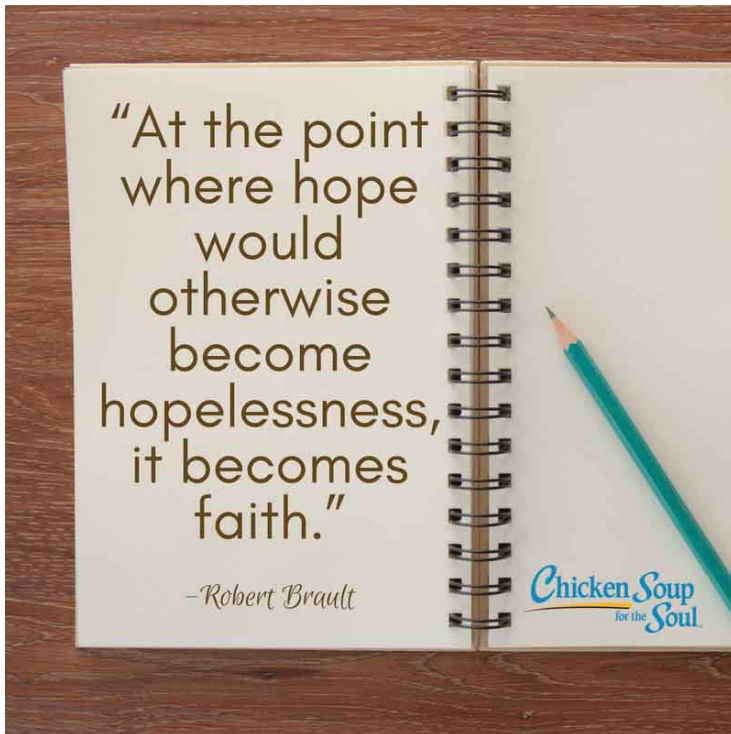


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- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Blocker Construction Ad
- 1- Death Notice: Fern Westby
- 2- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 2- World of Experience
- 3- Farmers Union PSA
- 3- Dr. Holm's Column
- 4- Build Dakota Scholarship Presentation
- 5- Today in Weather History
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Death Notice: Fern Westby

Fern Westby, 87, of Groton passed away Wednesday, December 27, 2017 at Bethesda Home of Aberdeen. Services are pending for Saturday with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

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

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Life has been interesting since I've suffered my broken ankle. I'm still trying to do a somewhat of a normal route, only to find out that's why my ankle is swelling up.

I went in for surgery yesterday. Got to the office at 10:30 a.m. and was expecting an exam and a later appointment, if needed. I ended up having the surgery done and was basically the last one of the day. We go out of there around 7:30 p.m. That was a looong day! They put a plate and screws in, then they put some kind of a cast on.

Most of the morning I had my leg not elevated and by noon, it was starting to hurt. About that time the doctor's office called to find out how everything was going. I asked about the pain pills if that was suppose to reduce swelling. Nope. Keeping my foot elevated and ice on it will help keep the swelling down.

You would think being laid up would give me plenty of time to get some stuff done. I find myself dozing off in mid sentence. Even watching a movie is tough - started watching one, then saw the ending. Now I'm having to run the keypad from my lap and the mouse from the arm of the chair. It's not exactly what you call efficient. My girls have been helping with the paper route in the morning - it's actually working out quite well. We get the routes done in just a little over an hour. I drive them around and they get out and do the homes on their side.

I heard the skidsteer drive by earlier today so I'm guessing they are working on the skating rink. I had a nice major flood on it last week and was hoping to do some more over the weekend. We have perfect weather right now for making ice and I'm sure the city guys will get the skating rink up and operating soon.

It's already Wednesday and I have not even started on the weekly paper yet. I might have to exercise my option to not to publish this week. I do have that option twice a year. We'll see how the tonight and tomorrow goes.

I think I just discovered what I need - reading glasses. I need something to magnify my screen a little bit so I can see better. My glasses are for looking far. Julianna just game me her glasses to try out and it more than doubled my what I can see.

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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Food, Glorious Food . . . Just Not so Much of It.

By Richard P. Holm MD

Food. So much of our lives rotate around it. Think of food channels and commercials, cookbooks, the grocery store, tailgating parties, the holiday season, breaks at work, lunch meetings, and fast-food on every corner . . . there are super-sized meals at every turn. We are people who like to eat; but why are we so hungry?

For purposes of survival, Mother Nature has set our appetites to want about 40% more food than we need. We are made to be able to store energy in fat so that during times of starvation we can stay alive. Now, however, in this country and in this century, it's not a time of starvation. In fact, it's a time of too much convenience and too much calorie-laden food.

And thus, there is truly an epidemic of obesity bearing the consequences of sleep apnea, hypertension, diabetes is all running rampant with a subsequent increase in strokes and heart attacks. We are dying from a success of food marketing.

How can we curb our inborn genetically set appetites, especially with all this food around? Part of the solution is with exercise, but that's another story. I predict that science and the pharmaceutical industry will one day come up with a safe appetite suppressant, which will replace gastric bypass surgery for the morbidly obese and will then also be our primary treatment for all those illnesses which come from an overweight condition.

Until then, we need to train our free will to say "yes" to exercise and "no" to so much food. We simply shouldn't eat all that we want.



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")**

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Build Dakota Scholarship Presentation


Groton Area School will host a Build Dakota Seminar for students in grades 11-12 on January 9, 2018 from 11:30 – 12:14 in the GHS Arena. Any interested business/industry professionals and industry partners, human resource officers, economic development personnel, parents, and interested community members are welcome to attend the presentation.

The focus of the presentation will be to explain the Build Dakota Scholarship and industry partnership programs. Participants will learn about the program and the benefits for businesses and the community. The presentation will also connect students with local businesses and give information about the high-need workforce areas.

More information is included in the attached flyer. The Build Dakota is a wonderful program for SD students – hope to see you on January 9th!



BUILD DAKOTA
SCHOLARSHIP FUND



SOUTHEAST TECH **WESTERN DAKOTA TECH** **LAKE AREA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE** **MT Mitchell Technical Institute**

Build Dakota/Technical Institute Roadshow

Please join us to learn about strategies to build your workforce or launch your career with this full-ride scholarship opportunity!

DETAILS:


- **Tuesday, January 9, 2018**
- **Groton Area High School**
406 N 2nd St
Groton, SD 57445
- **11:30am-12:14pm (CST)**
- **Contact:**
Jodi Sternhagen, Counselor
(605) 397-8381 or Jodi.Sternhagen@k12.sd.us

SPEAKERS: (May change based on availability)

- Deni Amundson, Program Manager, Build Dakota Scholarship
- Julie Stevenson, Business Partner Specialist, Lake Area Technical Institute
- Clayton Deuter, Director of Admissions, Mitchell Technical Institute
- Chellee Unruh, Institutional Advancement Officer, Southeast Technical Institute
- Aaron Jacobs, Foundation Director, Western Dakota Technical Institute
- Available for Questions: Representative from the SD Department of Labor and Regulation

AUDIENCE:

- Parents and Students
- High School Counselors, Teachers and Administrators
- Business/Industry CEOs and Human Resource Professionals
- Community Resource Individuals Offering Career Guidance



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Today in Weather History

December 27, 1959: Precipitation began as freezing rain on the morning of the 27th throughout the eastern half of South Dakota, changing to snow mixed with occasional sleet late on the 27th, then continued as mostly snow through the late afternoon of the 28th. Glaze caused extensive breakage of tree limbs and power and telephone lines in southeast sections of the state and in scattered communities in the northeast counties. More than 40 communities were without telephone service for more than 24 hours. Highway travel was very dangerous; one man was killed when a tractor skidded on an icy highway and overturned on him in Kingsbury County. Strong winds averaging 20 to 25 mph both dates increased breakage of ice-laded utility wires and caused drifting and blocking of highways by the 3 to 6 inch snowfall. Damage and repair costs to utility lines were estimated at \$400,000.

December 27, 1987: A winter storm gave some freezing rain and snow to southern and eastern South Dakota and southwest and west central Minnesota on the 27th and 28th. In Minnesota, freezing rain began Sunday morning the 27th before changing to heavy snow, which extended into the 28th. The heaviest snowfall was across the high terrain of southwest Minnesota. In southern and eastern South Dakota, six to twelve inches of snow fell. Strong northwest winds of 20-40 mph hampered travel and snow removal. Snow drifts up to 6 feet deep were common. Across many areas of southern Minnesota, visibilities were reduced to zero due to blowing snow. Snowfall amounts in South Dakota included 12 inches in DeSmet; 10 inches in Wessington Springs and Madison; 9 inches in Huron; 8 inches in Pierre, Brookings, Mission and McCook County; 7 inches in Sioux Falls, Kadoka, Pine Ridge, and Martin. 8 inches also fell in Watertown and Highmore, with 7 inches at Bryant and 6 inches in Clear Lake.

