

Groton Daily Independent

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Today's Events

Boys' Basketball hosts Langford Area with 7th grade game at 5 p.m., junior varsity at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

Thursday, Feb. 1

Boys' Basketball at Tiospa Zina: C game at 5:15 p.m. followed by the junior varsity game and then the varsity game.

Friday, Feb. 2

Girls' Basketball hosts Tiospa Zina: Junior varsity game at 6:30 p.m. followed by the varsity game.

Saturday, Feb. 3

MathCounts at SDSU
Robotics at Chamberlain High School
Wrestling at Stanley County, 10 a.m.
GBB at Madision. NEC vs. DAK12 Classic. 2:15 p.m.: Groton Area vs. Sioux Falls Christian in the auxiliary gym.

Midwest Masonry & concrete Pumping

Greg Heilman, owner

405 E 1st Ave., Groton

Greg: 253/929-9137

Mike: 605/492-7041

midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com



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



Glimpse From Greenfield

Brock Greenfield
State Senator
District 2

The number of bills in-play now that the unlimited bill deadline has passed is 409, with 173 being Senate Bills and 236, House Bills. There have also been seven Senate Joint Resolutions and ten House Joint Resolutions introduced. You all know the function of bills and how they progress through the process. Joint Resolutions often intend to pose questions to the voters at the ballot box in subsequent

elections. Other Joint Resolutions can seek to petition for other actions to be taken. For example, a few years ago, the Legislature passes a JR calling for an Article V Convention to propose a Federal Balanced Budget Amendment. (I will touch on one Joint Resolution in this article and will discuss more of them later as they work their way through the legislature.) Still other documents known as resolutions or commemorations that do not have the force of law and seek more or less to make political statements or to congratulate individuals or groups on various accomplishments. Resolutions are often voted on, while commemorations are almost always uncontroversial and are adopted by unanimous consent without a vote.

Now that a large number of bills are in the system, I will dedicate this to showcasing some of those which have been heard in committees I serve on or that have been debated on the floor. In Health and Human Services, we heard SB 74 which seeks to revise current law to allow individuals who are less than ten years older than prospective adoptive children to legally adopt. We heard from a family who shared their account about a biological father who had a thirteen-year-old son. The father, in his early 30's, married a woman who was 22 years old. She had essentially been a mother-figure to the son for four years. Last spring, she attempted to legally adopt the boy. Upon hearing the case, the judge asked the ages of the woman and the boy. The difference in age was nine years. The judge informed the family of a state law that required that there be a minimum of ten years between an adoptive parent and child. This bill seeks to insert language that would allow for an adult to adopt somebody less than ten years younger if it is "in the best interest of the child." The bill passed committee 6-0 and, subsequently, the Senate, 34-0.

We have likely all seen ads on television that speak of "biologics" relative to products with medicinal value. To-date, our law does not recognize these. Thus, we need to address the matter to allow for dispensing of them. SB 75 defines "biological products" and "interchangeable biological products" and establishes that those biological products recognized by the US FDA are able to be legally dispensed and utilized in South Dakota. This bill appears to be common sense and uncontroversial and simply recognizes changing times and medical advances. It met with unanimous support of the committee, and the full Senate.

SB 105 may prove to be somewhat more controversial. The bill seeks to allow medical professionals to administer toxicology tests on infants who are suspected to have been exposed to controlled substances in utero. The intent is to allow medical practitioners to be able to perform necessary tests within the first 28 days of a baby's life to be able to determine whether the child needs special medical attention. In response to questions, the committee receive assurances that this procedure will not be abused or overused. The bill passed committee 6-1, and I voted in favor of it. I believe the health and well-being of a newborn is paramount, and I trust that the intent of the bill is true. The bill will be heard on the Senate floor this week.

In Judiciary, we heard testimony on SB 84 which states "No agency of the State of South Dakota or any political subdivision of the state may enter into a settlement agreement with any third party involving claims

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for monetary damages or equitable relief in which the settlement agreement requires nondisclosure or confidentiality as to the terms of the settlement. Any settlement agreement under this section shall be a public record...". The bill was originally opposed by the SD Bankers Association, SD Electric Utility Companies, SD Retailers Association, Associated School Boards of SD, SD Insurance Alliance, Heartland Consumer Power District, and the Governor's Office. In working with the sole proponent of the bill, an amendment was offered which satisfied several of the concerns of the opponents. However, a few questions remained. In the end, I voted against the bill in committee, but it passed 5-2. I have had subsequent conversations about whether the bill needs further amendments. At this time, I am relatively comfortable that the bill is in pretty good shape. I intend to either help to amend it or to support it on the floor as it came out of committee. This is intended to be a "transparency" issue to allow the public access to information related to settlement agreements between government entities and those who contract with them. I just want to make sure we do our best to get the language right before moving it along in the legislative process.

Finally, Judiciary heard two bills brought by the Attorney General. SB 61 seeks to strengthen our sex offender registry law by requiring sex offenders to update changes of address in a timely fashion and in-person. It also says that if a person fails to comply with the law, a first offense is a Class 6 felony and subsequent offenses are Class 5 felonies, which increases penalties. The other bill, SB 64, would clarify that attempted human trafficking of a minor is subject to the same penalty as human trafficking. Our trafficking laws relative to minors had not contemplated that on occasion a person may be apprehended in an initial attempt to engage in this nefarious behavior. In such an instance, it is important that our law is consistent and does not allow a trafficker to receive a lesser penalty on a technicality. Both bills passed committee 6-0 and await floor action this week.

Next week, I will touch on at least one gun-related bill that was heard in Judiciary Committee and awaits a floor debate. By then, presumably, there will have been other gun bills that have been heard and dealt with in committee and/or on the floor, so I will wait to provide a narrative until my next article.

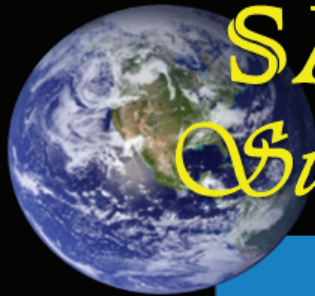
One Joint Resolution that has passed the full Senate is SJR 1. If this meets with approval on the House side, the electorate will be asked to vote on whether to increase the threshold for changing our SD Constitution to 55%. Many Senators expressed mixed feelings about this measure, but erred on the side of letting the people decide. They voiced a desire to allow majority rule, but also said it may be advisable to require a higher standard when making changes to the Constitution, as such measures are more permanent in that the only way to subsequently change the Constitution is by virtue of a public vote. Several concerns about the recently adopted "Marsy's Law" Amendment have precipitated this discussion. To be clear, this would pertain ONLY to proposed Constitutional Amendments. It would not change the vote threshold for referred laws or initiated measures. That would remain 50% plus 1.

Thank you, once again, for reading and providing feedback. God bless each of you!

Brock

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SAVE THE DATE Super Blue Blood Moon



Total Lunar Eclipse
Jan. 31, 2018
(all times PST)

Moonset Times
Washington, DC 7:15 a.m. EST
New York, NY 7:06 a.m. EST
Chicago, IL 7:06 a.m. CST
Kansas City, MO 7:28 a.m. CST
Denver, CO 7:12 a.m. MST
Phoenix, AZ 7:29 a.m. MST
Los Angeles, CA 6:57 a.m. PST
Seattle, WA 7:44 a.m. PST

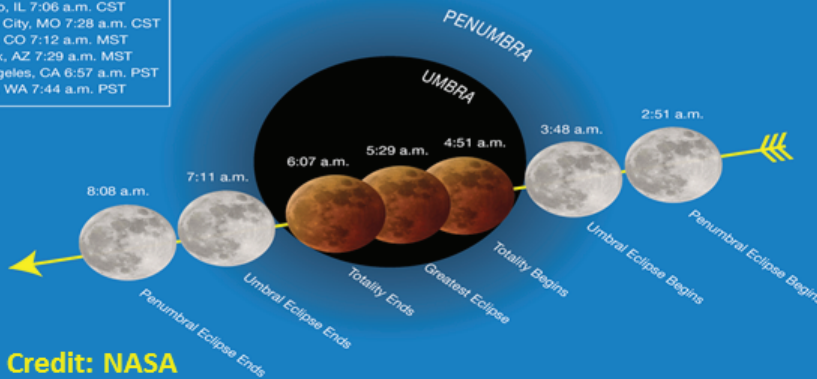


Image Credit: NASA

January 31st 2018 (Morning)
PEAK VIEWING TIME IN SOUTH DAKOTA:
630AM CST
(Look To Western Horizon)



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Updated: 1/28/2018 4:50 AM Central

Published on: 01/28/2018 at 4:52AM

Look to the western skies Wednesday morning, as a lunar eclipse could be visible from the Dakotas & western Minnesota. Check back over the next few days to see if the forecast is for clear or cloudy skies and set your calendar. Best viewing time is from 6 to 7 in the morning. More information can be found at: <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/super-blue-blood-moon-coming-jan-31>

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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)

Wildcats beat Tigers in girls action

Northwestern's girls posted a 62-39 win over the Groton Area Tigers in basketball action played Monday in Mellette.

Jennie Doeden led the Tigers with 12 points followed by Payton Maine with seven, Harleigh Stange six, Jessica Bjerke and Miranda Hanson each had five and Nicole Marzahn added four points.

Groton had 28 rebounds with Bjerke having nine, eight steals with Bjerke having three, and seven assists with Stange and Doeden each having two. The Tigers had 23 turnovers and 15 team fouls.

Groton Area made 11 of 26 field goals, five of 22 three-pointers and two of four free throws.

Addison Sparling led Northwestern with 14 points followed by Sydney Schell with 12, Hannah Schenteel with 10, Evy Peterson nine, Caitlyn Fishbach eight, Crissy Stoltenberg six and Payton Groft three.

The Wildcats made 21 of 61 field goals and had 20 turnovers.

Groton's junior varsity team pulled out a 34-33 win. Kenzie McInerney led Groton Area with eight points, Grace Traphagen and Kaycie Hawkins each had seven, Tadyn Glover five, Eliza Wanner four and Nicole Marzahn three.

Northwestern won the C game, 31-26. Grace Wambach had 11 points, Maddie Bjerke seven, Erin Unzen four and Brooklyn Gilbert and Madeline Flihs each had two points.

Groton coffee cup league 1-29-18

Team standings: James valley 13, Ten pins 10, Kens 9, Jungle Lanes 8

High scores: Joyce Walter 178, 174; Vickie Kramp 161, Sandi Bistodeau 161, Sue Stanley 156

High series: Joyce Walter 470, Vickie Kramp 448, Sandi Bistodeau 415

Conde National league

Team standings: Pirates 13, Cubs 11, Braves 11, Colts 9, Giants 9, Mets 7

Men' High scores: Ryan Bethke 224, 202; Lance Frohling 223, 215, 204; Butch Farmen 213; Russ Bethke 202

Men' High series: Lance Frohling 642, Ryan Bethke 594, Butch Farmen 573, Russ Bethke 528

Women's High scores: Joyce Walter 191, Vickie Kramp 183, Alice Severs 178

Women's High series: Joyce Walter 478, Alice Severs 463, Vickie Kramp 460



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MB17-NM008Ec

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Today in Weather History

January 30, 2001: Widespread freezing rain, accumulating from 1/8 to 1/2 inch, changed over to snow late in the evening of the 29th. The snow accumulated from 6 to 12 inches over much of central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. The combination of ice and snow caused significant travel problems, school and flight cancellations and delays, business closings, and numerous vehicle accidents. Several highways were closed along with large portions of Interstates 29 and 90. Some snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Murdo, 14 SSW Hayes, and 8 E of Eden, 7 inches at Castlewood and 5 NE of Peever, 8 inches at Miller, Gann Valley, Iona, Watertown, Ortonville, and 2 NW Stephan. Nine inches of snowfall accumulated 18 S of Harrold with 10 inches at Tulare and Kennebec, 11 inches at Clark, Clear Lake, and Wheaton, 12 inches at Carpenter, Willow Lake, Milbank, and Browns Valley, and 13 inches at Wilmot.

January 30, 2011: Heavy snow of 6 to 9 inches fell across part of northeast South Dakota from the afternoon of the 30th to the afternoon of the 31st. Travel was disrupted especially along Interstate-90. Some snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Webster, Summit, and Clear Lake; 7 inches at Watertown and Milbank; 8 inches at Wilmot and Sisseton and 9 inches at Bryant, Waubay, and Andover.

1607: The Bristol Channel floods in England, resulted in the drowning of a large number of people and the destruction of a large amount of farmland and livestock. Recent research has suggested that the cause may have been a tsunami. Cardiff was one of the most badly affected towns, with the foundations of St. Mary's Church destroyed.

1954: A tornado touched down near White Point Beach, Nova Scotia. A great deal of hail and lightning was reported along the coast near Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

1966: The Blizzard of 1966 temporarily isolated Buffalo, New York and paralyzed the region. Train service was disrupted. Numerous highways, the New York State Thruway from Albany to the Pennsylvania state line, and the Buffalo Airport as well as other airports throughout western and central New York were closed. Hardest hit was the Syracuse-Oswego area. 100 inches of snow was reported at Oswego, NY. Some schools in Orleans County were closed for the entire week following the blizzard. Economic loss from the storm was estimated at \$35 million dollars. Winds gusting to 60 mph and temperatures in the teens along with heavy and blowing snow created severe blizzard conditions.

2002: What had been one of the driest Januarys on record in Iowa was broken up by a winter storm that produced snowfall across the state from January 30-31. The snow was heaviest across southern and southeastern Iowa where storm total accumulations ranged between 11 and 13 inches along and south of a line from Chariton through Ottumwa to Wapello and Burlington. The highest reported totals were 13.2 inches at Leon and 13.0 inches at Bloomfield and Fairfield.

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








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

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

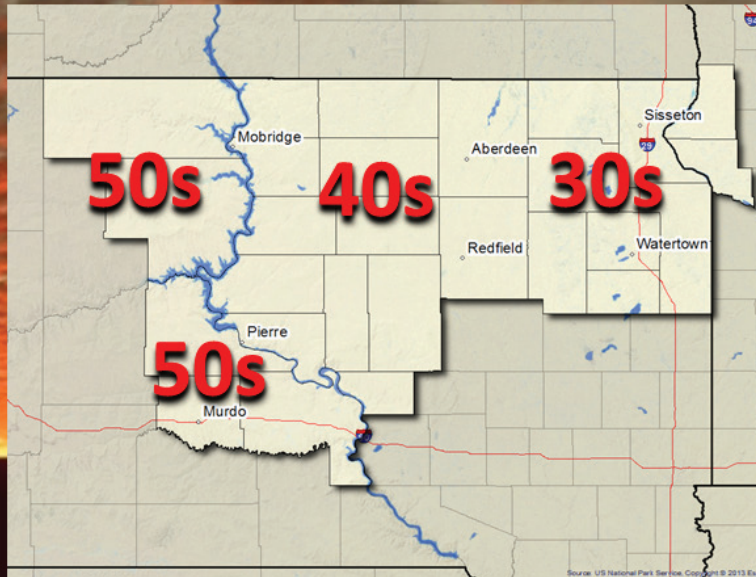
1987 - Thunderstorms in Minnesota spawned a tornado which moved in a southwesterly direction for a distance of thirty miles across Rice County and Goodhue County. Trees were uprooted and tossed about like toys, and a horse lifted by the tornado was observed sailing horizontally through the air. Thunderstorms drenched La Crosse, WI, with 5.26 inches of rain, their second highest 24 hour total of record. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Tue Jan 30	Wed Jan 31	Thu Feb 1	Fri Feb 2	Sat Feb 3	Sun Feb 4	Mon Feb 5
						
40°F 23°F	37°F -1°F	11°F -1°F	26°F 4°F	9°F -9°F	14°F 0°F	20°F 2°F
SSE 21 MPH Precip 20%	W 19 MPH Precip 20%	NNW 15 MPH	S 10 MPH	N 15 MPH Precip 20%	W 9 MPH	WNW 8 MPH

Warmer Today Highs:



National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 1/30/2018 4:10 AM Central

Published on: 01/30/2018 at 4:18AM

Warmer air is on the way for today, with much above average temperatures for today. Wednesday will be mild as well, before more winterlike temperatures return to the region for the latter half of the work week.

