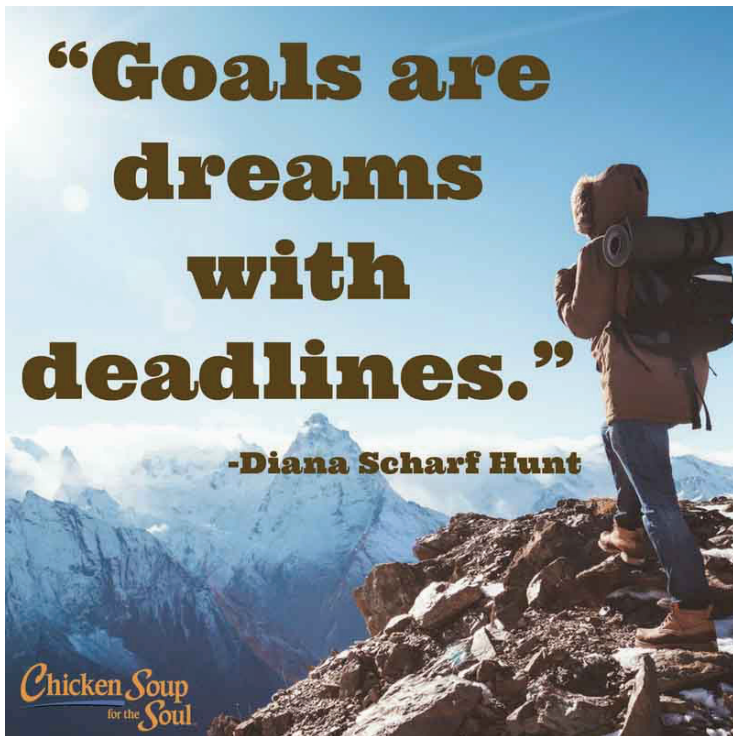


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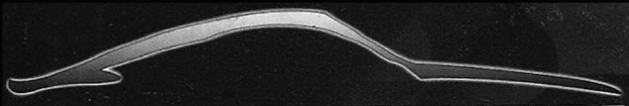
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- 1- Recycling trailers
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A Riddle

I am white, black and read all over.
What am I?
(answer at the end of the AP News)



McKIVER COLLISION
Lifetime Warranty on all Collision Work!
13556 400th Ave., Groton SD 57445
Allen McKiver, Owner ~ 605/397-4404

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**



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.

WINTER STORM WATCH

Issue Date:4:18 AM Tue, Jan 9, 2018

Expiration:9:00 AM Thu, Jan 11, 2018

...Blizzard conditions possible Wednesday into Thursday east in the region...

.A strong surface low pressure area and Arctic cold front will bring widespread mixed precipitation on Wednesday changing over to snow. Strong north winds will bring blowing snow and low visibilities.

...WINTER STORM WATCH IN EFFECT FROM WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON THROUGH THURSDAY MORNING...

- * WHAT...Blizzard conditions possible. Travel could be very difficult to impossible. Total snow accumulations of 2 to 4 inches and ice accumulations of a light glaze are possible.
- * WHERE...Portions of central, north central and northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota.
- * WHEN...From Wednesday afternoon through Thursday morning.
- * ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Winds gusting as high as 45 mph could cause whiteout conditions in blowing snow. Significant drifting of the snow is also possible. Cold wind chills as low as 30 below zero will cause frostbite in as little as 30 minutes to exposed skin.

A Winter Storm Watch for blizzard conditions means there is a potential for falling and/or blowing snow with strong winds and extremely poor visibilities. This can lead to whiteout conditions and make travel very dangerous.

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Upcoming Events

Today: Build Dakota/Technical Institute Roadshow, 11:30 a.m. to 12:14 p.m. at GHS. Girls' basketball will be hosting Waubay-Summit with junior varsity game at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

On Wednesday, MathCounts will be held at Aberdeen Simmons Middle School from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Thursday, Groton Area will be hosting Sisseton in girls' basketball action. Sisseton does not have enough girls for a C team, so junior varsity game will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

Then on Friday, the Groton Area boys will travel to Sisseton. The C game is scheduled to start at 5 p.m. with the junior varsity starting at approximately 6 p.m. and the varsity game at approximately 7:30 p.m. The debate team will be at the Silver Bowl in Sioux Falls. The wrestling team will be at Philip High School with the tourney to start at 3 p.m. CT

On Saturday, Jan. 13, the boys will be playing with the following schedule at the Redfield Shoot-out: Parkston vs. Flandreau Indian at noon, Little Wound vs. Warner at 1:30 p.m., Aberdeen Christian vs. Platte-Geddes at 3 p.m., Timber Lake vs. Redfield-Doland at 4:30 p.m. and Dell Rapids vs. Groton Area at 6 p.m.

Also on Saturday, the wrestling team will be at Philip for the tournament starting at 10 a.m. CT. There will be a seventh and eighth grade basketball jamboree in Groton with Britton-Hecla, Leola-Frederick, Northwestern and Webster coming to town, starting at 10 a.m.

There is open gym on Sunday from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. for JK through eighth grade and from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for sixth grade through seniors.

On Monday, Jan. 15, Langford Area will come to Groton Area with the junior varsity game starting at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity match.

Tuesday, Jan. 16, the Ipswich boys' basketball teams will be coming to Groton. Seventh grade plays at 3 p.m., eighth grade at 4 p.m. followed by the C game at 5:15, the junior varsity and the varsity thereafter.

Wednesday, Jan. 17, marks the end of the first semester.

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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Groton Senior Citizens elect officers

The Groton Senior Citizens met Monday, Jan. 8, and elected its officers for 2018. Left to right, they are Ruby Donovan, president; Eunice McCollister, vice-president; Jan Raap, treasurer; and Elda Stange, secretary. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

Tina Kosel)

USD Dean's List

VERMILLION, S.D. – The University of South Dakota announced its Academic Honors and Dean's List to recognize over 2,300 students for their superior academic achievement during the Fall 2017 semester.

Full-time, undergraduate students are named to the Dean's List if they received a 3.5 GPA for courses they took in the Fall 2017 semester and had no incomplete or failing grades.

Local students named to the Dean's List are Lincoln Gibbs, Claremont; Haley Unzen, Kari Hanson, Lucas Sternhagen, Luke Smith, Marlee Jones, Mason Madsen, Rachel Blackmun and Taylor Gustafson, all of Groton; Sierra Kamin, Westport.

Gun Show

GUN SHOW: Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association 16th Annual ABERDEEN Gun Show. New location. Saturday, February 3, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, February 4, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dakota Event Center on LaMont East. Roger Krumm 701-851-0129. (...0203)



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")

Governor Seeking Summer Intern Applicants

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard is currently seeking applications for the 2018 Governor’s Office internship program in Pierre. The positions will be paid and run from May through August 2018.

Governor’s Office interns have the opportunity to work at the highest level of state government. Interns’ duties will depend on interests and strengths. Typical duties will include aiding the Governor’s director of constituent services, and communications director; conducting policy research; preparing policy briefings; and staffing the Governor, Lt. Governor, and First Lady.

The positions are open to all undergraduate or graduate-level students. Preference will be given to South Dakota residents attending South Dakota colleges or universities.

Students who are interested in receiving credit should also apply. The Governor’s staff is open to working with individual universities and professors to secure credit for the internship program.

Interested students should submit a resume, cover letter and a letter of recommendation by Monday, Feb. 5, via email, to Grace.Beck@state.sd.us.

For more information on duties or logistics, please contact Grace Beck at Grace.Beck@state.sd.us or 605-773-3661.



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.

November Students of the Month

The student council is sponsoring Student of the Month. Each month the faculty select students who show outstanding academic achievement. These students receive certificates and have an end of the year lunch with the principal. The November 2017 Students of the Month are Dillon Abeln, sixth grade; Kaleb Antonsen, seventh grade; Stella Meier, eighth grade; Alexa Herr, freshman; Kayla Jensen, sophomore; Kaitlyn Anderson, junior; and Madison Sippel, senior.



Dillon Abeln, sixth grade, is the son of Isaac and Nikki Abeln, Columbia. Alex is her brother. Dillon is involved in sports, watching sports and playing video games with his brother. He attends MathCounts and his interests are sports and space. Social studies is his favorite subject and he plans to be an astronaut. His role models are his parents.



Kaleb Antonsen, seventh grade, is the son of Travis and Angela Antonsen, Groton. Sibings are Kellen and Kolton. His activities are football, basketball and baseball. He has been named to the honor roll and he is interested in hunting, fishing and hanging out with friends. Social studies is his favorite subject and he plans to attend a vo-tech or college. His dad is his role model.



Stella Meier, eighth grade, is the daughter of Dr. Anna and Brett Schwan and Nicholas Meier. Siblings are Lydia Meier and Ryder and Ivan Schwan. Her activities are volleyball, track, one-act play, band, choir and MathCounts. Her accomplishments are placing in MathCounts, being named previously Student of the Month and Honor Roll. She is interested in volleyball, reading, drawing, swimming, listening to music and dancing. Math is her favorite subject. She plans to be an archeologist and her role model is her mom.



Alexa Herr, freshman, is the daughter of LaRon and Jolene Herr, Bristol. Siblings are Sheldon and Erika. Her activities are volleyball, FCCLA, 4-H, piano and shooting sports. Accomplishments include Coach's Award in 2013 (4-H), received superior at piano contests in Aberdeen, being named to the honor roll, top superior for Illustrated Talk in FCCLA in 2017. Her interests are

reading, playing volleyball, playing piano and spending time with family and friends. History is her favorite subject and she plans to go into nursing. Erika Herr, her sister, is her role model.

Kayla Jensen, sophomore, is the daughter of Robin and Lynn Jensen, Claremont. Abby is her sister. Kayla is involved in DI, oral interp and one-act play. Her accomplishments are second place as a freshman in the NSU Math Contest and first place in state 4-H Quotes to Live By essay contest her freshman



year. She is interested in watching the Wings hockey play, playing with her cats and music and band. Band is her favorite subject and she would like to go into music education. Her role model is her aunt, Vonnie.

Kaitlyn Anderson, junior, is the daughter of Stacey Anderson and John Anderson. Kennedy Anderson is her sister. Her activities include FCCLA, Carnival of Silver Skates, helping to teach Sunday School at Claremont United Methodist Church and 4-H. Her accomplishments are being named Student of the Month as a sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and 11 grades and on the Honor Roll each year since sixth grade. Her interests are art and photography and art is her favorite subject. Her future plans are undecided and her parents are her role models.



Madison Sippel, senior, is the daughter of Monte and Sandi Sippel, Groton. Her siblings are Alyssa and Sarah. Her activities are FCCLA, FBLA, volleyball student manager, football and wrestling cheerleader, track and field and Emmanuel Luther League. Her accomplishments are being named to the National Honor Society, the honor roll, student of the month,



National Wendy's Heisman school and state finalist, Coke Scholar finalist and Girls State delegate. She is interested in baking, eating, napping, watching Netflix and tutoring. Math is her favorite subject. She plans to attend the University of South Dakota to major in mathematical education with a minor in chemistry or coaching.

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Today in Weather History

January 9, 1982: Winds of 20 to 40 mph accompanied by 1 to 3 inches of snow created ground blizzard conditions and extreme wind chills from the 9th through mid-afternoon on the 12th. There were two deaths from exposure that were attributed to the storm including a 69-year old Scotland woman and a woman from Veblen in Marshall County. Both tried to walk after their vehicles stalled. Near zero visibilities and snow drifts to 5 feet high forced closures of numerous highways. Also, minor power outages were reported.








January 9, 1997: A powerful Alberta Clipper and a deep Arctic High brought widespread and prolonged blizzard conditions, heavy drifting snow, and dangerous wind chills of 40 to 80 below to central and north-east South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. North winds were from 30 to 50 mph gusting to 60 mph. The clipper dropped from 2 to 7 inches of snowfall on top of an already solid 2 to 5-foot snowpack. As with previous storms, most roads again became blocked by huge snowdrifts. As a result of the blockage and the blizzard conditions, both Interstates 29 and 90 closed along with all state highways leaving hundreds of people stranded to wait out the storm. This winter has been the worst for road closings. Many people became stuck in snow drifts or went off the road because of low visibility, and had to be rescued. One dramatic rescue near Webster, involving tens of rescue workers, occurred after a woman was stranded in her vehicle for nearly 40 hours. A couple with a one-year-old was rescued after spending a night in their car and they were unharmed. A Wakpala woman died from carbon monoxide poisoning in her stalled pickup on Highway 1806 near Wakpala. Emergency personnel had a very difficult time responding to emergencies. Some emergencies took up to several hours to go short distances. A rural Leola man died, when emergency workers could not get to him in time. In McLaughlin, seven people had to be taken by air ambulance, because there was no way out.

All area schools were closed the 9th and 10th with most schools at this point in the winter season missing over 7 days. A state record was set when Faulkton School had closed for its 13th day. Mail was delayed and area airports had flight delays or were closed. Many businesses were also closed and were suffering economic losses as a result of this storm and previous storms because customers could not get to them. Many grocery stores ran low or out of bread, milk, and other food necessities. There were some power outages across the area, but were not widespread. The power was out at Isabel, Timber Lake, and Firesteel, for as much as 8 hours. The power outage in Isabel resulted in extensive water pipe breaks at the Isabel School. Willow Lake was without power for over 2 days. Some homes across the area were also without heat for several days in the bitter cold. The majority of ranchers was running out of or was unable to access feed for cattle, sheep, and hogs. As a result of the extreme conditions and lack of food, over fifty thousand livestock died. In addition, many livestock suffered frostbite and were significantly weakened. There was also a lot of wildlife and pheasants killed. As a result, the Emergency Feed Grain Donation Program was activated for the ranchers. One rancher said that he had been ranching in this area for 34 years and had never lost cattle before. Also, some dairy farmers had to dump their milk because trucks could not get them in time.

Some people were trapped in their homes up to several days as snowdrifts buried their homes and blocked the roads with some people having to crawl out their windows. In Wilmot, a 12 foot drift covered the community home, where residents had to turn the lights on during the day. As a result of snow removal budget depletions and other storm damages, President Clinton declared all of the counties a disaster area. Snowplows from Iowa, Nebraska, and plows and manpower from the South Dakota National Guard helped to break through hundreds of roads. The snowdrifts in some places were packed so hard and were measured at 300 pounds per square inch. Some longtime residents said this has been the worst winter they had seen in their lifetimes. The total damage estimate for this January blizzard and for the previous January winter storm is 50 million dollars. This includes the added snow removal costs, livestock losses, building damages, and other economic losses.