1869 - A post Christmas storm in New York and Vermont produced record storm totals of 30 inches at Burlington, VT, and 39 inches at Montpelier VT. A public emergency was declared in Vermont. (David Ludlum)

1892 - An Atlantic coast storm produced a record 18.6 inches of snow at Norfolk, VA, including 17.7 inches in 24 hours. The storm also produced 9.5 inches of snow at Raleigh NC, and brought snow to northern Florida for the first time in 35 years. (26th- 28th) (The Weather Channel)

1982 - The worst Louisiana rainstorm in more than 100 years came to an end. More than 18 inches fell at Vinton, LA, during the three day storm. Flooding was widespread, and property damage was estimated at 100 to 200 million dollars. President Reagan visited the state and declared ten parishes in northeastern Louisiana disaster areas. (The Weather Channel)

December 27, 1987: Today marks the end of the infamous 2-day ice storm which began as freezing rain and sleet before sunrise on Christmas Day in Oklahoma. This ice storm left parts of Oklahoma without power for over a week. Sleet prevailed across the western and northern parts of Oklahoma City, while freezing rain devastated southern and eastern parts of the metro area. Despite heavy sleet and ice accumulations of up to 2 inches, total snowfall was only a trace.

1988 - Severe thunderstorms developing along a cold front in the south central U.S. spawned a dozen tornadoes in Mississippi between early afternoon and sunrise the following day. A tornado at Harperville destroyed five chicken homes killing thousands of chickens. Strong thunderstorm winds gusted to 80 mph at Rolling Fork MS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)






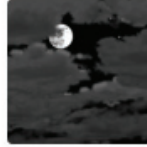

1989 - Half a dozen cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins, WV, with a reading of 13 degrees below zero. Watertown NY was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 37 degrees below zero. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

December 27, 2001: Typhoon Vamei forms in the South China Sea, about 100 miles north of the Equator. Vamei is the first recorded tropical cyclone to develop within 1.5 degrees of latitude about 104 miles of the equator.

2004 - A major storm system affected parts of the western United States during December 27-29, bringing a variety of weather conditions to the region. Heavy rainfall broke daily precipitation records at some locations in California. Very heavy snow fell across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with some areas receiving several feet of accumulation. Winds with this weather system gusted over 65 mph at some coastal and mountain locations in California.

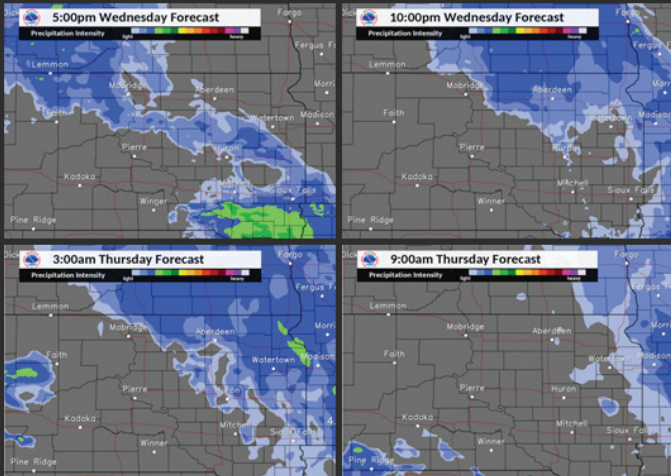
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This Afternoon	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Mostly Cloudy	Snow Likely	Cold	Increasing Clouds	Chance Snow	Mostly Cloudy	Cold
High: 12 °F	Low: 2 °F	High: 9 °F	Low: -10 °F	High: 3 °F	Low: -17 °F	High: -9 °F

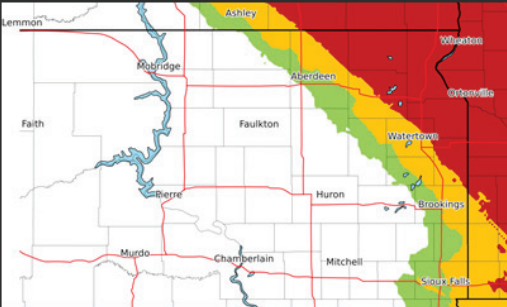
Light Snow Expected Tonight

Snowfall Timing



Potential of 1" of Snow

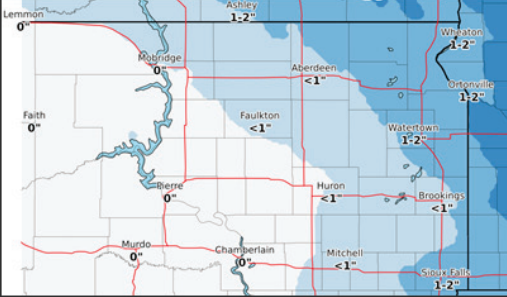
(through 6 am CST Thursday)




None Low Moderate High


Expected Snowfall Amounts

(through 6 am CST Thursday)





Take It Slow if travelling in northeast SD, MN, and eastern ND tonight into Thursday Morning



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 12/27/2017 10:15 AM Central

Published on: 12/27/2017 at 10:23AM

An area of light snow will slide across northeast South Dakota, Minnesota, and eastern North Dakota tonight into Thursday morning. If travelling in those areas, take it slow and plan for reduced visibilities when snow is falling.

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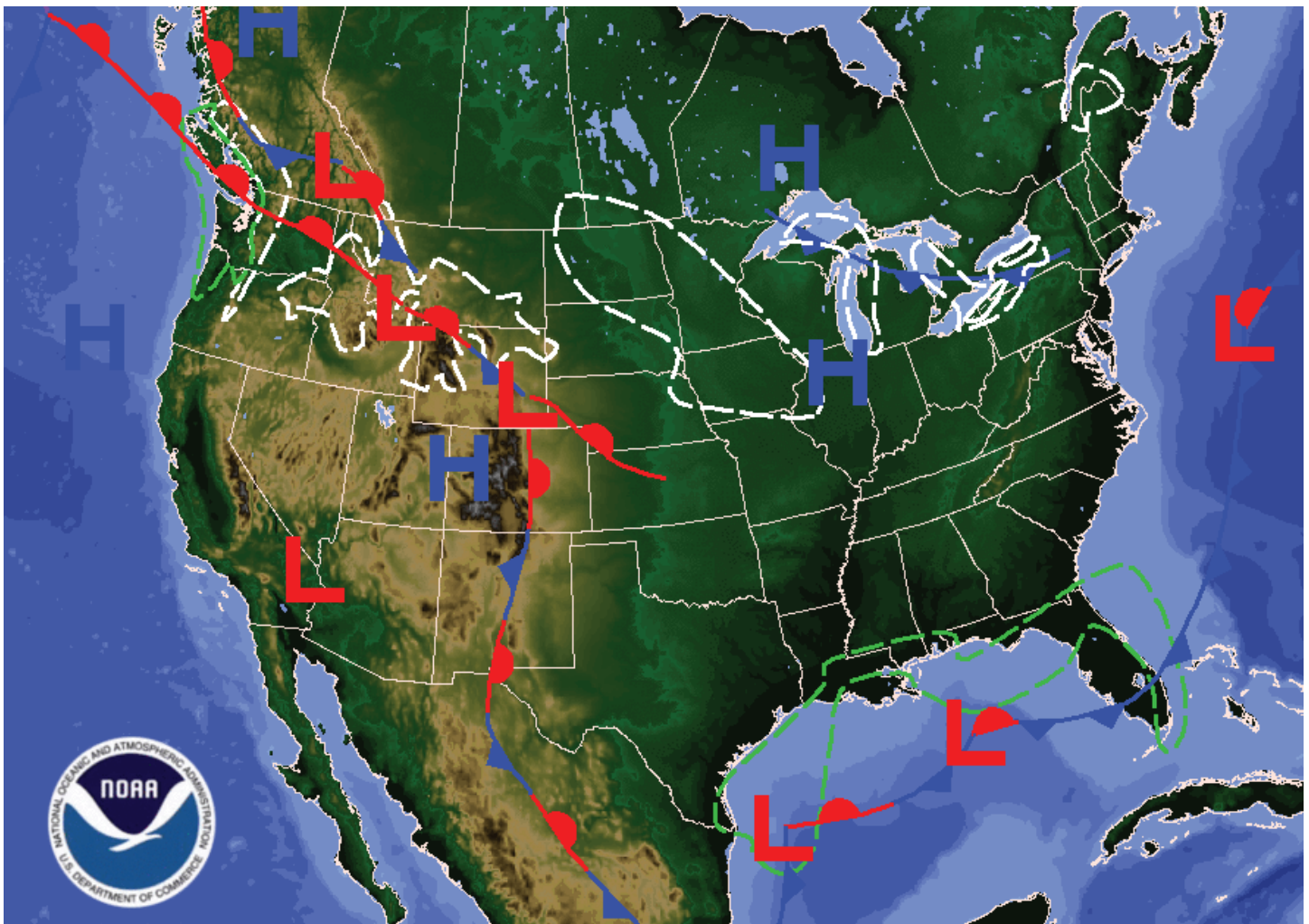
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 1.2
Low Outside Temp: -16.9
High Gust: 19
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 54° in 1928
Record Low: -29° in 1914
Average High: 23°F
Average Low: 3°F
Average Precip in Dec: 0.45
Precip to date in Dec: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 21.65
Precip Year to Date: 13.47
Sunset Tonight: 4:57 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:13 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Dec 27, 2017, issued 3:49 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)



WHY FATHERS MATTER

We rarely think of Joseph when we speak of Mary and her son, Jesus. But Joseph was a very special individual as well.

