

Groton Daily Independent

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Riddle:

I travel around the world yet stay in one corner. What am I?

Answer at end of AP News

Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

605-725-WOOD

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



**DAKOTA TREE
COMPANY**

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

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Today's Events

Tuesday, Feb. 6

GBB: Girls host Roncalli.

The JH Band will be doing a split pot for Ava Tunheim at the Feb 6th Roncalli GBB game that they play pep band for.

Thursday, Feb. 8

Boys Junior High Basketball at Frederick. 7th Grade at 4pm, 8th Grade at 5pm

Friday, Feb. 9

Doubleheader at Warner. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5:15 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6:30 p.m., Boys Varsity at 8 p.m.

Who's financing ballot measures?

Voters don't get their answers until after they sign petitions

By DIRK LAMMERS

PIERRE, S.D. — Every two years, clipboard-holding solicitors greet South Dakotans outside grocery stores, shops and restaurants to gather signatures in hopes of putting potential new laws on the following year's ballot.

But those residents often have no idea who's funding initiated ballot measures and proposed constitutional amendments until well after the petitions are filed with the Secretary of State's office.

Petitions are due a year before Election Day, but current South Dakota law doesn't require ballot committees to submit their first campaign finance reports until about nine months before Election Day. The two committees backing approved 2018 ballot measures and six others awaiting petition approval didn't have to disclose funding until late last month.

That information gap created a potential fiasco during the 2016 election cycle, as residents had no idea that an out-of-state payday lending company was pumping millions of dollars into a proposed constitutional amendment that on first look capped maximum interest rates at 18 percent but in essence imposed no limits.

"We weren't sure who was paying for it," said State Sen. Reynold Nesiba, D-Sioux Falls.

Nesiba in 2015 was a signature gather for a grass-roots effort to subject payday lenders, who often charge interest rates exceeding 500 percent, to a true 36-percent cap.

The payday loan industry took off across South Dakota in the 1990s and 2000s but legislative changes leading to its growth date back to the early 1980s, when South Dakota officials changed state law to lure the credit card industry to Sioux Falls, the state's largest city.

After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1978 that banks could export interest rates to other states, then-South Dakota Gov. Bill Janklow shepherded two bills through the 1980 state Legislature to entice Citibank to set up shop in Sioux Falls. One bill lifted the cap on interest rates that companies could charge customers, and the other allowed out-of-state bank holding companies to establish subsidiaries in the state.

Wells Fargo, First Premier and Capital One quickly followed suit, and a town whose largest employer had been the John Morrell & Co. meat plant diversified its economy in a flash. South Dakota's legislative action also created an environment that allowed the payday loan industry to flourish during the next two decades.

The February 2015 effort to subject the industry to lower maximum interest rates emerged from an unlikely partnership between Steve Hildebrand, a former Democratic operative who owns a Sioux Falls coffee shop, and Steve Hickey, a pastor turned Republican state legislator. Hickey and Hildebrand formed South Dakotans for Responsible Lending and began gathering signatures for a measure that would subject payday lenders to a true 36-percent cap.

Four months later, two new groups registered by South Dakota residents unknown in political circles emerged to address the same issue.

Bradley Thuringer of Rapid City formed Give Us Credit South Dakota to formally oppose the Hickey-Hildebrand effort, and North Sioux City's Lisa Furlong created a committee sounding strikingly similar to Hickey and Hildebrand's group: South Dakotans for Fair Lending. Furlong's committee proposed a constitutional amendment that would place an 18-percent cap on interest rates, but the language included one important catch: lenders could charge whatever interest rate they wanted as long as the customer agreed in writing. No payday loan is issued on a verbal contract, so lenders essentially would never be subject to the 18-percent limit.

The ballot committees' first campaign disclosures, the 2015 year-end campaign finance reports, weren't due until Feb. 1, 2016, so residents were being asked to sign petitions without any information on who was backing the efforts.

On Nov. 5, 2015, the Hickey-Hildebrand committee submitted more than 20,081 signatures, far surpassing the 13,871 signatures needed, to Secretary of State Shantel Krebs to secure their spot on the ballot as Initiated Measure 21. As a proposed constitutional amendment, the competing effort from Furlong's

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group faced a higher minimum burden — 27,741 signatures — but Furlong submitted a pile of sheets with 63,372 signatures. Krebs ruled that only 42,195 of those were valid, but the approved total was enough to put the 18-percent cap on the ballot as Amendment U.

In his official explanation for Amendment U, South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley led with the loophole: “Under this constitutional amendment, there is no limit on the amount of interest a lender may charge for a loan of money if the interest rate is agreed to in writing by the borrower. If there is no written agreement, however, a lender may not charge more than 18 percent interest per year.”

But Jackley’s sentence noting that Amendment U “eliminates the ability to set statutory interest rates that are inconsistent with this amendment” seemed to raise the stakes. If both Initiated Measure 21 and Amendment U passed, the 18-percent loophole cap would prohibit a true 36-percent cap from ever taking effect.

When South Dakotans for Fair Lending filed its first required disclosure form on Feb. 1, the report showed just a single contribution: a \$1.7 million donation from Alpharetta, Georgia-based Select Management Resources LLC, a Rod Aycox-led company that owns hundreds of North America Title Loans and LoanMax stores across more than 20 states. More than \$1.55 million of that contribution went to Walnut, California-based Silver Bullet Group Inc. for petition signature gathering, meaning the payday loan company spent \$24.51 for each signature gathered or \$36.81 for each valid signature.

Give Us Credit South Dakota’s 2015 year-end disclosure itemized just one contribution, a \$455,000 deposit also from Select Management Resources, nearly all of it spent on consulting. Select Management Resources pumped another \$500,000 into the committee in 2016, with more than \$300,000 going to consulting and more than \$300,000 going to advertising.

The Hickey-Hildebrand committee raised just over \$20,000 in in-state contributions, another \$3,400 from Hickey’s church and \$400 from Hickey’s House campaign committee. In 2016, the group received about \$2,000 more in contributions with additional funds coming from out of state: \$5,500 cash and more than \$9,000 in in-kind donations from the Durham, North Carolina-based Center for Responsible Lending, \$9,800 from the Washington, D.C.-based social welfare organization Sixteen Thirty and \$6,000 from No on U.

South Dakota voters asked to sign petitions in 2015 were oblivious to any contribution sources.

In the end, voters passed the true 36-percent cap with 76-percent support and shot down the industry-backed 18-percent loophole cap with 63-percent opposition. Payday lenders quickly closed up shop across the state.

Although he’s too late for the 2018 election cycle, Sen. Nesiba wants to make sure there’s no repeat in 2020. He’s advancing a bill that would give voters an earlier look at the money by requiring committees sponsoring initiated ballot measures or proposed constitutional amendments to file an additional mid-year campaign finance report during signature gathering.

“It increases transparency,” Nesiba said. “It gives us one more disclosure, gives us more information about who’s putting these issues on the ballot.”

The Senate State Affairs committee advanced Nesiba’s bill to the floor on an 8-1 vote with opposition only from Sen. Stace Nelson, R-Fulton. The full Senate approved the measure 33-2 and it now heads to the House.

Nelson said although Nesiba’s bill may be well intentioned, he wonders if it steps on residents’ constitutional rights to be involved in their government. He said the U.S. Supreme Court recognizes that people have the absolute First Amendment right to anonymous political speech and anonymous political activity, and the continued burden of campaign disclosure requirements goes against that principal.

When the nation’s founding fathers started protesting the tyranny of England, they had to do so under pen names for protection, Nelson said.

“Are we turning into the tyranny, the strong-arm of government that our forefathers rebelled against?” he asked. “Do we need to control everything? Do we need to control the outcome of everything?”

Nesiba said asking for one more disclosure report doesn’t amount to tyranny, and he said his proposal is far less burdensome than House Speaker Mark Mickelson’s 2018 initiated measure seeking to ban all

out-of-state money from ballot items. South Dakota voters will weigh in on that idea in November.

Nesiba served on a bipartisan Initiative and Referendum Task Force this past summer that is pitching several campaign finance law changes during the 2018 legislative session, but his bill didn't emerge from that group. Nesiba solicited his fellow study group members, many of them Republican, to sign on to the measure as co-sponsors, he said.

If Nesiba's bill passes and is signed by Gov. Dennis Daugaard, it would go into effect in July, too late for the 2018 election cycle. But Nesiba said he wants to make sure there's no confusion in the summer and fall of 2019 when workers begin soliciting signatures for 2020 ballot measures.

"I think people have a right to know," he said.



David Hunter

Officer Hunter to retire

After an executive session, the Groton City Council accepted the retirement letter from Police Officer David Hunter. His retirement will be effective February 28, 2018. Hunter started with the Groton Police department in April of 2012. The council authorized to advertise for a full time police officer.

