

Groton Daily Independent

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“Follow the light of your intuition, and keep away from the darkness of convention.”

-Michael Bassey Johnson

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

A Riddle

**You pick it, You peel the outside, You cook the inside, You eat the outside, And throw away the inside. What am I?
(answer at the end of the AP News)**

Harry Implement

“Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!”



(605) 395-6421

Ferney

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**

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Harry Implement Ad
- 1- SunDial Help Wanted Ad
- 1- A Riddle
- 2- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 2- City Council Agenda
- 3- Farmers Union PSA
- 3- Blackwood wins large stocking
- 4- Boys Varsity Stat Sheet vs. Hamlin
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Job Opening

Sun Dial Manor in Bristol is accepting applications for a Full or Part time Cook/Dietary Tech. Hours Vary. Sign-on Bonus available.

Please contact Mandy at 605-492-3615 or P.O. Box 337, Bristol, SD 57219 for more information.

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda January 8, 2018 – 7:00pm Groton Community Center

Minutes

Bills

Department reports

Superintendent & foreman conference – Shawn

March 6-7 in Watertown, SD

Employee salaries & volunteer list

Appoint Planning and Zoning member term through January

2021

Reappoint Planning and Zoning member term through January

2023

April 10, 2018 Election Date

2-Year Terms ending:

Dave Blackmun

Dave McGannon

Burt Glover

Mayor sign SDPAA Agreement

Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)

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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Rylan Blackwood won the local S&S Lumber Christmas drawing. Ryan Schelle of S&S Lumber congratulates Rylan of his grand prize drawing. It pays to visit Grampa and Grandma on Christmas break! Rylan Blackwood is 5 yrs old from Fort Worth, TX. He is the grandson of Bruce and Karyn Babcock, Groton, SD.



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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Boys Varsity Stat Sheet vs. Hamlin

VISITOR: Hamlin ()

NO PLAYER	TOT-FG			3-PT			REBOUNDS										MIN
	P	FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	
4 Bawden, Conner	*	1	7	1	5	1	2	0	7	7	3	4	1	3	0	1	32:00
22 Noem, Mitchell	*	4	7	4	6	0	0	0	7	7	2	12	0	0	0	0	32:00
30 Williams, Bryce	*	3	7	0	1	0	1	1	2	3	2	6	4	6	0	2	32:00
32 Weelborg, Devan	*	3	6	1	1	2	2	0	2	2	2	9	6	3	0	0	32:00
44 Roe, John	*	7	13	0	1	1	2	2	8	10	4	15	0	4	0	0	24:00
14 Poppen, Cade		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
20 Grantham, Nash		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0:00
24 Trooien, Lucas		1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0:00
34 Antonen, Kirby		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								0	2	2				2			
Team Totals		19	42	6	14	4	7	3	29	32	16	48	11	20	0	4	160

Total FG% - 1st: 9/21 0.429 2nd: 10/21 0.476 Game: 0.452 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 2/5 0.400 2nd: 4/9 0.444 Game: 0.429 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 0/1 0.000 2nd: 4/6 0.667 Game: 0.571 (0,0)

HOME: Groton ()

NO PLAYER	TOT-FG			3-PT			REBOUNDS										MIN
	P	FG	FGA	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO	BK	S	
20 KEITH, BRANDON	F	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	24:00
42 DEHOET, BRODYN	C	4	11	1	4	1	3	2	4	6	2	10	0	4	0	1	24:00
3 SIPPEL, ANTHONY	G	1	3	1	3	0	0	2	4	6	2	3	1	0	0	1	32:00
4 DOEDEN, JONNY	G	1	5	1	3	1	2	2	0	2	3	4	2	2	0	0	8:00
5 SHABAZZ, SERIC	G	3	16	1	9	6	7	1	8	9	2	13	3	3	0	5	32:00
11 RINTALA, ANDREW		3	8	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	5	9	0	4	0	1	16:00
30 LARSON, COLE		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
40 JOHNSON, PEYTON		0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	8:00
55 DIEGEL, TREYTON		1	3	1	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	2	0	1	16:00
TEAM REBOUNDS								0	2	2				0			
Team Totals		13	49	6	25	12	16	10	23	33	16	44	8	16	0	10	160

Total FG% - 1st: 8/28 0.286 2nd: 5/21 0.238 Game: 0.265 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 5/16 0.313 2nd: 1/9 0.111 Game: 0.240 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 5/7 0.714 2nd: 7/9 0.778 Game: 0.750 (1,0)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Hamlin	8	12	4	24	48
Groton	14	12	8	10	44

Last FG: Hamlin 4th-08:00, Groton 4th-08:00
 Largest lead: Hamlin by 4 4th-08:00, Groton by 14 3rd-08:00
 Score tied: 3 times, Lead changed: 1 times

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Boys Junior Varsity Stat Sheet vs. Hamlin

VISITOR: Hamlin ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
10 Noem, Booker	*	4	10	0	2	1	3	0	4	4	2	9	0	1	0	2	16:00
12 Arnold, Caden	*	2	6	0	3	0	0	0	3	3	2	4	0	3	0	0	24:00
14 Poppen, Cade	*	2	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	4	5	0	1	0	1	0:00
20 Grantham, Nash	*	2	5	0	1	2	2	1	3	4	0	6	0	2	0	3	8:00
50 Holiday, Nathan	*	0	2	0	0	1	6	1	1	2	5	1	0	4	0	1	16:00
2 Mors, Nick		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	16:00
13 Noem, Jackson		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
21 Thue, Cameron		1	1	0	0	4	5	0	1	1	0	6	0	1	0	0	32:00
24 Arnold, Hunter		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0:00
30 Popham, Clay		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
32 Roe, Cole		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	8:00
34 Antonen, Kirby		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0:00
40 Hakeman, Austin		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
42 Thue, Trevor		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
51 Swenson, Kyler		2	2	0	0	3	3	2	2	4	3	7	0	1	0	0	16:00
TEAM REBOUNDS									1	3	4				1		
Team Totals		14	32	0	6	12	21	5	25	30	24	40	2	15	0	8	160

Total FG% - 1st: 7/16 0.438 2nd: 7/16 0.438 Game: 0.438 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/4 0.000 2nd: 0/2 0.000 Game: 0.000 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 5/10 0.500 2nd: 7/11 0.636 Game: 0.571 (3,0)

HOME: Groton ()

NO PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN		
		FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
12 SHABAZZ, DARIEN	F	2	5	1	3	1	7	2	1	3	1	6	0	3	0	2	24:00
34 JONES, AUSTIN	F	0	2	0	0	1	6	1	4	5	3	1	1	3	0	0	32:00
50 TRAPHAGEN, TRISTAN	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	8:00
14 KURTZ, KADEN	G	3	6	1	1	6	10	1	0	1	3	13	1	3	0	0	32:00
22 GUTHMILLER, CADE	G	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	4	2	0	1	0	2	0:00
10 THURSTON, RILEY		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8:00
32 LARSON, CHANDLER		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	16:00
40 JOHNSON, PEYTON		1	4	1	1	8	11	1	5	6	4	11	1	1	0	1	16:00
56 Diegel, Treyton		0	8	0	5	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	24:00
57 Add New Player,		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00
TEAM REBOUNDS									1	3	4				1		
Team Totals		6	27	3	11	18	36	6	19	25	19	33	3	16	0	5	160

Total FG% - 1st: 2/10 0.200 2nd: 4/17 0.235 Game: 0.222 Deadball
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/2 0.000 2nd: 3/9 0.333 Game: 0.273 Rebounds
 Total FT% - 1st: 7/17 0.412 2nd: 11/19 0.579 Game: 0.500 (8,0)

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
Add New Team	11	8	11	10	40
Add New Team	1	10	4	18	33

Last FG: Add New Team 4th-08:00, Add New Team 4th-08:00
 Largest lead: Add New Team by 17 3rd-08:00, Add New Team NONE
 Score tied: 0 times, Lead changed: 0 times

Noem's three-pointers propel Hamlin past Groton Area

Hamlin unleashed a secret weapon by the name of Mitchell Noem late in the game and it was enough to overcome Groton for a 48-44 North-east Conference win.

The Tigers played with strong intensity and had Hamlin on the run in the first half, forcing turnovers, snatching down rebounds and high intense passing around the



Peyton Johnson

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Jonathan Doeden

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Treyton Diegel

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Charger defense. Groton Area held a 14-8 lead in the first quarter, a 26-20 lead at half time. Groton Area opened up a 14-point early in the third quarter and led by 10 at the break, 34-24. Then, Noem unleashed very long three-pointers, three in a row, and the Chargers took the lead and hung on to win, 48-44.

Seric Shabazz led Groton Area with 13 points, nine rebounds, five steals and three assists. Brodyn DeHoet added 10 points and six rebounds. Andrew Rintala added nine points, Jonathan Doeden had four, Anthony Sippel and Treyton Diegel each had three points and Peyton Johnson added two points.



Anthony Sippel

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)

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John Roe led the Chargers with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Mitchell Noem had 12 points with four three-pointers, Devan Weelborg had nine, Bryce Williams six, Conner Bawden had four and Lucas Trooien added two points.

Groton Area made 26 percent of its field goals while Hamlin made 45 percent. Groton Area had the edge in rebounds, 33-32. Hamlin had 20 turnovers, half of which were steals and Groton Area had 16 turnovers, four of which were steals. The Tigers made 12 of 16 free throws for 75 percent off of Hamlin's 16 team fouls. Hamlin made four of seven free throws for 57 percent off of Groton Area's 16 team fouls.

Hamlin won the junior varsity game, 40-33. Kaden Kurtz led the Tigers with 13 points followed by Peyton Johnson with 11, Darien Shabazz had six, Cade Guthmiller two and Austin Jones added a free throw.

Eight players scored for the Chargers with Booker Noem having nine points.



Seric Shabazz
(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Brandon Keith
(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



Brodyn DeHoet
(Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Lady Tigers beat St. Francis, lose to Hamlin

The Lady Tigers posted a 65-47 non-conference win over St. Francis Indian School as part of the Redfield Classic held Saturday. Groton Area led at the quarterfiles at 20-15, 38-32 and 49-34.

Jennie Doeden had a double-double on the afternoon with 22 points and 12 rebounds. Harleigh Stange had 21 points and seven rebounds. Payton Maine had 13 points and six rebounds. Miranda Hanson had five points and Jessica Bjerke added four points.

Groton Area had 39 rebounds, 10 steals with Stange and Doeden each having three, 15 assists with Bjerke and Eliza Wanner each having four, and 13 turnovers.

Groton Area made 23 of 43 field goals for 54 percent, five of 19 three-pointers for 26 percent and four of 13 free throws for 31 percent.

Jaziea Areoren led the Lady Warriors with 23 points and Charlize Aeroren added 10.

Hamlin's Lady Chargers posted a 62-18 Northeast Conference win over Groton Area in Friday night's home game. The Chargers



Miranda Hanson
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



The Carnival of Silver Skates theme for January 2018 is "80 Years of Memories".

We would like to honor the former skaters who have passed away.

Please contact Tina at the Groton Independent at 397-6397 or email her at tina@grotonsd.net to share the name of someone you would like remembered at this year's carnival.

Thank you for helping us to honor those who started this great community tradition.

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Kaycie Hawkins

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Nicole Marzahn

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

led at the quarterstops at 19-7, 35-14 and 52-16.

Harleigh Stange and Jennie Doeden each had four points, Jessica Bjerke and Payton Maine each had three and Eliza Wanner and Kaycie Hawkins each added two points.

Groton Area made six of 28 field goals for 21 percent, two of 19 three-pointers for 11 percent and missed four free throw opportunities. Groton Area had 22 rebounds with Bjerke having eight, four assists with Doeden having two, two steals and 19 turnovers.

Payton Lakness led the Chargers with 15 points and Taryn Opdahl added 10.

Hamlin won the junior varsity game, 42-33. Scoring for Groton Area were Nicole Marzahn with nine, Eliza Wanner and Kaycie Hawkins with eight each, and Payton Colestock and Caitlyn Barse with three each.



Eliza Wanner

(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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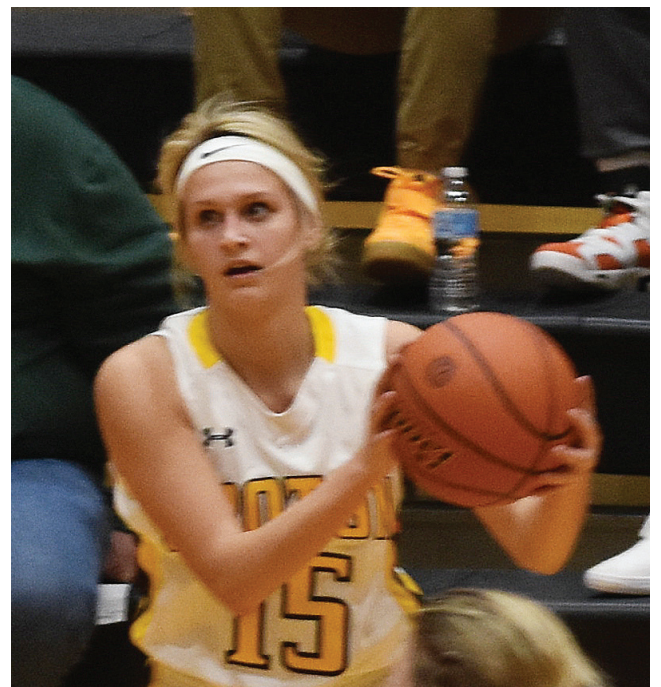
Jennie Doeden
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Jessica Bjerke
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Payton Maine
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Harleigh Stange
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

#13 Wolves Remain on Top in the NSIC after 19-Point Victory over Minot State

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 13 Northern State University men's basketball team handily defeated Minot State 75-56 from Wachs Arena. The Wolves rolled to their tenth straight NSIC victory, as well as 15th straight win, improving to 16-1 overall and 10-0 in the league.

The Wolves broke out to a quick start in the first half, notching 45 points to the Beavers 26. Minot battled back in the second, but was unable to overcome the 19-point deficit. NSU held their largest lead of 24 points with 12 minutes remaining in regulation.

As a team the Wolves shot 57.1 percent from the floor, 56.3 percent from the 3-point line, and 66.7 percent from the foul line. Defensively they held the Beavers to a 39.6 field goal percentage and 26.7 3-point percentage. NSU out-rebounded Minot 32-27, notching six points off five offensive boards. Northern added 42 points in the paint, ten points off turnovers, nine points off the bench, and two fast break points.

Ian Smith led the team with 17 points, knocking down 7-of-10 from the floor including a team second best two made 3-pointers. Smith added three rebounds, three assists, and three steals. DJ Pollard followed close behind with 16 points and a team second best six rebounds. Pollard also hit a team second best two long range buckets and added three assists and one steal. Gabe King was the final Wolf in double figures with 15 points. The sophomore 75.0 percent from the floor, with a team leading three made 3-pointers, as well as two assists, one block, and one steal.

Darin Peterka and Logan Doyle each notched nine points, rounding out the NSU starting five. Doyle notched a team leading seven rebounds, while Peterka tallied six. The seniors combined for four assists, one block, and one steal.

