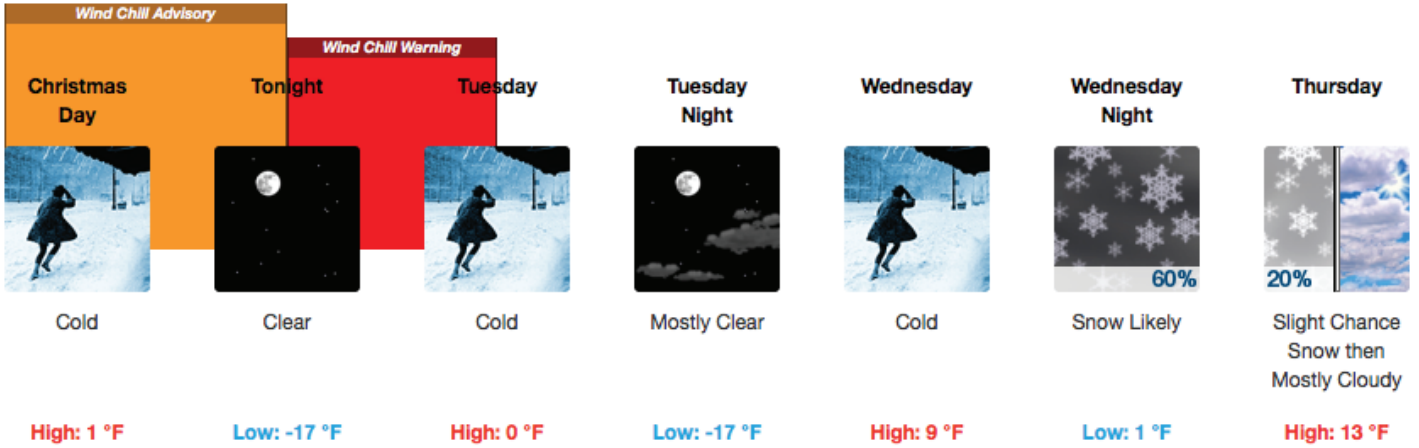
1988 - Hot weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Williston, ND, reported a record high of 108 degrees. Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the eastern U.S., and in southeastern Texas. Richland County, SC, was soaked with up to 5.5 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)


1989 - Thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in the southwestern U.S. Yuma, AZ, experienced their most severe thunderstorm of record. Strong thunderstorm winds, with unofficial gusts as high as 95 mph, reduced visibilities to near zero in blowing dust and sand. Yuma got nearly as much rain in one hour as is normally received in an entire year. The storm total of 2.55 inches of rain was a record 24 hour total for July. Property damage due to flash flooding and high winds was in the millions. (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Wisconsin and northern Illinois to New England, with 103 reports of large hail and damaging winds through the day. Thunderstorms in Wisconsin produced hail three inches in diameter near Oshkosh, and wind gusts to 65 mph at Germantown. (The National Weather Summary)

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## Extreme Cold Continues

Wind Chill Warnings & Advisories in Effect


**Tonight**



Low Temperature **-10 to -20°**

Lowest Wind Chill **-25 to -40°**

**Tuesday**



High Temperature **-5 to +5**

Low Wind Chill Values Remain

[weather.gov/Aberdeen](http://weather.gov/Aberdeen)  
**National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD**

Updated: 12/25/2017 2:52 PM

Published on: 12/25/2017 at 2:53PM

An Arctic airmass over the region will keep dangerously cold air in place over the next few days. The bitterly cold air will combine with northwest winds to produce wind chill values of 25 below to 40 below zero tonight into Tuesday morning. While there will be some improvement Tuesday afternoon, wind chill values will remain 10 below to 20 below degrees. Check out your latest cold forecast at [www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr)

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## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 19.0

Low Outside Temp: -3.3

High Gust: 26

Precip: 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 56° in 1907

Record Low: -25° in 1996

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 3°F

Average Precip in Dec: 0.41

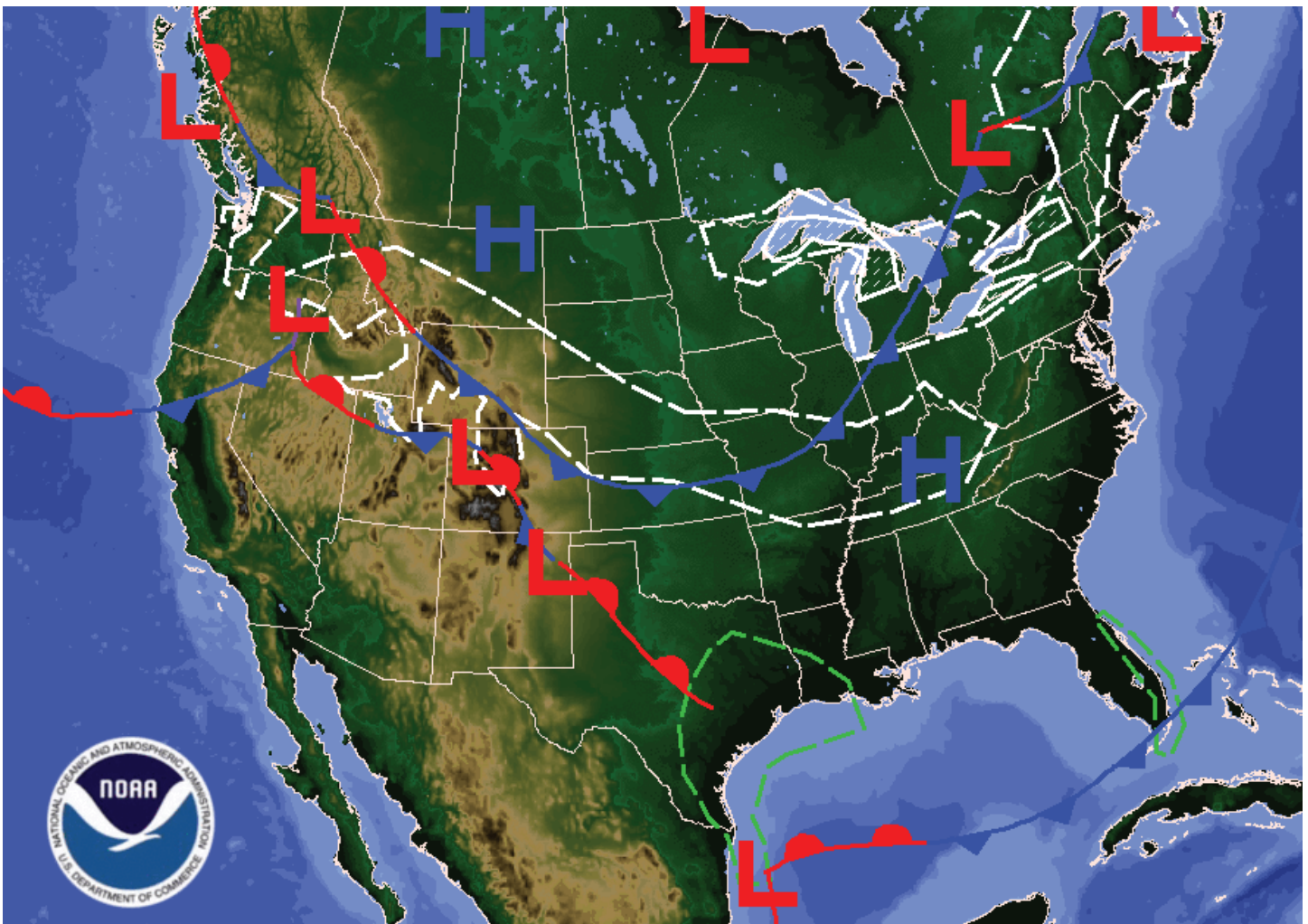
Precip to date in Dec: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.61

Precip Year to Date: 13.47

Sunset Tonight: 4:55 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:12 a.m.



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Dec 25, 2017, issued 3:47 PM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Roth 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)



## THE BIRTH OF JESUS

"And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

Glory to God in highest heaven,  
and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.

They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger."

Luke 2:6-16  
New Living Translation



## 2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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## News from the Associated Press

### **Deadwood casino revenue down slightly in 2017**

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Commission on Gaming says revenue for Deadwood casinos is down 2 percent so far this year compared to the first 11 months of 2016.

The commission released figures Friday showing revenues through November 2017 are at just over \$1 billion.

Despite the overall decrease, the Rapid City Journal reports that November's revenues of \$80.1 million were a slight increase compared to November last year.

Table games approved by state lawmakers in 2015 were also up by about 6 percent this November compared to last year and brought in nearly \$5 million for the month. Table games include blackjack, poker, and craps.

Slot machines make up the majority of gaming in Deadwood and brought in \$75.2 million in November.

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

### **Christmas brings Northeast blizzard, bitter cold in Midwest**

CHICAGO (AP) — The good news for many in the Northeast and Midwest was that it has been a white Christmas. The bad news was that a blizzard swept into parts of New England and bitter cold enveloped much of the Midwest.