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Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Patchy Fog	Mostly Cloudy then Patchy Fog	Patchy Fog then Chance Wintry Mix and Patchy Blowing Snow	Snow and Blowing Snow	Areas Blowing Snow and Blustery then Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Chance Snow then Snow Likely
High: 36 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 35 °F	Low: 0 °F	High: 4 °F	Low: -15 °F	High: 0 °F

Today and Tonight


Dry and warm


Upcoming travel?
Check weather.gov first



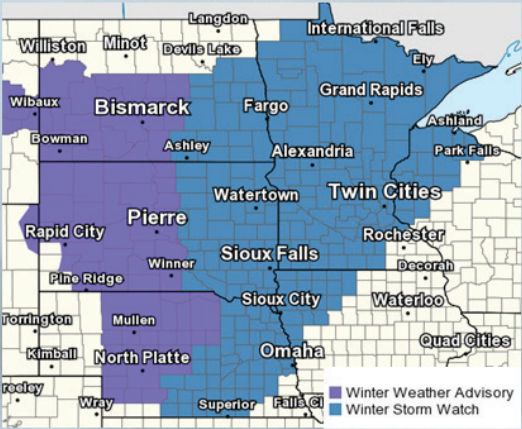
National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Wednesday Afternoon into Thursday Morning

 2 to 4" snow possible
may start as rain/freezing rain over E SD and W MN


 winds gusting 30 to 45 mph
reduced visibility in blowing and drifting snow

Watches and Advisories




Legend: Winter Weather Advisory (light blue), Winter Storm Watch (dark blue)

Thursday Afternoon into early Next Week

 Much Colder!
Dangerous Wind Chills

Highs in the single digits above and below zero



Published on: 01/09/2018 at 5:28AM

Watches and Advisories have already been posted across much of the Northern Plains for the upcoming storm system moving into our area Wednesday afternoon into Thursday morning. Light icy conditions may start us off Wednesday afternoon, as a mix of rain or freezing rain falls over eastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota Wednesday afternoon. 2 to 4 inches of snow will be possible before tapering off Thursday morning. Winds gusting 30 to 45 mph will likely result in reduced visibility in blowing and drifting snow. Get your most up to date forecast at www.weather.gov

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 37.1 at 3:26 PM

Low Outside Temp: 10.7 at 7:55 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 8 at 1:24 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 53° in 2012

Record Low: -31° in 1977

Average High: 22°F

Average Low: 1°F

Average Precip in Jan: 0.16

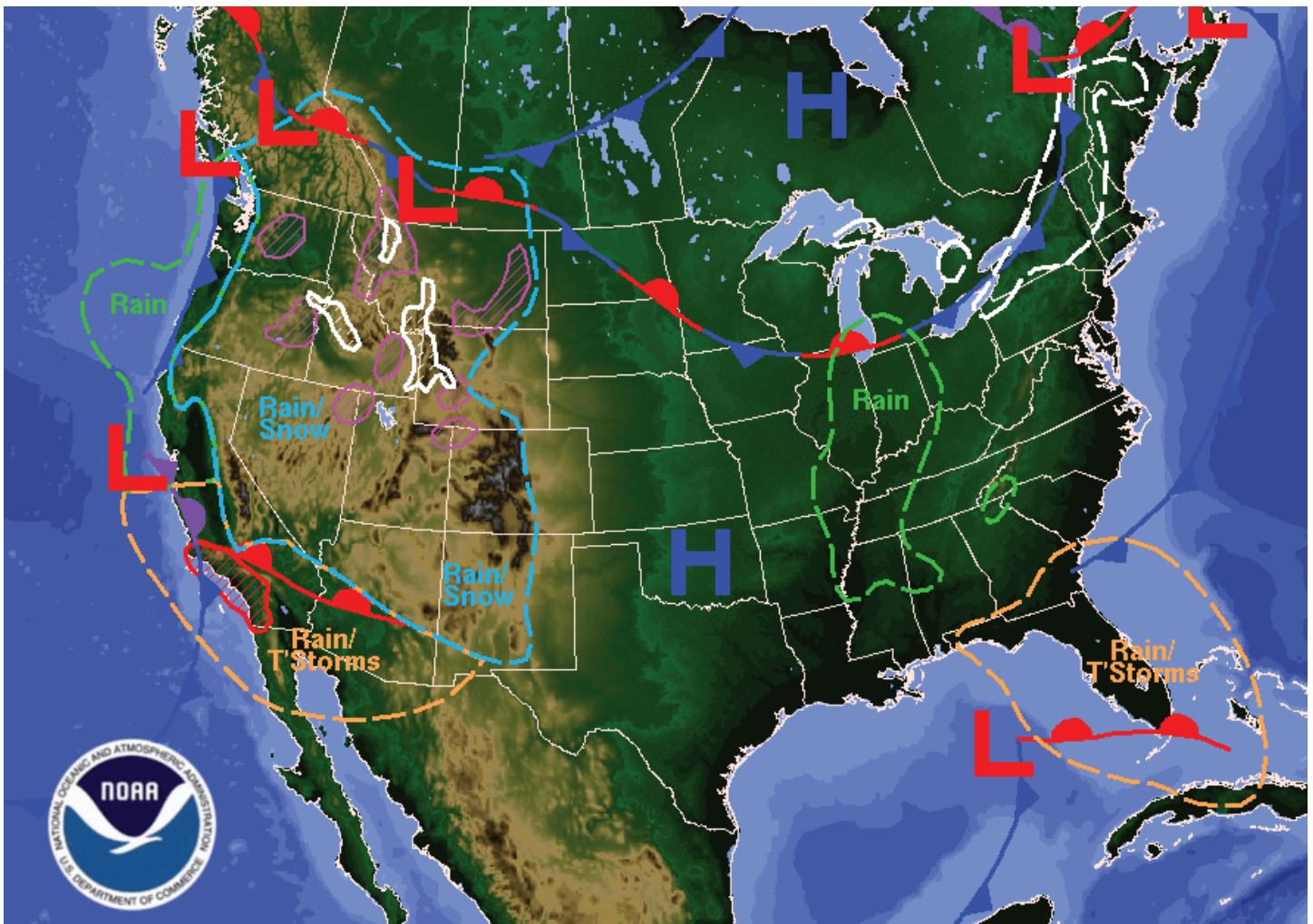
Precip to date in Jan: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.16

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:09 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:12 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Jan 09, 2018, issued 5:26 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Mcreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

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

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REVIVE US!

Many lament the spiritual decline in our nation. We see a culture in decline and the rising tide of secularism. We know that our God is powerful – that He can dominate the lives of those who profess to love Him – if they will only allow Him. He is willing and able. But we must become willing and available if we want renewal and revival. The responsibility is on us. The possibility is with Him.

God's children in all ages come close to and then turn away from Him. It's as though at some point in time God becomes a liability, a burden, an interferer in the lives of those who profess Him as Lord. He seems to get in the way or He keeps them from enjoying the things in life that bring delight and pleasure to so many.

But this God, our God, is willing and waiting on those who are also willing to "call on His name." And that just may be the problem.

In Scripture, name always refers to the nature or the character or the identity of the person. And when we think of the name of God we must always associate it with holiness, purity, righteousness, sacrifice, justice, mercy, grace, love and compassion.

The writer of Psalm 80 asks "revive us," or "quicken us" and "restore us that we may be saved." Surely, God will do this because He wants to do this. But we cannot expect Him to do this unless we are willing to identify with His character and repent and become as He is. If we want revival it must begin with each of us!

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to recognize that each of us is responsible to You to repent if we want revival in our land. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 80:18b, 19 Then we will never abandon you again. Revive us so we can call on your name once more.

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

100 years for fatally stabbing wife in Sioux Falls

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man who pleaded guilty to fatally stabbing his wife has been sentenced to 100 years in prison.

Irving Jumping Eagle apologized and said he would never forgive himself before he was sentenced in Minnehaha County court Monday after pleading guilty to first-degree manslaughter. Jumping Eagle says he and his wife struggled with drug and alcohol addiction and that he doesn't remember stabbing his wife last April at a Sioux Falls apartment.

The Argus Leader says Jumping Eagle was initially charged with first- and second-degree murder, along with the manslaughter charge. The murder charges were dropped as part of a plea deal.

Thirty-three-year-old Alicia Rhae Jumping Eagle was found dead with several stab wounds to the head and chest at her Sioux Falls apartment.

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

Governor to give annual State of the State address

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is set to give his annual State of the State address to lawmakers in Pierre.

The speech in the state House chamber will be held Tuesday, when lawmakers gather for the 2018 legislative session.

It's the Republican governor's final session in office. It runs until lawmakers adjourn in late March.

Daugaard tells the Argus Leader he will discuss workforce development, managing state assets and extending a law governing the use of lakes on private land created by flooding.

Republicans hold supermajorities in both the House and the Senate.

Monday's Scores **By The Associated Press**

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Bridgewater-Emery 84, Ethan 55
Canistota 71, Gayville-Volin 48
Douglas 69, Lead-Deadwood 35
Edgemont 45, Guernsey-Sunrise, Wyo. 44
Harrisburg 55, Mitchell 41
Madison 75, West Central 55
Milbank 73, Wilmot 53
Tri-State, N.D. 65, Waverly-South Shore 61
Waubay/Summit 64, Estelline 39

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Alcester-Hudson 31, Viborg-Hurley 28
Beresford 52, Howard 49
Brandon Valley 54, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 46
Corsica/Stickney 57, Platte-Geddes 25
Douglas 40, Lead-Deadwood 31
Ipswich 54, Edmunds Central 14
Lake Preston 66, Iroquois 18
Lemmon 62, Flasher, N.D. 56

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Lennox 53, Dell Rapids 47
Lyman 46, White River 44
New Underwood 42, Oelrichs 40
Redfield/Doland 56, Great Plains Lutheran 16

Sunflower research forum set in North Dakota this week

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The commodity group that represents sunflower farmers around the country is holding its annual research forum this week in North Dakota.

The two-day event hosted by the National Sunflower Association is Wednesday and Thursday at the Delta by Marriot hotel in Fargo.

Researchers from the federal Agriculture Department and universities in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa will present findings on sunflower studies dealing with diseases, insects, irrigation and blackbirds.

The forum has been held for nearly four decades.

House speaker, top Senate Democrat among key 2018 players

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers returning to Pierre on Tuesday for the 2018 legislative session will craft the state budget and take up big issues ranging from cracking down on meth dealers to raising legislator pay.

Here's a look at some of the key political players behind those measures:

GOV. DENNIS DAUGAARD

South Dakota's governor since 2011 is entering his final legislative session with lackluster state revenues. He's proposed a plan that would fill an immediate shortfall this budget year and leave most state workers without raises over the next.

Another proposal from the governor that's likely to spur debate is a push to extend an expiring law that governs the use of lakes on private land for recreation. The issue has long vexed landowners and outdoor enthusiasts alike.

HOUSE SPEAKER MARK MICKELSON

The Sioux Falls Republican decided against a bid for governor, but his 2018 legislative agenda shows above-average ambition. Mickelson wants to end collective bargaining at public universities, ask voters to repeal a victims' rights constitutional amendment and make changes to the state's ballot question system. The third-term lawmaker is also backing a potentially contentious bid to raise legislator salaries.

GOP CAUCUS LEADERS

House Majority Leader Lee Qualm, a farmer from Platte, said he's sponsoring legislation for a proposed \$55 million precision agriculture classroom and laboratory project at South Dakota State University that would also include other renovations. Senate Majority Leader Blake Curd was among top lawmakers who announced that all legislators and their staff are expected to attend ethics, professionalism and sexual harassment training later this month.

SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER BILLIE SUTTON

The gubernatorial hopeful plans to sponsor government transparency legislation in the upcoming session as he runs a campaign billed in part as aimed at fighting corruption. Sutton has served in the Senate since 2011, but term limits prevent him from running for the seat this year. Sutton's legislative votes are likely to be scrutinized in the governor's race, and he could carry Democrats' top bills to help boost his profile.

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ATTORNEY GENERAL MARTY JACKLEY

A Republican candidate for governor, Jackley is taking a tough-on-meth approach to the Legislature this year with legislation to impose harsher penalties for dealing and manufacturing the drug. His agenda also includes a bill that would require companies to inform state residents whose personal information was stolen in a data breach, a potentially popular change among voters.

Jackley and U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem are competing in the Republican primary to succeed Daugaard.

REPUBLICAN SEN. NEAL TAPIO

The first-term lawmaker is forming an unofficial legislative panel to examine state immigration and refugee resettlement programs and propose legislation. The potentially attention-grabbing commission comes as Tapio, who headed President Donald Trump's campaign in South Dakota, prepares to run for U.S. House.

He would face Secretary of State Shantel Krebs and Dusty Johnson, a former public utilities commissioner, in the 2018 Republican primary.

GOP lawmaker starting group on immigration, refugee programs

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — State Sen. Neal Tapio says he will form a legislative work group to examine state immigration and refugee resettlement programs in South Dakota.

The Watertown Republican said Monday the group would analyze the programs' "financial and societal" effects on state and local governments.

Tapio says it will be made up of lawmakers, but won't be an official legislative committee.

Tapio says the committee plans to create an "exhaustive" analysis including financial impacts in areas like education and law enforcement.

Taneeza Islam, executive director of the nonprofit South Dakota Voices for Peace, says immigrants, refugees and Muslims contribute significantly to the state's economy and culture.

The announcement comes as Tapio prepares to run for Congress. He would face Secretary of State Shantel Krebs and Dusty Johnson, a former public utilities commissioner, in the 2018 Republican primary.

South Dakota inmate serving life term dies in hospital

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota prison inmate serving a life sentence for first-degree manslaughter has died after a long illness.

The state Department of Corrections says 79-year-old Robert Brim died Sunday at a Sioux Falls hospital. An autopsy is planned.

Brim received the life sentence in 1958 for shooting Irene Stoeser, who was pregnant at the time. Stoeser's 3-year-old daughter also was shot and killed during the incident, but Brim was charged only with the death of Irene Stoeser. A 4-year-old son was also injured.