Carter Evans led the team off the bench with four points, two rebounds, two steals, and one block. He was followed by Bo Fries and Justin Decker with three and two points respectively. Andrew Kallman hit the floor for eight minutes, notching a team second best two assists.

Northern returns to action next Friday and Saturday from Wachs Arena as they take on Wayne State and Augustana. Kick-off is scheduled for 8 p.m. on Friday and 6 p.m. on Saturday.

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Fourth Quarter Comeback leads #19 Wolves over Minot State

Aberdeen S.D. – A strong fourth quarter helped the #19 Northern State University Wolves pick up a 74-65 over Minot State. NSU notched their fourth straight NSIC win, improving to 13-2 overall and 9-1 in the NSIC.

It was a tightly contested game through the first three quarters, with Northern State holding a 2-point advantage after the first quarter. The Wolves and Beavers were tied up at 29 going into the intermission, while Minot took a 2-point lead going into the fourth quarter. It was all the Wolves in the fourth, out-scoring the Beavers 26-15 to take the 9-point victory.

The Wolves shot 52.0 percent from the floor and 90.0 percent from the foul line in the victory. Northern out-rebounded Minot 31-21, with 19 second chance points off 13 offensive rebounds. Minot shot 44.7 percent from the field and 80.0 percent from the free throw line. The Wolves had 34 points in the paint, 12 points off turnovers, and ten bench points.

Miranda Ristau led all scorers with 23 points, seven rebounds, while shooting 10-of-14 from the field. Brianna Kusler had 15 points, six rebounds, three assists, two steals, and went a perfect 8-of-8 from the charity stripe. Jill Conrad added 13 points and four assists, while Alexis Tappe was the last player in double figures for the Wolves with ten points and team high five assists. Rounding out the starting lineup was Jessi Marti with three points, six rebounds, two assists, and two steals.

Gabby Laimer led the team off the bench in scoring with six points, two assists, and one rebound. Brynn Flakus and Haley Froelich also added two points for the Wolves off the bench, with Froelich notching one assist. Anika Fredrick and Sara Tvedt each tallied a rebound.

The Wolves return to action next Friday and Saturday from Wachs Arena, as Wayne State and Augustana come to town. Tip-off for Friday is scheduled for 6 p.m. versus the Wildcats and Saturday is scheduled for 4 p.m. versus the Vikings.

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Smith's Spark Leads No. 13 Wolves over U-Mary

Aberdeen, S.D. – It was a gritty battle for the No. 13 Northern State University men's basketball team on Friday evening, as the Wolves defeated the Marauders of U-Mary 71-55. Northern legged out their 14th straight victory, improving to 15-1 overall and 9-0 in the NSIC.

The first 20 minutes of action was a back and forth battle with six lead changes and neither team leading by more than five until under a minute to go. Northern captured the 2-point lead with 2:18 left in the half, and added some padding as the clock ticked under 30 seconds. Two and-1 plays by Darin Peterka and Ian Smith gave the Wolves the 36-28 lead heading into the second half.

Northern quickly ran away with the game in the second, out-scoring the Marauders 35-27. Their largest lead of 19 points, came with just under four minutes remaining in regulation. NSU displayed a stronger defensive presence in the second, holding U-Mary to a 38.1 field goal percent and 12.5 3-point percentage.

As a team, the Wolves shot 48.1 percent from the floor and 70.0 percent from the foul line, while knocking down five made 3-pointers. They were out-rebounded by the Marauders 33-30, however tallied 17 team assists and forced 15 Marauder turnovers. Northern tallied a game leading 40 points in the paint, and added 16 points off turnovers, 12 points off the bench, nine second chance points, and four fast break points.

Ian Smith led the team offensively with 21 points and six assists, while notching a team leading two steals on defense. The junior shot 77.8 percent from the floor and knocked down 6-of-9 from the foul line. Darin Peterka followed close behind with 18 points of his own, including a team leading three made long range buckets. DJ Pollard was the final Wolves in double figures notching 11 points, as well as a team second best six rebounds.

The NSU big men got in foul trouble early and battled under the basket, notching a combined 13 points in the game. Logan Doyle tallied nine points, three rebounds, two assists, one block, and one steal for the Wolves, while shooting a team leading 80.0 percent from the floor. Carter Evans led the team off the bench with four points, while adding two assists and one block.

Bo Fries proved to be a rebounding asset in the win, with a team leading and season high seven. The junior added three point and two assists for the Wolves. Andrew Kallman and Justin Decker each tallied two points, while Logan LeGrand tallied a made free throw in the fourth. Kallman added one of the team's five steals, as well as one block and one assist.

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No. 19 Northern State Notches Tenth Double Figure Victory of the Season

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 19 Northern State University Wolves rolled to their third straight NSIC victory, defeating U-Mary 67-49 from Wachs Arena. The Wolves improve to 12-2 overall and 8-1 in the league.

It was tied at 17-all following the first quarter, however the Wolves broke things open with another 17 points in the second. Defensively they held the Marauders to eight points in the second quarter, and entered the locker room with a nine point led. Northern added another 33 points in the second half, securing the 18-point victory.

Northern shot 46.6 percent from the floor and 75.0 percent from the foul line in the win. They out-rebounded the Marauders 42-to-31 and tallied 18 points off 14 offensive rebounds. Defensively, the Wolves held U-Mary to a 35.1 field goal percentage and 21.1 3-point percentage. NSU added 38 points in the paint, 15 points off turnovers, 15 points off the bench, and two fast break points.

Miranda Ristau led the team with 16 points, four assists, and two blocks. She was second on the team with seven rebounds, while shooting 46.7 percent from the floor. Alexis Tappe added a team second best 14 points, shooting a stellar 7-of-8 from the floor. The senior added four rebounds and one assist in the win.

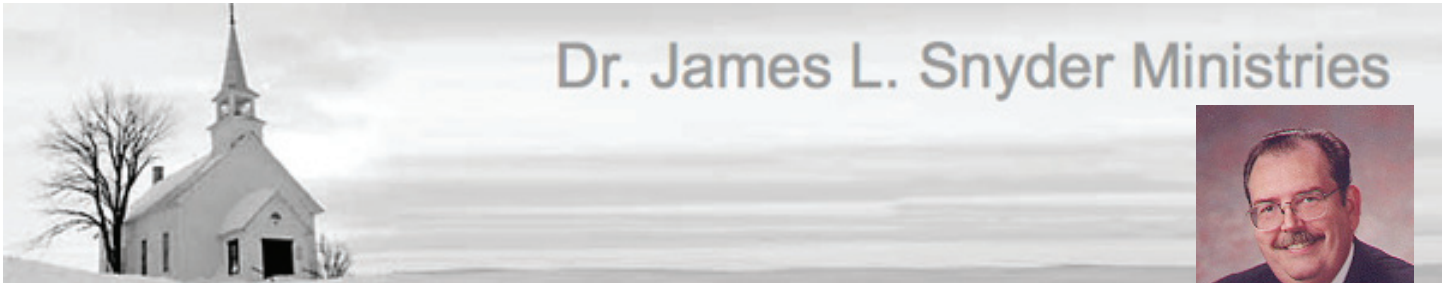
Jill Conrad was the final Wolf in double figures with ten points, as well as a team second best three assists. Conrad tallied the lone three pointer of the game for NSU, shooting 60.0 percent from the floor. Brianna Kusler led the team from the glass with nine rebounds, while adding eight points, four assists, and a team leading four steals.

A total of four Wolves notched four points in the outing including Jessi Marti, Haley Froelich, Sara Tvedt and Alayna Johnson. Marti tallied three rebounds and three assists, while Tvedt and Johnson each notched three rebounds as well. Brynn Flakus added two points, while Caryssa Mielitz tallied a made free throw in the fourth. Flakus notched four rebounds, including three offensive boards, and two assists.

The Wolves return to Wachs Arena tomorrow afternoon for a 4 p.m. match-up against the Beavers of Minot State.

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Back in the Saddle Again...and Again

This is not my first rodeo when it comes to New Years. I have ridden this Bronco so many times I cannot remember how many. Well, I can remember, but I am not going to let that slip. Something to do with a New Year's Resolution.

Back in the days of youth, I used to stay up to watch the New Year's Eve ball drop. Now, I see so many people drop the ball during the year that I don't want to see another one on New Year's Eve. I've seen enough of that.

At my stage in life, health is more important than watching something I have seen a thousand times before.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage agrees with me on this issue. It is one of the few issues that we agree on so why should I mess with it.

One thing about starting over again is trying not to make the same mistakes you made last year. It is good to sit down and think about all the mistakes you have made last year and mine came to one.

When I got to that issue, I proudly shared it with my spouse. I was so excited that I could only think of one mistake I made last year and I really wanted to share it with her.

"What do you mean," she said rather suspiciously, "you only made one mistake last year?"

With a great deal of excitement, I nodded enthusiastically and said, "Yes, I only made one mistake last year and my resolution is not to make the same mistake this year."

"What was that mistake?"

"My biggest mistake last year was that I forgot to give you a birthday card."

I thought I was in good territory here. I thought I was playing into her heart and she would be happy for this resolution.

"A birthday card?"

"Yes," I said as seriously as possible. "I don't remember getting you a birthday card this past year and I want to make it up to you in the coming year." What could be better than that kind of solution for a year of mistakes?

She stared at me with sort of a twinkle in her eye, which at the time confused me. I know what a sarcastic stare is. I know what an anger stare is. I know what an enthusiastic stare is. I also know what a confused stare is. But a twinkle in her eye!

My biggest mistake for the New Year may be not knowing what this twinkle in her eye is all about. Is she agreeing with me? Or, am I in more trouble than I can really comprehend?

There was a moment of awkward silence. Actually, that moment stretched to several moments of silence, which I am not accustomed to. When my wife is silent, something is developing that I am not going to be prepared for.

When her silence had exhausted itself, she simply said, "So, you only made one mistake last year?"

I'm worried now. I thought I was trying to get the New Year started off in a very positive direction. Now I have no idea what I'm going to do.

Then she began with a series of, "Remember the time when...?"

If what she said was true, I came quite close last year to making one mistake for every day. Oh boy! If

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she is correct, no two mistakes were the same. I am not sure if anybody can make that many mistakes in a given year. Either, I am crazy or I am a genius in the area of making mistakes.

No way could I contest any of these mistakes for the simple reason my memory is not on my side. I cannot say I did not make those mistakes because I do not remember. She remembers me doing them so it must be true. Right?

When she finished her evaluation of my past year, I sighed a very deep sigh and asked, "What do you think my New Year's resolutions ought to be for the New Year?"

Again came that twinkle in her eye. I'm not used to that twinkle yet. "Well," she said rather seriously, "if you are serious about your New Year's resolution maybe you should make one resolution for the New Year that you will not make the same mistakes this year."

She paused a little bit, stared at me and then continued, "This New Year, why don't you concentrate on making different mistakes." When she said that the twinkle in her eye exploded into hilarious laughter. I was not sure if I should laugh or not.

When my wife is right, she is right. Therefore, my New Year's resolution for this New Year is to concentrate on making different mistakes than last year. With this resolution comes the full support of my wife. The two of us together can concentrate on making new mistakes.

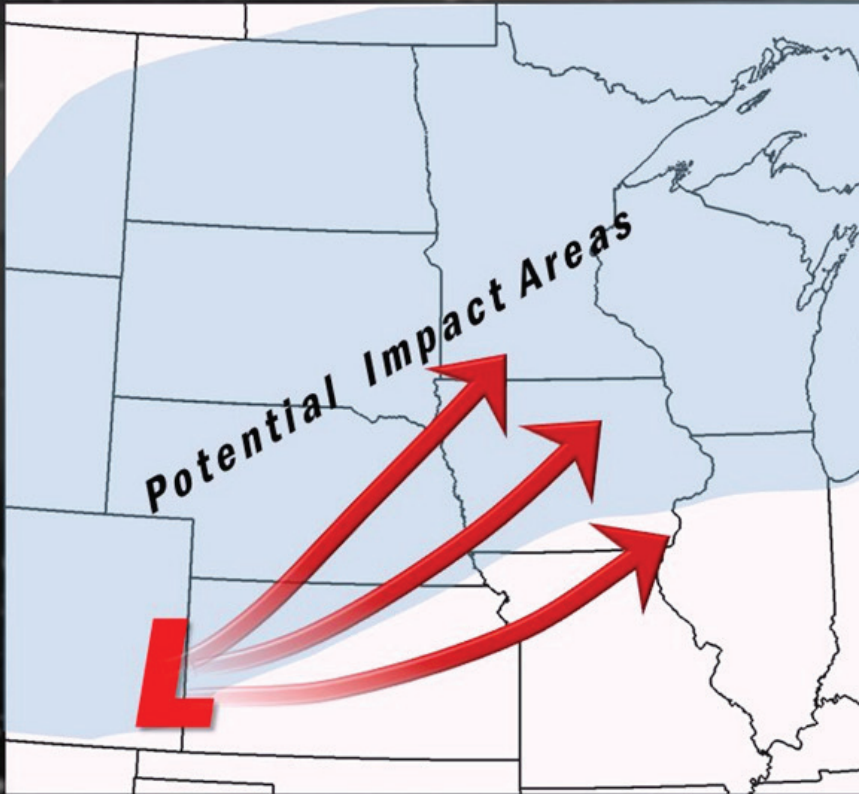
This has made my New Year so very exciting. Yes, I made mistakes last year, but forget all about that.

I was reminded of what the apostle Paul said, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Philippians 3:13).

Let's concentrate on the year at hand and mistakes that can be made this year that were never thought of last year.

A Winter Storm Ahead?

Potential Growing for Winter Weather - Wednesday & Thursday



 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

What's the Concern?

Growing forecast confidence in a **VERY** impactful winter storm next week.

What's Still Uncertain?

The exact **track** of the storm.

The exact **timing** of the storm.

The exact **strength** of the storm.

The exact **amounts** and **locations** of the heaviest precipitation.

What Can You Do?

Start to **monitor** the forecast for the middle of next week.

Consider **preparing** your car, home, and self for the risk of winter weather.

Published on: 01/06/2018 at 3:37PM

There's plenty of uncertainty, but the potential for a winter storm to impact the area Wednesday and Thursday is growing. Stay tuned to the latest forecast in the coming days.

Today in Weather History

January 7, 1873: A blizzard raged across the Great Plains. Many pioneers, unprepared for the cold and snow, perished in the tristate region of southwest Minnesota, northwestern Iowa, and southeastern South Dakota. Visibility was down to three feet. Cows suffocated in the deep drifts and trains were stuck for days. More than 70 people died, some bodies were not found until spring.

The following appears on pages 260-261 in the "History of Dakota Territory" by George Kingsbury. "On the 7th of January, 1873, a brother and sister of "John Foster," aged respectively fourteen and twelve years, went a short distance from home and soon afterward a blizzard came up suddenly. The children wandered in the storm to an old sod house which stood out on the prairie and there sought shelter from the driving snow. However, as the house was roofless it afforded but poor protection against the blizzard and the children perished, their bodies being buried in the snow. Our subject and the father were absent from home at the time. Weeks passed and in spite of continued searching the bodies of the children were not found, but in March a neighbor dreamed that the children were in the old house and on the 16th of that month their bodies were found there."