Even the usually rainy Pacific Northwest got the white stuff. The National Weather Service says it's only the sixth time since 1884 that downtown Portland had measurable snow — only an inch or two — on a Dec. 25.

A blizzard warning was issued Monday for portions of Maine and New Hampshire, with forecasters saying snow of up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) and wind gusts up to 50 mph (80 kph) could make travel "dangerous to impossible."

Most businesses were already shuttered on Christmas Day in New England. One of the few open was The Tobacconist cigar shop in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, where area-resident Dwayne Doherty said he welcomed the fresh blanket of snow.

"I'm actually happy," he said, chuckling as he made his way to his pick-up. "We haven't had snow on Christmas at all in the last few years. It's actually perfect."

States from Montana and the Dakotas to Wisconsin expected wind chill temperatures in places at 40 below zero (40 below Celsius), the National Weather Service said. The upper half of Iowa and northern Illinois also braced for subzero temperatures.

Minnesota was experiencing its most frigid Christmas Day since 1996, with wind chills as cold as 35 degrees below zero, KSTP-TV reported. The National Weather Service warned that those whose skin was exposed in such conditions could get frostbite in as little as 15 minutes.

Snow amounts in the Midwest were not large for this time of year. A storm system that swept from Nebraska through Iowa dropped around 2 inches of snow on Chicago, the weather service said.

That was just enough to provide a picturesque backdrop for those gathering for Christmas dinners in the Chicago area. But it wasn't enough to cause havoc either on roadway or airport runaways.

Chicago's O'Hare International Airport was reporting just six cancellations and average delays of only 15 minutes around noon Monday. There were no cancellations at the city's other major airport, Midway, and delays were less than 15 minutes on average.

The nation's third largest city had comparatively little snow for the season until the weekend — just over 2 inches (5 centimeters) in all, the National Weather Service said.

The city of Milwaukee had 103 salt trucks treating slick spots Monday, according to WITI-TV. The trucks were using treated salt that's deployed when temperatures drop below 15 degrees.

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In addition to slowing travel in New England, the storm was responsible for some power outages. Ever-source reported more than 20,000 customers in eastern Massachusetts without electricity, the bulk on Cape Cod which was feeling the brunt of strong winds.

Most of Indiana had been under winter weather advisory with officials urging motorists to stay put unless they absolutely had to travel. Northern Indiana had been expecting up to 5 inches (13 centimeters) with slightly less in the southern part of the state.

New England was expected to get up to 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow. Strong winds were predicted for Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island with gusts up to 65 mph (105 kph).

Mountain areas in parts of Colorado, Montana and Wyoming received more than 1 foot (30 centimeters) of snow, which started Saturday. It was good news for holiday skiers and resorts which have struggled with a slow start this season.

But it meant a heightened warning of avalanches in higher elevations outside of ski areas.

## Rapid City mayor wants public presentations on arena plans

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City's mayor is planning presentations for the public on whether to remodel Barnett Arena or build a new facility that would cost about \$182 million — two years after voters rejected a similar idea.

City councilmembers are meeting in February to discuss both options and Mayor Steve Allender told the Rapid City Journal he wants to arrange public meetings before then. Allender said he's also speaking with private groups and business organizations because "it's an important issue."

"I will present until no one shows up," he said.

In 2015, Rapid City voters overwhelmingly denied a proposed \$180 million expansion of Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, where the arena is located. But Allender says the plan two years ago would have drained the city's Vision Fund and this time the proposal would use about half the fund.

Remodeling the arena would cost \$25 million.

The \$182 million price tag would include principal and interest, according to previous presentations Allender has given. Annual debt payments would be an estimated \$6 million.

When councilmembers meet in February, they'll decide whether to approve a funding plan for either of the options for the arena. Then, 5 percent of the city's registered voters would need to sign a petition to put the question on the June 5 ballot.

Allender has made clear he prefers a new arena and said he believes public presentations are winning over skeptics.

"It's a very safe plan," he said.

Elvis Presley, Van Halen, and Garth Brooks have all performed at Barnett Arena, which has about 10,000 seats.

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

## South Dakota teen embraces contact sports after crash injury

By JACQUE NILES and ROBB GAROFALO, Aberdeen American News

IPSWICH, S.D. (AP) — Daniel Braun has every reason to avoid contact sports.

Except one. He doesn't want to.

Braun, a junior at Ipswich High School, is a key cog in the Tigers football, basketball and track and field teams. That's pretty good for a guy whose high school career started out in a near-miss.

Braun was a passenger in a car that was involved in a head-on collision when he was in eighth grade, the Aberdeen American News reported. The crash resulted in a broken neck, massive internal injuries and a three-month stint in a halo.

"We were coming back from a (Minnesota) Vikings game," Braun said. "It was snowing and the roads were kind of icy. We were going maybe 50 miles an hour. Another car was overdriving the conditions and

came sliding into our lane. Hit us head on.”

Braun was in the back seat of the car and, with no air bag, sustained the most serious injuries. His dad, who was driving, had some glass cuts on his arm. His sister in the front passenger seat broke her thumb.

“I had the most fun,” Braun said, wryly.

Braun sustained a C2 fracture in his neck and a “bucket handle tear” in his abdomen.

“They were pumping blood into me, maybe two liters, but it just kept building up in my stomach,” he said.

Doctors had to make an emergency incision through Braun’s abdomen to find and repair the tear. Once that was done, they stabilized his neck with a halo, a device that is screwed to an individual’s skull to immobilize the neck. This was done to allow the fractured vertebrae to heal naturally.

Braun wore the contraption for a solid three months before graduating briefly to a neck brace, then physical therapy.

“It took me a while to figure out how to walk straight up and get used to the weight,” he said. “Once I figured that out, it was a breeze.”

Now, the only reminders of the crash are the scars — one long, winding incision on his abdomen and four small spots on his head from the screws — and the special collar he wears on the football field to protect his neck against whiplash.

The collar is the one concession Braun makes when it comes to playing sports. Though a smidgen of lingering doubt lurked in his mind during the first month, Braun was adamant that he wanted to continue to play sports again.

“The first month watching everyone else go out there and run around and shoot (basketballs), I was just like, ‘What am I supposed to do, just sit here and watch?’” Braun said. “After a while you got used to it. Then you’re just like, ‘I’m going to work that much harder when I get back.’”

Braun was cleared two months after the halo came off, though it took some convincing on his part to get the go-ahead to play football.

“(Doctors) didn’t want to fully clear me because ... if I got injured again, they didn’t want to have that on their conscience,” Braun said. “I had to get my parents’ OK.”

That, too, took a little convincing from Braun.

“They were more nervous than I was,” he said. “I was just like, ‘Let’s go. It’s my favorite sport. Let’s get ready.’ They were more, ‘Slow down.’”

Now Braun is back and stronger than ever. He was a key member of the Ipswich football team and is a starter for the basketball squad, scoring 12 points in the Tigers’ season-opening win over Eureka/Bowdle on Dec. 12. He also runs sprints for the track and field squad.

And, while he doesn’t consciously think about the accident, his injuries or his scars, he knows these moments are not to be taken for granted.

“You never know how quickly some things can end,” he said.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

## South Dakota family honors daughter who died in house fire

By DEB HOLLAND, Black Hills Pioneer

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Phibie Joyce Moyer may have only graced this Earth for six years, but her caring spirit lives on, especially this holiday season.

Phibie was one of five children who died in an April 1 house fire in Spearfish. She was a kindergartener at Sturgis Elementary School.

“From the second she came into this world, Phibie started touching hearts one by one, with her bright red hair and crystal baby blue eyes,” her mother, Shannon Huggett, said. “She would brighten up a room with just a simple smile.”

Huggett said Phibie taught her so much about love, compassion, and caring for others.

“She cared about everything and everybody,” she said. “She didn’t want anybody’s feelings hurt no mat-

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ter who they were. Even the biggest bully in school she was super nice to.”

A couple of months ago, Huggett got the idea to honor Phibie’s memory at Christmas in some way. At first, she considered having everyone in her extended family take a name from an Angel Tree and fulfill that wish.

“One morning it just came to me that we needed to help a family in need because that’s what Phibie would want us to do,” she said. “I knew that Christmas was going to be hard. It was our favorite holiday.”

The family loved the idea.

Huggett posted a message on Facebook saying that Phibie loved the holidays, so it would only be fitting that they carry on the joy she brought to them, with others. She asked for nominations and was overwhelmed with more than 75, the Black Hills Pioneer reported .

“That’s what’s heartbreaking about this whole thing. I want to help every one of them,” she said.

Huggett printed out the nominations and shared them with her family. Even with more than 75 nominations, the family came to a consensus on one family — Kristin Brave, a single mother of four in Rapid City. The person who nominated Brave said the young woman recently earned her high school diploma, got into the certified nursing assistant program, got a driver’s license and insurance, got a job, and put each of her children in daycare or school.

Brave, 23, said the message from Shannon was truly a Godsend.