In describing him, Matthew says that he was a "just" or "righteous" man. And because of that, he was a "decent," "fair" and "righteous" man. When he was faced with an incredibly difficult decision – whether or not he should abandon Mary – an angel appeared and advised him to "go ahead with your marriage to Mary."

Initially, Scripture informs us, "that not wanting to disgrace her, he planned to send her away." He was well aware of the fact that stoning was the legal prescription for what people would think of Mary's being pregnant without being married. If he took Mary to be his wife he could be humiliated or ridiculed by those around him. But he chose to obey the command of the angel to marry her. As a "righteous" man he was also a "merciful" man, a man willing to listen to, hear and obey God. Joseph was a man of great character.

But there is more. Not only was he righteous, merciful and obedient to the voice of God, but he was a man who was sensitive and discrete. Joseph was open to the voice of God and responded immediately when God spoke to him and protected the reputation and honor of Mary – thereby revealing he was a man of integrity.

Prayer: Lord, we pray for fathers everywhere who will strive to be like the earthly father of Your Son. We ask that You will raise up men of integrity to honor You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 1:18-25 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

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

Days of shoveling snow, bitter cold ahead for northern US

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — Freezing temperatures and below-zero wind chills socked much of the northern United States on Wednesday and will stay put for days to come, as the snow-hardened city of Erie, Pennsylvania, digs out from a record snowfall.

Forecasters warned of hypothermia and frostbite from arctic air settling in over the central U.S. and spreading east.

Wind chill advisories or warnings were in effect for much of New England, northern Pennsylvania and New York. Those places and states in the northern Plains and Great Lakes were projected to see highs in the teens or single-digits, and lows below zero for the rest of the week and into the new year.

The National Weather Service said wind chills in some areas Thursday could make temperatures feel below zero.

Meanwhile, Erie was recovering from a storm that brought 34 inches of snow on Christmas Day, smashing the all-time daily snowfall record for the Great Lakes city of 8 inches, and 26.5 more inches on Tuesday. More than 65 inches have fallen on the city since Christmas Eve, with several more inches falling Wednesday as residents dug out in frigid temperatures.

Strong westerly winds over Lake Erie picked up moisture, developed into snow and converged with opposing winds, dumping snow in a band along the shore from Ohio to New York, said Zach Sefcovic, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Cleveland.

Sabrina Ram, 33, drove into Erie on Christmas Eve to visit her parents just as the snow began to fall. Ram, who lives in suburban Washington, and her father spent five hours on Christmas and two hours Tuesday clearing the driveway.

"In D.C., we'd be out of commission for weeks," Ram said. "Things here are pretty much back to normal now."

She said she was going to build a snowman, but didn't know where to start — "where do you put it?" — and she went outside to clear off the satellite dish before falling face first into the snow, because she couldn't figure out where the porch ended.

"I totally just flew forward while my dad laughed at me," Ram said.

In New York, communities near Lake Ontario's eastern end, including Redfield and Boylston, also saw around 5 feet of snow this week.

The storm's timing was good, since people were off the streets and staying home for Christmas, giving plows more space to clear streets, officials said.

By Wednesday, Erie's roads were relatively clear, emergency calls were relatively slow and the big task was digging out, Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper said.

"We're used to a lot of snow here in Erie, but this is unprecedented, the amount we got," Dahlkemper said.

In Millcreek, outside Erie, it took Kathleen Palkovic and her 23-year-old son two hours to shovel out so Palkovic could make it to her waitressing job. The 5-mile drive to Dave's Diner in downtown Erie took an hour. The 62-year-old Palkovic and the cook opened the restaurant at a little after 6 a.m. in single digit temperatures.

"We're dedicated people, I guess," Palkovic said. Something else helped: "It took 800 milligrams of ibuprofen after all that to get me to work."

Battle over ethics law among South Dakota's top '17 stories

By The Associated Press

South Dakota lawmakers were among the state's busiest newsmakers in 2017 — as usual — with a range of moves that included rejecting and recasting some of the measures approved by voters just a

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few months earlier. The doings in Pierre were far from the only big story statewide, though: ABC settled a lawsuit brought by a South Dakota meat producer over so-called "pink slime," a jury acquitted a consultant who helped an Indian tribe try to develop a marijuana resort, and a fugitive polygamous leader was captured near Yankton.

Here's a look at some of the top stories of the year:

AT THE CAPITOL

The GOP-controlled Legislature wasn't entirely happy with a ballot measure approved by voters that created a public campaign finance system, established an ethics panel and tightened lobbying and campaign finance laws. Some argued that voters had been fooled by a deceptive campaign and that the measure had constitutional issues. They passed bills that covered some of the same ground, but supporters of the ethics overhaul said it wasn't enough — and vowed to be right back at the ballot box in 2018.

The Legislature passed a \$1.59 billion budget that was a few million dollars below what Gov. Dennis Daugaard had envisioned with his first draft, after revenues fell a bit short. Lawmakers managed to approve a minor increase for education and added \$1 million to the state employee health plan.

Early in the session, GOP Rep. Matthew Wollmann resigned after admitting sexual contact with two interns. Wollman's departure shined a light on the sometimes chummy ways that legislators and interns interact during the short but intense legislative sessions in Pierre.

Legislators came back briefly in June to create rules governing the use of lakes on private land for recreation, immediately re-opening many waters to outdoor enthusiasts.

DAKOTA ACCESS LINE OPENS UP, AND KEYSTONE LEAKS

The developers of the Dakota Access pipeline finally turned the spigot in March, completing a \$3.8 billion project despite months of protests that at one point drew thousands of activists to the Standing Rock reservation on the North Dakota-South Dakota border. Though the pipe now carries oil, opponents continue to try to stop it via the courts.

In November, far away in South Dakota's Marshall County, an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil leaked from the Keystone oil pipeline. Federal regulators said a weight installed on the pipeline a decade earlier to stabilize it might have damaged the pipe and its coating. The leak, which didn't reach water, came shortly before a big vote in Nebraska on the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. Regulators in that state gave the OK to XL anyway.

SOUTH DAKOTA VS ONLINE RETAIL

South Dakota put itself on the leading edge of a move to collect sales taxes from out-of-state internet retailers. The state is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review whether retailers can be required to collect the taxes in states where they don't have a physical presence. It's a legal fight that has big implications for e-commerce, local retailers, and states that miss out on sales taxes. Thirty-five states and the District of Columbia lined up to support South Dakota, which estimates it loses \$50 million annually to e-commerce.

PINK SLIME SETTLEMENT

Disney-owned ABC and South Dakota-based Beef Products Inc. locked horns in a South Dakota courtroom over the network's reports on a beef product that critics dubbed "pink slime." BPI argued that ABC's reports amounted to defamation that hurt its operations and cost employee jobs, and sought \$1.9 billion. The two sides settled in June for a settlement of \$177 million from Disney — and an unknown amount more from insurers.

POLYGAMY LEADER TRIPPED UP AT PAWN SHOP

Polygamous leader Lyle Jeffs, wanted in Utah for an alleged \$11 million food stamp fraud, was captured after a year on the run thanks to sharp-eyed pawn shop workers in Yankton. Jeffs had been living out of his truck when he went to River City Treasures and Pawn to sell two pairs of Leatherman pliers — and gave his ID to do it. Though Jeffs had rearranged his name, one of the employees looked him up and realized he was a wanted man. In December, Jeffs was sentenced to nearly five years in prison.

DROUGHT HITS DAKOTAS

South Dakota wasn't quite as dry as North Dakota, but farmers and cattle producers in both states had to deal with parched conditions that forced some producers to sell off cattle. Some farmers lost winter wheat.

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MARIJUANA CONSULTANT CLEARED BY JURY

When the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe wanted to develop a recreational marijuana resort, one of the consultants they brought in was Eric Hagen. While the tribe destroyed their crop and dropped the idea in 2015, Hagen was charged with several marijuana possession charges and faced years in prison. But a jury needed only a couple of hours to clear Hagen of the charges. A colleague who had pleaded guilty earlier wound up having his drug case dismissed after agreeing to pay a fine and court costs.

EAGLE CHOP SHOP

In April, federal officials in Rapid City announced they had busted 15 people for illegally trafficking eagles and other migratory birds after a two-year undercover operation. The indictments portrayed an illicit trade carried out through face-to-face meetings, emails, texts and personal introductions, with eagle heads or wings fetching hundreds of dollars and sellers also sometimes trading goods such as bear claws, buffalo horn caps or animal hides.

American sorry for accusing NBA G League players of theft

DALLAS (AP) — American Airlines has apologized to two players on the Memphis Grizzlies' minor league affiliate who were kicked off a plane in Dallas after a flight attendant wrongfully accused them of stealing blankets, which an assistant coach suggested happened because they are black.

Airline spokesman Joshua Freed said Tuesday that Memphis Hustle guard Marquis Teague and forward Trahson Burrell boarded the Sunday flight from Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The flight was operated by Envoy Air.

Two first-class passengers gave the players their blankets as they headed to their seats in coach. But a flight attendant, who is also black, accused them of theft and the players were asked to leave the plane following an argument.

An airline manager apologized to the players and they later flew first class to Sioux Falls, Freed said.

"We take pride in bringing people together, and we know that on this flight we let some of our customers down," Freed said. "Our team at American, along with Envoy Air, is reviewing what happened, and will be reaching out to them."