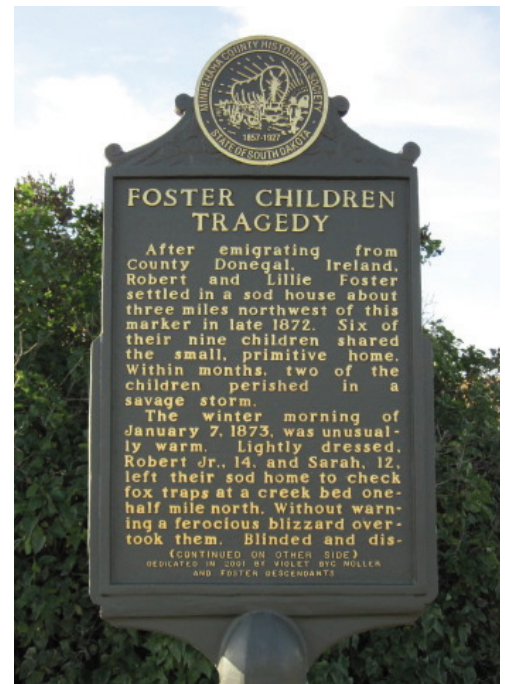
January 7, 1980: A strong area of low pressure moved out of the northern Rockies across South Dakota and central Minnesota on January 6th and 7th. Heavy snow along with very high winds caused widespread blowing and drifting snow with low visibilities. Many roads were closed, and many motorists were stranded. Snowfall amounts across western and northern Minnesota were from 7 to 12 inches.

January 7, 1989: Heavy snowfall of 5 to 19 inches fell in the north and east central South Dakota on the 6th and 7th. Snow and blowing snow reduced visibilities to near zero in many locations as winds gusted to near 50 mph. Part of Interstate 29 north of Sisseton closed the night of the 7th. Icy roads contributed to a school bus accident which injured eight boys. Extreme wind chills of 30 to 60 below also occurred. Snowfall amounts included 8 inches in Sisseton, with 12 to 19 inches across Marshall and Roberts counties.

This storm also affected northern Minnesota from the 6th through the 8th with heavy snowfall of 8 to 12 inches with local amounts of 24 to 26 inches. The heavy snow was followed by an Arctic intrusion which brought in 35 to 50 mph winds. This caused a shutdown the Red River Valley. Snowdrifts were from 5 to 10 feet in some areas. Roads had to be closed. The strong winds caused near-blizzard conditions along with extremely low wind chills.

1966: Tropical Cyclone Denise dropped 45 inches of rain on La Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean in 12 hours, and 71.80 inches of rain in 48 hours through the 8th.








1989: Empty foundations are all that remain of four homes on the southwest end of Allendale, Illinois after an F4 tornado ripped through. The tornado was extremely rare due to its strength and the fact that it occurred so far north during the middle of meteorological winter.



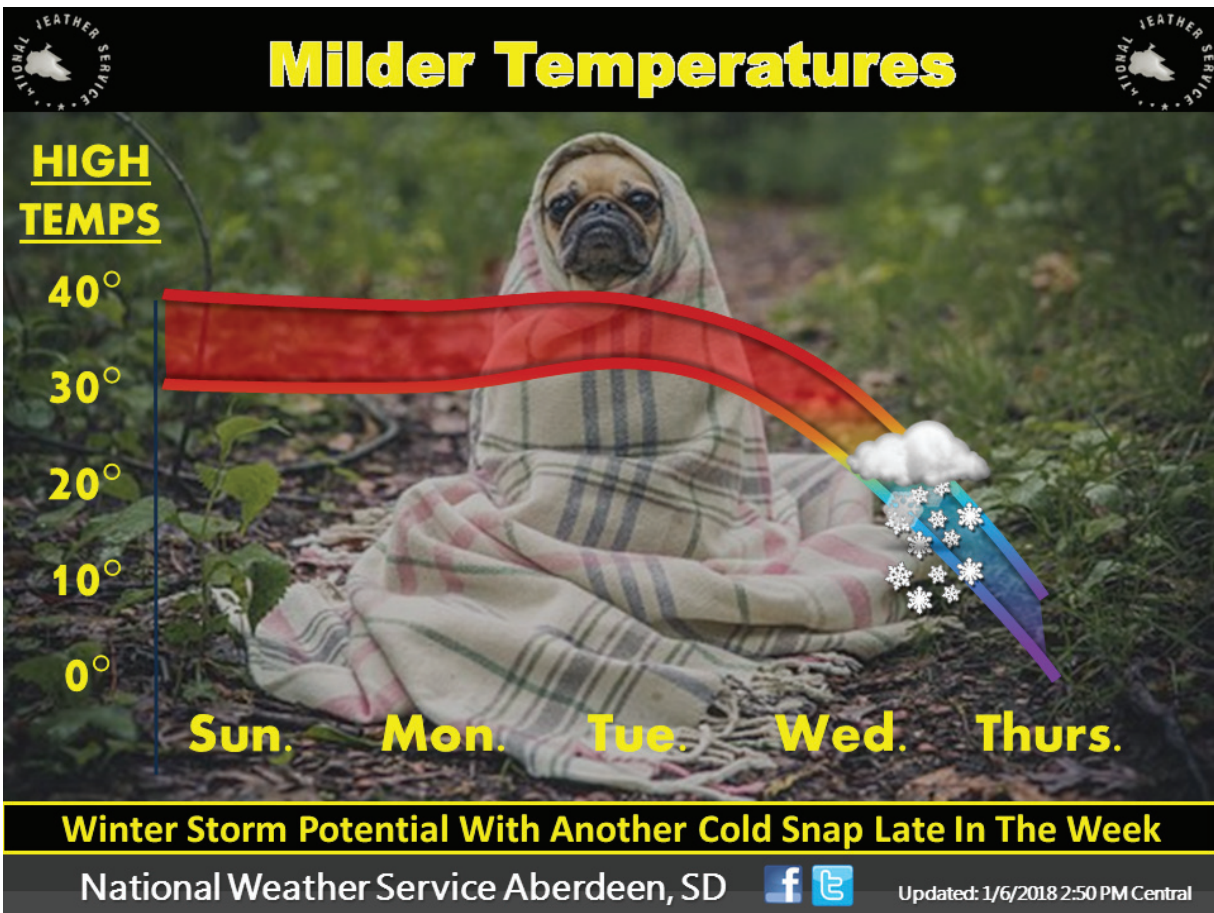
Historical Marker at the Bethel Cemetery on West Benson Road in Minnehaha County.

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Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
						
Partly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny then Chance Snow
High: 34 °F	Low: 18 °F	High: 32 °F	Low: 19 °F	High: 37 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 32 °F

Milder Temperatures





HIGH TEMPS

40°
30°
20°
10°
0°

Sun. Mon. Tue. Wed. Thurs.

Winter Storm Potential With Another Cold Snap Late In The Week

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD   Updated: 1/6/2018 2:50 PM Central

Published on: 01/06/2018 at 2:56PM

Warmer air is moving into the region today, and this milder air will stick with us through mid-week with highs in the 30s across most of central and northeast South Dakota. A system is showing up around mid-week in several models and while we don't have high confidence at this point, there is the potential for snow. This system is also expected to unleash another (albeit short lived) Arctic blast.

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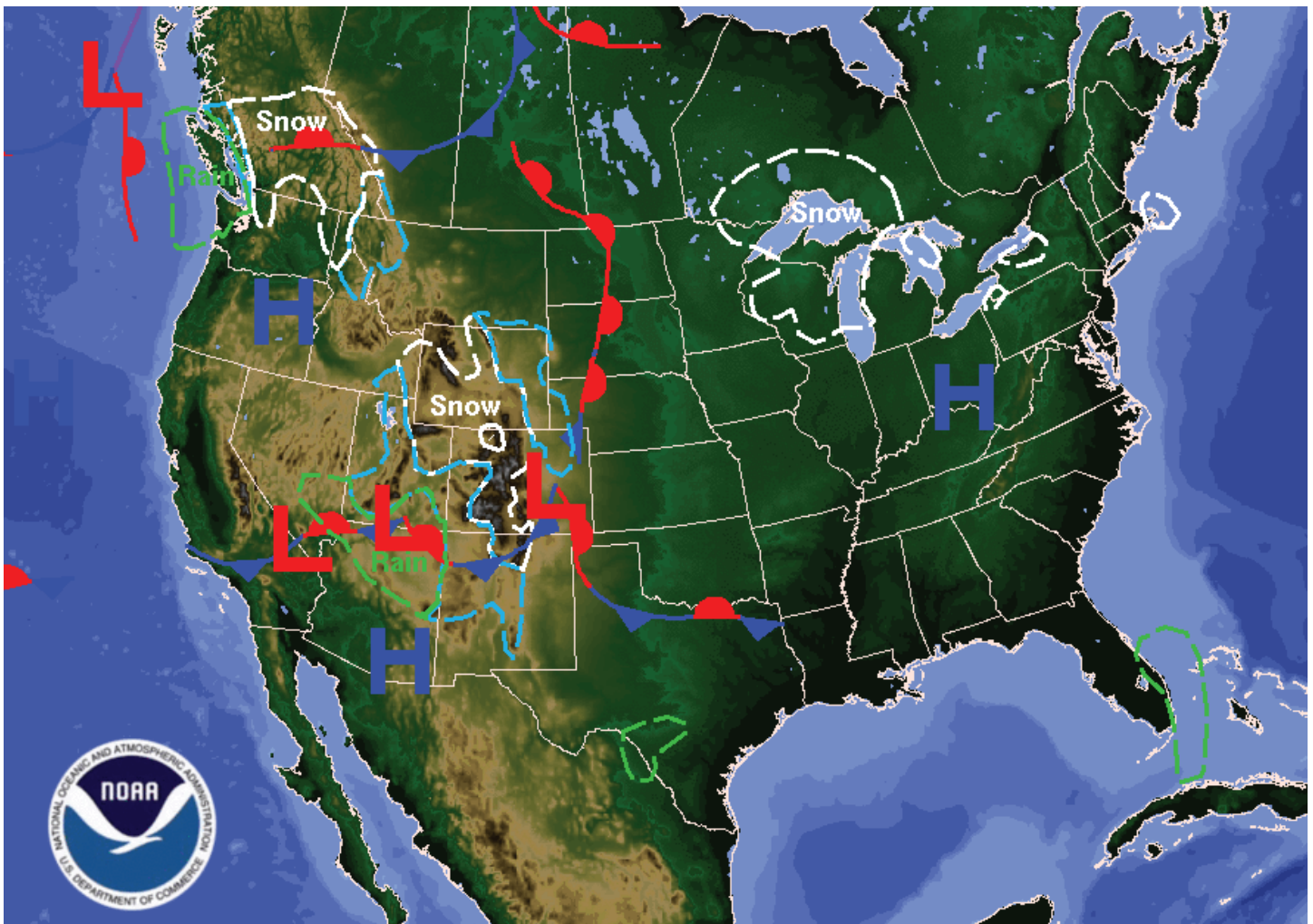
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 18.7 at 9:33 PM
Low Outside Temp: 5.2 at 4:28 AM
Wind Chill: -11.0 at 6:05 AM
High Gust: 37 at 11:27 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 54° in 1963
Record Low: -39° in 1912
Average High: 22°F
Average Low: 2°F
Average Precip in Jan: 0.13
Precip to date in Jan: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.13
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:07 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:12 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Jan 06, 2018, issued 4:08 PM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow
Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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CLEANSED!

Recently there was an article tucked away in a newspaper about a young girl in Georgia who feels no pain. She suffers from a rare congenital disease that affects the nervous system. She and other individuals who are born with congenital insensitivity must be carefully guarded. They must be taught that fire burns or that if they fall a bone might be broken or if they are struck in the head it may result in a concussion. It is frightening to think of them having to live with no warning system to alert us to pain or sickness. It requires them to be under constant surveillance for their own protection.

There is another insensitivity, however, that is more serious – it is becoming insensitive to sin. Our minds become numb to the dangers of sin as we see degrading pictures of people improperly exposing themselves to attract attention to their sensuality. Or the constant stories of the happiness and pleasures that come from drinking alcoholic beverages. Then there are the endless stories about children being born out of wedlock to famous Hollywood celebrities and attractive pictures of them being praised and celebrated. Children, not old enough to understand God's plan for marriage, are taught that it is appropriate for families to have two moms or two dads. What was once identified as wrong is now right.

But thank God that His Spirit is alive and anxious to convict hearts and change lives. "Deliver us and forgive us our sins for Your name's sake," said the psalmist. If we awaken to the danger of sin and confess, God will forgive us.

Prayer: Open our eyes and give us sensitive minds, Father, to the things of this world that will destroy us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 79:9 Help us, O God of our salvation! Help us for the glory of your name. Save us and forgive our sins for the honor of your name.

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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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

07-11-21-30-33

(seven, eleven, twenty-one, thirty, thirty-three)

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$550 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Christian 58, Ipswich 37

Bennett County 60, Wall 51

Bridgewater-Emery 74, Colman-Egan 53

Britton-Hecla 59, Castlewood 51

Corsica/Stickney 68, Wagner 32

Douglas 65, Spearfish 54

Faulkton 54, Eureka/Bowdle 46

Garretson 45, Chester 36

Harding County 59, Faith 55

Harrisburg 52, Huron 42

Hopkins, Minn. 91, Sioux Falls Washington 69

Kadoka Area 67, Crazy Horse 17

Kimball/White Lake 58, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 42

Leola/Frederick 58, Waubay/Summit 44

Linton-HMB, N.D. 55, Herreid 45

McCook Central/Montrose 59, Howard 27

Mitchell Christian 49, Freeman Academy/Marion 40

Oelrichs 64, Takini 34

Potter County 53, Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D. 40

Rapid City Central 57, Pierre 37

Rapid City Christian 68, Jones County 65

Rapid City Stevens 56, Aberdeen Central 53

Red Cloud 70, Belle Fourche 38

Sioux Falls Christian 82, Unity Christian, Orange City, Iowa 56

Sioux Falls Lincoln 80, Minneapolis Henry, Minn. 67

Stanley County 65, New Underwood 32

Sturgis Brown 59, Custer 16

Sully Buttes 75, James Valley Christian 59

Sanford Classic

Dakota Valley 62, Irene-Wakonda 51

Langford 62, Lower Brule 61

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Viborg-Hurley 61, Bon Homme 45

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Andes Central/Dakota Christian 47, Colome 24

Avon 62, Marty Indian 38

Belle Fourche 54, Red Cloud 37

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 59, Chamberlain 42

Corsica/Stickney 52, Wagner 37

DeSmet 49, Deubrook 28

Faith 68, Harding County 44

Faulkton 54, Eureka/Bowdle 21

Harrisburg 66, Huron 30

Hopkins, Minn. 80, Sioux Falls Washington 52

Ipswich JV 53, Aberdeen Christian 27

Jones County 37, Rapid City Christian 28

Kadoka Area 80, Crazy Horse 49

Lennox 71, Clark/Willow Lake 38

Mitchell Christian 46, Freeman Academy/Marion 42

New Underwood 48, Stanley County 10

Newell 45, McIntosh 44

Oelrichs 71, Takini 20

Potter County 55, Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D. 20

Rapid City Central 63, Pierre 44

Rapid City Stevens 37, Aberdeen Central 33

Sioux County, Neb. 48, Edgemont 33

Sioux Falls Lincoln 68, Minneapolis Henry, Minn. 18

Sioux Falls O'Gorman 65, Watertown 26

Spearfish 69, Douglas 42

St. Thomas More 61, Elk Point-Jefferson 34

Sully Buttes 53, James Valley Christian 18

Unity Christian, Orange City, Iowa 61, Sioux Falls Christian 58

Wall 52, Bennett County 29

Waubay/Summit 37, Leola/Frederick 32

CNOS Classic

Dakota Valley 76, Winnebago, Neb. 70

Redfield Classic

Groton Area 65, St. Francis Indian 47

Irene-Wakonda 47, Warner 44

Langford 53, Wolsey-Wessington 46

Northwestern 50, Little Wound 47

Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 48, Redfield/Doland 42

Tiospa Zina Tribal 54, Hitchcock-Tulare 46

Wilmot 52, Lyman 41

South Dakota State rolls to 101-88 win over Omaha

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Mike Daum scored 27 points and grabbed 11 rebounds and South Dakota State rolled to 101-88 win over Omaha on Saturday night.