“I can’t imagine what she is going through, then to open her heart to do what she is doing for another family is so nice,” she said

Brave said she and her children, who range in age from 1 to 5 years old, have been through a lot this year and to actually have an abundant Christmas is something unexpected.

“I thought we wouldn’t actually have a Christmas this year, or we’d maybe get a couple presents from the shelter,” she said.

Learning that the Christmas gifts and meal fixings were being done in honor of Phibie makes it even more special, Brave said.

“She’s experienced such heartbreak, and she’s reaching out to help others,” Brave said. “We really appreciate it a lot.”

“I definitely think we made the best choice,” Huggett said.

The Huggett family will buy gifts and clothes for each of the children and Kristin, along with everything they need for an amazing Christmas dinner.

Huggett, a 2003 Sturgis Brown High School graduate, said Phibie would be so happy with the Christmas project. But, then again, Phibie was always a happy child.

“It was seldom that she woke up on the wrong side of the bed, and if somebody else was in a bad mood, she would do anything she could to make you smile,” Huggett said.

But that’s not to say Phibie didn’t have an attitude or fight with her brother, Noah.

“They fought all the time,” Huggett said. “However, Noah has always been very protective of her. He can fight with her, but if anyone else tries to, ‘No way.’”

Phibie was ecstatic to get to go to kindergarten at Sturgis Elementary School, her mom said. She chose a hot pink backpack, or “pack-pack,” as she called it.

“That was her color. She loved hot pink,” Huggett said.

Huggett recalls taking Phibie to her first day of school.

“She was so excited,” she said. “But the minute she saw the other classes start walking in, she turned to me and said: ‘Mom, I don’t think I’m ready.’”

Since Phibie’s death, her mom has been drawn to butterflies. The story begins on the night Huggett was writing Phibie’s obituary. She received a message from a teacher’s aide who worked in Phibie’s kindergarten class. She explained to Huggett that in class they were reading a book about a caterpillar that started life as an ugly caterpillar and turned into a beautiful butterfly.

At one point during her kindergarten year, some of the boys reportedly teased Phibie about her red hair. The teacher told Huggett she explained to Phibie that kids may make fun of her now for her red hair, but eventually she would grow up to be beautiful. Phibie’s response to the teacher was, “You mean I’m going

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to be a beautiful butterfly, too?"

After Huggett heard the story, butterflies came to represent Phibie and her transformation. The family even found hot pink butterflies to adorn their Christmas tree this year.

"Phibie was all pink and glitter," her mom said.

On the wall in the Hugget's home in Sturgis is a shadow box with Phibie's ashes, an amazing photo of her, and items that reflect the seasons. Currently, it includes white Christmas nativity figures.

"When it's not a holiday, there are two necklaces in there that her uncle Josh gave her, a tie-dyed rose and a couple other things," Phibie's grandma, Misty, said.

Phibie's uncles loved her dearly, as did her grandpa and grandma. She called Misty her Nanna Banana. Misty affectionately called Phibie — Miss Prudence P. Water.

Grandma Misty remembers the drawn-out trips to the grocery store with Phibie.

"It took us two hours," Misty said.

Phibie had to get her baby, whose name changed on a regular basis, dressed, put in her toy car seat, and buckle in.

"Phibie then had to get a diaper bag ready as if she was leaving for a month. Some might think it was a little overboard but she was definitely prepared," her mom said.

It's difficult for Huggett to think back to the days surrounding the house fire.

About two weeks before the fire, Tanlynn Roden began babysitting for Phibie. Then, on the Friday before the fire, Phibie, Noah, Tanlynn, and others planned to go to a birthday party at a home in Spearfish. Tanlynn's mom called that evening saying the kids could just stay the night and Huggett could pick them up in the morning.

At about 9:30 p.m. that night, Huggett got a phone call from Tanlynn saying Noah didn't want to stay the night, he wanted to go home.

Huggett headed to Spearfish to pick up Noah. She said once she arrived at the house, she asked Phibie if she wanted to come home with Noah, too.

"She told me she was not coming home because she was having too much fun. That was her first 'official' sleepover. I wasn't going to take that away from her," Huggett said.

Huggett and Noah went home to Sturgis and went to bed.

"I woke up at 4:15 on the dot, and I was wide awake. I'm not a morning person at all," Huggett said.

Huggett was scheduled to work at Auto Zone in Sturgis at 8 a.m. She received a call from her boss at 7:47, she said.

"He said, 'Did you do something last night? You have a detective looking for you,'" she said.

Huggett thought it was an April Fool's joke. But he said he was serious.

While she talked to her boss, she got notification on her phone that she had a voicemail message. It was from a police detective in Spearfish.

"He said there was an incident. They wouldn't tell me anything, just that I needed to get to the hospital in Spearfish," she said.

Apparently they had been trying to reach Huggett for nearly four hours.

Huggett's brother called his dad saying someone had contacted him and told him there was a house fire in Spearfish where Phibie was staying.

"They knew there was a house fire before I even did," Huggett said.

Huggett got in the car and headed to Spearfish.

At the hospital, she entered through the emergency room doors where she met Detective Darin Pedneau.

"He was standing at the door along with the chaplain of the hospital," Huggett said. "They took me into the little chapel and told me that there had been a fire and there were five children that were unaccounted for."

Phibie's grandparents and her uncle also headed to Spearfish to support Huggett, but halfway there they received a call from another of Huggett's brother saying they needed to meet at the Spearfish Fire Department, not the hospital.

"At that point, we knew. We knew," Misty said.

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As the family approached the fire hall, Misty said the firefighters "couldn't even look at us. You could tell they were heartbroken."

All the families involved were called back to the hospital.

"There were so many rumors on Facebook that they wanted everybody to be together so we could hear what really happened at the same time," Misty said.

Police officials said five bodies were recovered and through DNA testing had been identified. About 10:30 a.m. on April 1, 2017, Huggett got confirmation that Phibie was one of the five.

Misty said Huggett fell to her knees upon hearing the news.

"Your whole world just stops," Huggett said. "There are still days where it's hard to believe that she is really gone."

Even today, Huggett said she can look at pictures of Phibie and not break down, but once she focuses on her face, the deep hurt emerges.

In addition to Phibie, others who died in the April 1 fire were Clinton James Johnson, 7; Rhylin Zane Gee, 9; Justice Lillian Gene Roden, 9; and Tanlynn Crystal Rain Roden, 11.

The call came in at 4:23 a.m. Saturday, April 1, that there was a fire on Ames Street in Spearfish. The blaze was so strong that firefighters were unable to enter the home right away. It took about an hour and a half to put the fire out. By the time the last flames were extinguished, the structure was in danger of collapse. The home has since been razed.

Phibie's legacy will also live on in a memorial to Sturgis Youth Little League.

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Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

## **\$2.4M Sioux Falls park relocation underway**

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A park in Sioux Falls is getting an upgrade, but it isn't your typical restoration project.

A \$2.4 million project will move Sioux Falls' Rotary Park from one side of the Big Sioux River to the other, to make way for a road reconstruction, the Argus Leader reported.

Work began this month to relocate and reconstruct the park on the west side of the river.

The project is removing trees in the area to make space for new park features, including new trees and landscaping, a picnic shelter, restroom, playground and parking lot. These features will be installed starting in April, and the park is expected to be open to the public next fall.

The move is necessary in order to conduct a reconstruction project for Interstate 229 and 26th Street in 2019.

Parks Director Don Kearney said that the equipment in the existing park on the east side of the river will remain there through its life expectancy. Kearney said access to the park will be moved to the river's west side because of the building of a 26th Street bridge and a new pedestrian bridge that will connect both of the river's sides.

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

## **\$8M aquatic center to open by summer in South Dakota city**

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Progress is being made on an \$8 million aquatic center that southeastern South Dakota voters narrowly approved two years ago.

Construction for Mitchell's indoor aquatic center began in March, the Daily Republic reported. Mitchell City Councilwoman Susan Tjarks said the facility is on schedule to be completed by the summer.

Fifty-four percent of Mitchell voters approved the \$8 million center about two years ago. Tjarks said she wishes the city could recoup the time lost to putting the project to a referral vote.

"But, I'm sure most people will never remember that in the long run, and it will be worth the wait when we have a fabulous aquatics facility that will serve our community for many years to come," Tjarks said.

Tjark said the project's rapid progress is evident every time she drives past the facility. "It's going to be amazing," she said.

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

## Cities, volunteers clash over feeding homeless in public

By KATE BRUMBACK, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — When Adele MacLean joined others in an Atlanta park to feed the hungry the Sunday before Thanksgiving, she left with a citation and a summons to appear in court.

The case was dropped when she showed up in court earlier this month, but she and her lawyers say the citation for serving food without a permit was improper and demonstrates callousness toward the homeless. The city and some advocates say feeding people on the streets can hinder long-term solutions and raises sanitation concerns.

"I'm still outraged this is happening," MacLean said after her court appearance Dec. 14. "I'm concerned that the city, whenever they want to crack down on the homeless, they're going to go after anyone that tries to help them."

