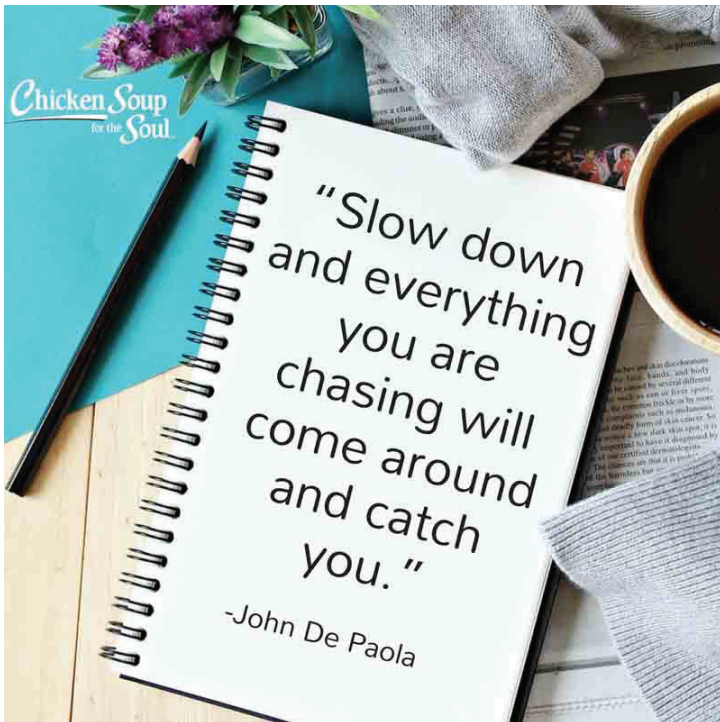


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Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper
recycling trailer at the school is

Closed

Today's Events

Boys basketball at Northwestern
7th grade at 4:15 p.m., 8th grade at 5:15 p.m. followed by junior varsity and varsity games
SDHS Clay Target League informational meeting at 5 p.m. in the HS conference room
One-Act Play Performance at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 23

GBB hosts Clark-Willow Lake with JV game at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game

Thursday, Jan. 25

NEC Wrestling at Clark, 4 p.m.

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Groton Dairy Queen offers Band Trip Fundraiser day



These three rookies are trying to figure out the till during the Band Trip Fundraiser held at the Groton Dairy Queen. Pictured are Grace Wambach, Tanae Lipp and Alexis Hanten. Half of the sales of the day on Saturday went towards the band trip. (Photo by

Julianna Kosel)

Kimberly Kohrs (right) shows Alyssa Fordham and Kelly Kohrs how the till operates at the Groton Dairy Queen. (Photo by

Julianna Kosel)



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Tanae Lipp is measuring out the ingredients for a smoothy as Trixy Schwabe watches. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Kami Lipp works in the grills as as Dale Grenz, Dairy Queen owner, is in the deep fryer area during the Band Trip fundraiser.

(Photo by Julianna Kosel)



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Gia Gengerke assists Erin Unzen with a customer order. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)

Erin Unzen puts whipped cream on a shake for a customer. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



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The weather has warmed up so that even the squirrels have come out to play. (Photo by

Julianna Kosel)

Saturday's pairings for Dax-XXII/NEC Clash

Here are the Boys Pairings and Games Times for the Dak-XII/NEC Conference Clash to be played in Madison, SD on Saturday, January 27th. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$4 for students.

Madison HS Aux. Gym	Madison HS Main Gym
10:45 AM Deuel vs. Canton	10:00AM Webster Area vs. West Central
12:30 PM Chamberlain vs. Tri-Valley Redfield/Doland vs. Dell	11:45AM Groton Area vs. Lennox
2:15 PM Rapids	1:30 PM Milbank vs. Elk Point-Jefferson
4:00 PM Britton-Hecla vs. Vermillion Aberdeen Roncalli vs. Tea	3:15 PM Hamlin vs. Dakota Valley
5:45 PM Area	5:00 PM Sisseton vs. Madison
	6:45 PM Clark/Willow Lake vs. Sioux Falls Christian

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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)

Carlson leaving Groton/Conde Methodist Church parish

Pastor Thomas Carlson made an announcement on his Facebook Page that he has accepted a call to the Cresbard/Tolstoy parish. Here is what he had posted:

"I'm excited to announce that as of July 1st, Britni and I will be moving to Cresbard, South Dakota. I'm looking forward to see what God has for us as we partner with the people of Cresbard and Tolstoy. We have been blessed by so many over the last three year in Groton and Conde. Thank you, for the love you have shown Britni and I. We have grown in our faith and leadership."



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same mileage, fewer
carbon deposits, lower
maintenance costs,

slashed benzene & related
genotoxic, carcinogenic
tailpipe emissions;

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

***Farmers Union's**

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

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Robotics teams place at Groton Tourney

GT Robotics hosted a tournament January 20 here in Groton. Twenty-two teams from seven schools attended. The teams came from Britton, Box Elder, Chamberlain, Eureka, Groton, Harrisburg and Mitchell.

Harrisburg teams TR Rookie Mistake and AntLion allied to be tournament champions. Three Groton teams made it to the semi-finals, but were beaten by the teams that went to the championship. They were G-Force (Hunter Monson, Tannor McGannon, Lee Iverson and Steven Paulson), G.A.T. Wrenches (Noah Tullis, Tyler Iverson and Adrian Knutson) and Geek Squad (Isaac Smith, Andrew Marzahn and Jacob Lewandowski).

GT Robotics teams ranking at the end of qualifying rounds were: G.A.T. Wrenches , 4th; G-Force, 7th; Gear Heads (Jackson Dinger, Ethan Clark & Bryson Wambach), 12th; Geek Squad, 16th; and Galaxy (Travis Townsend, River Pardick and Alex Dutchuk), 21st.

Besides the alliance competition, there is also a skills challenge. This is where one robot is used to score as much possible in one minute. Groton teams took second, third & fourth G.A.T. Wrenches, Galaxy and Geek Squad. The skills challenge was won by a Harrisburg team.

How has GT Robotics been doing this season? Below are tables showing our rankings at the end of qualifying rounds and how far we got in the elimination rounds of the tournaments we have participated in this year.

Rankings of GT Robotics Teams the end of qualifying rounds for each tournament

Tournament	Groton	Mitchell	Harrisburg	Rapid City	Groton
Number of teams in Tourney	15	13	22	22	22
9050A G-Force	10	12	8	19	7
9050B Gear Heads	10	11	17	20	12
9050C G.A.T. Wrenches	7	1	3	11	4
9050D Geek Squad	5	10	20	3	16
9050E Galaxy	4	6	16	18	21

How far did GT Robotics team get in elimination rounds (playoffs)?

Tournament	Groton	Mitchell	Harrisburg	Rapid City	Groton
9050A G-Force	Final	Semi	Final	Final	Semi
9050B Gear Heads	Qtr		Qtr	Qtr	Qtr
9050C G.A.T. Wrenches	Semi	Champion	Final	Final	Semi
9050D Geek Squad		Semi	Qtr	Qtr	Semi
9050E Galaxy		Semi			Qtr

EARTHTALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

From the Editors of

E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: Can you settle this age-old question for me once and for all: Is it greener to take showers or baths? And how can I save water either way? -- Tim Jackson, Queensbury, NY

Like most good questions, it depends... The main variables are how long the shower takes and the flow rate of the shower head. A typical bathtub holds 36 gallons of water, but most of us only fill it up partially. For baseline purposes, let's assume a typical bath uses 25 gallons. Meanwhile, a typical shower head doles out 2.5 gallons per minute (GPM). (In 1992 the federal government mandated that all new shower heads sold in the U.S. had to be 2.5 GPM, although California, Colorado and New York have since instituted even lower limits for their own states.) According to this scenario, a 10-minute shower would use as much water as 25-gallon bath.

If you can spend less than 10 minutes in the shower, all the better for the environment. Likewise, if you install a low-flow shower head—some models go as low as 1.5 GPM now—you can save even more water and money on your water bill. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) "WaterSense" label marks shower heads that are particularly miserly when it comes to water usage.

But just because a new shower head is low-flow doesn't mean it has to feel like it, given the genius of engineering going into new products from fixture makers. Delta may be leading the pack with its "H₂O-kinetic" design that uses physically larger water droplets to provide what it describes as "the feeling of more water without using more water." Its budget-oriented 75152 model (~\$30 online) can be toggled between 2.5 GPM and a stingy 1.8 GPM, and is a top pick on leading review site Wirecutter. "On its 2.5 GPM setting...the Delta 75152 delivers a powerful, soaking spray through its four nozzles, which create a much denser spray pattern than the ring of spray holes found on most budget showerheads," reports Wirecutter.

Yet another way to cut down on water waste in the shower is by using a so-called "shower timer" that lets you know how long you've been scrubbing. Waterproof timers go from anywhere between \$6 and \$20 online; it might be the best investment in water conservation you could make. A more elaborate version is the \$149 Shower Manager, a battery-powered device that you install between an existing shower head and its supply pipe in order to ratchet down the flow significantly or shuts the shower off completely after a pre-set period of time.

For those of us who just can't give up our baths, there are some things we can do to keep the water waste to a minimum. For starters, plug the drain before you start running the water and adjust the temperature as it fills up. Also, only fill up the tub to the minimal level you'll need to get your body wet and washed. And truly committed environmentalists can find a way to reuse the "graywater" from the bathtub to irrigate your garden or water your houseplants, either by rigging up some kind of hose system or just with a plain old bucket.

CONTACTS: EPA Watersense Showerheads, www.epa.gov/watersense/showerheads; Delta's "H₂Okinetic" Design, www.deltafaucet.com/design-innovation/innovations/shower/h2okinetic-showers; "Best Showerhead: Reviews by Wirecutter," thewirecutter.com/reviews/the-best-shower-head; Shower Manager, www.showermanager.com.

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Cavaliers hold off Lady Tigers



Groton's Lady Tigers battled a tough Aberdeen Roncalli team on Friday where the Cavaliers came away with a 51-41 win. Roncalli led at the quarterstops at 14-7, 33-12 and 41-30.

Roncalli scored 16 points from Groton's 19 turnovers while Groton Area scored five points off of Roncalli's turnovers. Groton made 43 percent of

Miranda Hanson makes this three-pointer for the Tigers. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

its field goals and Roncalli made 32 percent of its field goals.

Jennie Doeden led the Tigers with 10 points, five rebounds, three assists and two steals. Harleigh Stange had eight points, four rebounds and three assists. Payton Maine added eight points, had four rebounds and three assists. Jessica Bjerke had six points, seven rebounds and two assists. Eliza Wanner had two rebounds and Nicole Marzahn had one rebound.

Grace Imbery led the Cavaliers with 16 points followed by Mariah Winegar had 11, Megan Streier had eight, Jami Ewart and Jori Ewart each had five, Hannah Kuck had four and Madelyn Martin added two points.

Roncalli won the junior varsity game, 31-19. Kaycie Hawkins had seven points, Nicole Marzahn and Gracie Traphagen each had five points and Eliza Wanner added two points. Roncalli won the C game, 29-12. Grace Wambach had six points while Erin Unzen, Jasmine Gengerke and Trista Keith each had two points.



Jennie Doeden is open as Eliza Wanner has the ball. (Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

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Pictured are Payton Maine (top left), Jennie Doeden (top right) and Jessica Bjerke (bottom right). (Photos by Jeslyn Kosel)

THIS WEEK: 98 Events and Activities in South Dakota to Raise Awareness About School Choice

Mount Rushmore State Parents Encouraged to Look Into Education Options for Children During National School Choice Week

Pierre – School Choice Week began in South Dakota and across America this Sunday, with the goal of raising awareness about the options that parents have for their children’s education.

The Week will feature 98 events and activities across the Mount Rushmore State, including open house events at schools, school fairs, homeschool information sessions, and other celebrations.

Nationwide, 32,240 events and activities are being organized to raise awareness during National School Choice Week (Jan. 21-27, 2018), and nearly 7 million Americans are expected to participate. It will be the largest series of education-related events and activities in U.S. history.

The Week brings attention to the different education environments that are available for South Dakota’s more than 207,000 children. For example, families in South Dakota can choose from traditional public schools, private schools, and homeschooling. The state’s public school open enrollment policy is one of the nation’s broadest and most accommodating

“We chose to be a part of NSCW because it’s a celebration for our parents and their right to choice in education,” said Nita Jones, principal of the independent school in Waubay, South Dakota that serves 200 students from preschool to 8th grade.

Celebrated since 2011, National School Choice Week is an independent public awareness effort. The Week is nonpartisan and nonpolitical, and it is not related to any legislative advocacy campaign.

“School Choice Week is an exciting time for South Dakota students, parents, and teachers,” said Andrew Campanella, president of National School Choice Week. “It is an opportunity for parents to research the education options available for their children, and also a time to celebrate the hard work and dedication of the many incredible educators and school leaders in the state.”

To download a guide to school choice in South Dakota, or to learn more about featured events in the Mount Rushmore State, visit <https://schoolchoiceweek.com/states/south-dakota>.

For information on events planned near you, please send us an email with information about your coverage area to pressoffice@schoolchoiceweek.com.



Glimpse From Greenfield

Brock Greenfield
State Senator
District 2

As I concluded my article last week, I gave a little teaser of something I would touch on this week. Normally, I would not mention a health event, but what I experienced last summer and fall was so life-changing that I do want you to know about it. Although several of you followed my progress, we have an expansive district, so others will only be reading of this for the first time. After treating myself for acid

reflux for the past thirteen years, my symptoms had become virtually unmanageable. With even light activity, I felt a burning in my chest. Nothing I did, from changing my diet, to treating it with medications seemed to help. When I shared my situation with my physician's assistant in Clark, she sent me to Sanford Heart Hospital for further testing. An initial echocardiogram was not terribly alarming, but I was still scheduled for an angiogram a couple weeks later. It was during that test that the cardiologist found several blockages. In the end, I underwent quadruple bypass surgery. In days following the surgery, my parents and I were asked three common questions. First, was there a history of heart disease in my family? Second, was I a smoker? Third, was I a diabetic? The answers to the first and last question was "Yes." I share this with you because I want you to know those three factors can dramatically change your lives in a...heartbeat...pardon the pun!

Now, just four months removed from my surgery, I have dropped forty pounds—ninety overall—and have changed my lifestyle. I eat better, and I work out every day. While I cannot overcome heredity, I can do certain things to stave off a future heart attack and to guard against having my chest opened up again. I am so thankful to Louann Streff for knowing what my symptoms likely meant and for sending me to the heart hospital. And I am most grateful for everybody who has expressed concern and support as I have progressed back to a much healthier disposition. If you have risk factors for heart disease and/or are experiencing any symptoms, please take them seriously, regardless of your age. Since my surgery, I have celebrated my 42nd birthday, and I look forward to many more to come now that I have a new lease on life!

With that, the second week of session found committees getting to work with regularity. More bills are working their way into the system, and we are working to move them along in the process. As many of you know, the bill that passed last summer in special session regarding the recreational use of nonmeandered waters that have flooded private lands contained a sunset provision that would repeal the law this coming June 30 unless action is taken. SB 24 introduced by the Governor seeks to extend the sunset until July 1, 2021. That bill was heard in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee last week, and it passed 7-2. While I am not on the Ag Committee, the law that was passed and SB 24 have warranted profound interest from our district. I am aware that a number of other ideas are floating (again, I'm being "punny"), and I suspect we will have a robust debate about any number of issues surrounding nonmeandered waters. Because the law passed last June seems to have struck a reasonable balance between landowner rights and sportsmen concerns, I am hopeful SB 24 will pass. I remain open to all other issues surrounding the broader issue.

In Health and Human Services, I learned about a new procedure being practiced called "microblading". This does NOT involve strapping small inline skates to a person's feet and traversing the streets or a rink! It does involve temporarily adding ink under the surface of a person's skin to fill in one's eyebrows. It is

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becoming a widely-used process, and we heard from a person in the cosmetology field who asked for us to endorse this as an accepted and regulated procedure going forward. Because of verbiage that needs to be worked out, the bill has been held over, but I look for the bill to meet with approval later this week.

In Judiciary, we heard compelling testimony from a young lady and somebody she has been working with to overcome the living hell she experienced beginning at age 14 when she became a victim of human trafficking. I will spare you all the details, but needless to say when a young, vulnerable person is being trafficked, she or he may find her- or himself in any number of illegal situations. When those unfortunate circumstances lead to arrest(s), that person's record becomes marred with any number of misdemeanors or felonies. SB 67 would permit a victim of child sex trafficking or exploitation to seek to expunge any criminal or delinquency record obtained as a result of the victimization. The young lady who testified before the committee said she is working very hard to overcome her past. She has been sober for several months. Yet, because she has a very checkered record, potential employers are hesitant about giving her a shot at securing good job opportunities. Currently, she said she is working in a manual labor position with "inappropriate" co-workers who are not exactly encouraging her to better her lot in life. She is hopeful that for her sake, as well as that of those who hide in the shadows, this bill will pass and give them a new lease on life. As I began to type that, I did not intend for it to come full circle, but perhaps because of my personal situation I appreciate even more how sometimes people need a little—or a lot of—help along the way as they seek to improve themselves. While nobody knows what the future might hold for somebody who could benefit from this bill, it is a foredrawn conclusion that failure to pass SB 67 will essentially ensure fewer opportunities for victims of trafficking who are genuinely trying to better themselves and to overcome what they have been subjected to in their pasts. That would be most unfortunate!

As session progresses, I will touch on more bills with each passing week. It does appear we are on pace to see more bills introduced this year than in the recent past. As always, I very much appreciate the trust you have place in me to work for you. Cracker barrels begin this coming weekend. Four of the next five weeks, we will be in Aberdeen. Those events are carried via radio stations and livestreams, and are covered via blogs and social media. I will also try to give you a heads-up when I know the details of other cracker barrels held in Clark, Lake Norden, and Redfield.

Until next time, be well, and be blessed!

Brock

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Well... that was embarrassing. The Minnesota Vikings, coming off a miraculous win, were thoroughly destroyed by the Philadelphia Eagles Sunday night 38-7. The loss is the third largest blowout in NFC championship history, surpassed only by the Carolina Panthers' 49-15 win over the Arizona Cardinals in 2015 and the New York Giants' 41-0 victory over the Vikings in 2000.

The Vikings offense started the game off right. They received the ball to start the game and drove down the field, capping off a 75-yard drive with a 25-yard touchdown from Case Keenum to Kyle Rudolph. The Eagles punted on their opening drive, and it looked like the Vikings were going to cruise through the game. Unfortunately, Keenum ended up throwing his first pick six of the season on the Vikings ensuing drive and suddenly the game was tied. The Vikings got the ball back, went three-and-out, and the game was essentially over at that point.