Hustle assistant coach Darnell Lazare said in a tweet that the flight attendant saw two "young black athletes" with blankets from first class and that his first comment was "did you steal them?"

"How about you teach people to get the facts first before jumping to conclusions," Lazare tweeted Sunday.

Freed declined to say whether race was a factor, explaining that airline officials are still reviewing the matter.

Sunday's incident comes after American CEO Doug Parker told employees last month that American Airlines will implement so-called implicit-bias training.

The NAACP issued a "travel advisory" in October warning African-Americans they could face discrimination when flying on American. The alert followed several high-profile incidents including one involving an organizer of the Women's March who was booted from a flight after a dispute over her seat.

American pledged to hire an outside firm to review its diversity in hiring and promotion, train all 120,000 employees to counteract implicit bias, create a special team to review passengers' discrimination complaints, and improve resolution of employee complaints about bias.

The Memphis Hustle is in the G League, which is the NBA's minor league and was formerly known as the NBA Development League.

Teague played a year at the University of Kentucky before being drafted in the first round of the 2012 NBA draft by the Chicago Bulls. Burrell played two seasons at the University of Memphis.

Official opposes delay of Indian Health Service director

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A tribal official says congressional delay in approving a new Indian Health Service director could create more problems at South Dakota hospitals that are already in dangerous condition.

It's been two months since President Donald Trump nominated Quapaw tribal member Robert Weaver

to the job. But the agency hasn't had a permanent leader for nearly two years.

Oliver J. Semans Sr., a member of the Rosebud Tribal Health Board, told the Argus Leader that confirmation should be prioritized, given the persistent problems at Indian Health Service facilities in South Dakota.

"We're talking life and death, and this should be a priority," said Semans.

IHS officials have tried to resolve problems at federal hospitals across the state. But tribal members have disagreed with many of the agency's decisions, according to Semans.

He said the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and other Great Plains tribes' health officials disapproved of the agency's move to turn the Sioux San Hospital in Rapid City into a medical clinic. IHS closed the hospital's emergency and inpatient departments earlier this year.

The agency has said it will direct emergency cases to Rapid City Regional Hospital. But tribal leaders had requested to use the Sioux San facility for that purpose, according to Semans. He said the decision runs opposite to tribal leaders' demands.

"We're asking IHS to stop, let the nomination process of Rob Weaver happen and then have Mr. Weaver come talk to the tribes in the Great Plains about how to move forward," Semans said.

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

Sioux Falls officials OK new management for golf courses

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Sioux Falls City Council has approved a deal to have a Nebraska-based company manage the city's three golf courses for \$75,000 a year.

The Argus Leader reports the five-year agreement also entitles Landscapes Unlimited to 11 percent of profits from course operations at Elmwood, Prairie Green and Kuehn Park. The 5-3 vote on Tuesday night came a week after councilmembers delayed taking action when the public and city officials voiced opposition.

Dakota Golf Management has managed the courses for 23 years and their contract expires Dec. 31.

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

Montana regulators ask utilities to account for tax cuts

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Montana regulators want to make sure utility customers benefit from the recently passed tax overhaul that reduces corporate tax rates starting next year.

The Public Service Commission on Wednesday directed regulated utilities to calculate the change in tax liability they expect under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and, by the end of March, offer proposals for how it would apply the savings.

The commission issued the order before the new tax law takes effect to preserve its authority to determine how the additional revenue should be spent, the commission said.

"Our commission is, if not the first, one of early movers on this issue among the 50 state utility commissions in the nation," said Commissioner Travis Kavula. "Taking this first step is essential to ensuring that consumers reap the benefits of the tax reform legislation."

Corporations currently pay a 35 percent tax rate that is passed on to consumers. Under the new tax bill, the rate will be reduced to 21 percent. Commission staff estimated the new tax law will lower taxes on Montana utilities by tens of millions of dollars a year.

"The commission wants to ensure that this money is not simply captured by shareholders, but instead is directed in a way that provides a long-term benefit to the consumer," Commission Chairman Brad Johnson said in a statement.

NorthWestern Energy's electric and natural gas utilities are required to make the calculations as is the electric service of Montana-Dakota Utilities. Natural gas utilities under Energy West and MDU will have their rates adjusted for the effect of the new tax law as part of rate cases pending before the PSC, the commission said.

Commissioner Roger Koopman said utilities "can issue customer refunds, use the money as a source

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of zero cost financing for capital projects, direct the funds to offset large, unusual expenses or propose some combination of these three applications.

"I suspect the commission will be strongly inclined toward ratepayer refunds," Koopman said in a statement.

It could be a while before Montana utility customers see rate changes under the new tax law, PSC spokesman Chris Puyear said.

The five-member PSC works to ensure that Montanans receive safe and reliable service from unregulated public utilities at reasonable rates.

Cold weather helps Great Bear park open for season

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Great Bear Recreation Park has opened skiing and tubing lanes for the season thanks to recent cold weather that helped with snow-making.

KELO-TV reports that warmer weather in Sioux Falls earlier this month delayed the park's opening. But skiing and snowboarding began Tuesday with limited runs.

The park has more than 220 acres of recreation space.

Information from: KELO-TV, <http://www.keloland.com>

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

10-12-20-38-41, Mega Ball: 25, Megaplier: 4

(ten, twelve, twenty, thirty-eight, forty-one; Mega Ball: twenty-five; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$277 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$337 million

Bitter cold expected until New Year in US Midwest, Northeast

CHICAGO (AP) — A white Christmas for much of the Northeast and Midwest has given way to bitter cold until the New Year.

Residents should expect colder-than-normal temperatures for the rest of the week, according to Chicago-area National Weather Service meteorologist Amy Seeley. Temperatures hovered around zero degrees in Chicago on Tuesday.

A Christmas storm also dumped a record amount of snow on the Erie, Pennsylvania, area.

The National Weather Service said 34 inches of snow fell on Monday, an all-time daily snowfall record for Erie. Another 19 inches fell before dawn Tuesday, bringing the total to 53 inches.

The city issued a snow emergency, citing "dangerous and impassable" roads.

Forecasters warn of sub-zero frigid arctic air and dangerously cold wind chills in much of the US.

Wind chill advisories or warnings are in effect for all of North Dakota and Wisconsin, as well as swaths of South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan and Indiana.

Wind chill advisories were also in effect for parts of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and New York. Meteorologists warn frostbite is possible with as little as 30 minutes of exposure.

Russia: Explosion injures 10 at St. Petersburg supermarket

By IRINA TITOVA, Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP) — At least 10 people were injured Wednesday by an explosion at a supermarket in St. Petersburg, Russia's second-largest city and the site of a deadly subway bombing this year.

The Investigative Committee, the nation's top investigative agency, said a device containing 200 grams (7 ounces) of explosives went off at a storage area for customers' bags. It said the device was rigged with shrapnel to cause more damage.

No one has claimed responsibility for the explosion at a branch of the Perekrestok supermarket chain in the city's northwest Kalininsky district.

Alexander Klaus, the chief of the local branch of the Investigative Committee, said 10 people were hospitalized with injuries.

Andrey Kibitov, a spokesman for St. Petersburg's governor, tweeted that the injured were in satisfactory condition and one had been discharged from the hospital.

A criminal investigation was launched.

While officials stopped short of branding the explosion as a terror attack, the National Anti-Terrorism Committee that oversees anti-terror efforts in Russia said it was coordinating the search for suspects.

Viktoriya Gordeyeva, a St. Petersburg resident who walked past the supermarket shortly after the explosion, said people were afraid to enter other stores in the area.

"There was no panic, but people were reluctant to enter a nearby drug store and a grocery store," Gordeyeva said.

Another local resident, Marina Bulanova, a doctor, heard the explosion and rushed to the market to help treat anyone who might be hurt. She said ambulance crews already had taken those injured to city hospitals by the time she got there.

Russian President Vladimir Putin telephoned U.S. President Donald Trump earlier this month to thank him for a CIA tip that helped thwart a series of bombings in St. Petersburg, Putin's home town.

The Federal Security Service, or FSB, said seven suspects linked to the Islamic State group were arrested in connection to the alleged plot. The Kremlin said the arrested suspects had planned to bomb St. Petersburg's Kazan Cathedral and other crowded sites.

In April, a suicide bombing in the St. Petersburg's subway left 16 people dead and wounded more than 50. Russian authorities identified the bomber who blew himself up on a subway line as Akbardzhon Dzhaliilov, a 22-year old Kyrgyz-born Russian national.

Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

Israel minister plans Trump train station at Western Wall

By ILAN BEN ZION, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's transportation minister is pushing ahead with a plan to dig a railway tunnel under Jerusalem's Old City, passing near sites holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims — and ending at the Western Wall with a station named after President Donald Trump.

Yisrael Katz's plan, currently in the initial stages, involves constructing two underground stations and excavating over 2 miles (3 kilometers) of tunnel beneath downtown Jerusalem and under the politically sensitive Old City. The project would extend Jerusalem's soon-to-open high-speed rail line from Tel Aviv to the Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can pray.

The route will run close to — but not directly under — the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where tradition holds that Jesus was crucified and buried, and a contested holy site known to Jews as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary. Previous excavations by Israel near the holy site — the spiritual epicenter of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — have sparked violent Palestinian protests.