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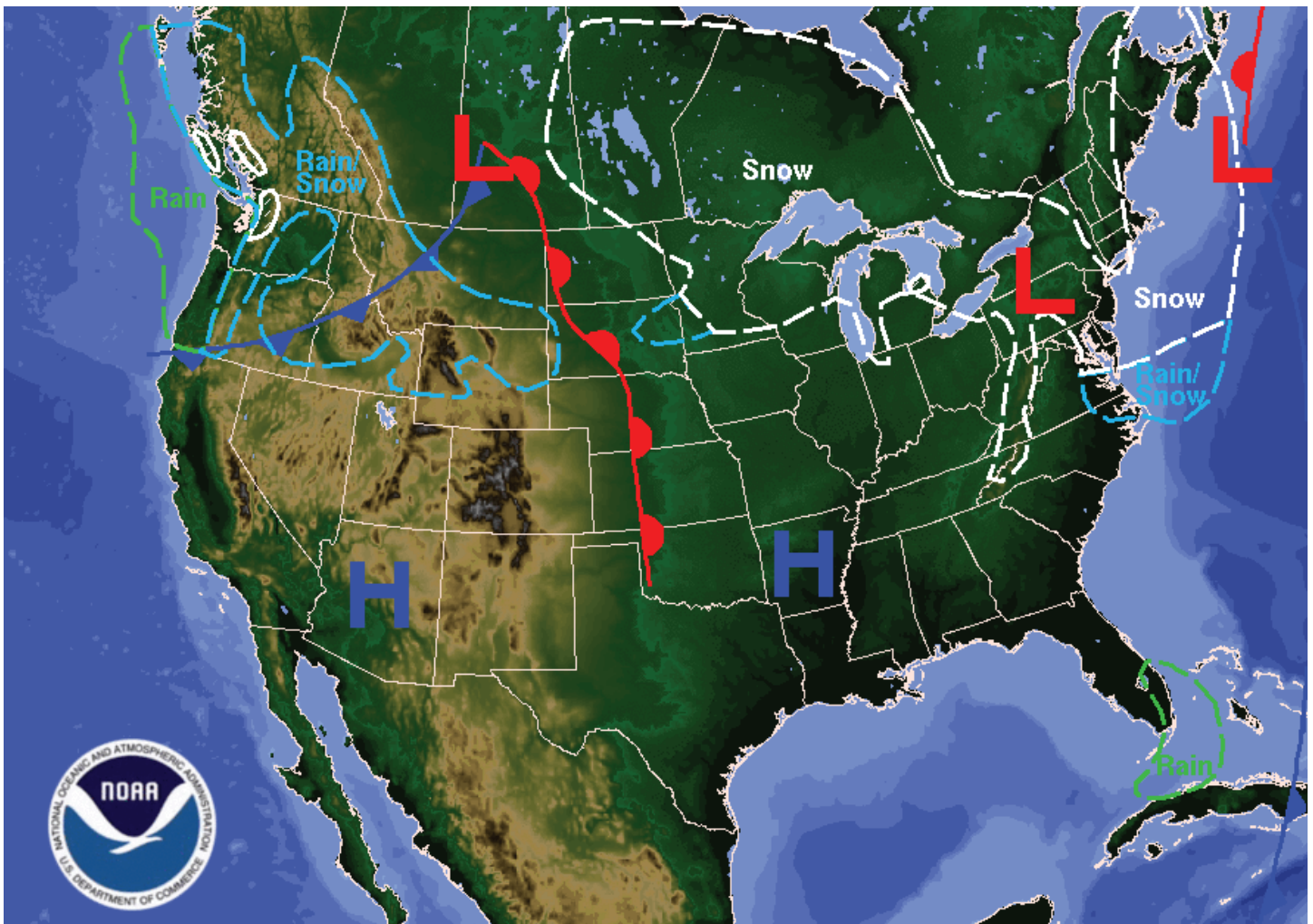
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 19.5 F at 3:23 PM
Low Outside Temp: -4.0 F at 7:54 AM
Wind Chill: -
High Gust: 11.0 Mph at 10:26 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 55° in 1931
Record Low: -32° in 1916
Average High: 24°F
Average Low: 2°F
Average Precip in Jan: 0.46
Precip to date in Jan: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.46
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:37 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:55 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Jan 30, 2018, issued 3:53 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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ALMOST/NOT YET

Most of us have a memory or two of family trips we took when we were children. Excitement filled our hearts as we left on our journey. Then, after awhile, boredom and restlessness sets in and everyone becomes anxious and angry and we wondered why we ever left home. No matter where we were going or how long it took, someone would ask the question, "Are we there yet?" It is a question that is handed down from one generation to the next and one family to another. It's part of life.

And the answer was and still is the same: "Almost" or "Not yet." It reminds us of the fact that life is indeed a journey and we are never sure where or when it will end.

It is difficult to face the uncertainties of life wondering when there will be some final resolution to the issues that surround us and threaten us constantly. We are troubled when we see injustice and feel deceived. We want to be free from the fear and threat of terrorism and enjoy the reign of peace and joy. We hear of wars and rumors of wars. We are forced to face the fact that conflict and crises pervade our world and disturb our lives. And the peace that the leaders of this world promise us, never comes.

So we call on God and ask, "Are we there yet? Is it time for Your return?" And He answers, "Almost. Not yet. My time has not come. You and I still have work to do."

We as Christians have His light in this darkness and His hope in the midst of despair. It is our responsibility to share this gift of light and hope with others so they can pray with us...

Prayer: "O Lord, the God Who saved us, day and night we cry out to You. May our prayers come before You; turn Your ear to our cry!" Grant us Your peace through Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 88:1-2 O Lord, God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before You. Let my prayer come before You; Incline Your ear to my cry.

2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

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News from the Associated Press

Bond set for suspect shot by officer after vehicle incident

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Bond has been set at \$500,000 for a man accused of trying to hit a police officer with his vehicle in North Dakota.

Twenty-two-year-old Ulises Villalobos-Alvarado appeared in court Monday on felony charges of attempted murder and fleeing a peace officer. He said he would accept a public defender for now but will eventually seek his own attorney.

Villalobos-Alvarado is accused of trying to run over a Bismarck officer who subsequently shot him in the arm. The incident happened Jan. 18 as police and probation officers were conducting a probation search Jan. 18. He later turned himself in at a gas station in Brookings, South Dakota.

He waived extradition and was returned to North Dakota on Friday to face the charges.

Bear Butte State Park fire caused by private burn pile

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — A fire that burned 150 acres (61 hectares) on the north side of Bear Butte State Park over the weekend was caused by a debris burn pile that escaped.

The Great Plains Fire Information office says the burn pile was on private property, but the fire escaped and spread to the state park near Sturgis.

Local, state and federal firefighters responded. Gusty winds helped spread the fire that started Saturday, but it was fully contained Sunday.

No structures were endangered and no injuries were reported. There were no evacuations, and the park's bison herd was not affected.

Officials say the park's hiking trail will remain closed indefinitely as damage is assessed.

Man sentenced for stabbing woman's eardrum with scissors

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A Minnesota man has been sentenced to serve 10 years in the South Dakota State Penitentiary for assaulting a Mitchell woman with a pair of scissors in 2016.

Fifty-year-old Eustace Miles of Moorhead, Minnesota, pleaded guilty to aggravated assault for punching the woman, hitting her with an extension cord and belt, and stabbing a pair of scissors into her ear, puncturing her eardrum.

The Daily Republic reports that in addition to the prison time, Miles must pay nearly \$5,200 in fines, court fees and restitution, along with some future medical and counseling expenses.

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

Monday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Christian 55, Britton-Hecla 51
Avon 49, Menno 45
Canby, Minn. 41, Deubrook 39
Corsica/Stickney 54, Bon Homme 51, OT
Freeman 60, Scotland 33
Harrisburg 83, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 72, OT
Herreid/Selby Area JV 79, Wakpala 58

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Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 52, Ethan 42

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Christian 57, Britton-Hecla 17

Bon Homme 50, Gregory 27

Bridgewater-Emery 64, Dell Rapids St. Mary 51

Castlewood 59, Wilmot 50

DeSmet 70, Clark/Willow Lake 40

Dupree 33, Rapid City Christian 23

Ethan 61, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 30

Herreid/Selby Area 50, Wakpala JV 42

Kimball/White Lake 56, Wolsey-Wessington 39

Lennox 60, Madison 49

Little Wound 65, Red Cloud 58

Lyman 50, Colome 43

New Underwood 46, Kadoka Area 41

Northwestern 62, Groton Area 39

Sioux Falls Washington 58, Harrisburg 44

Wall 40, Hot Springs 24

Waubay/Summit 65, Langford 29

Waverly-South Shore 48, Webster 36

Jackley leads in 2017 fundraising; Noem has cash advantage

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley's campaign for governor topped other candidates last year with more than \$1 million in fundraising, but his Republican primary opponent, U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, ended 2017 with a heftier bank balance of more than \$2.1 million.

State Senate Minority leader Billie Sutton, the lone Democrat in the race, raised more than \$870,000 in cash and donated goods and services last year. Sutton closed out 2017 with about \$664,000 on hand — the least of the top candidates — but he's poised to conserve cash while Noem and Jackley campaign for the June primary election.

They are competing to replace outgoing Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who can't run again this year because of term limits.

Marty Jackley for Governor reported raising roughly \$947,000 in cash and donated goods and services in a year-end campaign finance report released Monday. His political action committee, Friends of Marty Jackley, brought in roughly \$137,000 in cash and in-kind contributions last year. Jackley had over \$1.6 million on hand between both accounts.

"The outpouring of support from across the state is humbling, and the fact that nearly all of our donations have come from South Dakota shows just how much momentum we have moving forward," Jackley said in a statement.

His governor account received about \$842,000 in contributions from individuals, while the PAC took in \$69,000 in individual donations.

Noem's campaign committee, Kristi for Governor, reported raising slightly more than \$900,000 in the year-end report. The campaign reported spending about \$566,000, leaving over \$2.1 million in the bank.

"Thousands of people have contributed their hard-earned money, their precious time and their prayers to our campaign in the past year," Noem said in a statement. "We are leading the race in cash on hand, and we plan to lead in votes and support on June 5th."

She started the reporting period with roughly \$1.8 million in the bank. Noem last week proposed an overhaul of South Dakota campaign finance rules, including barring corporate contributions, if elected.

Sutton's haul included over \$438,000 from individuals and \$100,000 from former Democratic U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson's campaign account.

"If you look at the history of candidates in our party, I've raised two-and-a-half times as much at this point in the race, which is very telling of the grassroots support that we have and the excitement about our campaign," Sutton said. "My goals are to raise the money I need to win."

Minnesota officials welcome Super Bowl to the 'Bold North'

By AMY FORLITI, Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP) — Despite disappointment that their Minnesota Vikings won't be the first team to play a Super Bowl in their home stadium, state officials and team owners opened their arms to Super Bowl fans on Monday as they kicked off a week of events before Sunday's game between the Philadelphia Eagles and New England Patriots.

Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton proclaimed it Super Bowl Week in the state, and Minnesota Host Committee co-chairman Doug Baker promised fans a week they won't forget.

Many events include a local flair and outdoor activities that seek to turn the state's snow and ice into a strength — what promoters are calling the "Bold North."

"This is Minnesota. It's not going to be Florida balmy. But it's going to be Minnesota cold, and we're proud of it," Dayton said. "We're proud of our state. And we're just very much willing to welcome everybody who wants to come up here."

Officials say the Super Bowl wouldn't have come to Minnesota's northern climate without U.S. Bank Stadium, which opened in 2016. Dayton and Minnesota lawmakers in 2012 approved a financing package for the facility, which had taxpayers paying nearly half the cost of the \$1.1 billion stadium.

Vikings owner Zygi Wilf said Monday the partnership that got the roofed stadium built "is a great template for other cities to see that it's not just a one-way street." Wilf said that while locales in warmer climates are more likely to draw future Super Bowls, this joint venture between the owners and the city and state resulted in what he called "the best stadium in the United States."

The Vikings fell one win short of landing on the NFL's biggest stage after losing the NFC championship game to the Eagles 38-7. Instead, the Eagles will be here seeking their first Vince Lombardi Trophy, trying to deny the Patriots a sixth Super Bowl title.

Neither team has played in U.S. Bank Stadium.

Though he joked about wearing a purple tie "in defiance," Dayton said the state will set aside its disappointment that the Vikings aren't in the Super Bowl and will welcome all visitors, even suggesting: "Behave yourselves — and dress warmly."

Perhaps as proof that "Minnesota Nice" really does exist, more than 10,000 people have volunteered to direct visitors and help keep things running smoothly during the week. In addition to bringing the Super Bowl to Minnesota, the host committee has spent the last year investing \$5 million in grants to improve the health and wellness of kids around the state.

"I'm often asked what makes Super Bowl 52 unique, and the conversation often turns to the cold and to the weather. But my real answer is, it's the people," NFL Senior Vice President of Events Peter O'Reilly said. "It's the people and the energy and the warmth here in the Bold North that is really coming through."

Follow Amy Forliti on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/amyforliti>. More of her work at: <https://apnews.com/search/amy%20forliti>

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

Turning to beet juice and beer to address road salt danger

By MICHAEL CASEY, Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — Looking to strike a balance between ice-free roads and clean waterways, public works departments around the country are working to cut their salt use in winter by slathering the roadways with beet juice, molasses, and even beer waste to make them safer.

Rock salt for decades has provided the cheapest and most effective way to cut down on traffic accidents and pedestrian falls during winter storms. But researchers cite mounting evidence that those tons of sodium chloride crystals — more than 20 million nationwide each year — are increasing the salinity of hundreds of lakes, especially in the Northeast and Midwest. That is putting everything from fish and frogs to microscopic zooplankton at risk.

“There has been a sense of alarm on the impacts of road salt on organisms and ecosystems,” said Victoria Kelly, a road salt expert at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in New York. “We’ve seen increasing concentrations in river water, lakes, streams. Then, scientists started asking the question: What is going to happen to the organisms living in freshwater bodies and what will happen to the freshwater bodies as a whole?”

Believed to be first used in the 1940s in New Hampshire, salt became the go-to de-icing agent as cities expanded, highways were built and motorists came to expect clear roads. More than a million truckloads a year are deployed in ice-prone climes, most heavily in the Northeast and Midwest.

But many state and local agencies are seeking ways to reduce salt use as its environmental impacts are becoming more apparent.

They have turned to high-tech equipment to spread salt more efficiently, better weather forecasting to time their salting, and liquefied organic additives that help salt stick to pavement. That reduces salt use by preventing it from washing away immediately.

Agencies from New Jersey to North Dakota are using a mixture that includes beet juice; New Hampshire and Maine use one with molasses. Highway departments also have turned to beer waste, pickle brine and, in at least one Wisconsin county, cheese brine.

“Adding salt to the environment does have negative impacts, but for those of us in the Northeast, especially in rural states, where driving is the predominant way of getting around, we need mobility,” said Jonathan Rubin, director of the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and lead author on a 2010 report on the cost and benefits of salting Maine roads.

“In my opinion, we are always going to be using some degree of road salt,” he said. “The question is, can we use less?”

Salt corrosion already causes billions of dollars in damage each year to cars, roads and bridges — and now there are growing signs it’s making freshwater ecosystems saltier. In the past 50 years, chloride concentrations in some lakes and rivers quadrupled and, in a few, increased a hundredfold.

Last year, a study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences concluded that more than 40 percent of 327 lakes examined had experienced long-term salinization, and that thousands more were at a risk. Researchers also estimated nearly 50 lakes in the study, including small ones in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Rhode Island, could surpass the Environmental Protection Agency’s chloride threshold concentration by 2050, potentially harming aquatic life.

Earlier this month, the University of Maryland’s Sujay Kaushal led another PNAS study that showed how road salt also results in the release of other salts like potassium and magnesium along with toxic metals like lead and copper into the nation’s waterways. Dubbed the freshwater salinization syndrome, Kaushal said this has caused a spike in salinity and alkaline levels at nearly 230 sites in the East and Midwest including the Hudson, Potomac, and Mississippi rivers.

Experiments at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute aquatic lab in Troy, New York, have found that higher salt concentrations reduced growth rates in rainbow trout and decreased the abundance of zooplankton — tiny animals or larvae that are critical to the aquatic food chain and play a role in keeping lakes and streams clean.

Other studies have shown that salinization of lakes and streams reduces the numbers of fish and amphibians, kills off plants, and alters the diversity of these freshwater ecosystems.

"At high road salt concentrations, you can see reductions in growth, reduction in the diversity of species within a system and you can also see effects on reproduction of certain species," said William Hintz, of Rensselaer Polytechnic.

Despite such environmental concerns, Caleb Dobbins, New Hampshire's highway maintenance engineer, doesn't envision salt being replaced anytime soon by substitutes, such as magnesium acetate, which he says are 30 times more expensive and have their own environmental challenges.