Clint Nordquist of DGR Engineering, Rock Rapids, Iowa, came before the council to discuss options with the planning of an engineering study for the city's electric system. DGR Engineering is assisting the city with the potential change-out of a switch south of the south substation. Nordquist said that the city should consider the study. "You want to make sure you're not wasting capital dollars," he said. "The goal is to get ahead of projects and put together a long term plan." DGR's proposal includes \$5,200 for mapping and \$17,400 for a 10-year plan. No decision was made on the proposal.

Waste Water Superintendent Dwight Zerr reported on a new control system installed at the Park Lift Station and the Aspen Lift Station. The new control system replaces the float system. Both lift stations were done at a cost of \$4,500.

Shawn Lambertz, electric superintendent, talked about the pickup quotes for the electric department. The council authorized getting bids for the new pickup and accessories.

Terry Herron, city supervisor, said the city has sanded only once and snow removal has been at a minimal. He also reported that there was a request for a new keypad lock at the skating house, but he said he saw no need for that.

City Attorney Drew Johnson presented a small cell ordinance for consideration by the council. Other communities are having to grapple with these small cell stations. He did suggest waiting for three of six months to see how other communities are handling these. The city does have a minimum ordinance addressing cell towers.

Petitions for city council need to be turned in by February 23 at 5 p.m.

The Northeast Council of Government 2017 performance report was presented to the council. The city pays about \$1,500 a year for dues to NECOG. In 2017, with the help of NECOG, the city received \$8,000 for a water study and \$20,000 for a sewer and storm sewer study. There is also a pending application for \$19,238 for a lift station generator at the Aspen Lift Station.

Officer Justin Cleveland was authorized to attend a statewide sex offender registry conference April 24-25 in Deadwood.

The video of the meeting has been posted on the 397news.com website.

Gov. Dugaard Signs First Red Tape Bills Of Session

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Dugaard signed five "red tape" bills that aim to reduce excessive complexity throughout South Dakota's laws. You can click on the bill number to get more information about the law.

SB 57 – An Act to revise certain references regarding the contractor's excise tax.

HB 1015 – An Act to repeal the use of explosives, pyrotechnics, and fireworks for the protection of sunflower crops from depredating birds.

HB 1020 – An Act to revise certain provisions and regulations regarding medical assistants.

HB 1035 – An Act to repeal certain provisions and regulations related to labeling requirements for feed.

HB 1037 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the South Dakota State Fair.

These pieces of legislation are part of an ongoing effort to make government more accessible by repealing unnecessary laws and regulations that could lead to confusion, delay or inaction. Through 2017, the Dugaard Administration has repealed 1,541 sections of state statute, removing 129,746 words from the code, and the administration has proposed twenty more red tape bills this legislative session.

Service Notice: Joy Stiklestad

Memorial services for Joy Stiklestad, 68, of Claremont will be 11:00 a.m., Thursday, February 8th at Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Pastor Sara Sorenson will officiate. Burial will take place a later date.

Joy passed away February 3, 2018 at Avera St. Lukes's Hospital, Aberdeen.



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Super Premium E30's
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slashed benzene & related
genotoxic, carcinogenic
tailpipe emissions;
*see sdfu.org's E30 tab for
info, E30 prices\locations.

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

Gov. Daugaard Signs Bills Into Law

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed the following bills into law on Monday. You can click on the bill number to get more information about the law.

SB 17 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding a division under the Department of Human Services.

SB 18 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the South Dakota Board of Technical Education.

SB 27 – An Act to make an appropriation from the coordinated natural resources conservation fund to the State Conservation Commission and to declare an emergency.

SB 40 – An Act to authorize the transfer of certain surplus real estate in Rapid City to the Ellsworth Development Authority and to declare an emergency.

HB 1003 – An Act to revise certain provisions concerning the content of the campaign finance disclosure reports and to declare an emergency.

HB 1006 – An act to revise the extent of comments required by the director of the Legislative Research Council regarding certain ballot measures and the period of time in which those comments are to be made.

HB 1011 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding voter registration list maintenance mailings.

HB 1013 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding voting systems used in elections and to declare an emergency.

HB 1019 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding background checks for physicians and to declare an emergency.

HB 1021 – An Act to revise certain provisions related to the practice of podiatry and to authorize certain fee increases.

HB 1030 – An Act to provide for the cancellation of certain uncollectible unemployment insurance contributions.

HB 1040 – An Act to provide for the licensing of a professional counselor, professional counselor-mental health, or marriage and family therapist licensed in another state under certain circumstances and to declare an emergency.

HB 1041 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding insurers' internal audit requirements.

HB 1046 – An Act to allow certain resident farmers or ranchers to receive a big game license during the Black Hills deer season.

HB 1047 – An Act to revise certain provisions defining fur-bearing animals.

HB 1048 – An Act to revise certain provisions referring to the statements on auditing standards utilized by the Department of Revenue.

HB 1049 – An Act to revise certain references to the Internal Revenue Code.

HB 1068 – An Act to revise certain provisions regarding the collection of motor fuel tax from interstate fuel users.

HB 1069 – An Act to establish an unladen motor vehicle permit for certain proportionally registered commercial motor vehicles.



Glimpse From Greenfield

Brock Greenfield
State Senator
District 2

The final number of bills dropped in the “hopper” prior to the bill introduction deadline ended up being 319 on the House side and 215 on the Senate side. That number is significantly higher than in the recent past. Simply put, a whole lot of ideas are ruminating, and this is proving to be a very busy session with committees experiencing larger workloads than normal.

A couple weeks ago, I highlighted an adoption bill that spoke to the age difference between an adult and a prospective adoptive child. In Health and Human Services last week, we heard another bill, SB 106, that seeks to insert new language into the law relative to who else is eligible to adopt. Current law calls for placement preference to be given to “a relative or custodian who is available and who has been determined by the department (of Social Services) to be qualified, provided the placement with the that relative or custodian is in the best interest of the child.” SB 106 would assert that “an individual, not related by birth, adoption, or marriage to the child but who has an emotionally significant relationship with the child” would also be eligible to seek to adopt. Again, the attempt is to do what is in the best interest of the child. After being amended to reflect the language I have quoted, the bill passed committee and subsequently the floor with unanimous votes.

SB’s 108 and 109 both sought to change or repeal licensing requirements for different groups of professionals. In both cases, we heard a loud outcry from the people most intimately involved with those bills, and both bills were defeated. SB 108 sought to deregulate shampooing and cleansing of hair as it related to cosmetology licensure. SB 109 called for repealing the requirement that interpreters for the deaf be licensed. Proponent testimony was underwhelming in expressing the need for South Dakota to pass either bill, while the opponents had provided much feedback by way of testimony and personal contacts that compelled the HHS Committee to side with them and defeat the bills, 6-1 and 7-0, respectively.

SB 164 would establish that it is illegal for a medical professional to insert a catheter into a patient under the age of 16 without a parent’s consent unless a medical emergency necessitates the catheterization. We heard testimony that a three-year-old had been involuntarily catheterized because his parents were suspected of exposing him to drugs. Because the child was not potty-trained and was not able to submit to a urinalysis on request, he was involuntarily subjected to the invasive process. This bill passed committee 7-0, and will be taken up on the floor this week.

SB 139 was amended in the Judiciary Committee to read that there is “a rebuttable presumption that a parent has agreed to a change in physical custody if the change has occurred for a period of one hundred twenty consecutive days or more and the parent has not formally objected to the court, even in the absence of a formal written agreement.” This was to address a case in which a 16-year-old child had chosen to live his non-custodial parent. The custodial parent did not object, and in-function the change had been implemented. However, when the non-custodial parent sought a change to the child support agreement, the courts said they could not grant the change because there was not a court-order recognizing the change in custody. This bill seemed to be common-sense once the amendment was put on it, and it passed both the committee and the floor unanimously.

Also before the Judiciary Committee was SB 168, which has drawn some interest from a number of people. This bill would call for every member of the SD Legislature to submit to a drug test. If a person

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failed his or her drug test, his or her name would be forwarded to the presiding officer of the House or Senate for potential disciplinary action. The bill passed the committee 4-3. I voted for it. However, I recognized that the bill had a few holes in it that were going to have to be tended to prior to coming up for debate on the floor. First, there is nobody identified as the administrator of the program. Second, there is nothing to ensure HIPAA compliance. Third, there is no contemplation of re-testing in the case of a false positive. Although the bill is well-intentioned, and I support it in-concept, it has a long way to go before it is ready to be passed into law. I am hopeful that the prime sponsor will come forth with some amendments to address these and other issues with the bill.