About 40 cities nationwide had active laws to restrict food sharing as of November 2014, and a few dozen more had attempted such restrictions, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. Interim Director Megan Hustings said she doesn't have updated numbers but that she's heard about more cities considering such regulations.

MacLean, a volunteer with a movement called Food Not Bombs, was cited Nov. 19 by a Georgia State University police officer after her group refused to stop feeding the homeless in a downtown park, and her lawyers say city officers have been distributing a "misleading pamphlet" bearing the city seal that says a permit is required to feed people in public places.

That's simply not true, said Southern Center for Human Rights attorney Gerry Weber, who's representing MacLean. Permits are required for restaurants, food trucks and festival food vendors, not for people sharing food at no charge, he said.

Even though MacLean's case was dropped, it doesn't mean officers will stop telling people they can't feed the homeless, and doesn't eliminate the possibility of future citations, Weber said. The Southern Center is pushing for a clear statement from the city that people have a right to feed the homeless in public places, he said.

Conflict between city government and groups feeding the homeless in public isn't unique to Atlanta.

A Fort Lauderdale, Florida, ordinance requiring permits to feed the homeless in a park is being challenged in federal court by another Food Not Bombs group. The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments in that case in August but has not ruled yet.

The lawyers in that case argue the ordinances violate the group's right to free speech because group members share food "as an expression of their political message that hunger and poverty can be ended if society's resources are redirected from the military and war."

"I salute genuinely the good will and good nature of all these people. There is no bad guy in this," said Georgia State University police Sgt. Joseph Corrigan, a chaplain who also leads the department's homeless outreach program.

But instead of having feedings that pop up in different places all the time, it's better to connect people with shelters or other established organizations that provide consistent help and services, he said.

Food safety, garbage and the human waste left behind when people are fed in a place with no bathrooms are also concerns, Corrigan said.

Additionally, many homeless people struggle with serious mental illness or addiction, which can make them wary of help, said George Chidi, social impact director for Central Atlanta Progress, a nonprofit community development organization that serves downtown Atlanta. The city has teams whose mission is to reach out, develop trusting relationships and, ultimately, connect the homeless with housing and treatment



services. Public feedings can disrupt those efforts, Chidi said.

"We don't want anybody to stop feeding people," he said. "We just want it done in a way that's connected to social services providers ... and not on the street corner because we can't make sure those connections are being made in these street corner feedings."

MacLean doesn't buy those arguments.

"Food is a human right, and you don't force people to do what you want them to do by withholding food," she said.

Some avoid shelters because of strict rules, safety and health concerns or because they aren't able to be in the same place as family or friends, she said.

Hustings said restrictions on public feedings are most commonly enacted or enforced when the homeless population becomes more visible. In Atlanta, advocates say, more people have ended up on the streets after the recent closure of the city's shelter of last resort.

"Even though the rhetoric will be around providing access to safe food or something that purports to be considering the folks who are homeless and need the food, a lot of times our communities across the country know it's because citizens don't like seeing large gatherings of people who look homeless," Hustings said.

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## Russian officials bar Navalny from running for president

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian election officials on Monday formally barred Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny from running for president, prompting calls from him for a boycott of next year's vote.

The Central Election Commission decided unanimously that the anti-corruption crusader isn't eligible to run.

Navalny is implicitly barred from running for office because of a conviction in a fraud case which has been viewed as political retribution. He could have run if he was given a special dispensation or if his conviction was cancelled.

Incumbent Vladimir Putin is set to easily win a fourth term in office in the March 18 election, with his approval ratings topping 80 percent.

Over the past year, Navalny has mounted a grassroots campaign which reached out to the most remote corners of Putin's heartland.

Navalny, 41 is the most serious challenger that Putin has faced in all his years in power, and the court cases against him have been widely seen as a tool to keep him from running for office.

In a pre-recorded video message that was released minutes after the Election Commission handed down the decision, Navalny called on his supporters to boycott the vote.

"The procedure that we're invited to take part is not an election," he said. "Only Putin and the candidates he has hand-picked are taking part in it."

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"Going to the polls right now is to vote for lies and corruption."

Central Election Commission chief Ella Pamfilova told Navalny ahead of its vote to bar him that "maybe we would be interested if you were running," but said the conviction doesn't allow the commission to put him on the ballot.

Speaking before the vote, Navalny told the commission that their decision to bar him would be a vote "not against me, but against 16,000 people who have nominated me, against 200,000 volunteers who have been canvassing for me."

While Putin is all but certain to win an easy victory, the Kremlin wants his performance to be as strong as possible and has been concerned by growing voter apathy.

Navalny's call for a boycott could hurt the Kremlin's hopes for boosting turnout.

The involvement of Ksenia Sobchak, a 36-year-old star TV host, could raise public interest in the race. While Sobchak has denied colluding with the Kremlin, she could attract some of Navalny's supporters and help boost attendance.

Sobchak criticized Navalny's call for boycotting the vote, saying Monday that the "election is the only way to change something, and boycotting them is inefficient and harmful."

She proposed that Navalny join her campaign if she gets registered for the race.

Other veterans of past elections — liberal Grigory Yavlinsky and ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — are also running. Communists nominated a new face, Pavel Grudinin, director of a big strawberry farm just outside Moscow.

Vladimir Isachenkov contributed to this report.

## 'Sound of Music' actress Heather Menzies-Urich dies at 68

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actress Heather Menzies-Urich, who played one of the singing von Trapp children in the hit 1965 film, "The Sound of Music," has died. She was 68.

Her son, actor Ryan Urich, told Variety that his mother died late Sunday in Frankford, Ontario. She recently had been diagnosed with brain cancer.

"She was an actress, a ballerina and loved living her life to the fullest," Urich said.

Menzies-Urich played Louisa von Trapp, the third-oldest of the seven von Trapp children, in the film adaptation of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical that starred Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer.

"The Sound of Music" captured five Academy Awards, including best picture.

"Heather was part of 'the family.' There is really no other way to describe the members of the cast of the movie of 'The Sound of Music,'" Ted Chapin, president and chief creative officer of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization, said in a statement.

A Toronto native, Menzies-Urich's other film credits include "Hawaii" and "Piranha." On television, she appeared as a fugitive in "Logan's Run" and had guest spots on "Dragnet," "Bonanza," "Marcus Welby, M.D." and other series.

Variety reports that Menzies-Urich is survived by two other children, several grandchildren and a great grandchild.

Her husband, actor Robert Urich, died in 2002. After his death, Menzies-Urich established the Robert Urich Foundation to raise funds for cancer research.

## Guatemala says it is moving embassy in Israel to Jerusalem

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Guatemala's president announced on Christmas Eve that the Central American country will move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, becoming the first nation to follow the lead of U.S. President Donald Trump in ordering the change.

Guatemala was one of nine nations that voted with the United States and Israel on Thursday when the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a non-binding resolution denouncing Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

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Trump didn't set any timetable for moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and neither did Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales.

In a post on his official Facebook account Sunday, Morales said that after talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, he decided to instruct Guatemala's foreign ministry to move the embassy.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki criticized the decision Monday, saying in a statement Morales was "dragging his country to the wrong side of history by committing a flagrant violation of international law."

Al-Malki called it a "shameless act of lawlessness" and "a brazen act of disrespect and disregard" to international alliances of which Guatemala is part.

Guatemala and Israel have long had close ties, especially in security matters and Israeli arms sales to Guatemala.

No other country has their embassy for Israel in Jerusalem, though the Czech Republic has said it is considering such a move.

In a statement, Netanyahu praised Morales' decision and said that he was waiting in Jerusalem.

"God bless you, my friend, President Morales," he said. "I told you recently that there will be other countries that would recognize Jerusalem and announce the transfer of their embassies to it. Well here is the second country and I reiterate: It is only the beginning and it is important."

Trump upended decades of U.S. policy with his Dec. 6 announcement that he was recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Though Trump said he was merely recognizing reality and not prejudging negotiations on the future borders of the city, Palestinians saw the move as siding with Israel on the most sensitive issue in the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Israel claims all of Jerusalem as its capital, while the Palestinians claim the city's eastern sector, which was captured by Israel in 1967 and is home to sensitive religious Jewish, Muslim and Christian sites. Many governments have long said that the fate of Jerusalem must be resolved through negotiations.

Trump's announcement has set off weeks of clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli security forces that have left 12 Palestinians dead.

Netanyahu has made great efforts to reach out to Latin America in recent years as part of a campaign to counter longstanding support for the Palestinians at the United Nations.

The resolution passed by the General Assembly declared the U.S. action on Jerusalem "null and void." The 128-9 vote was a victory for Palestinians, but fell short of the total they had predicted. Thirty-five nations abstained and 21 stayed away from the vote.

## Trump celebrates Christmas like most of America, with family

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump is celebrating Christmas the way millions of Americans do: surrounded by family, the White House said.

But unlike most Americans, he released a brief video in which his wife, Melania, joined him to "wish America and the entire world a very Merry Christmas."