"Everybody is looking throughout the world," he said. "Nobody is finding that silver bullet."

Sturgis officials urge South Dakota to oppose incorporation

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Officials in the South Dakota city of Sturgis are calling upon the state to take action against the incorporation of the Buffalo Chip Campground of Sturgis Motorcycle Rally fame.

The South Dakota Supreme Court ruled Thursday in favor of the incorporation of Buffalo Chip, nearly three years after it became a municipality, the Black Hills Pioneer reported .

"We are disappointed in the ruling," said Mark Carstensen, mayor of nearby Sturgis. "We thought when this finally came out, it would be over."

The annual Sturgis rally draws hundreds of thousands of people to the area, and the campground hordes of those visitors. The city of Sturgis, area landowners and the South Dakota Municipal League challenged a 2015 vote to incorporate Buffalo Chip. Meade County Circuit Judge Jerome Eckrich ruled in May 2016 that Buffalo Chip shouldn't be a city, Eckrich said that the census survey and map submitted by the Buffalo Chip Campground were not legal, and that people who voted to approve the town did not actually live at addresses where they were registered to vote.

"We all know the people who voted in the election for incorporation didn't live there," Carstensen said.

The Supreme Court ended up vacating Eckrich's ruling, saying the lower court did not have subject matter jurisdiction and that any action challenging the incorporation must be brought by the state.

Buffalo Chip attorney Kent Hagg said he's unsure whether there will be more litigation surrounding the matter, but he's confident Buffalo Chip will retain its status as a town.

"The state has had its opportunity from day one to step in, and they have not," he said. "Regardless of how Buffalo Chip became a municipality, the fact that it has existed as a political subdivision makes it a de facto municipality. Buffalo Chip has operated as a municipality for well over two years, and as such, it would be against case law to find against us."

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

Semitrailer-car crash in Deuel County kills 2 women

CLEAR LAKE, S.D. (AP) — A crash in Deuel County involving a semitrailer and a car killed the two women in the car.

The Highway Patrol says the car slid into the wrong lane on state Highway 22 about 8:15 a.m. Friday and was hit by the oncoming semi.

Eighty-three-year-old car driver June Kallhoff and 86-year-old passenger Celia Bouvette died at the scene east of Clear Lake. Both women are from the town of Gary.

The semi driver wasn't hurt.

Kristi Noem has over \$2.1M banked for 2018 governor campaign

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Republican U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem ended 2017 with more than \$2.1 million in the bank for her bid to become South Dakota's governor.

Kristi for Governor reported raising slightly more than \$900,000 in a year-end campaign finance report, including about \$754,000 from individuals. She brought in \$75,500 from out-of-state or federal political action committees and \$68,500 from other candidate committees.

Noem's campaign reported spending about \$566,000, leaving over \$2.1 million on hand. She started the reporting period with roughly \$1.8 million in the bank.

Noem and Attorney General Marty Jackley are Republicans competing for the governor's office this year. State Senate Minority leader Billie Sutton is the Democrat campaigning to succeed term-limited GOP Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Noem has the most cash in the bank of those candidates.

Sentencing set for Dakota Access protester in shooting

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A judge has scheduled a spring sentencing for a Denver woman who pleaded guilty in a shooting during protests in North Dakota against the Dakota Access oil pipeline, but he's still weighing whether to let her out of jail in the meantime.

Attorneys for Red Fawn Fallis argue in recent court documents that aside from one slip-up, she's been an "exemplary" resident at a Fargo halfway house for three months and should be allowed to return there until her punishment is handed down.

Fallis, 38, was accused of firing a handgun at officers three times during her October 2016 arrest. No one was hurt. She pleaded guilty Jan. 22 to civil disorder and gun possession by a convicted felon. Prosecutors agreed to drop at sentencing a more serious count of discharge of a firearm during a felony crime of violence.

U.S. District Judge Daniel Hovland has scheduled sentencing for May 31 in Bismarck.

Fallis was moved from jail to the halfway house in October, but she was arrested this month for violating conditions of her release when she signed out of the facility to attend adult learning classes but never showed up. She apologized during her plea hearing.

Prosecutors aren't objecting to returning Fallis to the halfway house provided she's placed on electronic monitoring, which her attorneys say would be an acceptable requirement.

Her attorneys also note that Fallis has been granted furloughs three times in the past year for various reasons; that she voluntarily returned to the halfway house the day she disappeared; and that she has taken steps to better herself, including working toward a high school equivalency diploma and working at a food bank.

Prosecutors have agreed to recommend a prison sentence of no more than seven years, though Hovland could go as high as 15 years.

Fallis' arrest was among 761 that authorities made in southern North Dakota during the height of protests in 2016 and 2017. At times thousands of pipeline opponents gathered in the region to protest the \$3.8 billion project to move North Dakota oil to Illinois.

The pipeline has been operating since June. Opponents fear environmental harm, and four Native American tribes in the Dakotas are still fighting it in court. Texas-based developer Energy Transfer Partners says it's safe.

Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

Jackley's governor campaign, PAC bring in over \$1M in 2017

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Republican Marty Jackley raised more than \$1 million between his South Dakota governor campaign group and political action committee in 2017.

Marty Jackley for Governor reported raising roughly \$947,000 in cash and donated goods and services in a year-end campaign finance report. The political action committee, Friends of Marty Jackley, brought in roughly \$137,000 in cash and in-kind contributions last year.

Jackley ended the year with over \$1.5 million in his governor account, which received about \$842,000 in contributions from individuals. The PAC account reported ending the period with nearly \$93,000 on hand.

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Jackley, the state attorney general, and U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem are Republicans competing for the governor's office in 2018. State Senate Minority leader Billie Sutton is the Democratic candidate seeking to replace outgoing Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Mother says school district took too long to reveal threat

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The mother of a Sioux Falls middle school student says it shouldn't have taken school officials nine days to let her know about the depth of a threat against her son.

Amber Mauricio says it took that long before she learned a 13-year-old boy brought a knife to school and planned to use it to harm her son. Mauricio tells the Argus Leader she was initially told a student at Patrick Henry Middle School wanted to fight with her son, but too many days passed before she was told about the seriousness of the threat.

School district spokeswoman DeeAnn Konrad said Monday the district is unable to share information about specific discipline situations. Police say the boy could be charged with having a weapon on school property.

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

Sanford donates \$30 million for college scholarships

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Billionaire philanthropist Denny Sanford is donating \$30 million to create college scholarships for students who have faced tough hurdles in their path to becoming successful learners, including those in South Dakota.

The money will start an endowment fund with the Horatio Alger Association. The organization provides scholarships to four-year universities across the country. Sanford picked seven South Dakota universities that winners can attend.

Association spokeswoman Meg Kane tells the Argus Leader students that are honored with tuition assistance sometimes grow up in single-parent households or families struggling with addiction or incarceration, some even caring for their younger siblings.

The schools in South Dakota include the University of Sioux Falls, Augustana University, University of South Dakota, South Dakota State University, Dakota State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Black Hills State University.

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

2-vehicle crash in Lawrence County kills Belle Fourche man

BELLE FOURCHE, S.D. (AP) — A two-vehicle crash in Lawrence County killed a 25-year-old Belle Fourche man.

The Highway Patrol says Jeremiah Chyba was driving a car that was struck by a pickup truck on state Highway 34 east of Belle Fourche about 7 a.m. Friday.

Authorities say the crash happened when the pickup tried to pass another pickup that was hauling a flatbed trailer, and the passing pickup struck the oncoming car.

Chyba died at the scene. The pickup driver was taken to a Spearfish hospital with what the patrol says were minor injuries.

Republican State Sen. Neal Tapio announces bid for Congress

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Republican State Sen. Neal Tapio of Watertown has announced a bid for South Dakota's lone U.S. House seat.

Tapio is a businessman and a former state campaign director for President Donald Trump.

He joins Secretary of State Shantel Krebs and former governor chief of staff and former public utilities commissioner Dusty Johnson in seeking the GOP endorsement to run for the House seat held by U.S.

Rep. Kristi Noem, who's running for governor.

Tapio scheduled events in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Watertown and Aberdeen on Tuesday to formally announce his candidacy.

Man caught in 2014 Sturgis sex trafficking sting sentenced

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Canadian man arrested during an undercover sex trafficking sting during the 2014 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally has been sentenced to 2 ½ years in federal prison.

Thirty-five-year-old Alexandros Thymaras was accused of trying to arrange for sex with a teenage girl. The Calgary man was indicted on a charge of commercial sex trafficking.

South Dakota U.S. Attorney Ron Parsons says Thymaras was recently sentenced to the prison time and ordered to pay \$6,100 in fines and fees.

Amazon wades into health care, with JPMorgan and Berkshire

By TOM MURPHY, AP Health Writer

Amazon is diving into health care, teaming up with Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway and the New York bank JPMorgan Chase, to create a company that helps their U.S. employees find quality care "at a reasonable cost."

The leaders of each company, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Buffett, and JPMorgan's Jamie Dimon, offered few details Tuesday and said that the project is in the early planning stage.

"The ballooning costs of (health care) act as a hungry tapeworm on the American economy," Buffett said in a prepared statement. "Our group does not come to this problem with answers. But we also do not accept it as inevitable."

The new company will be independent and "free from profit-making incentives and constraints." The businesses said the new venture's initial focus would be on technology that provides "simplified, high-quality and transparent" care.

It was not clear if the ultimate goal involves expanding the ambitious project beyond Amazon, Berkshire or JPMorgan. However, JPMorgan's Dimon said Tuesday that, "our goal is to create solutions that benefit our U.S. employees, their families and, potentially, all Americans."

Shares in health care companies took a big hit in early trading Tuesday, hinting at the threat of the new entity to how health care is paid for and delivered in the U.S.

Before the opening bell, eight of the top 10 decliners on the Standard & Poor's 500 index were health care companies.

The need for a solution to the health care crises in the U.S. is intense. With about 151 million non-elderly people, employer-sponsored coverage is the largest part of the U.S. health insurance market.

Health care costs for companies routinely rise faster than inflation and eat up bigger portions of their budgets. Americans are mired in a confusing system that creates a mix of prices in the same market for the same procedure or drug and offers no easy path for finding the best deal.

Employers have hiked deductibles and other expenses for employees and their families to dissipate the costs, which have hit Americans hard.

Only 50 percent of companies with three to 49 employees offered coverage last year, according to the nonprofit Kaiser Family Foundation. That's down from 66 percent more than a decade ago. The federal Affordable Care Act requires all companies with 50 or more full-time employees to offer it.

Amazon, Berkshire and JP Morgan say they can bring their scale and "complementary expertise" to what they describe as a long-term campaign.

Amazon's entry into the health market has been perceived as imminent, even though the company had announced nothing publicly.

It has been watched very closely on Wall Street, which has seen Amazon disrupt numerous industries ranging from book stores to clothing chains.

Amazon, which mostly sold books when it was founded more than 20 years ago, has radically altered the

way in which people buy diapers, toys or paper towels. Most recently it has upended the grocery sector, spending \$14 billion last year for Whole Foods Market Inc.

AP writer Joseph Pisani contributed to this report from New York. Murphy reported from Indianapolis.

Putin: US took 'hostile step' in publishing Russia list

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday the Trump administration made a "hostile step" when it published a list of Russian businessmen and politicians as part of a sanctions law against Moscow.

The long-awaited U.S. publication appears to be mainly a list of people in Russian government, along with 96 "oligarchs" from a Forbes magazine ranking of Russian billionaires.

The list, ordered by Congress in response to Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential campaign, had induced fear among rich Russians that it could lead to U.S. sanctions or being informally blacklisted in the global financial system.

But the U.S. surprised observers by announcing that it had decided not to punish anybody under the new sanctions, at least for now. Some U.S. lawmakers accused President Donald Trump of giving Russia a free pass, fueling further questions about whether the president is unwilling to confront Moscow.

Putin on Tuesday referred to the list as a "hostile step" — but said Moscow does not want to make the situation even worse.

"We were waiting for this list to come out, and I'm not going to hide it: we were going to take steps in response, and, mind you, serious steps, that could push our relations to the nadir. But we're going to refrain from taking these steps for now," Putin said.

The Russian president said he does not expect the publication to have any impact but expressed dismay at the scope of the officials and business people listed.

"Ordinary Russian citizens, employees and entire industries are behind each of those people and companies, so all 146 million people have essentially been put on this list," Putin said at a campaign event in Moscow. "What is the point of this? I don't understand."

Russia hawks in Congress had pushed the administration to include certain names, while Russian businessmen hired lobbyists to keep them off.

In the end, the list of 114 Russian politicians released just before a Monday evening deadline included the whole of Putin's administration, as listed by the Kremlin on its website, plus the Russian cabinet, all top law enforcement officials and chief executives of the main state-controlled companies.

President Putin even joked on Tuesday that he felt "slighted" that his name wasn't there.

A companion list of 96 "oligarchs" is a carbon copy of the Forbes magazine's Russian billionaires' rankings, only arranged alphabetically. It makes no distinction between those who are tied to the Kremlin and those who are not. Some of the people on the list have long fallen out with the Kremlin or are widely considered to have built their fortunes independently of the Russian government.

Officials said more names, including those of less senior politicians and businesspeople worth less than \$1 billion, are on a classified version of the list being provided to Congress. Drawing on U.S. intelligence, the Treasury Department also finalized a list of at least partially state-owned companies in Russia, but that list, too, was classified and sent only to Congress.

The idea of the seven-page unclassified document, as envisioned by Congress, was to name-and-shame those believed to be benefiting from Putin's tenure, as the United States works to isolate his government diplomatically and economically.

Every top Russian official except for Putin is on the list of 114 senior political figures. Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev is on it, along with all ministers from the Russian government, all 42 of Putin's aides, and top law enforcement officials. The CEOs of all major state-owned companies, including energy giant

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Rosneft and Sberbank, are also on the list.

The oligarchs list includes tycoons Roman Abramovich and Mikhail Prokhorov, who challenged Putin in the 2012 election. Aluminum magnate Oleg Deripaska, a figure in the Russia investigation over his ties to former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, is included.

Less obvious names on the list include Sergei Galitsky, founder of retail chain Magnit, and Arkady Volozh, founder and CEO of the search engine Yandex, and bankers Oleg Tinkov and Ruben Vardanyan. They have been lauded as self-made men who built their successful businesses without any government support.

Some billionaires on the list have fallen out with the Kremlin entirely, like the Ananyev brothers, who fled the country last year and vowed to sue the Russian government after their bank was declared bankrupt.

The list shows that the United States views the entire Russian government as enemies, Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov — himself on the list — told reporters on Tuesday.

Although he said Russia should not "give in to emotions" before studying the list and its implications carefully, Peskov pointed out the name of the law: "On countering America's adversaries through sanctions."

"De facto everyone has been called an adversary of the United States," he said.

In a Facebook post Tuesday, Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the foreign affairs committee for the Federation Council, the upper chamber of Russian parliament, said U.S. intelligence failed to find compromising material on Russian politicians and "ended up copying the Kremlin phone book."

Kosachev criticized the U.S. government for harming Russia-U.S. relations, saying that "the consequences will be toxic and undermine prospects for cooperation for years ahead. He added that the list displays "political paranoia" of the U.S. establishment.

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who came to prominence thanks to his investigations into official corruption, tweeted Tuesday that he was "glad that these (people) have been officially recognized on the international level as crooks and thieves." Navalny in his investigations has exposed what he described as close ties between government officials and some of the billionaires on the list.

The list's release was likely to at least partially defuse the disappointment from some U.S. lawmakers that Trump's administration opted against targeting anyone with new Russia sanctions that took effect Monday.

Under the same law that authorized the "Putin list," the government was required to slap sanctions on anyone doing "significant" business with people linked to Russia's defense and intelligence agencies, using a blacklist the U.S. released in October. But the administration decided it didn't need to penalize anyone, even though several countries have had multibillion-dollar arms deals with Russia in the works.

State Department officials said the threat of sanctions had been deterrent enough, and that "sanctions on specific entities or individuals will not need to be imposed."

Companies or foreign governments that had been doing business with blacklisted Russian entities had been given a three-month grace period to extricate themselves from transactions, starting in October when the blacklist was published and ending Monday. But only those engaged in "significant transactions" are to be punished, and the U.S. has never defined that term or given a dollar figure. That ambiguity has made it impossible for the public to know exactly what is and isn't permissible.

New York Rep. Eliot Engel, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, lambasted the move to punish no one, saying he was "fed up" and that Trump's administration had chosen to "let Russia off the hook yet again." He dismissed the State Department's claim that "the mere threat of sanctions" would stop Moscow from further meddling in America's elections.