Last week, I mentioned a "transparency issue" that was pending on the floor. SB 84 seeks to prohibit a state agency from entering into a confidential settlement agreement with an individual. I mentioned that I planned on supporting the bill on the floor because of efforts being undertaken to improve the bill. I am happy to report that good-faith efforts did lead to the bill being improved via the amendment process, and I did support it. The bill passed the Senate, 21-13. There remain a few questions that will undoubtedly be dealt with as the bill passes over to the House.

Finally, SB 46 calls for all SD schools to establish policies with regard to the use of "restraint and seclusion." It would require that parents be notified in the event that a restraint procedure is used on their children. Moreover, it prohibits prone restraints, and it forbids schools from confining children involuntarily. This bill was heard on the Senate floor on a day when many administrators were watching and listening, and they appeared to be supportive of the bill. As I met with many of them later in the day, the bill mandating them to establish these policies did not even come up, so I assume they did not view it as problematic or burdensome.

Thank you for reading, once again! God bless each of you!

Brock

Thune's Office Accepting Summer Internship Applications

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) is currently seeking college students to serve as summer interns in his office in Washington, D.C., as well as in his offices in Aberdeen, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls.

Interns in Thune's state offices will participate in constituent service and state outreach activities, while students in the Washington, D.C., office will have the opportunity to witness the legislative process, give Capitol building tours, and attend Senate votes and hearings. Both in-state and Washington, D.C., internships will allow students to work closely with constituents, hone their research and writing skills, and learn a multitude of valuable office skills.

"The opportunity to intern in a Senate office is one of the best ways to learn how our federal government works," said Thune. "Interns in my office will experience the inner workings of a Senate office firsthand, while improving their legislative knowledge and communication skills. I encourage all college students to consider applying for this rewarding experience."

Thune is chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; and a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; and the Senate Committee on Finance.

College students who are interested in interning in Thune's Washington, D.C., Aberdeen, Rapid City, or Sioux Falls offices should fill out an online application form with their resume and cover letter by March 9, 2018, at <https://sen.gov/PR9V> or by searching "intern program" on thune.senate.gov. **Mailed-in applications will no longer be accepted.**

For more information, please call 202-224-2321.

South Dakota State Parks Remain Popular Getaways

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) officials say state parks saw high numbers of visitors in 2017. The state park campgrounds hosted more than 342,000 nights of camping last year, up 3.8 percent and continuing an upward trend that has been steadily growing for over a decade.

But the real highlight of 2017 according to Katie Ceroll, South Dakota State Parks director, is the opportunities created by several new and expanded services in the parks.

"Camping is widely popular in the state parks," she said. "But we offer so much more. Whether you're staying overnight or stopping in for the day, parks feature visitor centers, special events and other recreational opportunities to enhance your visit."

Ceroll noted several accomplishments in 2017 that drew people to the parks.

In May, Good Earth State Park near Sioux Falls opened its visitor center and has already surpassed 80,000 guests. In addition, the park offered over 180 programs on topics from cultural history to snowshoeing. Good Earth is also a popular gathering place for group activities.

"The visitor center meeting rooms and patio are becoming popular venues for meetings and special events," said Ceroll. "An outdoor amphitheater will be constructed this spring, which will be used for school groups, programming and group rentals."

In June, over 11,600 visitors attended the 40th Annual Fort Sisseton Historical Festival. The three-day event included a military encampment, pie-baking contest, musical performances and shooting competitions.

Water recreation was boosted in June with the dedication of the Jay Heath Canoe and Kayak Trail along the Big Sioux River. The water trail features new canoe/kayak campsites at three state parks, as well as several city and county parks. A GPS-based website provides details on public access points along the river from Sioux Falls to Sioux City, Iowa.

In September, Custer State Park opened the rejuvenated Peter Norbeck Outdoor Education Center. The interactive center is designed to introduce, educate and encourage families to explore the natural world on their own.

"These and other new features are great ways to enhance your experience in the parks," said Ceroll. "I encourage folks to get out in 2018 and discover all your parks have to offer."

For more information on South Dakota State Parks, visit gfp.sd.gov.

-GFP-

Game, Fish and Parks Food Plot Program Offers Free Seed

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) food plot program was developed nearly 50 years ago to assist landowners in providing winter food sources for wildlife. Landowners can receive free corn or sorghum seed to plant each spring, plus a payment to help offset planting costs. The program took a step forward in 2015, offering landowners a third seed option, called the brood mix.

The brood mix is an annual mixture of cover crop species (i.e. canola, flax, millet, radish, sunflower), designed to flower from spring through fall and produce seed for wildlife to forage on during winter. By flowering, the brood mix provides pollinator habitat that traditional corn and sorghum food plots lack. Pollinating insects (i.e. bees and butterflies) thrive in areas with flowering plants. Insects comprise nearly 100% of a pheasant chick's diet, therefore making habitats with high insect numbers for pheasant chicks to forage a key component of pheasant production.

Landowners enrolled in the program still retain and may regulate all hunting access privileges; however they cannot charge anyone a fee in exchange for hunting access. For more information and to find a habitat advisor in your area, visit <http://habitat.sd.gov/> or contact a GFP biologist at 605.353.7145.

Seed is typically distributed in May, so it is important that interested landowners get signed up as soon as possible.

-GFP-

South Dakota Habitat Conservation Foundation Elects Officers

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Habitat Conservation Foundation recently announced the election of officers for its board of directors for 2018.

Christine Hamilton of Kimball will serve as president, Jan Nicolay of Sioux Falls will serve as vice president and Steve Halverson of Pierre will serve as secretary/treasurer for the organization.

“I’m honored by the opportunity to serve South Dakota in this capacity, and I’m looking forward to working with fellow board members to support projects that establish new habitat and promote the benefits of conservation practices. Land stewardship is so important now, and critical for future generations,” stated Hamilton.

Other members continuing their service on the board include: Jeff Scherschligt and Scott Lawrence of Sioux Falls; Doug Balvin of Huron; Tony Bour and Larry Ness of Yankton; Tim Kessler of Aberdeen; Les Lindskov of Isabel; DeLon Mork and Terry Schultz of Madison; Dick Muth and Jack Theeler of Mitchell. GFP Department Secretary Kelly Hepler and GFP Commissioner Barry Jensen of White River serve as ex officio members of the Board.

In 2017, grants in the amount of \$611,000 were distributed for 12 projects that improved wildlife habitat and provided incentives for additional hunting opportunities on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands in South Dakota. More information is available online at <http://habitat.sd.gov/resources/habitatconservationfund.aspx>.

The Foundation also recently received its nonprofit determination from the Internal Revenue Service, so it can now accept tax deductible donations directly. The Foundation will continue to work with the South Dakota Community Foundation to raise and manage endowed funds held by the Community Foundation for wildlife habitat and water quality improvement projects in South Dakota.

About the South Dakota Habitat Conservation Foundation: The South Dakota Habitat Conservation Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides funding for wildlife habitat and water quality projects. This foundation manages an endowed fund established at the South Dakota Community Foundation stemming from one of the eight recommendations of the Governor’s 2013 Habitat Summit, and it also receives tax deductible donations directly that are not endowed. Periodically, it will provide grants from both non-endowed contributions and earnings from endowed contributions at the South Dakota Community Foundation for projects conducted in South Dakota. In the coming year, the foundation will undergo a strategic planning process to identify future project priorities.

For more information, please visit <http://habitat.sd.gov/resources/habitatconservationfund.aspx> or call 605.773.4503.

GROW SD Receives State Farm® Grant to Support Small Business

The Northeast South Dakota Economic Corporation (NESDEC) dba GROW South Dakota (GROW SD) recently received a Good Neighbor Citizenship Grant from State Farm for its technical assistance (TA) program for small business borrowers. The purpose of the project is to assist small business loan applicants prepare to borrow money and grow their business.

The TA provided by GROW SD business loan officers will support business owners in various aspects of their operations. Each business will have different needs, but in general, TA comprises starting or expanding a business before, during, and after financing. NESDEC primarily serves northeastern South Dakota, but the grant allows the organization to have a wider reach across the state.

“State Farm is committed to building safer, stronger, and better educated communities. We feel honored to be able to support GROW SD as we also have an emphasis on helping small businesses thrive and creating jobs.” Kelly Pargett, State Farm Public Relations specialist.

NESDEC celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2018. Through September 30, 2017, the organization had made 1,993 loans to 1,204 businesses for more than \$67 million. These loans assisted businesses in creating or maintaining 12,258 jobs.

For information, visit www.growsd.org or call 605-698-7654.

Gas Price Trends Showing No Relief

Monday, February 5, 2018 - The national gas price average has increased for the sixth consecutive week, landing today's national average at \$2.61. That is 18 cents more expensive since prices started the upward trend in late-December and 3 cents more than last Monday.