The first lady says that at this time of year "we see the best of America and the soul of the American people" in children packing boxes to help brighten Christmas for service members and communities coming together to help one another.

"In this season of joy, we spend time with our families, we renew our bonds of love and goodwill between our citizens and, most importantly, we celebrate the miracle of Christmas," Trump said, noting the story of Jesus' birth.

"This good news is the greatest Christmas gift of all, the reason for our joy and the true source of our hope," the president said.

Trump is spending his first Christmas in office at his estate and private club in Palm Beach, Florida. The White House did not say which family members are with him at Mar-a-Lago, but the first lady and their son, Barron, arrived days before he joined them last Friday.

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Trump's daughter, Tiffany Trump, was seen getting off of Air Force One in Florida on Friday, and Donald Trump Jr. shared on social media photos of some of his five children at Christmas Eve dinner with their grandfather.

But the day was not without work. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the president had been briefed on Monday's suicide bombing in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack, which killed at least six people.

Heading into the holiday, Trump took note of those he considers naughty (a top FBI official, the news media) and nice (U.S. troops stationed overseas and their families, kids eagerly awaiting Santa's arrival). He also squeezed in time for golf, time with family and time for church.

"Merry Christmas," Trump said Sunday night as he and the first lady arrived for a Christmas Eve service at the Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea in Palm Beach, where congregants welcomed them with a standing ovation. The Trumps wed at the church in 2005.

Trump also sought to cheer U.S. troops who are spending the holiday away from their own families.

"Every American heart is thankful to you and we're asking God to watch over you and to watch over your families," he told Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard members via video hook-up from his estate.

Trump complimented each military branch, but heaped his most effusive praise on the Coast Guard, which impressed him with its rescue operations during a devastating hurricane season.

"You've done such an incredible job in Texas and Florida and Puerto Rico," Trump said.

Trump opened Christmas Eve by tweeting against those he feels don't support him, including FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe and the news media.

After playing golf at his private club in neighboring West Palm Beach, the president joined his wife to field calls from children eager to know when Santa Claus would come to town. The calls came by way of a Santa tracking program run for more than 60 years by NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command.

Trump ate Christmas Eve dinner with family before heading to church.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

## Peru's president grants medical pardon for jailed Fujimori

By FRANKLIN BRICENO, Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Peru's president announced Sunday night that he granted a medical pardon to jailed former strongman Alberto Fujimori, who was serving a 25-year sentence for human rights abuses, corruption and the sanctioning of death squads.

President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski released a statement on Christmas Eve saying he decided to free Fujimori for "humanitarian reasons," citing doctors who had determined the ex-leader suffers from incurable and degenerative problems.

The 79-year-old Fujimori, who governed from 1990 to 2000, is a polarizing figure in Peru. Some Peruvians laud him for defeating the Maoist Shining Path guerrilla movement, while others loathe him for human rights violations carried out under his government and some human rights groups quickly criticized the pardon.

His daughter, Keiko Fujimori, narrowly lost Peru's last presidential election to Kuczynski, and her party dominates congress. Her party mounted an attempt this month to oust Kuczynski over business ties to the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht, which is at the center of a huge Latin American corruption scandal, but the president survived the impeachment vote late Thursday.

Critics of Fujimori again raised speculation that Kuczynski agreed to pardon the former leader in return for some opposition lawmakers not supporting his impeachment.

Fujimori filed a request seeking a medical pardon more than a year ago, citing deteriorating health. He has said on his Twitter account that he suffers from arrhythmia, for which he has been hospitalized several times this year. He remained at a clinic Sunday night where he was taken from prison a day earlier after

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suffering a drop in blood pressure.

Keiko Fujimori and one of her brothers, Kenji, visited the clinic Sunday night. The brother later tweeted that their father would remain hospitalized a few days more.

Supporters of the former leader gathered outside the clinic to celebrate his pardon Sunday night. "He was a brave man, the best Peruvian president of all time," said Juana Lopez.

A few dozen opponents of Fujimori demonstrated a few blocks from the presidential palace. Some protesters chanted "Kuczynski traitor" and "Killer Fujimori" while carrying posters with photographs of those slain during his decade in power.

Jose Miguel Vivanco, executive director of Human Rights Watch, said on this Twitter account that the pardon "was a vulgar political negotiation in exchange for Kuczynski's stay in power." Amnesty International demanded that Kuczynski "clarify the doubts about the lack of transparency and respect for due process."

Eduardo Dargent, a political science professor at Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, predicted the president's decision would prove to be "his worst mistake." He said the pardon was a "mockery" for people who voted for Kuczynski in his runoff election fight with Keiko Fujimori.

Peruvian law provides that no person convicted of murder or kidnapping can receive a presidential pardon except in the case of a terminal illness. Three previous requests from Fujimori for pardons since 2013 were rejected after doctors said he did not suffer from incurable illness or severe mental disorder.

Kuczynski's statement said a medical board had evaluated Fujimori and determined that "he suffers from a progressive, degenerative and incurable disease and that prison conditions mean a serious risk to his life, health and well-being."

Fujimori would have been in prison until age 93 if he had severed his full sentence.

He was first convicted in 2009 and sentenced to 25 years in prison for his role in the killings of 25 people, including an 8-year-old boy, during his administration. He was later drew four more convictions, the most serious one charging him with knowledge of the existence of death squads financed with public money that killed civilians accused of being Shining Path members.

A former university president and mathematics professor, Fujimori was a political outsider when he emerged from obscurity to win Peru's 1990 presidential election over writer Mario Vargas Llosa.

Peru was being ravaged by runaway inflation and guerrilla violence when he took office. He quickly rebuilt the economy with mass privatizations of state industries. Defeating the fanatical Shining Path rebels took longer but his fight won him broad-based support.

His presidency collapsed just as dramatically as his rise to power.

After briefly shutting down Congress and putting himself into a third term, Fujimori fled the country in disgrace in 2000 after leaked videotapes showed his spy chief, Vladimiro Montesinos, bribing lawmakers. Fujimori went to Japan, his parents' homeland, and famously sent in his resignation by fax.

Five years later, he stunned supporters and enemies alike when he flew to neighboring Chile, where he was arrested and extradited to Peru. Fujimori's goal was run for Peru's presidency again in 2006, but instead he went to trial and was convicted of abuse of power.

## **N. Korea says it's a 'pipe dream' that it will give up nukes**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said it is a "pipe dream" for the United States to think it will give up its nuclear weapons, and called the latest U.N. sanctions to target the country "an act of war" that violates its sovereignty.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved tough new sanctions against North Korea on Friday in response to its latest launch of a ballistic missile that Pyongyang says can reach anywhere on the U.S. mainland. The resolution was drafted by the United States and negotiated with the North's closest ally, China.

"We define this 'sanctions resolution' rigged up by the U.S. and its followers as a grave infringement upon the sovereignty of our Republic, as an act of war violating peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and the region and categorically reject the 'resolution,'" North Korea's foreign ministry said in a statement on

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Sunday.

The ministry said the sanctions are tantamount to a "complete economic blockade" of North Korea.

"If the U.S. wishes to live safely, it must abandon its hostile policy towards the DPRK and learn to co-exist with the country that has nuclear weapons and should wake up from its pipe dream of our country giving up nuclear weapons which we have developed and completed through all kinds of hardships," said the statement, carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

China called for restraint Monday, with Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying saying that nations should "make positive and constructive efforts to de-escalate tensions" on the Korean Peninsula.

Hua said the new U.N. resolution emphasizes "not inflicting adverse humanitarian impact" on North Koreans and not affecting regular economic activities or humanitarian assistance.

The resolution includes sharply lower limits on North Korea's refined oil imports, the return home of all North Koreans working overseas within 24 months, and a crackdown on ships smuggling banned items including coal and oil to and from the country.

The Trump administration's success in achieving the resolution won praise from the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Ben Cardin of Maryland. "That was a good move, a major accomplishment," he said.

Cardin, who spoke on "Fox News Sunday," said the stepped-up sanctions should be followed by diplomacy aimed at bringing the U.S. and China together on a sustained effort to ease tensions in that region.

But the resolution doesn't include even harsher measures sought by the Trump administration that would ban all oil imports and freeze international assets of the government and its leader, Kim Jong Un.

The resolution drew criticism from Russia for the short time the Security Council nations had to consider the draft, and last-minute changes to the text. Two of those changes were extending the deadline for North Korean workers to return home from 12 months to 24 months — which Russia said was the minimum needed — and reducing the number of North Koreans being put on the U.N. sanctions blacklist from 19 to 15.

## Trump's busy Christmas Eve: calls to troops, talk of Santa

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump's first Christmas Eve in office was a busy one that unfolded like this: tweet against perceived adversaries, cheer U.S. troops spending the holidays overseas, play golf, chat with children anxious to know when Santa will bring their presents, eat dinner with the family and attend a church service.

"Today and every day, we're incredibly thankful for you and for your families," Trump told the troops via video hook-up from his Florida estate, where he is spending the holidays with his family. "Your families have been tremendous. Always underappreciated, the military families. The greatest people on Earth."