"How do you deter an attack that happened two years ago, and another that's already underway?" Engel said. "It just doesn't make sense."

Lederman reported from Washington, D.C.; Jill Colvin in Washington, D.C., contributed to this report.

Republicans vote to release classified memo on Russia probe

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, CHAD DAY and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Brushing aside opposition from the Justice Department, Republicans on the House intelligence committee voted to release a classified memo that purports to show improper use of surveillance by the FBI and the Justice Department in the Russia investigation.

The four-page memo has become a political flashpoint, with President Donald Trump and many Republicans pushing for its release and suggesting that some in the Justice Department and FBI have conspired against the president.

The memo was written by Republicans on the committee, led by chairman Rep. Devin Nunes of California, a close Trump ally who has become a fierce critic of the FBI and the Justice Department. Special counsel Robert Mueller is investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election and whether Trump's campaign was involved.

Republicans have said the memo reveals grave concerns about abuses of the government surveillance powers in the Russia investigation. Democrats have called it a selectively edited group of GOP talking points that attempt to distract from the committee's own investigation into Russian meddling.

The vote Monday to release the memo is an unprecedented move by the committee, which typically goes out of its way to protect classified information in the interest of protecting intelligence sources and methods. The memo was delivered by courier to the White House on Monday evening. Trump now has five days to object to its release by the committee.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told "Fox and Friends" that the memo will be reviewed Tuesday. The White House said late Monday that Trump would meet with his national security team and White House counsel to discuss the memo in the coming days.

Republicans said they are confident the release won't harm national security. They also said they would not release the underlying intelligence that informed the memo.

"You'll see for yourself that it's not necessary," said Texas Rep. Mike Conaway of Texas, who's leading the House's Russia investigation.

But Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the ranking Democrat on the committee, said the panel had "crossed a deeply regrettable line."

"Today this committee voted to put the president's personal interests, perhaps their own political interest, above the national interest," he said, noting that the memo's release could compromise intelligence sources and methods.

While Trump's White House signaled he would likely support the Republican memo's release, his Justice Department has voiced concerns.

In a letter to Nunes last week, Justice officials said releasing the classified memo could be "extraordinarily reckless" and asked to review it. Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd suggested that releasing classified information could damage the United States' relationship with other countries with which it shares intelligence.

After those complaints, FBI Director Christopher Wray reviewed the memo over the weekend.

Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., who was with Wray when he reviewed the memo, said the FBI director did not raise any national security concerns with him. Gowdy said the memo doesn't reveal any intelligence methods but it does reveal "one source."

But Schiff said Wray told him Monday that the review didn't satisfy his concerns about the memo's release. Wray wanted to brief the committee about FBI and Justice Department concerns ahead of any release, a request committee Republicans blocked, Schiff said.

The FBI did not respond to a request for comment Monday evening.

Privately, Trump has been fuming over the Justice Department's opposition to releasing the memo, according to an administration official not authorized to discuss private conversations and speaking on condition of anonymity.

At the behest of Trump, White House chief of staff John Kelly and other White House officials contacted

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Justice Department officials in the past week to convey the president's displeasure with the department's leadership on the issue specifically, the official said. In a series of calls, Kelly urged the Justice officials to do more within the bounds of the law to get the memo out, the official said.

It is still unclear exactly when or how the memo will be released.

Conaway said the memo could be released within the five-day window if Trump signals his approval for releasing it. But committee rules don't address how that approval must be given — or what happens if it comes in the form of a tweet.

Some Republican senators have said they don't want to release the memo, and Democrats have pushed back on Republican criticism of the FBI, saying it is an attempt to discredit Mueller's investigation. The probe has already resulted in charges against four of Trump's former campaign advisers and has recently moved closer to Trump's inner circle.

"They will trample on anything to protect the White House at this point in time," said Rep. Mike Quigley, D-Ill., of the Republican move to release the memo.

Late Monday, House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi blamed House Speaker Paul Ryan, who oversees the intelligence panel and has deferred to Nunes, whom she called a "stooge." She said on CNN that Ryan is allowing the release of a "false memo based on a false premise."

In response, Democrats on the panel have put together their own memo. On Monday, the committee voted to make the Democratic memo available to all House members — but not the public. Conaway said he was open to making it public after House members have a chance to review it.

The fate of the Nunes memo is only the latest flashpoint in the contentious relationship between Trump and the Justice Department.

Trump has frequently raged at Attorney General Jeff Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia probe, a move the president believes was disloyal and led to the appointment of Mueller.

Separately Monday, Schiff and Conaway said former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon will appear for a closed-door interview Wednesday.

Bannon was interviewed by the committee earlier this month but refused to answer questions about his time in the Trump administration at the direction of the White House counsel's office. Bannon served on Trump's campaign and was the chief strategist in the White House until he left in August.

Bannon's refusal drew a subpoena from Nunes seeking to compel him to answer the committee's questions.

On Monday, Conaway said, "I expect our subpoena will be complied with."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Child experts: Just say 'no' to Facebook's kids app

By **MATT O'BRIEN** and **BARBARA ORTUTAY**, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Child development experts and advocates are urging Facebook to pull the plug on its new messaging app aimed at kids.

A group letter sent Tuesday to CEO Mark Zuckerberg argues that younger children — the app is intended for those under 13 — aren't ready to have social media accounts, navigate the complexities of online relationships or protect their own privacy.

Facebook launched the free Messenger Kids app in December, pitching it as a way for children to chat with family members and parent-approved friends. It doesn't give kids separate Facebook or Messenger accounts. Rather, the app works as an extension of a parent's account, and parents get controls such as the ability to decide who their kids can chat with.

The social media giant has said it fills "a need for a messaging app that lets kids connect with people they love but also has the level of control parents want."

"TARGETING YOUNGER CHILDREN"

But a group of 100 experts, advocates and parenting organizations is contesting those claims. Led by

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the Boston-based Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, the group includes psychiatrists, pediatricians, educators and the children's music singer Raffi Cavoukian.

"Messenger Kids is not responding to a need - it is creating one," the letter states. "It appeals primarily to children who otherwise would not have their own social media accounts." Another passage criticized Facebook for "targeting younger children with a new product."

In a statement, Facebook said on Monday that the app "helps parents and children to chat in a safer way," and emphasized that parents are "always in control" of their kids' activity. The social media giant added that it consulted with parenting experts and families, and said "there is no advertising in Messenger Kids."

KIDS AND FACEBOOK

A variety of experts and technology insiders have begun questioning the effects smartphones and social media apps are having on people's health and mental well-being — whether kids, teens or adults. Sean Parker, Facebook's first president, said late last year that the social media platform exploits "vulnerability in human psychology" to addict users. A chorus of other early employees and investors piled on with similar criticisms.

Many preteens have already found their way onto Facebook and more youth-oriented social media platforms such as Snapchat and Facebook's own Instagram, despite internal rules that require users to be at least 13 years old. Those rules are based in part on federal law, which prohibits internet companies from collecting personal information on children without their parents' permission and imposes restrictions on advertising to them.

Some companies have offered parental controls as a way of curbing unauthorized preteen use of their platforms. But Facebook's new kid-focused app, which features animations and emojis, seems to cater to a younger audience, said Josh Golin, executive director of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood.

"It looks like something that would appeal to a 6-year-old or 7-year-old," he said.

UNCERTAIN IMPACT

Facebook wouldn't answer questions about said how popular the messaging app has been. But App Annie, an app analytics firm, said Messenger Kids has been downloaded about 80,000 times on iOS since it launched on Dec. 4. It's been in the top 40 most popular kids' apps since then. That sounds like a lukewarm reception at best.

University of Michigan developmental behavioral pediatrician Jenny Radesky, who co-signed the letter, said she's never met a parent who was clamoring to get their children onto social media at an earlier age.

"One can only assume that Facebook introduced it to engage users younger and younger," Radesky said.

That's troubling, she said, because younger children haven't yet developed the cognitive skills that enable them to think about and regulate their thoughts and actions and "allow them to realize when persuasive technology design might be manipulating them."

At the time it launched Messenger Kids, Facebook said it won't show ads or collect data for marketing to kids. And it stressed that it won't automatically move users to the regular Messenger or Facebook when they get old enough — though it might give them the option to move contacts to Messenger down the line.

Trump to herald economic progress in State of the Union

By JULIE PACE, AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump will herald a robust economy and push for bipartisan congressional action on immigration in Tuesday's State of the Union address, as he seeks to rally a deeply divided nation and boost his own sagging standing with Americans.

The speech marks the ceremonial kickoff of Trump's second year in office and is traditionally a president's biggest platform to speak to the nation. However, Trump has redefined presidential communications with his high-octane, filter-free Twitter account and there's no guarantee that the carefully crafted speech will resonate beyond his next tweet.

Still, White House officials are hopeful the president can use the prime-time address to Congress and millions of Americans watching at home to take credit for a soaring economy. Though the trajectory of

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lower unemployment and higher growth began under his predecessor, Trump argues that the tax overhaul he signed into law late last year has boosted business confidence and will lead companies to reinvest in the United States.

Considering the strength of the economy, Trump will step before lawmakers Tuesday night in a remarkably weak position. His approval rating has hovered in the 30s for much of his presidency and at the close of 2017, just 3 in 10 Americans said the United States was heading in the right direction, according to a poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. In the same survey, 67 percent of Americans said the country was more divided because of Trump.

It's unlikely Trump will be able to rely on a robust legislative agenda to reverse those numbers in 2018. Congress has struggled with the basic function of funding the government, prompting a brief government shutdown earlier this month that was resolved only with a short-term fix that pushed the spending deadline to Feb. 8.

Against the backdrop of the spending fight, Republicans and Democrats are also wrestling with the future of some 700,000 young immigrants living in the United States illegally. Trump has vowed to protect the so-called Dreamers from deportation, but is also calling for changes to legal immigration that are controversial with both parties.

"We're going to get something done, we hope bipartisan," Trump told reporters Monday, before giving his speech a practice run-through in the White House map room. "The Republicans really don't have the votes to get it done in any other way. So it has to be bipartisan."

Though Democrats are eager to reach a resolution for the young immigrants, the party is hardly in the mood to compromise with Trump ahead of the midterm elections. Lawmakers see Trump's unpopularity as a key to their success in November, and are eager to mobilize Democratic voters itching to deliver the president and his party a defeat at the ballot box.

Seeking to set the tone for their election-year strategy, party leaders have tapped Massachusetts Rep. Joe Kennedy, the grandson of Robert F. Kennedy, to deliver a post-speech rebuttal aimed at casting Democrats, not Trump, as champions of the middle class.

Democrats are also looking to make their mark in other ways. A handful of lawmakers are planning to boycott the president's remarks. And several Democratic women plan to wear black to protest sexual harassment, an issue that has tarnished several lawmakers in both parties. Trump himself has been accused of assault or harassment by more than a dozen women, accusations he has denied. The Wall Street Journal reported this month that the president's lawyer arranged a payment to a porn star, Stormy Daniels, to prevent her from talking about her alleged encounter with the future president.

First lady Melania Trump, who has largely stayed out of the spotlight following those allegations, will attend Tuesday's address, according to the White House. She'll be joined in the audience by several guests whose stories amplify the president's agenda, including an Ohio welder who the White House says will benefit from the new tax law and the parents of two Long Island teenagers who were believed to have been killed by MS-13 gang members.

Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

Venezuelans 'loot to eat' amid economic tailspin

By **SCOTT SMITH** and **FABIOLA SANCHEZ**, Associated Press

PUERTO CABELLO, Venezuela (AP) — The cab of Carlos Del Pino's big rig gave him a nerve-rattling front-row seat to a surge in mob attacks on Venezuela's neighborhood markets, cattle ranches and food delivery trucks like his.

Shortly after pulling away from the docks at Puerto Cabello, the country's biggest port, he witnessed 20 people swarm a truck ahead of him and in a frenzy fill up their sacks with the corn it was carrying to a food-processing plant. The driver was held at gunpoint.

"It fills you with terror," Del Pino said.

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He has hauled cargo for 14 years, and on a good month earns the equivalent of about \$100, enough to support his wife and two daughters. Yet, despite his fears, he sympathizes with his impoverished countrymen, who are becoming desperate amid Venezuela's widespread food shortages and sky-high inflation.

"They have to loot to eat," he said.

Sporadic looting, food riots and protests driven by the hungry poor have surged in Venezuela, a country that's no stranger to unrest. But the uprisings playing out recently have a different face than the mostly middle-class protesters who took to the streets for months last year in political demonstrations trying to oust President Nicolas Maduro.

"These protests are coming from people of the lower classes who simply cannot get enough to eat," said David Smilde, a senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America, who has spent decades researching Venezuela. "They want relief, not necessarily to force Maduro from power."

Venezuela holds the world's largest oil reserves and was once among Latin America's wealthiest nations. But after nearly two decades of socialist rule and mismanagement of the state-run oil company, it is being battered by the worst economic crisis in its history.

The surge in violent food protests began in poor neighborhoods across the country around Christmas, when Maduro had promised that holiday hams were coming in government food baskets distributed to his supporters.

But many didn't arrive, sparking protests with small groups burning garbage in the street and looting. Opposition pundits called it the "pork revolution." Trying to bring calm, Maduro ordered hundreds of supermarkets to slash prices to the previous month's level — a tall order in a country where prices have been doubling every few weeks.

Repeating a common refrain, the government blamed the absence of hams on sabotage by its foreign critics, in this case Portugal, which it said was taking orders from the U.S.

"Why didn't the ham arrive? Because of the blockade against us," socialist party leader Diosdado Cabello said on state TV, blaming the "gringos" but providing no evidence.

The unrest has cooled some, but many Venezuelans fear it will be a temporary lull as the economy spins further out of control. The International Monetary Fund estimates inflation will reach five digits this year, while the economy, in its fifth straight year of recession, will shrink 15 percent.

Barely solvent businesses say they are reluctant to import more goods, fearing another government-ordered fire sale. As the currency crashes on the flourishing black market, the monthly minimum wage is now worth the equivalent of just \$3.

Financial sanctions imposed in August by the Trump administration are only adding to Venezuelans' misery, choking off the country's access to credit and scaring away oil companies.

Meanwhile, hunger is widespread.

Recently a dozen men stormed a street-side deli in the western city of Barquisimeto. Surveillance cameras captured them leaping over the glass counter as customers and employees scrambled out of the way. They wiped the store clean in minutes.

Cattle ranchers say at least two farms have been raided by people who slaughtered cows. A video on Twitter shows a dozen men in the state of Merida killing a cow with rocks and a machete, one shouting: "We are hungry."

In the first half of January, there were at least 110 incidents of looting, more than five times than in the same period a year earlier, says the Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict, a non-governmental group that tracks unrest.

Food and the cash to pay for it are more difficult to find, especially outside the capital of Caracas. And even when people have money, prices are often beyond their reach, with the inflation rate soaring above 2,600 percent in 2017, the opposition-controlled National Assembly says.

Looting is part of a wider trend in hunger-related crimes, said Roberto Briceno Leon, director of the Caracas-based Venezuelan Observatory for Violence.

Street gangs are luring poor children as young as age 9 with food, he said. Standing in as a lookout

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during a burglary used to earn a recruit Nike shoes or Wrangler jeans. Now, they get a McDonald's hamburger, he said.

Briceno Leon adds that some hungry people unable to buy groceries steal food by eating it inside stores. Men riding motorbikes increasingly yank bags of food away from customers who have stood in line for hours, spending what little money they had.

"It's not just that you do not have money," he said. "There's little money to shop with and few products."

Truckers hauling food — from rice to live chickens — have become targets while stopped in traffic or making a pit stop.

When the mob recently waylaid the truck in front of him, Del Pino rolled up his cab windows and locked the doors in fear the hungry mob would turn on him next.

He pulled his semi out of the line, dodging an attack.

"Here the problem is just that — hunger. Hunger is killing people," Del Pino said.

Associated Press writer Scott Smith reported this story in Puerto Cabello and AP writer Fabiola Sanchez reported in Villa de Cura, Venezuela.

Scott Smith on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ScottSmithAP> .

Fabiola Sanchez on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fisanchezn> .

Nigeria's first bobsled team running for pride and legacy

By ERRIN HAINES WHACK, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Seun Adigun told herself her athletic career was done after she ran her last race at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. But for some reason, she couldn't bring herself to tell the world.

Three years later, she realized: Adigun wasn't retiring — she was readying for a new sport. And her years competing as a 100-meter hurdler were great preparation what would come next.

"It was the speed and the power and the strength that I needed to be able to be a successful bobsled athlete," she said.