Because of those sensitivities, the proposal will likely meet with heavy resistance from the Palestinians, neighboring Arab countries and the international community.

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Katz, a senior Cabinet official who also serves as Israel's intelligence minister, is a close ally of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and is seen by many as his likely eventual successor as head of the Likud party.

Transportation Ministry spokesman Avner Ovadia said Wednesday the project is estimated to cost more than \$700 million and, if approved, would take four years to complete.

Katz's office said the minister advanced the plan in a recent meeting with Israel Railways executives, and has fast-tracked it in the planning committees.

Katz said a high-speed rail station would allow visitors to reach "the beating heart of the Jewish people — the Western Wall and the Temple Mount." He proposed naming the station after Trump "for his brave and historic decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital" earlier this month.

Trump's announcement has enraged the Palestinians and much of the Muslim world. The U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution last week condemning the move, with several traditional American allies breaking with Washington to vote in favor of the motion.

Israel captured east Jerusalem, which includes the Old City, in 1967, and annexed it in a move not recognized internationally. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state, and a longstanding international consensus holds that the fate of the city should be decided through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Ikrema Sabri, a senior Muslim cleric in Jerusalem, denounced the planned train line extension, saying that Palestinians won't accept "any change or act in the occupied territories."

He said that "giving the name of Trump to this project will not give it any legitimacy. It would be just another implementation of the unacceptable decision of President Trump to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel."

Digging railway tunnels to the Western Wall would also entail excavating in Jerusalem's Old City, where religious and political sensitivities — as well as layers of archaeological remains from the city's 3,000-year history — could make for a logistical and legal quagmire.

Last year an initiative to convert an already excavated area abutting the Western Wall into an egalitarian Jewish prayer section was hotly contested by Israeli archaeologists, who said such a move would cause irreparable damage to the historic remains of the ancient city.

The Israel Antiquities Authority declined to comment on the planned train extension.

Despite the likely opposition to the project, Ovadia said he expects the plans to be approved in the coming year, barring major complications. The Tel Aviv-Jerusalem high-speed line is expected to open next spring.

"There's no reason why this train won't be built," he said. "We already know how to deal with no less difficult opposition."

Katz has previously proposed other ambitious infrastructure projects, including an artificial island off the coast of the Gaza Strip that would serve as an air and seaport for the Palestinian territory, and a railway connecting Israel with Saudi Arabia and other Arab states.

Follow Ilan Ben Zion on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ilanbenzion

As California legalizes pot, laws collide at US checkpoints

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

PINE VALLEY, Calif. (AP) — California legalizes marijuana for recreational use Monday, but that won't stop federal agents from seizing the drug — even in tiny amounts — on busy freeways and backcountry highways.

Marijuana possession still will be prohibited at eight Border Patrol checkpoints in California, a reminder that state and federal laws collide when it comes to pot. The U.S. government classifies marijuana as a controlled substance, like heroin and LSD.

"Prior to Jan. 1, it's going to be the same after Jan. 1, because nothing changed on our end," said Ryan Yamasaki, an assistant chief of the Border Patrol's San Diego sector. "If you're a federal law enforcement agency, you uphold federal laws."

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The checkpoints, located up to 100 miles (161 kilometers) from Mexico, are considered a final line of defense against immigrants who elude agents at the border. They also have been a trap for U.S. citizens carrying drugs, even tiny bags of marijuana.

About 40 percent of pot seizures at Border Patrol checkpoints from fiscal years 2013 to 2016 were an ounce (28 grams) or less from U.S. citizens, according to a Government Accountability Office report last month. California's new law allows anyone 21 and over to carry up to an ounce.

The Border Patrol operates 34 permanent checkpoints along the Mexican border and an additional 103 "tactical" stops, typically cones and signs that appear for brief periods.

Ronald Vitiello, acting deputy commissioner of parent agency Customs and Border Protection, called drug seizures an "ancillary effect" of enforcing immigration laws. Motorists typically are released after being photographed and fingerprinted. They generally aren't charged with a crime because prosecutors consider them low priority.

The clash between state and federal marijuana laws played out on a smaller scale near the Canadian border in Washington after that state legalized marijuana in 2014. California is a far busier route for illegal crossings with many more agents.

State and federal marijuana laws have conflicted since California became the first to legalize marijuana for medical use in 1996. Next week, California will be among seven states and Washington, D.C., with legal recreational pot.

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, a staunch opponent of legalization, said last month that he was taking a close look at federal enforcement, suggesting a tougher stance than President Barack Obama's administration.

At highway checkpoints, Border Patrol agents look for signs of nervous drivers, like clutching steering wheels and avoiding eye contact and interrupting when passengers are asked to state citizenship. Some panicked drivers make a U-turn when they spot the checkpoint, a dead giveaway.

One recent morning on westbound Interstate 8 about 40 miles (64 kilometers) east of San Diego, an agent standing outside a booth under a large white canopy stopped drivers for a few seconds to ask their citizenship or waved them through after peering inside.

In about an hour, three raised enough suspicion to be ordered aside for a thorough vehicle search.

A dog discovered a marijuana stash about the size of a thumbprint inside the pickup truck of a man with Arizona license plates who was taking his elderly uncle to a hospital appointment. It would have taken up to an hour to process the arrest, so agents released him after seizing the pot and warning it was illegal.

"I didn't know that, sorry," the driver said, walking to his truck after waiting on a bench a few minutes while the dog searched.

The animal sniffed something in another car but found nothing in the seats or trunk. The apologetic driver said she smoked marijuana a week earlier, implying the odor lingered.

The Pine Valley checkpoint, amid oak- and chaparral-covered mountains on the main route from Arizona to San Diego, gets busy with drivers returning from weekend getaways but is less traveled than others.

Agents say a checkpoint on Interstate 5 between San Diego and Los Angeles can cause a 4-mile (6.4-kilometer) backup in 90 seconds during peak hours.

The government faces pushback over checkpoints. Some residents complain about delays and trespassers trying to circumvent checkpoints — some even dying from heat and exhaustion. Motorists who consider them a privacy invasion steadfastly refuse to answer questions and post their test encounters on YouTube.

Border Patrol officials insist they are effective. Without them, Vitiello said, smugglers would have open passage to cities like Phoenix and Albuquerque, New Mexico, once past the border.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1976 that agents can question people at checkpoints even without reason to believe anyone in the vehicle is in the country illegally and don't need a search warrant.

Michael Chernis, an attorney who represents people charged with marijuana crimes, believes checkpoint seizures are a waste of resources but acknowledged the government is empowered.

"The bottom line is, there's absolutely no protection against federal interaction when it comes to adult use," he said.

Obama to Prince Harry: Leaders must use care on social media

By GREGORY KATZ, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Former President Barack Obama told Prince Harry in an interview broadcast Wednesday that people in leadership roles must be careful in their use of social media and warned against spending too much time immersed in the internet at the expense of the world outside.

Obama did not, however, directly mention his successor, President Donald Trump, who has made the use of Twitter a centerpiece of his presidency.

"All of us in leadership have to find ways to recreate a common space on the internet," he said. "One of the dangers of the internet is people can have entirely different realities. They can be just cocooned in information that reinforces their current biases."

He spoke with Harry in the prince's capacity as guest editor of the BBC Radio 4 news program. Both men said the interview, recorded in Canada in September, was Obama's first since leaving the presidency in January.

Obama said he felt serene the day he left the White House at the end of his second four-year term despite the vast amount of work that remained unfinished. He said it was "hugely liberating" to be able to set his own agenda in the morning to have the time to talk with his wife, Michelle, now that he is no longer president.

"I miss the work itself because it was fascinating," Obama said of his eight years in the Oval Office, citing his health care reforms as one of his proudest achievements.

In a brief live segment at the end of the show, Harry said he did not know if Obama would be on the guest list for his wedding in May to American actress Meghan Markle.

"I don't know about that, we haven't even put the invite or the guest list together, who knows if he's going to be invited or not," Harry said. "I wouldn't want to ruin that surprise."

The Sun newspaper, a popular tabloid, has suggested that the British government is concerned that Harry and Markle may invite the Obamas but not Trump, possibly straining ties between the two governments.

Harry did say his fiancée enjoyed her first Christmas with the royal family.

"The family loved having her there," Harry said.

The prince used his position to ask Obama a "lightning round" of questions of the type normally asked of entertainers, not politicians.

The former president declined to say whether he wears boxers or briefs, preserving a bit of post-presidential dignity, but was willing to say he prefers Aretha Franklin to Tina Turner — "Aretha is the best," he said of the Queen of Soul — and favors retired basketball star Michael Jordan over current phenom LeBron James.

Obama rejected gloomy prognostications about the state of the world, saying that in many ways the world is healthier and wealthier than it has ever been, making it perhaps the best time in human history to be born.

He cited improved treatment of African-Americans and greatly expanded opportunities for young women as achievements of the past few generations that give him hope for the future.

Harry also interviewed his father, Prince Charles, who offered a more downbeat assessment. He said the root causes of climate change are not being addressed even as it caused "untold horrors" in different parts of the world.