KCCR reports Brim was employed by Stoeser and her husband on their farm near Hayes in Stanley County.

Information from: KCCR-AM, <http://www.todayskccr.com/>

Girl's Basketball Polls **By The Associated Press**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school girl's preseason poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking.<

Class AA

Rank-School FPV Rcd TP Pvs

1. Rapid City Stevens (18) 8-0 107 3

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2. Aberdeen Central (3) 7-1 90 1
 3. Harrisburg (3) 6-1 70 2
 4. Brandon Valley - 5-1 65 4
 5. Sioux Falls Lincoln - 6-2 27 5
- Others receiving votes: Brookings 1.<

Class A

Rank-School FPV Rcd TP Pvs

1. St. Thomas More (23) 8-0 119 1
2. Vermillion - 7-0 81 2
3. Lennox - 8-1 67 3
4. Dell Rapids - 7-1 37 4
5. Belle Fourche (1) 8-0 24 RV

Others receiving votes: West Central 10, Crow Creek 9, McCook Central/Montrose 8, Hamlin 3, Dakota Valley 2.<

Class B

Rank-School FPV Rcd TP Pvs

1. Sully Buttes (22) 6-0 119 1
2. De Smet - 7-1 67 3
3. Castlewood (1) 6-0 63 5
4. Warner - 6-2 25 2
5. Irene-Wakonda - 8-1 24 RV

Others receiving votes: Faith 20, Waubay-Summit (1) 15, Hanson 13, Avon 10, Faulkton 6, Menno 3, Ethan 2.<

Boy's Basketball Polls By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school boy's preseason poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking.<

Class AA

Rank-School;FPV;Rcd;TP;Pvs

1. Sioux Falls Lincoln;(15);7-1;107;1
2. Harrisburg;(8);6-0;103;2
3. Rapid City Central;(1);9-0;77;5
4. Rapid City Stevens;-;7-1;38;RV
5. Sioux Falls O'Gorman;-;5-3;33;3

Others receiving votes: Sioux Falls Washington 1, Brandon Valley 1.<

Class A

Rank-School;FPV;Rcd;TP;Pvs

1. Madison;(22);7-0;114;2
2. Sioux Falls Christian;(2);6-0;95;3
3. Sioux Valley;-;9-1;58;5
4. Tea Area;-;4-2;47;1
5. Aberdeen Roncalli;-;6-0;13;RV

Others receiving votes: Dell Rapids 12, Hamlin 12, Dakota Valley 4, Sisseton 2, Red Cloud 2, Crow Creek

1.<

Class B

Rank-School;FPV;Rcd;TP;Pvs

1. Clark-Willow Lake;(12);6-0;106;2

2. Bridgewater-Emery;(10);6-2;94;1

3. Sully Buttes;-;5-1;59;3

4. Warner;-;6-0;31;RV

5. White River;(2);7-0;28;RV

Others receiving votes: Langford Area 16, Canistota 13, Irene-Wakonda 10, Colome 3.<

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Review recommends monitoring of Sioux Falls center siding

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An independent review of the \$117 million events center in Sioux Falls has concluded that its flawed siding panels are structurally sound.

But consultants found that the use of flat paneling approved by the city has led to ripples in the siding on the Denny Sanford Premier Center.

Mayor Mike Huether and Public Works Director Mark Cotter shared the results of consultants Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc.'s findings during a news conference Friday, the Argus Leader reported .

The flawed paneling was the subject of a city settlement with five construction companies in 2015. Huether's administration late last year approved the hiring of an independent consultant to assess whether the exterior panels are protecting the building's interior.

An earlier forensic report concluded that the flawed paneling wasn't worth replacing, but the report was never made public.

City secrecy surrounding the paneling problems prompted calls from the public, City Council and chamber of commerce for more transparency.

"The most prudent way to finally quell the conversation, the negativity and the naysayers, we felt this would be a good investment," said Huether.

In the report, the consultants said that the use of flat panels led to buckling.

"To avoid this appearance, the panels needed to be precurved," the report said. "The visual appearance of warping, buckling, or bulging at joints is most likely due to the lapped construction of flat metal panels around a curved building."

The report recommended regularly inspecting panels to identify if they need to be replaced. The consultants warned that buckling and warping could worsen.

The consultants will discuss their findings with the City Council later this month.

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

Woman found dead following pursuit was homicide victim

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's attorney general says an autopsy confirms the death of a California woman found in the back seat of an SUV following an interstate chase is a homicide.

Marty Jackley said Monday that preliminary results show 58-year-old Michelle Walsh died from head and neck injuries. Her body was discovered after Highway Patrol troopers chased and stopped the SUV driven by her son, 30-year-old Tosten Walsh Lommen. He's facing charges of eluding authorities and drunken driving, but has not been charged with his mother's death.

The Highway Patrol says the New Year's Day pursuit on Interstate 90 from Spearfish to Rapid City, about 50 miles (80 kilometers), reached speeds of more than 100 miles per hour. Officers used spike strips on the roadway to disable the SUV and arrest Lommen.

Victims of fatal Sioux Falls shooting identified

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police have identified two men fatally shot outside an apartment building in Sioux Falls.

Twenty-eight-year-old Samuel Louis Crockett died at a hospital and 30-year-old Corey James Zephier died at the scene of the shooting Friday. Arrest warrants have been issued for two people, one for first-degree murder and the other for accessory to first-degree robbery.

The Argus Leader reports police say either the victims or the suspects were trying to steal drugs from the others. Police are also seeking a third person for concealing a felony.

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

Intel CEO: Fixes on the way for serious chip security flaws

By MATT O'BRIEN, AP Technology Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Intel has big plans to steer toward new business in self-driving cars, virtual reality and other cutting-edge technologies. But first it has to pull out of a skid caused by a serious security flaw in its processor chips, which undergird many of the world's smartphones and personal computers.

Intel CEO Brian Krzanich opened his keynote talk Monday night at the annual CES gadget show in Las Vegas by addressing the hard-to-fix flaws disclosed by security researchers last week. At an event known for its technological optimism, it was an unusually sober and high-profile reminder of the information security and privacy dangers lurking beneath many of the tech industry's gee-whiz wonders.

Some researchers have argued that the flaws reflect a fundamental hardware defect that can't be fixed short of a recall. But Intel has pushed back against that idea, arguing that the problems can be "mitigated" by software or firmware upgrades. Companies from Microsoft to Apple have announced efforts to patch the vulnerabilities.

And Krzanich promised fixes in the coming week to 90 percent of the processors Intel has made in the past five years, consistent with an earlier statement from the company. He added that updates for the remainder of those recent processors should follow by the end of January. Krzanich did not address the company's plans for older chips.

To date, he said, Intel has seen no sign that anyone has stolen data by exploiting the two vulnerabilities, known as Meltdown and Spectre. The problems were disclosed last week by Google's Project Zero security team and other researchers. Krzanich commended the "remarkable" collaboration among tech companies to address what he called an "industry-wide" problem.

While Meltdown is believed to primarily affect processors built by Intel, Spectre also affects many of the company's rivals. Flaws affecting the processor chips also endanger the PCs, internet browsers, cloud computing services and other technology that rely on them. Both bugs could be exploited through what's known as a side-channel attack that could extract passwords and other sensitive data from the chip's memory.

Krzanich himself has been in the spotlight over the security issue after it was revealed that he had sold about \$39 million in his own Intel stocks and options in late November, before the vulnerability was publicly known. Intel says it was notified about the bugs in June.

The company didn't respond to inquiries about the timing of Krzanich's divestments, but a spokeswoman said it was unrelated to the security flaws.

During his presentation Monday, Krzanich also launched into a flashy and wide-ranging celebration of the way Intel and its partners are harnessing data for futuristic innovations, from 3D entertainment partnerships with Paramount Pictures to virtual-reality collaborations with the 2018 Winter Olympics and a new breakthrough in so-called quantum computing.

A self-driving Ford Fusion rolled onto the stage of the casino theater where Krzanich gave his talk. It's the first of a 100-vehicle test fleet run by Mobileeye, the Israel-based software company that Intel bought for \$15 billion last year. Mobileeye processes the information cars "see" from cameras and sensors.

A flying taxi — the German-built Volocopter — later lifted from the stage. Then came the drones, in a musical performance that Krzanich said would mark a Guinness record for the “world’s first 100-drone indoor lightshow without GPS.”

AP source: Mueller conveys interest in questioning Trump

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller’s team of investigators has expressed interest in speaking with President Donald Trump as part of a probe into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign, a person familiar with the matter said Monday.

The prospect of an interview with the president has come up in recent discussions between Mueller’s team and Trump lawyers, but no details have been worked out, including the scope of questions that the president would agree to answer if an interview were to actually take place, according to the person. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation.

When or even if an interview would occur was not immediately clear, nor were the terms for the interview or whether Trump’s lawyers would seek to narrow the range of questions or topics that prosecutors would cover. Trump’s lawyers have previously stated their determination to cooperate with Mueller’s requests.

It’s not surprising that investigators would ultimately seek to interview the president given his role in several episodes under scrutiny by Mueller. Any interview of Trump would be a likely indication that the investigation was in its final stages — investigators typically look to interview main subjects in their inquiries near the end of a probe.

Mueller for months has led a team of prosecutors and agents investigating whether Russia and Trump’s Republican campaign coordinated to sway the 2016 election, and whether Trump has worked to obstruct an FBI investigation into his aides, including by firing the FBI director, James Comey.

Comey has said that several months before he was dismissed, Trump told him he hoped he would end an investigation into his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn.

Mueller’s team recently concluded a series of interviews with many current and former White House aides, including former chief of staff Reince Priebus and the president’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner.

Four people have been charged so far, including Flynn, who pleaded guilty in December to lying to the FBI about his conversations with the Russian ambassador. Former campaign chairman Paul Manafort was indicted on charges tied to foreign lobbying work.

Peter Carr, a spokesman for Mueller, declined to comment, as did Trump lawyers John Dowd and Jay Sekulow.

Trump did not rule out the possibility of being questioned by Mueller when asked about it at a news conference Saturday. He said there had been “no collusion” and “no crime.”

“But we have been very open,” Trump said. “We could have done it two ways. We could have been very closed and it would have taken years. But you know, it’s sort of like, when you’ve done nothing wrong, let’s be open and get it over with.”

A White House spokesman pointed to a statement from White House lawyer Ty Cobb saying the White House doesn’t publicly discuss its conversations with Mueller but was continuing to cooperate “in order to facilitate the earliest possible resolution.”

Associated Press writer Chad Day contributed to this report.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

North Korea to join Olympics in South Korea as tensions ease

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The rival Koreas took steps toward reducing their bitter animosity during rare talks Tuesday, as North Korea agreed to send a delegation to next month's Winter Olympics in South Korea and reopen a military hotline.

The meeting, the first of its kind in about two years, was arranged after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un made an abrupt push for improved ties with South Korea following a year of elevated tensions with the outside world over his expanding nuclear and missile programs. Critics say Kim may be trying to divide Seoul and Washington in a bid to weaken international pressure and sanctions on the North.

During the talks, the North Korean delegation said it would send an Olympic delegation, including officials, athletes, cheerleaders, journalists and others, South Korean Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung told reporters, according to media footage from the border village of Panmunjom, the venue of the talks.

North Korea is weak in winter sports and a pair of figure skaters, Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik, earlier became the only North Korean athletes to qualify for next month's Pyeongchang Games before the North missed a confirmation deadline. The International Olympic Committee said Monday it has "kept the door open" for North Korea to take part in the games.

Chun, one of five South Korean negotiators, said the South proposed that North Korea send a big delegation and march with South Korean athletes during the Feb. 9-25 games' opening and closing ceremonies.

He said South Korea also suggested resuming temporary reunions of families separated by war and offered military talks designed to reduce animosities in front-line areas. South Korea also stressed the need to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, Chun said.

North Korea responded by saying the two Koreas must try to promote peace and reconciliation through dialogue, he said.

The two sides' chief delegates were meeting Tuesday evening to discuss the wording of a joint statement, the media reports said, but it wasn't immediately known when the talks would end. Past inter-Korean talks have often continued until late at night.

The countries have a long history of failing to follow through with rapprochement accords. In 2015, negotiators met for nearly 40 hours before announcing a deal to pull back from a military standoff caused by land mine blasts that maimed two South Korean soldiers. But animosities flared again several months later after the North's fourth nuclear test.

The meeting's venue, Panmunjom, is the only place on the tense border where North and South Korean soldiers are just meters (feet) away from each other. A North Korean soldier in November defected to the South across Panmunjom amid a hail of bullets fired by his comrades. He was hit five times but survived.

Tuesday's meeting began in an amicable atmosphere, with chief North Korean delegate Ri Son Gwon saying he hoped the talks would give "a New Year's first gift — precious results to the Korean nation." Ri's South Korean counterpart, Unification Minister Cho Myoung-gyon, said he also hoped they would come up with a "good gift" for people in both Koreas.

Later Tuesday, Chun said North Korea told the South Korean delegation that it restored a military hotline with the South, in the second reopening of a suspended inter-Korean communication channel in about a week.

All major inter-Korean communication channels had been shut down amid animosities over the North's nuclear program in recent years. But North Korea reopened one of the channels last week as signs emerged of improving ties.

An agreement on the North's Olympic participation had been widely expected before the talks began, but the Koreas remain sharply at odds over how to improve their overall ties.

North Korea is expected to demand rewards in return for South Korea's proposal of family reunions and military talks, such as a halt to South Korean propaganda broadcasts and a scaling back or halting of military drills with the U.S., observers say.

Suspension of the military drills would be unacceptable for Seoul because it would seriously undermine

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its alliance with its chief ally, the United States, which wants to put more pressure on North Korea. The North views the drills as a rehearsal for an invasion.

During an earlier era of inter-Korean detente, athletes from the two Koreas paraded together at international sports events such as the Olympics and fielded a unified Korean team. The government of current South Korean President Moon Jae-in wants the two Koreas to agree to similar reconciliatory steps at the Pyeongchang Games.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday expressed hope for some progress from the talks and said he was open to talking with Kim himself. But U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley later said the U.S. administration isn't changing its conditions regarding talks with North Korea, saying Kim first needs to stop weapons testing for a "significant amount of time."