Adigun, 31, soon convinced fellow former runners Ngozi Onwumere and Akuoma Omeoga to join the team as brakemen. But they wouldn't just be newcomers to the sport.

Next month, the trio will represent Nigeria as the country fields its first-ever bobsled team at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. The team is also a first, men's or women's, for the entire continent of Africa.

Yes, they get the comparisons to "Cool Runnings" — the 1993 film based on the true story of the Jamaica's first bobsled team, which was male, who competed in the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary, Canada — and say it's a legacy they embrace and a following they hope to emulate.

But the peppy pioneers, all American-born and whose parents emigrated from Nigeria, said they also look forward to representing a positive story about their motherland.

"Nigerians are so excited to see the country being represented," said Adigun, a Chicago native who is also a three-time national track champion for Nigeria. "I realized exactly what was a void from the country of Nigeria, from the continent of Africa, and for women in general being represented."

Onwumere, 26, agreed, adding: "To be the first to do anything is, I think, it's just something that you can't really explain."

Their story will likely take on added meaning next month, after President Donald Trump's recent remarks about Africa's "shithole countries."

Their journey to South Korea has also been a fast one. Three years ago, the team was little more than an idea, a "crazy but amazing journey," said Adigun, the driver in role and personality who also helped recruit and coach Onwumere, who hails from Dallas, at their alma mater, the University of Houston.

Once her teammates were on board, official Olympic rules required them to operate under a national governing body. None existed.

The Bobsled and Skeleton Federation of Nigeria was formed. A GoFund Me campaign was created in

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2016, and the team raised more than \$75,000 in 14 months to pay for necessities like helmets, uniforms, travel and their first sled — a wooden vessel affectionately named “The Maeflower.” They began practicing in Houston, without snow.

The team’s popularity soon attracted Visa and Under Armour as sponsors. To qualify for the Winter Games, the women had to complete five races. They met their goal in November.

Along the way, their energy and enthusiasm has attracted attention in the U.S. and Nigeria. In December, they appeared on “The Ellen Show,” and last week, tennis icon Serena Williams retweeted their Under Armour Olympics ad.

The team said they’re excited to walk into the stadium in Pyeongchang next month and have been working hard to be competitive as rookies among a pool of talented and experienced bobsledders. Their main goal is to be an example for their country and for women in the sport.

A medal is almost too much to think of, said Omeoga, 26, who ran track at the University of Minnesota. “That actually has never even crossed my mind yet,” she said. “I’m just taking things one day at a time: Don’t get too ahead of yourself, don’t get too behind yourself, don’t sell yourself short on anything.”

Bobsled and Skeleton Federation of Nigeria: <https://bsfnigeria.com/>

Errin Haines Whack is The Associated Press’ national writer on race and ethnicity. Follow her work on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/emarvelous>

Pentagon restricts release of Afghanistan war data

By **ROBERT BURNS**, AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon has ordered an independent federal auditor to stop providing the public with key information about U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan, accelerating a clampdown on data, such as the size of the Afghan military and police forces, that indicate how the 16-year-old stalemated war is going.

The crackdown on information comes just months after President Donald Trump announced a new Afghanistan strategy aimed at breaking a battlefield stalemate by accelerating Afghan-led operations against the Taliban and other insurgent groups in the country. Trump on Monday railed against the recent string of attacks in Afghanistan, and ruled out any U.S. discussions with the Taliban as part of the effort to seek peace talks between the Afghan government and the insurgents.

The auditing agency, established by Congress and known as the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, revealed the new gag order in its latest three-month assessment of conditions in Afghanistan. The restrictions fly in the face of Pentagon assertions over the past year that it was striving to be more transparent about the U.S. war campaigns across Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

Over the years, the SIGAR auditing effort has revealed many dubious practices by the U.S., including instances of contractor fraud. Since January 2016 it had published data on the number of governing districts controlled by Kabul, the number controlled by the Taliban, and the number that are contested.

John F. Sopko, head of the auditing organization, expressed disappointment that the Pentagon had forbidden release of the data on relative control of the governing districts.

“This development is troubling for a number of reasons, not least of which is that this is the first time SIGAR has been specifically instructed not to release information marked ‘unclassified’ to the American taxpayer,” Sopko wrote.

“Aside from that, the number of districts controlled or influenced by the Afghan government had been one of the last remaining publicly available indicators for members of Congress — many of whose staff do not have access to the classified annexes to SIGAR reports—and for the American public of how the 16-year-long U.S. effort to secure Afghanistan is faring,” he added.

In response, the Pentagon said the U.S.-led coalition of NATO and allied nations in Afghanistan made the decision to restrict the public release of the information.

The Defense Department told SIGAR this month that it doesn’t “have the authority to overrule the clas-

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sification determination made by NATO Resolute Support," said Lt. Col. Michael Andrews. He said that similar information was included in the department's December 2017 semi-annual report to Congress, and the Pentagon encouraged SIGAR to use that data.

The Defense Department report said the Afghan government has control or influence over 60 percent of the population, while insurgents had control or influence over approximately 10 percent of the population, with the remainder contested.

In November, Gen. John Nicholson described the Afghan government control during remarks to reporters at the Pentagon. He said it remained "roughly the same" as in 2016. "About 64 percent of the population is controlled by the government, about 24 percent live in contested areas, and the Taliban control the remaining 12 percent," he said. He did not reveal the number of districts held by each side.

Sopko wrote that historically, the number of districts controlled or influenced by the government has been falling since his office began reporting on it, while the number controlled or influenced by the insurgents has been rising — "a fact that should cause even more concern about its disappearance from public disclosure and discussion."

The war effort has sometimes faded from U.S. public attention, even though the U.S. has invested about \$120 billion in reconstructing Afghanistan since 2002.

Sopko said in his report that the Pentagon also classified or otherwise restricted information that his organization had previously reported publicly, including such "fundamental metrics" of the Afghan military and police performance as Afghan casualty figures and most measurements of the battlefield capabilities of the Afghans military.

Super Bowl ads aim for the heart - and sometimes lower

By MAE ANDERSON, The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — After a year of political and cultural upheaval, Super Bowl advertisers appear to be pulling back from themes of unity in favor of in-game stunts and ads that aim for the heart — and in some cases even lower.

The stakes are high since a 30-second spot costs more than \$5 million for airtime alone. The goal is to capture the attention of the more than 110 million viewers expected to tune in to the big game on Feb. 4 — ideally by striking an emotional chord with the game audience that will rub off on brands.

Next best: Simply drawing attention, even if an ad offends some people. Worst of all? Being forgotten immediately.

"More people will see me in this than they have in the last three movies I've made," actor and comedian Bill Hader ("Trainwreck") muses in a teaser for Pringles' first Super Bowl spot.

MEASURING THE MOOD

Each year, Super Bowl ads offer a snapshot of the national psyche. Last year, just after President Donald Trump took office, ads offered themes of inclusion. Airbnb showed faces of different ethnicities with the copy "We all belong," and Coke re-ran an ad featuring "America the Beautiful" sung in different languages.

This year, following a year of heated debate over immigration, NFL players taking a knee during the national anthem and the #MeToo movement highlighting sexual misconduct, many Super Bowl advertisers are playing it safer by showcasing famous faces, focusing on inoffensive causes and trying to stand out with silly humor and stunts. Of course, a few are going straight for whatever will grab attention.

GOING LOW

Most people remember the 2004 Super Bowl for the infamous "wardrobe malfunction" when Justin Timberlake ripped off part of Janet Jackson's shirt during the halftime performance. But it also featured an unusually large number of tasteless ads, including crotch and fart jokes by Sierra Mist, Budweiser and Bud Light and the now-famous Cialis ad that warned about erections lasting longer than four hours.

Advertisers largely dialed it back afterward, excepting a 2009 Doritos ad that included a snowglobe-in-the-crotch joke. But this year, Justin Timberlake returns to the Super Bowl ... and so does sock-it-to-the-lower-body humor.

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Groupon's ad, for instance, stars Tiffany Haddish asking people to support local businesses — then cuts to a wealthy man who plots to crush small businesses, only to double over after players nail him with a kicked football.

Groupon insists the man isn't hit in the groin, although the ad video is ambiguous. "The crotch hit is the lowest thing in the book," Advertising Age columnist Barbara Lippert said in a phone interview. "I was hoping it was retired forever."

The Groupon ad is also notable for its distinctly anti-1 percenter tone. "We think the vast majority of consumers will appreciate the over-the-top comeuppance our 'villain' receives," said Jon Wild, Groupon's head of marketing for North America.

An ad for Febreze air freshener goes all in for toilet humor. It presents a pseudo-documentary about a boy whose "bleep doesn't stink," alluding to a profane phrase that commonly refers to people who are full of ... themselves.

THE RICH AND FAMOUS

It wouldn't be a Super Bowl without celebrities chugging sugary drinks and hawking junk food. Cindy Crawford will reprise an iconic 1992 Super Bowl spot for Pepsi. The beverage maker will also feature Peter Dinklage and Morgan Freeman in linked ads for new versions of Doritos and Mountain Dew.

In a Pringles ad, Bill Hader has a snack on set and introduces a made-up practice dubbed "flavor stacking," in which the actor stacks together different Pringles varieties. M&Ms has released a teaser showing Danny DeVito dressed as an M&M being dunked in chocolate.

For a non-snacking celebrity appearance, Squarespace hired a bearded Keanu Reeves and sat him by a campfire to tout its web hosting services.

AIMING FOR THE HEART

Other advertisers are aiming straight for warm and fuzzy, figuring it's best to bet on "things that are universally liked," said Kelly O'Keefe, managing director of Virginia Commonwealth University's Brandcenter.

NBC created five cinematic 60-second ads showcasing Olympic athletes to drum up excitement for the Winter Olympics, which start airing starting four days after the Super Bowl. The ads showcase Americans athletes such as skier Lindsey Vonn and figure skater Nathan Chen.

An Anheuser-Busch ad shows a Budweiser brewery producing cans of water instead of beer, highlighting the brewer's donation of drinking water to places in need. Its Stella Artois brand also teamed with Matt Damon to sell a limited edition beer glass, with proceeds also targeted at providing access to water.

Lexus is promoting its new LS 500 luxury sedan, which it is aiming at a 45-to-55-year-old demographic, with an action spot starring the Black Panther, a Marvel superhero.

STUNT MARKETING

Recent Super Bowl ad stunts have yielded mixed results. Snickers isn't returning to the game this year after a live spot last year fell flat. But marketers aren't giving up.

Tide, which last year did a fake-out ad with Terry Bradshaw that appeared to be commentary during the game, will be back with Bradshaw this year.

House intel committee votes to release classified memo

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK, CHAD DAY and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Brushing aside opposition from the Justice Department, Republicans on the House intelligence committee voted Monday to release a classified memo that purports to show improper use of surveillance by the FBI and the Justice Department in the Russia investigation.

The four-page memo has become a political flashpoint, with President Donald Trump and many Republicans pushing for its release and suggesting that some in the Justice Department and FBI have conspired against the president.

The memo was written by Republicans on the committee, led by chairman Rep. Devin Nunes of California, a close Trump ally who has become a fierce critic of the FBI and the Justice Department. Special counsel Robert Mueller is investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election and whether Trump's campaign was

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involved.

Republicans have said the memo reveals grave concerns about abuses of the government surveillance powers in the Russia investigation. Democrats have called it a selectively edited group of GOP talking points that attempt to distract from the committee's own investigation into Russian meddling.

The vote to release the memo is an unprecedented move by the committee, which typically goes out of its way to protect classified information in the interest of protecting intelligence sources and methods. The memo was delivered by courier to the White House on Monday evening. Trump now has five days to object to its release by the committee.

The White House said late Monday that the president will meet with his national security team and White House counsel to discuss the memo in the coming days.

Republicans said they are confident that the release won't harm national security. They also said they would not release the underlying intelligence that informed the memo.

"You'll see for yourself that it's not necessary," said Texas Rep. Mike Conaway of Texas, who's leading the House's Russia investigation.

But Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the ranking Democrat on the committee, said the panel had "crossed a deeply regrettable line."

"Today this committee voted to put the president's personal interests, perhaps their own political interest, above the national interest," he said, noting that the memo's release could compromise intelligence sources and methods.

While Trump's White House signaled he would likely support the Republican memo's release, his Justice Department has voiced concerns.

In a letter to Nunes last week, Justice officials said releasing the classified memo could be "extraordinarily reckless" and asked to review it. Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd suggested that releasing classified information could damage the United States' relationship with other countries with which it shares intelligence.

After those complaints, FBI Director Christopher Wray reviewed the memo over the weekend.

Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., who was with Wray when he reviewed the memo, said the FBI director did not raise any national security concerns with him. Gowdy said the memo doesn't reveal any intelligence methods but it does reveal "one source."

But Schiff said that Wray told him Monday that the review didn't satisfy his concerns about the release of the memo. Wray wanted to brief the committee about FBI and Justice Department concerns ahead of any release, a request committee Republicans blocked, Schiff said.

The FBI did not respond to a request for comment Monday evening.

Privately, Trump has been fuming over the Justice Department's opposition to releasing the memo, according to an administration official not authorized to discuss private conversations and speaking on condition of anonymity.

At the behest of Trump, White House chief of staff John Kelly and other White House officials contacted Justice Department officials in the past week to convey the president's displeasure with the department's leadership on the issue specifically, the official said. In a series of calls, Kelly urged the Justice officials to do more within the bounds of the law to get the memo out, the official said.

It is still unclear how exactly when or how the memo will be released.

Conaway said the memo could be released within the five-day window if Trump signals his approval for releasing it. But committee rules don't address how that approval must be given — or what happens if it comes in the form of a tweet.

Some Republican senators have said they don't want to release the memo, and Democrats have pushed back on Republican criticism of the FBI, saying it is an attempt to discredit Mueller's investigation. The probe has already resulted in charges against four of Trump's former campaign advisers and has recently moved closer to Trump's inner circle.

"They will trample on anything to protect the White House at this point in time," said Rep. Mike Quigley,

D-Ill., of the Republican move to release the memo.

Late Monday, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi blamed House Speaker Paul Ryan, who oversees the intelligence panel and has deferred to Nunes, whom she called a "stooge." She said on CNN that Ryan is allowing the release of a "false memo based on a false premise."

In response, Democrats on the panel have put together their own memo. On Monday, the committee voted to make the Democratic memo available to all House members — but not the public. Conaway said he was open to making it public after House members have a chance to review it.

The fate of the Nunes memo is only the latest flashpoint in the contentious relationship between Trump and the Justice Department.

Trump has frequently raged at Attorney General Jeff Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia probe, a move the president believes was disloyal and led to the appointment of Mueller.

Separately Monday, Schiff and Conaway said former White House chief strategist, Steve Bannon, will appear for a closed-door interview Wednesday.

Bannon was interviewed by the committee earlier this month but refused to answer questions about his time in the Trump administration at the direction of the White House counsel's office. Bannon served on Trump's campaign and was the chief strategist in the White House until he left in August.

Bannon's refusal drew a subpoena from Nunes seeking to compel him to answer the committee's questions.

On Monday, Conaway said, "I expect our subpoena will be complied with."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

FBI's McCabe, a frequent Trump target, abruptly leaves post

By ERIC TUCKER and SADIE GURMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, a target of frequent and aggressive criticism by President Donald Trump, abruptly stepped down from his position Monday ahead of his planned retirement this spring.

A 22-year veteran of the FBI, McCabe has been publicly and repeatedly lambasted over the past year by Trump, who has accused him of bias because of his wife's political connections and an FBI investigation that produced no criminal charges against Hillary Clinton.

McCabe, who has held a number of FBI leadership roles and been heavily involved in investigations into major crimes including the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, becomes eligible for retirement in a matter of weeks. FBI staff learned Monday that McCabe was leaving the bureau's No. 2 post effective immediately, according to people who spoke only on condition of anonymity to discuss an internal personnel move. He is expected to retire with full pension benefits.

The departure comes as FBI Director Christopher Wray makes changes to his senior leadership team, replacing two other top aides last week. Such changes are not unusual when a new director takes charge, but they are notable amid Trump's public pressure on Wray to get rid of officials who were confidants of James Comey, whom he fired as FBI director last May.

In a message Monday to FBI employees, Wray said McCabe would be retiring on March 18 and denied that the move stemmed from political pressure.

"I will not be swayed by political or other pressure in my decision-making," Wray wrote.

The exit comes amid multiple ongoing investigations, including a Justice Department watchdog probe into the actions of McCabe and other top FBI officials during the Clinton email probe. In addition, special counsel Robert Mueller is investigating whether the Trump campaign improperly coordinated with Russia during the 2016 presidential election and whether Trump sought to obstruct the inquiry by, among other actions, firing Comey.