Syria allows some patients to leave besieged area

By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syria's government is allowing the evacuation of nearly 30 critically ill people from a besieged Damascus suburb, where hundreds requiring medical treatment have been prevented from reaching hospitals minutes away.

The government recently tightened its siege of eastern Ghouta, home to some 400,000 people, leading

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to severe shortages of food, fuel and medicine as winter sets in.

Ingy Sedky, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Damascus, said four patients were allowed to leave Tuesday and 25 others are expected to be let out in the coming hours.

It is not clear if all will be evacuated in one batch Wednesday or over several days. The ICRC is partnering with the local Syrian Arab Red Crescent to handle the evacuations. SARC spokeswoman Mona Kurdi said the evacuees arrived in hospitals in government-controlled Damascus, just a few minutes' drive away.

The Army of Islam, a prominent rebel group in eastern Ghouta, said the critically ill will be evacuated as part of a deal that was conditional on it releasing an equivalent number of captives.

"There are many more people who need to be evacuated. We hope this will be only the beginning," Sedky said.

The evacuees included three children, as young as one year old, and one adult. The patients, who traveled with family members, needed immediate treatment for cancer, kidney failure and hemophilia.

At least five detainees were evacuated from eastern Ghouta late Tuesday.

Some patients may not be able to leave eastern Ghouta for government-controlled areas, because they either fear conscription into the army or detention for having lived or worked in opposition areas.

For weeks, the U.N. has been calling on the government to allow some 500 critically ill people to leave the suburb for treatment and to expand aid groups' heavily restricted access to the area. Activists in eastern Ghouta have circulated photos online of severely malnourished children. The U.N. says one in eight children in eastern Ghouta is going hungry, up from one in 50 in May.

Earlier this month, the U.N. said 12 people had died waiting for medical evacuation from eastern Ghouta. Their names were on a U.N.-drawn list submitted to the government six months ago.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his government is working with Russia, a close ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad, to try and evacuate some 500 people from eastern Ghouta, including about 170 women and children, who are in urgent need of humanitarian or medical assistance. Turkey is a leading supporter of the Syrian opposition.

Rights groups say the government has used siege tactics across Syria to starve local populations and force rebels to surrender, which would amount to a war crime. The government denies the allegations, blaming shortages on rebel groups.

Eastern Ghouta was one of the first areas to rise up against Assad when Arab Spring protests spread across the country in 2011. Government forces surrounded the area in 2013, but tunnels and smuggling allowed residents to bring in food and medical supplies.

The government tightened the noose earlier this year following victories against insurgents in other parts of the country.

Assad's rule is more secure than at any time since the uprising began, and the opposition is largely confined to the suburbs around Damascus and the northwestern rebel-held Idlib province.

"De-escalation" agreements brokered by Russia, Iran and Turkey have reduced the violence in most areas, but efforts to reach a political solution to the conflict remain stalled.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Wednesday that Russian-brokered talks slated for next month were crucial for reaching a settlement, and would not interfere with U.N.-backed negotiations, which have made virtually no progress since they began in 2014.

Several dozen Syrian opposition groups have refused to take part in the Russian talks, accusing Moscow of failing to rein in Assad.

Lavrov, who met with Syrian opposition leader Ahmad Jarba on Wednesday, told Russian news agencies that the Sochi congress would lay the groundwork for U.N.-led talks. Lavrov said Russia's goal is to bring together the largest number of opposition groups possible to help launch constitutional reforms in the war-torn country.

The Syrian government, which supports the Sochi process, has vehemently rejected the opposition's central demand that Assad play no role in a political transition.

Singer files sex assault complaint against former Trump aide

WASHINGTON (AP) — A singer and potential congressional candidate says she has filed a sexual assault complaint against President Donald Trump's former campaign manager for hitting her twice on her buttocks during a Washington gathering in November.

Joy Villa, a Trump backer who wore a "Make America Great Again" dress at the Grammys this year, said Tuesday she plans to meet with detectives in Washington next week about the complaint against Corey Lewandowski.

In a phone interview from Tampa, Florida, Villa said she was initially reluctant to come forward because she was worried about any backlash. But she said she called Washington's Metropolitan Police Department on Christmas Eve after a friend who witnessed the incident spoke about it publicly, and other friends urged her to come forward.

"I didn't know him at all," Villa said about Lewandowski. "I only knew him by reputation. He broke my trust."

She said she saw him at a gathering at the Trump International Hotel on the day after Thanksgiving, and said Lewandowski struck her "extremely hard" even after she told him to stop. She said she felt it was "disgusting and shocking and demeaning."

Villa, who is considering a run for a Florida congressional seat, said she initially thought it was sexual harassment, but police told her that touching someone on any body part that is sexual in nature constituted sexual assault. She said she was told it was classified as a misdemeanor.

"I was initially fearful to come forward with this," she said, adding that she did not want to bring shame or embarrassment on Lewandowski's family or hers.

"I did nothing wrong," Villa said. "I realized if he's not going to respond or apologize to me, I think it's the right thing to do."

Lewandowski did not respond to an email seeking comment.

Villa made news earlier this year when she wore a dress displaying Trump's campaign slogan at the Grammys. She explained her decision to wear the dress in an Instagram post, writing, "You can either stand for what you believe in or fall for what you don't." She added, "agree to disagree."

This is not the first time Lewandowski has faced police charges. In March 2016 he was charged with misdemeanor battery for an altercation involving a female reporter after a news conference in Florida. The charges were later dropped.

Trump fired him as campaign manager in June 2016.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. WHY TRUMP'S APPALACHIAN SUPPORTERS STILL BACK HIM

Trump's backers cheer on his controversial fights with the media and establishment politicians. They say they feel like he's fighting for them.

2. HOW 13 DAYS IN JULY SHAPED TRUMP WHITE HOUSE

The chaotic, two-week span from July 19-31 featured a senior staff shake-up and forewarned of the Russia probe's reach into the president's orbit.

3. WHO SCORED A RARE INTERVIEW WITH OBAMA

Former President Barack Obama has told Prince Harry in an interview that he felt serene the day he left the White House despite the sense that much important work remained unfinished.

4. WHERE DAYS OF BITTER COLD AWAIT

A white Christmas for much of the Northeast and Midwest has given way to bitter cold until the New Year. Snow continues to fall in Erie, Pennsylvania, which has already seen a record amount.

5. WHO FILES SEX ASSAULT COMPLAINT AGAINST FORMER TRUMP AIDE

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A singer and potential congressional candidate says she's filed a sexual assault complaint against President Donald Trump's former campaign manager for hitting her twice on her buttocks during a Washington gathering in November

6. HOW MUCH TIME PROSECUTORS ARE DEMANDNG FOR SAMSUNG HEIR LEE

South Korean prosecutors want a 12-year prison term for Samsung's jailed billionaire heir Lee Jae-yong for his conviction on bribery and other charges.

7. WHERE A NEW CHURCH IS ON HOLD

Construction on a Greek Orthodox church to replace one that was crushed in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks has been temporarily suspended amid rising costs and questions over how donations have been managed.

8. ROHINGYA REFUGEES HAVE ONLY MEMORIES, SAVED ON PHONES

For many Rohingya living in refugee camps in Bangladesh, all that remains of their old lives in Myanmar are memories captured in photos and videos on their mobile phones.

9. WHO APOLOGIZED TO HIS COUNTRY

Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori said he's sorry for the wrongs committed under his government in the 1990s, issuing a vaguely worded statement two days after he received a presidential medical pardon that freed him from prison.

10. KATIE LEDECKY EARNS AP FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR HONORS

The champion swimmer earned five golds and a silver at this year's world championships in Budapest.

Treasury issues sanctions against 2 North Korean officials

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Treasury Department issued sanctions Tuesday against two officials it describes as "key leaders of North Korea's unlawful weapons programs."

The sanctions against Kim Jong Sik and Ri Pyong Chol block them from any property or interests in property within U.S. jurisdiction, and prohibit them from transactions with American citizens. Treasury said the men are senior officials in North Korea's Munitions Industry Department.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the sanctions are part of the United States' "maximum pressure campaign" to isolate North Korea and "achieve a fully denuclearized Korean Peninsula."

The United Nations Security Council unanimously approved tough new sanctions against North Korea on Friday in response to its latest launch of a ballistic missile, which Pyongyang says is capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

Baik Tae-hyun, spokesman of South Korea's Unification Ministry, expressed hope Wednesday that the continuing campaign of sanctions and pressure will eventually force North Korea into "making the right decision" and engaging in dialogue over its nuclear program.

Baik noted it was the seventh time the U.S. Treasury has imposed unilateral sanctions against the North since the start of President Donald Trump's administration. Baik also pointed out that the two North Koreans had already been under U.N. Security Council sanctions.

Starfish making comeback after syndrome killed millions

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Starfish are making a comeback on the West Coast, four years after a mysterious syndrome killed millions of them.

From 2013 to 2014, Sea Star Wasting Syndrome hit sea stars from British Columbia to Mexico. The starfish would develop lesions and then disintegrate, their arms turning into blobs of goo.

The cause is unclear but researchers say it may be a virus.

But now, the species is rebounding. Sea stars are being spotted in Southern California tide pools and elsewhere, the Orange County Register reported Tuesday.

"They are coming back, big time," Darryl Deleske, aquarist for the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in Los Angeles, told the newspaper.