Trump briefly addressed members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard stationed in Qatar, Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and patrolling the Strait of Hormuz in the Middle East.

Vice President Mike Pence rallied U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan during a surprise visit last week.

Trump complimented each branch of the armed forces, starting with the Army's "Iron Brigade" combat team in Kuwait, which he said is performing a "vital mission" by partnering with the Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian and Jordanian armies.

He said a Kuwait-based, Marine Corps air-ground task force has provided more than 4,000 flight hours of close air support in the campaign against the Islamic State group, and he thanked sailors aboard the USS Sampson for defending "high-value assets" in the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump also singled out the Air Force's 69th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron in Qatar for engaging more than 700 IS and Taliban targets in five separate countries and winning two trophies in an Air Force bomb competition.

He showered the most praise on the Coast Guard, which impressed him with its rescue operations dur-

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ing a devastating hurricane season.

"You've done such an incredible job in Texas and Florida and Puerto Rico," Trump said. "Many Republicans are very happy but, I have to tell you, the people of Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and lots of other states are even more happy. What a job you've done ... saved thousands and thousands of lives."

Puerto Ricans, however, may quibble with the president's assessment of their state of mind.

Power generation on the U.S. territory is at 65 percent, with nine of Puerto Rico's 78 municipalities still completely in the dark more than three months after Hurricane Maria walloped the island. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has estimated power will not be fully restored across Puerto Rico until May. More than 200,000 homes were damaged and more than 30,000 people have lost their jobs, sparking an exodus of more than 200,000 Puerto Ricans to Florida alone.

In closing, Trump offered thanks to those who are spending time away from their families to "defend all of our families, our freedoms and our pride."

"Every American heart is thankful to you and we're asking God to watch over you and to watch over your families," he said, before he asked journalists to leave the room so he could begin answering any service member questions.

Trump began the day by tweeting against a top FBI official he has suggested is biased against him, as well as the news media. The president also spent several hours playing golf at his private club in West Palm Beach.

Later Sunday, the president and first lady Melania Trump fielded calls from children eager to know how soon Santa Claus would get to their homes. Trump and his wife engaged callers on separate telephones at their Mar-a-Lago estate as they sat in chairs on opposite sides of a large Christmas tree. The calls came by way of a Santa tracking program run for more than 60 years by the North American Aerospace Defense Command. Journalists could only hear the president's side of the conversations.

Trump told a caller from Mississippi that the state is "great" and predicted that "Santa is going to treat you very well."

He offered encouragement when a caller from Virginia wanted to find building blocks under the Christmas tree. Trump, who made his name and fortune building things, said: "That's what I always liked, too."

"Santa moves very quickly. He'll be at your house very late at night when you're sleeping," Trump said.

Trump ate Christmas Eve dinner with his family before attending worship services with the first lady at the Episcopal church in Palm Beach where they were married in 2005.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

## Thousands spend Christmas in shelters after Philippine storm

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AP) — Thousands of villagers in the southern Philippines spent their Christmas morning in emergency shelters Monday as the region dealt with the aftermath of one of the deadliest storms to hit the country this year.

Tropical Storm Tembin unleashed landslides and flash floods that left more than 120 people dead and 160 missing, mostly in the hard-hit provinces of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur and on the Zamboanga Peninsula. It strengthened into a typhoon before blowing out of the country Sunday and into the South China Sea.

"We're really sad that we have this news especially because our countrymen were looking to celebrate Christmas," Marina Marasigan of the government's disaster-response agency told a televised news conference.

Intense rainfall in the mountains most likely caused landslides that blocked rainwater, Marasigan said. When the naturally formed dams broke from the pressure, torrents of rainwater smashed into the villages below.

Mayor Bong Edding of Sibuco town blamed logging operations in the mountains for a flash food that swept away houses with more than 30 residents. Five bodies have been recovered so far in the village



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and a search and rescue operation was continuing.

A large number of dead and missing was also reported in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur provinces, where floodwaters from a mountain washed away several riverside houses.

Marasigan asked the public to heed storm warnings and evacuation orders to avoid casualties.

Thousands of villagers fled to emergency shelters and more than 500 passengers remained stranded in airports and seaports after the coast guard prohibited ferries from venturing out in the rough seas and several flights were canceled as the storm raged Saturday.

The typhoon was packing maximum sustained winds of 120 kilometers (75 miles) per hour and gusts of up to 145 kph (90 mph).

An inter-island ferry sank off northeastern Quezon province Thursday after being lashed by fierce winds and big waves, leaving at least five people dead. More than 250 passengers and crewmen were rescued.

Earlier in the week, another tropical storm left more than 50 people dead and 31 others missing, mostly due to landslides, and damaged more than 10,000 houses in the central Philippines.

Among the areas battered by the latest storm was Marawi, a lakeside city in Lanao del Sur that is still recovering from a five-month siege by pro-Islamic State group extremists that left more than 1,000 people dead and displaced its entire population of about 200,000 people.

It was the latest disaster to hit the Philippines, which is battered by about 20 typhoons and storms each year, making the archipelago that lies on the Pacific typhoon belt one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

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Associated Press writer Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.

## Jerusalem violence, rain put damper on Bethlehem Christmas

By JALAL HASSAN and IMAD ISSEID

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — It was a subdued Christmas Eve in the traditional birthplace of Jesus on Sunday, with spirits dampened by cold, rainy weather and recent violence sparked by President Donald Trump's recognition of nearby Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Crowds were thinner than previous years as visitors, especially Arab Christians living in Israel and the West Bank, appeared to be deterred by clashes that have broken out in recent weeks between Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces. Although there was no violence Sunday, Palestinian officials scaled back the celebrations in protest.

Claire Degout, a tourist from France, said she would not allow Trump's pronouncement, which has infuriated the Palestinians and drawn widespread international opposition, affect her decision to celebrate Christmas in the Holy Land.

"The decision of one man cannot affect all the Holy Land," she said. "Jerusalem belongs to everybody, you know, and it will be always like that, whatever Trump says."

Trump abandoned decades of American policy Dec. 6 by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and saying he would move the U.S. Embassy to the holy city.

Trump said the move merely recognizes the fact that Jerusalem already serves as Israel's capital and that he was not prejudging negotiations on the city's final borders. But Palestinians, who seek Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem as their capital, saw the declaration as unfairly siding with Israel. On Thursday, the U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to reject Trump's decision. The Old City, in east Jerusalem, is home to sensitive Jewish, Muslim and Christian holy sites.

The announcement triggered weeks of unrest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including near-daily clashes in Bethlehem, which lies just south of Jerusalem.

By midafternoon, hundreds of people had gathered in Manger Square near the city's main Christmas for celebrations, greeted by bagpipe-playing young Palestinian marching bands and scout troops. Accompanying the decorations was a large banner protesting Trump's Jerusalem declaration.

But after nightfall, the crowds had thinned as rain fell and temperatures dipped to about 9 degrees (49

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F). Just a few dozen people milled about Manger Square, while others took shelter in the church and other nearby buildings.

Bethlehem's mayor, Anton Salman, said celebrations were toned down because of anger over Trump's decision.

"We decided to limit the Christmas celebrations to the religious rituals as an expression of rejection and anger and sympathy with the victims who fell in the recent protests," he said.

Next to the square was a poster that read "Manger Square appeal" and "#handsoffjerusalem."

"We want to show the people that we are people who deserve life, deserve our freedom, deserve our independence, deserve Jerusalem as our capital," he said.

Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the apostolic administrator of Jerusalem, the top Roman Catholic cleric in the Holy Land, crossed through an Israeli military checkpoint to enter Bethlehem from Jerusalem. His black limousine was escorted by a group of men on motorcycles, some of them wearing red Santa hats.

Pizzaballa, who last week rejected the U.S. decision, tried to steer clear of politics. He waved to the crowd, shook hands and hugged well-wishers.

"Now it's time to enjoy," he said. "We as Christians we will enjoy, despite all the difficulties we have. Merry Christmas."

But in his homily during midnight Mass, Pizzaballa prayed for the peace of Jerusalem and appealed to politicians "to have courage" to make bold decisions that respect all peoples. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a Muslim, was among those in attendance.

"There is no peace if someone is excluded. Jerusalem should include, not exclude," Pizzaballa said. "The mother, Jerusalem is our mother, loves all her children. If one is missing, the mother cannot be in peace."

"We need vision," he added. "And despite the many disappointments of the past and of the present days, with determination, do not abandon having a vision, but on the contrary, even more than before, let yourself be provoked by the cry of the poor and the afflicted."

James Thorburn, a visitor from London, said it was important to enjoy the holiday and show solidarity with Bethlehem's residents.

"I know that a lot of people did cancel," he said. "I felt I should come to support the Palestinians."

## Plane headed to Key West for holiday crashes, killing 5

BARTOW, Fla. (AP) — A small plane headed to Key West for the Christmas holiday crashed Sunday at the end of a runway at a Florida airport, killing five people, authorities said.