McCabe has been repeatedly assailed by Trump since the fall of 2016, when it was revealed that his wife had accepted campaign contributions from the political action committee of then-Virginia Gov. Terry

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McAuliffe, a Democrat and close Clinton ally, during a failed state Senate run. That episode is among the decisions under review by the Justice Department's inspector general, which is expected to complete its report soon.

The FBI has said McCabe received the necessary ethics approval, and that at the time of the contributions, he was not in a supervisory role on the Clinton email investigation. But that has not stopped Trump and Republicans in Congress from repeatedly asserting that McCabe, and other FBI officials, are partisan law enforcement officials harboring a bias against him.

Responding to December news reports that McCabe would retire, the president wrote: "How can FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, the man in charge, along with leakin' James Comey, of the Phony Hillary Clinton investigation (including her 33,000 illegally deleted emails) be given \$700,000 for wife's campaign by Clinton Puppets during investigation?"

Another of the president's tweets from last year said: "Why didn't A.G. Sessions replace Acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe, a Comey friend who was in charge of Clinton investigation," referring to Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Monday evening, Republicans on the House Intelligence Committee voted to release a classified memo they wrote that alleges that the FBI and the Justice Department improperly used government surveillance during the Russia investigation.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters Monday that Trump was not part of the decision-making process but that he stood by his criticism of McCabe. Amid the tensions, Wray and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein traveled to the White House Monday to meet with chief of staff John Kelly, according to a senior White House official who was not authorized to discuss the meeting publicly and requested anonymity.

The FBI's No. 3 official, David Bowdich, has been named acting deputy director.

Though McCabe has pushed back against White House narratives that Comey was not well-liked within the bureau, and that an ongoing FBI investigation into Trump campaign ties to Russia was not a significant matter for the FBI, he has not publicly discussed in detail his interactions with Trump or shared any personal observations of the president.

That could change upon his departure from the FBI. Comey, for instance, after his firing authorized a close friend to share with reporters details of his own encounters with the president that he said troubled him. And former CIA Director John Brennan and James Clapper, the retired director of national intelligence, have been outspoken about their own views of Trump.

McCabe became deputy director in 2016 following earlier jobs running the FBI's Washington field office and serving as head of its national security branch. A Duke University-educated lawyer, he joined the FBI in 1996 and worked on organized crime in New York.

He took over as acting director following Trump's May 9 firing of Comey, and was among the officials interviewed for the position, which ultimately went to Wray, a former Justice Department official. The Washington Post reported last week that Trump asked McCabe whom he had voted for in the presidential election. Trump has said he does not recall asking that question.

McCabe's defenders call him a thoughtful, intelligent and committed career agent.

Comey tweeted that McCabe "stood tall over the last 8 months, when small people were trying to tear down an institution we all depend on."

Former Attorney General Eric Holder tweeted: "FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe is, and has been, a dedicated public servant who has served this country well. Bogus attacks on the FBI and DOJ to distract attention from a legitimate criminal inquiry does long term, unnecessary damage to these foundations of our government."

Two days after Comey's firing, McCabe appeared at a congressional hearing and contradicted a White House assertion that Comey had lost the support of FBI rank-and-file. He declared, "I can tell you that the majority, the vast majority of FBI employees, enjoyed a deep and positive connection to Director Comey."

In one of the more dramatic exchanges of the day, he was asked whether the Trump-Russia investigation was a small matter in relation to the other work the FBI is conducting.

"Sir," he told Sen. Angus King of Maine, "we consider it to be a highly significant investigation."

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Jill Colvin contributed to this report.

Brady doesn't want radio host fired for comments on daughter

BY KYLE HIGHTOWER, AP Sports Writer

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Tom Brady is not looking to have the radio host who called his daughter "an annoying little pissant" to lose his job.

The Patriots quarterback said early Monday he's reconsidering whether to continue a long-running weekly radio appearance with the station. Hours later at the Super Bowl media night, he was asked about the incident in which WEEI host Alex Reimer made the remarks about Brady's 5-year-old daughter after watching the first episode of a Brady documentary called "Tom vs. Time" that is airing on Facebook. Reimer's show aired Thursday, four days before Brady's weekly morning radio segment with different hosts.

"I didn't hear too much about it. I didn't get into it much," Brady said at the Xcel Center. "I certainly hope the guy is not fired.

"I just know everybody is real protective of their kids. I never stayed away from criticism. I understand that criticism is part of sports. But I certainly don't think that my children or anybody else's children deserve to be in that. And that's what I said."

Brady cut short an appearance on Monday morning and said, "I'll obviously evaluate whether I want to come on this show again.

"It's very disappointing when you hear that certainly with my daughter or any child. They certainly don't deserve that."

The station says Reimer has been suspended indefinitely.

The Patriots and the station recently announced an extension of their agreement, which involves weekly calls from Brady and coach Bill Belichick. The five-time Super Bowl champions will play for their sixth ring against the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday.

Brady expressed no regrets about doing the Facebook series.

"I thought it was fun. I thought it was a great opportunity," he said. "The fans like it. And that's really what we were looking for."

He said his son will be in an upcoming episode that features their summer trip to China.

Patriots safety Devin McCourty praised Brady defending his daughter.

"It's always easy to defend our families," McCourty noted. "I thought that was very disappointing to see anyone say anything negative toward his daughter, or anything about your family. Really poor taste.

"But I think as always Tom handled it in the right way with something like that. But I think with all of us that's one thing that we're gonna tolerate is anything toward our family."

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

Floods peak in Paris as France sees worst rains in 50 years

By NICOLAS GARRIGA and JEFFREY SCHAEFFER, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Floodwaters peaked in Paris on Monday and were threatening towns downstream as the rain-engorged Seine River winds through Normandy toward the English Channel.

Rivers swollen by France's heaviest rains in 50 years have engulfed romantic quays in Paris, swallowed up gardens and roads, halted riverboat cruises — and raised concerns about climate change.

The Meteo France weather service said January has seen nearly double normal rainfall nationwide, and the rains in the past two months are the highest measured for the period in 50 years.

"I'm amazed. I've come to Paris since 1965, most years, and I've never seen the Seine as high," said Terry Friberg, visiting from Boston. "I love Paris with all my heart but I'm very worried about the level of

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the river.”

Flood monitoring agency Vigicrues said the water levels in Paris hit a maximum height of 5.84 meters (19 feet, 2 inches) on the Austerlitz scale early Monday.

That’s below initial fears last week, and well below record levels of 8.62 meters in 1910, but still several meters above normal levels of about 1.5 meters on the Austerlitz scale.

And the waters are expected to stay unusually high for days or weeks.

That’s bad news for tourists hoping to cruise past Paris sites on the famed “bateaux mouches” riverboats, or visit the bottom floor of the Louvre Museum, closed since last week as a precaution. Riverside train stations along the line that serves Versailles are also closed, and will remain that way for several more days.

Water laps the underside of historic bridges, and treetops and lampposts poke out of the brown, swirling Seine.

South African tourist Michael Jelatis, visiting Notre Dame Cathedral on an island in central Paris, was among many people linking the floods to global warming, blamed for increasing instances of extreme weather.

“Around the world we’re all aware that things like this, unusual weather, are happening. I mean back home we are in a serious drought at the moment as well,” he told The Associated Press.

Overall, Paris is better prepared than when it was last hit by heavy flooding in 2016, and Parisians have largely taken disruptions in stride this time.

Other towns on the surging Seine have seen it much worse.

The floods have caused damage in 242 towns along the river and tributaries already and more warnings are in place as the high waters move downstream.

In Lagny-sur-Marne south of Paris, Serge Pinon now has to walk on a makeshift footbridge to reach his home and its flooded surroundings.

His basement is submerged in water, as are the plants he was trying to grow in a backyard greenhouse tent. He lost a freezer, a refrigerator, a washing machine and dryer to flood waters.

“We’re up to the maximum, maximum and now we’re just waiting for it to go down,” he said. “This year the flood has risen more rapidly than usual. Here it usually rises in a regular fashion and we have the time to see it coming we can save things. But this time it rose too quickly.”

Elsewhere in the town, street signs stick out of the water and a lonely boat floats in the Marne River, once accessible from the riverbank but now unreachable on foot.

Mayor Jean-Paul Michel said that residents are used to seasonal floods, but this one is exceptionally long-lasting, now in its third week. “So it goes on and on, and we think it’s going to carry on for (another) long week before the flood starts subsiding,” he said.

AP journalist Angela Charlton contributed to this report.

Cleveland Indians dropping Chief Wahoo logo from uniforms

By TOM WITHERS, AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Indians are dropping the Chief Wahoo logo from their uniforms next year after decades of protests and complaints that the grinning, red-faced caricature used in one version or another since 1947 is racist.

The move, announced Monday, came after protracted discussions between team owner Paul Dolan and baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred.

The cartoonish image of a big-toothed American Indian with a scarlet face and a single feather in his headdress will come off the team’s sleeves and caps starting with the 2019 season, when Cleveland will host the All-Star Game.

“Major League Baseball is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game,” Manfred said in a statement. He said the logo “is no longer appropriate for on-field use.”

The decision is unlikely to quell complaints from Native American organizations and others who see the symbol — and the team’s very name — as insensitive. The Indians will continue to wear the Wahoo logo

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in 2018, and even after it is gone from the uniform, the club will sell merchandise featuring the mascot in the Cleveland area.

"I'm elated," Philip Yenyo, executive director of the American Indian Movement of Ohio, said of the decision to remove Wahoo from uniforms. "But at the same time, I think it should be this year. I don't understand why they're drawing this out. It doesn't make any sense to me, unless they want to continue to make what's basically blood money."

He added: "Just make the leap already."

Yenyo and others have demanded that the team go further and drop "Indians" as its name: "If they don't get rid of the name, then you're still going to have fans going down there wearing headdresses and painted in redface."

Amid the intensifying debate, the club has slowly moved away from the logo in recent years. The Indians replaced it with a "C" as their primary logo and removed signs depicting Chief Wahoo from Progressive Field, the team's ballpark.

There was no immediate reaction from Indians players.

"It's a big disappointment," Jeremiah Baker said at a sporting goods store in suburban Westlake as he picked through a clearance bin of caps with his wife and two children. "Chief Wahoo has been so iconic for so many years, and I understand that some people may be offended, but it's a blow to native Clevelanders."

National criticism and scrutiny over Chief Wahoo grew in 2016, when the Indians made the World Series and Manfred expressed his desire to have the team drop the symbol. During the playoffs, a lawsuit was filed while the club was playing in Toronto to have the logo and team name banned from Canadian TV. A judge dismissed the case.

The Indians' bid to host the 2019 All-Star Game heightened the debate.

"While we recognize many of our fans have a longstanding attachment to Chief Wahoo, I'm ultimately in agreement with Commissioner Manfred's desire to remove the logo from our uniforms in 2019," Dolan said in announcing the decision.

The presence of the Wahoo logo is likely to remain strong in the stands on caps, T-shirts and signs, and other Native American references in the stadium will probably persist. For over 40 years, one fan, John Adams, has pounded a tom-tom in the left-field bleachers.

The team will continue to sell Chief Wahoo gear because if it stops doing so, it will lose ownership of the trademark, and others will be able to use the symbol as they please.

Reaction to the announcement was swift on social media as fans took sides on a touchy topic that has become part of the Cleveland sports landscape for generations.

Every year, Native American groups have protested outside the stadium before the home opener in hopes of getting the Indians not only to abolish Chief Wahoo but to change the team name.

Many fans are dedicated to preserving Chief Wahoo and see the logo as a symbol of the city's resurgence in the mid-1990s, when the Indians opened their new ballpark and the team made the World Series for the first time since 1954.

The NFL's Washington Redskins have come under similar pressure to change their less-cartoonish Indian-head logo and their name but so far have resisted. Last year, a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in another case made it clear that the Redskins name cannot be stripped of trademark protection just because some find it offensive.

Stanford, Illinois and Dartmouth are among the colleges and universities that have dropped Native American nicknames or symbols for their teams over the years.

More AP baseball: <https://apnews.com/tag/MLBbaseball>

Police look at phone records for clues in jealousy shooting

By KRISTEN DE GROOT, Associated Press

Police on Monday were focusing on phone records to try to piece together how a group of friends wound up at a Pennsylvania self-serve car wash, where a gunman lying in wait in the early morning hours killed four of them and injured one who managed to hide.

The suspected shooter, 28-year-old Timothy Smith, suffered a gunshot wound to the head in the Sunday shooting at Ed's Car Wash in Melcroft, a rural town about 55 miles (89 kilometers) southeast of Pittsburgh. He's on life support and isn't expected to survive what authorities believe may be a self-inflicted injury.

Smith was a jealous ex-boyfriend of 25-year-old victim Chelsie Cline, according to family members of some of the victims.

Also killed were William Porterfield, 27; Courtney Snyder, 23; and Seth Cline, 21. Another woman was able to hide in the back seat of a truck and only suffered minor injuries from broken glass, police said. Chelsie Cline and Seth Cline were half-siblings.

Four days before the shooting, Chelsie Cline had shared a meme on Facebook reading "After this week, I rlyly need to get taken out ... on a date or by a sniper either one is fine w me at this point."

A Facebook friend, Tim Smith, replied: "I could do both."

Timothy Smith was obsessed with Cline after they dated, leaving beer for her on her car and sending her flowers and other presents, said Chelsie Cline's half-sister, Sierra Kolarik, in an interview with the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

Kolarik said Smith "came off as the most kind-hearted person" but that his interests were "guns and guns and guns and shooting and beer and rolling cigarettes."

Porterfield and Chelsie Cline spent time together in the days before the shooting after Cline broke off a relationship with Smith, Porterfield's widow, Jenna Porterfield, 24, told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. She said a state police investigator told her Smith was Cline's jealous former boyfriend.

"I was told my husband was cheating on me with (one of the victims), and that she had broken up with her previous boyfriend two days ago, and he went crazy and shot them all," she said.

State police said Smith was the first person to arrive at the car wash and parked his pickup truck on the side of the two-bay car wash. They said he shot Porterfield and Chelsie Cline when they got out of their car and walked to the side of the car wash.

Snyder and Seth Cline arrived in a pickup truck and were both shot and killed in their vehicle, state police said.

A man who lives nearby said he heard about 30 gunshots over a span of several minutes.

Vicki Snyder lives down the road from Smith's family and said her children were in school with the Smith children. Smith's brother was the best man in her son's wedding.

"He seemed like a normal kid," she said of Smith, who was in the same grade as her daughter. "He seemed kind of quiet, but he was the youngest and he was always polite and very nice."

She said Smith lived at home and helped out his older sister who uses a wheelchair after injuring her spine in a car accident a few years ago.

"They are just a typical family that had some tragedy and dealt with it," Snyder said. "They're down-to-earth, nice, regular people."

More caffeine, please: Keurig is buying Dr Pepper Snapple

By JOSEPH PISANI, AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Keurig is buying Dr Pepper Snapple Group, bringing together the make-at-home coffee brand with the company behind Dr Pepper soda, Mott's apple juice and Snapple iced tea.

The new company, Keurig Dr Pepper, plans to expand its bottled iced coffee offerings that are sold at supermarkets and convenience stores. The private company that controls Keurig already owns coffee brands like Stumptown and Peet's.

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Keurig Dr Pepper will offer "hot and cold beverages to satisfy every consumer throughout the day," said Larry Young, chief executive of Dr Pepper Snapple.

And the combined business will tap into each other's distribution network, bringing their brands to more stores and online retailers. The companies said they'll save \$600 million a year starting in 2021 by combining their warehouse and delivery systems.

The new company will have about \$11 billion in annual sales, which still makes it far smaller than soda makers PepsiCo Inc. and Coca-Cola Co., which had 2016 sales of \$63 billion and \$41 billion, respectively.

But Bernstein analyst Ali Dibadj said he expects more beverage companies to combine to save on distribution costs and get their products on the same delivery trucks.

"There will be more of these," Dibadj said.

Some Snapple flavors are already sold as Keurig pods, but there's a chance that more of Dr Pepper Snapple's brands will be turned into pods that are placed into Keurig's single-serve brewing machines to make drinks.

Keurig's pods, which are thrown out after they are used, have been criticized by environmental advocates as contributing to more waste. The company previously announced plans to make all its pods, called K-Cups, recyclable by 2020.

Keurig Green Mountain Inc. became a privately held company in 2016 when it was acquired by Europe's JAB Holding Co. in a partnership with snack company Mondelez International.