Case Keenum completed 28 of 48 passes for 271 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions. Even though he was only sacked once, the Eagles did a good job of making him uncomfortable in the pocket. Outside of the opening drive, the Vikings were unable to get anything going on the ground to help the struggling pass attack. The team only had 70 rushing yards, led by Jerick McKinnon's 10 carries for 40 yards. The Eagles also did a great job of keeping Adam Thielen and Stefon Diggs in check, allowing the duo only 11 catches for 98 yards.

The Vikings offense had their worst outing of the season, but they still played considerably better than the Vikings defense. The defense, which finished the 2017 season as the best in the league, looked out of sorts from the beginning. They gave up 456 yards and 38 points to the Nick Foles led Eagles, which was by far the most this season. The team was unable to put any pressure on Foles, they were unable to cover Philadelphia's mediocre wide receivers, and they were unable to tackle. The whole game was very uncharacteristic of this Vikings defense, and I'm sure head coach Mike Zimmer will have nightmares from this performance for years to come.

Vikings fans young and old are accustomed to heartbreak, but this loss feels particularly painful. This year felt special. The team lost their starting quarterback after week 1 and lost their starting running back in week 4, yet they still went 13-3. The Super Bowl is in Minneapolis this year, and Vikings fans around the globe had good reason to believe this would be the first time in NFL history a team would play for a championship in their home stadium.

Once again, fans had hope.

Once again, we were let down.

If you are a Vikings fan, it's important to remember that the season may be over, but the future is bright. If you aren't a Vikings fan, make sure to go and give any you know a hug or a pat on the back – because I assure you we need one right about now.

Have any questions, comments, or just need to vent? Reach out to me on Facebook ([facebook.com/SkolJWright](https://www.facebook.com/SkolJWright)) or on Twitter (@SkolJWright).

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80th Annual Carnival of Silver Skates

Sunday, January 28th—2:00 and
6:30

Recognizing *past skaters*, showcasing several *specialty acts*, and a *walk down memory lane*. Join us for a great show, performed by our *local youth*, that helps *honor those* who have helped establish this *great community tradition* over

Admission: 13 & older—\$3.00
6-12—\$2.00

Parking: Provided around the rink and on the ice or cozy up on the bleachers (ice parking begins at 10 am, then again at 4:30 pm)

**Check us out on Facebook at "Silver Skates"

WE HOPE TO
SEE YOU THERE!



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Today in Weather History

January 22, 1982: A winter storm of long duration lasting 3 days from the 22nd to the 24th virtually paralyzed South Dakota with snowfall of 6 to 20 inches. Subzero temperatures statewide coupled with strong winds of 30 to 50 mph brought wind chills of 50 to 70 below zero. One woman died of exposure near her home in Aurora County. Snow drifted as high as 15 feet. Blowing snow reduced visibilities to near zero for most of the duration of the storm. Hundreds of motorists were stranded. Numerous traffic accidents occurred due to near zero visibilities. Some power outages occurred. Major highways, interstates, and airports were closed. Numerous businesses and schools were closed for several days.

January 22, 2010: A powerful mid-season winter storm moved northeast out of the four corners region of the United States and into the Northern Plains. Ahead of this system, warm and moist air streamed northward creating widespread fog and freezing fog conditions during the days leading up to the event. Heavy riming frost began to accumulate on power lines and tower guide wires, placing heavy strain on them by the time the freezing rain arrived in the late morning and afternoon hours on Friday, January 22nd. Along with the freezing rain, southeast winds gusting over 30 mph also created a strain on sagging power lines. Scattered power outages were reported as early as Tuesday, January 19th due to the frost covered lines, but the majority of power line and power pole damage occurred during the evening of the 22nd and the morning of the 23rd. The freezing rain that arrived during the afternoon and evening of the 22nd was the proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back". By the time the rain, freezing rain, and snow ended Saturday morning, January 23rd, nearly every power cooperative across central and northeast South Dakota suffered extensive power pole and power line damage. Also, several radio and television towers were downed by the icing and strong winds. The heavy icing and strong winds downed over 5000 power poles along with 21,000 miles of power lines across South Dakota leaving thousands of households without power. Several homes sustained substantial damage caused by broken water pipes. Power was still not restored for many customers until several weeks after the event. Power line crews from Minnesota, Kansas, and Oklahoma were called upon to help restore power. Several counties, along with the state emergency operations center, opened emergency shelters for people to stay. Forty-one National Guard members were on active duty across the state helping to restore power. Many flights were delayed or cancelled at several airports. The ice and the wind also helped topple a canopy at a truck stop at the intersection of Highway 20 and 212. On January 23rd, a radio and television signal transmission tower northwest of South Shore was downed along with a tower north of Reliance and a radio tower southwest of Marvin. The hardest hit area with this storm was the Cheyenne River and Standing Rock Sioux reservations in central and north central South Dakota. With no electricity, residents were dependent on donations of food, bottled water, blankets, heat and light sources, toiletries, and cots. The rural water system serving the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe was shut down resulting in the state EOC shipping water to the reservation. The Governor asked for a presidential disaster declaration for most of the counties and three reservations. The request was for both public and individual assistance for total damages estimated over 20 million dollars for the state.

1904: An unusual estimated F4 tornado leveled the northern part of Moundville, Alabama just after midnight, killing 37 people. The tornado reportedly had a phosphorescent glow. An engineer on a northbound Great Southern train saw the destruction right after it occurred, and backed his train 12 miles in reverse to the town of Akron, where he sent a telegram for help.

1937: Low of 9 degrees above zero in Las Vegas froze many pipes. Schools had trouble keeping warm and coal was in short supply in the city. January 1937 was the coldest month on record for Las Vegas with an average temperature of 31.2 degrees, which is 17.5 degrees below normal.

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Mon Jan 22	Tue Jan 23	Wed Jan 24	Thu Jan 25	Fri Jan 26	Sat Jan 27	Sun Jan 28
25°F	33°F	36°F	41°F	39°F	29°F	23°F
14°F	14°F	18°F	22°F	19°F	7°F	16°F
N 16 MPH	W 8 MPH	SSW 6 MPH	SSE 10 MPH	SW 10 MPH Precip 10%	NW 15 MPH Precip 10%	NNW 11 MPH

January Thaw Continues This Week

MON/Today
22nd



Dense Fog this morning over north central and NESD

HI: 25-33°

TUE
23rd



Decreasing clouds from west to east in the afternoon

HI: 27-41°

LO: 12-22°

WED
24th



HI: 32-40°

LO: 12-18°

THU
25th



Breezy

HI: 36-50°

LO: 17-23°

FRI
26th



Breezy

HI: 35-41°

LO: 20-26°

Normal High: 23-30°

Normal Low: 3-10°

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 1/22/2018 3:48 AM Central

Published on: 01/22/2018 at 3:50AM

While today's highs will be near normal, temperatures will warm back above normal on Tuesday and remain through the rest of the week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 34.2 at Midnight

Low Outside Temp: 25.3 at 8:34 PM

Wind Chill: -

High Gust: 15 at 4:09 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 58° in 1942

Record Low: -30° in 1936

Average High: 23°F

Average Low: 1°F

Average Precip in Jan: 0.35

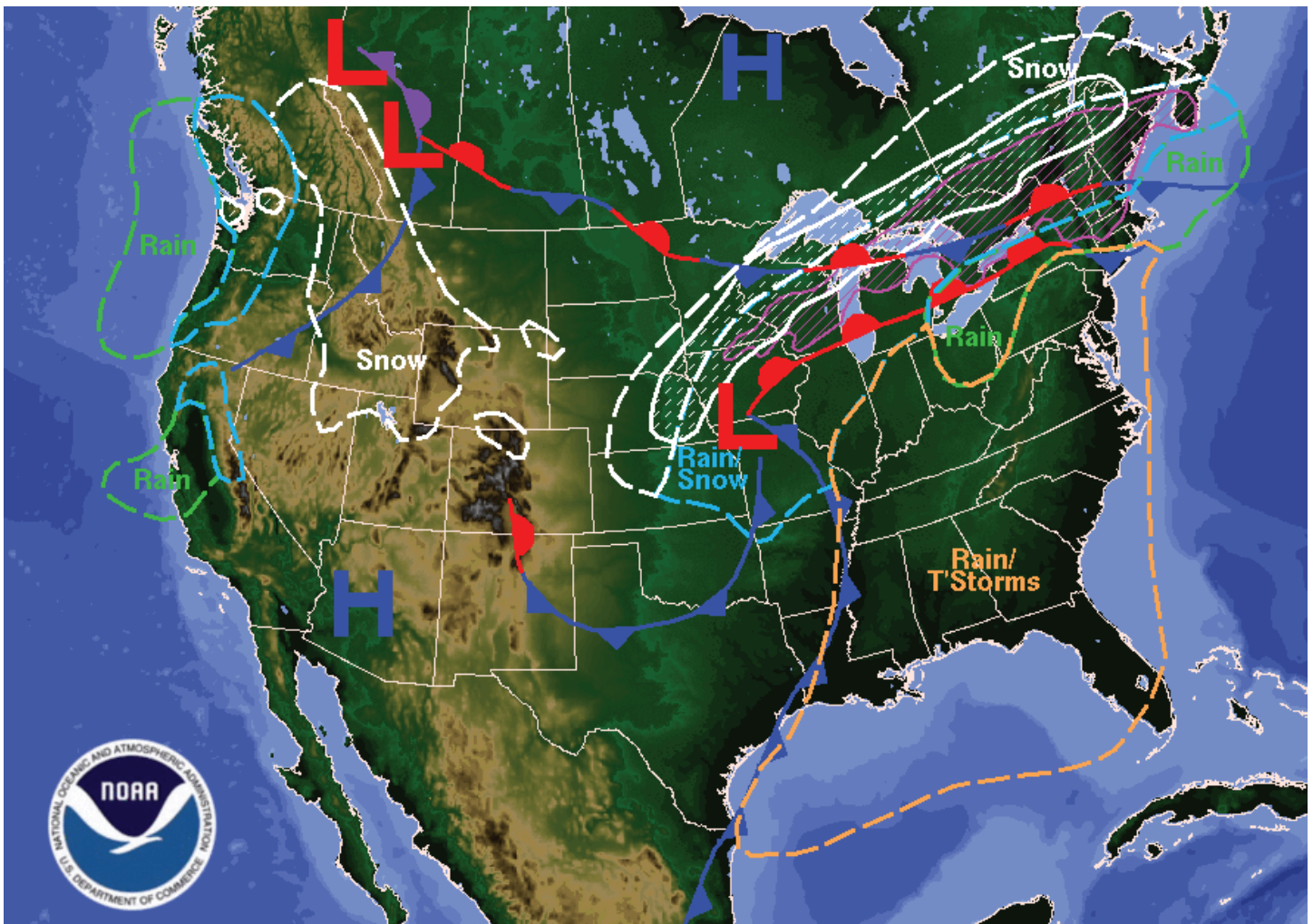
Precip to date in Jan: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.35

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:26 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:03 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Jan 22, 2018, issued 4:43 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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GOD'S GRACE

Every now and then it is good to take a "morning inventory" and reflect on the grace of God.

This morning when I opened my eyes I thanked God for protecting me while I slept. As I turned off the alarm clock, I thanked Him for sounds and my hearing. As I rested for a moment before I got out of bed I could feel my beating heart which He kept going while I slept. As I stood up, I thanked Him for my balance, healthy legs and my slippers. As I took a shower, I thanked Him for the warm water, shampoo, soap, a towel and a mat on the floor to keep me from slipping. Then I continued by thanking Him for a mirror, razor, deodorant and on and on until I thanked Him for all of the articles of clothing He provided for me to wear today.

And then I thanked Him for the words of the psalmist that reminded me of His promise: "no good thing will He withhold from those whose walk is blameless."

It was then that I had to pause in deep humility and gratefully thank Him for His love and grace that I do not deserve. It is so easy for me to accept the gifts of God – including my salvation - without realizing that everything I have, ever have had, or will have are gifts from God.

As I reflected on that verse the word blameless kept ringing in my ears as though it was my friendly alarm clock. I, of all people, am certainly not blameless. As I meditated on the word blameless for a few minutes and thought about everything I am or have, it's not because I am blameless. It's because of His unending love and grace!

Prayer: Thank You Lord, for loving us, saving us and giving us everything we have. May we be ever grateful! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 84:11c No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

News from the Associated Press

Hospital leader promotes telemedicine in rural South Dakota

By CAITLYNN PEETZ, The Daily Republic

WAGNER, S.D. (AP) — A prestigious recognition is just the beginning of a national campaign for Bryan Slaba.

Slaba, CEO of Wagner Community Memorial Hospital, was recently announced as the recipient of the American Hospital Association's 2018 Rural Leadership Award for his work to promote telemedicine in rural communities.

And though honored by the recognition, the 10-year veteran of the hospital and Mitchell resident said he plans to use the title as a platform to advocate the efficiency and effectiveness of telemedicine, the Daily Republic reported .

"I am starting to, and hope to, promote this as a true delivery model for rural health care nationwide," Slaba said. "This award is the affirmation that can now act as a springboard to move that forward."

The work he's already done to implement the method, along with overcoming staffing shortages and a rural climate earned him the Rural Leadership Award, chosen from a pool of candidates from 5,000 member hospitals.

In 2009, Slaba helped implement the eEmergency program, which allows hospital staff to simply push a button to activate a camera and connect with a certified physician and critical care nurse team in Sioux Falls who can help them through a visit they might not be sure how to handle.

With a physician shortage across the country, Slaba said the technology allows for health care providers across the state and country to interact and provide the best possible outcomes in any situation.

"There's no shame in hitting that button — they're not saying they can't take care of it, it just takes a team to do this," Slaba said. "It's hard to bring people out to rural areas for work, and it's time to figure out how to adapt and this is one way to do it. In the end, it all comes down to 'I want to make a difference,' and this is making a difference."

Recently, Wagner Community Memorial Hospital became the first rural hospital to begin an eHospitalist service, which works like eEmergency, but deals with chronic illnesses, as opposed to emergencies.

Through his work, Slaba has reduced emergency room costs to the same as 2012, he said.

And within his first five years of taking over as CEO at the hospital, Slaba oversaw two major additions and a renovation project that included laboratory, radiology and outpatient services.

But maybe his proudest accomplishment was assisting the Yankton Sioux Tribe in establishing a dialysis facility that serves more than 20 people each week. Before the project, a handful of tribal members had to travel more than 100 miles for treatment.

Slaba will receive his award during the AHA Rural Health Care Leadership Conference Feb. 4 through Feb. 7 in Phoenix, Arizona, where he will also present about telemedicine. He also plans to present on rural health care in New Orleans and Chicago in 2018.

Brittany Baron, vice president for patient care service at Wagner Community Memorial Hospital, was a member of the committee that nominated Slaba for the award, and praised his dedication to the Wagner community in her nomination letter.

"Bryan's dedication does not stop at the doors of the hospital, his deep involvement and dedicated leadership in the community has advanced the economic climate, housing opportunities and overall perception and pride in our community," Baron wrote.

But to Slaba, it's his staff that makes his success possible. Without them buying in to his programs and initiatives, none of it would work, he said.

"We've taken a very difficult situation and produced quality health care, and now we can project this to the rest of the country," Slaba said. "We can take what we've done in itty bitty Wagner and really make an impact on the nation."

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

New South Dakota technical university president shares goals

By JIM HOLLAND, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — James "Jim" Rankin first set foot on the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology campus as an incoming freshman in the fall of 1974.

At the time, he recalls, there would have been no imagining his return, 44 years later, to become the university's 19th president.

"Not a chance," Rankin said with a laugh. "I think at that point I was just worried about becoming a sophomore."

Rankin, originally from Draper and Fort Pierre, worried and studied his way to a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from Mines in 1978.

He met with reporters in Rapid City on Jan. 11 for the first time since returning to the city Jan. 8.

Rankin, who was appointed by the state Board of Regents in November, outlined some of his goals as university president.

Before accepting the post, he was vice-provost for research and economic development at the University of Arkansas. His leadership at the Fayetteville campus helped generate more than 50 startup companies and increased annual external funding to \$103 million.

Rankin earned his Ph.D. and master's degree in electrical engineering at Iowa State University. His career took him to Rockwell-Collins, where he worked as an engineer. He also taught at St. Cloud State University and Ohio University.

Rankin succeeds Heather Wilson, who left in May to accept President Donald Trump's appointment as Air Force secretary.

He inherits a university boasting a 98 percent placement rate for its science and engineering graduates in nine of the last 10 years. Last year saw the placement rate slip to 96 percent.

"I know it can't go much higher (than 98 percent), but we want to make sure it stays there," he said.

Rankin also wants to boost enrollment, with a goal of 3,000 undergraduate students, the Rapid City Journal reported. There are currently around 2,400 undergraduate students at the school.

He said a state Board of Regents decision approving in-state tuition fees for qualifying new and transfer students from Colorado and Nebraska will be key to helping Mines increase its undergraduate enrollment.

Rankin also hopes to boost fundraising efforts to increase the number of scholarships offered to students, and increase research by Mines faculty and students with an eye toward increasing business development in Rapid City and the Black Hills.

He said the campus already has 30 entrepreneurs-in-residence helping students who want to start companies through the Black Hills Business Development Center, which recently announced plans to expand from the Mines campus with another location at 108 Main St.

"The seeds are planted. We just need to keep helping in that area," he said.

Rankin hopes to meet soon with city officials to learn of continuing efforts to link the Mines campus and the city business district through expansion of the downtown core east of Fifth Street, along with expansion of the business development center.

"We've always had that little bit of distance between us, and if we can add new businesses, we want to help participate in that. If we can help in company attraction or with start-up companies, we like to do that," Rankin said.

Much has changed on the Mines campus and in Rapid City since Rankin left, while some things were quickly familiar.

Long gone are the March-Dake Dormitory and an old classroom building, whose location is marked with an arch. The campus has expanded to the west with the addition of three new dormitories.

Rankin recalls O'Harra Stadium with its unique multi-tier parking and Surbeck Center, where incoming

students received their green frosh beanies.

"Some of those good memories came back," he said.

Rankin said he will spend much of his first days back on campus meeting with student, staff and faculty and also get to know Rapid City again.

"This isn't just me deciding to throw out an idea, this is really all of us deciding together how we want to move forward," he said.

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

South Dakota couple see potential in small town mansion

WINNER, S.D. (AP) — A couple found the property deal of a lifetime when they snagged a century-old mansion in a small South Dakota town for \$119,000.

Now, homeowners David and Tessa Howard are figuring out what to do with the property.

The couple has started renovating by replacing windows and painting the front of the house.

The five-bedroom, four-bathroom house was built in 1914 in Winner, which now has a population of 2,900 people. The Howards bought the property last May after five months on the market.

The Howards told the Argus Leader that they've been previewing the property as a potential bed and breakfast or Airbnb rental.

"There are just tremendous possibilities," said David Howard. "It could be Airbnb, it could be a bed and breakfast, it could be a hunting lodge, it could be about anything. It pretty easily fits 16 people probably. Weddings, reunions, whatever. There are just a lot of possibilities."