It was Daum's eighth double-double of the season. David Jenkins Jr. added 22 points and five rebounds, Reed Tellinghuisen had 16 points, Tevin King added 15 and Skyler Flatten chipped in 12.

The Jackrabbits (14-5, 2-0 Summit League) shot 57 percent to 44 percent for Omaha and had a 35-25

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rebounding edge.

South Dakota State jumped to a 22-8 start that included a pair of 3-pointers by Jenkins and another by Flatten and built it into a 50-35 advantage at the break.

The Jackrabbits led throughout the second half and were up 91-64 with just under six minutes to play. Omaha cut it to 95-82 with 2:45 left but could not get closer.

Zach Jackson scored 29 points to lead the Mavericks (5-13, 0-2). JT Gibson added 18.

Hunter leads North Dakota State over South Dakota 84-79

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Cameron Hunter scored a career-best 35 points to lead North Dakota State in an 84-79 win over South Dakota in Summit League action on Saturday.

Hunter was 9 of 12 from the field, made all five from distance and was 12 of 14 from the line for the Bison (9-7, 1-1) who pick up their first Summit League win. Paul Miller added 24 points with six rebounds and six assists.

The Bison struggled early and were down 28-23 with 5:51 left in the half but a 15-2 run with Hunter, Miller and Chris Quayle combining for five-straight 3-pointers pushed the team into a 38-30 lead with 3:03 to go before the break.

North Dakota State led through most of the second half but fell behind to trail 76-75 with 2:43 left. Miller and Spencer Eliason answered with a pair of layups and Hunter drained five free throws in the stretch to keep the Bison on top.

Matt Mooney scored 23 points — 5 of 13 from distance — with four steals to lead the Coyotes (14-5, 2-1).

South Dakota population increases by 0.9 percent in 2017

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's population growth last year was slightly ahead of the national rate, and better than the rates of neighboring states, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The state's population grew by 0.9 percent between July 2016 and July 2017, the Daily Republic reported . Nebraska's population grew by 0.7 percent and Iowa's increased by 0.5 percent.

The U.S. population increased by more than 1 million people last year.

"The fact that South Dakota grew 0.9 percent in 2016-2017 is exceptional — especially since the U.S. only grew by 0.72 percent," said Aaron Scheibe, deputy commissioner of the state Governor's Office of Economic Development.

Scheibe said that United Van Lines named South Dakota as the top state for inbound migration last year. He said the top reasons to move to the state were for a job and for family.

"This latest statistic is further proof that South Dakota bolsters an unbeatable quality of life," said Scheibe.

He said the increase could boost economic opportunities for residents, such as more small businesses and a strengthened workforce.

"From helping those businesses meet customer demand to generating more sales tax revenue and higher school enrollment, new residents can help our state grow in many ways, and I am confident that trend will continue," said Scheibe.

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

County employees save security funding in Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — County employees sent a barrage of written and verbal complains when commissioners cut funding for security at the administration building in Rapid City.

It worked. County commissioners buckled and agreed to reinstate security at the Pennington County Administration Building, the Rapid City Journal reported .

The building's employees said they're often in need of security to curb bad behavior among individuals who visit to pay taxes, renew vehicle registration or conduct business with county offices. They said

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they've been sworn at or forced to witness fights among people standing in line.

"Our famous line is, 'You know, we can go get security. They're right down the hall,'" said County Treasurer Janet Sayler. "And people's attitudes change immediately."

County officials slashed security funding for the 2018 budget to manage proposed raises for county employees. The commissioners had asked department heads to identify ways to absorb the cost of the raises in their budgets.

Sheriff Kevin Thom included a cut that was the equivalent of 1.5 security jobs at the County Administration Building. The cut amounted to nearly \$73,000. It removed the sheriff's deputies staffed at the desk in the building's entrance.

Commissioners accepted and adopted the sheriff's budget in the fall. After fielding many complaints from employees, the commissioners voted unanimously in late December to reinstate the funding.

The cut wasn't scheduled to take effect until Jan. 1, so there was never a lapse in security.

Commissioners haven't yet decided what part of the budget to use for the security funding.

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

South Dakota sheriff's deputy accused of stealing gun

WAGNER, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a Charles Mix County sheriff's deputy has been arrested for allegedly stealing a gun.

The Daily Republic reports that Deputy Jesse McLaughlin is facing grand theft charges. No other details on the incident have been released.

Charles Mix County Sheriff Randy Thaler said in a statement that his office will not tolerate any of its employees breaking the law and taking advantage of other people's property during an arrest.

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

Standing Rock man sentenced for child abuse, other charges

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A judge says a South Dakota man convicted on child abuse, assault and child pornography charges on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation must serve nearly 13 years in prison.

Chavez Spotted Horse, of Little Eagle, was sentenced to 76 months in prison on charges of child abuse and assault with a dangerous weapon. Authorities say the 41-year-old Spotted Horse beat an 11-year-old victim with a plastic kitchen spoon, a rod and a plastic hanger.

Spotted Horse was sentenced to 78 months on a charge of receipt of images depicting the sexual exploitation of minors. Investigators say he admitted to viewing and receiving child pornography over the internet on specialized websites.

The Standing Rock Reservation straddles the North and South Dakota border. Agencies from both states assisted in the investigation.

Fareway bans tobacco use by employees on company property

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — A major Iowa grocery retailer has announced it will no longer allow its employees to use tobacco products on company property, including stores in Nebraska.

Des Moines television station KCCI reports that Fareway Food Stores implemented the policy, effective Monday. Under the new policy, smoking and the use of any other tobacco or tobacco-like products such as electronic cigarettes and chewing tobacco is banned on all company property.

Store officials say employees will only be allowed to use FDA-approved nicotine products aimed to help smokers quit.

Caitlyn Ferin, a member of Fareway's Corporate Wellness Team, says it's important to the company to "create a healthy work environment for our employees."

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Fareway operates more than 100 stores in Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, Illinois and Minnesota.

Information from: KCCI-TV, <http://www.kcci.com>

Deputy's wife fundraises after South Dakota father dies

By JONATHAN ELLIS, The Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Cade Stensland welcomed his newborn son into the world on Dec. 19.

Two days later, Stensland died in an accident 20 miles east of Rapid City while delivering milk for his employer, Dean Foods. He would have turned 32 the next day.

The Larchwood, Iowa, man was laid to rest Dec. 28. Besides leaving behind his newborn son, he leaves two young daughters and his wife of nearly four years, Christina. More than 200 people turned out in Larchwood's St. Mary's Catholic Church to pay their respects, said John Anderson of Anderson Funeral Home.

The tragic circumstances surrounding his death led the wife of a Pennington County sheriff's deputy to start a GoFundMe account to raise money for Stensland's family, the Argus Leader reported. Andrea Wolfe Davis' husband responded to the accident.

Stensland was driving a Dean Foods delivery van eastbound on Interstate 90 at 8:45 p.m. Dec. 21 when he rear-ended a charter bus that was stopped in the middle of the highway. The bus had lost power and didn't have lights. None of the 56 passengers on the bus were injured.

Stensland wasn't so lucky.

"It was a difficult holiday week for the team, mourning a co-worker who lost his life while doing his job delivering milk for the community," said Dean Foods spokesman Jamaison Schuler.

His loss was a huge blow to the family, Anderson said. Stensland also worked on the family farm and had recently started an organic hops operation.

Davis, whose husband has been in law enforcement for 23 years, said law enforcement officers don't go unscathed by the tragedies they encounter.

"They get affected by a lot of their calls," she said. "This one is rough."

When she heard the tragic details of the accident, Davis wanted to see if anyone was raising money to help Stensland's young family. She reached out to Anderson, who got her in touch with Stensland's parents.

She launched the site, <https://www.gofundme.com/cade-stenslands-family>, on Christmas Eve, and by that evening had about \$2,000 in donations. As of Dec. 28, the site had raised \$7,315, near the \$10,000 goal.

The community, Davis said, has stepped up with a diaper drive and church meals. But longer term, she is worried about Stensland's widow, who now must raise three young children without their father.

"They are going to go through some tough times," she said.

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

South Dakota soybean producer looks ahead as USB director

By RANDY DOCKENDORF, Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

TRIPP, S.D. (AP) — As he walks his soybean fields near Tripp, Marc Reiner thinks about his ancestors who toiled the same soil when it was still Dakota Territory.

"My farm has been in the family since the 1880s. I'm the fifth generation, and I'm now farming it with my dad," he said. "I've been fortunate that my ancestors, including my parents and grandparents, have been able to keep the farm in operation for the next generation."

But Reiner knows his livelihood — and those of farmers across the nation — depends on factors far beyond his own operation. He has served on the South Dakota Soybean Research & Promotion Council, working to improve the industry for the Rushmore State.

Now, he's taking his knowledge and passion to the national level.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue recently appointed Reiner as a United Soybean Board (USB) director. Perdue appointed seven new members and 12 returning members as directors. They were sworn

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into office during the annual meeting held last month in St. Louis, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported .

After returning from the annual meeting, Reiner was excited to see the possibilities for soybean farmers. "It was really neat to see some of the issues and questions that we worked on for our state's farmers now played out on a national level," he said. "Different areas of our country have different concerns. We're also very interested to see how the different areas of the country approach production and marketing issues."

Whereas Reiner is a new USB director, Mike Korth of Randolph, Nebraska, is returning to the board. Directors can serve three 3-year terms.

"I truly appreciate the time and expertise that these individuals have agreed to provide, and know U.S. soybean producers will be well served by these men and women," Perdue said in a news release.

The USB is composed of 73 members representing 29 states and Eastern and Western regions. To become a member, the person must be a soybean producer and be nominated by a qualified state soybean board.

For Reiner, the timing was right for taking a national leadership position.

"I just finished my final term on the state soybean board of directors. I served as chair of the state board for three years and served with some great people," he said.

"I had the opportunities this year to be nominated by some fellow South Dakota soybean farmers. I put together my application, and we submitted it. I was fortunate to get selected for the United Soybean Board."

Under the USB regulations, the 73 directors work on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers to achieve maximum value for their soy checkoff investments. The checkoff program collects funds from farmers of a particular agricultural commodity — in this case, soybeans — for promotion and research of that commodity.

Under federal law, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service holds oversight responsibilities for USB and the soy checkoff.

The soybean checkoff dollars give producers the ability to help chart their industry's future, Reiner said.

"Soybeans producers are using their own dollars," he said. "It's a wonderful opportunity for farmers to pool their dollars and lead the discussion on what they want to do."

The USB directors steer clear of national politics, Reiner said.

"We discuss what we can do for research, market development and trade," he said. "We also work on what we can do for communication and education."

Reiner isn't a stranger to the soybean industry and promoting it at home and abroad. He has traveled to China and Europe as part of agricultural groups. Those trips provided valuable contacts and information on biotechnology, sustainability and trade, he said.

Foreign trade represents a crucial market that could grow much larger, Reiner said.

"Nationally, we export 40 percent of our beans. The figure is even bigger for South Dakota — something like 60 percent," he said. "If you look at the markets right now, China is the big one for exports. They're a huge market."

China is a rapidly-growing nation, with an estimated 1.4 billion people out of the global population of 7.5 billion. In addition, Chinese consumers are demanding more and better food.

"China raises a lot of soybeans, but all of those soybeans are for themselves," Reiner said. "Most of their imported beans come from the United States. They use it for livestock diets — areas like pork production, poultry processing and aquaculture."

Reiner pointed to changing Chinese nutritional needs as fueling the demand.

"They're moving from the lower class to the middle class, and they're improving their diet," he said. "They want more protein. They want fish, poultry and pork. They want more animal production, and our soybean meal is going over to feed their folks."

The U.S. also holds agreements with major trade partners such as Mexico, Canada, Japan and South Korea, he said.

At home, American agriculture seeks to improve the beans' quality, Reiner said. Researchers are studying genetics, including the amino acid profile and the protein and oil levels, he said. The research also looks at fertilization and other farming practices.

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Reiner has seen the benefits of research through his work with the South Dakota soybean council. The state board has committed research funds to South Dakota State University in Brookings. The researchers are working more with genetics and production practices on entire fields rather than the past use of small plots, he said.

"SDSU has been a great partner to work with, and we try to use our checkoff dollars as a tool for work in those fields," he said.

Besides improving their commodities, American producers are looking at ways of better moving and marketing their crops, Reiner said.

"What does it cost us to take beans in the central part of the U.S. and transport them to the Gulf Coast or Pacific Northwest?" he asked. "It comes down to keeping our transportation costs low. A lot of it has to do with the rail system and our locks and dams (on waterways)."

When it comes to exports, the U.S. also sends nutritionists overseas to help nations improve their diets, Reiner said. Commodity groups aren't the only ones marketing to foreign nations, as promotions are also made for American livestock and meat exports.

In addition, marketing efforts are targeted toward U.S. consumers, Reiner said. Exports play an important role, but producers aren't neglecting the domestic customer, he said.

"With the checkoff, we're working with educational efforts," he said. "The markets are always changing. We can't just take for granted that people are informed on what we're doing (in agriculture) and what we offer them."

In turn, farmers are learning the changing needs and preferences of consumers, grocery stores and other outlets, Reiner said. Consumers are looking at nutrition, taste, ease of preparation, cost and food safety.

"Those are all really important qualities to us," he said. "We raise products that are wholesome, good tasting and reasonably priced. It's all part of our obligation to the folks that we serve."

But agriculture isn't all about the bottom line, Reiner said. Producers are practicing sustainability as good stewards of the land, water and air, he said.

"We're continuously trying to do things more efficiently," he said. "We can be progressive by adapting new technology. We can raise more with less, thanks to the wonders of science."