In his New Year's Day address, Kim said he was willing to send a delegation to the Pyeongchang Games. He urged Seoul to halt the military drills with the U.S. and said he has a "nuclear button" to launch missiles at any target in the United States. Moon welcomed Kim's outreach and proposed the talks at Panmunjom.

Trump and Kim traded bellicose rhetoric and crude insults last year, as North Korea conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear detonation and three tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. RARE KOREAS TALKS BEAR FRUIT

Pyeongyang will send a delegation to the Winter Olympics across the border in the South and restore the military hotline with Seoul.

2. WHO IS LOSING TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS IN US

Washington's move affecting nearly 200,000 Salvadorans who may have to return next year raises worries in El Salvador that a major source of income for the poor nation will be cut off.

3. IRAN LAWMAKER SAYS 3,700 ARRESTED IN DAYS OF PROTEST, UNREST

The protests, which vented anger at high unemployment and official corruption, were the largest seen in Iran since the disputed 2009 presidential election.

4. AP SOURCE: MUELLER CONVEYS INTEREST IN QUESTIONING TRUMP

No details have been worked out, including the scope of questions that the president would agree to answer from the special counsel's team if an interview were to actually take place.

5. 'A BRIGHTER MORNING EVEN IN OUR DARKEST NIGHTS'

Oprah Winfrey's impassioned call at the Golden Globes has Democratic Party activists buzzing about the media superstar and the 2020 presidential race — even if it's only a fantasy.

6. WALK-OFF: ALABAMA BEATS GEORGIA IN OT FOR NATIONAL TITLE

Freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa comes off the bench to spark a comeback and throws a 41-yard touchdown to DeVonta Smith to give the Crimson Tide a 26-23 overtime victory against the Bulldogs.

7. HOW DETAINED TEEN IS VIEWED IN MIDDLE EAST

Seen by the Palestinians as a hero and by Israelis as a publicity-seeking trouble maker, Ahed Tamimi has come to embody rival, grievance-filled narratives of the long-running conflict.

8. SUPREME COURT HEARING VEHICLE SEARCH CASES

The high court is taking up a case involving the search of a rental car that lawyers say has the potential to affect the 115 million car rentals annually in the United States.

9. FRANCE INVESTIGATES APPLE FOR SLOWING DOWN OLD IPHONES

In France it is illegal to intentionally shorten the lifespan of a product in order to encourage customers replace it.

10. WHAT LEADS RACE FOR BRITISH ACADEMY AWARDS

Cold War monster movie "The Shape of Water" led nominations as organizers announced a new female host and promised to fight sexism and sexual misconduct in showbiz.

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Walk-off: Alabama beats Georgia in OT for national title

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — To add another championship to the greatest dynasty college football has ever seen, Alabama turned to its quarterback of the future, and Tua Tagovailoa proved that his time is now.

The freshman quarterback, who had played mostly mop-up duty this season, came off the bench to spark a comeback and threw a 41-yard touchdown to DeVonta Smith that gave No. 4 Alabama a 26-23 overtime victory against No. 3 Georgia on Monday night for the College Football Playoff national championship.

Tagovailoa entered the game at halftime, replacing a struggling Jalen Hurts, and threw three touchdown passes to give the Crimson Tide its fifth national championship since 2009 under coach Nick Saban.

"He just stepped in and did his thing," Hurts said. "He's built for stuff like this. I'm so happy for him." The Tide might have a quarterback controversy ahead, but first Alabama will celebrate another title.

For the third straight season, Alabama played a classic CFP final. The Tide split two with Clemson, losing last season on a touchdown with a second left.

What was Saban thinking as the winning pass soared this time?

"I could not believe it," he said. "There's lots of highs and lows. Last year we lost on the last play of the game and this year we won on the last play of the game. These kids really responded the right way. We said last year, 'Don't waste the feeling.' They sure didn't, the way they played tonight."

Smith streaked into the end zone and moments later confetti rained and even Saban seemed almost giddy after watching maybe the most improbable victory of his unmatched career. A few hours later, Alabama was voted No. 1 in the final AP college football poll for the 11th time, three more than any other program.

After Alabama kicker Andy Pappanastos missed a 36-yard field goal that would have won it for the Tide (13-1) in the final seconds of regulation, Georgia (13-2) took the lead with a 51-yard field goal from Rodrigo Blankenship in overtime.

Tagovailoa took a terrible sack on Alabama's first play, losing 16 yards. On the next he found Smith, another freshman, and hit him in stride for the national championship.

Tagovailoa was brilliant at times, though he had a few freshman moments. He threw an interception when he tried to pass on a running play and all his receivers were blocking. He also darted away from pass rushers and made some impeccable throws, showing poise of a veteran. Facing fourth-and-goal from the 7, down seven, the left-hander moved to his left and zipped a pass through traffic that hit Calvin Ridley in the numbers for the tying score with 3:49 left in the fourth quarter.

He finished 14 for 24 for 166 yards. The winning play was, basically, four receivers going deep.

"After the sack, we just got up and took it to the next play," Tagovailoa said. "I looked back out, and he was wide open. Smitty was wide open." Freshmen were everywhere for the Alabama offense in the second half: Najee Harris at running back; Henry Ruggs III at receiver; Alex Leatherwood at left tackle after All-American Jonah Williams was hurt. It's a testament to the relentless machine Saban has built.

But this game will be remembered most for his decision to change quarterbacks trailing 13-0.

"I just thought we had to throw the ball, and I felt he could do it better, and he did," Saban said Tagovailoa. "He did a good job, made some plays in the passing game. Just a great win. I'm so happy for Alabama fans. Great for our players. Unbelievable."

Saban now has six major poll national championships, including one at LSU, matching the record set by the man who led Alabama's last dynasty, coach Paul Bear Bryant.

This was nothing like the others.

With President Trump in attendance, the all-Southeastern Conference matchup was all Georgia in the first half before Saban pulled Hurts and the five-star recruit from Hawaii entered. The president watched the second half from Air Force One.

"I don't know how Coach Saban found me all the way in Hawaii from Alabama," Tagovailoa said. "Thank God he found me and we're here right now."

The Tide trailed 20-7 in the third quarter after Georgia's freshman quarterback, Jake Fromm, hit Mecole Hardman for an 80-yard touchdown pass that had the Georgia fans feeling good about ending a national title drought that dates back to 1980.

Fromm threw for 232 yards and for a while it looked as if he was going to be the freshman star of the game, the first to true freshman to lead his team to a national title season since Jamelle Holieway for Oklahoma in 1985.

"I mean, if you want to find out about Jake Fromm, go ask those guys on the other side of the ball, and they'll tell you because that's a really good defense he just went against," Georgia coach Smart said.

A little less than a year after the Atlanta Falcons blew a 25-point lead and lost in overtime to the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl, there was more pain for many of the local fans. Two years ago, Georgia brought in Smart, Saban's top lieutenant, to bring to his alma mater a dose of Alabama's Process.

Smart, who spent 11 seasons with Saban — eight as defensive coordinator in Tuscaloosa — quickly built 'Bama East. It was Georgia that won the SEC this season. Alabama had to slip into the playoff without even winning its division.

With the title game being played 70 miles from Georgia's campus in Athens, Dawgs fans packed Mercedes-Benz Stadium, but it turned out to be sweet home for Alabama. Now Saban is 12-0 against his former assistants.

But not without angst.

Alabama drove into the red zone in the final minute and Saban started playing for a winning field goal to end the game. A nervous quiet gripped the crowd of 77,430 as 'Bama burned the clock. With the ball spotted in the middle of the field, Pappanastos lined up for a kick to win the national championship. The snap and hold looked fine, but the kicked missed badly to the left.

For the second straight week, Georgia was going to overtime. The Bulldogs beat Oklahoma in a wild Rose Bowl in double overtime to get here, and after Jonathan Ledbetter and Davin Bellamy sacked Tagovailoa for a big loss on the first play, Alabama was in trouble — second-and-26.

Not for long. Tagovailoa looked off the safety and threw the biggest touchdown pass in the history of Alabama football.

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

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

Salvadorans fear their country not prepared for returnees

By **MARCOS ALEMAN**, Associated Press

SANTA TECLA, El Salvador (AP) — Being deported to an El Salvador he hadn't seen in more than three decades was a trauma Hugo Castro recalls clearly.

The 51-year-old said Monday that his country must begin preparing now to receive the nearly 200,000 Salvadorans who may have to return following the Trump administration's decision to lift their temporary protected status next year.

"The main problem for deportees is that they're made invisible. They're rejected, there's no work. They don't help us," said Castro, who was deported from the U.S. in 2015.

The U.S. announcement brought fears that a major source of income for this poor Central American nation will be cut off and that families could be separated. But there was also a hint of optimism that Salvadorans with many years of experience in the U.S. could bring expertise and investment to spur the economy.

Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said Salvadorans who have stayed in the U.S. with temporary protected status — only a fraction of the estimated 2 million Salvadorans living there — would have to leave by Sept. 9, 2019, unless Congress came up with a solution allowing them to stay.

The temporary protected status program has been offered to citizens from a number of countries fleeing natural disasters or other instability. The affected Salvadorans received the status after earthquakes in 2001 killed more than 1,000 people. Thousands more who arrived in the United States in recent years fleeing gang violence were not eligible.

Castro went to the United States as a teenager to study at a college in Atlanta. During his junior year his

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family back home lost nearly everything when the bank seized their coffee operation. Dropping out, he worked at a country club and a book store and became manager of a Mexican restaurant. Then a run-in with police led to more than two years in immigration detention as he unsuccessfully fought deportation after living in the U.S. for three decades.

His first three months back in El Salvador were the worst, he said. He suffered from depression and didn't want to leave his mother's home. People told him a 49-year-old man should not depend on his mother to support him, so he started looking for work.

"I went everywhere, to restaurants. I told them I had a lot of experience and that I spoke English, but they rejected me," he said.

Eight months after arriving, Castro finally found work at the Salvadoran Immigrant Institute. The non-profit group recognized the value of Castro's bilingualism and the experience he had gained through the deportation process and it put him to work helping other deportees reintegrate into society.

Castro said programs like his are very limited and more needs to be done for returnees.

"The government has to get ready, partner with businesses, with all of society, the nonprofits and create assistance programs," he said.

As an example, he noted that in 2016, the country received 52,000 deportees from the United States and Mexico. Meanwhile, a government program to give small cash grants to allow deportees to open their own businesses has only graduated 140 people, he said.

The biggest worry among many Salvadorans is that their nation of 6.2 million people will see a big drop in the amount of cash sent home by countrymen working in the United States. Salvadorans transferred more than \$4.5 billion from the U.S. in 2016, accounting for 17 percent of El Salvador's economy, according to government figures.

Luis Membreno, an economic analyst in El Salvador, said that fear may be overblown. He said Salvadorans who have protected status in the U.S. tend to be more long-standing migrants who have their families there and send less money home. Many more Salvadorans are not in the program, with growing numbers entering the U.S. illegally over the past decade fleeing violence and poverty.

"I don't think that family remittances are going to fall in the short term," Membreno said.

He also thinks some Salvadoran families in the U.S. could start sending more money back — something that started when Donald Trump was elected president — so remittance figures could rise.

In addition, he said, many of those eventually returning could be skilled and have money to invest. "All of this could generate a certain dynamism in the economy," he said.

Cesar Rios, director of the nonprofit group where Castro works, is less optimistic. "Our country is not prepared to receive thousands of Salvadorans," he said.

Deportees are often targeted by gangs, because they believe they have money. Police also target them, because of the stigma that they are criminals.

"There's no work," Rios said. "Between 200 and 300 Salvadorans continue leaving every day for the United States."

Ernesto Godoy, standing outside a Western Union money transfer office in San Salvador, said he receives money from relatives with protected status in the United States. He worried the decision could lead to bigger problems in El Salvador.

"It's going to affect us, not only me, but on a national level, because here in El Salvador we make ends meet with remittances from the United States," Godoy said.

Associated Press writer Mark Stevenson in Mexico City contributed to this report.

Iran lawmaker says 3,700 arrested in days of protest, unrest

By AMIR VAHDAT and JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — An Iranian reformist lawmaker said Tuesday that some 3,700 people were arrested in the days of protests and unrest that roiled Iran over the past two weeks, offering a far higher number than authorities previously released.

The protests, which vented anger at high unemployment and official corruption, were the largest seen in Iran since the disputed 2009 presidential election, and some demonstrators called for the overthrow of the government. At least 21 people have been killed in the unrest surrounding the protests.

The official news website of the Iranian parliament, icana.ir, quoted Mahmoud Sadeghi of Tehran as saying that different security and intelligence forces detained the protesters, making it difficult to know the exact number of detainees. He did not elaborate, nor did he say where he got the figure.

Previously, authorities have said “hundreds” were arrested in Tehran alone, not offering a total figure for arrests as the demonstrations spread into the Iranian countryside, including small towns.

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli has said about 42,000 people at most took part in the anti-government protests. Sadeghi’s figure of arrested offered Tuesday would mean nearly 10 percent of those who demonstrated were arrested.

On Sunday, Tehran prosecutor, Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi, said that 70 of the detained protesters have been released on bail during the last 48 hours. He added that there would be more releases from detention, except for the main instigators of the riots who will be “dealt with seriously.”

Also Sunday, Iranian lawmakers held a closed session in which senior security officials briefed them on the protests and the conditions of the detainees, the state-run IRNA news agency reported.

Iranian authorities have said that the protests are waning. That’s in part due to the government blocking access to the popular messaging app Telegram, which demonstrators used to share images of the rallies and organize. Authorities also have deployed additional police and members of the Basij, a volunteer organization affiliated with Iran’s paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

It remains difficult for journalists and outsiders to piece together what’s happening beyond Tehran, as Iran is a vast country of 80 million and travel there is restricted.

In recent days, government supporters have held several mass rallies across the country to protest the unrest.

The United States and Israel have expressed support for the protests, which began on Dec. 28 in Iran’s second largest city, Mashhad, but deny Iranian government allegations that they fomented them.

U.S. officials and analysts studying Iran say believe conservative opponents of President Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate within Iran’s clerically overseen government, started the demonstrations in Mashhad, but quickly lost control of them.

Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday also blamed “Americans and Zionists” for the protests, saying money supporting them came from “one of the filthy-rich governments of the Persian Gulf.”