The Howards already welcomed their first guests. They rented the mansion out to pilot crews who visited during peak pheasant hunting season when the hotels were booked.

"We said, 'We've got this work in progress. You can at least stay here,'" said David Howard. "They had a good time. They bought some local steaks, grilled them out in the backyard and just made it like home."

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

Pierre and Fort Pierre face deadline for bridge replacement

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Officials in Pierre and Fort Pierre have until February to choose potential enhancements to the design of the Missouri River bridge replacement.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation gave the cities of Pierre and Fort Pierre a Feb. 1 deadline to make their decision about enhancements to the bridge replacement's design, the Capital Journal reported. Enhancements could include lighting, railings, pedestrian walkway bump-outs and steps down to the water.

The cities will have to cover costs if they choose any further enhancements beyond the basic design. Mayors of both cities say they plan to put the issue on their upcoming agendas.

Fort Pierre City Councilmember Larry Cronin asked his colleagues at a council meeting Jan. 8 to request feedback from residents.

"The main reason I wanted to bring something up tonight was because we've got to vote in a month whether to fund a \$500,000, a \$750,000 or a \$1 million dollar project, with taxpayer dollars," Cronin said.

At the meeting, Fort Pierre Mayor Gloria Hanson said there are too many unanswered questions regarding cost alternatives for enhancement options, such as architectural lighting.

"It would be a frustrating thing to present anything to the public right now," Hanson said.

DOT Bridge Design Program Manager Steve Johnson said cities need to make a decision soon so they can stay on track to complete the project by 2022. Johnson said some choices could affect the structural design of the bridge replacement.

Information from: Pierre Capital Journal, <http://www.capjournal.com>

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SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

17-21-25-29-30

(seventeen, twenty-one, twenty-five, twenty-nine, thirty)

Estimated jackpot: \$106,000

Lotto America

15-23-40-43-45, Star Ball: 7, ASB: 5

(fifteen, twenty-three, forty, forty-three, forty-five; Star Ball: seven; ASB: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$18.65 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$63 million

Powerball

26-28-47-49-58, Powerball: 3, Power Play: 4

(twenty-six, twenty-eight, forty-seven, forty-nine, fifty-eight; Powerball: three; Power Play: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$78 million

Hagedorn leads South Dakota over Omaha 85-71

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Tyler Hagedorn scored 25 points and grabbed seven rebounds and South Dakota beat Omaha 85-71 on Saturday night.

Hagedorn was 8 of 17 from the field — including 3 of 4 from distance — for the Coyotes (17-5, 5-1 Summit League), winners of their last three. Matt Mooney added 17 points, five rebounds, four assists and four steals and Nick Fuller had 16 points and eight rebounds.

Hagedorn led the opening South Dakota surge, sinking a pair of 3-pointers, a layup and four free throws in the 14-4 start. Omaha pulled to 22-18 midway through the half but Fuller answered with a dunk, sparking a 19-6 run that stretched it to 41-24 and the Coyotes led 50-32 at intermission.

South Dakota led by double figures most of the second half and cruised to the win.

Zach Jackson led the Mavericks (7-15, 2-4) with 18 points on 7-of-13 shooting. Lamar Wofford-Humphrey added 15.

South Dakota State routs Western Illinois 98-70

MACOMB, Ill. (AP) — David Jenkins Jr. scored 27 points to lead seven in double-figure scoring as South Dakota State remained undefeated in the Summit League with a 98-70 rout of Western Illinois on Saturday night.

South Dakota State (17-5, 5-0) has won eight straight and 10 of its last 11 games.

Jenkins, a freshman guard, made four 3-pointers, finished 9-of-13 shooting and now has scored in double figures in 18 games. Tevin King and Reed Tellinghuisen added 12 points apiece for the Jackrabbits, who shot 50 percent from the floor, including 14 of 28 from long range. Mike Daum and Skyler Flatten chipped in 11 points apiece, with Daum grabbing a game-high 12 rebounds.

Reserves Ian Theisen had 13 points and Chris Howell had 10 for South Dakota State.

Isaac Johnson scored 19 points for Western Illinois (10-8, 1-4). Kobe Webster added 17 points and C.J. Duff 16.

Rohingya Muslim refugee return to Myanmar delayed

By JULHAS ALAM, Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — The gradual repatriation of more than 680,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees back to Myanmar from Bangladesh, scheduled to begin Tuesday, has been delayed amid widespread fears that refugees would be forced to return, a Bangladesh official said Monday.

The refugees began pouring across the border into Bangladesh in August, fleeing waves of attacks by Myanmar security forces and Buddhist mobs.

While the two countries have signed an agreement to begin sending people home in "safety, security and dignity," the process has been chaotic and opaque, leaving international aid workers and many Rohingya afraid they would be coerced into going back to villages that they fled only months ago.

Abul Kalam, Bangladesh's refugee and repatriation commissioner, said a number of issues remain unresolved.

"The main thing is that the process has to be voluntary," said Kalam, adding that paperwork for returning refugees had not yet been finalized and transit camps had yet to be built in Bangladesh. It was not immediately clear when the process would start.

Myanmar officials could not be reached for comment.

"If they send us back forcefully we will not go," Sayed Noor, who fled his village in Myanmar in August, said over the weekend, adding that Myanmar authorities "have to give us our rights and give us justice."

"They will have to return all our wealth that they have looted and hold people accountable. They will have to compensate us. We came here because we are fighting for those things," he said. "If we don't get all of this, then what was the point of coming here?"

Eventually, all the Rohingya who have fled Myanmar since August were to leave Bangladesh, according to the agreement signed late last year. Over the weekend, the U.N.'s migration agency increased the total estimate of those refugees to 688,000.

David Mathieson, a longtime human rights researcher who has spent years working on Rohingya issues, heaped scorn on the agreement ahead of the latest announcement.

"It's a fantasyland, make-believe world that both governments are in," he said in an interview in Yangon, Myanmar's main city, noting that security forces there had just forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya across the border. "Now you're expecting them to come back, as if they're in a conga line of joy after what you did to them?"

The Rohingya Muslims have long been treated as outsiders in largely Buddhist Myanmar, derided as "Bengalis" who entered illegally from Bangladesh, even though generations of Rohingya have lived in Myanmar. Nearly all have been denied citizenship since 1982, effectively rendering them stateless. They are denied freedom of movement and other basic rights.

Many of the people who fled earlier violence and moved into displacement camps inside Myanmar have been unable to leave those settlements for years.

Most Rohingya lived in poverty in Myanmar's Rakhine state, near the Bangladesh border. Marked by their religion and their language — most Rohingya speak a dialect of Bengali, while most of their neighbors speak Rakhine — they are easy to target.

The recent surge of violence erupted after an underground insurgent group, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, attacked at least 30 security outposts in Myanmar in late August. The military and Buddhist mobs then launched retaliatory attacks on Rohingya across Rakhine in a frenzy of killings, rapes and burned villages. The U.N. has described the violence as "textbook ethnic cleansing."

The attacks, which Doctors Without Borders believes have left at least 6,700 Rohingya dead, sowed terror across Rohingya communities. Most refugees came in the first month or so after the violence began, but some continue to trickle into Bangladesh, complaining of ill-treatment by authorities.

In early January, following up on their November agreement, Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a deal to begin sending back the refugees starting Tuesday. Officials have said they expect some 1,500 refugees to go back each week, though only refugees with identity documents — which most Rohingya lack — will

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be allowed into Myanmar.

Bangladesh and Myanmar are both eager to have the repatriations begin. Bangladesh has grown weary of hosting Rohingya who've spilled across the border for decades. More than a million Rohingya are now believed to live in Bangladesh. Myanmar, meanwhile, wants the repatriations to lessen the international condemnation it has faced for the violence.

In Myanmar, officials have started building sprawling camps for returning refugees. Forty buildings have been finished already in the Hla Po Kaung transit camp, enough for more than 3,000 refugees, state media have reported. Eventually, the camp will have 625 buildings, enough for 30,000 refugees. In theory the returnees will stay only temporarily in the camp before going home, though many Rohingya villages were burned to the ground during the violence.

In Bangladesh, there have been almost no signs of preparations. A Bangladesh official who oversees the area where most of the camps are located said last week that "we have not finalized anything yet."

Aid workers say some refugees may want to return — perhaps the 500 or so Bengali-speaking Hindus who also fled the Rakhine state violence, and the handful of Rohingya who have managed to acquire citizenship documents.

But how many more?

Not many, experts say.

"I think that the (Myanmar) government knows very well that only a few people will go back," said Chris Lewa, the director of the human rights research group the Arakan Project. But officials want the good publicity that could come with repatriations, she said.

"When the majority of Rohingya refuse to come back, the Myanmar government will say 'See, we have done what we can for them to return, but they refuse to come back and prefer to stay in Bangladesh, which was their own country,'" she said.

Inside Rakhine, there are few signs that people want their former Rohingya neighbors to return.

"International pressure, because of human rights and humanitarianism, means we have to accept them back, even though we don't want to," Than Tun, a Buddhist leader in Sittwe, the Rakhine state capital, said in a telephone interview.

He dismissed the idea that the Rohingya had fled their homes. "We think that these Bengalis have gone back to their original land — Bangladesh."

AP journalists Rishabh Jain in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and Tim Sullivan in New Delhi contributed to this report.

Turkish troops face fierce battles in Syrian Kurdish enclave

BEIRUT (AP) — Intense clashes erupted Monday as Turkish troops and their allies advanced on a Kurdish enclave in Syria, the third day of the Ankara offensive aimed at ousting the Kurds from the area, a Kurdish militia and a war monitoring group said.

The Turkish offensive on Afrin, codenamed Operation Olive Branch, started on Saturday, heightening tensions in the already complicated Syrian conflict and threatening to further strain ties between NATO allies Turkey and the United States.

The U.N. Security Council is convening Monday to discuss the situation in Syria.

In a statement Monday, NATO said it has been in touch with Turkey over the developing offensive. NATO said Turkey has suffered from terrorism and has the right to self-defense but urged Ankara to do so in a "proportionate and measured way."

NATO also said it has no presence in Syria but that as members of the coalition against Islamic State militants, "our focus is on the defeat" of the extremist group.

The U.S.-backed Kurdish militia said it has repelled Turkish troops and their Syrian allies from Shinkal and Adah Manli, two villages they seized a day earlier in Afrin, the northwestern Syrian district that straddles the Turkish border.

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The militia said the Turkey-backed forces have opened a new front, pushing their way into two other villages in the district's north. The militia said they are fighting to push back the advancing troops in Balia and Qarna.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the Syrian Kurdish militia waged a ferocious counteroffensive late Sunday, repelling the Turkish troops and allied Syrian fighters from the two villages they briefly captured. The Observatory said Turkey-backed troops were attempting once again to enter Afrin.

Access to Afrin is restricted and it is difficult to independently verify the reported developments.

The Kurdish militia, known as People's Defense Units or YPG, said it was clashing Monday with the Turkish troops northwest of Afrin.

Turkey considers the YPG a terror organization because of its affiliation to its own Kurdish insurgency. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has promised to expand the operation.

Women's marches organizers hope to keep building momentum

By HAVEN DALEY and JOHN LOCHER, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Thousands of people poured into a football stadium in Las Vegas on Sunday, the anniversary of women's marches around the world, to cap off a weekend of global demonstrations that participants hope will continue building momentum for equality, justice and an end to sexual harassment.

"This is a birthday party for a movement that has only begun to flex its power to change this democracy," Anna Galland, the executive director of the progressive group moveon.org, told the boisterous crowd.

Following marches that drew huge crowds across the U.S. on Saturday, one year after President Donald Trump's inauguration, protesters gathered Sunday on multiple continents, including in London, Paris, Sydney, Madrid and Buenos Aires.

The events culminated with the Las Vegas rally, which launched an effort to register 1 million voters and target swing states such as Nevada in the U.S. midterm elections later this year, which could shift control of Congress. Organizers said they are planning future events in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Texas.

Paula Beaty, 53, a tech worker from Durham, North Carolina, attended the Las Vegas rally wearing an outfit recalling the women's suffrage movement of the early 20th century. She cited the difference women made in helping Democrat Doug Jones upset conservative Republican Roy Moore for a Senate seat in Alabama in December.

"For us it's all about women's rights and we're seeing them be eroded with Trump in office," Beaty said. "The women made a difference in Alabama and we're hoping we can flip the House and Senate with the power of women."

There was also a push for women to not just register as voters, but as candidates. Democratic Idaho state Rep. Paulette Jordan, a member of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, drew an immense cheer when she told the crowd she was running to be not only Idaho's first female governor, but the first Native American woman to be governor in any state. She implored other women to join her in running for office.

"This is Idaho's future. This is the future of America," she said.

The demonstrations came at a time of reckoning for many men in Hollywood, the media and other industries as women speak out about sexual misconduct and inequity in general. Among the speakers in Las Vegas was singer and actress Cher.

"This is one of the worst times in our history and that's why I honestly believe that women are going to be the ones that fix it," Cher told the crowd. "Stay strong and remember if you don't have a vote, you don't have a voice."

Those who took part in this year's events said they were galvanized by an avalanche of political and gender issues over the past year, as well as the #MeToo movement, which has been credited with countering widespread sexual abuse and misconduct.

Many of the marchers not only supported women's rights, but also denounced Trump's views on issues including immigration, abortion and LGBT rights. Demonstrators denounced Trump's views with colorful signs and even saltier language.

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Trump dismissed the suggestion that his presidency has been bad for women. He tweeted Saturday that it was a "perfect day" for women to march to celebrate the "economic success and wealth creation" of his first year in office.

"Get out there now to celebrate the historic milestones and unprecedented economic success and wealth creation that has taken place over the last 12 months," the Republican wrote. "Lowest female unemployment in 18 years!"

In Palm Beach, Florida, home to Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate, several hundred people marched Saturday carrying anti-Trump signs. A group of women wearing red cloaks and white hats like the characters in the book and television versions of "The Handmaid's Tale," which imagines a future in which women's rights have been strictly limited, walked in formation with their heads bowed.

In the British capital Sunday, demonstrators carried placards reading "We Are Powerful" and "Time's Up" and chanted outside Prime Minister Theresa May's office as they raised grievances ranging from workplace inequities to misogynistic abuse on social media.

"Today is a call for action to bring about change," London protest co-organizer Shola Mos-Shogbamimu said. "This is so much more than Trump."

The London event drew thousands of people despite sleet and snow. Heavy rain fell on Paris protesters who gathered near the Eiffel Tower, which could have been a factor in the small number of participants compared to the U.S. marches on Saturday.

"It doesn't matter if the weather is like this," Maggie Kim, who was one of the more than 100 people who didn't let the rain and cold deter them. "We're still coming together, and we're going to still fight against Trump and his agenda."

This story has been updated to correct the last name of a protester to Kim, not Kan.

Gene Johnson in Seattle, Danica Kirka in London, Sylvie Corbet in Paris, Chris Blake in Sydney and Jo Kearney in London contributed to this story.

50 years after key Vietnam battles, Mattis seeks closer ties

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A half-century after the Tet Offensive punctured American hopes of victory in Vietnam, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis is visiting the former enemy in search of a different kind of win: incremental progress as partners in a part of the world the Pentagon has identified as vital for the United States to compete with China and Russia.

Mattis, a retired general who entered the Marine Corps during Vietnam but did not serve there, departed Washington on Sunday for an initial two-day stop in Indonesia, followed by a visit to Hanoi on Wednesday and Thursday for talks with senior government and military leaders.

By coincidence, Mattis will be in Vietnam just days before the 50th anniversary of the communist offensive on Jan. 30-31, 1968, when North Vietnam attacked an array of key objectives in the South, including the city of Hue, a former imperial capital and cultural icon on the Perfume River. At the time, Mattis was a senior at Columbia High School in Richland, Washington. The following year he joined the Marine Corps Reserves.

The Tet Offensive gave the North an important boost, even though it ultimately was a military failure. It collapsed an air of confidence among U.S. leaders that they would soon win a favorable peace agreement. Looking ahead to 1968, the top U.S. commander in Vietnam at the time, Gen. William Westmoreland, famously declared in a speech in Washington in November 1967 that the war was about to enter a phase "when the end begins to come into view."

The fighting dragged on for seven more years, fueling U.S. street protests and convulsing American politics, before the North prevailed and the last Americans evacuated in 1975.

The former enemies have gradually set aside their wartime differences, in part out of shared concern

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about China's growing military power and more assertive position in the South China Sea. The Trump administration sees Vietnam as a partner in opposing China's assertion of territorial claims in the South China Sea, including the Spratlys, an island chain where Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei also have claims.

Despite the passage of time, the legacy of the U.S. war is never far from the surface.

The countries didn't normalize relations until 1995. It took another two decades before Washington fully lifted a ban on selling deadly weapons to Vietnam. The Vietnamese have largely embraced the new partnership as they've sought to diversify diplomatic and security relations in the region, fearing Chinese primacy. Vietnam fought a border war with China in 1979, and bitterness runs deep.

The current crop of top U.S. generals is too young to have served in Vietnam. The last chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to have been a Vietnam veteran was Adm. Mike Mullen, who served aboard a Navy destroyer in 1969 that provided fire support for American and South Vietnamese ground forces near Da Nang. The only secretary of defense to have fought in Vietnam was Chuck Hagel, wounded in 1968. He served as Pentagon chief from 2013-2015.

But the war isn't a relic of history at the Pentagon. An obscure office, the Defense POW-MIA Accounting Agency, still directs efforts to find and identify remains of Americans killed in Vietnam. Decades of searches still haven't accounted for more than 1,200 people. An additional 350 are missing in Laos, Cambodia and China, the Pentagon says. Mattis may visit POW-MIA accounting representatives during his visit.

Mattis has shown interest in some of the unfinished business of Vietnam, too. Last month, he approved giving a Medal of Honor to a Marine for valorous actions in a counter-offensive to retake Hue. A Marine gunnery sergeant at the time, John Canley of Oxnard, California, had been awarded the Navy Cross for heroic action, including rescuing wounded Marines from Jan. 31 to Feb. 6, 1968.

Hue and the Tet Offensive remain a powerful symbol of the war for Americans of that generation; an Associated Press photograph by Eddie Adams of a Vietnamese officer executing a Viet Cong suspect on a street in Saigon on the second day of the Tet Offensive was a rallying cry for U.S. war protesters and is still an iconic symbol of the conflict.

Mattis is the latest in a string of Pentagon chiefs who've visited Vietnam to expand security ties and address China's growing military power.

Ash Carter made the last visit in June 2015, marking two decades of relations and announcing the Pentagon would assign a peacekeeping expert to the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi to help the Vietnamese Defense Ministry prepare for its first deployment on a U.N. peacekeeping mission. Leon Panetta and his Vietnamese counterpart exchanged personal items from soldiers lost in the war three years earlier.