As a result, Reiner sees great potential for value-added agriculture. In turn, smaller communities and surrounding rural areas can create more jobs and income.

As USB director, Reiner also sees tremendous learning opportunities.

"I learn so much talking to the people in the field. It's really rewarding, and I gain a deeper understanding of agriculture, particularly soybeans," he said. "It's really enjoyable to know I'm going to work on something that represents farmers in South Dakota and across the nation."

And much as his ancestors handed down the family farm, Reiner wants his current work at the state and national levels to create a legacy for his descendants.

"One of the most important things to me is making sure my children, if they so choose, have the chance to operate the family farm," he said.

"In that way, I want them to enjoy the same things that were open for me to enjoy."

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

Semi with contaminated soil tips over in South Dakota

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say contaminated soil from a Keystone Pipeline leak site spilled out when a semi-trailer driver became distracted and tipped the rig in northeastern South Dakota.

The accident happened Friday morning near Britton. The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the semi driver, 37-year-old William Connors of Show Low, Arizona, was distracted by an electronic device when he drifted onto the wrong side of the road, overcorrected and tipped.

Brian Walsh, scientist for the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, tells the American News that cleanup was going well and he doesn't expect much impact to the environment.

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The pipeline leak was reported in mid-November. An estimated 210,000 gallons spilled out of a buried pipeline on agricultural land in Marshall County.

The crash remains under investigation.

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

Titans rally from 21-3 hole, beat Chiefs 22-21 in playoffs

By DAVE SKRETTA, AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Marcus Mariota did everything to help the Titans advance in the playoffs, throwing two touchdown passes, running for crucial first downs and providing the spark needed to rally from a 21-3 halftime hole.

Heck, he even caught one of his own TD passes .

It all added up to a heart-stopping 22-21 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs on Saturday, the first post-season win for the Titans in 14 years and one that will provide some relief — for the week, at least — for embattled coach Mike Mularkey and his remarkable bunch of underdogs.

"Special," said Mariota, whose 205 yards passing included the go-ahead 22-yard strike to Eric Decker with six minutes left. "I'm part of a great team. I'm part of a group of guys that really believe in each other. And it's something special."

Now, the Titans will find out Sunday whether they're headed to New England or Pittsburgh next.

Derrick Henry added a career-high 156 yards rushing and another score for Tennessee (10-7), while a defense fileted by Alex Smith and the Chiefs (10-7) in the first half pitched a shutout in the second half — dooming the Kansas City franchise to another humiliating postseason defeat.

The Chiefs haven't won a home playoff game since January 1994.

"I'm in shock," Smith said. "The swing at halftime to the final whistle, definitely a shock. Yeah. Didn't feel like we played up to how we're capable of playing and that's disappointing.

Smith threw for 264 yards and two touchdowns , but most of that came before halftime. He couldn't get going in the second half and misfired on fourth-and-9 at the Titans 44 with just over two minutes to go, denying the Chiefs a chance for Harrison Butker to kick a go-ahead field goal.

Adding to the depression? Henry appeared to fumble as Tennessee tried to run out the clock.

The Chiefs' Derrick Johnson picked up the ball and returned it for a touchdown with 1:47 to go, and the crowd went wild as fireworks shot off over Arrowhead Stadium. But a replay clearly showed Henry down, the call was overturned and Tennessee succeeded in running out the clock.

"Grit. It's just grit," Henry said. "We told them we've got 30 minutes left, all we've got to do is play our game. Execute the plays and everything will take care of itself."

In the first half, the Chiefs looked every bit the team that had won four straight in convincing fashion, and the Titans looked every bit the team that backed into the playoffs.

Kareem Hunt, the league's top rusher this season , plunged in from 1 yard for a 7-0 lead. Smith hit Travis Kelce, who later left with a concussion, with a 13-yard touchdown pass. And he added another TD toss to Demarcus Robinson on the final offensive play for a 21-3 lead at the break.

"We were feeling good," Johnson said. "We came in 21-3 and that's all we were talking about: 'Finish. Don't get complacent. We have bigger goals than this game.'"

But it was the Titans who finished, and it was Mariota who led the way. He capped a 91-yard TD drive to start the second half in the bizarre fashions: Mariota threw a TD pass to himself.

His throw to the end zone was batted right back at him by Darrelle Revis, and Mariota hauled it in and dived for the goal line. It was the first time a player has thrown a TD pass to himself in the playoffs, and the first time in any game since the Vikings' Brad Johnson during the 1997 season.

"Right place, right time," Mariota said with a smile.

Tennessee nearly squandered its momentum when Adoree Jackson fumbled a punt, but the Chiefs were unable to pick up a first down and Butker knocked a 48-yard field goal off the upright. And the Titans

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capitalized when Henry rumbled nearly untouched 35 yards for a touchdown a few minutes later.

The Chiefs' offense had been rendered impotent by that point, unable to move the ball after Kelce left with a concussion in the first half. And the Titans blanketed Tyreek Hill whenever he touched the ball, and they stacked the box to slow Hunt down in obvious rushing situations.

Finally, the Titans pulled ahead on Mariota's strike to Decker, and that led to more controversy from the officials. Tennessee went for a 2-point conversion and a field-goal edge, Mariota fumbled as he was getting sacked and Frank Zombo scooped up the ball for two points the other way.

But the officials had blown the play dead, ruling Mariota's progress had been stopped, and the Titans retained the slimmest of margins — one that would stand up to the final whistle.

"I feel really good around our football team," Mularkey said. "I know what I'm going to get from them every week. That's a good feeling, knowing how they're going to come out, no matter what."

OFFICIAL COMPLAINTS

The Chiefs also complained about the officials blowing their whistles on a play late in the first half, when Mariota fumbled while getting sacked. He clearly lost the ball and the Chiefs picked it up, but the play could not be reviewed. Tennessee wound up kicking a field goal.

RECORD RALLY

Only two other road teams have rallied from at least 18 down to win a playoff game in NFL history. The Cowboys came back from 21-3 in the first half to beat the 49ers 30-28 in December 1972, and the Lions came back from 27-7 in the second half to beat the 49ers in December 1957.

KELCE HURT

Kelce sustained his concussion on a wicked blow from Titans S Johnathan Cyprien late in the first half. Kelce, who had four catches for 66 yards, lay stunned on the turf for a moment before wobbling to his feet. Trainers quickly took him to the locker room and he did not return.

UP NEXT

The Titans' opponent in the divisional round will be decided Sunday. If the Jaguars beat the Bills in their wild-card matchup, Tennessee heads to New England to face the No. 1 seed. If Buffalo wins, the Titans head to face No. 2 seed Pittsburgh.

For more NFL coverage: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL

Trump says he's 'like, really smart,' 'a very stable genius'

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump felt compelled Saturday to let the world know he's playing with all his marbles and is among the sharpest cookies around.

In a series of tweets, Trump defended his mental fitness and boasted about his brains, saying he is "like, really smart" and "a very stable genius." It was the latest pushback against a new book that portrays him as a leader who doesn't understand the weight of his office and whose competence is questioned by aides.

"Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart," Trump tweeted from Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, a few hours before a strategy session on the 2018 legislative agenda with Republican congressional leaders and Cabinet members.

And when Trump addressed reporters later, the Ivy League graduate was ready for the question.

"I went to the best colleges for college," said Trump, who holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. "I had a situation where I was a very excellent student, came out, made billions and billions of dollars, became one of the top business people, went to television and for 10 years was a tremendous success, as you probably have heard, ran for president one time and won."

His ire was directed at Michael Wolff, author of "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House." The book draws a derogatory portrait of the 45th president as an undisciplined man-child who didn't actually want to win the White House, and who spends his evenings eating cheeseburgers in bed, watching television

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and talking on the telephone to old friends.

The book also quotes Trump's former chief strategist, Steve Bannon, and other prominent advisers as questioning the president's competence.

"I consider it a work of fiction," Trump told reporters, then bemoaned the country's "very weak" libel laws.

"I don't know this man," Trump said of the author. "I guess sloppy Steve brought him in the White House quite a bit and it was one of those things. That's why sloppy Steve is now looking for a job."

In one of his morning tweets, the president said critics are "taking out the old Ronald Reagan playbook and screaming mental stability and intelligence."

He said his journey from "VERY successful businessman," to reality TV star to president on his first try "would qualify as not smart, but genius and a very stable genius at that!"

Reagan died in 2004, at age 93, from pneumonia complicated by the Alzheimer's disease that had progressively clouded his mind. At times when he was president, Reagan seemed forgetful and would lose his train of thought while talking.

Doctors, however, said Alzheimer's was not to blame, noting the disease was diagnosed years after he left office. Reagan announced his diagnosis in a letter to the American people in 1994, more than five years after leaving the White House.

Trump, now 71, was the oldest president ever when assuming office. Reagan was nearly eight months younger.

Trump's chief of staff, John Kelly, who has tried to bring order to a chaotic White House, said he had not seen the tweets until reporters showed them to him just before Trump spoke about noon.

But he said that Trump didn't appear angry Friday or Saturday. "I thought he would be, frankly," Kelly said.

As for the tweets: "He feels he can go around the press and get his perspective out by tweeting," explained Kelly. "That's kind of why he does it."

Chatter about Trump's mental fitness for office has intensified in recent months on cable news shows and among Democrats in Congress.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders this week called such suggestions "disgraceful and laughable."

"If he was unfit, he probably wouldn't be sitting there and wouldn't have defeated the most qualified group of candidates the Republican Party has ever seen," she said, calling him "an incredibly strong and good leader."

Trump is set to have his first physical examination as president this coming Friday at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

This exam does not typically involve having the president undergo a mental health evaluation, as some Democrats have urged.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., introduced a bill in April to establish a commission that would study if the president is mentally or physically unable to perform his duties. And in August, Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., introduced a resolution urging the vice president and Cabinet to have Trump undergo a mental and physical exam to determine if he's competent. Neither measure has gone anywhere.

In early December, the House voted overwhelmingly to kill a resolution from a liberal Democrat to impeach Trump. Rep. Al Green, D-Texas, said Trump had associated his presidency with causes rooted in bigotry and racism.

To back his claim accusing Trump of high misdemeanors, Green cited incidents such as Trump's blaming both sides for violence at a deadly white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, and his sharing of hateful, anti-Muslim videos posted online by a fringe British extremist group.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said in a statement shortly before the vote that while "legitimate questions have been raised about his fitness to lead this nation," they argued "now is not the time to consider articles of impeachment."

Associated Press writer Alan Fram in Washington contributed to this report.

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This story has been corrected to show that Trump criticized "very weak" libel laws, not "weak libel laws."

Malaysia OKs new search by private company for missing plane

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia's government said Saturday that it has approved a new attempt by a private company to find the wreckage of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, nearly four years after its disappearance sparked one of aviation's biggest mysteries.

The Houston, Texas-based company Ocean Infinity dispatched a search vessel this past week to look in the southern Indian Ocean for debris from the plane, which disappeared March 8, 2014, on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 227 passengers and 12 crew members.

The governments of Malaysia, China and Australia called off the nearly three-year official search last January. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau's final report on the search conceded that authorities were no closer to knowing the reasons for the Boeing 777's disappearance, or its exact location.

"The basis of the offer from Ocean Infinity is based on 'no cure, no fee,'" Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said Saturday, meaning that payment will be made only if the company finds the wreckage.

"That means they are willing to search the area of 25,000 square kilometers (9,653 square miles) pointed out by the expert group near the Australian waters," he said.

However, he said, "I don't want to give too much hope ... to the (next of kin)." He said his government was committed to continuing with the search.

He did not offer other details.

Ocean Infinity said in a statement that the search vessel Seabed Constructor, which left the South African port of Durban on Tuesday, was taking advantage of favorable weather to move toward "the vicinity of the possible search zone."

In the initial search for the plane, a 52-day surface search covered an area of several million square kilometers (square miles) in the Indian Ocean west of Australia, before an underwater search mapped 710,000 square kilometers (274,000 square miles) of seabed at depths of up to 6,000 meters (20,000 feet). They were the largest aviation searches of their kind in history, according to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).

Despite other methods such as studying satellite imagery and investigating ocean drifts after debris from the plane washed ashore on islands in the eastern Indian Ocean and the east coast of Africa, the 1,046-day search was called off on Jan. 17, 2017.

However, the ATSB's report said the understanding of where the plane may be is "better now than it has ever been," partly as a result of studying debris that washed ashore in 2015 and 2016 that showed the plane was "not configured for a ditching at the end-of-flight," meaning it had run out of fuel.

The search team also looked back at satellite imagery that showed objects in the ocean that may have been MH370 debris. The report said this analysis complemented work detailed in a 2016 review and identified an area of less than 25,000 square kilometers (9,650 square miles) — roughly the size of the U.S. state of Vermont — that "has the highest likelihood of containing MH370."

The search was extremely difficult because no transmissions were received from the aircraft after its first 38 minutes of flight. Systems designed to automatically transmit the flight's position failed to work after this point, the report said.

Online:

<https://oceaninfinity.com/>

Trump says he'd be open to talking with North Korean leader

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

THURMONT, Md. (AP) — President Donald Trump, shelving comparisons about the size of a "nuclear button," said Saturday he is open to talking with the North Korean leader he's called "Little Rocket Man"

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and hopes some progress results from upcoming talks between the Koreans.

Trump, who last year lambasted his chief diplomat for talking about negotiations with the nuclear-armed North, told reporters at Camp David that some dialogue or direct conversation with Kim Jong Un was not beyond the realm of possibility.

"Sure, I always believe in talking," Trump said. "Absolutely I would do that, I wouldn't have a problem with that at all." But he was quick to add that any talks would come with conditions, which he did not specify.

The first formal talks between North and South in more than two years are set to take place in a border town Tuesday as the rivals try to find ways to cooperate on the Winter Olympics in the South and to improve their ties. Tensions are high because of the North's nuclear and missile programs.

"Right now they're talking Olympics. It's a start, it's a big start," Trump said during a question-and-answer session after meetings with GOP leaders in Congress and Cabinet members on the administration's 2018 legislative agenda.

Kim "knows I'm not messing around. I'm not messing around, not even a little bit, not even 1 percent. He understands that," Trump said.

Assessing next week's discussions, Trump said "if something can happen and something can come out of those talks, that would be a great thing for all of humanity. That would be a great thing for the world."

The president also said that he had spoken with South Korean leader Moon Jae-in, who "thanks me very much for my tough stance."

"You have to have a certain attitude and you have to be prepared to do certain things and I'm totally prepared to do that," Trump said, contending his tough words have helped persuade the North to sit down with the South.

Trump had tweeted last week: "Does anybody really believe that talks and dialogue would be going on between North and South Korea right now if I wasn't firm, strong and willing to commit our total 'might' against the North."

His administration on Thursday agreed to delay joint military exercises with South Korea until after the Olympics. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis insisted the move was a practical necessity to accommodate the Olympics and was not a political gesture.

Trump and Kim have traded barbs recently about their nuclear arsenals.

In a New Year's address, Kim said he has a "nuclear button" on his office desk and warned that "the whole territory of the U.S. is within the range of our nuclear strike."