Keurig Dr Pepper plans to tap into JAB's other coffee brands. It wants to expand bottled iced coffees under the Krispy Kreme, Stumptown and Peet's names, all of which are owned by JAB. The holding company also owns the Panera Bread restaurant chain. And Keurig sells coffee pods under the Green Mountain and Donut Shop brands.

Keurig CEO Bob Gamgort, who will lead the new company, highlighted Dr Pepper Snapple's Bai brand as "driving significant growth" during a conference call with investors.

Bai, which makes fruity, low-calorie drinks and bottled water, was bought by Dr Pepper Snapple last year to add low-calorie drinks and flavored sparkling waters into its portfolio as more people avoid sugary sodas.

JAB will be the controlling shareholder of the combined company. Mondelez will hold a stake of about 13 percent to 14 percent.

Keurig said Dr Pepper Snapple shareholders will receive \$103.75 per share in a special cash dividend and keep 13 percent of the combined company. Dr Pepper Snapple shareholders still must approve the deal.

Shares of Dr Pepper Snapple Group Inc. soared 22 percent to \$117.07 on Monday.

Keurig Dr Pepper will trade publicly after the deal closes, which is expected to happen in the second quarter. A new ticker symbol hasn't been announced yet, the company said. Keurig will stay in its Waterbury, Vermont, headquarters, and Dr Pepper Snapple will remain in Plano, Texas.

AP Business Writer Michelle Chapman in Newark, New Jersey, contributed to this report.

Abused California sibling went to college, didn't seek help

By **AMY TAXIN** and **MICHAEL BALSAMO**, Associated Press

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP) — The community college student with a page-boy haircut was quiet, never drew attention to himself and earned A's semester after semester.

Despite ample opportunities, he apparently never divulged the sickening truth that his home was a veritable torture chamber.

Authorities say the student, now about 26, was the eldest male among 13 siblings who were held captive in their California home by their parents, David and Louise Turpin.

The couple starved all but their 2-year-old daughter for years and sometimes chained their children to beds for months at a time without letting them use the toilet, prosecutors said.

However, Louise Turpin regularly drove her oldest son to classes at the nearby Menifee campus of Mt. San Jacinto College and waited outside the classroom for him.

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He was on the president's honor roll in fall 2015 and spring 2016, college spokeswoman Karin Marriott said. A transcript obtained by ABC News showed he attended classes from 2014 until at least 2016 and took up to 15 credits a semester. He earned A's in many classes, including algebra, guitar, public speaking, English fundamentals and freshman composition.

A classmate, Marci Duncker, said he was "always quiet and alone" when they attended classes. She tried to say hello to him a few times but he just looked at her and never responded.

"It was one of the most sad faces I'd seen in years," Duncker said.

The boy was usually one of the last people to leave class, she said.

None of the names of the abused siblings have been released by authorities and all were taken to hospitals when they were freed two weeks ago from the home in Perris, about 70 miles (113 kilometers) southeast of Los Angeles.

Authorities say the abuse was so long-running their growth was stunted.

Despite near-daily interactions with others outside the home, there's no indication the oldest son ever sought to draw attention to what was happening at home. Gale Kelley, a trainer for the International Association of Trauma Professionals, said that reluctance is understandable.

"They were born into this. This was normal for them. Some of them may not even realize they've been abused," she said. "These children have been living in isolation so they only know what they know."

Abusers often tell children they shouldn't talk about what happens at home or that they deserve to be treated that way, and that may have made it difficult for them to escape, she said.

"We don't know what kind of duress they were under as far as threats," Kelley said. "They're still seeing the world through the eyes of a scared little kid who is in constant danger."

The case has drawn international attention and compassion for the children.

The younger ones were home-schooled and there's no evidence the other older children were educated outside the home, except for the oldest girl — now 29 — who had attended kindergarten to third grade in a public school in Texas.

Sheriff's deputies rescued the children on Jan. 14 after the Turpins' 17-year-old daughter climbed out a window and called 911.

The house reeked of human waste and evidence of starvation was obvious, with the oldest sibling weighing only 82 pounds, Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin said.

The parents were arrested and pleaded not guilty to torture and other charges.

The siblings, seven adults and six children, will likely need years of therapy, psychological experts said, adding that if possible it would be best to keep them together for now.

"They're going to have some developmental delays, no question," said Russell Rice, a family therapist and executive director of a California residential treatment program for teenagers in Redlands. "Their brains are going to be as stunted if not more than their physical development."

Rice said more independent options exist, for example, a residential complex with a case manager on site to assist with money management or other programs. But he said that could be overwhelming for people who have been sheltered from the outside world.

"They don't even know how to shop, probably, and the concept of money," he said. "They won't be living on their own. They'll be highly supervised for quite some time."

The repeated exposure to traumatic events could make them skittish when they are out in public.

"The children have been in constant crisis mode, constant danger, and so that switch gets turned and it is always on," Kelley said. "They're expecting to see trauma everywhere and in everybody."

Balsamo reported from Los Angeles.

Many Puerto Ricans adrift in US hotels after Hurricane Maria

By **CLAUDIA TORRENS, Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — After they lost their home in Puerto Rico to flooding during Hurricane Maria, Enghie Melendez fled with her family to the U.S. mainland with three suitcases and the hope it wouldn't take long to rebuild their lives. It hasn't worked out that way.

More than four months later, the family of five is squeezed into two rooms in a hotel in Brooklyn. While her husband looks for work, they are stuck in limbo, eating off paper plates and stepping over clothes in cramped quarters as they try to get settled in an unfamiliar city.

"After the hurricane hit we told the kids that every day was going to be an adventure, but not like this," said the 43-year-old Melendez. "This is turning out to be really hard."

Around the U.S., many Puerto Ricans are similarly adrift in hotels because of the Sept. 20 hurricane. The move north spared them from the misery of the storm's aftermath on the island. But the transition has often proved to be difficult, disruptive and expensive as people try to find housing, jobs, schools and even furniture and clothes to start fresh on the mainland.

Melendez and her family shuffled between staying with relatives to a homeless shelter to a small hotel in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, forcing her to change schools for her three daughters in the middle of the semester.

"The instability is terrible," she said as her husband, who worked as a cook at an Army base near San Juan, used a glass bottle to mash plantains to make a traditional Puerto Rican dish.

Adding to the worries for large numbers of Puerto Ricans is that hotel reimbursements from the Federal Emergency Management Agency have started to run out and many say they can't afford temporary housing without assistance.

"It's stressful," said Yalitzia Rodriguez, a 35-year-old from the southern Puerto Rico town of Yauco who has been staying at a hotel in Queens with her elderly mother and husband while he looks for work. "If we don't get an extension we will have nowhere to live."

Maria destroyed between 70,000 and 75,000 homes and damaged an additional 300,000, said Leticia Jover, a spokeswoman for Puerto Rico's Housing Department. The effects of the storm included the widespread loss of power, which is still not restored in some places. Many businesses closed. The result has been an exodus to the mainland.

The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College estimated in an October study that between 114,000 and 213,000 Puerto Ricans would move to the U.S. mainland over the next 12 months. Most were expected to settle in Florida, followed by Pennsylvania, Texas and New York.

FEMA says there are nearly 4,000 families, more than 10,000 people, receiving hotel assistance from the agency in 42 states because their homes in Puerto Rico are too damaged to occupy. The agency extended the expiration for the program from Jan. 13 to March 20 at the request of the island's governor, but all cases are reviewed for eligibility every 30 days and the payments could end for some people sooner. It's impossible to know how many are in temporary housing without any aid or staying with families.

Leslie Rivera, from the central town of Caguas, has been shuffling among hotels in Tampa, Florida, since December with her three kids, ages 13, 10 and 2. She was approved for subsidized housing and expects to be settled soon but it has been difficult.

"I feel like I am on the streets because I have no clothes. I have nothing for my kids," the 35-year-old said with tears in her eyes.

Marytza Sanz, president of Latino Leadership Orlando, which has been helping displaced families, said many don't know where they will go after FEMA stops paying for their rooms.

"There are people with five dollars in their pockets," she said. "They can't buy detergent, deodorant, medicine."

In Kissimmee, in central Florida, Desiree Torres feels nervous. She has spent more than two months in a hotel with her three children. She says she can't find a job and several local shelters have told her there is no space for her and her children.

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"I can't sleep at night," said the 30-year-old Torres, who lost her home in Las Piedras, a southeastern town near where the eye of the storm first crossed the island. "I'm worried about my kids."

After the hurricane, Melendez and her family were forced to sleep for more than three weeks in their garage because of flooding and sewage that entered the home. They left their four dogs with a friend and managed to get on a humanitarian flight. They spent 10 days at Melendez's father-in-law's Manhattan apartment and a month and a half in a Brooklyn shelter. A Puerto Rican activist helped them enter the hotel.

"My kids were in a Manhattan school. We would wake up before 5 a.m. at the shelter to take them there. Now they are in a Brooklyn school," she said. "Where will they be tomorrow?"

For now, they survive on a \$1,700 monthly disability payment that Melendez receives along with about \$300 a month in food stamps.

Her 16-year-old daughter, Enghiemar, does her homework on the floor of the hotel room and tries to keep in touch with friends back home by text.

"I always wanted to come and live here," she said. "But not like this."

Associated Press writers Gisela Salomon in Miami and Tamara Lush in Tampa, Florida, contributed to this report.

Kochs warm to Trump policies, not behavior

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. (AP) — For the Koch brothers and their powerful donor network, the trouble with President Donald Trump isn't what he's doing. It's how he's doing it.

Huddled at a private retreat in the California desert, the conservative movement's moneyed elite worried aloud this weekend that the Republican president's undisciplined behavior is clouding his achievements — and making it harder for the GOP to protect its grip on Congress heading into the 2018 midterms.

"President Trump is not helping get many Republicans elected," said Tom Shepherd, a Cincinnati-based businessman who joined roughly 550 Koch donors at a private retreat in the California desert this weekend. "I think he's doing more harm than good because he's distracting people from the good work which is happening, which is either happening because of him or in spite of him."

The frustration with the unorthodox president comes as the Kochs begin to implement their strategy to protect Republican majorities in the House and Senate this fall.

The GOP has no more powerful ally than the vast political and policy network assembled by the Midwestern industrialist icons, long demonized by the left and revered by the right for their short- and long-term efforts to reshape American politics and culture.

The Koch network's chief lieutenants renewed their vow this weekend to spend up to \$400 million on politics and policy to shape November's midterm elections nationwide.

That's more than the combined resources spent by the Republican National Committee, the National Rifle Association and the Chamber of Commerce in the 2016 election cycle.

They outlined plans on Monday to spend big on political advertising now through the end of July on as many as 14 key Senate races and 15 gubernatorial elections. Their goal: Flood the airwaves with political messaging early to help shape voters' opinions long before the election season's final months.

"We need to be on offense starting now," said Emily Seidel, CEO of the Kochs' political arm, Americans for Prosperity.

She said the network has already decided to play in Senate contests in Wisconsin, Indiana, Missouri and Florida — all seats held by vulnerable Democrats. They expect to be active in many more. And on governor's races, they're targeting Nevada, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan and Florida to start.

The investment includes \$20 million to help sell the recently adopted tax overhaul to a skeptical American public through a series of public rallies, phone banking and paid advertising.

Despite the extraordinary investment, the men and women who filled the luxury resort outside Palm Springs for a three-day retreat that ended Monday acknowledged a difficult road ahead.

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Some blamed history more than the regular distractions from Trump. The party in the White House traditionally struggles in the first midterm election of a new presidency.

"It's a challenge regardless of the president," said Tim Phillips, president of Americans for Prosperity.

But the donors who pledged at least \$100,000 this year to the Koch network — there were an estimated 550 on hand this weekend — were less cautious when asked about the president's leadership.

Many opposed his candidacy before the 2016 election. The Kochs refused to endorse Trump, fearing that his style and policies might undermine conservative priorities.

"I didn't support him," said Frank Baxter, a retired investment banker from California who served as the ambassador to Uruguay under former President George W. Bush. "The results are kind of changing my mind."

Like others, he praised the tax overhaul, Trump's judicial appointments and regulatory cuts. He added, "I still don't like what he says or does."

Gary Lynch, whose Iowa livestock business employs roughly 700 people, said he and his business have benefited from the Republican tax overhaul. He said, however, that Trump's behavior "doesn't help" his party promote the benefits of the plan.

"He hasn't got it down yet," Lynch said of the president, noting that he doesn't mind Trump's style personally.

Another former Trump critic, North Carolina-based donor Art Pope, said he's warming to the president as well.

"The policies of this administration have really benefited the American people," Pope said. He's still worried about the political climate heading into the midterms: "It's going to be a tough election."

Democrats need to pick up at least 24 seats nationwide this fall to claim the House majority for the last two years of Trump's first term. Recent Democratic wins in Alabama and Virginia, backed by Trump's low approval ratings, suggest the GOP is in trouble.

When asked about his party's 2018 prospects, Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., among a handful of elected officials who attended the Koch conference, acknowledged that the House majority is at risk.

"I can make the case for losing 18 seats and no more. I can make the case for 28 seats," he said. "It's a long ways off. It depends what we do between now and November."

As the White House and Republicans nationwide work to highlight the strong U.S. economy, Trump intensified a weekend feud with the rapper Jay-Z on Twitter.

The musician said over the weekend the president's recent vulgar comments about African countries and Haiti were "disappointing" and "hurtful."

Trump punched back on Twitter, urging his followers to inform Jay-Z that "because of my policies," unemployment among black Americans is at the "LOWEST RATE EVER RECORDED!"

Back at the Koch retreat, prominent Trump donor Doug Deason said he enjoyed the president's social media habits, which allow him to speak directly to the American people.

"I don't think it helps. I don't think it hurts," Deason said.

He noted that the Koch network would "spend a lot of money" to ensure the benefits of the tax overhaul aren't overshadowed by any distractions.

"Who gives a crap about Jay-Z?" Deason asked. "I don't."

Syria violence overshadows Russia-hosted talks

By MEHMET GUZEL and SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

KILIS, Turkey (AP) — Intense clashes erupted Monday on a strategic hilltop in northwestern Syria as Kurdish forces tried to enter the area a day after it was captured by Turkish troops.

Turkish military officials cancelled a government-organized press tour to Bursayah Hill, separating the Kurdish-held enclave of Afrin from the Turkey-controlled town of Azaz, due to what they described as "security concerns."

Separately, in the nearby rebel-held province of Idlib, suspected Syrian government airstrikes killed at

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least 21 people and put a hospital out of order.

The violence has overshadowed a peace conference hosted by Russia that was due to open in Sochi on Monday. Russia, a key ally of President Bashar Assad, says it invited 1,600 representatives to the Syrian Congress of National Dialogue, but so far only the government and opposition representatives tolerated by it have shown up. The main Syrian opposition body has boycotted the talks.

The main Syrian Kurdish militia, which is fighting in Afrin and controls some 25 percent of Syrian territory, has also declined to attend, saying it holds Russia responsible for the Turkish offensive.

Alexander Lavrentiev, Russia's envoy for Syria, downplayed the violence, saying the situation in Afrin has "somehow stabilized" and expressing hope that "potential provocations prior to and during the event won't affect its outcome."

"We still hope that common sense will prevail and that the leadership of the united Syrian opposition will still decide to attend the congress. This possibility has not been ruled out, and the invitations remain on the table," he said, according to Russian state agency Tass.

The Turkish incursion began on Jan. 20, with Ankara saying it seeks to drive "terrorists" away from its border and create a safe zone in the area. Turkey considers the Syrian Kurdish militia in control of Afrin, the People's Defense Units or YPG, an extension of the Kurdish insurgency within its borders.

On Monday, Turkish authorities said they had detained 311 people for allegedly engaging in "terrorist propaganda" through social media postings critical of the Afrin offensive. The Interior Ministry said the suspects, who are accused of supporting the Syrian Kurdish forces, were detained in the past week but did not provide further details.

The Paris-based media watchdog Reporters Without Borders called the detentions a government "witch hunt against critics."

Turkish troops and allied Syrian forces have met with stiff resistance as they try to push into Afrin, and the capture of Bursayah Hill marked their biggest advance since the start of the offensive. The operation has so far claimed the lives of 61 civilians in Afrin, three in Turkish towns along the border and five Turkish soldiers, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The Turkish-led offensive has opened a new front in the civil war, which is far from over despite recent gains by Assad's forces and the expulsion of the Islamic State group from nearly all the territory it once held.

The government is now focused on the northwestern province of Idlib, which is dominated by al-Qaida-linked militants and home to more than 2.6 million people, nearly half of whom have fled from other areas.