Mattis has never been to Vietnam. During the war, he attended what was then known as Central Washington State College, graduating in 1972, and earned his commission as a second lieutenant through the Reserve Officer's Training Corps. He rose in the ranks through 41 years on active duty, capping his career as the four-star commander of U.S. Central Command. He had been retired three years when President Donald Trump picked him to lead the Pentagon.

Senate talks fall short, shutdown extends into workweek

By ALAN FRAM, ANDREW TAYLOR and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government shutdown is set to sow more disruption and political peril Monday after the Senate inched closer but ultimately fell short of an agreement that would have reopened federal agencies before the beginning of the workweek.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said negotiations kept going late into the night, with a vote to break a Democratic filibuster on a short-term funding bill scheduled for noon Monday. Under the proposal taking shape, Democrats would agree to a three-week spending measure — until Feb. 8 — in return for a commitment from the Republican leadership in the Senate to address immigration policy and other pressing legislative matters in the coming weeks.

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But Democrats appeared to be holding out for a firmer commitment from McConnell. "We have yet to reach an agreement on a path forward," Schumer said late Sunday.

McConnell's comments followed hours of behind-the-scenes talks between the leaders and rank-and-file lawmakers over how to end the display of legislative dysfunction, which began Friday at midnight after Democrats blocked a temporary spending measure. Democrats have sought to use the spending bill to win concessions, including protections for roughly 700,000 younger immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children.

Republicans have appeared increasingly confident that Democrats were bearing the brunt of criticism for the shutdown and that they would ultimately buckle. The White House and GOP leaders said they would not negotiate with Democrats on immigration until the government is reopened.

There were indications Sunday that Democratic resolve was beginning to waver, with growing worries that a prolonged shutdown could prove to be an electoral headache for the party just as it has grown more confident about prospects in November.

Although they initially dug in on a demand for an immigration deal, Democrats had shifted to blaming the shutdown on the incompetence of Republicans and President Donald Trump, seeming sensitive to being seen by voters as willing to tie up government operations over their big to protect immigrants.

Trump, who regularly disrupted negotiations in recent weeks, had been a relatively subdued player in the weekend debate. He has not appeared in public since Friday afternoon. The White House said he was in regular contact with Republican leaders, but he has not reached out to any Democrats, a White House official said.

Sunday morning on Twitter, he called on the GOP-controlled Senate to consider deploying the "nuclear option" — changing Senate rules to end the filibuster — and reopen the government with a simple majority.

McConnell has dismissed that option, saying Republicans will welcome the filibuster when they return to being the Senate minority. The White House didn't immediately respond to McConnell's comments.

Democrats are facing intense pressure from their base to solve the issue over the young immigrants, and they are skeptical of Republicans' credibility when offering to take up the issue. Whether Trump would back the emerging plan or any later proposal on immigration is an open question. Even if the Senate voted on an immigration proposal, its prospects in the House would be grim.

Throughout the day there were few outward signs of progress, as lawmakers took turns delivering animated speeches to near empty chambers to explain why the other party is to blame. McConnell and Schumer met off the Senate floor in the early evening, as many in quiet Capitol offices flipped their television screens to playoff football games.

While lawmakers feuded, signs of the shutdown were evident at national parks and in some federal agencies. Social Security and most other safety-net programs were unaffected by the lapse in federal spending authority. Critical government functions continued, with uniformed service members, health inspectors and law enforcement officers set to work without pay.

Lawmakers were mindful that the political stakes would soar Monday morning, when thousands of federal workers would be told to stay home or, in many cases, work without pay. What was still a weekend burst of Washington dysfunction could spiral into a broader crisis with political consequences in November's midterm elections.

That threat prompted a bipartisan group of Senate moderates to huddle for a second day Sunday in hopes of crafting a plan to reopen the government. The group was set to meet again Monday morning.

The emerging approach found advocates in South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, who has been trying to broker an immigration deal, and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, both Republicans who rejected an earlier short-term proposal. Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake, another previous no-vote, announced he would vote in favor of reopening the government Monday.

Graham said no deal had been reached by the moderate group because Democrats were not yet on board. "To my Democratic friends, don't overplay your hand," he told reporters. "A government shutdown is not a good way to get an outcome legislatively."

The vote Monday will prove to be a test of unity and resolve among Democrats. Five Democrats from

states won by Trump broke ranks in a vote Friday. The measure gained 50 votes to proceed to 49 against, but 60 were needed to break a Democratic filibuster.

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking and Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

S. Koreans burn Kim's photo as N. Korean band leader passes

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and AHN YOUNG-JOON, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Conservative activists burned a large photo of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as the head of the North's extremely popular girl band passed by them Monday during her visit to Seoul amid a flurry of cooperation between the rivals ahead of next month's Winter Olympics in the South.

Hyon Song Wol, a Pyongyang celebrity who heads the Moranbong Band hand-picked by Kim, began a two-day visit on Sunday, triggering media frenzy in South Korea about the woman who is also in charge of the North's artistic performance during the Olympics.

It has been rare for such a high-profile North Korean figure to travel to South Korea in recent years as they saw their ties deteriorating over the North Korean nuclear standoff before they recently abruptly sought to improve ties this month ahead of the Feb. 9-25 Olympics.

After her visits to potential venues for North Korean performances in an eastern city, Hyon arrived back Monday morning at the Seoul railway station where she saw about 150 to 200 activists rallying against her visit and recent inter-Korean rapprochement deals. "Pyeongchang Olympics? We oppose Kim Jong Un's Pyongyang Olympics," they chanted referring to the North Korean capital.

Hyon saw the activists but did not react. After she left the scene, the demonstrators used a blowtorch to burn Kim's photo, a North Korean flag and a "unification flag" that athletes of the rival Koreas plan to carry together during the opening ceremony of the Olympics. Police used fire extinguishers to quench the fire, but the activists later stamped on Kim's photo and the flags and burned them.

Seoul police plan to investigate the protesters, according to Yonhap news agency.

Hyon's arrival has made her the subject of intense South Korean media attention, with photographers following her every move and TV stations aggressively reporting not only her career and band but also her fox-fur muffler, boots and facial expressions.

The band, with the young women in short skirts and high heels dancing and singing odes to Kim, draws global attention even though little information is available about it or about Hyon to outsiders. South Korean media say she is an army colonel and is close to Kim, but little else is known.

South Korea's liberal government led by President Moon Jae-in sees North Korea's participation in the Games — both in sporting events and cultural exchanges — as a way to calm tensions caused by Pyongyang's recent nuclear and missile tests and war of words with the United States. The two Koreas agreed to field their first unified Olympic team, in women's hockey, and have their athletes march together under the joint flag depicting their peninsula during the Feb. 9 opening ceremony.

Some of the Olympic proposals like a unified hockey team and the use of the joint flag have caused a heated debate in South Korea, reflecting changes in public views toward North Korea which has been rapidly expanding its nuclear and missile arsenals in recent years.

South Korea's main conservative opposition party expressed its complaint over what it calls too much security arrangements provided for Hyon. "The Moon government is offering gracious hospitality to a North Korean army colonel as if she's a queen ... Did they forget North Korea had until recently been threatening to turn South Korea into a sea of fire with its nuclear weapons and missiles?" a party statement said.

The current mood of reconciliation between the Koreas flared after North Korea's Kim abruptly expressed his willingness to improve ties and send a delegation to the Olympics during his annual New Year's address. Outside critics have dismissed Kim's overture as a tactic to use improved ties with Seoul to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions over North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile programs.

Hyon, who is also an alternate member of the ruling party's Central Committee, was travelling with six other North Koreans. Her delegation inspected possible venue sites in Gangneung, where some Olympic

games are scheduled to take place, on Sunday and is to do the same in Seoul on Monday.

Her Moranbong Band is not to visit South Korea during the Games, but she's to head a little-known 140-member art troupe which is to perform twice during the Olympics — one in Gangneung and the other in Seoul. The art troupe, which comprises orchestra members, singers and dancers, is part of North Korea's Olympic delegation that also includes athletes, officials, journalists and a taekwondo demonstration team.

Dismissive words on abuse scandal cast pall over pope's trip

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO, Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Pope Francis ventured into the Amazon to demand rights for indigenous groups, decried the scourge of corruption afflicting the region's politics and denounced a culture of "machismo" in which violence against women is too often tolerated.

Yet his latest visit to South America is likely to be remembered most for 27 dismissive words that sparked outrage among Chileans already angry over a notorious clerical abuse scandal and haunted the rest of his trip.

"That is the enigma of Pope Francis," Anne Barrett Doyle of the online abuse database BishopAccountability.org said Sunday. "He is so bold and compassionate on many issues but he is an old school defensive bishop when it comes to the sex abuse crisis."

Even before Francis landed in Chile for the first leg of his two-country trip, the pontiff's visit seemed ripe for contention. Vandals fire-bombed three churches in the capital of Santiago, warning in a leaflet that "the next bombs will be in your cassock," and an angry group protesting the high cost of hosting him briefly occupied the Nunciature where he would sleep.

Also looming over his visit to both Chile and Peru were damaging clerical sex abuse scandals and growing apathy over the Catholic Church. In a Latinobarometro annual poll last year, 45 percent of Chileans identified as Roman Catholic, a sharp drop from the mid-60s a decade ago. Even in deeply religious Peru, where nearly three-quarters of the population calls itself Catholic, the number of faithful has dipped notably from a generation ago.

As Francis drove through the streets of Santiago in a popemobile after arriving the crowds standing by to greet him were comparably thin when compared to other papal visits.

"Love live the pope!" some yelled. But others weren't welcoming. "Stop the abuse, Francis!" one person's sign said. "You can so you must."

Francis almost immediately dove into the thorny topic of the abuse scandal, meeting on his first full day with survivors of priests who had sexually abused them and apologizing for the "irreparable damage" they suffered.

He proceeded to take on equally contentious concerns throughout the rest of his stay in Chile. He called on the government and indigenous Mapuche to find ways to peacefully resolve differences that have seen a surge of violence. And he urged Chileans to remain welcoming to a surge of new immigrants.

All the while, signs that Francis himself was unwanted continued to emerge. Police shot tear gas and detained dozens of protesters outside a Mass in the capital and there were more church burnings. Aerial photographs taken by local newspapers of all three of Francis' outdoor Masses showed swaths of empty spaces

Then came the 27 words that stunned the nation.

Questioned by local journalists about Chilean Bishop Juan Barros, who abuse survivors say was present when the Rev. Fernando Karadima molested them decades ago, Francis responded that there was no proof against the bishop he appointed in 2015 and characterized the accusations as slander.

"The day they bring me proof against Bishop Barros, then I'll speak," he said. "There is not one shred of proof against him. It's all calumny. Is that clear?"

The comment, combined with Barros' presence at several activities during the week, cast a pall over the entire trip.

"The pope's visit in Chile turned into the worst of his five years as pontiff," read a headline in Clarin, a

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major newspaper in Francis' native Argentina.

"The principal legacy of this trip will be negative because of Francis' support of Barros," said German Silva, a political scientist at the Universidad Mayor in Santiago.

The remark followed him into Peru. Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the pope's top adviser on abuse, and the Chilean government publicly rebuked the pope in a remarkable correction. And near a church where the pope prayed on his final day, a banner hung from a building with the words "Francis, here there is proof" and accompanied by the photo of the disgraced founder of a Peru-based Catholic lay movement.

The banner was a reference to Peru's biggest clerical abuse scandal, involving Luis Figari, the former leader of Sodalitium Christianae Vitae. An independent investigation found Figari sodomized recruits and forced them to fondle him and one another.

Still, despite the outrage that case has stirred in Peru, the pope received a warmer reception here. Thousands waited to greet him each night as he retired to the papal embassy in Lima and people lined the streets wherever he went. Peruvians largely praised his comments condemning corruption in a nation that has been embroiled in Latin America's largest graft scandal. They also welcomed his call to protect the Amazon and stop crimes like sex trafficking and femicide that plague much of the region.

Andrew Chesnut, the Catholic Studies chair at Virginia Commonwealth University, said Francis likely deepened wounds in Chile. But in Peru, "he has helped alleviate the pain of a polarized society, though the medicine won't last long."

Juan Rivera, 31, who attended a final papal Mass that drew 1.3 million people, said the abuse scandals certainly stain the church's reputation. But, he added, "Faith itself can't be stained."

Associated Press writers Nicole Winfield and Franklin Briceno in Lima, Peru, and Peter Prengaman and Patricia Luna in Santiago, Chile, contributed to this report.

The Patriots and Eagles will square off in Super Bowl 52

By ARNIE STAPLETON, AP Pro Football Writer

Tom Brady and the New England Patriots are going back to the Super Bowl in search of a sixth title. They'll face a Philadelphia Eagles team looking for their first Lombardi Trophy.

Brady led the Patriots (15-3) back from a 10-point, fourth-quarter deficit to beat the Jacksonville Jaguars 24-20 in the AFC championship game Sunday.

Starting his 36th playoff game, Brady shook off an injury to his right hand and the loss of top target Rob Gronkowski to rally the Patriots to their record 10th Super Bowl appearance.

The Patriots will try to match the Pittsburgh Steelers' six Super Bowl trophies when they face the Eagles (15-3) on Feb. 4 in Minneapolis.

Nick Foles, the backup QB who was thrust into the starting role when Carson Wentz blew out his left knee last month, led the Philadelphia to a 38-7 rout of the Minnesota Vikings in the NFC championship game.

Foles threw for 352 yards and three touchdowns, showing poise and moxie in going 26 for 33.

The Vikings were hoping to become the first NFL team to serve as host to a Super Bowl in its own stadium, but they followed up their "Minneapolis Miracle" with a "Flop in Philly."

So, they'll clear out their lockers long before the Eagles and Patriots and their fans take over U.S. Bank Stadium for Super Bowl 52 in two weeks.

Odds makers like the chances of Brady winning a sixth Super Bowl ring, making the Patriots nearly a touchdown favorite to beat the Eagles.

The Patriots and Eagles, who last won an NFL title in 1960, several years before the first Super Bowl, met in the Super Bowl after the 2004 season with the Patriots prevailing 24-21.

Hours after Brady's game-winning 4-yard TD pass to Danny Amendola with 2:48 remaining in Foxborough, the Eagles won for the fourth time in five tries under Foles.

It started out ominously, however.

The Vikings celebrated Kyle Rudolph's 25-yard touchdown catch from Case Keenum on their opening

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drive by mimicking the Olympic sport of curling for their TD celebration.

It was the Eagles who had all the fun after that.

Patrick Robinson's spectacular 50-yard interception return got Philadelphia started. Then Foles and his offense tore up the league's stingiest scoring defense, with long TD throws to Alshon Jeffery and Torrey Smith. LeGarrette Blount had an 11-yard scoring run when things were decided in the first half, and the Eagles were headed to an NFL title game the Vikings (14-4) hoped to be in at their own stadium.

"You know everyone was against us," Foles said. "Coming out here and stick together and (we) come away with an amazing victory against a great team."

Blake Bortles and the stingy Jaguars (12-7) led New England 20-10 early in the fourth quarter, but couldn't hold against the defending champions.

The NFL's second-ranked defense kept Brady and the Patriots at bay for most of the game, but lost linebacker Myles Jack and defensive tackle Marcell Dareus on consecutive plays on New England's winning drive.

It was New England's 13th win in 14 games since their 2-2 start. Their only stumble since September was a 27-20 loss at the Dolphins on Dec. 11.

Brady, wearing a black bandage on his right hand after needing stitches to close a cut that happened on a play during practice earlier in the week, showed no signs of being hampered.

And, with the game — and the season — possibly on the line, the Patriots star came up big again.

"I've had a lot worse," Brady said. "I didn't know that on Wednesday. It was a crazy injury. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday was a little scary. Then I started getting some confidence and today we did just enough to win."

Brady finished 26 of 38 for 290 yards and two touchdowns to Amendola.

It's the eighth Super Bowl appearance for Brady and coach Bill Belichick, who have won five times — including last year's 34-28 overtime rally against the Falcons.

"It's pretty amazing," Brady said. "Just to be on a team that wins these kinds of games, it's just a great accomplishment."

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

Follow Arnie Melendrez Stapleton on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/arniestapleton>

'Three Billboards' sweeps female-focused SAG Awards

By LINDSEY BAHR, AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Western-inspired revenge tale "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" swept the female-focused and led Screen Actors Guild Awards Sunday with wins for best ensemble, best actress for Frances McDormand and best supporting actor for Sam Rockwell.

It was almost an exact repeat of the major Golden Globe Awards wins with Gary Oldman also winning best actor for his portrayal of Winston Churchill in "Darkest Hour" and Allison Janney taking supporting actress for playing Tonya Harding's mother in "I, Tonya."

As with many of the awards shows this season, it was the treatment of women in Hollywood that stayed at the forefront of the show, which featured a roster of nearly all female presenters and Kristen Bell as its inaugural host.

"We are living in a watershed moment," Bell said in her opening monologue, which stayed light and mostly clear of politics. "Let's make sure that we're leading the charge with empathy and diligence."

With many prominent men in Hollywood facing accusations of sexual misconduct, virtually every aspect of awards season has been impacted by the scandal — from questions on the red carpet to anxiety over who might win.

Both James Franco and Aziz Ansari two weeks ago won Golden Globe Awards while wearing Time's Up pins before being accused of sexual misconduct and in Ansari's case, aggressive sexual behavior by an

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anonymous accuser. Both were nominated Sunday and lost, Franco to Oldman and Ansari to William H. Macy for "Shameless."

Rockwell, who beat out his co-star Woody Harrelson for the award, took his moment on stage to give a shout out to McDormand.

"Frances, you're a powerhouse," Rockwell said. "I stand shoulder to shoulder with you and all the incredible women in this room who are trying to make things better. It's long overdue."

Most of the comments in the evening were forward-looking. SAG-AFTRA President Gabrielle Carteris said, "This is not a moment in time. This is a movement."

Big television winners included NBC's "This Is Us," which took the ensemble award for drama and won Sterling K. Brown the outstanding actor award, and HBO's "Veep," which got outstanding comedy ensemble and a best actress win for Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

HBO's "Big Little Lies" picked up best actor in a miniseries wins for both Alexander Skarsgard and Nicole Kidman.

"I'm so grateful today that our careers can go beyond 40 years old," Kidman said in her acceptance speech. "We are potent and powerful and viable. I just beg that the industry stays behind us because our stories are finally being told."

"The Crown's" Claire Foy won best female actor in a drama series for her portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II. Lifetime achievement award recipient Morgan Freeman kept his remarks brief after a moving highlight reel of his expansive career and an introduction by Rita Moreno. The Oscar-winner for "Million Dollar Baby" and four-time nominee has over 80 films to his name.

"I'm gonna tell you what's wrong with this statue," he said as he wrapped up. "From the back it works, from the front it's gender specific. Maybe I started something."

The day's first awards went to "Game of Thrones" and "Wonder Woman," which were honored for best stunt ensemble honors.