Trump soon responded: "Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!"

Insurgents attack Myanmar soldiers in Rakhine, wounding 6

BANGKOK (AP) — Six Myanmar soldiers were wounded in an insurgent attack in northern Rakhine state, where government troops have been accused of "ethnic cleansing" that forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee into Bangladesh, officials said.

The military said in a statement on the commander in chief's Facebook page that the attackers were from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, the militant group blamed for attacks on police posts in August that prompted the crackdown that left thousands of Rohingya dead and more than 650,000 displaced.

On Friday, more than 20 insurgents used homemade bombs to attack a truck transporting troops from Taungpyo township in northern Rakhine, the government said in a separate statement on its Facebook page.

Six soldiers were taken to a military hospital, border guard police official Sann Oo said by phone Saturday.

In the past, the military has retaliated against Rohingya villages following such attacks.

The United Nations' top human rights official in September described the Myanmar army's crackdown against the Rohingya Muslim minority as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing."

The United States also declared the violence against Rohingya Muslims to be "ethnic cleansing" and President Donald Trump's administration announced on Dec. 21 that it sanctioned the country's Maj. Gen. Maung Maung Soe, who until recently was in charge of security operations in Rakhine.

Myanmar's military released a report in November saying an internal investigation had absolved its forces of wrongdoing including allegations of rape and killings.

Hurricane Harvey survivors feel grief, distress months later

By JAMIE STENGLE, Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — Deb Eberhart couldn't sleep and was easily moved to tears as she worked to coordinate repairs to her Houston home in the months after flooding from Hurricane Harvey besieged it with 3 feet (0.91 meters) of water.

She clenched her jaw so hard that it hurt. She couldn't eat.

"I thought: 'Well, I'm not handling things as well as I should be,'" the 69-year-old retired teacher said.

Eberhart realized she needed help that had nothing to do with construction crews and insurance adjusters. So she joined storm survivors seeking help from therapists in the wake of the destructive winds and heavy rains in August that caused more than 80 deaths and an estimated \$150 billion in damage in Texas.

Experts say the emotional distress caused by such an event can take many forms — grief, anxiety, depression, even fear of storms — and progress through several stages over a year or longer. Even months after the storm hit, new patients have been coming to free counseling being offered by private and government-funded programs.

In the small coastal town of Port Aransas, which experienced major destruction after Harvey made landfall nearby, psychologist Andrew Reichert said he began noticing a shift about a month ago in what was bringing people in.

"It's gone from kind of the immediate stress and shock to more just kind of a chronic stress and long-haul type of thing," Reichert said. "A lot of my work is helping people prioritize and focus on what they can control versus what they can't."

Eberhart headed to Austin before the storm hit, even though she thought her Houston home would be fine. She later received photos of the flooding at her house from a neighbor who used a boat. When she returned home, she was heartbroken by what she found: "Mud and slush, and everything just gone."

She lived with her son and his roommates in Houston for about three weeks, then she moved into a starkly furnished apartment near her home. The stress increased amid the frustrations of being displaced, remodeling work and the grief from losing irreplaceable items such as furniture that belonged to her mother and childhood photographs.

"I think after a while you just have to accept the fact that maybe you're just stuck in a place, and somebody can just get you over the hump and it would be a therapist," Eberhart said.

She had her first counseling session in November with Judith Andrews, a psychologist who co-chairs the Texas Psychological Association's disaster resource network. Eberhart, who was able to return to her house in December, said talking to Andrews helped her realize she should not be mad at herself for still being upset and that she needed to take steps to deal with the stress, such as starting to exercise again.

Andrews, whose organization is offering free counseling sessions, said survivors feel grief over the loss of both property and stability. "They're grieving about the loss of what was," she said.

They usually first experience the survival-focused "heroic phase," when people are responding with high intensity, helping others to survive or being rescued, Andrews said. A few weeks later comes the "honeymoon" phase, which can last up to six months as people are buoyed by feelings of solidarity and bonding from their shared experience.

But anger, resentment and feelings of isolation and abandonment can creep in during the "disillusionment" phase, when survivors struggle to rebuild. The "reconstruction" phase follows — and can last for years — as victims learn to accept that everything won't be the same.

"What happens when people don't process it by talking, then they really don't get rid of it," Andrews said. She noted that most people won't need long-term counseling but many "would certainly benefit by short-term therapy."

The Texas Education Agency is heading a task force to mobilize the mental health response in schools.

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One goal is to help teachers understand how to spot children who might benefit from talking to someone, said Andy Keller, a psychologist and president and chief executive officer of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, which is collaborating with the state on the task force.

Megan Davis took her 3-year-old and 6-year-old daughters — who escaped their Houston home by boat with their mother — to sessions with Andrews to make sure the girls were OK.

Davis said she was encouraged to hear her girls were “age-appropriately handling the large changes in their lives.” The 34-year-old attorney said she also was given tools to talk to her daughters and to know how to let them guide the conversation.

“I think that oftentimes we focus on the immediate effects of disasters, and that’s really a small portion of what’s important in terms of looking at mental health, especially with respect to kids,” said Jeff Temple, a psychologist at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission has been working with mental health care providers to offer free counseling across affected areas in Texas until Jan. 24 through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The state has applied for additional funds to extend the services.

“Recovery takes time,” said commission spokeswoman Kelli Weldon.

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Told their treehouse must go, owners appeal to Supreme Court

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lynn Tran and Richard Hazen built a Florida beachfront treehouse that would be the envy of any child. It’s got two levels, hammocks and windows looking out on the Gulf of Mexico.

But the hangout has cost the couple a handsome sum: about \$30,000 to construct and probably five times that in legal fees as they’ve fought local authorities over it, Tran said. Now, they’re at their last stop, the Supreme Court. Unless the high court intervenes, the treehouse must be torn down.

The justices had their first opportunity to consider taking the case at a closed-door conference Friday, and a decision on whether they will weigh in could come as early as Monday.

The couple’s lawyer, David Levin, acknowledges the case is unlikely to be accepted by the justices, who only hear argument in about 80 of the thousands of cases they’re asked to take each year. But he argues that his clients’ rights were violated when a Florida court “rubber stamped” a ruling proposed by the city of Holmes Beach without any evidence of independent consideration.

Tran and Hazen haven’t been willing to give up on the structure she calls their “getaway.”

“Part of me still believes there’s got to be justice out there and we didn’t do anything wrong,” Tran said in a telephone interview.

Tran and her husband run a rental property called Angelinos Sea Lodge on Anna Maria Island on Florida’s west coast. They have a house on their property and four rental units.

Before they began constructing the treehouse around an Australian Pine on their property in 2011, Hazen asked the city whether they needed a permit. The answer: No.

So, with some help from the internet, Tran dreamed up the structure, which took six months to build.

Soon, however, the city got an anonymous complaint about the treehouse. After an investigation, the city found the couple did actually need to go through the permitting process. And it turns out the treehouse was in an area where building is prohibited because of a city setback. The couple hoped to get around that by having local voters weigh in, but courts told them no.

Holmes Beach Mayor Bob Johnson noted in a telephone interview that courts have sided with the city and he called the continued legal wrangling “quite honestly a waste of time.”

“For some reason these people have this fixation on it,” he said.

Tran says she never expected such a drawn-out fight and that in hindsight the couple could have taken the money they’ve spent on the treehouse, gone somewhere else and built an actual house.

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It's still costing the couple. They're accumulating a \$50 a day fine for not taking down the treehouse, a fine that's now tens of thousands of dollars.

Tran says she's afraid to think about it. Until the high court acts, she's enjoying the treehouse on sunny days, meditating there or napping in a hammock. The couple doesn't have any children of their own enjoying the treehouse and renters aren't allowed up for liability reasons, but Tran says guests and beachgoers often admire the structure.

"It's kind of fun to have around," she said.

If the treehouse ultimately has to go, there's a lurking irony for the couple. To take down the structure, they'll need the one thing they didn't have before they began putting it up: a city permit.

Follow Jessica Gresko on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jessicagresko>

Pot industry frets, then shrugs off Sessions' new policy

By PAUL ELIAS, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — This week's announcement that the U.S. Justice Department was ditching its hands-off approach to states that have legalized marijuana initially sent some in the industry into a tailspin, just days after California's \$7 billion recreational weed market opened for business.

But for long-term pot purveyors accustomed to changing regulatory winds, the decision was just another bump in a long and winding road to proving their business legitimacy.

Many in the industry said they're keeping a wait-and-see attitude because the effect of Attorney General Jeff Sessions' announcement depends on whether federal prosecutors crack down on marijuana businesses operating legally under state laws. Sessions provided no details other than saying individual U.S. attorneys are authorized to prosecute marijuana operators as they choose.

Stocks of publicly traded marijuana-related companies plunged Thursday after Sessions announced the Justice Department's new policy. On Friday, though, many of those stocks recovered.

"The announcement was largely symbolic," said Patrick Moen, general counsel of Privateer Holdings, a Seattle-based venture capital firm that invests in marijuana businesses. "This kind of stunt will not have a substantial effect on the industry."

Moen noted Sessions' action doesn't change federal law, which includes a congressional provision barring authorities from spending federal money to prosecute medical marijuana operations that abide by state laws.

He conceded that the action would have a "near-term chilling effect" on the industry's lobbying effort to compel banks and insurance companies to accept its business. Banks and insurance companies refuse to do business with cannabis companies because marijuana is illegal under federal law and most financial institutions are federally insured, forcing marijuana businesses to operate in cash.

Most of Seattle-based Privateer's \$150 million in investments are in companies based outside the United States, and Moen conceded that Sessions' action Thursday would keep it that way for the short term because of regulatory uncertainty in the United States. Online news and marijuana information site Leafly is the firm's biggest U.S. investment.

In San Francisco, a city long known for embracing weed, sales of recreational marijuana began Saturday as planned. Six pot shops confirmed they were selling recreational marijuana Saturday after receiving their state licenses the day before.

Shabnam Malek, a 44-year-old lawyer and mother of three, waited in line for a half hour for Apothecarium to open its doors in San Francisco.

She marveled at the difference between buying a legal bag of weed from the times in her 20s when she was buying marijuana on the streets, a situation she said exposed her to contaminated products and unsafe situations.

She said she thinks Sessions' announcement will backfire on him.

"If anything I feel more galvanized," she said. "I think he's going to see a lot of us come out and be

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even more vocal about our support for legal cannabis.”

Sessions’ action also was on the mind of Kevin Johnson, director of operations at Grass Roots, which also opened its doors for recreational pot in San Francisco on Saturday.

“It’s certainly a concern,” Johnson said. “It may be more difficult for us to do proper banking but when we opened up, George W. Bush was president and the DEA was doing raids on dispensaries. We’re in this for the long haul.”

Grass Roots opened 13 years ago to sell medical marijuana.

In Colorado, CEO Andy Williams said the announcement that he’s open to prosecution could turn years of work and millions of dollars of investment in his store Medicine Man Denver into a criminal enterprise. He said Sessions’ action goes against the will of Colorado voters, who legalized marijuana in 2014.

“Any action by the attorney general goes against the public sentiment,” he said. “I don’t think it’s a smart move. Of course, we haven’t seen what it is yet, so we’ll wait and see.”

The share price of Medicine Man dropped nearly 40 percent Thursday, from \$3.18 to \$2.11. The stock closed up Friday at \$2.28 a share.

Colorado’s U.S. attorney, Bob Troyer, said his office won’t change its approach to prosecution, despite Sessions’ guidance. Prosecutors there have always focused on marijuana crimes that “create the greatest safety threats” and will continue to be guided by that, he said.

Don Morse, director of the Oregon Cannabis Business Council, said he expects “business as usual” in Oregon’s marijuana industry despite Sessions’ policy.

The U.S. Attorney for Oregon, Billy J. Williams, indicated he would maintain the same level of enforcement with state and local authorities by focusing on unlicensed production of marijuana and smuggling to other states.

“Legal marijuana has become so entrenched in the U.S. — it’s a multibillion-dollar industry — and I don’t see the people who are behind this, people like myself, rolling over for the Justice Department, which means Congress will have to act,” Morse said. He said Congress should declassify marijuana as a Schedule 1 dangerous drug.

Morse said he believes the same federal provision that bars prosecution of medicinal marijuana operators also protects the recreational side to some extent, because “it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.”

Cannabinniers, a San Diego maker of marijuana-infused food and drink also expects slower investor interest in the short term.

“At this point, we have no details about what the attorney general plans to do or what is going to happen, but regardless this is going to slow down investment in one of the fastest-growing industries,” said Jeffrey Paul, vice president of sales for Cannabinniers.

Associated Press writers Peter Banda in Denver, Andrew Selsky in Portland, Oregon, and Amanda Lee Myers in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

100 million people affected by East Coast’s deep freeze

By VERENA DOBNIK, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — About 100 million people faced a new challenge after the whopping East Coast snowstorm: a gusty deep freeze, topped Saturday by a wind chill close to minus 100 on New Hampshire’s Mount Washington that vied for world’s coldest place.

Jaw-clenching temperatures to start the weekend throughout the Northeast hit Burlington, Vermont, at minus 1 and a wind chill of minus 30. Both Philadelphia and New York were shivering at 8 degrees.

And in Hartford, Connecticut, a brutal cold of 10 degrees yielded a wind chill of minus 20.

On Saturday, winds of more than 90 mph swirled Mount Washington, the Northeast’s highest peak, at a temperature of minus 37 degrees and a wind chill of minus 93. It tied for second place with Armstrong, Ontario, as the coldest spot in the world.

Boston, at a relatively balmy 11 degrees, was wrangling with a different kind of challenge: a shortage of

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plumbers as the weather wreaked havoc on pipes that froze and cracked, Democratic Mayor Marty Walsh reported.

A 3-foot tidal surge brought on by the nor'easter along the Massachusetts coast was the highest recorded in nearly a century. Residents of Boston and its suburbs were cleaning up Saturday after the tide that came in Thursday, flooding streets and forcing some residents to be evacuate as the water started to freeze.

In New Jersey, many people stayed home instead of dealing with single-digit temperatures. Others were cleaning up from the storm that dropped more than a foot of snow in some spots earlier in the week.

"My car felt like an icebox this morning, even though I had the heat on full blast," Julie Williams said as she sipped coffee inside a Jackson Township convenience store. She was headed to work at a local supermarket, and was expecting it to be packed.

"People think it's nuts before a storm happens, with everyone getting milk, bread, etc." she said, adding with a laugh, "but it's even worse in the days afterward, because they do the same thing but they're a little crazy from cabin fever."

The operators of New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport were struggling to recoup from Thursday's storm.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which runs the airport, said it was working with airlines and the Federal Aviation Administration to limit flights into Kennedy on Saturday "until there are adequate gates available to handle the backlog of flights due to recovery of flight schedules in the wake of Thursday's storm."

In Rhode Island, hospitals were treating dozens of storm-related injuries as the region grits through a deep freeze that followed a powerful blizzard.

In Providence and Newport, at least 40 people were treated for various weather-related conditions, from heart attacks, snowblower or shoveling injuries, frostbite and more, according to The Providence Journal.