The twin-engine Cessna 340 crashed shortly after takeoff at Bartow Municipal Airport, immediately killing the 70-year-old pilot and his four adult passengers, according to a statement from Polk County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Carrie Horstman. It wasn't immediately clear what caused the crash.

The sheriff's office identified the pilot as Lakeland attorney John Shannon. He had filed a flight plan to fly Sunday from Bartow to Key West, Horstman said.

Shannon's passengers included his two daughters, his son-in-law and a family friend. They were identified as: 24-year-old Southeastern University student Olivia Shannon, 26-year-old Baltimore teacher Victoria Shannon Worthington, 27-year-old University of Maryland law student Peter Worthington Jr. and 32-year-old Lakeland teacher Krista Clayton.

The Worthingtons had arrived in Florida on Saturday for the Christmas holiday, Horstman said.

"This is a tragedy at any time, but it is so much worse because it happened on Christmas Eve," Sheriff Grady Judd said.

The plane was engulfed in flames by the time fire rescue crews arrived, Polk County Fire Rescue spokeswoman Tina Mann said in a statement.

The private plane was heading east into heavy fog when it took off, according to the sheriff's office.

The National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration will be investigating the crash.

Bartow is about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Orlando.

## Putin foe clears first step in bid for Russian presidency

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Hundreds of supporters of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny nominated him for president Sunday, allowing Navalny to file the endorsement papers required for his candidacy and putting pressure on the Kremlin to allow him to run.

Navalny, the most formidable foe President Vladimir Putin has faced during 18 years in power, is prohibited from seeking political office because of a criminal conviction that is largely viewed as retribution. However, he could enter the race, if he gets special dispensation or the conviction is thrown out.

About 800 Navalny supporters assembled in a giant tent for the formal endorsement meeting held in Moscow's snow-covered Silver Forest. His allies said multiple meeting venues refused to host the gathering.

Ivan Zhdanov, who chaired the meeting, joked that the riverside event ended up being convened at a place where the address is "Silver Forest, Beach Number 3."

"Has everyone got their swimming trunks?" Zhdanov asked the participants.

Election authorities observed the endorsement process. Navalny and his legal advisers submitted the nomination papers with the Russian Election Commission on Sunday evening.

Outdoor endorsement gatherings also took place in 19 other cities, from Vladivostok to St. Petersburg.

In Moscow, the process was delayed because the printer being used to generate the paperwork stopped working in the cold woods. While Navalny's staff tried to fix the machine, several hundred people gathered on a central Moscow square to demonstrate support for his nomination.

Biologist Svetlana Sorokina, 41, said it was important to show the Kremlin "there are many people like us."

Nearby, police officers warned the crowd through loudspeakers they were breaking the law and threatened to disperse the rally. Sorokina said she was "a little bit scared."

"I understand the danger. But I got prepared. I told my parents," she said. "They expect me to call and say everything is OK."

For Tatyana Komendant, 65, whether Navalny would make a good president or not was secondary. What mattered was getting the Kremlin to allow an open race in which anyone interested who met the eligibility requirements would be allowed to run, she said.

"Any alternative is good. It would be better if Putin was to be replaced by anyone," Komendant said.

Russian law requires candidates to submit endorsements from just 500 people before they may start collecting the 1 million signatures needed to appear on the ballot. Putin's representatives are expected to file his nomination papers on Tuesday.

Election officials were expected to accept Navalny's paperwork, but it's highly unlikely they will allow him to proceed to the signature-gathering stage.

Polling agencies show Putin all but certain to win the March election. Polls show him with an 80 percent approval rating among Russian citizens. But Navalny has managed to galvanize some of the vast country's sleepiest regions with a yearlong grass-roots campaign.

"We have seen for ourselves this year that overwhelming support for authorities simply isn't there," Navalny said during an American-style campaign speech at the nomination meeting, where he was flanked by his wife and children.

He reiterated he was confident he would win the presidential election if he were allowed to run. He called on his supporters to boycott the vote, if election authorities refuse to register him.

A lawyer by training, Navalny came to public prominence in 2009, when he began publishing investigations of corruption at Russia's biggest state-controlled companies. He spearheaded massive anti-government protests in 2011-2012 in reaction to wide-spread fraud during the parliamentary election.

Navalny came under pressure from authorities as he gained popularity. He faced countless detentions and jailings for staging protests and spent months under house arrest while being investigated for fraud. He was convicted on two sets of unrelated fraud charges. His brother was sent to prison in what was seen as political revenge.

He ran in Moscow's 2013 mayoral election and received nearly 30 percent of the vote.

## Sen. Flake dangles possibility of running against Trump

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona says President Donald Trump is certain to face an independent challenge in the next presidential election, if not one from within the party. And Flake is not ruling out being that challenger.

Flake has been fiercely critical of Trump, even while supporting parts of his agenda, like the new tax cuts. Trump in turn has denounced the senator, who's not seeking re-election next year.

Flake says if Trump continues on his path, and if Democrats lean left, a "huge swath of voters" will be "looking for something else."

Asked on ABC's "This Week" whether he might run for president in 2020, Flake said "That's not in my plans" but "I don't rule anything out."

He says Republicans must marginalize the party's "ultra-nationalist" element.

## Obituary project makes homicide victims more than just stats

By NATALIE POMPILIO, Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — It was a bloody day in Philadelphia: five people shot or stabbed dead. One of the shooting victims was Trina Singleton's 24-year-old son, Darryl.

In this city of 1.6 million people that tallied 269 homicides last year, Darryl's death on Sept. 13, 2016, earned him a few lines near the end of a newspaper story, his loss overshadowed by the death of a 21-year-old cousin of rap star Meek Mill.

"He was totally overlooked," Trina Singleton said. "There were so many people shot that day, he was a number."

Now a new website is working to show that Darryl and victims like him are more than statistics. Since the Philadelphia Obituary Project went live in June, it has posted more than 30 in-depth obituaries of city homicide victims from the past 18 months.

"We want to talk about the lives of the people, not their deaths. To dignify them. To humanize them," said Cletus Lyman, a city lawyer who has spent more than \$10,000 to fund the project. "We want to complete the picture and show the community that we're losing real people."

Lyman grew up in a small Pennsylvania town reading obituaries, everyone's obituaries, because in a town that size, every citizen was considered worthy of coverage. As an adult, he found himself frustrated by the way the deaths, especially of those who met violent ends, were covered.

Lyman found Albert Stumm, a former Associated Press editor who is now a freelancer based in Spain, to manage the site's content.

"This is an unapologetically positive effort because there's a lot of victim-blaming that goes around," Stumm said. "Yes, many victims have gotten into trouble before they got killed. But how they got there is less important to us than who they were."

The obituaries will include information about a victim's criminal past if the family chooses to talk about it, Stumm said. In instances where a known violent offender is killed, the website won't seek further details, he said, noting a founder of the Junior Black Mafia, which terrorized the city for decades, was not profiled after his murder in December 2016.

Stumm said he didn't know of any other similarly broad private efforts, though he pointed out that some news organizations have tried to write about all homicide victims in a given time period.

Obituaries are part of the ritual of grieving, said Frank Farley, an educational psychology professor at Philadelphia's Temple University.

"We memorialize because we ourselves hope to be memorialized," Farley said. "For many, the fear of disappearing from life with no notation, nothing noted, is a very grim thing."

With newspapers having less space and fewer staff, it's more likely that homicide victims won't receive the due they had been given in years past, although grieving loved ones can always pay to put a death notice in the newspaper. Typically, newspapers write articles about the deaths of only well-known locals

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and other public figures.

When the Philadelphia Obituary Project's reporters began contacting the families of homicide victims last year, some were hesitant. Then the effort began to get traction.

The tribute to Darryl Singleton in the Philadelphia Obituary Project notes he attended crime-scene investigation camp in Baltimore one summer and was taking classes to be an emergency medical technician. It shares his paternal grandmother's remembrance of the summers he and his brother spent at her home in Georgia and the trips they made to local nursing homes, where Darryl would sing songs like "I Believe I Can Fly."

These good memories, Trina Singleton said, have helped the family mourn.

"We're talking about what he accomplished, so his life isn't summed up by some gunshots," she said. "That's important for us as we go forward."

## Dimming Christmas lights reflect Venezuela's grim crisis

By SCOTT SMITH, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Marilyn Pitre recalls taking her family on evening strolls at Christmas time through Altamira Plaza in Venezuela's capital, soaking up the dazzling lights and giant tree made of light bulbs in a display that once drew comparisons to New York City's Rockefeller Center.

That was before crisis struck Venezuela. Now the 40-year-old mother of two wouldn't dare set foot in the plaza after dark, fearing robbers. And this season, for the first time in years, no festive lights will bring it to life.

It's a sight that many say mirrors the mood in the once-prosperous oil nation. Middle class residents have cut back on gifts and struggle to afford basic ingredients needed to cook traditional Christmas dishes.

The poor have been hit hardest, some scavenging trash piles year-around to fill their stomachs.