Producers say the female-forward approach was inspired by last year's Women's March, but the show arrived at a time when some of the industry's biggest names are leading the Time's Up and Me Too movements to address gender inequality, sexual misconduct, pay disparities and other issues.

The show comes two weeks after a black-dress protest at the Golden Globe Awards, and several stars including Meryl Streep, Emma Stone and Michelle Williams bringing activists to the show. The SAG red carpet saw the return of colorful frocks and far fewer Time's Up pins — although some actors, like Kumail Nanjiani and Gina Rodriguez, were still sporting theirs.

E! host Giuliana Rancic asked "GLOW" actress Alison Brie about recent allegations of misconduct against her brother-in-law James Franco (Brie is married to actor Dave Franco.)

"I think that above all what we've always said is it remains vital that anyone who remains victimized should have the right to speak out and come forward," Brie said, adding that in the case of Franco, "Not everything that has come forward is fully accurate."

Franco has also called some of the accusations inaccurate, but after two days of facing questions about the claims on late-night television, "The Disaster Artist" star has kept a lower profile, although he was in attendance at the SAG Awards. He did not attend last week's Critics' Choice Awards.

The Globes were the first major awards show forced to confront the sexual misconduct scandal since it exploded in October with dozens of women accusing Harvey Weinstein of harassment and in some instances, rape. (Weinstein has denied all allegations of non-consensual sex.)

Weinstein accusers Marisa Tomei and Rosanna Arquette used some of their time presenting an award Sunday to name some of the "silence breakers" in the movement including Asia Argento, Annabella Sciorra, Ashley Judd, Daryl Hannah, Mira Sorvino, Anthony Rapp and Olivia Munn.

"So many powerful voices are no longer silenced by the fear of retaliation," Arquette said. "We can control our own destiny."

The SAG Awards are a reliable predictor of the winner for the best actor and actress Academy Awards; this year's show comes two days before Oscar nominations are announced.

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While "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" now has the Golden Globe and SAG win to its name, it lost out to Guillermo del Toro's fantasy romance "The Shape of Water" at the Producers Guild Awards Saturday night, which is often the most accurate gage of what will ultimately win best picture at the Academy Awards on March 4.

AP Entertainment Reporters Sandy Cohen, Amanda Lee Myers and Mike Cidoni Lennox contributed from Los Angeles.

For full coverage of awards season, visit: <https://apnews.com/tag/AwardsSeason>

Deportation fears have legal immigrants avoiding health care

By KELLI KENNEDY, Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The number of legal immigrants from Latin American nations who access public health services and enroll in federally subsidized insurance plans has dipped substantially since President Donald Trump took office, many of them fearing their information could be used to identify and deport relatives living in the U.S. illegally, according to health advocates across the country.

Trump based his campaign on promises to stop illegal immigration and deport any immigrants in the country illegally, but many legal residents and U.S. citizens are losing their health care as a result, advocates say.

After Trump became president a year ago, "every single day families canceled" their Medicaid plans and "people really didn't access any of our programs," said Daniel Bouton, a director at the Community Council, a Dallas nonprofit that specializes in health care enrollment for low-income families.

The trend stabilized a bit as the year went on, but it remains clear that the increasingly polarized immigration debate is having a chilling effect on Hispanic participation in health care programs, particularly during the enrollment season that ended in December.

Bouton's organization has helped a 52-year-old housekeeper from Mexico, a legal resident, sign up for federally subsidized health insurance for two years. But now she's going without, fearing immigration officials will use her enrollment to track down her husband, who is in the country illegally. She's also considering not re-enrolling their children, 15 and 18, in the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, even though they were born in the U.S.

"We're afraid of maybe getting sick or getting into an accident, but the fear of my husband being deported is bigger," the woman, who declined to give their names for fear her husband could be deported, said through a translator in a telephone interview.

Hispanic immigrants are not only declining to sign up for health care under programs that began or expanded under Barack Obama's presidency -- they're also not seeking treatment when they're sick, Bouton and others say.

"One social worker said she had a client who was forgoing chemotherapy because she had a child that was not here legally," said Oscar Gomez, CEO of Health Outreach Partner, a national training and advocacy organization.

My Health LA provides primary care services in Los Angeles County to low-income residents and those who lack the documents to make them eligible for publicly funded health care coverage programs, such as state Medicaid. According to its annual report, 189,410 participants enrolled in the program during Fiscal Year 2017, but 44,252, or about 23 percent, later dis-enrolled. It's not clear how many of those who dropped out are Hispanic; the report did not describe ethnicity.

Enticing Hispanics to take advantage of subsidized health care has been a struggle that began long before Trump's presidency.

Hispanics are more than three times as likely to go without health insurance as are their white counterparts, according to a 2015 study by Pew Research Center. Whites represented 63 percent, or 3.8 million, of those who signed up for Affordable Care Act plans last year compared to 15 percent, or just under a

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million, Hispanics, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The reasons vary, but some have always feared deportation, regardless of who is in office.

Recent events have not helped. Despite initial signs of a compromise agreement, Trump now isn't supporting a deal to support young people who identified themselves to the federal government so that they could qualify for protections against deportation despite being brought to the U.S. illegally as children.

Last fall, Border Patrol agents followed a 10-year-old immigrant with cerebral palsy to a Texas hospital and took her into custody after the surgery. She had been brought to the U.S. from Mexico when she was a toddler.

And in Okeechobee, a small rural city about an hour and a half north of Miami that is home to many immigrant farm workers, green-and-white-striped immigration vehicles were spotted driving around town and parking in conspicuous places last spring and summer. After a few immigrants were picked up and deported, health advocates said patients canceled their appointments, waiting until immigration officials left to reschedule them.

In Washington state and Florida, health workers report that immigrant patients start the enrollment process, but drop out once they are required to turn in proof of income, Social Security and other personal information. The annual report from My Health LA noted that it denied 28 percent more applicants in Fiscal 2017 than it had the year before, mostly due to incomplete applications.

In a survey of four Health Outreach Partner locations in California and the Pacific Northwest, social workers said some of their patients asked to be removed from the centers' records for fear that the information could be used to aid deportation hearings.

The dilemma has forced social workers at Health Outreach Partner to broaden their job descriptions, Gomez said. Now, in addition to signing people up for health insurance or helping them access medical treatments, they are fielding questions about immigration issues and drawing up contingency plans for when a family member is deported.

"That planning is seen as more helpful and immediate to their patients than their medical needs right now," he said.

Afghan forces end Taliban siege at Kabul hotel; 18 dead

By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Security forces said Sunday they had killed the last of six Taliban militants to end an overnight siege at Kabul's Intercontinental Hotel that left at least 18 people dead, including 14 foreigners. Some of the 150 guests fled the gunbattle and fire sparked by the assault by shimmying down bedsheets from the upper floors.

The militants, who wore suicide vests, pinned down security forces for more than 13 hours after the attack began about 9 p.m. Saturday. The gunmen roamed the hallways and targeted foreigners and Afghan officials inside the luxury, hilltop hotel.

The more than 150 people who were rescued or managed to escape included 41 foreigners, said Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish. Of those, 10 people were injured, including six security forces, he said.

Eleven of the 14 foreigners killed were employees of KamAir, a private Afghan airline, Danish said. KamAir put out a statement saying some of its flights were disrupted because of the attack.

Six of those killed were Ukrainians, said Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin, who added that his office was working with Afghan law enforcement agencies "to clarify the circumstances of this terrorist act."

Two Venezuelan pilots for KamAir were among the dead, according to Luis Figuera. He told The Associated Press that his brother-in-law, Adelsis Ramos, was killed along with Pablo Chiossone, and that their bodies were identified by another Venezuelan pilot at a Kabul hospital.

A citizen from Kazakhstan also was among the dead at the hotel, according to Anuar Zhainakov, a spokesman for the Kazakh Foreign Ministry.

Afghan security officials confirmed that 34 provincial officials were at the hotel for a conference organized by the Telecommunication Ministry.

Afghan officials said that also among the dead was a telecommunications official from Farah province in

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western Afghanistan; Waheed Poyan, the newly appointed consul general to Karachi, Pakistan; and Ahmad Farzan, an employee of the High Peace Council, a commission created to facilitate peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban and other opposition groups.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack at the heavily guarded hotel that is popular among foreigners and Afghan officials.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the insurgents initially planned to strike the hotel Thursday night but postponed it because a wedding was underway there and they wanted to avoid civilian casualties.

The attack unfolded almost six years after Taliban insurgents launched a similar assault on the property.

Mumtaz Ahmad, a provincial telecommunication employee for Helmand province, said he was walking from his room to the reception for his group on Saturday night.

"When the elevator door opened, I saw two armed suicide bombers. People were escaping and the attackers were firing at them," he said.

Fire broke out in the six-story hotel as the fighting raged, filling some guest rooms with smoke. Explosions could be heard throughout the standoff. Live TV video showed people trying to escape through windows and from the upper stories as thick, black smoke poured from the building.

The Interior Ministry said it is investigating how the attackers managed to enter the building. It said a private company had taken over security about three weeks ago at the hotel, which is not part of the Intercontinental chain.

During a news conference, Danish said that an initial investigation showed that six insurgents entered the hotel from the northern side and stormed its kitchen. A person or persons inside the hotel might have helped the attackers gain entrance, Danish said, adding that the investigation is continuing.

Two of the attackers were killed by special forces on the 6th floor of the hotel.

Capt. Tom Gresback, spokesman for NATO-led forces, said in a statement that Afghan forces had led the response efforts and that no foreign troops were hurt in the attack, according to initial reports.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the United States strongly condemns the attack, adding that Washington "stands with the government and people of Afghanistan. We remain firmly committed to supporting Afghan efforts to achieve peace, security and prosperity for their country."

Neighboring Pakistan also condemned the "brutal terrorist attack" and called for greater cooperation against militants.

Afghanistan and Pakistan routinely accuse each other of failing to combat extremists on their long and porous border.

Afghan forces have struggled to fight the Taliban since the U.S. and NATO formally concluded their combat mission at the end of 2014.

They have also had to contend with a growing Islamic State affiliate that has carried out a number of big attacks in recent years.

In other violence in Afghanistan this weekend, insurgents burst into a home in Balkh province in the north where several members of a pro-government militia were gathered late Saturday, killing 18 of them, said Gen. Abdul Razeq Qaderi, the deputy provincial police chief. Among those killed was a tribal leader who served as the local police commander, he said.

In the western province of Farah, a roadside bomb early Sunday killed a deputy provincial police chief and wounded four other police, according to Gen. Mahruf Folad, the provincial police chief.

The Taliban claimed both attacks.

In the western province of Herat, a roadside bomb struck a vehicle carrying 13 civilians, killing all but one of them, said Abdul Ahad Walizada, a spokesman for the provincial police chief. No one immediately claimed the attack, but Walizada blamed Taliban insurgents, who often plant bombs to target Afghan security forces.

Droves fill pope's final Mass in restive Latin America trip

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — More than 1 million people turned out Sunday for Pope Francis' final Mass in Peru, giving him a warm and heartfelt farewell that contrasted sharply with the outcry he caused in neighboring Chile by accusing sex abuse victims of slandering a bishop.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston, who publicly rebuked the pope on Saturday for those remarks, joined the pontiff and dozens of fellow bishops on a tented altar at a Lima airfield to celebrate the Mass. The crowd of 1.3 million people reported by the Vatican was the largest of Francis' weeklong, two-nation visit.

Francis tried to move beyond the scandal Sunday, joking with cloistered nuns that they were taking advantage of his visit to finally get out and get a breath of fresh air. And he denounced a corruption scandal in Latin America that has even implicated his Peruvian host, President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, who recently survived an impeachment vote by lawmakers.

In his homily Francis referred to the "grave sin of corruption," that kills the hope of people, urging Peruvians to have hope and show tenderness and compassion.

Thousands lined the streets as his black papal Fiat made its way to the airport, where a children's choir sang in farewell as Francis boarded a plane to head back to Rome.

Earlier in the day, he said the bribery scandal centered on Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht was "just a small anecdote" of the corruption and graft that have thrown much of Latin American politics into crisis.

"If we fall into the hands of people who only understand the language of corruption, we're toast," the pope said in unscripted remarks.

Francis was greeted by cheering crowds at nearly every stop of his Peru trip, but the cloud of sex abuse scandal trailed him.

"Francis, here there IS proof," read a banner hanging from a Lima building along his motorcade route Sunday.

The message was a reference both to Peru's own abuse scandal and to Francis' Jan. 18 comments in Iquique, Chile, that there was not "one shred of proof" to allegations that a protege of that country's most notorious pedophile priest, the Rev. Fernando Karadima, knew of Karadima's abuse and did nothing to stop it.

Karadima's victims have accused the bishop, Juan Barros, of witnessing the abuse and of complicity in covering it up. Barros has denied the accusations, and Francis backed him by saying the victims' claims were "all calumny."

Francis' remarks that he would only believe victims with "proof" were problematic because they were already deemed so credible by the Vatican that it sentenced Karadima to a lifetime of "penance and prayer" in 2011 based on their testimony. A Chilean judge also found the victims to be credible, saying that while she had to drop charges against Karadima because too much time had passed, proof of his crimes wasn't lacking.

The pope's comments sparked such an outcry that both O'Malley, Francis' own top adviser on abuse, and the Chilean government made the highly rare decision to publicly rebuke him — an extraordinary correction of a pontiff from both church and state. The criticisms were all the more remarkable given that they came on the Argentina-born pontiff's home turf in Latin America.

O'Malley said Saturday that Francis' remarks were "a source of great pain for survivors of sexual abuse," and that such expressions of disbelief made abuse survivors feel abandoned and left in "discredited exile."

Chilean government spokeswoman Paula Narvaez said there was an "ethical imperative to respect victims of sexual abuse, believe them and support them."

The issue also had resonance in Peru. Last week the Vatican took over a Peru-based Roman Catholic lay movement, Sodalitium Christianae Vitae, more than six years after first learning of sexual, physical and psychological abuse committed by its founder.

An independent investigation commissioned by the movement found that founder Luis Figari sodomized his recruits, forced them to fondle him and one another, liked to watch them "experience pain, discomfort and fear" and humiliated them in front of others. Figari's victims have criticized the Vatican for its years

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of inaction and for eventually sanctioning him with what they consider a “golden exile” — retirement in Italy at a retreat house, albeit separated from the community he founded.

The banner hanging from the building along Francis’ motorcade route referred to evidence against Figari and featured a photo of him. Peruvian prosecutors recently announced they wanted to arrest him.

But for the most part, Peruvians welcomed him with open arms and flooded in huge droves to his final Mass. In contrast, Francis’ send-off from Chile drew only 50,000 people, a fraction of the number expected.

“He is a symbol to us as Catholics,” said Cindy Sanchez, a 24-year-old administrative assistant attending the Mass. “Listening to him gives us encouragement.”

During his seven-day trip in Chile and Peru, Francis personally apologized to survivors of priests who sexually abused them, traveled deep into the Amazon to meet with indigenous leaders, decried the scourge of violence against women in Latin America and urged the Chilean government and radical factions of the Mapuche indigenous group to peacefully resolve one of the region’s longest-running disputes.

But the pope also attracted unprecedented rejection: At least a dozen churches across Chile were set aflame, and riot police shot tear gas at and arrested protesters in the capital, Santiago.

Associated Press writers Christine Armario and Franklin Briceno contributed to this report from Lima.

Despite shutdown, troops get football, Lady Liberty to open

By RICHARD LARDNER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. government shutdown amid a congressional dispute over spending and immigration has forced scores of federal agencies and outposts to close their doors and triggered furloughs for Air Force civilian employees but won’t keep Lady Liberty shackled.

The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, closed since the government shut down Friday, will reopen for visitors Monday, with New York state picking up the tab for the federal workers who operate them, the state’s Democratic governor, Andrew Cuomo, said Sunday.

The sites had been turning away visitors due to what the National Park Service described as “a lapse in appropriations,” a bureaucratic term for a lack of money. In Philadelphia, crowds of tourists were told Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were signed, and the Liberty Bell were closed.

The shuttered icons were some of the easiest-to-spot impacts of the partial government closure. Funds ran out at midnight Friday, leaving 48 hours before the most dramatic effect — the furloughing of nearly 1 million federal employees — takes place.

Government workers were struggling with the uncertainty that comes with not knowing when or if they will get paid, union leaders said.

J. David Cox, national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents 700,000 federal and D.C. government workers, said Sunday he was fielding hundreds of emails every hour from worried employees.

“That level of concern is higher than it’s ever been,” Cox said. “If your take home pay is averaging \$500 a week, you’re living payday to payday, and if all of a sudden that payday doesn’t show up, you can’t pay for child care, you can’t buy groceries.”

Cox said he has told his members to report to work Monday and await instructions from the agency they work for about whether they will be sent home or continue to work.

The shutdown scuttled plans for a National Guard training exercise at Fort Bragg in North Carolina and created uncertainty for the Army base’s civilian employees and local businesses. At Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota, it meant furloughs for about 500 civilians starting Saturday.

Fayetteville, North Carolina, businesses worried the shutdown could affect them if furloughed Fort Bragg employees have to reduce their discretionary spending.

Darrick King, owner of Yadkin Road Hand Car Wash & Detail, told the Fayetteville Observer many of his

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clients are from Fort Bragg. He said he hopes for a quick resolution from Washington, D.C., but if there isn't, "It will damage me severely."

As in past shutdowns, federal services were carved into two categories, essential and non-essential, with the essential services set to carry on as normal. In that category, the mail will be delivered and Social Security checks still go out, the air traffic control system stays up and running, as do the FBI, Customs and Border Protection and veterans hospitals.

Still, there were plenty of inconveniences to irk American taxpayers.

While active-duty troops will stay at their posts during a shutdown, people stationed overseas were touched by the political fallout almost immediately.

The American Forces Network, which broadcasts American radio and television programming outside the U.S. and uses civilian government employees, initially said its services would not be available, sparking angry reactions from viewers eager to see the NFL playoffs Sunday. Later, though, the Department of Defense said even though the civilian employees were furloughed two of AFN's eight channels, one for news and one for sports, would remain on.

Senate moderates in both major political parties expressed hopes of finding a way out of the government shutdown mess on Sunday while their leaders played the blame game. Lawmakers on Capitol Hill said they were pursuing a deal to reopen the government before the start of the workweek Monday. In exchange for Democratic votes, Republican leaders would agree to address immigration policy in the coming weeks. But nothing had been agreed to, lawmakers said Sunday, and there were no indications that leaders of either party or the White House were on board.

In New York, the governor said the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island are vital to the state's tourism industry and couldn't remain closed. He said the state will spend about \$65,000 a day to keep them open, with the revenue gained more than offsetting the costs.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home, historic Ebenezer Baptist Church and the visitor center at MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta were closed. And Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park and other federally managed natural areas in Florida were partially closed.