"Every motorist in the country is paying more at the pump year-over-year. At \$2.58 cents, South Dakota is seeing an increase of 24 cents compared to the same time last year," said Marilyn Buskohl, AAA South Dakota spokesperson. "Strong demand coupled with steadily rising oil prices means filling up will continue to cost consumers more this month. In fact, the last time the national gas price average was this high, but under \$3/gallon in February was in 2010."

Quick Stats

The largest monthly changes in the nation's top ten markets are: Iowa (+22 cents), California (+21 cents), Minnesota (+19 cents), Nebraska (+18 cents), Kansas (+17 cents), North Dakota (+17 cents), Oklahoma (+17 cents), Florida (+16 cents), Louisiana (+16 cents) and Missouri (+16 cents).

The nation's top ten least expensive markets are: Texas (\$2.36), Mississippi (\$2.37), South Carolina (\$2.37), Alabama (\$2.37), Missouri (\$2.38), Arizona (\$2.38), Arkansas (\$2.39), Tennessee (\$2.41), Oklahoma (\$2.42) and New Mexico (\$2.43).

Central and Great Lakes Region

On the week, gas prices are less volatile than we have seen in the Great Lakes and Central region since the start of the year. While prices increased for most states, from 1 to 6 cents, a few states saw no change (Wisconsin) or a 1-cent decrease at the pump: Illinois and Missouri.

In the region, 10 of 13 states are selling gas for \$2.50 or more: Michigan (\$2.67), Iowa (\$2.64), North Dakota (\$2.63), Illinois (\$2.62), Nebraska (\$2.62), Indiana (\$2.60), Minnesota (\$2.58), South Dakota (\$2.58), Wisconsin (\$2.54) and Kentucky (\$2.51). Missouri (\$2.38) and Ohio (\$2.45) have the lowest gas price average in the region.

Oil market dynamics

At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI decreased 35 cents to settle at \$65.45. Last week's losses, which were buoyed by a stronger dollar, may extend into this week after EIA's latest weekly report revealed that crude inventories grew by an astonishing 6.8 million b/d.

The crude oil growth may give the market some pause as it assesses the long-term impact of OPEC's production reduction agreement, which remains in effect through the end of 2018. Countries outside of the agreement, such as the U.S., have seen production grow as global demand has grown, enabling these countries to export more oil while OPEC and its allies reduce production.

Motorists can find current gas prices along their route with the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. The app can also be used to map a route, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance. Learn more at AAA.com/mobile

AAA provides automotive, travel, and insurance services to 58 million members nationwide and nearly 97,000 members in South Dakota. AAA advocates for the safety and mobility of its members and has been committed to outstanding road service for more than 100 years. AAA is a not-for-profit, fully tax-paying member organization works on behalf of motorists, who can now map a route, find local gas prices, discover discounts, book a hotel, and track their roadside assistance service with the AAA Mobile app (AAA.com/mobile) for iPhone, iPad and Android. For more information, visit www.AAA.com.

Coffee: It's Good For The Soul A Look at This Time Honored Tradition

By Lura Roti, for South Dakota Farmers Union

The original article ran in the February 2018 issue of the SDFU Union Farmer newsletter.

As an agriculture journalist, I've been driving through rural communities across South Dakota for more than two decades. If I pull into a fuel station before noon and step inside, I nearly always witness coffee.

Coffee, as defined in this article, is quite simply a group of men, dressed for the workday in coveralls or T-shirts - depending on the weather of course - hands around steaming mugs or pop cans visiting.

When I, an out-of-towner, walk in, conversations nearly always wane. And, even though I don't say a word, I always feel as though I am interrupting an important meeting of sorts. Kind of the feeling I get if I arrive late for church.

Other than that uncomfortable feeling, I didn't give these coffees much thought until I spent a November morning visiting with Peter Bisgard and his adult sons, Bob and Randy. While interviewing them about their family's Day County farming operation, the men mentioned that coffee with neighbors is part of their daily routine.

They explained to me that this daily ritual has value beyond the social. "We used to meet every morning at a bachelor neighbor's house. After he died, and we didn't meet for about six weeks. We all missed it and realized that we get a lot of information by talking to neighbors," Peter said.

He explained to me that whether it was discussing a new piece of machinery before making a purchase or sharing a bit of local news, the men felt their day went better when it began with coffee. Today, the men meet up in the basement of their rural church.

After talking with the Bisgards, I began to think about the role coffee has in the lives of South Dakota's farmers and ranchers. The more I thought about it, the more eager I was to visit with other farmers and ranchers to learn about this time-honored tradition that I believe dates back to homesteading.

Just last winter when I was reading the Little House series to my 7-year-old daughter, Parker, I noticed that several chapters included comments about the Ingalls family waiting for Pa to return from coffee at the General Store to provide them with information.

Staying connected, especially during the winter months, is the reason Salem farmer, Jim Wahle heads to T & C's Pit Stop each morning.

"It's the social aspect. I stop out here first thing in the morning, have coffee, catch up on current events and what is going on in the community," said Jim of the morning coffee routine he's kept nearly all his adult life.

Brian Heinecke, agrees. A Sisseton crop and livestock farmer, Heinecke has been going to coffee with his dad, Richard, for as long as he can remember.

Typically, the men meet up at a local C-store, but a few years back, when Richard was undergoing chemo and was confined to a wheelchair, a few guys would meet up in the Heinecke's kitchen.

"It really meant a lot to dad. We're a small community where everyone checks in on everyone."

Beyond the feel good reasons

Connecting with friends on a regular basis is good for your health, says Andrea Bjornestad, Assistant Professor in the Department of Counseling and Human Development at South Dakota State University & SDSU Extension Mental Health Specialist.

"We all have a human need to feel connected to others," Bjornestad explains. "To feel connected, you need



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to be with people with whom you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts, ideas, worries and concerns." Social support, Bjornestad adds, reduces the risk of depression - an important health outcome for farmers and ranchers, a group of individuals who in 2012, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) listed as having the highest suicide rate.

"We need to focus on farmers' and ranchers' mental health," Bjornestad says. "With the economy the way it is, our farmers and ranchers are experiencing daily stress that may be turning into chronic stress."

She explains that chronic stress can contribute to the development of anxiety or depression.

Bjornestad and Leacey Brown, SDSU Extension Gerontology Field Specialist, recently conducted a study of 185 farmers and ranchers from South Dakota and other Midwest states that looked at the impact of social support on the depression symptoms of farmers and ranchers.

The survey looked at social support as coming from a significant other, friends or family. The study showed that 9.2 percent of participants were depressed. Higher scores on the three subscales (family, friend, significant other) were all associated with lower depression scores.

"What was unique in my findings, is friendship support was the most significant type of support. Most farmers reported support from family members and/or a significant other. However, those with more depression symptoms reported less support from friends," Bjornestad explains.

She adds that unlike a physical illness, mental illness often goes undetected and undertreated.

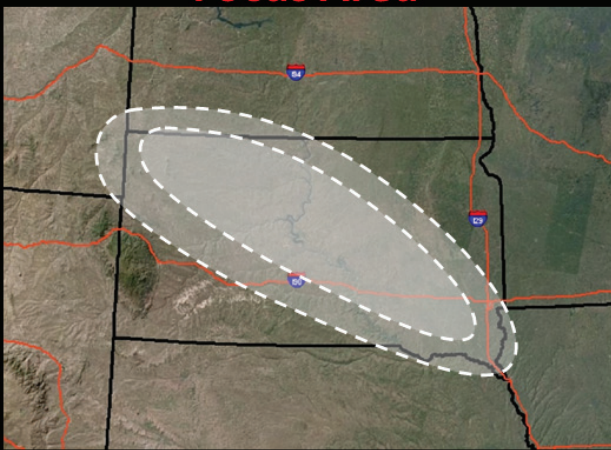
"When our body is hurt, we eventually go to the doctor. When our brain is hurt, we are more likely to ignore all the signs and symptoms," Bjornestad says.

Although coffee isn't a cure-all, Bjornestad says it's a healthy activity that shouldn't be ignored.

Light Snow Possible Thursday & Friday

Prolonged Period Could Yield A Few Inches

Impacts

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Wind |  |
| Light: 10-20mph | |
| Visibility | Increasing Confidence But Snow Totals Still Uncertain |
| Reduced - But Generally Good | |
| Snow Accumulation | |
| A Few Inches | |

weather.gov/Aberdeen Like National Weather Service Aberdeen @NWSAberdeen

Published on: 02/05/2018 at 2:26PM

A persistent area of light snow looks to move into the area early Thursday into early Friday. We generally anticipate light snow and light winds, with the potential for a few inches of accumulation. This is still a few days out and models could still shift this feature - so stay tuned!

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Today in Weather History

February 6, 1959: A man from Gary in Deuel County was in critical condition with frozen hands, feet, and arms after spending the night in his car in subzero weather. Click [HERE](#) for information on a Winter Storm Survival Kit for Travelers.