Khamenei, however, also stressed that those with legitimate complaints about Iran’s economy should be heard.

“We should differentiate between people’s righteous and honest demands on one side and barbaric and disruptive moves by another group,” he said. “These should be distinguished from each other.”

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Alabama's youngsters deliver on national championship stage

By JOHN ZENOR, AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Alabama's latest group of hotshot recruits delivered on college football's biggest stage. And the Crimson Tide needed every big play from them.

Quarterback Tua Tagovailoa capped a second-half comeback with a 41-yard touchdown pass in overtime to fellow freshman DeVonta Smith in Monday night's 26-23 win over Georgia to give the Tide a fifth national championship in nine years.

The youth movement started well before that play. It featured runs by Najee Harris and a touchdown reception by Henry Ruggs III with help from a big catch by Jerry Jeudy.

"When the game that mattered most came around and we got opportunities, we made the most out of it," Harris said.

The outgoing stars passed the torch to the next wave a little earlier than expected.

Tagovailoa replaced starter Jalen Hurts to start the second half with Alabama down 13-0. He passed for 166 yards and three touchdowns and flashed some running ability, too.

Harris ran for 64 yards on six carries and delivered some big fourth-quarter runs. He had a 16-yarder and a 35-yarder to set up a field goal and help keep Alabama alive.

Ruggs caught a 6-yard touchdown pass in the third quarter. Jeudy had a 20-yard catch on Alabama's tying touchdown drive late in the fourth.

Then came Smith and Tagovailoa and a final freshman connection on second and 26 after a sack.

"I looked at Tua and said, 'Trust me,' and he nodded his head," Smith said. "When I saw they were in Cover 2, I knew we had a chance."

The freshmen were matter of fact about their accomplishments. Making plays and winning titles is why the prized recruits came to Alabama, after all.

"When they just called anybody's number, we were ready," Smith said. "That's that everybody comes here to do. When your number is called, you're here just to make plays."

The players who played pivotal roles in getting Alabama to the title game — like Hurts and tailback Damien Harris — didn't seem to mind sharing the spotlight with the young 'uns.

Tagovailoa, Najee Harris and Jeudy were all five-star recruits joining the fold of a team that reloads annually.

"We expect stuff like that," Damien Harris said. "No matter who you are, no matter how long you're here, no matter what your experience is, whenever you get here you're expected to play to a standard. We've got a lot of young guys that were able to do that this year and in this game. We had a lot of older guys come in and contribute as well."

Benched or not, Hurts was in the middle of the celebration and all smiles in the locker room. He had led Alabama to the national title game as both a freshman and sophomore but struggled in the first half.

Coach Nick Saban benched him in what Hurts called "an executive decision."

"As a competitor, of course you understand it," Hurts said. "As a team player and as a leader, you've got to do what's best for the team. If that's what was best for the team, then I support it completely."

"In the national championship game, all the personal things, that's out the window. You want to win this game for the team."

Venue for Korea talks is potential flash point inside border

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The two Koreas' rare high-profile talks Tuesday took place at the jointly controlled area inside the world's most heavily fortified border — the same place where North Korean soldiers recently sprayed bullets at a comrade who was making a daring dash for freedom.

The defecting soldier was hit five times, but he survived and is now recovering in South Korea. The dramatic video of his defection, released by the American-led U.N. command, showed again why the area, called Panmunjom, is known as one of the scariest places on Earth.

On Tuesday, Panmunjom captured international headlines again when a group of high-level North Korean officials walked across concrete slabs that make up a military demarcation line for their first formal talks with South Korea in more than two years.

A look at Panmunjom, whose mystique makes the place not only a potential flash point, but also a venue for talks and a tourist site:

NO-MAN'S LAND

Panmunjom sits inside the 4-kilometer (2.5-mile) -wide Demilitarized Zone, a buffer zone created at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. Once an obscure farming village, it was where the armistice that ended the Korean War was signed.

No civilians live there, and a cluster of blue huts form a Joint Security Area overseen by North Korea and the U.N. Command.

The 248-kilometer (154-mile) -long DMZ is guarded on both sides by mines, razor-wire fences, tank traps and combat-ready troops. But Panmunjom is the only DMZ location where North and South Korean troops stand only several feet away from each other. North Korean soldiers wearing lapel pins with the portraits of late North Korean leaders use binoculars to monitor the South, while tall South Korean troops wearing aviator sunglasses stand motionless like statues.

This unique scene makes it a popular tourist spot, drawing curious visitors to both sides of the village.

PAST BLOODSHED

The most notorious incident at Panmunjom happened in the summer of 1976, when two American army officers were killed by ax-wielding North Korean soldiers.

The U.S. officers had been sent out to trim a 12-meter (40-foot) tree that obstructed the view from a checkpoint. The attack prompted Washington to fly nuclear-capable B-52 bombers toward the DMZ to intimidate North Korea. Then-North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, the late grandfather of current ruler Kim Jong Un, expressed regret over the incident before animosities eased.

In 1984, North Korean and U.N. Command soldiers traded gunfire after a Soviet citizen defected by sprinting to the South Korean sector of the truce village. The incident left three North Korean soldiers and one South Korean soldier dead.

The rival Koreas have had similar violent confrontations along other parts of the DMZ in the past. No deadly clashes have occurred in recent years, but a 2015 land mine blast that maimed two South Korean soldiers pushed the Koreas to the brink of an armed conflict. South Korea blames North Korea for the explosion.

VENUE FOR TALKS

Military officials from North Korea and the U.N. Command used to meet at Panmunjom to oversee the armistice. In recent years, it has been used for occasional talks between the two Koreas.

Tuesday's talks were being held at Peace House, a Seoul-run conference hall located in the southern half of the village. The facility has equipment that can feed real-time closed-circuit TV footage of the talks to South Korean leaders in Seoul. It also allows North Korean leaders in Pyongyang to listen to the talks, according to South Korean media.

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North Korea operates another conference room, called "Panmungak," on the northern side of Panmunjom. Before Tuesdays' meeting, the most recent high-profile gathering in Panmunjom was in August 2015, when negotiators for the rivals met for nearly 40 hours and reached a deal that allowed them to pull back from a military standoff triggered by the land mine explosion.

U.S. PRESIDENTIAL VISITS

U.S. presidents and other top officials have often traveled to Panmunjom and other areas of the DMZ at times of heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula. They have peered through binoculars across the border and vowed to boost the U.S. military alliance with South Korea.

In 1993, then-President Bill Clinton visited Panmunjom when the North Korean nuclear crisis first flared. In 2002, President George W. Bush visited the DMZ a few weeks after he labeled North Korea part of an "axis of evil."

In 2012, ahead of a planned North Korean long-range rocket launch, President Barack Obama visited a frontline U.S. military camp just south of the DMZ and told American troops they are protectors of "freedom's frontier." Obama's trip came days after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited Panmunjom.

In November 2017, President Donald Trump planned to visit the DMZ to underscore his stance against North Korea's nuclear program when he came to South Korea as part of an Asian tour, but his plans were thwarted by heavy fog that prevented his helicopter from landing at the border area.

'American Idol' says it wants to get back to making stars

By DAVID BAUDER, AP Media Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — "American Idol" wants to get back in the business of making stars.

The longtime talent show, which is being revived by ABC starting on March 11, faded in ratings and cultural significance over its last seasons on Fox before ending in 2016.

The memorable talents boosted by the show — Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, Adam Lambert and the like — were all a part of the show's heyday a decade earlier.

Ryan Seacrest is back as host of "American Idol," but it will have three new judges in Luke Bryan, Katy Perry and Lionel Richie. They said on Monday they see themselves as mentors and instructors.

Challenged at a news conference to name the three final winners of "American Idol," none of the cast members or producers attempted it. Bryan acknowledged that was a weakness of the show's final years, and judges wanted to mold some memorable talent.

"We are wasting our time if we don't find another star," Perry said.

Richie said he's been asked often to do instructional videos on making it in the music business and he always resisted, wondering how many people would be interested. But he realized he would be able to offer that advice as a judge on "American Idol."

"A lot of our viewers will see themselves in some of these contestants," Perry said. "They will relate and they will feel hope ... hopefully they can be inspired to achieve their own dreams."

The judges said they saw themselves in the contestants because they were once there; Perry recalled the struggling days when frozen chicken nuggets from Trader Joe's was her regular dinner.

Seacrest said the show's format hasn't changed. He said the new judging panel is working well together — as opposed to stars circling in their own orbits — and that was an important goal in the reboot.

No one has necessarily emerged as a "bad cop" along the lines of Simon Cowell. Producers indicated that was an outdated view of the show. "I'm blunt but I can't be mean because I'm a woman," Perry said.

Much like in the show's final years, it wouldn't focus on marginally talented contestants during tryouts so they would be humiliated on television, said Trish Kinane, the show's executive producer.

The show will air on Sunday and Monday nights for eight weeks, then wind down to just Sunday when a new season of "Dancing With the Stars" premieres. Then, "Idol" will have a two-night finale on May 20 and 21.

The reboot has caused some bad blood: Fox executives haven't been happy that the show is coming

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back so soon and said that toward the end, producers wouldn't work with them to reduce costs that would make the show more viable; producers at "American Idol" didn't want Fox to cancel it in the first place.

— This story has been corrected spelling of Katy Perry's first name.

A small uptick in inter-Korean ties follows a tense year

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — What a difference a year makes.

North and South Korea sat down to talk Tuesday after a year of mounting tensions that saw North Korea test ever-more capable missiles and conduct its largest nuclear detonation ever, and the U.S. and its allies respond with sanctions and harsh rhetoric.

The seemingly intractable differences suddenly eased over the past week — though just a tad — in a series of developments that followed a suggestion by North Korea's leader that he might send a delegation to the upcoming Winter Olympics in South Korea.

A look at the buildup and easing of tensions:

— Jan. 1, 2017: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un says in a New Year's address that preparations for launching an intercontinental ballistic missile have "reached the final stage."

— Jan. 2, 2017: Donald Trump, then the U.S. president-elect, tweets, "North Korea just stated that it is in the final stages of developing a nuclear weapon capable of reaching parts of the U.S. It won't happen!"

— March 6, 2017: North Korea fires four ballistic missiles, and later says it was simulating nuclear strikes on U.S. military bases in Japan.

— April 12, 2017: Trump says in a televised interview that the U.S. is sending "an armada" of vessels to the Korean Peninsula, after the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier strike group is ordered to head there from Singapore. The move fans fears that Trump is weighing military action.

— April 15, 2017: North Korea marks the birth anniversary of founder Kim Il Sung with a massive military parade. Analysts say previously unseen rocket canisters and launcher trucks point to the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles and launch systems.

— June 23, 2017: North Korea's taekwondo demonstration team arrives in South Korea for its first performance in the rival country in 10 years.

— July 4, 2017: North Korea conducts its first flight test of an ICBM, the Hwasong-14. Kim says the United States would be displeased by the North's "package of gifts" delivered on America's Independence Day.

— July 28, 2017: North Korea fires another Hwasong-14. Experts say its range could reach into the U.S. mainland, including cities such as Chicago.

— Aug. 9, 2017: North Korea announces a plan to launch a salvo of missiles toward the U.S. territory of Guam, a major military hub in the Pacific. It never does.

— Aug. 29, 2017: North Korea fires an intermediate-range Hwasong-12 that flies over Japan before plunging into the northern Pacific Ocean.

— Sept. 3, 2017: North Korea carries out its sixth and most powerful nuclear test to date, saying it was a hydrogen bomb designed for use on ICBMs.

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Nov. 29, 2017: North Korea's third test of an ICBM demonstrates a potential range that could reach Washington, D.C.

Jan. 1, 2018: Kim says in his New Year's address that he has a nuclear button on his desk, but also calls for improved relations with the South and says his country is willing to discuss sending a delegation to February's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

Jan. 5, 2018: South Korea says North Korea has agreed to hold talks.

Jan. 6, 2018: Trump, expressing hope for some progress from the talks, says he is also open to talking with Kim. But his U.N. ambassador, Nikki Haley, says the next day that the U.S. administration isn't changing its conditions regarding talks, saying Kim would first need to stop weapons testing for a significant amount of time.

Jan. 9, 2018: At a meeting in the border village of Panmunjom, North Korea agrees to send a delegation including athletes to the Olympics.

Supreme Court hearing 2 vehicle search cases

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Terrence Byrd was driving his fiancée's rental car on a Pennsylvania highway when a state trooper pulled him over for an alleged minor traffic violation. He acted nervously during the stop, at one point telling troopers he had a marijuana cigarette in the car, and officers eventually asked to search the vehicle.

But because the rental agreement didn't authorize Byrd to drive the gray Ford Fusion, troopers told him they didn't actually need his consent for the search. And when troopers opened the trunk, they found body armor and about 2,500 little bags of heroin. Byrd later acknowledged he planned to sell the drugs for roughly \$7,000, and a court sentenced him to 10 years in prison.

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court will hear argument in two vehicle search cases including Byrd's. His attorneys argue his case has potential consequences for the 115 million car rentals that take place annually in the United States.

The court's decision has the potential to impact, in particular, low-income Americans, a significant portion of car renters, and black and Hispanic drivers, who are more likely to rent cars than white drivers, according to the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association of Criminal Defense lawyers, who filed a brief in the case.

Byrd tried to get the evidence from the search excluded from his case. But a court ruled that because Byrd was an unauthorized driver of the car he had no reasonable expectation of privacy in the car and therefore couldn't challenge the search using the Fourth Amendment, which protects against unreasonable searches. The Trump administration and courts in several parts of the country agree that's the right outcome. Other courts disagree.

Byrd's lawyers say rulings like the one against him mean police can conduct a search whenever they stop a rental car being driven by an unauthorized user, even if they don't believe they will find evidence of a crime in the car.

Byrd's case dates to 2014, when his fiancée Latasha Reed, with whom he has five children, rented a car from a Budget rental office in New Jersey. The government disputes their relationship, calling her Byrd's girlfriend, but both sides agree that the rental agreement limited the car's drivers to Reed, a spouse, co-workers on company business or anyone else who signed an additional form at the time of the rental, though no one did.