But the shutdown wasn't knocking Old Ironsides out of commission. The USS Constitution, the world's oldest commissioned warship, was to remain open to tourists during the shutdown at the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston.

Contact Richard Lardner on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/rplardner>

Jordan urges Pence to 'rebuild trust' after Jerusalem pivot

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Jordan's king appealed Sunday to Vice President Mike Pence to "rebuild trust and confidence" in the possibility of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, following fallout from the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Pence tried to reassure the monarch that the U.S. was committed to restarting peace efforts and to a two-state solution, if both sides agree. Such a caveat deviates from long-standing U.S. support for that approach as the only possible outcome of any peace deal.

Trump's announcement on Jerusalem last month infuriated the Palestinians, who seek the Israeli-annexed eastern sector of the city as a future capital. They accused the U.S. of siding with Israel and said Washington can no longer serve as a mediator.

Jerusalem is the emotional centerpiece of the long-running conflict, and Trump's policy shift set off protests and condemnation across Arab and Muslim countries.

It posed a dilemma for Abdullah, a staunch U.S. ally who derives his political legitimacy in large part from the Hashemite dynasty's role as guardian of a key Muslim site in Jerusalem. Any perceived threat to Muslim claims in the city is seen as a challenge to Jordan, where a large segment of the population is of Palestinian origin.

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Pence told the king that the U.S. has committed "to continue to respect Jordan's role as the custodian of holy sites, that we take no position on boundaries and final status." It was a message Pence relayed Saturday in talks with Egypt's president.

Later, after meeting U.S. troops near the Syrian border, Pence said he and Abdullah had "a very frank discussion."

"Look, friends occasionally have disagreements and we agreed to disagree on the decision by the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. But what we agreed on was the need for all parties to come back to the table," Pence said.

"The Palestinian Authority has been absent from direct negotiations since 2014. And I hope I impressed upon King Abdullah our earnest desire to restart the peace process," Pence said.

Abdullah expressed concerns about the regional fallout from the Jerusalem decision.

"Today we have a major challenge to overcome, especially with some of the rising frustrations," he said. He described the Pence visit as a mission "to rebuild trust and confidence" in getting to a two-state solution, in which a state of Palestine would be established in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, lands Israel captured in 1967.

Another cause of concern for Jordan is the Trump administration's decision to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Jordan vehemently opposes such a move if taken ahead of an Israeli-Palestinian partition deal.

Israel views Jerusalem as its unified capital.

An international consensus has long held that the city's final status should be decided through negotiations, which was also U.S. policy going back decades.

Palestinians view Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital as a blatantly one-sided move.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said he would not meet with Trump administration officials and called off a meeting with Pence that had been scheduled for mid-December.

In a new expression of that snub, Abbas overlapped with Pence in Jordan from Saturday evening to midday Sunday, when the Palestinian leader flew to Brussels for a meeting with European Union foreign ministers Monday. There, Abbas is expected to urge EU member states to recognize a state of Palestine in the pre-1967 lines, and to step up involvement in mediation.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, an Abbas adviser, reiterated that "the U.S. is no longer acceptable as a mediator."

Pence was scheduled to hold meetings on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, deliver an address to the Knesset and visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial.

Netanyahu called Pence "a great friend of Israel" and said there was "no alternative for American leadership" in the peace process. "Whoever is not ready to talk with the Americans about peace — does not want peace," he said at a meeting of ambassadors in Jerusalem.

Palestinians in the West Bank protested Pence's arrival by burning posters with his image on them.

Associated Press writer Karin Laub contributed to this report.

'Jumanji' tops box office for third straight weekend

By JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" outdid another weekend's worth of newcomers to top the North American box office for the third straight weekend, making the surprise hit the fifth-highest grossing film of all time for Sony Pictures.

"Jumanji," starring Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart, sold \$20 million in tickets, according to studio estimates Sunday, bringing its five-week domestic total to \$317 million. That makes Sony's reboot the studio's best non-Spider-Man movie domestically, not adjusting for inflation.

The film's unexpectedly strong staying power has lent a boost to the January box office but kept new releases from reaching the top of the box-office chart. "Jumanji" has also reigned overseas, where it has grossed \$450.8 million and topped all films internationally for three straight weeks.

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The war drama "12 Strong," starring Chris Hemsworth, debuted in second with \$16.5 million in ticket sales. The Warner Bros. release, produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, is a fact-based tale, adapted from Doug Stanton's best-seller "Horse Soldiers," about a group of Special Forces soldiers sent into northern Afghanistan just weeks after Sept. 11.

"12 Strong" appealed largely to an older crowd. Seventy-nine percent of its audience was over the age of 25, said Warner Bros.

The heist thriller "Den of Thieves" slotted in at third place with an opening weekend of \$15.3 million. The STXfilms release stars Gerard Butler and Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson.

Though "Paddington 2" disappointed last weekend in its debut, the acclaimed sequel slid just 25 percent in its second week. "Paddington 2," which has set a new record for the most widely reviewed 100-percent fresh movie on Rotten Tomatoes, grossed \$8.2 million in its second week of domestic release thanks in part to good word of mouth. Warner Bros. acquired the film's North American distribution from The Weinstein Co. in November.

Also showing unexpected legs was "The Greatest Showman," the Hugh Jackman-led musical about P.T. Barnum. It dipped just 12 percent in its fifth week of release. With another \$11 million, "The Greatest Showman" has now grossed \$113.5 million for 20th Century Fox.

Paul Thomas Anderson's "Phantom Thread" expanded nationwide, taking in \$3.4 million from 896 theaters. The Focus Features release, starring Daniel Day-Lewis in what the actor has said will be his final performance, has grossed \$6.2 million.

Also notable: "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" crossed the \$600 million mark domestically with \$6.6 million in its sixth week of release. The Disney release stands at \$604.3 million domestically — or no. 9 all-time, not accounting for inflation — and \$1.296 billion worldwide.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final four-day domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle," \$20 million (\$32.6 million international).
2. "12 Strong," \$16.5 million (\$2.5 million international).
3. "Den of Thieves," \$15.3 million (\$1.3 million international).
4. "The Post," \$12.2 million (\$6.6 million international).
5. "The Greatest Showman," \$11 million (\$11 million international).
6. "Paddington 2," \$8.2 million (\$2.4 million international).
7. "The Commuter," \$6.7 million (\$10.2 million international).
8. "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," \$6.6 million (\$9.9 million international).
9. "Insidious: The Last Key," \$5.9 million (\$18.4 million international).
10. "Forever My Girl," \$4.7 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to comScore:

1. "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle," \$32.6 million.
2. "Secret Superstar," \$25.9 million.
3. "Forever Young," \$22.5 million.
4. "Insidious: The Last Key," \$18.4 million.
5. "Coco," \$18.3 million.
6. "Ferdinand," \$17.5 million.
7. "Maze Runner: The Death Cure," \$15.2 million.
8. "Wonder," \$12.6 million.
9. "Darkest Hour," \$12.1 million.
10. "The Greatest Showman," \$11 million.

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

Turkish troops enter Kurdish enclave in northern Syria

By **LEFTERIS PITARAKIS** and **SARAH EL DEEB**, Associated Press

HASSA, Turkey (AP) — Turkish troops and Syrian opposition forces attacked a Kurdish enclave in northern Syria on Sunday in their bid to oust from the area a U.S.-allied Kurdish militia, which responded with a hail of rockets on Turkish towns killing at least one refugee.

The Turkish offensive on Afrin, codenamed Operation Olive Branch, started Saturday and has heightened tensions in the already complicated Syrian conflict, threatening to further strain ties between NATO allies Turkey and the United States.

On Sunday, the United States urged Turkey to exercise restraint and ensure that the offensive is "limited in scope and duration." A statement by State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert also asked Turkey to be "scrupulous to avoid civilian casualties," adding that all parties involved in Syria should focus on defeating the Islamic State group.

The Syrian government, Iran and Egypt condemned the attack, which activists said has killed at least 18 civilians in the Kurdish-held enclave, Afrin, in the first 24 hours. Turkish officials say 11 rockets launched from Syria have landed in Turkish towns along the border, killing at least one Syrian refugee and injuring 47.

France called for an emergency U.N. Security Council meeting to discuss the developments there and urged Turkish authorities "to act with restraint in a context where the humanitarian situation is deteriorating in several regions of Syria."

Turkish officials said the troops entered Afrin a day after dozens of Turkish jets and artillery units at the border pounded Syrian Kurdish targets. A spokesman for the Kurdish fighters said the attack was repelled.

Turkey considers the Syrian Kurdish militia, known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG, a terror organization and a security threat because of its affiliation with Kurdish rebels fighting in southeastern Turkey.

The group controls Afrin, in Syria's northwestern Aleppo province, as well as nearly 25 percent of Syrian territory, to the east along Turkey's border. The YPG also forms the backbone of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the main U.S. ally against the Islamic State group in Syria.

U.S. support for the Kurdish militia has been a cause of perpetual conflict between Ankara and Washington, which has backed the Kurdish militia.

U.S. officials have said that the administration had appealed to Turkey not to go ahead with the offensive. A Turkish operation there could have an impact on U.S. operations further east in Syria, the officials said.

The operation, for which Turkey has also rallied nearly 10,000 Syrian opposition fighters, could spill into a wider Turkish-Kurdish confrontation inside Turkey. There is an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 Kurdish fighters in the Afrin district, the Turkish prime minister said.

The operation also includes airstrikes on the district, threatening to create another humanitarian disaster in the region. The Afrin district houses no less than 800,000 civilians, including displaced people from earlier years of the Syrian war. Russia pulled back troops that had been deployed near Afrin after it was briefed on the operation by Turkey.

Kurdish officials said Russian military officials have proposed handing over Afrin to the Syrian government to avert a Turkey military offensive. They said they refused the proposal.

Badran Ciya Kurd, an adviser to the Kurdish administration in northern Syria who meets regularly with Russian and US officials, told The Associated Press Sunday that Russian officials suggested that handing over the enclave, encircled by Syrian government and its rival Turkey and Syrian fighters it backs, would avert the Turkish offensive.

It was not immediately possible to reach Russian officials.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told a group of journalists that Turkey aims to create a 30-kilometer (20-mile) deep "secure zone" in Afrin.

On Sunday, the state-run Anadolu Agency said the Turkish-backed fighters had penetrated 5 kilometers (3 miles) into Afrin as part of the offensive. At least one person, a Syrian refugee in Turkey, was killed

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when Reyhanli, a Turkish border town, came under a hail of rockets Sunday.

It was the second Turkish town to come under attack. Earlier, the rockets fired from Syria targeted the border town of Kilis, but there were no casualties.

In a statement, the Syrian opposition fighters battling alongside the Turkish troops said the combined force seized Shinkal, a village on the northwestern edge of Afrin district. A Syrian rebel commander said the clashes with the YPG fighters were intense, but that the Turkey-backed forces would fight to "eliminate terrorism" from the area.

SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali denied that Turkish troops had entered Afrin, saying Kurdish forces have been repelling attacks since Saturday. Bali said the SDF sent reinforcements to Afrin. The YPG said meanwhile that it had destroyed two Turkish tanks.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that Kurdish militia and Turkish forces clashed on the northern and western edges of Afrin. It said the Turkey-backed forces entered Shinkal and Adah Manli to the west. It added that the Turkey-backed forces captured three YPG fighters. The Observatory said airstrikes killed eight in Afrin's southeast, bringing the total of civilians killed since the attack began to 18.

Sevan Jan, a journalist in Afrin, said stores and services were operating normally. Residents in border villages were taking precautions against the bombings, he said. The only road out of Afrin, leading to government-controlled Aleppo, has been closed for security reasons, he added.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has vowed to expand the offensive to Manbij, a town to the east that Kurdish forces seized from IS in a costly battle with the aid of the U.S.-led coalition. The town has since emerged as a model for U.S.-backed Kurdish rule of largely Arab areas.

A Turkish advance on Manbij would further strains relations with Washington, which has troops operating in the Manbij area.

Turkish troops first crossed into Syria after the Kurds captured Manbij in 2016, in part to prevent them from expanding westward and linking territory to Afrin. At least 70 Turkish soldiers were killed, most in battles with IS militants, which have since been driven from nearly all the territory it once held in Syria.

Syria's government had vowed to shoot down any Turkish fighter jets over Afrin, calling it an "aggressive act." On Sunday, President Bashar Assad condemned the "brutal aggression" on Afrin but didn't repeat the threat. He said Turkey has always supported "terrorists" in Syria.

Iran, a close ally of Assad, also condemned the Turkish assault and called on Turkey to end it.

"The continuing crisis in Afrin may boost terrorist groups again in the northern parts of Syria," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi said according to Iran's official IRNA news agency.

Egypt, which maintains security coordination with Syria and is at odds with Turkey, said the military offensive threatened political negotiations.

Turkey has prepared around 10,000 Syrian fighters to storm Afrin, according Rami Abdurrahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Some were stationed in Azaz, on the eastern edge of Afrin and others in Atmeh to the south.

El Deeb reported from Beirut. Associated Press writer Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey contributed to this report.

Sequel to Trump's first year opens with crises, unease

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The sequel to President Donald Trump's first year in office is opening with the lead player hamstrung by a government shutdown and hunkering down amid investigations, crises and political unease.

After 365 days in the Oval Office, Trump has found that his drive to deliver quickly on campaign promises has yielded to the sobering reality of governing — and the prospect of an electoral rebuke in November. Administration aides, outside allies and Republicans on Capitol Hill see the Trump White House continuing

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to face many of the same challenges it wrestled with last year, with fresh plot twists to boot.

Special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into Russian interference in the 2016 election keeps moving ever closer to the Oval Office. The government shutdown highlights the legislative challenges that persist even with Republicans controlling the White House and both the House and Senate, and makes clear the administration's need to more carefully target its political capital on specific agenda items. And the fall elections are shaping up as a referendum on Trump's tenure.

"In the second year, you no longer are one-dimensional," said Ari Fleischer, press secretary when George W. Bush was president. "There's an inevitable pivot that every administration makes, and that is to recognize that it's no longer about future events and promises, it's now about defending and promoting last year's accomplishments."

No administration comes into office fully ready for the task of leading the government, and Trump's team has taken disruption to a new extreme. Republicans outside the White House are now hoping the Trump administration will be more politically savvy. But the 71-year old president has proved set in his ways, trusting his instincts over the advice of his aides, and there is no reason to expect that won't continue.

Yet Trump has been changed by the experiences of the past year, according to aides and outside advisers, most of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss internal dynamics. The president has grown more fearful of leaks. His inner circle of friends is smaller, most recently with the banishment of former chief strategist Steve Bannon. This smaller group of informal advisers has seen Trump favor those who tell him what he likes to hear, according to several people who talk to him regularly. And that, combined with chief of staff John Kelly's determination not to manage the president, is furthering the Trump's impulsive streak.

What comes next?

Personnel changes are afoot to streamline the West Wing political and legislative affairs teams in preparation for the November elections, and Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are preparing aggressive campaign and fundraising schedules.

Despite a booming economy, Trump's approval rating is at historic lows for a first-year president, weighed down by partisan controversy and his own divisive actions and statements. The fall contests represent a make-or-break moment for Trump and could influence his pursuit of a second term, an effort that will begin in earnest next year.

GOP lawmakers frame the importance of keeping control of the House and Senate in self-serving terms for Trump: Democratic control would grant subpoena power to the president's fiercest critics.

Wary of potentially losing the Senate, the White House plans to continue its aggressive push to appoint conservative judges before Congress breaks for campaign season.

For all the legislative ambition of the first year, Trump's second stands to be a more muted affair.

Immigration, the sticking point in the current shutdown, stands as the most promising option after the president provoked a crisis by setting up the March 5 expiration of protections for roughly 700,000 young immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children. He's hoping to use it as leverage to pass his hard-line immigration priorities.

Before the State of the Union address Jan. 30, the White House has been preparing much-delayed policy proposals on infrastructure and welfare, but little progress is anticipated as lawmakers have begun turning their focus to their own re-elections.

White House officials said Trump is looking forward to spending much of the year promoting his achievements on judicial nominations, deregulation and passage of the tax overhaul.

"If year one is about tallying campaign promises," said White House spokesman Hogan Gidley, "in year two, we can talk about results."

Administration officials pointed to Trump's speech Thursday in Pennsylvania, where he highlighted the benefits of his tax plan, as an example of his efforts to sell his first year to the public.

Overseas, many of the same challenges remain. The nuclear threat from North Korea occupies an ever-growing focus inside the West Wing. And while the Islamic State group's foothold in Iraq and Syria has

been diminished, Trump is facing new questions about the role of U.S. troops in the region.

___ Follow Miller on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@ZekeJMiller>.

Mick Mulvaney finds himself in middle of another shutdown

By ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mick Mulvaney stormed Washington as a tea party lawmaker elected in 2010, and he hasn't mellowed much as director of the Office of Management of Budget at the White House.

In both spots, he's been at the center of a government shutdown. But this time he is arguing against it and is faulting Democrats for seeking to use the very kind of leverage he tried to utilize in 2013.

Then a congressman, Mulvaney was among a faction on the hard right that bullied GOP leaders into a shutdown confrontation by insisting on lacing a must-pass spending bill with provisions designed to cripple President Barack Obama's signature health care law.

Then, the fast-talking South Carolina Republican downplayed the impact of a government shutdown, noting that critical government services would continue and Social Security benefits would be paid. He said about 75 percent of the government would remain open, and he noted that Congress arranged for the military to continue to get paid.

"In many ways, then, this is a government 'slowdown' more than it is a 'shutdown,'" Mulvaney said back in 2013, though he added, "I know that is not much consolation for folks who are personally affected."

Mulvaney voted against legislation to reopen the government and was unapologetic over his role as a ringleader in 2013, saying the GOP's political beating — and eventual retreat — was the product of bad messaging.

Now, as the federal official in charge of managing government operations during the lapse in funding, Mulvaney is taking steps to ameliorate the shutdown, giving agencies more flexibility to remain open by using, for instance, previously appropriated money to keep their doors open. He accused the Obama White House of purposefully closing high-profile federal sites to reap political gain. The Trump administration will do what it can to keep national parks open and accessible, he said.

"We are going to manage the shutdown differently. We are not going to weaponize it," Mulvaney said Friday. "We're not going to try and hurt people, especially people who happen to work for this federal government."

Mulvaney is quick-witted and possesses a disarming frankness, and he's not afraid of being impolitic, even as he has risen to a Washington power post.

For instance, on Friday, just hours before the shutdown began, Mulvaney told conservative radio host Sean Hannity, "I found out for the first time last night that the person who technically shuts the government down is me, which is kind of cool."

Mulvaney isn't apologizing for the shutdown tactics he employed in 2013, saying he opposed that year's stopgap spending measure because it funded agencies that were implementing "Obamacare." But he is blaming Democrats for trying to use the same kind of leverage now that he failed to exploit back then.