February 6, 1987: Record warmth occurred across all of central, north central, and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota with highs in the mid-50s to the lower 60s. Aberdeen, Kennebec, Mobridge, Pierre, Sisseton, Timber Lake, Watertown, and Wheaton all set record highs on this date in 1987. Pierre recorded the warmest temperature for the day with 62 degrees.

1978: A massive nor'easter buried the cities of the northeastern U.S. Storm totals included 18 inches in New York City, 16 inches at Philadelphia, and 14 inches at Baltimore. The Boston MA area received 25 to 30 inches in "The Great New England Blizzard," and the mayor outlawed travel in the city for an entire week. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the History Channel.

2010: On February 5-6, a severe nor'easter, commonly referred to as Snowmageddon, impacted the east coast from North Carolina to New York. Some snowfall amounts include; 32.9 inches at Washington Dulles International Airport; 28.5 inches at the Philadelphia International Airport; 21.1 inches at the Pittsburgh International Airport; 18.2 in Atlantic City; Trace in Central Park.

1807 - It was the famous "Cold Friday" in the Midwest and South. The temperature did not rise above zero in Ohio and Kentucky. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Brownsville, TX, was deluged with seven inches of rain in just two hours, and flooding in some parts of the city was worse than that caused by Hurricane Beulah in 1967. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Arctic cold invaded the south central and eastern U.S. Sixteen cities reported new record low temperatures for the date. Squalls in the Great Lakes Region produced a foot of snow at Arcade NY in three hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Forty-one cities in the western U.S. reported new record low temperatures for the date. Lows of -30 degrees at Ely NV and -33 degrees at Richfield UT were all-time records. Morning lows of 31 degrees at San Francisco CA and -15 degrees at Reno NV were records for February. Logan Canyon UT was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 54 degrees below zero, and Craig CO hit 51 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - A second cold front brought more heavy snow to the high elevations of Oregon, with 12 inches reported at Sunset Summit. Ten inches of snow blanketed Crater Lake and Mount Bachelor. Heavy snow also blanketed northeastern Nevada and parts of Washington State. In Nevada, up to a foot of snow was reported between Spring Creek and Lamoille. Stevens Pass WA received 14 inches of snow in 24 hours. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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| Tue Feb 6 | Wed Feb 7 | Thu Feb 8 | Fri Feb 9 | Sat Feb 10 | Sun Feb 11 | Mon Feb 12 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | |
| 13°F -4°F | 15°F 4°F | 14°F -6°F | 10°F -2°F | 17°F 0°F | 24°F 7°F | 28°F 11°F |
| S 11 MPH Precip 50% | NW 8 MPH | NNE 11 MPH Precip 20% | E 6 MPH | NW 8 MPH | WSW 11 MPH | S 10 MPH |



It's time for hats, gloves, and snow pants

Today: Highs 10 to 25°

Below Normal Temperatures through the rest of the work week

Light Snow, with accumulations around 1" or less
(mainly this afternoon and evening over E SD and W MN)



weather.gov/winter
NWS Aberdeen, SD

Graphic Created
2/6/2018 4:42 AM

www.weather.gov/abr

Published on: 02/06/2018 at 4:50AM

Hat, gloves, and snow pants weather continues! Expect below normal temperatures to continue through the rest of the work week. Light snow, with accumulations around 1 inch or less, will be possible mainly this afternoon and evening across eastern South Dakota and western South Dakota. Check out the latest forecast for your area at www.weather.gov/abr

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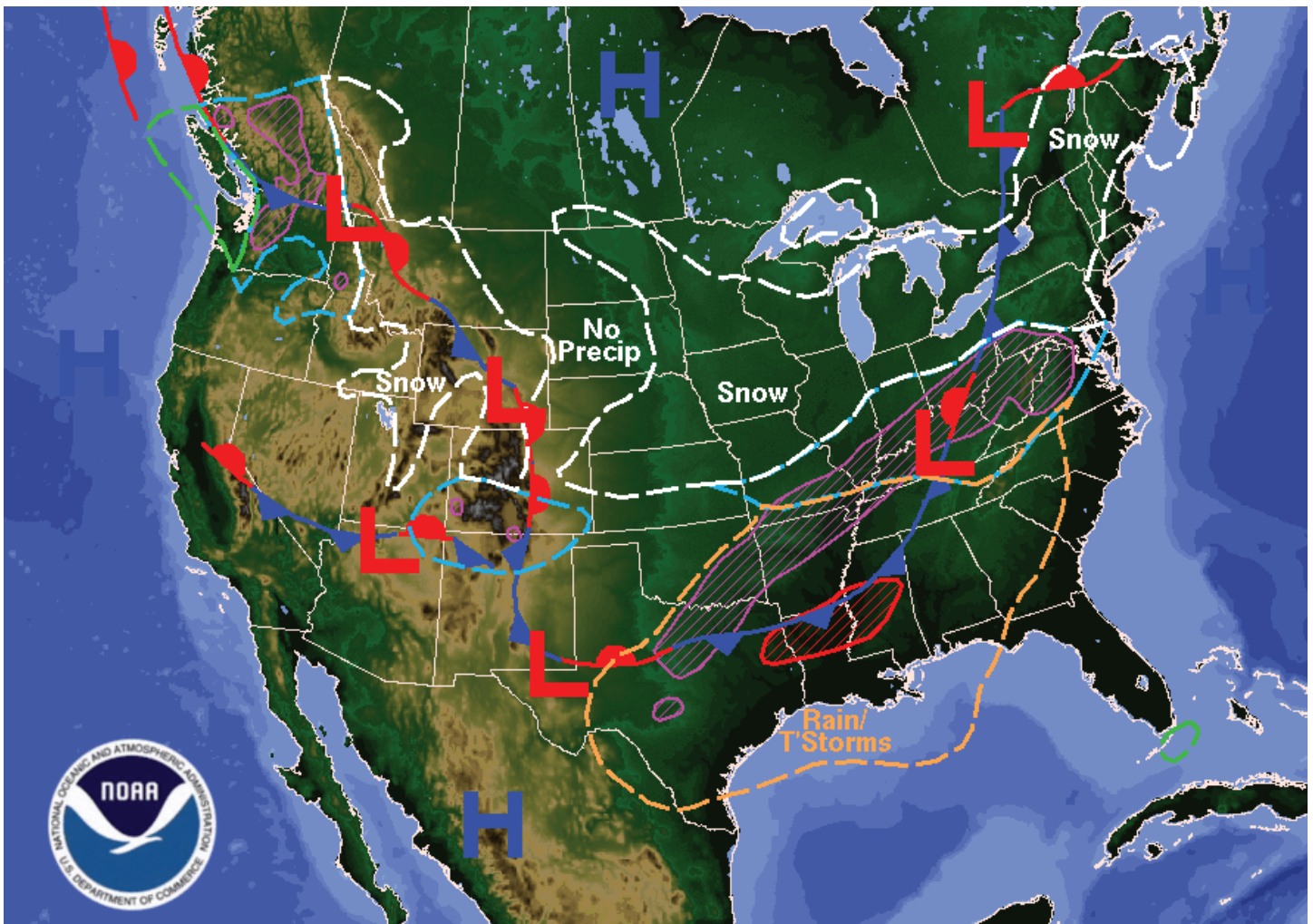
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 8.3 F at 1:35 PM
Low Outside Temp: -12.2 F at 9:40 PM
Wind Chill: -20.0 F at 12:17 AM
High Gust: 27.0 Mph at 3:05 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 58° in 1987
Record Low: -33° in 1907
Average High: 25°F
Average Low: 4°F
Average Precip in Feb: 0.09
Precip to date in Feb: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.56
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:47 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:46 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Feb 06, 2018, issued 4:17 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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THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

Years ago it was a heart-warming experience for me to take my wife and sons to visit my childhood home. With some hesitation I knocked on the door. The owners, who purchased the home shortly after my parents went to be with the Lord, remembered me and invited us in.

We began our tour in the living room, then went into the dining room and eventually the kitchen. We walked upstairs and paused in my childhood bedroom before visiting the attic. Then we went to the basement. Though there had been some changes, many things remained the same. Walking through my "original home" brought back many memories that flooded my heart. There were tears of joy mixed with tears of sadness as I thought of my family.

As we returned to the car, I began to think of the many different "homes" I'd lived in since my parents died. The final number was rather staggering but not unusual for most people. In 2011 a census study revealed that the average American will live in 11.7 different "homes."

Psalm 90 begins with the word "Lord" referring to our God as a sovereign God who is our eternal shelter – our dwelling place. Moses used the same words in Deuteronomy when he wrote, "the eternal God is your dwelling place." He told the Israelites that God was then and would always be their "home" – their refuge no matter where they were – whether in the wilderness or in the promised land. Home in Scripture is not a place but a Person.