Even so, Reed handed over the keys as soon as she left the rental office and Byrd drove the car. He was later pulled over while driving alone near Harrisburg. The reasons the trooper who pulled him over

gave for finding Byrd's driving suspicious: he was driving with his hands placed as most people are taught to drive, at 10 and 2 on the wheel; his seat was positioned far from the steering wheel; he was driving a rental car and he spent too long in the left lane making a passing maneuver.

The second case before the court involves a Virginia man who was arrested after a police officer walked onto his driveway and pulled back a tarp covering a stolen motorcycle. Virginia's highest court found the officer's actions proper.

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

Trump gets a national anthem moment at football title game

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — President Donald Trump got his own national anthem moment Monday when he took the field before Alabama and Georgia faced off in the College Football Playoff National Championship.

Months after wading into the culture war over protests during the anthem, the president was greeted by tens of thousands in Atlanta with cheers and a smattering of boos. After ROTC members escorted him onto the field, the president stood with his hand over his heart and an American flag pin on his lapel. He sang a few words as Georgia's Zac Brown Band and a gospel choir performed the anthem.

Trump has criticized professional football players who kneel during the anthem to protest racial injustice, as well as the NFL itself for allowing it.

"We want our flag respected," Trump said earlier Monday during a speech in Nashville, Tennessee, "and we want our national anthem respected also."

Most of the college players remained in their locker rooms during the anthem.

The president watched the game from a private box overlooking the Alabama sideline, flanked by ROTC students. The Tuscaloosa News had reported that he would appear on the Alabama radio broadcast during the game, but that didn't happen. ESPN also unsuccessfully sought an interview.

Trump departed the stadium during halftime as Georgia led Alabama 13-0. Rapper Kendrick Lamar, who has been a critic of the president, performed during the break.

Minutes after Trump returned to the Washington area, Alabama won in overtime 26-23.

A few dozen protesters gathered near the stadium before the game, shouting anti-Trump slogans. But more fans seemed upset by the long lines to get into the event amid increased security.

Trump takes victory lap on taxes with rural Americans

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Connecting with rural Americans, President Donald Trump on Monday hailed his tax overhaul as a victory for family farmers and pitched his vision to expand access to broadband internet, a cornerstone of economic development in the nation's heartland.

"Those towers are going to go up and you're going to have great, great broadband," Trump told the annual convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

"Farm country is God's country," he declared.

Trump became the first president in a quarter-century to address the federation's convention, using the trip to Nashville as a backdrop for a White House report that included proposals to stimulate a segment of the national economy that has lagged behind others. His Southern swing also included a stop in Atlanta for the national college football championship game.

Joined by Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan., and a group of Tennessee lawmakers, Trump said most of the benefits of the tax legislation are "going to working families, small businesses, and who — the family farmer."

The package Trump signed into law last month provides generous tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest Americans, and more modest reductions for middle- and low-income individuals and families.

The president vastly inflated the value of the package in his speech, citing "a total of \$5.5 trillion in tax

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cuts, with most of those benefits going to working families, small businesses and who? The family farmer." The estimated value of the tax cuts is actually \$1.5 trillion for families and businesses because of cuts in deductions and the use of other steps to generate offsetting tax revenue.

The president warned against voting for Democrats in this November's midterm elections, saying they would undo the tax bill. "If the Democrats ever had the chance, the first thing they would do is get rid of it and raise up your taxes," Trump said.

"Oh, are you happy you voted for me," he added. "You are so lucky that I gave you that privilege."

Trump also highlighted the doubling of the threshold for the estate tax — earning a standing ovation from the audience— and the ability for companies to immediately write off the full cost of new equipment. He said that "in every decision we make, we are honoring America's proud farming legacy."

Central to the report is the assessment that the "provider for an equalization among rural America is connectivity; that high-speed internet should remain a high priority for the administration," said Ray Starling, the special assistant to the president for agriculture, trade and food assistance. The report calls for expediting federal permitting to allow for broadband internet expansion in rural areas and for making it easier for providers to place cell towers on federal lands.

Trump signed an executive order following his speech on rural broadband, aimed at easing the process to put private broadband infrastructure on federal property. The White House described the move, along with a memorandum directing the Interior Department to work on a plan to increase access to their facilities for broadband deployment, as "incremental," but the start of an effort to make progress on the issue.

White House officials said all work was in the early stages and did not offer an overall timeline. Officials noted the price tag for rural broadband expansion has been estimated at \$80 billion, but said the administration had not determined a cost.

The president also took credit for working to roll back the Obama administration's interpretation of the Clean Water Act, which had greatly expanded the list of bodies of water subject to federal regulation. The Farm Bureau ran a public relations campaign against the rule and called it "dangerous and unlawful."

The Agriculture and Rural Prosperity Task Force report highlights the importance of addressing the opioid crisis, which has disproportionately affected rural communities.

Trump also called on Congress to renew the farm bill this year, adding he supports providing for federal crop insurance. The massive federal legislation funds federal agriculture and food policy, and it offers assistance to rural communities.

From Nashville, Trump traveled to Atlanta to watch Alabama's Crimson Tide and Georgia's Bulldogs face off Monday night in the College Football Playoff National Championship. The game was played in Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the new \$1.5 billion home field of the Atlanta Falcons.

Before departing for the game, Trump referenced his ongoing defense of the American flag and the national anthem, saying there was enough space for to people to express their views. "We love our flag and we love our anthem and we want to keep it that way," he said.

The president was greeted by cheers and a smattering of boos when he took to the field in Atlanta, escorted by ROTC members. With his hand over his heart and an American flag pin on his lapel, Trump sang a few words as Georgia's Zac Brown Band and a gospel choir performed the anthem.

Trump left the game at halftime to return to the White House.

Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey and Ken Thomas in Washington and AP College Football Writer Ralph D. Russo in Atlanta contributed to this report.

US ends protections for Salvadoran immigrants, sparking fear

By LUIS ALONSO LUGO and ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration's decision to end special protections for about 200,000 Salvadoran immigrants filled many Salvadoran families with dread Monday, raising the possibility that they will be forced to abandon their roots in the U.S. and return to a violent homeland they have not known for years, even decades.

Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen gave Salvadorans with temporary protected status until Sept. 9, 2019, to leave the United States or face deportation. El Salvador becomes the fourth country since President Donald Trump took office to lose protection under the program, which provides humanitarian relief for people whose countries are hit with natural disasters or other strife.

The decision, while not surprising, was a severe blow to Salvadorans in New York, Houston, San Francisco and other major cities that have welcomed them since at least the 1980s.

Guillermo Mendoza, who came to the United States in 2000 when he was 19 years old, was anguished about what to do with his wife and two children who are U.S. citizens.

"What do I do? Do I leave the country and leave them here? That is a tough decision," said Mendoza, a safety manager at Shapiro & Duncan, a mechanical contractor company in Rockville, Maryland, near Washington.

Orlando Zepeda, who came to the U.S. in 1984 fleeing civil war in El Salvador, said the lack of surprise does not ease the sting for the 51-year-old Los Angeles-area man who works in building maintenance and has two American-born children.

"It's sad, because it's the same story of family separation from that time, and now history repeats itself with my children," Zepeda said in Spanish.

Many immigrants hope Congress can deliver a long-term reprieve by September 2019. If that fails, they face a grim choice: return to El Salvador voluntarily or live in the U.S. illegally under an administration that has dramatically increased deportation arrests.

Cristian Chavez Guevara, a 37-year-old Salvadoran immigrant in Houston who is raising two American stepchildren and a young cousin, said the decision would tear apart his family. He was unsure what to do.

"I have been building dreams for the future and raising hope for a better future not just for me but for my family," he said. "All of that came to a halt."

The action presents a serious challenge for El Salvador, a country of 6.2 million people whose economy counts on money sent by wage earners in the U.S. Over the past decade, growing numbers of Salvadorans — many coming as families or unaccompanied children — have entered the United States illegally through Mexico, fleeing violence and poverty.

In September 2016, the Obama administration extended protections for 18 months, saying El Salvador was still suffering the lingering effects of earthquakes in 2001 that killed more than 1,000 people. The administration said the country was temporarily unable to absorb such a large number of returning people.

Nielsen, who faced a Monday deadline on another extension, concluded that El Salvador has received significant international aid to recover from the earthquake, and homes, schools and hospitals there have been rebuilt.

"The substantial disruption of living conditions caused by the earthquake" no longer exists, the department said in a statement.

El Salvador President Salvador Sanchez Ceren spoke by phone Friday with Nielsen to renew his plea to extend status for 190,000 Salvadorans and allow more time for Congress to deliver a long-term fix for them to stay in the U.S. The country's top diplomat, Foreign Minister Hugo Martinez, said Monday's decision underscored a need for Congress to act.

The 18-month delay was small comfort for Teresa Salmerón, a Salvadoran woman who has relatives working in the United States.

"What are they going to do here? There is no work here," she said. "I live on the money they send home."

Democratic leaders and immigrant advocacy groups criticized the move. House Democratic Leader

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Nancy Pelosi called it "a heartbreaking blow to nearly a quarter of a million hard-working Salvadorans who are American in every way." Rep. Bennie Thompson, ranking Democrat on the House Homeland Security Committee, said it was "just the latest in a string of heartless, xenophobic actions from the Trump administration."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called it "heartbreaking" and said "many families will be devastated."

However, groups advocating immigration restrictions called it an important step for the humanitarian program's credibility.

"The past practice of allowing foreign nationals to remain in the United States long after an initial emergency in their home countries has ended has undermined the integrity of the program and essentially made the 'temporary' protected status a front operation for backdoor permanent immigration," said Roy Beck, president of NumbersUSA.

The decision comes amid intensifying talks between the White House and Congress on an immigration package that may include protections for hundreds of thousands of young immigrants who came to the country as children and were temporarily shielded from deportation under an Obama-era program. Trump said in September that he was ending Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, but gave Congress until March to act.

The U.S. created temporary protected status in 1990 to provide safe havens for people from countries affected by earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, war and other disasters. It currently shields people from 10 countries, more than half from El Salvador.

The benefit, which includes work authorization, can be renewed up to 18 months at a time by the Homeland Security secretary.

In November, Nielsen's predecessor, acting Secretary Elaine Duke, ended the protection for Haitians, requiring them to leave or adjust their legal status by July 22, 2019, and for Nicaraguans, giving them until Jan. 5, 2019. She delayed a decision affecting Hondurans, leaving that decision to Nielsen.

Last year, the Trump administration extended status for South Sudan and ended it for Sudan. Other countries covered are Nepal, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

Associated Press writers Amy Taxin in Los Angeles and Mark Stevenson in Mexico City contributed to this report. Spagat reported from San Diego.

Kentucky's Republican House speaker resigns leadership post

By ADAM BEAM and BRUCE SCHREINER, Associated Press

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky's Republican House speaker resigned his leadership post, declaring he did not want the secret sexual harassment settlement he signed to be a distraction from the chamber's legislative work.

But moments into his announcement Monday, he said the state's Republican governor was spreading lies about him from the "deepest pits of Hell" and vowed to expose those he says orchestrated his demise, "regardless of who they are and the position they hold."

While Jeff Hoover will no longer lead the House of Representatives, he still has a seat in the chamber's back row, where he plans to be a vocal member of the Republican majority. Meanwhile, eight of his Republican colleagues have filed formal disciplinary charges against him and have asked a special committee to recommend the House remove him from office.

"Of course (it will be a distraction.) How could it not be?" asked Republican Rep. Phil Moffett, one of the eight GOP members who signed the charges against Hoover. "It's only logical to say once this issue is behind us completely, it will not be a distraction anymore."

Kentucky lawmakers have plenty of work to do. They must fill a nearly billion-dollar budget hole that could require massive spending cuts since the conservative body is averse to tax increases. They have to find a solution for a public pension system that is one of the worst funded retirement plans in the country.

And they have to repair a broken leadership structure that has left the House divided.

"I will not deny that the dazzlement of scandals and rumors and drama pulls focus from our primary tasks," GOP state Rep. Jill York said. "But as far as knocking anyone off stride in what they came down here to do ... I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. I'm filing bills."

With his wife watching from the balcony, Jeff Hoover acknowledged to colleagues that he sent inappropriate but consensual text messages to a woman who once worked for the House Republican Caucus. Those text messages, according to formal disciplinary charges filed against him in the House, included a request for the woman to send photos of herself wearing a "black lace g string." Hoover said his behavior was not "unwelcome" by the woman, but he agreed to pay her an undisclosed financial settlement after her attorney sent him a letter claiming sexual harassment.

Hoover and others have refused to discuss details of the settlement, citing a confidentiality clause. The Associated Press has not identified the woman because she says she is a victim of sexual misconduct. Her attorney declined to comment.

"Let me be clear: I made a mistake," Hoover said. "I did not do anything illegal. I did not do anything that was unethical. I did not do anything that was unwelcome or unwanted. And I did not engage in sexual harassment."

Hoover had announced he would resign as speaker in November, just days after the Courier Journal exposed the secret sexual harassment settlement signed by him and three other Republican lawmakers. But instead, when the House convened Monday to begin the 2018 legislative session, he temporarily ceded power to Osborne, sowing confusion among the 100-member body about who was really in charge.

Hoover's resignation was made on the condition "if accepted by the members of the House." Speaker Pro Tem David Osborne quickly ruled the resignation had been accepted and ordered it entered into the House journal. He said a vote would only be required if a House member objected, and none did.

Osborne said he will continue to preside as House speaker pro tem until his term expires at the end of the year. House members won't elect a new speaker until January 2019.

"It has not slowed down our work. We have continued to work," Osborne said. "The pace of activity will quicken over the next few days."

JFK airport tries to catch up, vows to probe weekend of woes

By DEEPTI HAJELA and JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Frazzled travelers snoozed on floors, and dozens of suitcases sat unclaimed as a welter of wintry problems — from a snowstorm to a burst water pipe — extended flight delays at Kennedy Airport into a fourth day Monday. The agency running the airport vowed to investigate the fiasco.

Andrea Collavo and his girlfriend were supposed to fly home to Italy on Friday after a vacation in the U.S. but still were trying to get into the air Monday.

They had spent days shuttling back and forth to hotels, waiting in a terminal, calling airlines and finally boarding a plane Sunday only to have it spend two hours on the tarmac and then turn back because of an equipment problem, a frustrated Collavo said.

"I can understand: Yeah, it's a mess because of the weather. But it seems that they're not very well organized," he said. "There's a big lack of information."