"When Republicans tried to add a discussion about Obamacare to the funding process in 2013, we were accused by Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer of inserting a non-fiscal — a non-financial — issue into the spending process in order to shut the government down," Mulvaney said. "How is that not exactly what is happening today?"

On Sunday, he defended himself against accusations of hypocrisy in his attacks on Democrats over the government shutdown, given his own role at the center of the 2013 shutdown.

"Everything that was in the bill Democrats support and have voted for previously," Mulvaney said on CNN's "State of the Union." "This is pure politics."

He reiterated that the administration won't negotiate with Democrats on immigration or a longer-term spending bill until they vote to reopen the government.

"They need to open the government tonight or tomorrow and then we can start talking," Mulvaney said on CNN.

North Korean girl band leader heads delegation to South

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The head of a hugely popular North Korean girl band crossed the heavily fortified border into South Korea on Sunday as part of an official delegation, triggering a media frenzy as she checked potential venues for performances during next month's Winter Olympics.

Appearing live on South Korean television, Hyon Song Wol didn't speak when she walked past a crowd of reporters, onlookers and a barrage of camera flashes before boarding an express train at Seoul's railway station for the eastern city of Gangneung, where the art troupe she also leads is to perform during the Pyeongchang Olympics.

Hyon has been the subject of intense South Korean media attention since she attended last week's talks at the border that struck an agreement on the 140-member Samjiyon art troupe's two performances — one in Seoul and the other in Gangneung, where some Olympic events will take place.

South Korea's government sees North Korea's participation in the Games — both in sporting events and cultural exchanges — as a way to calm tensions caused by Pyongyang's recent nuclear and missile tests and war of words with the United States.

The current mood of reconciliation between the Koreas flared after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un abruptly expressed his willingness to improve ties and send a delegation to the Olympics during his annual New Year's address.

Outside critics have dismissed Kim's overture as a tactic to use improved ties with Seoul to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions over North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile programs.

Hyon is the leader of Pyongyang's all-female Moranbong Band, which was hand-picked by Kim. After last week's talks, North Korea said Hyon would also lead the Samjiyon art troupe, whose performances would be the first by a North Korean group in South Korea since 2002.

Hyon was a popular singer before she was appointed to lead the girl band, which serves as the "soft" public face of the Kim government. Its members in short skirts and high heels or stylish military uniforms sing and dance odes to Kim. There is speculation that some of the Moranbong members may also appear in the Samjiyon art troupe, which observers say was likely hastily formed ahead of the Olympics-related talks with South Korea.

With no official media access given to Hyon, TV stations broadcast live footage of her bus moving on Seoul's roads before arriving at the railway station, where hundreds of police officers were mobilized to maintain order. Photos showed a smiling Hyon shaking heads with a South Korean official upon arrival at the border. Later Sunday, wearing a dark winter coat and fur scarf and with half her hair tied to the back, she looked more serious.

Hyon's arrival came hours after the International Olympic Committee allowed 22 North Korean athletes to take part in the Olympics in exceptional entries given to the North. Among the 22 are 12 women who will join South Korea's female hockey team in the Koreas' first-ever unified Olympic team.

The other sporting events the North Koreans will compete in are figure skating, short track speed skating, Alpine skiing and cross-country skiing.

The 22 North Korean athletes will march together with South Korean players under a single "unification flag" depicting their peninsula during the opening ceremony in Pyeongchang.

"Such an agreement would have seemed impossible only a few weeks ago," IOC chief Thomas Bach said in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Hyon, who is also an alternate member of the ruling party's Central Committee, was travelling with six other North Koreans. Her delegation had been expected in South Korea on Saturday, but North Korea canceled that plan on Friday night before it proposed a two-day trip starting Sunday. It wasn't clear why the visit was rescheduled.

Later Sunday, Hyon's advance team inspected a venue for her art troupe's performance in Gangneung. The team was expected to stay overnight at Gangneung before returning to Seoul to check another venue in the capital on Monday, according to Yonhap news agency.

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The Samjiyon art troupe, which comprises orchestra members, singers and dancers, is part of North Korea's Olympic delegation that also includes athletes, officials, journalists and a taekwondo demonstration team.

North Korea on Sunday offered to send another advance team across the border on Thursday to look at accommodation facilities, a press center and the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry. South Korea is to send its own advance team to North Korea on Tuesday to review logistics for a joint cultural event at the North's Diamond Mountain and their non-Olympic skiers' joint practices at the North's Masik ski resort, the ministry said.

Miocic, Cormier defend heaviest titles at UFC 220

By DAN GELSTON, AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Stipe Miocic and Francis Ngannou had a violent history of first-round finishes.

By the time their heavyweight bout reached the fifth round, Miocic and Ngannou huffed, puffed and trudged around the cage without a knockout in sight. Miocic set the UFC heavyweight record with his third straight successful title defense, turning the anticipated slugfest against Ngannou into a methodical and masterful ground-and-pound bout to win the main event of UFC 220 at TD Garden.

Miocic won 50-44 on all three scorecards early Sunday and was never seriously tested by the raw and unrefined Ngannou.

Miocic (18-2) and Ngannou (11-2) had UFC fans buzzing with perhaps the most-hyped heavyweight title bout since Brock Lesnar was the class of the division. Both fighters built their reputations on the strength of nasty knockouts, and Ngannou was coming off a GIF-worthy KO just seven weeks ago.

Both fighters were winded by the third round and Ngannou looked sleepy as he whiffed on a few blows in the fifth.

In the first round, the fight seemed like it could reach epic slugfest proportions. Miocic and Ngannou tagged each other several times, leaving each fighter staggered and seemingly on the brink of trouble.

"He's a tough dude. Caught me in the first round but I took control," Miocic said.

The fight never really picked up from there. Miocic spent the rest of the fight just banging away as Ngannou mostly covered up, hoping for one last desperate knockout punch.

Ngannou, a Cameroon native who this week criticized President Donald Trump for his profane description of African countries, never found that reserve power.

"I think I underestimated (him) a little bit," said Ngannou, whose rise from homeless to heavyweight contender captivated a sport eager for a new star.

Miocic beat Fabricio Werdum to win the heavyweight title in May 2016, and followed with wins against Alistair Overeem, Junior dos Santos and now Ngannou to slug his way into the record book.

Miocic could lay claim as UFC's greatest heavyweight.

"I mean I'm not the scariest, but I'm the baddest," he said.

CORMIER DEFENDS

Daniel Cormier locked a choke hold on Volkan Oezdemir with such force that the crowd exploded when the horn sounded to end the first round, thinking the fight was over.

Not yet.

Oezdemir was saved from submission briefly. But the inevitable defeat was just moments away.

With a Boston crowd roaring and chanting his initials, Cormier showed why he's the best active light heavyweight fighter in UFC and dominated Oezdemir via TKO to retain the 205-pound belt.

Cormier raised his hands in triumph as UFC President Dana White wrapped the title belt around his waist. Cormier dropped to his knees on the canvas and said this fight was the validation he needed to prove he was worthy of being called champion.

The 38-year-old Cormier was awarded the light heavyweight title after Jon Jones was stripped of the championship when he failed his latest doping test. Cormier has failed to beat Jones in two bouts and

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could not shake the stigma of those outcomes.

Against Oezdemir, Cormier proved worthy of the title.

Cormier pinned Oezdemir against the canvas early in the second and finished him off with a series of shots to the face.

"I've lost twice to Jon Jones," Cormier said. "I said coming in here that I felt like I was fighting for a vacant title again. I got the job done, so I'm the UFC champion again. I can't ignore what happened in July. I'm a competitor. Even though I came in here as a champ, I needed a win to feel like one."

UFC stripped Jones of the title after the California State Athletic Commission changed the result of Jones' stoppage of Cormier at UFC 214 in July to a no-contest. Jones tested positive for the banned steroid Turinabol.

Cormier lamented leading up to the fight that he would never again fight Jones.

"I've done everything right and I've just been dragged down by this guy constantly," Cormier said.

White suggested Cormier return to the heavyweight division and fight Stipe. But Cormier said he had little interest in the bout and friend and training partner Cain Velasquez should be next in line for a title fight.

Oezdemir got almost no reaction from the Boston crowd as he walked out draped in the Swiss flag. Cormier, known for getting split reactions, had fans standing on their feet, snapping pics and cheering. He took a lap around the canvas with his right arm raised in triumph, backed by "Let's go DC!" chants.

"I proved I'm worthy of being called champion, but Volkan's on that level," Cormier said. "Every guy who makes it to this point is on the level. Volkan Oezdemir, I leave a piece of myself with every opponent. I'm glad you can take a piece back with you to Switzerland."

UNDERCARD FUN

The TD Garden was packed and lit from the opening preliminary bout and the card was sprinkled with Massachusetts fighters to pander to the local crowd.

UFC grabbed hold of the Boston sports scene for a few hours Saturday night on the eve of the New England Patriots' appearance in the AFC title game with a chance to go to the Super Bowl. The bars that surrounded the arena had UFC banners waving on a windy night. White, who lived in Boston for 10 years, is a die-hard city sports fan and attended a Celtics game this week and was set to attend the Patriots game Sunday. But for White, the main event of the week clearly took place inside the octagon, where the undisputed light heavyweight and heavyweight championships were defended on the same card for the first time since 2003.

UFC 220 featured two quick contenders for KO off the year — remember, Ngannou's spectacular KO of Overeem happened in early December.

Abdul Razak Alhassan caught Sabah Homasi flush with a right uppercut in the first for one of the more spectacular knockouts in recent UFC history to win a welterweight bout. Razak Alhassan knocked Homasi cold with a vicious right that brought a gasp from the crowd and left Homasi motionless on his back for a couple of minutes. He eventually needed assistance to sit on a stool in his corner. Trainers placed bags of ice on his back and neck.

Razak Alhassan already beat Homasi in a controversial stoppage at UFC 218. The outcome of the immediate rematch left no doubt.

Calvin Kattar, a New England fighter who gave a shoutout to the Patriots, broke open a close fight against Shane Burgos and won via TKO in the third. Kattar staggered Burgos with a series of blows and nailed an uppercut that put Burgos on his back. Burgos absorbed more blows and briefly escaped until referee Dan Miragliotta stopped the fight.

Mudslides take heavy toll on immigrants serving posh town

By JULIE WATSON, The Associated Press

Oprah Winfrey and Rob Lowe give Montecito its star power, but it's people like Antonio and Victor Benitez who keep the wealthy Southern California community running.

The Mexican brothers are gardeners and part of the town's working-class immigrant population, which suffered outsized losses from the recent mudslides that killed at least 21, injured dozens and damaged or destroyed hundreds of homes.

Antonio and Victor Benitez suffered broken bones and each lost a child. Antonio's wife was killed. Victor's wife was killed - her body was found Saturday - and his toddler son was injured.

Nearly a third of those killed in the Jan. 9 mudslides were from immigrant families working in service jobs in the largely white and retired Pacific coast town of 9,000. Many of these families are from developing countries seizing the opportunities provided by the area's wealth to make a better life for their children.

Among them was 30-year-old Pinit Sutthithepa from Thailand who worked at a Toyota dealership in Santa Barbara and sent money to his wife and two children for years before being able to bring them to the United States in 2016. The mudslides killed him, his 6-year-old son and his 79-year-old stepfather. Crews are still searching for Sutthithepa's 2-year-old daughter.

His wife and mother were working at a grocery store when rocks and rushing water obliterated their home, Mike Caldwell, Sutthithepa's boss wrote on a GoFundMe page seeking help for the family.

Martin Cabrera Munoz, 48, worked long hours as a landscaper so he could send money to his children in his native Guanajuato, Mexico. He was sleeping in the room he kept at his boss's home when an avalanche of mud ripped through the property.

"He wanted to give his kids a better life," his youngest sister, Diana Montero, told the Los Angeles Times.

His funeral was held Wednesday at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Santa Barbara, where people are also mourning the deaths in the Benitez family.

The Rev. Pedro Lopez has tried to offer words of comfort to his tightknit, Spanish-speaking parish — but he knows the healing will be slow and painful.

"We've let everyone know the importance of being available to one another to share their grief," Lopez said.

Many members of the modest church are without work now that the million-dollar homes they cared for have been destroyed by the storm-triggered landslides, which also closed U.S. Highway 101, a major route for commuters between the coastal region's two major cities, Santa Barbara and Ventura.

A lot of families "can't get to work because of the freeway closure, or they don't know where to work now, and they don't know how they are going to pay rent or buy groceries," Lopez said.

Victor and Antonio Benitez built a thriving gardening business after coming to the United States as teenagers from Mexico, joining their father and another brother.

The two brothers, their wives and children shared a home so they could afford the rent in Montecito, where the median home price is more than \$4 million.

They were asleep when the mud and rocks thundered down the hillsides. As it poured in, collapsing the walls, some of the family members tried to escape through the kitchen door but were swept away.

The body of Victor's son, 10-year-old Jonathan Benitez, was found nearly 2 miles (3 kilometers) away.

"He was quite a popular young man. He took everybody under his wing," Lopez said, adding that one girl cried when recalling how Jonathan welcomed her to the first communion class.

The body of Jonathan's mother, 28-year-old Faviola Benitez Calderon, a housekeeper, was located Saturday, another victim of the mudslides.

Antonio and Victor Benitez, and Victor's toddler son, Ian, remain in the hospital with broken bones and bruises. Antonio Benitez underwent surgery for abdominal injuries from being dragged by the landslide. He is recovering but overwhelmed with grief over the loss of his 27-year-old wife, Marilyn Ramos, and his 3-year-old daughter, Kailly, their only child.

"Antonio wakes up, cries and cries, and then is given a sedative to go back to sleep, only to wake up

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again later and cry again," said his sister-in-law, Jennifer Ramos.

Marilyn Ramos was living the American dream that had spurred her to come to the United States at age 20, said her sister, who remained in Marquelia, a small Mexican fishing community south of Acapulco. Ramos met her husband in California.

"All she wanted was to be a mother and have a good family life, which she had," Jennifer Ramos said.

Nearly a third of Pamela Viale's upscale neighborhood in nearby Goleta hired Antonio and Victor Benitez. The brothers worked for her for five years.

"Once people saw what wonderful work they do and what a strong work ethic they have, word spread," she said. "It grew from one family to 18 families here, and everyone feels strongly about them. They are always willing to go the extra mile, always smiling — very friendly, just amazing people.

"We're really very devastated by their loss."

Viale and others organized GoFundMe pages to help the family, who also lost their tools and truck and face mounting medical bills and funeral costs before they can rebuild their lives.

Lori Lieberman, a recording artist who lives part-time in Montecito, said the outpouring of support has been incredible.

"Everyone really loves this family," she said.

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This story corrects the spelling of names in paragraphs 19-20.

Geysers yes, Ellis Island no: Some US parks open, some not

By **MATTHEW BROWN** and **DAN ELLIOTT**, Associated Press

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. (AP) — Visitors could still ride snowmobiles and ski into Yellowstone National Park Saturday to marvel at the geysers and buffalo herds, despite the federal government shutdown.

But across the country in New York, the nation's most famous monuments to immigration — the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island — were closed.

The Interior Department had vowed to keep open as many parks, monuments and public lands as possible during the shutdown, which began at midnight Friday on the East Coast.

By mid-day Saturday, the pattern was spotty, and some visitors were frustrated.

"My initial reaction is, they really kind of screwed up our day. We had a great day planned," said Dan O'Meara, a California firefighter who wanted to visit the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

"But the next thing is, you know — it's troubling that the people we voted in are not doing the job that they're supposed to be doing. So, it's very frustrating," he said.

In Yellowstone, cross-country skier Carol Weaver was unhappy with lawmakers, even though the trails were open for her and a group of friends making a two-day visit.

Weaver, from Bozeman, Montana, worried about what would happen if the impasse is lengthy.

"This is our public land, and we should be able to use it any time we want," she said. "Congress better get its act together. They've been so irresponsible the last year, as well as the White House."

Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., said the Trump administration is trying to minimize the effects of the shutdown by keeping parks open, but he accused former President Barack Obama of doing the opposite.

"There's a little different philosophy on the shutdown from the Obama administration, which was, 'We're going to try to inflict pain on the American people,'" Daines said.

He said Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, a former Montana congressman, wants to keep Montana's Glacier National Park and Yellowstone open. Most of Yellowstone is in Wyoming but three of the five entrances are in Montana.

On Saturday, Zinke tweeted, "Not all national parks are fully open but we're working hard to make as much accessible as is safely possible."

Yellowstone had 2 inches of fresh snow on Saturday and temperatures in the teens. Visitor centers, public toilets and other facilities run by the National Park Service were closed, but privately operated hotels, tour

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services and gift shops were open.

Snow coaches — small buses with tank-like tracks and oversized tires — shuttled visitors from the edge of the park to the geyser field that includes Old Faithful and to other popular destinations within the parks remote interior.

Xanterra Parks & Resorts and other private companies that serve visitors at Yellowstone said they'd cover the cost of grooming the park's snow-packed roads for at least a week to keep them open.

Ginger Lee, visiting the park from Palm Beach County, Florida with her husband and daughter, worried before coming that Yellowstone might be closed. But after cruising past the closed booth where entrance fees are usually collected, the Lees were soon trudging through the snow on a boardwalk leading to one of the park's famous thermal features.

"The bison and the elk and the bighorn sheep — the shutdown doesn't affect them so we're happy," Lee said.

In Philadelphia, the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall — where the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were signed — were closed.

Gaetana Dimauro of Adelaide, Australia, wasn't aware of the government shutdown when she went to see the Liberty Bell.

"That's bad though," she said. "I never heard of that before."

In Boston, the USS Constitution, the 220-year-old warship anchored at Charlestown Navy Yard, was open to visitors. But the site of the Revolutionary War Battle of Bunker Hill was closed.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home in Atlanta was closed, along with historic Ebenezer Baptist Church and the visitor center at MLK National Historic Site, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

A monument and museum dedicated to the victims of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, however, stayed open. Kari Watkins, executive director of the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum, said the center is affiliated with the National Park Service but is owned and operated by the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation.

In New Mexico, parts of Bandelier National Monument's cliff dwellings and fragile archaeological sites were off-limits to protect them from damage, but the entrance road and some trails were open.

Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado and Yosemite National Park in California were open, but few Park Service staff were available to help visitors.

A storm moving into Colorado Saturday was expected to drop up to 18 inches of snow, and Rocky Mountain National Park spokeswoman Kyle Patterson said crews would not plow the roads.

In Florida, the western entrance to Everglades National Park was closed but boat tours were still operating, the Naples Daily News reported .

Elliott reported from Denver. Associated Press writers Matthew Daly in Washington; Paul Davenport in Phoenix; Anthony Izaguirre in Philadelphia; Robert Jablon in Los Angeles; Ken A. Miller in Oklahoma City; Bob Salsberg in Boston and Julie Walker in New York contributed to this report.