The storm dropped more than 14 inches of snow on Providence.

Monday is expected to be the first day above freezing since last month. In New York City, temperatures should reach 40 degrees next week.

Even more southern locations didn't escape the cold; the mercury dipped into the single digits in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., during the weekend, about 20 degrees below normal for this time of year.

The high winds and frigid temperatures prompted several ski resorts to close some of their lifts. Bolton Valley in Vermont said there was a general "lack of demand and enthusiasm from skiers and riders." With a temperature of minus 14 at the summit and minus 11 at the base, the resort cancelled evening skiing due to a frostbite warning.

In Vermont's capital city of Montpelier, with the temperature at minus 5 Saturday, business was slow at La Brioche Bakery but soups were a big seller, said bakery clerk Caroline Cunningham. "Nobody wants to be outside," she said.

The key strategy for most East Coast residents was to wear layered clothing.

Brooklyn resident Zelani Miah, who was walking home from running errands Saturday morning, said he wore lots of them.

"Right now, the only thing I put on was just some gloves, a couple sweaters of course, like five or six of them, and two pants basically and boots," Miah said. "Keep warm, make sure you wear hats."

Saban way produces tenacious defenses for Tide __ and 'Dawgs

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — As Alabama All-America defensive back Minkah Fitzpatrick watched a YouTube video of last week's thrilling Rose Bowl between Georgia and Oklahoma, there was a sense of familiarity with the Bulldogs.

"We basically run the same defense. They added a couple of things just like we add some things," Fitzpatrick said. "Even the hand signals and stuff are pretty similar. It's pretty interesting."

Not surprising, though.

Georgia coach Kirby Smart spent eight years as defensive coordinator for Alabama coach Nick Saban.

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Alabama's defenses have ranked in the top-20 nationally in yards per play every season since '08. The Tide has been ranked in the top-10 in six of those seasons. Defense has been the backbone of four national championship teams, and both the third-ranked Bulldogs and fourth-ranked Tide bring top-10 defenses into the College Football Playoff national championship game on Monday.

Saban's defenses — and now Smart's, too — are detail-oriented, fundamentally sound and diverse. Saban's defensive playbook is expansive, and formations can be confounding for opposing quarterbacks to decipher before the ball is snapped. Playing defense for Saban requires not just talent — and there is so much talent — but smarts and discipline.

"He's going to run every defense known to man or at least have the ability to do so" said Chris Brown, author of "The Essential Smart Football" and "The Art of Smart Football."

Saban was defensive coordinator with the Cleveland Browns for Bill Belichick from 1991-94, and the two share similar philosophies.

The basics are this: 3-4 alignments that start with stout defensive linemen, who occupy blockers and can clog multiple gaps up front. This year's Alabama team has 308-pound Da'Ron Payne at nose guard. Georgia has 305-pound nose John Atkins.

"I think you have to be good up the middle," Alabama defensive coordinator Jeremy Pruitt said. "Big guys up front."

As college offenses have become more spread out, Saban and Smart and Georgia defensive coordinator Mel Tucker, who worked for Saban at LSU and Alabama, have adjusted. When facing offenses that line up with three or more wide receivers, the defense shifts to four-man fronts and usually five defensive backs. And with so many teams playing offense up-tempo these days, a key is having versatile players who can be cross-trained at multiple positions. The personnel does not have to change if the defense changes.

Tight, press coverage is typical on the outside and a concept called pattern matching is often used. Think of it as football's version of basketball's matchup zone.

"They're playing zone until someone comes into their space and then they play man," SEC Network analyst and former Auburn offensive lineman Cole Cubelic said. Defenders determine which receiver they are taking by reading the routes.

"They're going to challenge receivers and not give up easy stuff, and that comes from (Saban's) time with Belichick, where he learned a lot of sophisticated defensive coverage and concepts," Brown said. "It's not what Saban calls country zones, where you just drop to a spot and watch the quarterback's eyes."

Add in those hard to move defensive linemen allowing agile linebackers to fill holes and the basic offense schemes — short throws and between the tackle runs — rarely are productive against Saban's defenses.

"They do a great job of denying easy offense," said Miami's Manny Diaz, regarded as one of the top defensive coordinators in the country.

Brown said Saban's defensive playbook when Saban coached the Miami Dolphins was famously 1,400 pages.

"The menu is huge. All the checks and adjustments are huge," said Temple coach Geoff Collins, who spent a season working for Saban at Alabama before becoming a defensive coordinator at Mississippi State and Florida. "But what they'll apply to each game they won't pull from the entire playbook."

And the defenses are not always what they seem.

"They just do a good job of knowing what look they're giving (an offense) and having a compliment off of that look," Collins said. "Everything is built off of having a coverage and having a pressure off of the exact same look, and a change-up. They always have a complimentary package off of every disguise."

All those Xs and Os are important, but really there is no secret sauce to stopping offenses.

Plenty of teams are using similar schemes and not getting the same results because they don't get the same level of players. All-Americans such as Fitzpatrick and Georgia linebacker Roquan Smith can make most coaches look good. Where the coaching shows up most is not necessarily in the schemes, but in technique and effort.

"They're going to be coached tough," said Georgia receivers coach James Coley, a former offensive coordinator at Florida State and Florida. "The players that play embrace that toughness. Detailed with their

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technique, from the way they shoot their hands to how they disengage, how they press, how they jam. How they cover and trail. There is a lot of attention to detail."

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

Jerry Van Dyke, 'Coach' star and brother of Dick, dies at 86

By MARK KENNEDY, AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Jerry Van Dyke, the younger brother of Dick Van Dyke who struggled for decades to achieve his own stardom before clicking as the dim-witted sidekick in television's "Coach," died Friday in Arkansas, according to his manager. He was 86.

John Castonia said Van Dyke died at his ranch in Hot Spring County. His wife, Shirley Ann Jones, was by his side. No cause was immediately known.

Van Dyke had an affable, goofy appeal, but he spent much of his career toiling in failed sitcoms and in the shadow of his older brother, even playing the star's brother in "The Dick Van Dyke Show."

Until "Coach" came along in 1989, Van Dyke was best known to critics as the guy who had starred in one of television's more improbable sitcoms, 1965's "My Mother the Car." Its premise: A small-town lawyer talks to his deceased mother (voiced by actress Ann Sothern), who speaks from the radio of an antique automobile.

Other bombs included 1967's "Accidental Family," in which he was a nightclub comedian, 1970's "The Headmaster," in which he was a gym teacher and 1963's "Picture This," a game show that lasted only three months. He also joined "The Judy Garland Show" in 1963, to provide comic relief, but was fired at the end of the season.

"The show's writers wrote awful, awful, awful stuff," he recalled in a 1994 interview with The Associated Press, "and I was forced to do it. For instance, I had to come out and say to Judy Garland, 'What's a nice little old lady like you doing on television?'" He added: "And that was just the first week!"

In "Coach," he finally made it, playing assistant coach Luther Van Dam, comic foil to Craig T. Nelson's coach Hayden Fox. The two headed up a hapless Minnesota college football team, its follies aired from 1989 to 1997, and Van Dyke was nominated four times for an Emmy.

"I never knew what success was like, or having a hit series, or even doing something GOOD," Van Dyke told the AP. "Finally I got a job that I enjoy doing, that's not hard to do — and I get paid a lot of money."

Nelson, his co-star on the show, paid homage to his former onscreen partner Saturday: "I am incredibly sad to hear of Jerry's passing. He was such a brilliant comedian and we had a great time working together on 'Coach.' It is just devastating news."

Dawn Wells, an actress who starred with Van Dyke on an episode of "Fantasy Island," called him in a statement "one of Hollywood's funniest, kindest and personable comedians. He was a joy to work with. He will be missed."

Over the years, Van Dyke made guest appearances on numerous programs, among them "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," whose star had played his sister-in-law on "The Dick Van Dyke Show."

He also appeared on "The Andy Griffith Show," "Perry Mason" and in such films as "The Courtship of Eddie's Father," "Palm Springs Weekend," "Angel in My Pocket" and "McLintock!"

His decision to take the "Car" role was one of two disastrous career moves in the mid-1960s. He also passed on a chance to play the title role on "Gilligan's Island" and to replace the departing Don Knotts as the deputy on "The Andy Griffith Show."

"My Mother the Car" lasted one season. (A New York Times critic cracked, "last night's premiere made a strong case for not fastening your seat belts.") But "Gilligan's Island" turned its star, Bob Denver, into a television icon and is still airing endlessly in reruns. Van Dyke said in 1990 that his brother told him "My Mother the Car" sounded good. (At the time, a show about a talking horse — "Mister Ed" — and other

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fantasy sitcoms were doing well.)

"I never asked him for advice after that," Jerry Van Dyke said.

He also rued the loss of a role in 1982 when he was up for a supporting gig in a series to star Bob Newhart, which would run for eight celebrated seasons. But Tom Poston got his role as George the handyman on "Newhart." In recent years, Van Dyke made recurring appearances on "The Middle" (where he and brother Dick starred in an episode) and "Yes, Dear."

Patricia Heaton, who played Van Dyke's daughter on "The Middle," tweeted her respects: "Jerry, you were hilarious and terrifically talented — what an honor to be able to watch up close as you and your brother create your special magic."

He was born in Danville, Illinois, in 1931, six years after his brother. He said he knew from childhood that he wanted to be a comedian, and grew up listening to the radio shows of Bob Hope, Red Skelton and others. By age 8 he had earned a reputation as class clown.

He had his first brush with acting in a guest role on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" as Rob Petrie's banjo-playing brother. "I came away thinking, 'TV is a piece of cake; I want more of this,'" he told the AP.

Van Dyke entered Eastern Illinois University, but his education was interrupted by service in the Air Force during the Korean War. He spent much of that time entertaining colleagues at military shows with jokes and banjo playing.

When he got out of the service, he took that act on the road, with little success. Eventually he followed his brother to Hollywood.

He is survived by his wife, two children from his previous marriage to Carol Johnson — Jerri and Ronald — and his brother.

'You are a fake': Conte ramps up feud with Mourinho

By STEVE DOUGLAS, AP Sports Writer

Antonio Conte called Jose Mourinho a "little man" and "fake" before issuing an apparent challenge as the feud between two of the Premier League's most high-profile managers intensified on Saturday.

Tensions were already simmering after two days of back-and-forth insults between the pair in news conferences.

Mourinho, the Manchester manager, started the spat on Thursday by saying he did not feel the need to behave like "a clown" on the touchline. Feeling that was a dig at him, Conte, the Chelsea manager, responded aggressively Friday by suggesting Mourinho was suffering from dementia because of the Portuguese's behavior on the touchline earlier in his coaching career.

Mourinho then came out with the most explosive retort so far late Friday, saying he will never be "suspended for match-fixing." Conte served a four-month touchline ban in 2012 for failing to report his knowledge of an incident of attempted match-fixing during his time as Siena manager in 2011.

The Italian was acquitted of any wrongdoing over the matter in 2016.

Conte's latest dig at Mourinho came after Chelsea's 0-0 draw at Norwich in the third round of the FA Cup. And it set up a potentially explosive meeting between the two coaches when United hosts Chelsea on Feb. 25 in the Premier League.

"The situation is very clear. I don't have anything to clarify," Conte said. "It will be the opportunity in the game against United when we go to Old Trafford. Me and him, face to face. I'm ready. I don't know if he's ready."

Conte, 48, seemed unhappy with the 54-year-old Mourinho bringing up his past.

"I consider him a little man, I consider him a man with a very low profile," Conte said. "When there are these types of comments, before (making them) you have to know very well the truth.

"Before you make this type of comment, before to hurt another person, you must pay great attention. You show you are a little man. I know him very well in the past. In the past, he was a little man in many circumstances, is a little man in the present and, for sure, he will be a little man in the future."

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Conte was more scathing about Mourinho's behavior, providing the example of Mourinho attending a news conference wearing a training top with the initials "CR" following Claudio Ranieri's firing by Leicester in February last year.

"He offended (criticized) Ranieri for his English," Conte said. "Then when Ranieri was sacked (fired), he put on a shirt (with initials on) for Ranieri. You are a fake.

"If you want to fight a person, you try to kill this person. And then after two years, you try to help this person, because maybe it's good for you, for your profile."

States exploring tax changes in response to federal overhaul

By GEOFF MULVIHILL, Associated Press

CHERRY HILL, N.J. (AP) — In New Jersey and California, top Democratic officials want to let people make charitable contributions to the state instead of paying certain taxes. In Connecticut and New York, officials are exploring a switch from income taxes to new ones on payroll. A few governors have even called for tax cuts.

The ideas are bubbling up as state lawmakers begin their 2018 sessions and assess the effects of the Republican tax overhaul that President Donald Trump signed into law last month. Lawmakers and governors in some states are grappling with how to protect their constituents.

The federal policy implements a maze of changes. It cuts tax rates and nearly doubles the standard income deduction. Yet it also caps or eliminates some popular itemized deductions, and sets the personal exemptions to zero.

For many Americans, the result is expected to be lower federal tax obligations, at least initially. Those facing higher bills are expected to be concentrated in some high-tax states.

With legislators starting their sessions and governors writing state budgets, the response is a political priority. The proposals are bold, though not yet fleshed out.

This week, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo used his state-of-the-state speech to pledge to sue over the GOP tax plan, which he called "an assault" by the federal government. A lawsuit would add taxes to the growing list of Trump administration policies that Democratic states have challenged in court.

Other states have not committed to sue, but some leaders have indicated they'll explore the idea.

"I'm certainly not a constitutional lawyer, but the notion that this is not constitutional is something we want to pursue," said Phil Murphy, New Jersey's Democratic governor-elect.

Officials in California and Connecticut also said this week they were considering legal options.

In high-tax states, officials have been focused on protecting taxpayers from the impact of a new \$10,000 cap on deductions for paying state and local taxes. In California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York, more than one-third of tax filers claim the state and local tax deduction on federal taxes; the average deduction in each state is over \$15,000.

California state Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon, a Los Angeles Democrat who is running for the U.S. Senate, introduced legislation this week that would allow people to make charitable donations to the state instead of paying income taxes. That would allow them to claim a charitable deduction on federal taxes.

"Our hard-earned tax dollars should not be subject to double-taxation, especially not to line the pockets of the Trump family, hedge fund managers and private jet owners," de Leon said in a statement.

Another Democrat, New Jersey Gov.-elect Phil Murphy, announced a similar plan on Friday but said local governments also could implement it and apply it to property taxes.

Kim Rueben, a senior fellow at the liberal-leaning Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, said it remains to be seen whether the IRS would allow deductions for that kind of contribution if it's rewarded with tax credits. There is some precedent for it, though: She noted that some states give tax credits in return for private-school scholarships and that the IRS allows deductions of those contributions.

In Connecticut, two Democratic legislative leaders want to replace income taxes on individuals with payroll taxes on employers.

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Under the new federal tax law, employers' state and local taxes would remain deductible. House Speaker Joe Aresimowicz and House Majority Leader Matthew Ritter sent a letter Wednesday asking a state commission to evaluate the idea. New York's Cuomo said he's looking at a similar change there.