More than 115 flights of the day's roughly 600 were canceled, and about 100 were delayed at one of the nation's busiest airports. And the weather brought a bit more freezing rain, sleet and snow Monday night.

"What happened over the weekend was a completely unacceptable performance," said Rick Cotton, executive director of Kennedy Airport's owner, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. He pledged to bring in outside experts and investigators to dissect the breakdowns and improve communication and contingency plans.

"We intend to identify what went wrong, why it went wrong ... and we intend to fix it," Cotton said.

As officials hoped to get the airport back in order, Mariani Silva hoped to get out of it. She'd spent the night at Kennedy after arriving around 7 p.m. Sunday for her flight home to Brazil.

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"I'm trying to go back to Sao Paulo since yesterday, and I'm still in the airport, sitting on the ground," she said, hoping to get on a plane Monday evening.

Other passengers tried to get hold of their luggage. At points, scores of suitcases were lined up in cordoned-off areas without their owners. Cotton said the Port Authority had told airlines and the companies that run terminals to get bags and passengers back together fast.

The trouble began when a winter storm blasted New York and snarled air travel on Thursday.

As the skies cleared, unusually cold weather shot in, creating what the airport operating agency called a cascade of problems over the weekend. Temperatures around the airport were in the teens and single digits Saturday and Sunday, hitting just 4 degrees around 8 a.m. Sunday, according to the National Weather Service.

Frozen equipment, luggage-handling problems and staff shortages slowed down operations on the ground. As flights got backlogged, gates clogged up, and some arriving passengers waited on the tarmac for hours and ended up being bused to terminals. Other flights were diverted. One plane even clipped another outside a terminal amid the difficult conditions early Saturday.

It wasn't immediately clear how many passenger-filled planes at JFK sat on the ground long enough to risk a possible U.S. Department of Transportation fine. The threshold is more than three hours for a domestic flight and four for an international one.

Then, around 2 p.m. Sunday, a water pipe broke. About 3 inches (8 centimeters) of water gushed onto the floor of Terminal 4, suspending its international flight arrivals for a few hours.

The terminal was completely up and running again four hours later, and flights resumed normal operations by 9:45 p.m., according to JFK International Air Terminal LLC, the company that runs the terminal.

Cotton blamed the weekend of woes primarily on poor communication between international airlines and terminal operating companies.

Brian Kelly, CEO of The Points Guy travel website, pointed to rocky coordination among the different companies that run the airport's terminals. They're independent of each other, and that can make it difficult, if not impossible, for an airline operating at one terminal to find a gate at another.

"I didn't think JFK could one-up itself, but it certainly did," Kelly said. "They need to get all the terminals working together because this can't happen again."

Meanwhile, Valentina Kukwa continued trying to get home to Salt Lake City from her trip to Cameroon. Two days of travel had turned into three-plus, including a daylong wait in Morocco, and she had no idea where some of her luggage was.

Kukwa, who's originally from Cameroon, wasn't surprised that a storm would disrupt winter travel.

"My frustration was the way they handled it," she said. "It's a bad situation, but they're making it worse."

Associated Press video journalist Joseph B. Frederick and photographer Richard Drew contributed from New York, and AP Airlines Writer David Koenig contributed from Dallas.

Tillerson tells AP Cuba still risky; FBI doubts sonic attack

By JOSH LEDERMAN and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States would be "putting people intentionally in harm's way" if it sent diplomats back to Cuba, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson says in an Associated Press interview, even as a new FBI report casts doubt on the initial theory that Americans there have been hit by "sonic attacks."

Following months of investigation and four FBI trips to Havana, an interim report from the bureau's Operational Technology Division says the probe has uncovered no evidence that sound waves could have damaged the Americans' health, the AP has learned. The report, dated Jan. 4, doesn't address other theories and says the FBI will keep investigating until it can show there's been no intentional harm.

Tillerson said he's not convinced that what he calls the "deliberate attacks" are over. He defended his September decision to order most U.S. personnel and their relatives to leave Cuba and said he won't reverse course until Cuba's government assures they'll be safe.

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"I'd be intentionally putting them back in harm's way. Why in the world would I do that when I have no means whatsoever to protect them?" Tillerson told the AP on Jan. 5. "I will push back on anybody who wants to force me to do that."

"I still believe that the Cuban government, someone within the Cuban government can bring this to an end," Tillerson added. Washington has never claimed Cuba perpetrated the attacks but has insisted the island's communist-run government must know who did. Cuba adamantly denies both involvement and knowledge of any attacks.

Tensions over the issue are apparent in Congress, with critics of the Cuban government at odds with supporters of closer U.S. ties. And within the Trump administration, the CIA, whose spies were affected while working under diplomatic cover, has chafed at the lack of FBI progress, several officials have told the AP in recent months, while a few lawmakers briefed on the probe have questioned whether the FBI even agrees with the State Department that anyone was attacked.

The State Department has said previously the most recent "medically confirmed" case of an American being affected occurred Aug. 21. Tillerson didn't cite any more recent incidents, but pointedly stressed he was "not sure they've ended."

The AP has learned at least one additional embassy worker who reported similar symptoms since that date has been sent for medical testing. The symptoms were determined to be unrelated.

Tillerson's comments and the FBI report illustrate how befuddled the U.S. still seems about the mystery in Havana, more than a year after embassy workers started reporting illnesses including hearing loss, vision problems and memory issues. Symptoms often followed unexplained sounds in diplomats' homes that led investigators to suspect a futuristic sonic weapon. The U.S. has said 24 government workers were harmed. Canada has reported some of its diplomats were affected, too.

The FBI report, which hasn't been released publicly, is the clearest sign to date of the U.S. ruling out the sonic weapon theory. The report says the FBI tested the hypothesis that air pressure waves via audible sound, infrasound or ultrasound could be used to clandestinely hurt Americans in Cuba, and found no evidence. Infrasound waves are below the range of human hearing. Ultrasound is above.

The FBI declined to comment Monday.

In October, the AP published a recording of the high-pitched chirping sound some diplomats heard. Officials cautioned then they weren't sure whether the sound itself harmed Americans, or was perhaps the byproduct of something else that did. Last month, the AP reported doctors discovered brain abnormalities in patients who were being treated after returning from Cuba. But since the patients hadn't been tested before working in Cuba, outside experts raised questions.

For Cuba and its U.S. supporters, frustration is growing about Washington's aggressive response and lack of answers. In addition to pulling out all but "essential personnel," the Trump administration last year expelled 15 Cuban diplomats and warned Americans to avoid the island. Havana sees those steps as harming U.S.-Cuba relations and damaging its critical tourism industry, all without any proof anyone was attacked.

By law, Tillerson must form an "accountability review board" after any serious injury to diplomats overseas. One highly publicized example was after four Americans were killed in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012.

Tillerson has signed off on the new review board, U.S. officials said. The State Department wouldn't comment, saying it would announce any decision after Congress is notified.

That could come as early as Tuesday, when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will hold a hearing about the "attacks on U.S. diplomats in Cuba." Top officials from the State Department's medical unit, Diplomatic Security and Western Hemisphere division will testify.

Over the weekend, Sen. Jeff Flake, a longtime proponent of closer U.S. ties to Cuba, said high-ranking Cuban officials told him that the FBI has found no evidence of attacks and that classified U.S. briefings left him with no reason to doubt Cuba's account.

But Sen. Marco Rubio, a vocal critic of Cuba's government, declared on Twitter it was a "documented FACT" that U.S. personnel were "victims of some sort of sophisticated attack" and U.S. officials briefed on the matter know that "full well."

Yet other lawmakers briefed by Tillerson say they were discouraged the Trump administration couldn't

or wouldn't answer basic questions on the investigation.

The FBI, which leads broader law enforcement cooperation with Cuba, insists it's doing everything possible in a place where it has little or delayed access to suspected crime scenes.

Tillerson, in the AP interview, said he was satisfied with the U.S. response.

"I've met with the victims, I've met with their families," Tillerson said. "I'm concerned about their health and wellbeing, and that trumps everything in my book."

Follow the AP's coverage of the Cuba attacks at <http://apnews.com/tag/CubaHealthMystery> .

A few dozen protesters in cold rain outside the big game

ATLANTA (AP) — A few dozen protesters took a knee in cold, light rain on a sidewalk near the venue of the College Football Playoff title game Monday evening, shouting slogans against President Donald Trump.

A few police officers looked on at the small, peaceful protest as a leader with a bullhorn led chants in the direction of fans streaming past them before game time to Mercedes-Benz Stadium, about three blocks away.

"Black lives matter! Women's lives matter and immigrants' lives matter!" protesters chanted, some opening umbrellas against the rain. Three of them carried a sign that said, "The Trump-Pence Machine Must Go." Another sign in the group read, "Time's Up."

Tee Stern, with the group called Refuse Facism ATL, said the demonstration was called to "take a knee" against the Trump administration.

"We are getting the message out across the country to everyone that is agonizing and very angry and fearful of the fact that we are facing down a fascist regime and it needs to be stopped," Stern told The Associated Press.

The protest came ahead of Trump's scheduled arrival at the downtown Atlanta stadium for the planned 8 p.m. kickoff between the University of Alabama and the University of Georgia.

For hours earlier Monday, as light rain fell off and on, there had been no anti-Trump protesters in sight.

With the rain's unpleasantness compounded by temperatures in the 30s, many fans — decked out in University of Georgia red-and-black or University of Alabama crimson — sought refuge ahead of the game inside nearby restaurants and the Georgia World Congress Center, waiting for the stadium gates to open. Crowds were also sparse for most of the day's concerts in nearby Centennial Olympic Park.

In another planned protest, the NAACP Atlanta branch urged people to wear white and wave white towels when the president arrived at the stadium or when his name was mentioned. Organizers said the show of white was intended to mock the "snowflake" insult that Trump supporters make against the president's opponents.

"We're going to make a snowflake turn into a mighty blizzard inside of Mercedes-Benz Stadium when Mr. Trump comes," Gerald Griggs, a vice president of the Atlanta branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said at a news conference earlier Monday.

The organization also planned a "Twitter storm" beginning at 6 p.m. and continuing through the end of the game. They plan to use the hashtag #AllTrumpsLies to highlight what they say are lies told by the president.

Atlanta police set up designated areas for demonstrations and had previously said they wouldn't interfere unless protesters break the law. Local, state and federal law enforcement authorities said they've worked for months to develop security plans.

Oprah speech has Democrats buzzing about possible 2020 run

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Oprah Winfrey's impassioned call for "a brighter morning even in our darkest nights" at the Golden Globes has Democratic Party activists buzzing about the media superstar and the 2020 presidential race — even if it's only a fantasy.

Even so, for Democrats in early voting states, and perhaps for a public that largely disapproves of President Donald Trump's job performance, the notion of a popular media figure as a presidential candidate is not as strange as it once seemed, given the New York real estate mogul and reality TV star now in the White House.

"Look, it's ridiculous — and I get that," said Brad Anderson, Barack Obama's 2012 Iowa campaign director. While he supports the idea of Winfrey running, it would also punctuate how Trump's candidacy has altered political norms. "At the same time, politics is ridiculous right now."

Winfrey's speech as she accepted the Cecil B. DeMille lifetime achievement award on Sunday touched on her humble upbringing and childhood wonder in civil rights heroes.

But it was her exhortation of the legions of women who have called out sexual harassers — and her dream of a day "when nobody has to say 'me too' again" — that got some political operatives, in early voting states such as Iowa and New Hampshire, thinking Winfrey might be just what the Democrats need.

"I think we need more role models like her that are speaking to young women and trying to restore some hope. The election of Donald Trump was a devastating setback for little girls," said Liz Purdy, who led Democrat Hillary Clinton's 2008 New Hampshire presidential primary campaign.

Trump's job approval rating sat at just 32 percent in December, according to an Associated Press-NORC poll. And though polls show his approval up slightly since, Trump is the least popular first-year president on record. He has also been accused by multiple women of sexual misconduct, though he has vehemently denied the allegations.

Winfrey, in September and October, publicly dismissed the notion of seeking the nation's highest office, though she noted that Trump's victory made her rethink the requirements of the office.

A representative for Winfrey did not reply to a request Monday for comment from The Associated Press. Winfrey's longtime partner, Stedman Graham, told the Los Angeles Times that "it's up to the people" whether she will be president, adding, "She would absolutely do it."

Winfrey, 64, has become a cultural phenomenon over the past 30-plus years, born into a poor home in Mississippi but breaking through as a television news and talk show personality in the 1980s. Over 30 years, she became the face of television talk shows, starred and produced feature films, and began her own network.

Trump himself has lavished praise on Winfrey over the years, including in 2015, when he said that he would consider her as a running mate on his Republican ticket. "I like Oprah," Trump told ABC News in June 2015. "I think Oprah would be great. I'd love to have Oprah. I think we'd win easily, actually."

It echoed comments Trump made in 1999, when he was weighing a presidential candidacy in the Reform Party. "If she'd do it, she'd be fantastic. I mean, she's popular, she's brilliant, she's a wonderful woman," Trump told CNN's Larry King.

NBC tweeted a picture of a smiling Winfrey under the message, "Nothing but respect for our future president. #goldenglobes." It quickly attracted attention, including Donald Trump Jr.'s. The president's son retweeted it, calling it "strange." The network later deleted the tweet and explained that it was done by a "third party agency" and was a reference to a joke by Golden Globes host Seth Meyers.

Late-night show host Jimmy Kimmel said at a press conference Monday that he thought Winfrey's speech was "preaching to the choir" with her Hollywood audience.

"That said, given the choice between Oprah and our current president, I'm on the bus with Oprah traveling the country encouraging people to sign up and vote," he said.

Some operatives think she has what it takes to be a viable presidential candidate.

"She would be a serious candidate," said Jennifer Palmieri, former White House communications direc-

tor under President Barack Obama and the communications director for Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign.

Beyond her rise from poverty, Winfrey's success as a multidimensional media figure has come from promoting ways for women to assert themselves, typically outside the political arena. That could soften what Palmieri describes as an enduring resistance among some voters to women with political ambition.

"I think lessons we all learned from watching Hillary's run, and how her ambition was unfavorably and unfairly viewed, coupled with Oprah's existing popularity, could give Oprah a strong start," Palmieri said.