Volunteer first responders known as the White Helmets say the airstrikes on Monday hit the province's largest vegetable market, in the town of Saraqeb. The Qasioun news agency, which covers events in opposition-held areas, said 14 people were killed. The Observatory, an opposition-linked group that monitors all sides of the conflict, also said 14 were killed, including six children.

Another two people, including a child, were killed in the attack on the hospital.

The activist-run Edlib Media Center posted photographs of the exterior of the damaged building. Videos of rescuers sifting through the rubble showed them emerging with a survivor, apparently a medic. Mohammed Abrash, a doctor in Idlib city, said the only hospital in Saraqeb was now out of order.

The government appears to have stepped up its bombing campaign in Idlib in recent days. The Observatory reported 90 airstrikes in Idlib on Monday alone, killing a total of 21 people. It said airstrikes on Sunday killed 17.

Sandy al-Obeid, a resident of Saraqeb, said she heard the attack on the market from her home and could see the plane from her window.

"When I finally fell asleep, I dreamt there were airstrikes and we were hiding. It turned out there were airstrikes. But now nightmares are confused with reality," al-Obeid said in a series of text messages.

Near the capital, Damascus, activists reported government shelling of Harasta, in the rebel-held suburbs known as eastern Ghouta. Fighting has raged in the area over the last few days despite a cease-fire negotiated between Russia and the opposition.

Russia's Defense Ministry on Monday called on the Syrian government to hold talks with the rebels in

eastern Ghouta to allow for medical evacuations.

"A cessation of hostilities is the only chance and the only condition for political settlement in eastern Ghouta and in Syria on the whole," it said.

El Deeb reported from Beirut.

IS attack on military academy in Afghan capital kills 11

By RAHIM FAIEZ and AMIR SHAH, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Islamic State militants attacked Afghan soldiers guarding a military academy in the capital on Monday, killing at least 11 troops and wounding 16.

The attack, which began before dawn and continued well past daybreak, was the latest in a wave of relentless violence in Kabul this month unleashed by the Taliban and the rival Islamic State group that has killed scores and left hundreds wounded.

President Donald Trump condemned the recent spate of violence, saying "innocent people are being killed left and right," including children. After previously expressing support for Afghan efforts to reach a political settlement with the insurgent group, Trump said "there's no talking to the Taliban."

Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri said a suicide bomber struck the military unit guarding the academy, setting off a gunbattle. Two of the attackers were killed in the gunbattle, two detonated their suicide vests and one was arrested by the troops, he said.

Waziri confirmed that 11 soldiers were killed. He said "the attack was against an army unit providing security for the academy and not the academy itself."

The Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan, which calls itself Khorasan Province, claimed the attack in a statement carried by its Amaq news agency, saying its fighters targeted the academy.

The academy, known as Marshal Fahim National Defense University, is sometimes called "Sandhurst in the Sand" — a reference to the British academy. Named after Mohammed Fahim, the country's late vice president and a military commander of the Northern Alliance that fought the Taliban, the academy was inaugurated in 2013 after British forces oversaw the development of its officers' school and its training program.

The academy was also the site where the highest-ranking U.S. military officer to be killed in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq lost his life, in August 2014. Army Maj Gen. Harold J. Greene, then deputy commander of the transition force in the country, was shot and killed by an Afghan soldier in a so-called "insider attack" that was later claimed by the Taliban.

The same academy was also attacked in October last year by a suicide bomber who killed 15 officers. The attacker was on foot and detonated his suicide vest as the on-duty officers were leaving the facility. That attack was also claimed by the Taliban.

President Ashraf Ghani denounced Monday's attack, saying the "Taliban must choose between Islam and terrorism."

Neighboring Pakistan also condemned Monday's attack, saying it "reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, especially the series of heinous attacks within the last week in Afghanistan."

Both the Taliban and IS have stepped up attacks in recent weeks, in what analysts say is a campaign of violence intended to undermine the U.S.-backed government.

On Saturday, a Taliban attacker drove an ambulance filled with explosives into the heart of the city, killing at least 103 people and wounding as many as 235.

The Taliban claimed the ambulance attack, as well as an attack a week earlier in which militants stormed a luxury hotel in Kabul, killing 22 people, including 14 foreigners, and setting off a 13-hour battle with security forces.

Masoom Stanekzai, the head of Afghanistan's intelligence service, said five suspects have been arrested for their involvement in the hotel attack. A sixth suspect had fled the country, he said. He also said that

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four people have been arrested in connection with Saturday's ambulance attack.

The recent attacks have underscored the weaknesses of Afghan security forces more than 16 years after the U.S.-led invasion toppled the Taliban.

They also raise questions about Trump's strategy for winning America's longest war, which was announced in August but has changed little on the ground. That strategy was based on ramping up military pressure on the Taliban to eventually force them into peace talks with the government.

But in a meeting with visiting ambassadors on Monday, Trump said "we don't want to talk with the Taliban."

The Taliban have been waging an insurgency since they were driven from power by U.S. and Afghan forces after the Sept. 11 attacks. In recent years, they have seized districts across the country and carried out near-daily attacks, mainly targeting Afghan security forces and the U.S.-backed government. They say they are open to direct peace talks with the United States, something Washington has long rejected.

The Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan emerged in 2014, as the U.S. and NATO were winding down their combat mission and around the time that IS declared its self-styled Islamic caliphate, headquartered in Syria and Iraq. Its followers have clashed with both Afghan forces and the Taliban.

Associated Press writers Maamoun Youssef in Cairo and Patrick Quinn in Beirut contributed to this report.

US, Qatar reach agreement on subsidy spat with airlines

By JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and Qatar have reached a deal to resolve a years-old quarrel over alleged airline subsidies, as Qatar's government works to defuse tensions with the Trump administration.

A formal announcement could come Tuesday, when Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis meet with a Qatari delegation.

The agreement will see state-owned Qatar Airways agree voluntarily to open up its accounting books, the individuals said. U.S. airlines say the company receives billions of dollars in government payments that leave them at a competitive disadvantage. Qatar will also make a loose commitment that the flag carrier won't launch flights to the United States from Europe or other non-Qatari cities, creating yet more competition for the U.S. airlines.

The individuals briefed on the agreement demanded anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss it ahead of a formal announcement.

Both sides of the dispute can claim the agreement as a victory — for very different reasons.

The U.S. airline industry can claim the increased transparency will create a powerful disincentive to unfair subsidies, as Qatar will no longer be able to mask such payments through creative accounting. The three major U.S. carriers — Delta Airlines, American Airlines and United Airlines — have spent huge sums over the last three years pressing the Obama administration and Trump administration for tough action. They're eager to show a win.

Yet for Qatar, the agreement averts the more serious step U.S. airlines wanted: re-opening the so-called open-skies treaties that could lead to less favorable conditions for Persian Gulf airlines.

Qatar, denounced by President Donald Trump last year for allegedly funding terrorism, can also show it's cooperating closely and productively with U.S. regulators. That could help the tiny gas-rich kingdom draw a contrast with the United Arab Emirates, whose two airlines are also accused of improper subsidies but have yet to reach an agreement with Washington.

"Everybody gets to claim victory in this," said Helene Becker, an airline analyst for Cowen and Co.

Indeed, even before any announcement, American, the world's biggest airline by passenger traffic, praised the deal as a way to "thoughtfully address" Qatari subsidies. And United CEO Oscar Munoz applauded the agreement while thanking Trump's administration for "effectively representing the interests of the American aviation industry."

Though on the same side of the airline dispute, Qatar and the UAE oppose each other in a bitter, unrelated standoff. Last year, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations blockaded Qatar after accusing

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it of supporting extremism and fomenting dissent throughout the region. Qatar hopes to change that narrative by enhancing counterterrorism cooperation and allowing greater U.S. visibility into its finances and banking practices.

In an eight-paragraph document laying out “understandings” between Qatar and the U.S., the Gulf nation will commit within one year to releasing audited financial statements for Qatar Airlines “in accordance with internationally-recognized accounting standards,” according to a text of the agreement obtained by The Associated Press. Within two years, Qatar Airways is to disclose any transactions with other state-owned entities, such as caterers or other companies that support airline operations, closing what the U.S. airlines have claimed is a backdoor used by Gulf nations to hide illicit subsidies.

A side-letter to the agreement will state that Qatar’s civilian aviation authority is unaware of any plans by Qatar Airlines to start so-called “Fifth Freedoms” flights — routes from third countries to the United States. Under the scenario U.S. airlines fear, Qatar Airways could offer flights from its Doha hub to, say, Paris or London, stop to pick up more passengers, then fly on to New York.

The side-letter only says there are no current plans to operate such service. That’s short of a binding guarantee. There’s also no commitment Qatar Airways won’t expand its offering of Qatar-U.S. flights.

“This appears to be the administration essentially throwing a meatless bone to the three U.S. carriers to put an end to their rants against the Gulf carriers,” said John Byerly, who was the chief open skies negotiator in the Obama administration and has also consulted for Emirates Airline and UPS.

The two UAE airlines — Dubai-based Emirates and Abu Dhabi-based Etihad Airways — aren’t a party to the U.S.-Qatar agreement. Emirates Airline currently offers “Fifth Freedom” flights in which passengers can fly from New York-area airports to Milan, Italy or Athens without ever setting foot in the UAE.

All three Gulf airlines have long denied receiving unfair government subsidies. A Qatari government spokesman declined to comment on the agreement. There was no immediate reaction from either Emirates or Etihad.

AP Airlines Writer David Koenig in Dallas and AP writer Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

Reach Josh Lederman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joshledermanAP>

Asian shares lower, tracking modest pullback on Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares skidded Tuesday following Wall Street’s biggest loss in more than four months. KEEPING SCORE: Japan’s Nikkei 225 index lost 1.4 percent to 23,286.05 and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng dropped 0.8 percent to 32,693.43. South Korea’s Kospi sank 1.0 percent to 2,569.94. The Shanghai Composite index fell 0.7 percent to 3,497.00 and Australia’s S&P ASX 200 gave up 0.9 percent to 6,020.20. Shares were lower in Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia.

WALL STREET: The sell-off was led by technology stocks, the biggest gainers in 2017, which accounted for much of the slide. Energy companies also fell as crude oil prices finished lower. Utilities and other rate-sensitive sectors declined as bond yields hit their highest level in almost four years. The Standard & Poor’s 500 index fell 0.7 percent to 2,853.53 and the Dow Jones industrial average also dropped 0.7 percent, to 26,439.48. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.5 percent, to 7,466.51. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks gave up 0.6 percent to 1,598.11. Losers outnumbered gainers almost five-to-one on the New York Stock Exchange.

TRUMP: Also on investors’ radar: Tuesday night’s State of the Union address by President Donald Trump, and a two-day meeting of the Federal Reserve’s policymaking committee that wraps up Wednesday. “This is one of the few prepared speeches that the president will give, so the progress on NAFTA and trade with China is something the market is going to watch carefully,” said Mike Baele, senior portfolio manager at U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management.

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JAPAN: Data for December released Tuesday showed the jobless rate rising to a still low 2.8 percent and retail sales coming in stronger than expected. But household spending and willingness to spend fell, underscoring the need for wage increases during the annual spring labor negotiations that are underway.

ANALYST'S VIEWPOINT: "Asian markets are set to see further pullback in the day, caught in the crosswind of the overnight action. In particular, the performance of Apple Inc.'s regional supply chain is expected to come into focus as reports of a production reduction to the company's leading iPhone X floated to the market," Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude fell 52 cents to \$65.04 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 58 cents, or about 1 percent, to settle at \$65.56 a barrel on Monday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, dropped 38 cents to \$68.82 a barrel. It fell \$1.06, or 1.5 percent, to close at \$69.46 per barrel on Monday.

CURRENCIES: The dollar, which fell sharply last week, declined to 108.76 yen from 108.96 yen late Monday. The euro fell to \$1.2376 from \$1.2383.

BITCOIN: The price of bitcoin fell 1.3 percent Monday to \$11,018.88, according to the tracking site CoinDesk. Bitcoin futures on the Cboe Futures Exchange fell 2.5 percent to \$10,920.

Today in History By The Associated Press.

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 30, the 30th day of 2018. There are 335 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 30, 1968, the Tet Offensive began during the Vietnam War as Communist forces launched surprise attacks against South Vietnamese towns and cities; although the Communists were beaten back, the offensive was seen as a major setback for the U.S. and its allies.

On this date:

In 1649, England's King Charles I was executed for high treason.

In 1798, during a meeting of the U.S. House of Representatives in Philadelphia, Matthew Lyon of Vermont spat tobacco juice in the face of Roger Griswold of Connecticut (two weeks later, Griswold physically attacked Lyon on the House floor).

In 1882, the 32nd president of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was born in Hyde Park, New York.

In 1933, Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany. The first episode of the "Lone Ranger" radio program was broadcast on station WXYZ in Detroit.

In 1945, during World War II, a Soviet submarine torpedoed the German ship MV Wilhelm Gustloff in the Baltic Sea with the loss of more than 9,000 lives, most of them war refugees; roughly 1,000 people survived. Adolf Hitler marked the 12th anniversary of his appointment as Germany's chancellor with his last public speech in which he called on Germans to keep resisting until victory.

In 1948, Indian political and spiritual leader Mohandas K. Gandhi, 78, was shot and killed in New Delhi by Nathuram Godse (neh-too-RAHM' gahd-SAY'), a Hindu extremist. (Godse and a co-conspirator were later executed.) Aviation pioneer Orville Wright, 76, died in Dayton, Ohio.

In 1958, "Sunrise at Campobello," a play by Dore Schary (DOHR'-ee SHER'-ee) about Franklin D. Roosevelt's struggle against polio, opened on Broadway with Ralph Bellamy as FDR.

In 1962, two members of "The Flying Wallendas" high-wire act were killed when their seven-person pyramid collapsed during a performance at the State Fair Coliseum in Detroit.

In 1969, The Beatles staged an impromptu concert atop Apple headquarters in London; it was the group's last public performance.

In 1972, 13 Roman Catholic civil rights marchers were shot to death by British soldiers in Northern Ireland on what became known as "Bloody Sunday."

In 1981, an estimated 2 million New Yorkers turned out for a ticker-tape parade honoring the American

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hostages freed from Iran.

In 1993, Los Angeles inaugurated its Metro Red Line, the city's first modern subway.

Ten years ago: John Edwards bowed out of the race for the Democratic presidential nomination. Rudy Giuliani dropped out of the Republican presidential contest and endorsed front-runner and longtime friend John McCain. The Federal Reserve cut a key interest rate for the second time in just over a week, reducing the federal funds rate by a half point to 3 percent.

Five years ago: In a dramatic appeal before the Senate Judiciary Committee, wounded former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords urged Congress to enact tougher curbs on guns, saying, "too many children are dying" without them. Patty Andrews, 94, the last surviving member of the singing Andrews Sisters trio, died in the Los Angeles suburb of Northridge.

One year ago: President Donald Trump fired Acting U.S. Attorney General Sally Yates after she publicly questioned the constitutionality of his controversial refugee and immigration ban and refused to defend it in court. It became legal in Maine to possess and grow marijuana.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Michael Anderson is 98. Producer-director Harold Prince is 90. Actor Gene Hackman is 88. Actress Vanessa Redgrave is 81. Country singer Jeanne Pruett is 81. Chess grandmaster Boris Spassky is 81. Country singer Norma Jean is 80. Former Vice President Dick Cheney is 77. Rock singer Marty Balin is 76. Rhythm-and-blues musician William King (The Commodores) is 69. Singer Phil Collins is 67. Actor Charles S. Dutton is 67. World Golf Hall of Famer Curtis Strange is 63. Actress Ann Dowd is 62. Actress-comedian Brett Butler is 60. Singer Jody Watley is 59. Actor-filmmaker Dexter Scott King is 57. The King of Jordan, Abdullah II, is 56. Actor Wayne Wilderson (TV: "Veep") is 52. Actor Norbert Leo Butz is 51. The King of Spain, Felipe VI, is 50. Country singer Tammy Cochran is 46. Actor Christian Bale is 44. Rock musician Carl Broemel (My Morning Jacket) is 44. Actress Olivia Colman is 44. Actress-singer Lena Hall is 38. Pop-country singer-songwriter Josh Kelley is 38. Actor Wilmer Valderrama is 38. Actress Mary Hollis Imboden is 32. Actress Kylie Bunbury is 29. Actor Jake Thomas is 28. Actress Danielle Campbell is 23.

Thought for Today: "History repeats itself in the large because human nature changes with geological leisureliness." — Will (1885-1981) and Ariel Durant (1898-1981), American historians.