This same Lord is the eternal God who will become the eternal shelter and refuge for all who accept His Son.

Prayer: We pray, Sovereign Lord, that those who need Your salvation will come to You for their eternal refuge. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 90:1 Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

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News from the Associated Press

Monday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Avon 56, Marty Indian 49
Bridgewater-Emery 80, Canton 52
Colman-Egan 52, Baltic 44
DeSmet 64, Castlewood 53
Ethan 86, Wagner 54
Great Plains Lutheran 57, Elkton-Lake Benton 50
Hanson 65, Freeman 44
Langford 57, Waubay/Summit 26
Luverne, Minn. 64, Flandreau Indian 52
Mitchell Christian 68, Sunshine Bible Academy 30
Philip 67, Wall 57

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Baltic 41, Colman-Egan 33
Brookings 70, Mitchell 60
Corsica/Stickney 76, Marty Indian 36
Dakota Valley 61, Sioux City, North, Iowa 29
Dell Rapids St. Mary 51, Gayville-Volin 47
Dupree 70, Takini 31
Edmunds Central 63, Aberdeen Christian 59
Elkton-Lake Benton 57, Great Plains Lutheran 38
Ethan 58, Wagner 43
Florence/Henry 49, Estelline 27
Grant County, N.D. 59, Lemmon 43
Howard 54, Garretson 38
Irene-Wakonda 60, Alcester-Hudson 47
Kadoka Area 61, New Underwood 38
McCook Central/Montrose 58, West Central 50
Mitchell Christian 45, Sunshine Bible Academy 40
Parker 58, Bon Homme 49
Solen, N.D. 67, Wakpala 52
Timber Lake 63, Standing Rock, N.D. 43
Wolsey-Wessington 57, Lake Preston 43

Panel rejects giving Legislature control over tuition hikes

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota House panel has rejected a bill that would have given the Legislature control over tuition hikes at the state's public universities.

The House Education Committee voted 9-3 Monday against the proposal. Republican Rep. Lynne DiSanto has said the state Board of Regents, which currently sets tuition and fees, needed more oversight.

DiSanto's bill said the board would fix tuition only after the Legislature approved any rate increases.

The board last year increased tuition and fees at the state's six public universities by an average of 2.9 percent for the 2017-18 school year.

Rapid City police investigate deaths of 2 homeless people

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police are investigating the deaths of two homeless people near a bridge on Interstate 190 in Rapid City.

A police statement Monday said a passer-by alerted authorities around 10:15 a.m. Sunday. Police arrived to find 58-year-old Ernie Evans, of Rapid City, dead. Police also found a dead woman lying against a nearby tree. She's identified as 54-year-old Connie Red Nest, of Rapid City.

Authorities found no signs of trauma or foul play. Autopsies were ordered to determine the cause of their deaths.

Police Chief Karl Jegeris says his department has now investigated the unattended deaths of four homeless people amid this winter's cold temperatures.

The department says it's working with Mayor Steve Allender's office toward long-term solutions for improving the safety of Rapid City's homeless population.

Lawmakers weigh whether to change how voters modify laws

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers will consider more than 20 measures that could alter how voters consider policy changes via the ballot.

The proposals range from modifying font size to barring voters from bringing constitutional amendments to the ballot, the Argus Leader reported .

Opponents called the measures an unprecedented attack on the direct democracy process a year after legislators blocked a campaign finance and ethics measure approved by voters. Republican lawmakers said voters were "hoodwinked" by a Massachusetts group that bankrolled the campaign.

Republican Rep. Mark Mickelson and others then began a campaign to block foreign influence on state laws. Mickelson collected signatures to bring the issue before voters.

A task force met over the summer and brought forth eight bills to change the initiative and referendum process. Some of measures would require disclosing cost estimates for ballot proposals or would change how those who bring proposals forward work with the Legislative Research Council.

Legislators also introduced proposals when they reconvened earlier this year, including geographic requirements for signature gatherers or requiring lawmakers to sign off on constitutional amendments prior to referral. One measure proposed banning campaigns from paying petition circulators.

"What I think we're seeing now is an unprecedented attack on the initiated measure process," said Doug Kronaizl, a direct democracy advocate. Kronaizl said he's concerned that the large amount of proposals to consider will allow some to pass through without citizen input.

Senate Majority Leader Blake Curd disagreed. "I don't think that just because people bring things up to talk about them means that it rises to the level of an attack or a threat," Curd said.

Some have expressed concern that raising the threshold for passing amendments at the ballot could prove unfair to future voters.

"You essentially are going to have a situation where the voters of today are deciding for the voters of the future and are holding them to a higher standard than what folks have been held to for a long long time in South Dakota," said Senate Minority Leader Billie Sutton.

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

Sioux Falls taxi companies fold after Lyft arrives

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — City officials in Sioux Falls say at least five taxi companies plan to call it quits a year after the ride-hailing service Lyft arrived.

The city's licensing specialist, Jamie Palmer, says eight cab companies missed the recent deadline for renewal and five of them have informed her they won't be renewing.

Todd Ellingson tells the Argus Leader he saw the writing on the wall for his company, 1st American Cab, when Lyft arrived. Ellingson says he can't compete with the convenience and price of Lyft. Ellingson says

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"it's an app-driven world" so he's pulling the plug on 1st American.

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

Girl's Basketball Polls

By The Associated Press

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

Class AA

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|-------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Aberdeen Central | (23) | 13-1 | 119 | 1 |
| 2. Rapid City Stevens | (1) | 14-2 | 90 | 2 |
| 3. Sioux Falls Lincoln | - | 12-3 | 71 | 4 |
| 4. Harrisburg | - | 11-3 | 45 | 3 |
| 5. Sioux Falls O'Gorman | - | 9-5 | 28 | 5 |

Others receiving votes: Brandon Valley 7.

Class A

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|----------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Belle Fourche | (24) | 17-0 | 120 | 2 |
| 2. St. Thomas More | - | 14-2 | 90 | 1 |
| 3. McCook Central/Montrose | - | 16-1 | 72 | 3 |
| 4. Hamlin | - | 15-2 | 39 | RV |
| 5. Lennox | - | 14-3 | 21 | 4 |

Others receiving votes: Vermillion 8, West Central 6, Crow Creek 2, Aberdeen Roncalli 1, Winner 1.

Class B

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|---------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Sully Buttes | (17) | 14-1 | 108 | 1 |
| 2. Faith | (3) | 17-0 | 84 | T2 |
| 3. Warner | (4) | 14-3 | 83 | T2 |
| 4. Avon | - | 15-2 | 27 | RV |
| 5. Castlewood | - | 13-2 | 21 | 4 |
| (tie) Waverly-South Shore | - | 14-0 | 21 | RV |

Others receiving votes: Irene-Wakonda 7, Hanson 6, Ethan 2, Waubay/Summit 2.

Boy's Basketball Polls

By The Associated Press

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

Class AA

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|-----------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Rapid City Stevens | (23) | 13-2 | 119 | 2 |
| 2. Rapid City Central | - | 13-2 | 81 | 1 |

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3. Harrisburg (1) 13-2 80 3
4. Sioux Falls Lincoln - 10-4 49 T4
5. Sioux Falls Washington - 9-6 25 T4
Others receiving votes: Brandon Valley 3, Yankton 2.

Class A

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Sioux Falls Christian | (24) | 15-0 | 120 | 1 |
| 2. Madison - | 15-1 | 95 | 2 | |
| 3. Sioux Valley | - | 15-2 | 72 | 3 |
| 4. Dakota Valley | - | 11-3 | 37 | 5 |
| 5. Bon Homme (1) | | 12-2 | 13 | 4 |

Others receiving votes: Red Cloud 10, Tea Area 8, Dell Rapids 3, Miller 2, Rapid City Christian 1.

Class B

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs |
|----------------------|------|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Bridgewater-Emery | (15) | 12-3 | 100 | 2 |
| 2. Sully Buttes (6) | | 13-1 | 89 | 3 |
| 3. Clark3Willow Lake | (2) | 12-3 | 75 | 1 |
| 4. White River (1) | | 14-1 | 56 | 5 |
| 5. Warner - | 15-2 | 16 | RV | |

Others receiving votes: Corsica-Stickney 12, Canistota 6, Herreid-Selby Area 4, Irene-Wakonda 3.

Dakota Access protester who fired gun to remain jailed

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A federal judge has ordered a Denver woman to remain jailed in North Dakota while she awaits a spring sentencing for shooting at law officers during protests against the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

U.S. District Judge Daniel Hovland refused to grant a request by Red Fawn Fallis to be returned to a Fargo halfway house from which she went missing for an entire day last month.