That's not to say Winfrey can't claim any significant political influence. She notably headlined an Iowa rally for then-Sen. Barack Obama in the weeks leading up to his surprise victory in the state's 2008 leadoff nominating caucuses, which helped propel him to the presidential nomination.

Still, while some Democrats would embrace Winfrey's outsider-celebrity status as the party's answer to Trump, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., noted that Winfrey, like Trump, lacks any kind of experience in government.

"I think one of the arguments for Oprah is 45," Pelosi said, referring to Trump in shorthand for the 45th president. "I think one of the arguments against Oprah is 45."

Steve Peoples reported from New York. Associated Press writers Andrew Taylor in Washington and Dave Bauder in New York contributed to this report.

AP source: Mitt Romney treated for prostate cancer last year

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Republican presidential nominee in 2012, Mitt Romney, was treated for prostate cancer last year.

That's according to a Romney aide who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the aide was not authorized to discuss a sensitive health issue publicly.

The aide said Monday that Romney was diagnosed with "slow-growing prostate cancer" last year. The cancer was removed surgically and found not to have spread beyond the prostate, the aide said.

The news comes as the 70-year-old Romney weighs whether to run for a Utah Senate seat currently occupied by Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch. Hatch announced last week that he would not seek another term this fall.

US hits record for costly weather disasters: \$306 billion

By SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — With three strong hurricanes, wildfires, hail, flooding, tornadoes and drought, the United States tallied a record high bill last year for weather disasters: \$306 billion.

The U.S. had 16 disasters last year with damage exceeding a billion dollars, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Monday. That ties 2011 for the number of billion-dollar disasters, but the total cost blew past the previous record of \$215 billion in 2005.

Costs are adjusted for inflation and NOAA keeps track of billion-dollar weather disasters going back to 1980.

Three of the five most expensive hurricanes in U.S. history hit last year.

Hurricane Harvey, which caused massive flooding in Texas, cost \$125 billion, second only to 2005's Katrina, while Maria's damage in Puerto Rico cost \$90 billion, ranking third, NOAA said. Irma was \$50 billion, mainly in Florida, for the fifth most expensive hurricane.

Western wildfires fanned by heat racked up \$18 billion in damage, triple the U.S. wildfire record, according to NOAA.

Besides Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico, California, Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and North Carolina all had more than \$1 billion in damage from

the 16 weather disasters in 2017.

“While we have to be careful about knee-jerk cause-effect discussions, (many scientific studies) show that some of today’s extremes have climate change fingerprints on them,” said University of Georgia meteorology professor Marshall Shepherd, a past president of the American Meteorological Society.

NOAA announced its figures at the society’s annual conference in Austin, Texas.

The U.S. averages six of the billion-dollar weather disasters each year, costing a bit more than \$40 billion annually.

The increase in billion-dollar weather disasters is likely a combination of more flooding, heat and storm surge from climate change along with other non-climate changes, such as where buildings are put, where people move and how valuable their property is, said Deke Arndt, NOAA’s climate monitoring chief.

“Perhaps it is time to mandate urban development in a more resilient and sustainable manner given the increasing frequency of weather extremes, especially along the nation’s coasts,” Susan Cutter, director of the University of South Carolina’s Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute, said in an email.

The weather agency also said that 2017 was the third hottest year in U.S. records for the Lower 48 states with an annual temperature of 54.6 degrees (12.6 degrees Celsius) — 2.6 degrees warmer than the 20th century average . Only 2012 and 2016 were warmer. The five warmest years for the Lower 48 states have all happened since 2006.

Arndt said the U.S. — which has had above normal annual temperatures for 21 straight years — is showing the same warming effects as the rest of the world. The burning of coal, oil and gas emits heat-trapping gases that change Earth’s climate.

This was the third straight year that all 50 states had above average temperatures for the year.

Five states — Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and New Mexico — had their warmest year ever.

Temperature records go back to 1895.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears . His work can be found here .

SCOTUS to hear case disputing warrantless motorcycle search

By DENISE LAVOIE, AP Legal Affairs Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Do police have the right to go on private property — uninvited and without a warrant — to search a vehicle?

That’s the question the U.S. Supreme Court will be asked to answer when the court takes up the case of a Virginia man who was arrested after a police officer walked onto his driveway and pulled back a tarp covering a stolen motorcycle.

Arguments are scheduled Tuesday in a case that could test the boundaries of an exception to the Fourth Amendment’s requirement that police obtain a warrant before searching a person, their home, papers or personal effects.

The exception dates back nearly a century, when federal agents did a warrantless search of a suspected bootlegger’s car looking for illegal alcohol. In that case, the Supreme Court found that a vehicle could be searched without a warrant as long as police have probable cause to believe it contains contraband or evidence of a crime. The court reasoned that because cars are readily mobile, they can be moved before police are able to obtain a warrant to search them.

The Virginia case started with two high-speed police chases of a distinctive orange and black Suzuki motorcycle.

During one chase, an Albemarle County police officer wrote down the motorcycle’s license plate and recorded images of it with his dashboard camera. The plate number led police to a man who said he sold the motorcycle to Ryan Austin Collins after telling him it was stolen.

An officer then looked at Collins’s Facebook page, which included several photos of an orange and black motorcycle parked in the driveway of a house his girlfriend rented in Charlottesville.

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At trial, Collins was convicted of receiving stolen property and was sentenced to three years in prison, with all but two months suspended. He was not charged with eluding police.

Matthew Fitzgerald, an attorney with McGuireWoods, said the prominent Richmond law firm asked the Supreme Court to hear the case because lower courts have been split on whether the automobile exception applies on vehicles parked on private, residential property.

Fitzgerald argues that the exception does not apply in the Collins case because the motorcycle was parked within feet of the house. He argues that that falls within the curtilage — the immediate area around the house — so should have been protected by the Fourth Amendment search warrant requirement.

If officers are allowed to search vehicles within curtilage without obtaining a warrant, they could also creep into garages and carports to look for contraband in glove boxes, Fitzgerald said.

"This area around your house is really important. And so whether police come onto your property with probable cause alone and search your vehicles wherever they find them is something that should matter to a lot of people," Fitzgerald said.

"If the vehicle exception applies wherever you find the vehicle, then that is a big hole in the warrant requirement."

The Virginia Supreme Court, however, said that the officer's warrantless search of the motorcycle was justified, finding that "there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in a vehicle parked on private property yet exposed to public view."

The Virginia Attorney General's Office argues that the officer had "undisputed probable cause" to believe the motorcycle was stolen and had twice escaped police by taking off at dangerously fast speeds of up to 140 miles per hour.

After walking onto the driveway, the officer lifted its cover, recorded the license-plate number and vehicle identification number, and after determining that the motorcycle was stolen, replaced the cover.

"The officer's daytime search of the motorcycle was brief, unintrusive, and limited in scope," Acting Solicitor General Trevor Cox wrote in a brief filed with the Supreme Court.

Because of the automobile exception, "he was authorized to do it before the vehicle could be moved and elude police once again," Cox wrote.

The case that prompted the Supreme Court to establish the automobile exception dates back to 1921, when Prohibition banned the manufacture and sale of alcohol in the U.S. Federal prohibition agents stopped two suspected bootleggers driving on a highway from Detroit to Grand Rapids, Michigan.

There was no visible contraband in the Oldsmobile roadster, but when one of the agents pounded his fist on the rear seat, he noticed it was harder than usual. He cut open the seat cushion and found 68 bottles of whiskey and gin.

The defendants tried to have the evidence suppressed, but the high court found that a vehicle could be searched without a warrant if there is probable cause to believe it contains evidence.

Cornell Law School professor Sherry Colb, whose research centers on the Fourth Amendment, said it's surprising that the Supreme Court hasn't settled the issue earlier.

"The automobile exception has been with us for a while, and this one area has remained unclear — whether the automobile exception to the warrant requirement applies to an automobile on a private driveway," she said.

This story corrects paragraph 5 to remove reference to Collins; Adds that he was not charged with eluding police in paragraph 8

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Asian shares rise on Wall Street optimism

By YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares rose Tuesday, cheered by the upbeat mood on Wall Street and hopes for U.S. economic growth.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 added 0.5 percent in morning trading to 23,843.70. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.2 percent to 6,142.10. South Korea's Kospi gained nearly 0.2 percent to 2,517.57. Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 0.3 percent to 30,993.36, while the Shanghai Composite inched up nearly 0.1 percent to 3,411.05.

WALL STREET: The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose to another record, for the fifth straight sessions, gaining 4.56 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,747.71. The last time the index led off a year with more consecutive gains was in 2010, when it had six. The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 12.87, or 0.1 percent, to 25,283.00, the Nasdaq composite rose 20.83, or 0.3 percent, to 7,157.39 and the Russell 2000 index of small-cap stocks gained 1.80, or 0.1 percent, to 1,561.81.

THE QUOTE: "A continuation of Monday's bullish glow look set for Asian markets into Tuesday with few data points to observe," says Jingyi Pan, market strategist at IG in Singapore.

KOREAS: The region is closely watching developments from talks between delegates from North Korea and South Korea, the first such talks in two years. North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un recently made an abrupt push for improved ties with South Korea after a year of elevated tensions over his expanding nuclear and missile programs.

CURRENCIES: The dollar slipped to 112.63 yen from 113.13 yen late Monday. The euro fell to \$1.1970 from \$1.2032.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude added 48 cents to \$62.21 a barrel. It rose 29 cents to settle at \$61.73 per barrel Monday. Brent crude, the international standard, gained 47 cents to \$68.25 per barrel.

Follow Yuri Kageyama on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

Her work can be found at <https://www.apnews.com/search/yuri%20kageyama>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 9, the ninth day of 2018. There are 356 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 9, 1793, Frenchman Jean Pierre Blanchard, using a hot-air balloon, flew from Philadelphia to Woodbury, New Jersey.

On this date:

In 1788, Connecticut became the fifth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1861, Mississippi became the second state to secede from the Union, the same day the Star of the West, a merchant vessel bringing reinforcements and supplies to Federal troops at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, retreated because of artillery fire.

In 1913, Richard Milhous Nixon, the 37th president of the United States, was born in Yorba Linda, California.

In 1916, the World War I Battle of Gallipoli ended after eight months with an Ottoman Empire victory as Allied forces withdrew.

In 1931, Bobbi Trout and Edna May Cooper broke an endurance record for female aviators as they returned to Mines Field in Los Angeles after flying a Curtiss Robin monoplane continuously for 122 hours and 50 minutes.

In 1945, during World War II, American forces began landing on the shores of Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines as the Battle of Luzon got underway, resulting in an Allied victory over Imperial Japanese forces.

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in his State of the Union address to Congress, warned of the threat of Communist imperialism.

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In 1968, the Surveyor 7 space probe made a soft landing on the moon, marking the end of the American series of unmanned explorations of the lunar surface.

In 1972, reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes, speaking by telephone from the Bahamas to reporters in Hollywood, said a purported autobiography of him by Clifford Irving was a fake.

In 1987, the White House released a January 1986 memorandum prepared for President Ronald Reagan by Lt. Col. Oliver L. North showing a link between U.S. arms sales to Iran and the release of American hostages in Lebanon.

In 1993, the two owners of a fast food restaurant in Palatine, Illinois, and five employees were found shot and stabbed to death. (Two suspects were arrested in May 2002; both were convicted in separate trials and sentenced to life in prison.)

In 1997, a Comair commuter plane crashed 18 miles short of the Detroit Metropolitan Airport, killing all 29 people on board.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush, on his first visit to Israel while in office, warned Iran of "serious consequences" if it again harassed U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. military reported nine American soldiers were killed in the first two days of a new offensive to root out al-Qaida in Iraq fighters holed up in districts north of Baghdad. Johnny Grant, the honorary mayor of Hollywood, died in Los Angeles at age 84.

Five years ago: Vice President Joe Biden heard personal stories of gun violence from representatives of victims groups and gun-safety organizations at the White House as he undertook to draft the Obama administration's response to the mass shooting at a Connecticut elementary school. The Seastreak Wall Street, a commuter ferry, made a hard landing into a Manhattan pier, injuring 85 people (investigators later cited operator error). No one was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame; for the second time in four decades, baseball writers failed to give any player the 75 percent required for induction to Cooperstown, sending a firm signal that stars of the Steroids Era would be held to a different standard.

One year ago: President-elect Donald Trump appointed his influential son-in-law Jared Kushner as a White House senior adviser. The outgoing Obama administration blacklisted five Russians as the feud over U.S. election hacking escalated. Master Sgt. Debra Clayton, an Orlando, Florida, police officer, was fatally shot in the parking lot of a Wal-mart store while trying to arrest a man suspected of killing his pregnant ex-girlfriend (the suspect has since been arrested). In college football's first national championship rematch, No. 3 Clemson took down top-ranked Alabama 35-31.

Today's Birthdays: Author Judith Krantz is 90. Football Hall of Famer Bart Starr is 84. Actress K. Callan is 82. Folk singer Joan Baez is 77. Rockabilly singer Roy Head is 77. Rock musician Jimmy Page (Led Zeppelin) is 74. Actor John Doman is 73. Singer David Johansen (aka Buster Poindexter) is 68. Singer Crystal Gayle is 67. Actor J.K. Simmons is 63. Actress Imelda Staunton is 62. Nobel Peace laureate Rigoberto Menchu is 59. Rock musician Eric Erlandson is 55. Actress Joely Richardson is 53. Rock musician Carl Bell (Fuel) is 51. Actor David Costabile is 51. Rock singer Steve Harwell (Smash Mouth) is 51. Rock singer-musician Dave Matthews is 51. Actress-director Joey Lauren Adams is 50. Actress Angela Bettis is 45. Actor Omari Hardwick is 44. Roots singer-songwriter Hayes Carll is 42. Singer A.J. McLean (Backstreet Boys) is 40. Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, is 36. Pop-rock musician Drew Brown (OneRepublic) is 34. Rock-soul singer Paolo Nutini is 31. Actress Nina Dobrev is 29. Actor Basil Eidenbenz is 25. Actress Kerris Dorsey is 20. Actor Tyree Brown is 14.

Thought for Today: "Living is a form of not being sure, not knowing what next or how. The moment you know how, you begin to die a little. The artist never entirely knows. We guess. We may be wrong, but we take leap after leap in the dark." — Agnes de Mille, American dancer-choreographer (1905-1993).

Riddle Answer: Newspaper