Trump business ethics pledges left plenty room for profiting

By **BERNARD CONDON** and **TAMI ABDOLLAH**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Among the many promises Donald Trump made a year ago to assure people he wouldn't profit off his presidency, one stood out for its boldness: a pledge to donate the profits from any foreign governments staying in his namesake hotels to the U.S. Treasury.

Today, after a year in which groups associated with Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Kuwait have booked rooms, hosted events and spent thousands of dollars at the president's hotel in Washington, no such payments to the Treasury have been made. Trump officials, who have openly questioned how closely they should scrutinize their guests, initially pledged to make a payment at the end of 2017 and now say they would have "information to share" near the end of next month.

An Associated Press analysis of the promises Trump made to draw a "red line" between his businesses

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and his administration found that, while he has kept to the letter of many pledges, he has exploited the vague language of others, creating at least the appearance that he's profiting off his presidency.

Since his inauguration a year ago, the Trump Organization has secured dozens of trademarks from foreign governments, pursued possible projects in Scotland and the Dominican Republic, enjoyed free publicity from Trump's frequent visits to his resorts, raked in big profits from lobbyists and power brokers at his Washington hotel, and launched two hotel chains.

"My overall ethics grade for the Trump administration is an F," said ethics lawyer Kathleen Clark of Washington University School of Law in St. Louis.

To be sure, ethics experts didn't like Trump's pledges from the start. As promised, Trump resigned from positions at hundreds of companies, set up a trust to hold his assets, handed day-to-day management responsibilities to two sons and hired an ethics lawyer to vet business deals.

But what drew their ire is what he didn't do: sell off his assets completely. They argued that as long as he continues to profit off his sprawling business empire, with branded hotels, golf courses, licensing deals and other interests in more than 20 countries, Trump remains vulnerable to those seeking to influence his policies.

"Meaningless," is how Walter Shaub, then the chief federal ethics official, described the promises soon after Trump's lawyer announced them at a news conference last year.

Alan Garten, the general counsel of the Trump Organization, told AP that the company takes its ethics pledges seriously and has thrown considerable resources into fulfilling them.

"I feel very confident that we are meeting our obligations," he said.

AP looks at how Trump has lived up to those promises, one by one:

NO NEW FOREIGN DEALS

A promise to make no new deals has been kept only in the strictest sense of "new" and "deals." The Trump Organization contends it has only carried on with existing deals, not new business.

In the Dominican Republic, for example, the Trump Organization has been talking again to a wealthy family to revive a long-dead licensing agreement struck a decade ago to develop an oceanside resort. In Scotland, the Trump Organization was moving ahead with plans to open a second golf course at its resort in Aberdeen. And in Indonesia, a local developer is building two resorts bearing the Trump name.

Another problem area is trademarks.

Since the inauguration, the Trump Organization has been granted dozens of trademark protections in several countries. In China it was granted preliminary approval for 38 trademarks for hotels and golf clubs and other businesses early this year. Trump's daughter, Ivanka, got preliminary approval for three trademarks on the same day that she and her husband, Jared Kushner, hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife at a dinner at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort.

The Trump Organization told AP it applied for the trademarks before Trump became president.

But ethics experts say the expansion of old projects carries the same potential conflict as new deals: A sitting president could be financially beholden to a foreign government.

"These are meaningless lines being drawn," said Larry Noble, general counsel with the Campaign Legal Center, a Washington-based public interest group. "The point is, they're interacting with foreign businesses and foreign governments by doing that. So virtually all the potential conflicts you get with a new business you get with an expanding business."

AVOID 'EVEN THE APPEARANCE OF CONFLICT'

A six-page white paper by Trump's lawyers outlining his ethics promises a year ago pledged that Trump would uphold the high standards of his office by always acting "beyond reproach" and never giving "even the appearance of a conflict."

A few numbers suggest he's failed on that promise.

Since the election, Trump has doubled membership fees at his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, to \$200,000, an increase that could be seen as a way to cash in on those seeking to rub shoulders with the president.

The president has also spent one of every three days of his presidency visiting his properties, and he

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and his staff have mentioned them at least 35 times in tweets and public comments, according to watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW). Ethics experts have long argued that the frequent references and photos of Trump strolling his golf courses and dining in his restaurants amount to an ongoing advertisement for Trump's brand.

Then there's the taxpayer money spent at Trump resorts for the Secret Service and administration staff members who travel with the president — money for lodging, food and other expenses that eventually goes into Trump's pocket. To date, the administration has not released an accounting of such costs.

Also, according to a report last week by the watchdog group Public Citizen, the Trump Organization has taken in more than \$600,000 from dozens of political organizations, companies, foreign governments and officials using its hotels and resorts.

Among those were Saudi government officials, the Malaysian prime minister, two pro-Turkish groups and the Kuwaiti ambassador. Special interest groups reported to have held events at the properties included those representing miners, oil drillers, bankers, payday lenders, hedge fund operators, insurers, funeral home directors and commercial real estate investors.

Several lawsuits have accused the president of violating an emoluments clause in the U.S. Constitution forbidding presidents from taking gifts or money from "any King, Prince, or foreign State." A judge last month threw out one such lawsuit filed by CREW, saying it is an issue that Congress should address first.

"Because of his steady stream of conflicts," said CREW Executive Director Noah Bookbinder, "we have to question whether each decision he makes was made in the best interest of the American people or the best interest of his bottom line."

CAREFUL VETTING OF U.S. DEALS

The way the Trump Organization portrays it, the vetting of U.S. deals for conflicts, as outlined in the president's white paper, has been going well — perhaps too well.

Exhibit A: the slow rollout of its two new hotel brands — a mid-priced chain, called Scion, and the budget-conscious American Idea.

Both are departures from Trump's existing luxury hotels, and ethics experts have howled in protest that the president appeared to be exploiting his White House fame to profit with these new chains. The official plans were ambitious: as many as 100 new Scions, for instance, in just three years.

But aside from a deal with a single developer in Mississippi, there have been no announcements.

Trump critics say developers are reluctant to join up with a Trump brand that has become so controversial. But the Trump Organization says the lack of deals shows it is following through on ethics promises made a year ago.

"Making sure every 'I' is dotted and every 'T' is crossed and everything is perfect — does that kill deals? One hundred percent," Trump's son Eric told The New York Times last month. "Is it the right thing to do when your father is commander in chief? 100 percent it is."

Bobby Burchfield, an outside lawyer hired to oversee U.S. deals for conflicts, told AP the Trump Organization has been careful to meet its white paper obligations, adding that he's gotten no pushback when he's told to change transactions or kill them.

Burchfield, who was general counsel to George H.W. Bush's re-election campaign in 1992, said he has spent about one-fifth of his time on Trump business in the past year and has submitted about two dozen written approvals for deals and transactions, a requirement for any to go through.

Burchfield rejected any suggestion that the launch of American Idea even appears as if the president is trying to profit off the presidency.

"Appearance to whom?" he asked. "It's a very vague standard."

SEPARATION FROM BUSINESS

Trump appears to have resigned from positions he holds with the roughly 550 Trump Organization entities in more than 20 countries. But the changes appear to be more cosmetic than substantive.

Trump still owns those businesses through the Donald J. Trump Revocable Trust set up to hold his assets during the presidency. What's more, a provision added to the trust allowed Trump to withdraw profits and

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underlying assets at any time.

That has stirred suspicions that Trump is putting his private interests ahead of the nation.

For example, critics blasted last month's tax overhaul, noting that it set lower rates for real estate "pass through" businesses that figure prominently in the president's holdings.

"If the president does not divest from ownership, then suspicions galore arise that the president can be bought," said Craig Holman, a government affairs lobbyist for Public Citizen.

DONATE PROFITS AT HIS HOTELS

Trump's pledge to donate profits from foreign governments using his hotels to the U.S. Treasury was initially slammed by ethics experts because it didn't include all his properties, such as his resorts, and left it up to Trump to define "profit."

Then the Trump Organization pulled back from even this widely panned pledge.

An eight-page pamphlet provided by the company to the House Oversight Committee in May said that the company planned to send the Treasury only profits obviously tied to foreign governments, and not ask guests questions about the source of their money because that would "impede upon personal privacy and diminish the guest experience of our brand." The Trump Organization pledged to make contributions to the Treasury at the end of the calendar year; now Trump Hotels says it is completing annual financial reporting and expects to have information in late February. The Treasury Department did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Abdollah reported from Washington.

This Week: Home sales, Caterpillar results, 4Q GDP

By The Associated Press

A look at some of the key business events and economic indicators upcoming this week:

EYE ON HOUSING

Strong demand has helped lift U.S. home sales to levels last seen at the height of the housing boom a decade ago.

Sales of previously occupied homes accelerated in November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.81 million units, the fastest pace since December 2006. Did the trend continue in December? Find out Wednesday, when the National Association of Realtors releases its latest tally of U.S. home sales.

Existing home sales, in millions, seasonally adjusted annual rate:

July 5.44

Aug. 5.35

Sept. 5.37

Oct. 5.50

Nov. 5.81

Dec. (est.) 5.65

Source: FactSet

UNEARTHING GAINS

Caterpillar serves up its latest quarterly report card Thursday.

Wall Street predicts the construction equipment manufacturer's earnings and revenue improved in the fourth quarter from a year earlier. That would be in line with the company's performance through the first three quarters of 2017. Caterpillar has benefited from increased demand in North America and China.

LOSING STEAM?

Economists project that the U.S. economy's rate of growth slowed in the last three months of 2017.

They expect the Commerce Department will report on Friday that the gross domestic product grew by 2.7 percent in the fourth quarter. That would be down from the third quarter, when the economy expanded at a 3.2 percent annual rate, and the second quarter, when GDP climbed 3.1 percent.

GDP, seasonally adjusted annual rate, by quarter:

Q3 2016: 2.8
Q4 2016: 1.8
Q1 2017: 1.2
Q2 2017: 3.1
Q3 2017: 3.2
Q4 2017 (est.): 2.7
Source: FactSet

Vietnam jails former oil execs in high-profile graft case

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — A former oil executive was sentenced to life in prison and a former high-ranking Vietnamese government official received a lengthy prison term Monday at the end of a major corruption trial.

The 22 defendants in the case were mostly current or former executives at PetroVietnam and were convicted of mismanagement, embezzlement or both in their tenures at the state energy giant.

Former PetroVietnam chairman Dinh La Thang, the first Politburo member to be jailed in decades, was sentenced to 13 years in jail by the People's Court in the capital Hanoi. He was accused of deliberate economic mismanagement that cost the state millions.

Trinh Xuan Thanh, an ex-chairman of PetroVietnam's construction arm, was given life imprisonment for embezzlement. Thanh was also convicted of economic management. Germany accused Vietnam agents of snatching him from a Berlin park last year, a charge Vietnam denied saying Thanh turned himself in to police voluntarily. The incident strained relations between the two countries.

Three other former chairmen of PetroVietnam were sentenced to 9 years in jail each for economic mismanagement. Punishment for the other defendants ranged from 22 years in prison to suspended sentences.

Tuoi Tre newspaper quoted a judge as saying the prosecutions were "well-founded."

The Communist Party under the watch of General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong is waging an unprecedented crackdown on corruption in Vietnam, with PetroVietnam and the country's banking sector at the center.

Foreign press were not allowed to attend the two-week trial, though more than 100 Vietnamese had gathered outside the courthouse as the sentences were announced.

Thang was convicted of "deliberately violating state economic management regulations, causing serious consequences" by choosing PetroVietnam's Construction Joint Stock Co., or PVC, to build a thermo power plant without a proper bidding and appraisal process.

Thang was accused of ordering an advance payment of \$67 million to PVC, which did not use the funds for the proper purpose, causing losses of \$5.5 million to the state.

A retired government official, speaking outside the court, said the sentences were tough enough.

"I think the sentences handed down were fair. It is necessary for the country to fight against corruption," the retiree, Hoang Dinh Thanh, 70, said.

Some in the crowd waved as the convicted were driven by in prison vehicles.

Some expressed sympathy for Thang for his good deeds for the country.

"I understand those who committed wrongdoings must be punished," said Hoang Thi Ha, 42-year-old shop owner. "But Mr. Thang has done many good things for the country. I'd hoped he would have got leniency for that merit. His jail sentence is a bit harsh," she added.

Jonathan London, a lecturer at the Leiden University in the Netherlands and a Vietnam expert, said further reforms and commitments by the communist authorities are needed to root out corruption.

He said while these jail sentences may be dramatic, history in other countries suggests in the longer term that corruption is not best fought by punishment "but precisely the kinds of institutional reforms and levels of commitment to transparency that the Vietnamese public opinion has been calling for, but which Vietnamese leaders have been unfortunately unwilling to embrace."

Thang is accused of economic management in another case for his role in PetroVietnam's buying shares

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worth \$36 million in Ocean commercial joint bank. PetroVietnam lost all the investment when the State Bank of Vietnam bought the bank for nothing. He is expected to stand trial in the coming months.

Thang was once a rising political star but was dismissed from the all-powerful Politburo in May and was subsequently fired as Communist Party secretary of the southern commercial hub of Ho Chi Minh City. He was arrested on Dec. 8.

In the meantime, Thanh is scheduled to be put on trial on Wednesday accused of embezzling \$622,000 from a property development project.

Another trial involving 46 defendants, including many former bankers, is currently taking place in Ho Chi Minh City.

Rocket launched in New Zealand deploys commercial satellites

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — A rocket launched from New Zealand on Sunday successfully reached orbit carrying small commercial satellites.

California-based company Rocket Lab said its Electron rocket, which carries only a small payload of about 150 kilograms (331 pounds), successfully deployed an earth imaging and two other satellites for weather and ship tracking after blastoff from the Mahia Peninsula on North Island's east coast.

Company CEO and founder Peter Beck, a New Zealander, said the launch marks the beginning of a new era in commercial access to space. He said that deploying customer payloads on a second test flight "is almost unprecedented."

The company last May reached space with its first test launch, only to abort the mission due to a communication glitch. It has official approval to conduct three test launches and sees an emerging market in delivering small devices, some as big as a smartphone, into orbit.

The satellites would be used for everything from monitoring crops to providing internet service.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Jan. 22, the 22nd day of 2018. There are 343 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 22, 1968, the fast-paced sketch comedy program "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In" premiered as a weekly series on NBC-TV.

On this date:

In 1498, during his third voyage to the Western Hemisphere, Christopher Columbus arrived at the present-day Caribbean island of St. Vincent.

In 1901, Britain's Queen Victoria died at age 81 after a reign of 63 years; she was succeeded by her eldest son, Edward VII.

In 1908, Katie Mulcahey became the first — and only — woman to run afoul of New York City's just-passed ban on females smoking in public establishments. (Mulcahey served a night in jail after refusing to pay a \$5 fine; the law, which did not specify any fines, ended up being vetoed by Mayor George B. McClellan Jr.)

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson, in an address to Congress, pleaded for an end to the war in Europe, calling for "peace without victory." (By April, however, America also was at war.)

In 1922, Pope Benedict XV died; he was succeeded by Pius XI.

In 1938, Thornton Wilder's play "Our Town" was performed publicly for the first time in Princeton, New Jersey.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces began landing at Anzio, Italy.

In 1953, the Arthur Miller drama "The Crucible," set during the Salem witch trials, opened on Broadway.

In 1957, George P. Metesky, suspected of being the "Mad Bomber" who injured 15 people over a 16-year period, was arrested in Waterbury, Connecticut. (Metesky was later found mentally ill and committed

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until 1973; he died in 1994.)

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in its Roe v. Wade decision, legalized abortions using a trimester approach. Former President Lyndon B. Johnson died at his Texas ranch at age 64.

In 1987, Pennsylvania treasurer R. Budd Dwyer, convicted of defrauding the state, proclaimed his innocence at a news conference before pulling out a gun and shooting himself to death in front of horrified onlookers.

In 1998, Theodore Kaczynski (kah-ZIHN'-skee) pleaded guilty in Sacramento, California, to being the Unabomber responsible for three deaths and 29 injuries in return for a sentence of life in prison without parole.

Ten years ago: Actor Heath Ledger, 28, was found dead of an accidental prescription overdose in a New York City apartment. Jose Padilla (hoh-ZAY' puh-DEE'-uh), once accused of plotting with al-Qaida to blow up a radioactive "dirty bomb," was sentenced by a U.S. federal judge in Miami to 17 years and four months (later increased to 21 years) on other terrorism conspiracy charges. Republican Fred Thompson quit the race for the White House after a string of poor finishes in early primary and caucus states.

Five years ago: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line bloc fared worse than expected in a parliamentary election, forcing Netanyahu to negotiate a broad coalition deal. An Indonesian court sentenced Lindsay June Sandiford, a British grandmother, to death for smuggling cocaine into Bali (Sandiford is appealing her sentence). Linda Pugach, who was blinded in 1959 when her lover, Burton Pugach, hired hit men to throw lye in her face — and became a media sensation after later marrying him — died in Queens, New York at age 75.

One year ago: After a combative start to his presidency, Donald Trump delivered a more unifying message and sought to reassure Americans he was ready to begin governing a divided nation. A robbery inside a San Antonio shopping mall ended with shots fired, leaving one person who tried to intervene dead (two suspects are charged with capital murder). Tom Brady led the New England Patriots to another big AFC championship game performance in a 36-17 rout of the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Atlanta Falcons blew out the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship game, 44-21. Nathan Chen performed a near-flawless free skate featuring five quadruple jumps to become, at 17, the youngest men's U.S. figure skating champion in more than five decades at the competition in Kansas City, Missouri.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Ind., is 90. Actress Piper Laurie is 86. Celebrity chef Graham Kerr (TV: "The Galloping Gourmet") is 84. Actor Seymour Cassel is 83. Author Joseph Wambaugh is 81. Singer Steve Perry is 69. Country singer-musician Teddy Gentry (Alabama) is 66. Movie director Jim Jarmusch is 65. Actor John Wesley Shipp is 63. Hockey Hall of Famer Mike Bossy is 61. Actress Linda Blair is 59. Actress Diane Lane is 53. Actor-rap DJ Jazzy Jeff is 53. Country singer Regina Nicks (Regina Regina) is 53. Celebrity chef Guy Fieri is 50. Actress Olivia d'Abo is 49. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marc Gay (Shai) is 49. Actress Katie Finneran is 47. Actor Gabriel Macht is 46. Actor Balthazar Getty is 43. Actor Christopher Kennedy Masterson is 38. Jazz singer Lizz Wright is 38. Pop singer Willa Ford is 37. Actress Beverley (cq) Mitchell is 37. Rock singer-musician Ben Moody is 37. Actor Kevin Sheridan is 36. Actress-singer Phoebe Strole is 35. Rapper Logic is 28. Tennis player Alize Cornet (uh-LEEZ' kohr-NAY') is 28. Actress Sami Gayle is 22.

Thought for Today: "I know there's a proverb which that says 'To err is human,' but a human error is nothing to what a computer can do if it tries." — Dame Agatha Christie, English mystery writer (1890-1976).