"It's a huge difference," Deleske said. "A couple of years ago, you wouldn't find any. I dove all the way as far as Canada, specifically looking for sea stars, and found not a single one."

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Similar die-offs of starfish on the West Coast were reported in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, but the latest outbreak was far larger and more widespread, according to a report by researchers at the University of Santa Cruz.

Beginning with ochre stars off Washington state, the disease spread, killing off mottled stars, leather stars, sunflower stars, rainbows and six-armed stars.

It hit Southern California by December 2013.

"When it did (arrive), you just started to see them melt everywhere," said Deleske. "You'd see an arm here, an arm there."

The recovery has been promising.

Four adult sea stars, each about 7 to 8 inches long, were spotted this month at Crystal Cove State Park in Newport Beach.

"It's a treasure we always hope to find," said Kaitlin Magliano, education coordinator at the Crystal Cove Conservancy.

"We lost all of them," she said. "It's good to see we have some surviving and thriving . Maybe the next generation will be more resilient."

The stars aren't out of danger yet.

The wasting syndrome never completely disappeared in Northern and Central California and it has reappeared in the Salish Sea region of Washington state, according to a November report by the University of Santa Cruz.

Construction halted at church destroyed in Sept. 11 attacks

By COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Construction on a Greek Orthodox church to replace one that was crushed in the Sept. 11 attacks has been temporarily suspended amid rising costs and questions over how donations have been managed.

The St. Nicholas National Shrine next to the World Trade Center memorial plaza was to replace a tiny church obliterated when the trade center's south tower fell in 2001. The new building was designed by renowned architect Santiago Calatrava, who created the soaring white bird-like mall and transit hub nearby called the Oculus.

But unlike the transit hub, built largely with federal transportation dollars, the church is being funded through donations including from the Greek government, Greek Orthodox church members around the world, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston and the Italian city of Bari, whose patron saint is St. Nicholas.

In September, the estimated cost was \$50 million. But according to The New York Times , which first reported the work suspension, the cost had jumped to an estimated \$72 million to \$78 million as of this month.

Two firms, PricewaterhouseCoopers and BakerHostetler, were hired to perform an independent investigation into the construction, according to a Dec. 9 statement posted on the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

The stoppage was ordered by the construction company on the project, Skanska USA, the statement said.

"The archdiocese is confidently hopeful that construction will recommence in the very near future and has been assured by Skanska ... that they are looking forward to the rescinding of this temporary suspension to continue working together in cooperation with the archdiocese for the completion of the building project," the statement read.

The Greek Orthodox archdiocese, based in New York, represents more than 500 parishes across the country with more than 1.5 million members of the church and 800 priests. It reported last fall it was suffering from a "severe and complex" financial deficit.

Skanska, part of Stockholm-based Skanska AB, said it had extended payment deadlines and discussed alternatives with the archdiocese to try to keep the project going but ultimately had to halt construction.

"We regret that stopping work was the only viable option at this point in time," Skanska USA Executive Vice President Tom Webb said in a statement Tuesday. "We are confident that they will find the funding to complete this work at some point in the future."

The St. Nicholas shrine, meant as a salve for the faithful and a welcoming space for those wishing to reflect, was inspired by two Byzantine shrines in Istanbul, the Hagia Sophia and the Church of the Holy Savior in Chora. The building was to be sheathed in marble from quarries north of Athens, the vein of marble used to build the Parthenon.

The original St. Nicholas was far more modest. The building housed a tavern when Greek immigrants bought it in 1919 to use as a church. It was the only building not part of the trade center complex that was demolished after hijackers flew commercial jets into the towers.

US jury acquits Peruvian defendant in FIFA bribery case

By LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A former South American soccer official was acquitted in the FIFA bribery scandal on Tuesday and walked out of the courtroom saying he's finished with the world's most popular sport.

The verdict clearing Manuel Burga, former president of Peru's soccer federation, of a single racketeering conspiracy charge came days after prosecutors won guilty verdicts on multiple charges against two other former soccer officials.

"God bless America. That's all I can say," the 60-year-old Burga said with eyes still wet from tears minutes after the verdict was delivered in Brooklyn federal court.

Burga was the first person to be acquitted among over 40 people and entities in the world of global soccer charged in the U.S. with a scheme to extract hundreds of millions of dollars in bribes and kickbacks. Of those, 24 pleaded guilty.

The case against Burga was always thin. He faced a single count while two co-defendants — Juan Napout, of Paraguay, and Jose Maria Marin, of Brazil — were convicted of heftier charges Friday in a prosecution that exposed a culture of greed and corruption in soccer's executive suites.

Burga called the result a miracle and noted he prayed the rosary twice daily before the acquittal.

Burga said he would go home to Peru and resume a career as a lawyer after 15 years as a soccer executive.

"My history in soccer is finished," he said. "I'll go back to the law."

The judge had jailed Marin, 85, and Napout, 59, after their convictions Friday. The two also were acquitted on some lesser charges.

Burga's attorney, Bruce Udolf, said he was sure Burga was innocent but believed he would be convicted Tuesday based on a question from jurors Friday.

"I figured I'd be looking at him a jail cell," Udolf said. "I'm so happy. ... I want to go outside and do a couple of cartwheels."

Marin, Burga and Napout had been arrested in 2015. Prosecutors accused them of agreeing to take millions of dollars in bribes from businessmen seeking to lock up lucrative media rights or to influence hosting rights for the World Cup and other major FIFA-controlled tournaments.

World soccer's governing body had said last week it would seek compensation and a share of the cash. During the trial, Udolf insisted his client never took a bribe.

"I would submit to you that never has more been made of less evidence," he told jurors.

On Tuesday, Udolf credited Burga for insisting on a trial and saying he never agreed to anything.

"He'll go to his grave saying that," said the Fort Lauderdale, Florida, lawyer who headed the public integrity unit of the Miami federal prosecutor's office for five years in the 1990s.

Udolf said Burga would return to his childhood home, where he now lives modestly with his wife and two children.

Burga was held for a year in Peru on the U.S. charges before his transfer to the United States, where he was freed on bail to await trial. He'd been living with relatives in Washington.

Burga said he'd spend a month reunited with family before helping others through an administrative law practice.

"We have to look forward, not backward," he said.

Kremlin: Russia election boycott campaign may be illegal

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The Kremlin hinted Tuesday at possible legal repercussions for Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny over his calls for a boycott of the March presidential election.

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, wouldn't comment on the Election Commission's decision to bar Navalny from running but said the "calls for boycott ought to be carefully studied to see if they are breaking the law."

As expected, Russia's top election body on Monday formally barred Navalny from a presidential run. Navalny, an anti-corruption campaigner and Putin's most prominent rival, promptly put out a video statement saying that the ban shows "Putin is terribly scared and is afraid of running against me." He called on supporters to stay away from the vote in protest.

Meanwhile, Putin's backers convened Tuesday afternoon to formally nominate him for presidency after he announced that he will run as an independent candidate.

Prominent lawmakers, film actors, musicians and athletes gathered at a Soviet-era exhibition hall to endorse him. Putin did not attend because of other engagements, Peskov said.

Putin, who has been in power for 18 years and is expected to easily win another six-year term, has so far refrained from campaigning. Navalny, meanwhile, has been aggressively seeking votes all year, reaching out to the most remote parts of the country.

Peskov rejected suggestions that Navalny's absence from the ballot could dent the legitimacy of Putin's possible re-election.

Russian law doesn't specifically prohibit someone from calling for an election boycott, but authorities last year blocked access to several websites that did so.

Navalny rose to prominence in 2009 with investigations into official corruption and became a protest leader when hundreds of thousands took to the streets across Russia in 2011 to protest electoral fraud.

A few years later, and after several short-term spells in jail, Navalny faced two separate sets of fraud charges, which were viewed as political retribution aimed at stopping him from running for office. In his only official campaign before his first conviction took effect, Navalny garnered 30 percent of the vote in the race for Moscow mayor in 2013.

The European Union said in a statement on Tuesday the decision to keep Navalny off the ballot "casts a serious doubt on political pluralism in Russia and the prospect of democratic elections next year."

The EU's spokeswoman for foreign affairs, Maja Kocijancic, pointed to a European Court of Human Rights ruling that Navalny was denied the right to a fair trial when he was convicted in 2013.

"Politically motivated charges shouldn't be used against political participation," Kocijancic said.

Lorne Cook contributed to this report from Brussels.

Trump predicts GOP and Dems will agree on health care plan

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump is predicting that Democrats and Republicans will "eventually come together" on a new health care plan for the country.

Sending a Twitter post early Tuesday from his Florida resort, Trump said "the very unfair and unpopular Individual Mandate has been terminated as part of our Tax Cut Bill, which essentially Repeals (over time) Obamacare."

Much of former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act remains intact, however, and the sign-up period for the various options was carried out as normal this year.

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Majority Republicans sought repeatedly to repeal the 2010 law this year, but couldn't get it through the Senate.

Trump his wife, Melania, and their son, Barron, spent Christmas at his Mar-a-Lago resort.

This story has been corrected to state Trump ID in last paragraph.

In break with tradition, Trump doesn't host a state dinner

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump couldn't stop talking about the red carpets, military parades and fancy dinners that were lavished upon him during state visits on his recent tour of Asia. "Magnificent," he declared at one point on the trip.