Rueben said that for the approach to work, states would have to figure out what to do with the income of high-earners who receive money from investments rather than jobs — something Cuomo said he could address through a tax on carried interest.

Nicole Keading, an economist at the conservative-leaning Tax Foundation, said that change also could mean that states would replace progressive income tax structures with flat payroll taxes.

"You would be raising taxes on low-income people," she said.

The measure could be tough to pass this year with Cuomo and all members of the New York Legislature up for election. Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, a Republican who is running for governor, said the state should focus instead on cutting taxes and spending.

"The issues really hurting New Yorkers are self-inflicted wounds," he said.

Governors in some other states are worried that their own current tax policies could inflict pain for taxpayers as a result of the federal changes.

More than 40 states have income taxes, and nearly all of them rely to some degree on definitions from the federal tax code.

Economists expect that many states will see their revenue rise because they tie their tax laws to federal provisions such as those on personal exemptions, which lower the bills based on the size of households.

In Maryland and Michigan, the Republican governors have said they will introduce tax cuts to compensate, after the GOP bill eliminated the personal exemption.

"Protecting taxpayers should be a bipartisan issue, so that's my holiday gift to the people of Maryland," Maryland's Larry Hogan, a Republican, said last month.

Hogan, however, has to work with a legislature led by Democrats, and it's unclear how they will want to respond. Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, a Democrat, said the GOP tax plan will have "dire effects" for many Maryland residents.

"Our governor needs to be focusing on how he can join with members of the House and Senate to combat the evils of this federal tax bill," he said.

Last month, Idaho's state Senate leader, Republican Brent Hill, said he was concerned that new state revenue would come disproportionately from larger families because of the elimination of the exemption. He said the state could consider keeping a personal exemption or offering a state child tax credit.

Meanwhile in Colorado, Gov. John Hickenlooper, a Democrat, asked the Legislature last week for \$300 million in new spending for the current fiscal year and for the fiscal year that begins July 1. He cited in part new revenue expected under the federal law, which he has criticized.

Hickenlooper wants to use the extra money for roads, schools and the state reserve.

Associated Press writers Jim Anderson in Denver; Michael Catalini in Trenton, New Jersey; Jonathan J. Cooper in Sacramento, California; Susan Haigh in Hartford, Connecticut; David Klepper in Albany, New York; and Brian Witte in Annapolis, Maryland, contributed to this article.

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AP FACT CHECK: Trump and team on air safety, vets, pollution

By CALVIN WOODWARD and JOAN LOWY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's been a week of bogus boasting by President Donald Trump and members of his administration as they took unearned credit for airline safety, pollution cleanup and major advances in care for veterans.

The president ignored fatality-free years in aviation during the Obama administration when he declared 2017 the safest year on record and suggested that was because he's kept a sharp eye on airlines.

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He represented routine and ceremonial proclamations recognizing a day in remembrance of Pearl Harbor and a month in honor of military families as substantive achievements that improved care for veterans.

And his Environmental Protection Agency took credit for completing work on seven Superfund sites even though the actual cleaning was done by President Barack Obama's EPA.

Here's a look:

TRUMP: "Since taking office I have been very strict on Commercial Aviation. Good news - it was just reported that there were Zero deaths in 2017, the best and safest year on record!" — tweet Monday.

THE FACTS: It's been 4½ years since the last deaths involving a scheduled passenger airline in the U.S. Three passengers died in the crash of an Asiana Airlines plane while landing at San Francisco International Airport in July 2013. It's been almost nine years since the last fatalities involving a U.S.-registered, scheduled passenger airline in the United States. That was a Colgan Air plane that crashed on approach to Buffalo, New York, in February 2009, killing all 49 on board and a man on the ground.

Last year was notable for having no commercial passenger jet deaths worldwide, although there were two fatal regional airline crashes involving small turboprop planes in Angola and Russia. There were also fatal accidents involving cargo airliners.

What's Trump got to do with any of this?

His administration has instituted additional screening of passengers and their personal electronic devices at foreign airports with flights to the U.S., to prevent terrorist attacks. But there have been no new major safety regulations imposed on passenger airlines as Trump rounds out his first year in office. Indeed, he's held back a regulation pending from the Obama administration that would ban shipments of rechargeable lithium batteries on passenger planes. Testing has shown that the batteries can self-ignite, creating intense fires and explosions.

The White House cited Trump's initiative to "modernize Air Traffic Control" as justification for his tweet, but that doesn't fly. His proposal to privatize air traffic control isn't in effect, so it had nothing to do with the 2017 safety record. And even its proponents say the idea is not about safety, but rather efficiency.

TRUMP: "We will not rest until all of America's GREAT VETERANS can receive the care they so richly deserve. Tremendous progress has been made in a short period of time." — tweet Tuesday, with an Instagram link showing eight accomplishments where Trump is "fighting for our veterans."

THE FACTS: The video with catchy music overstates the impact of these steps. Of the eight achievements cited, two are ceremonial proclamations — National Veterans and Military Families Month and National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

Two are pieces of legislation that extended a troubled Veterans Choice program on a temporary basis. This became necessary because the Trump administration repeatedly miscalculated the amount of taxpayer dollars available in its account to pay for care from private doctors outside the VA system when veterans had to endure long waits for treatment at VA medical centers

A fifth claim involves "tele-health," letting doctors practice medicine across state lines using digital technology. Announced in August, it has yet to take full effect because a proposed VA regulation hasn't been completed. It's now being dealt with in legislation that passed the Senate and is going to the House.

A sixth claim refers to legislation that streamlines the appeals process for disability compensation claims within the VA. This step has had limited impact so far because it largely applies to new disability claims, not to most or all of the 470,000 pending claims.

The other two initiatives he listed make it easier for the VA to discipline employees. The department has pointed to more than 1,300 employees who have been fired under Trump's watch. But the pace of dismissals is roughly on par with or a little below that during the Obama administration.

EPA Administrator SCOTT PRUITT, on EPA claims that it completed — or "delisted" — more Superfund sites last year than Obama's EPA did the year before: "We have made it a priority to get these sites cleaned up faster and in the right way." — news release Tuesday.

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THE FACTS: This is a case of people taking credit for other people's work.

The EPA removed seven Superfund sites from its priority list last year, compared with two sites delisted the year before. But records show that construction work at all seven sites hyped by Pruitt's EPA, such as removing soil or drilling wells to suck out contaminated groundwater, was completed years before Pruitt was confirmed as the agency's chief in February. Removing sites from the list is a procedural step that occurs after monitoring data show that remaining levels of harmful contaminants meet cleanup targets, which were often set by EPA decades ago.

An analysis of EPA records by The Associated Press shows that the seven Superfund sites delisted last year fell short of the average pace set under both the administrations of Obama and George W. Bush, even in their opening years.

Trump's proposed 2018 budget seeks to cut the Superfund program by 30 percent. More than 1,300 Superfund sites on EPA's list are at various stages in the cleanup process.

Associated Press writers Hope Yen and Michael Biesecker in Washington and Jason Dearen in Gainesville, Florida, contributed to this report.

Trump, GOP lawmakers huddle at Camp David

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

THURMONT, Md. (AP) — Emerging from closed-door meetings with Republican leaders, President Donald Trump on Saturday held out the prospect of a deal with Democrats on the fate of young immigrants brought to the country illegally as children but appeared to put a welfare system overhaul — once a top White House priority — on the back burner.

Trump spent much of Friday and Saturday morning hashing out his 2018 agenda with GOP House and Senate leaders, top White House aides and select Cabinet members at the presidential retreat at Camp David. He described the sessions as "incredible" and "perhaps transformative in certain ways."

A long list of high-stakes topics were on the agenda, from national security and infrastructure to the budget and 2018 midterm election strategy. Though Democrats were not included in the discussions, the leaders — some dressed casually in jeans, khakis and sweaters — said they were optimistic that more Democrats would be working with Republicans.

"We hope that 2018'll be a year of more bipartisan cooperation," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told reporters, predicting a "significant number of Democrats" would be interested in supporting Trump's agenda.

It's a reflection of reality: Republicans hold a razor-thin majority in the Senate and will need Democrats' support to push through most legislation. It's unclear, however, the extent to which Trump is willing to work with Democrats to achieve that goal.

Trump, for instance, declared Saturday that he will not sign legislation protecting hundreds of thousands of young people who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children unless Congress agrees to fund his promised border wall as well as overhaul the legal immigration system. Trump last year ended the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which shielded more than 700,000 people from deportation and gave them the right to work legally in the country, and gave Congress until March to find a fix.

Trump said any deal must stop immigrants from being able to sponsor their extended family members and must end the diversity visa lottery, which draws immigrants from under-represented parts of a world. That's in addition to funding for the southern border wall, a deeply unpopular idea among Democrats.

The administration on Friday unveiled a 10-year, \$18 billion request for the wall that roiled the immigration talks and infuriated Democrats who've spent months in negotiations, increasing the prospect of a government shutdown.

But Trump appeared oblivious to the anger on Saturday. "We hope that we're going to be able to work out an arrangement with the Democrats," he said. "It's something, certainly, that I'd like to see happen."

Trump also appeared Saturday to back away from efforts to overhaul the welfare system, which just

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weeks ago had been identified as one of the White House's top two legislative priorities, along with a massive infrastructure investment plan.

McConnell had argued that welfare reform was a no-go given Democratic opposition. And Trump appeared to have come around.

"It's a subject that's very dear to our heart," Trump said. "We'll try and do something in a bipartisan way. Otherwise, we'll be holding it for a little bit later."

Republicans are eager to build on the victory achieved late last year with the overhaul of the nation's tax code. But before moving on to infrastructure and other items, Trump and his GOP allies first must navigate a tricky landscape of leftover legislation from last year that promises to test party unity in the coming weeks.

The need to work with Democrats on a spending package, for instance, is sure to whip up opposition from many conservatives to a hoped-for catchall spending bill slated for next month.

The Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland's Catoctin Mountains provides a woodsy respite from Washington. It's a place where presidents and lawmakers can bond over meals, hikes and movie nights.

"There's a feeling here that you don't have in very many places. There was a bonding," Trump said of the visit.

Trump's chief of staff, John Kelly, told reporters Saturday that lawmakers and top White House officials had enjoyed "a couple of glasses of wine together last night" and gathered with Trump to watch the new movie "The Greatest Showman," starring Hugh Jackman. (He described it as "very, very entertaining.")

Politics, too, were on the agenda, with talks about the midterm elections. Republicans are at risk of losing the majority they've held in the House since 2011, and could also lose seats in the Senate, though many more Democratic incumbents are up for re-election this year.

Trump said he's planning an aggressive campaign schedule to stump for Republican candidates, but added that he's done campaigning for insurgents challenging incumbent Republican members of Congress.

"I don't see that happening," he said, citing the stinging GOP loss last year in Alabama, where Democrats managed to win a seat in the Senate and Trump backed two losing candidates.

Associated Press writer Andrew Taylor in Washington contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Jan. 7, the seventh day of 2018. There are 358 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 7, 1789, America held its first presidential election as voters chose electors who, a month later, selected George Washington to be the nation's first chief executive.

On this date:

In 1610, astronomer Galileo Galilei began observing three of Jupiter's moons (he spotted a fourth moon almost a week later).

In 1800, the 13th president of the United States, Millard Fillmore, was born in Summerhill, New York.

In 1904, the Marconi International Marine Communication Company of London announced that the telegraphed letters "CQD" would serve as a maritime distress call (it was later replaced with "SOS").

In 1927, commercial transatlantic telephone service was inaugurated between New York and London.

In 1942, Japanese forces began besieging American and Filipino troops in Bataan during World War II. (The fall of Bataan three months later was followed by the notorious Death March.)

In 1949, George C. Marshall resigned as U.S. Secretary of State; President Harry S. Truman chose Dean Acheson to succeed him.

In 1959, the United States recognized the new government of Cuba, six days after Fidel Castro led the overthrow of Fulgencio Batista.

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In 1963, the U.S. Post Office raised the cost of a first-class stamp from 4 to 5 cents.

In 1979, Vietnamese forces captured the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh, overthrowing the Khmer Rouge government.

In 1989, Emperor Hirohito of Japan died in Tokyo at age 87; he was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.

In 1999, for the second time in history, an impeached American president went on trial before the Senate. President Bill Clinton faced charges of perjury and obstruction of justice; he was acquitted.

In 2015, masked gunmen stormed the Paris offices of Charlie Hebdo, a French newspaper that had caricatured the Prophet Muhammad, methodically killing 12 people before escaping. (Two suspects were killed two days later.) Actor Rod Taylor 82, died in Los Angeles.

Ten years ago: The Pentagon reported that an Iranian fleet of high-speed boats had charged at and threatened to blow up a three-ship U.S. Navy convoy in the Strait of Hormuz a day earlier, then vanished as the American ship commanders were preparing to open fire. Second-ranked LSU defeated No. 1 Ohio State, 38-24, in the BCS championship game played in New Orleans. Philip Agee, a renegade CIA agent whose naming of operatives led to a law against exposing spies, died in Cuba at age 72.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama announced he would nominate former GOP Sen. Chuck Hagel as his next defense secretary, calling him "the leader our troops deserve"; Obama also chose White House counterterrorism adviser John Brennan to lead the Central Intelligence Agency. The No. 2 Alabama Crimson Tide rolled top-ranked Notre Dame 42-14 for the BCS championship.

One year ago: President-elect Donald Trump, in a series of tweets, said "only 'stupid' people or fools" would dismiss closer ties with Russia, and he seemed unswayed after his classified briefing on an intelligence report that accused Moscow of meddling on his behalf in the election that catapulted him to power. Nat Hentoff, an eclectic columnist, critic, novelist and agitator dedicated to music, free expression and defying the party line, died in New York at age 91.

Today's Birthdays: Magazine publisher Jann Wenner is 72. Singer Kenny Loggins is 70. Singer-songwriter Marshall Chapman is 69. Actress Erin Gray is 68. Actor Sammo Hung is 66. Actress Jodi Long is 64. Actor David Caruso is 62. Talk show host Katie Couric is 61. Country singer David Lee Murphy is 59. Rock musician Kathy Valentine is 59. Actor David Marciano is 58. Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., is 57. Actress Hallie Todd is 56. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., is 55. Actor Nicolas Cage is 54. Singer-songwriter John Ondrasik (on-DRAH'-sik) (Five for Fighting) is 53. Actor Rex Lee is 49. Actor Doug E. Doug is 48. Actor Kevin Rahm is 47. Actor Jeremy Renner is 47. Country singer-musician John Rich is 44. Actor Dustin Diamond is 41. Actor Reggie Austin is 39. Singer-rapper Aloe Blacc is 39. Actress Lauren Cohan is 36. Actor Brett Dalton is 35. Actor Robert Ri'chard is 35. Actress Lyndsy Fonseca is 31. Actor Liam Aiken is 28. Actress Camryn Grimes is 28. Actor Max Morrow is 27. Actor Marcus Scribner is 18.

Thought for Today: "There may be Peace without Joy, and Joy without Peace, but the two combined make Happiness." — John Buchan, 1st Baron Tweedsmuir, Scottish author (1875-1940).

Riddle Answer: Corn.