Hovland cited a "lack of candor" by Fallis, saying she thwarted efforts to find her by turning off her cellphone and refused to answer questions about her whereabouts upon returning to the halfway house Jan. 18. She was jailed for violating conditions of her pretrial release.

The ruling was issued late Friday, and Fallis' attorneys did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday. They had argued in court documents that aside from the one slip-up, Fallis had been an "exemplary" resident at the halfway house for three months, earning furloughs, working to further her education and helping out at a food bank. They also said a return to the halfway house might aid Fallis after she's sentenced.

Fallis, 38, was accused of firing a handgun three times during her October 2016 arrest. No one was hurt. She pleaded guilty Jan. 22 to civil disorder and a weapons charge. Prosecutors have agreed to recommend a prison sentence of no more than seven years, though Hovland can go as high as 15 years when he sentences Fallis on May 31 in Bismarck.

Fallis apologized during her plea hearing for the halfway house incident but did not say where she had been that day, telling Hovland only that she "needed some time to really think about things" and that she was struggling with the fact she has no family in North Dakota to lean on.

Fallis' protest 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 Ameri-

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can 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>

South Dakota lawmakers vote to keep officials' emails closed

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers have rejected a government transparency bill that would have made officials' correspondence open for public review in some cases.

The House State Affairs Committee voted 10-2 Monday to kill the open records measure, which Gov. Dennis Daugaard's office also opposed.

It would have removed "correspondence" from a list of government records that officials keep secret from the public.

The change would have opened access to correspondence such as some emails, but kept closed communications to officials from constituents who expect that they're confidential.

The governor's chief of staff, Tony Venhuizen, says public officials need "some degree of privacy" to conduct official business.

Dave Bordewyk, general manager of the South Dakota Newspaper Association, says the bill was a good step to ensure the state's open records law works even better for South Dakota.

Ellsworth airmen return home after Pacific rotation

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — About 350 airmen have returned home to Ellsworth Air Force Base in western South Dakota after a six-month deployment to Anderson Air Base in Guam.

The airmen were part of the U.S. military's continuous bomber presence in the Pacific. Base bombers were part of a contingent of U.S. bombers and fighter escorts that flew in international airspace east of North Korea to the farthest point north of the border between North and South Korea that they have in this century.

Ellsworth aviators flew 1,100 hours, completed more than 260 sorties and dropped 200 bombs in training during the rotation.

Global stocks tumble as Wall Street braces for more losses

By PAN PYLAS and ELAINE KURTENBACH, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Stock markets around the world took a battering Tuesday, following a dramatic sell-off on Wall Street that triggered concerns that a potentially healthy pullback from record highs could turn into a bear market.

Hopes that Wall Street won't repeat the scale of Monday's losses helped limit the selling during European trading hours. Futures markets suggested another, but more limited drop, in the U.S., with the Dow and S&P 500 futures down 0.9 percent and 0.5 percent.

The drop, which gathered pace Monday when the Dow Jones industrial average posted its biggest percentage decline since August 2011, has been fueled by fears the U.S. Federal Reserve will raise interest rates faster than expected due to a pick-up in wages.

That has fed into widespread concerns that markets were stretched following a strong run over the past year that pushed many indexes to record highs. Some also questions the possible role of computer-driven algorithmic trading in the precipitous declines.

"If investors look at underlying earnings growth and the fundamentals of the global economy, there is reason for optimism," said Neil Wilson, senior market analyst at ETX Capital.

"However once this kind of stampede starts it's hard to stop."

Among the biggest fallers on Tuesday was Tokyo's Nikkei 225 stock average, which ended 4.7 percent lower at 21,610.24, having earlier been down a massive 7 percent. All other Asian markets tanked, too,

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including the Shanghai Composite index, which closed 3.4 percent lower at 3,370.65 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng, which skidded 5.1 percent to 30,595.42. Australia's benchmark S&P ASX 200 slid 3.2 percent to 5,833.30 and South Korea's Kospi declined 1.5 percent to 2,453.31.

The selling persisted into European trading hours, though at a more moderate pace. The FTSE 100 index of leading British shares was 2.3 percent lower at 7,170 while the CAC 40 in France fell 2.2 percent to 5,171. Germany's DAX was down 2.1 percent at 12,423.

Though many stock indexes are close to where they started the year, the losses mark a major reverse following a sustained period of gains, a pullback that market pros have been predicting for some time.

Stephen Schwarzman, the chairman and CEO of financial firm Blackstone, warned recently of a potential "reckoning" in markets.

A 10 percent drop from a peak is often referred to as a "correction" while a bear market is generally defined as a 20 percent or so drop in indexes. The S&P 500, for example, has fallen 7.8 percent since it set its latest record high on Jan. 26.

"Seemingly the only hope for the markets at the moment is that investors suddenly decide that the sell-off has been a bit overdone," said Connor Campbell, a financial analyst at Spreadex.

Despite the sea of red in global stock markets, there are hopes that the retreat won't last long given that global economic growth has picked up and the financial system is more robust since the financial crisis.

"That is not to say that we won't see further falls in coming days, but in an environment where growth is good and earnings are expected to rise globally, there are decent underpinnings," said James Knightley, chief international economist at ING.

The catalyst for the latest sell-off came in jobs figures last Friday showing that wage growth in the U.S. was creeping higher. For many traders, that was a sign that the Fed will have to pick up the pace of its rate hikes — higher wages have the capacity to fuel inflation.

On Monday, the Dow finished down 4.6 percent at 24,345.75, while the S&P 500 sank 4.1 percent, to 2,648.94. Falls like this have not been registered since August 2011 when investors were fretting over Europe's debt crisis and the debt ceiling impasse in Washington that prompted a U.S. credit rating downgrade.

Still, while some financial assets became more attractive to investors as perceived havens of value. Gold, for example, was up 0.5 percent at \$1,343 an ounce.

The U.S. dollar remained resilient despite the stock market sell-off, which at one stage Monday saw the Dow shed 1,597 points. The euro was up 0.4 percent at \$1.2415 while the dollar rose 0.1 percent to 109.22 yen.

Kurtenbach contributed from Tokyo. Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, and Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo also contributed to this report.

Airstrikes outside Syrian capital kill at least 19 civilians

By PHILIP ISSA, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Russian and Syrian government forces launched a new wave of strikes on Tuesday, killing at least 19 civilians in a besieged area just outside Syria's capital, Damascus, according to activists and a war monitoring group.

The onslaught came a day after a rash of airstrikes battered Syrian opposition areas, killing more than 28 people east of Damascus and striking at hospitals and residential buildings in the northwestern Idlib province. Syrian government forces have been on the offensive in Idlib in recent weeks but the push intensified after militants shot down a Russian Su-25 near the town of Saraqeb over the weekend.

Russia has waged a punishing aerial campaign against Syria's armed opposition since intervening in the civil war on the side of its ally, President Bashar Assad, in 2015.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 10 towns in the Eastern Ghouta region outside Damascus were bombed on Tuesday. The activist-run Ghouta Media Center said at least two, Douma and Harasta, was struck by ground-to-ground missiles.

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The Syrian Civil Defense search-and-rescue group, known as the White Helmets and which works in opposition areas, called it "another bloody day for civilians" in Eastern Ghouta.

It released a video of its workers rushing to rescue victims from the debris on Tuesday. The Observatory said 25 people were killed Tuesday. The Civil Defense put the death toll at 19.

From Damascus, the United Nations called for an immediate, month-long cease-fire in Syria in order to deliver critical humanitarian aid and medical care to civilians trapped by fighting in regions across the country.

The U.N. mission warned in a statement on Tuesday of "dire consequences" to the humanitarian crises in the country, and identified seven areas requiring urgent humanitarian relief. It said its ongoing fighting and the deliberate obstructions by forces at the front lines were blocking aid organizations from reaching civilians in need.

The U.N. says it has a plan to reach 700,000 people with relief in the next two months, if it can get the permission to proceed.

Syria's multi-sided war has drawn in armies and insurgents from around the world, aggravating a conflict which began as an uprising against Assad's rule. Though Assad appears to have survived the insurgency, his forces continue to bomb and besiege opposition pockets around the country, including in Eastern Ghouta and Idlib.

The White Helmets said airstrikes targeting the village of Termala in Idlib on Tuesday killed three people. It said one of its workers was also killed by an airstrike while responding to a call for rescue in the area.

Meanwhile, Turkish operations against Syrian Kurdish forces and U.S. and Russian-backed operations against the Islamic State group have compounded the suffering of Syrians in the country's north and east.

Turkey's military said a Turkish soldier was killed in an attack in Idlib, where the Turkish troops are establishing an observation post. The military said the soldier was killed late Monday by a mortar-and-rocket attack that also wounded five Turkish soldiers and a civilian military contractor.

Turkey began deploying forces in an observer role to the rebel-held Idlib in October as part of a "de-escalation" agreement with Iran and Russia to stabilize the lines of conflict in the war-torn country.