Pitre, pausing in Altamira Plaza on a bright afternoon after leaving work, said she tries to look beyond the shortages and political strife to the deeper meaning of Christmas.

"As Catholics, we celebrate the birth of Jesus," she said. "But it's not the same as before."

Venezuela, a country of 30 million people, sits atop the world's largest oil reserves, but global crude prices crashed three years ago, sending the economy into free fall and sparking social unrest.

Residents endure shortages of cash, soaring inflation and a lack of medicine.

Earlier this year, protesters upset with President Nicolas Maduro's government clashed daily with riot police for four months in Altamira Plaza and in streets across the country. More than 120 protesters were killed and thousands injured.

Inflation is expected to hit 2,400 percent by the year's end, said Henkel Garcia, director of the Caracas-based consulting firm Econometrica, adding that minimum wage workers today have a fifth of the purchasing power than nearly two decades ago, when the late President Hugo Chavez launched Venezuela's socialist revolution.

"This is the darkest Christmas we've ever had," said Guianfranco Perozo, 23, who holds two jobs just to get by.

Searching an open-air market in Caracas for cooking oil, Perozo shrugs when asked if he's bought any Christmas gifts. Any money left after groceries will go to diapers for his 8-month-old daughter, he said.

"There's nothing to celebrate," he said. "Too many people are hungry. Too many people are eating garbage."

Unrest simmers across Venezuela in the days before Christmas. Gasoline shortages in two states left long lines at filling stations, and residents in a community on the outskirts of Caracas protested food shortages one night, setting piles of garbage on fire, according to Twitter accounts.

Water rationing is common, and a mid-day blackout lasting five hours struck millions in Caracas and two neighboring states a week before Christmas.

Millions of others desperate for work have fled Venezuela. Antonieta Lopez, 35, will celebrate this Christ-

mas for the first time without her husband, forced to find a job in Chile nearly a year ago when work dried up at home.

Still, money is tight, and Lopez said she could only afford to buy her son, Matias, two items from his wish list — a Captain American action figure and a pair of Star Wars masks.

Sitting next to her on the steps of a quiet plaza, her mother, Evelyn Avellaneda, 70, said she's not able to buy things she'd normally put on the dinner table for Christmas. That includes a bottle of red wine.

Plenty of people are out walking past shops, but few buy things, Avellaneda said, adding that when they do find affordable items, there are long waits.

"There are lines at the banks. There are lines in the stores," she said. "There are lines everywhere."

## Judge partially lifts Trump administration ban on refugees

By MARTHA BELLISLE, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A federal judge in Seattle on Saturday partially lifted a Trump administration ban on certain refugees after two groups argued that the policy prevented people from some mostly Muslim countries from reuniting with family living legally in the United States.

U.S. District Judge James Robart heard arguments Thursday in lawsuits from the American Civil Liberties Union and Jewish Family Service, which say the ban causes irreparable harm and puts some people at risk. Government lawyers argued that the ban is needed to protect national security.

Robart ordered the federal government to process certain refugee applications. He said his order applies to people "with a bona fide relationship to a person or entity within the United States."

President Donald Trump restarted the refugee program in October "with enhanced vetting capabilities."

The day before his executive order, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Acting Homeland Security Secretary Elaine Duke and Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats sent a memo to Trump saying certain refugees must be banned unless additional security measures are implemented.

It applies to the spouses and minor children of refugees who have already settled in the U.S. and suspends the refugee program for people coming from 11 countries, nine of which are mostly Muslim.

In his decision, Robart wrote that "former officials detailed concretely how the Agency Memo will harm the United States' national security and foreign policy interests."

Robart said his order restores refugee procedures in programs to what they were before the memo and noted that this already includes very thorough vetting of individuals.

In a statement, Department of Justice spokeswoman Lauren Ehrsam said: "We disagree with the Court's ruling and are currently evaluating the next steps."

The ACLU argued the memo provided no evidence for why additional security was needed and didn't specify a timeframe for implementing the changes. The groups say the process for imposing the policy violated a federal law.

August Flentje, a Justice Department attorney, told the judge that the ban is temporary and "is a reasonable and appropriate way for agency heads to tackle gaps" in the screening process.

The lawsuits from the two groups were consolidated and represent refugees who have been blocked from entering the country.

The ACLU represents a Somali man living in Washington state who is trying to bring his family to the U.S. They have gone through extensive vetting, have passed security and medical clearances, and just need travel papers, but those were denied after the ban.

Lisa Nowlin, staff attorney for the ACLU of Washington, said in a statement they were happy for their client — "who has not yet had the opportunity to celebrate a single birthday with his younger son in person — will soon have the opportunity to hold his children, hug his wife in the very near future, and be together again as a family for the first time in four years."

Two other refugees included in the Jewish Family Service lawsuit are former Iraqi interpreters for the U.S. Army whose lives are at risk because of their service.

Another is a transgender woman in Egypt "living in such extremely dangerous circumstances that the

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U.S. government itself had expedited her case until the ban came down," said Mariko Hirose, a lawyer with the Jewish Family Service case.

Yet another is a single woman in Iraq, Hirose said. Her husband divorced her after she was kidnapped and raped by militants because she worked with an American company. Her family is in the U.S. but she's stranded by the ban, Hirose said.

Associated Press writer Chris Grygiel contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Dec. 25, the 359th day of 2017. There are six days left in the year. This is Christmas Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 25, 1776, Gen. George Washington and his troops crossed the Delaware River for a surprise attack against Hessian forces at Trenton, New Jersey, during the American Revolutionary War.

On this date:

In A.D. 336, the first known commemoration of Christmas on Dec. 25 took place in Rome.

In 1066, William the Conqueror was crowned King of England.

In 1818, "Silent Night (Stille Nacht)" was publicly performed for the first time during the Christmas Mid-night Mass at the Church of St. Nikolaus in Oberndorf, Austria.

In 1926, Hirohito became emperor of Japan, succeeding his father, Emperor Yoshihito.

In 1931, New York's Metropolitan Opera broadcast an entire live opera over radio for the first time: "Hansel and Gretel" by Engelbert Humperdinck.

In 1940, the Rodgers & Hart musical "Pal Joey" opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 374 performances.

In 1946, comedian W.C. Fields died in Pasadena, California, at age 66.

In 1961, Pope John XXIII formally announced the upcoming convocation of the Second Vatican Council, which opened in Oct. 1962.

In 1977, comedian Sir Charles Chaplin died in Switzerland at age 88.

In 1989, ousted Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu (chow-SHES'-koo) and his wife, Elena, were executed following a popular uprising. Former baseball manager Billy Martin, 61, died in a traffic accident near Binghamton, New York.

In 1991, Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev went on television to announce his resignation as the eighth and final leader of a communist superpower that had already gone out of existence.

In 2006, James Brown, the "Godfather of Soul," died in Atlanta at age 73.

Ten years ago: A tiger at the San Francisco Zoo escaped her enclosure and killed a park visitor; two brothers also were mauled, but survived. (The tiger was killed by police.) Russia's military successfully test-fired a new intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying multiple nuclear warheads.

Five years ago: In his Christmas message to the world, Pope Benedict XVI called for an end to the slaughter in Syria and for more meaningful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, while encouraging more religious freedom under China's new leaders. Chicago mobster Frank Calabrese Sr., 75, died at a federal prison in North Carolina.

One year ago: A Russian Tu-154 carrying 92 people to Syria crashed into the Black Sea shortly after takeoff from Sochi, killing all 92 people on board. Decrying the suffering in Syria, Pope Francis wished Christmas peace and hope for all those scarred by war and terrorism, which he said was sowing "fear and death in the heart of many countries and cities." George Michael, who rocketed to stardom with WHAM! and went on to enjoy a long and celebrated solo career, died at his home in Goring, England, at age 53.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Dick Miller is 89. Author Anne Roiphe is 82. Actress Hanna Schygulla (SHEE'-goo-lah) is 74. Rhythm-and-blues singer John Edwards (The Spinners) is 73. Actor Gary Sandy is 72. Singer

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Jimmy Buffett is 71. Pro and College Football Hall-of-Famer Larry Csonka is 71. Country singer Barbara Mandrell is 69. Actress Sissy Spacek is 68. Former White House adviser Karl Rove is 67. Actress CCH Pounder is 65. Singer Annie Lennox is 63. Reggae singer-musician Robin Campbell (UB40) is 63. Country singer Steve Wariner is 63. Singer Shane MacGowan (The Pogues, The Popes) is 60. Baseball Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson is 59. The former Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, Christina Romer, is 59. Actress Klea Scott is 49. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is 46. Rock musician Noel Hogan (The Cranberries) is 46. Singer Dido is 46. Rock singer Mac Powell (Third Day) is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ryan Shaw is 37. Country singer Alecia Elliott is 35. Pop singers Jess and Lisa Origliasso (The Veronicas) are 33. Rock singer-musician Lukas Nelson (Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real) is 29.

Thought for Today: "It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you ... yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand." — Saint Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997).