But Trump has yet to reciprocate, making him the first president in almost a century to close his first year in office without welcoming a visiting counterpart to the U.S. with similar trappings.

Trump spoke dismissively of state dinners as a candidate, when he panned President Barack Obama's decision to welcome Chinese President Xi Jinping with a 2015 state visit. Such visits are an important diplomatic tool that includes a showy arrival ceremony and an elaborate dinner at the White House.

"I would not be throwing (Xi) a dinner," Trump said at the time. "I would get him a McDonald's hamburger and say we've got to get down to work."

Last month it was Xi's turn to literally roll out the red carpet. The Chinese leader poured on the pageantry as he welcomed Trump to Beijing on what was billed as a "state visit, plus." Trump also made state visits to South Korea and Vietnam.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said there is no "singular reason" why Trump hasn't extended a state visit invitation yet, but added that the administration hopes to schedule a visit early in 2018. Sanders gave no hints about which of Trump's foreign counterparts are being considered for the diplomatic honor.

A state visit typically is offered as a sign of friendship and to showcase strategic ties between countries that are important to each other, said Anita McBride, a veteran of three Republican administrations who last served as chief of staff to first lady Laura Bush.

"The White House is the world stage to elevate that," she said. "These occasions really go a long way to solidify and strengthen relationships."

Trump speaks often about his relationships with many of his foreign counterparts, including Xi. Trump and the Chinese leader met at Trump's Florida estate in April, and Trump treated Xi to a full dinner — not the aforementioned burger — and what Trump described as "the most beautiful piece of chocolate cake."

"President Xi was enjoying it," the president reported.

Trump has also met at the White House, sometimes over lunch as well as abroad, with many of his foreign counterparts. He recently put the figure at more than 100.

But nothing compares to a state visit.

The White House portion of the visit begins with an elaborate arrival ceremony on the South Lawn, including the pomp of a military honor guard, a troop review and leader statements. The leaders meet privately in the Oval Office before they hold a joint news conference in the East Room or the Rose Garden. The evening ends with the foreign leader as the guest of honor at a lavish state dinner attended by hundreds, including members of Congress, business leaders, celebrities, political donors and others.

The visiting leader also has lunch at the State Department, and sometimes will address a joint meeting of Congress.

Such visits are reserved for when the U.S. wants to put on its "best face" for a particular leader and ally, said Peter Selfridge, who served as a liaison between the White House and visiting foreign dignitaries as U.S. chief of protocol from 2014 to January 2017.

"It's a really important arrow in a president's quiver when it comes to the diplomatic nicety side of his work," Selfridge said.

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And not just for American presidents. Knowing Trump enjoys flattery, Xi pulled out all the stops to impress him on that November stop in Beijing.

The visit opened with an arrival ceremony considered lavish even by Chinese standards, with Trump and his wife, Melania greeted at the airport by Chinese and American dignitaries standing at attention, a band playing military music and scores of flag-waving children chanting "welcome."

Trump was then whisked away for a private tour of the Forbidden City that included dinner. The meal was a first for a visiting foreign leader at Beijing's historic imperial palace since the founding of modern China. Trump also raved about an outdoor opera performance.

The following morning brought another welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People featuring a military parade that Trump said was "magnificent." He said "the world was watching" and claimed to have received telephone calls about it from around the world. "Nothing you can see is so beautiful," Trump said.

Xi also honored Trump at a state banquet that included video highlights from the Chinese leader's visit to Florida, along with clips from Trump's trip and the screening of a video of Trump's granddaughter, Arabella, singing in Chinese.

McBride said Trump's decision to not extend a state visit invitation could be partly because his first year was a chaotic one, dominated by staff upheaval and lengthy negotiations with Congress over health care and tax legislation. Separately, the first lady, who is responsible for planning a state dinner down to the smallest detail, didn't officially relocate to the White House until June. A state visit is also a massive undertaking and Trump has been running the government with a bare-bones staff.

But Trump's first state visitor will matter. "The other world leaders will pay attention to that," McBride said.

Not since Calvin Coolidge in the 1920s has a president ended his first year in office without hosting a foreign leader for a state visit, according to the White House Historical Association.

Coolidge assumed office in 1923 after the sudden death of President Warren G. Harding, and was elected to a full term in 1924. Coolidge didn't hold a state dinner until October 1926 for Queen Marie of Romania, according to the White House association.

Every president since Coolidge has hosted at least one state visit their first year.

Lyndon Johnson held 12 in 1964, his first full year in office after President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963. Barack Obama, Trump's immediate predecessor, held just one in 2009 — and it was famously crashed by a celebrity-seeking couple.

Earlier this year, Trump was the special guest of President Emmanuel Macron at France's Bastille Day parade. Trump has also accepted an invitation from Queen Elizabeth II for a state visit. Sanders said she expects those details will be announced soon.

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

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 27, the 361st day of 2017. There are four days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 27, 1927, the musical play "Show Boat," with music by Jerome Kern and libretto by Oscar Hammerstein II, opened at the Ziegfeld Theater in New York, beginning a run of 572 performances.

On this date:

In 1831, naturalist Charles Darwin set out on a round-the-world voyage aboard the HMS Beagle.

In 1892, the cornerstone was laid for the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City.

In 1904, James Barrie's play "Peter Pan: The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" opened at the Duke of York's Theater in London.

In 1932, New York City's Radio City Music Hall first opened.

In 1945, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were formally established.

In 1947, the original version of the puppet character Howdy Doody made his TV debut on NBC's "Pup-

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pet Playhouse.”

In 1949, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands signed an act recognizing Indonesia’s sovereignty after more than three centuries of Dutch rule.

In 1968, Apollo 8 and its three astronauts made a safe, nighttime splashdown in the Pacific.

In 1970, the musical play “Hello, Dolly!” closed on Broadway after a run of 2,844 performances.

In 1979, Soviet forces seized control of Afghanistan. President Hafizullah Amin (hah-FEE’-zoo-lah ah-MEEN’), who was overthrown and executed, was replaced by Babrak Karmal.

In 1985, Palestinian guerrillas opened fire inside the Rome and Vienna airports; 19 victims were killed, plus four attackers who were slain by police and security personnel. American naturalist Dian Fossey, 53, who had studied gorillas in the wild in Rwanda, was found hacked to death.

In 1995, Israeli jeeps sped out of the West Bank town of Ramallah, capping a seven-week pullout giving Yasser Arafat control over 90 percent of the West Bank’s one million Palestinian residents and one-third of its land.

Ten years ago: Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, 54, was assassinated in a gun and suicide-bomb attack in Pakistan following a campaign rally. Kenya held an election pitting incumbent president Mwai Kibaki (mwy kih-BAH’-kee) against opposition candidate Raila Odinga (RY’-luh oh-DING’-uh); both candidates ended up claiming victory in a vote that observers said was seriously flawed. (Kenya was racked by weeks of ethnic violence; Kibaki and Odinga ended up forming a coalition government.)

Five years ago: An Indian-born man, Sunando Sen, was shoved to his death from a New York City subway platform; suspect Erika Menendez later pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to 24 years in prison. (Authorities say Menendez pushed Sen because she thought he was Muslim; Sen was Hindu.) Retired Army general Norman Schwarzkopf, 78, died in Tampa, Florida. Character actor Harry Carey Jr., 91, died in Santa Barbara, California.

One year ago: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (shin-zoh AH’-bay), accompanied by President Barack Obama, visited Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, where he offered his “sincere and everlasting condolences to the souls of those who lost their lives” in Japan’s 1941 attack; Abe did not apologize, but conceded his country “must never repeat the horrors of war again.” Actress Carrie Fisher died in a hospital four days after suffering a medical emergency aboard a flight to Los Angeles; she was 60. Cavaliers superstar LeBron James was voted AP Male Athlete of the Year after bringing the NBA title to Cleveland.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor John Amos is 78. ABC News correspondent Cokie Roberts is 74. Rock musician Mick Jones (Foreigner) is 73. Singer Tracy Nelson is 73. Actor Gerard Depardieu is 69. Jazz singer-musician T.S. Monk is 68. Singer-songwriter Karla Bonoff is 66. Rock musician David Knopfler (Dire Straits) is 65. Actress Tovah Feldshuh is 64. Journalist-turned-politician Arthur Kent is 64. Actress Maryam D’Abo is 57. Country musician Jeff Bryant is 55. Actor Ian Gomez is 53. Actress Theresa Randle is 53. Actress Eva LaRue is 51. Wrestler and actor Bill Goldberg is 51. Actress Tracey Cherelle Jones is 48. Bluegrass singer-musician Darrin Vincent (Dailey & Vincent) is 48. Rock musician Guthrie Govan is 46. Musician Matt Slocum is 45. Actor Wilson Cruz is 44. Singer Olu is 44. Actor Masi Oka is 43. Actor Aaron Stanford is 41. Actress Emilie de Ravin is 36. Christian rock musician James Mead (Kutless) is 35. Rock singer Hayley Williams (Paramore) is 29. Country singer Shay Mooney (Dan & Shay) is 26.

Thought for Today: “Everybody gets so much information all day long that they lose their common sense.” — Gertrude Stein, American author (1874-1946).