That deployment is separate from a Turkish military offensive that Ankara launched last month to rout U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters from the northern enclave of Afrin.

The Russian military said on Tuesday it had asked Turkey to help recover the debris of the downed Russian fighter jet in order to establish the type of weapons that were used to shoot it down. Al-Qaida-linked militants said they downed the Russian Su-25 in Idlib on Saturday by a portable air defense missile.

Russian officials say the pilot engaged in a gunbattle with militants before blowing himself up with a hand grenade. It was the first time a Russian jet was shot down over Syria since Russia launched its air campaign on Assad's behalf.

Also Tuesday, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani criticized Turkey's ongoing offensive against U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters in the Syrian enclave of Afrin, saying it doesn't serve the interests of any country in the region.

Rouhani was quoted as telling his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in a phone conversation that "tensions in northern Syria do not benefit anybody." Iran is another key supporter of Assad's government.

Associated Press writers Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey, Nataliya Vasilyeva in Moscow and Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, contributed to this report.

Pence says he hasn't ruled out meeting with NKorea officials

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska (AP) — U.S. Vice President Mike Pence said he has not ruled out the possibility of meeting with North Korean officials at the upcoming Olympics in South Korea.

Before departing Monday for a six-day swing through Asia that will be highlighted by his stop at the Pyeongchang Games, Pence said no plans have been made for him to meet with any members of the

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North Korean delegation.

North Korea is sending its nominal head of state, Kim Jong Nam — the highest-level visitor to the South from the North in recent memory.

"Let me say President Trump has said he always believes in talking, but I haven't requested any meeting," Pence said. "But we'll see what happens."

Pence said his message, if he met any officials from the North, would be the same as it has been in public. "And that is that North Korea must once and for all abandon its nuclear weapons program and ballistic missile ambitions," he said.

Pence departed Monday for Japan and South Korea, aiming to ensure North Korea doesn't "hijack" the games as it participates on a joint team with the South, in the view of the White House. He'll hold symbolic events of his own to highlight the North's human rights abuses and nuclear ambitions, according to White House officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to preview the trip publicly.

"We'll be telling the truth about North Korea at every stop," Pence told reporters after touring missile defense facilities Monday that monitor and could respond to a launch by the North. "We'll be ensuring that whatever cooperation that's existing between North and South Korea today on Olympic teams does not cloud the reality of a regime that must continue to be isolated by the world community."

In Japan, he will meet with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. service members. In South Korea, Pence will visit a memorial to the 46 South Korean sailors killed in a 2010 torpedo attack attributed to the North, and hold meetings with President Moon Jae-in.

"Missile defense is essential to our national defense," Pence said before a briefing with U.S. Northern Command at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska. He touted the coming deployment of an additional 20 ground-based interceptors that would respond to an enemy launch.

Leading the U.S. delegation to the Olympic Opening Ceremonies, Pence will bring to the games Fred Warmbier, the father of Otto Warmbier, the U.S. student who died in 2017 shortly after he was released from North Korean detention.

"He & his wife remind the world of the atrocities happening in N Korea," Pence tweeted Monday before departing Washington.

The trip comes after President Donald Trump hosted a group of North Korean defectors in the Oval Office on Friday, including Ji Seong-ho, whom the president referenced in his State of the Union address last week. The White House cast the meeting as part of the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign to counter the North Korean nuclear program. The plan centers around rallying the international community to further isolate North Korea both diplomatically and economically.

White House officials said Pence was expected to continue to bring attention to North Korea's human rights abuses on the trip, and offer of reminder of grim conditions in North Korea.

On Sunday, the North Korean government shot back that its nuclear missile program would "deter Trump and his lackeys from showing off on the Korean peninsula."

"If Trump does not get rid of his anachronistic and dogmatic way of thinking, it will only bring about the consequence of further endangering security and future of the United States," the government said in comments carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

Trump and other senior officials have repeatedly said that time is running out before North Korea gains the capability to strike the U.S. mainland with a nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missile. The isolated country has proven it can launch missiles of sufficient range, but has yet to develop a vehicle that can withstand the hazards of atmospheric re-entry.

Associated Press writer Matthew Pennington contributed to this report.

Maldives leader says Supreme Court order was "coup"

By MOHAMED SHARUHAAN, Associated Press

MALE, Maldives (AP) — The president of the Maldives said Tuesday he ordered a state of emergency to investigate "this plot, this coup" involving a Supreme Court ruling last week that ordered the release of imprisoned opposition leaders, including many of his political rivals.

"This is not a state of war, epidemic or natural disaster. This is something more dangerous," President Yameen Abdul Gayoom said on national television. "This is an obstruction of the very ability of the state to function."

Yameen, who has rolled back a series of democratic reforms during his five years in office, has said that the court overstepped its authority in ordering the politicians released, saying the order "blatantly disrupts the systems of checks and balances."

Yameen's government has moved to assert its power since the Supreme Court ruling, announcing a 15-day state of emergency Monday night that gives officials sweeping powers, including to make arrests, search and seize property and restrict freedom of assembly. Hours after the emergency was declared, security forces arrested two Supreme Court justices and a former ruler who is now an opposition leader.

"This state of emergency is the only way I can determine how deep this plot, this coup, goes," Yameen said.

Meanwhile, Yameen's main political rival called on India to send an envoy — backed by its military — to free the imprisoned justices and opposition leaders.

Exiled former President Mohammed Nasheed, who was among the opposition politicians ordered freed by the Supreme Court and is now in neighboring Sri Lanka, said in a statement that Yameen "has illegally declared martial law and overrun the state. We must remove him from power," calling for the Indian envoy and military to be sent. "We are asking for a physical presence."

He also called on the U.S. to stop Maldives government officials from making transactions through U.S. banks.

There was no immediate response from India or the United States, though both have called on Yameen to obey the Supreme Court order.

Yameen has cracked down on civil liberties since coming to power in 2013, imprisoning or forcing into exile nearly every politician who opposes him.

Hours after the emergency was declared, security forces in riot gear and blue camouflage stormed the Supreme Court building, arresting two of its judges, including Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed. It was not immediately clear what charges they faced, if any. The whereabouts of the court's other two judges were not clear Tuesday.

Later, former dictator and opposition politician Maumoon Abdul Gayoom was seen on cellphone video taken by his daughter being quietly escorted from his home by security forces, hugging friends and family and waving to supporters before being driven away.

Shortly before his arrest he sent a message on Twitter saying a large deployment of police had surrounded his house: "To protect me or to arrest me? No idea."

His lawyer, Maumoon Hameed, said Gayoom faced charges including bribery and attempting to overthrow the government.

Gayoom was president from 1978 to 2008, when the Maldives became a multiparty democracy.

The Maldives is an archipelago of more than 1,000 islands with fewer than 400,000 citizens, more than one-third of them living in the crowded capital city, Male. Tourism now dominates the economy, with wealthy foreigners flown to hyper-expensive resort islands.

But it remains, in many ways, a small community. Gayoom, the former dictator, is the half brother of President Yameen. The two men are now political enemies. Nasheed, the opposition leader, unseated Gayoom in the country's first democratic elections in 2008. He and Gayoom are now political allies in an opposition alliance.

Nasheed resigned during his presidential term following protests over the arrest of a judge. He lost the

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2013 election to Yameen, then was convicted under Maldives' anti-terrorism laws in a trial widely criticized by international rights groups.

He was granted medical leave in 2016 and traveled to Britain where he was granted asylum.

Nasheed said last week after the court ruling that he would mount a fresh challenge for the presidency this year.

China, Australia, the United States, Finland and Denmark updated their travel advice during the latest unrest. China urged people to avoid travel there and the others told citizens to be cautious.

While there was no immediate sign of India preparing to send troops to the Maldives, New Delhi does have a history of military involvement there.

In 1988, Sri Lankan militants working for a Maldivian businessman tried to take control of the country and seized many government buildings.

Then President Gayoom asked for Indian military help to drive back the militants. India dispatched 1,600 paratroopers, who quickly restored Gayoom's control.

High Fives and a black eye: Scenes from Oscar Nominees Lunch

By **MIKE CIDONI LENNOX, SANDY COHEN and LINDSEY BAHR, AP Entertainment Writers**

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP) — The Oscar nominees luncheon brings together A-listers and rising stars — artists from every aspect of filmmaking — for an afternoon of celebration and mutual fandom.

With little on the agenda other than posing for a group photo, Monday's gathering was a chance for nominees to bask together in their exalted status together before the Academy Awards are presented on March 4.

The atmosphere makes for some fun moments.

First-time acting nominees Timothee Chalamet and Daniel Kaluuya high-fived at every opportunity. Greta Gerwig and Meryl Streep chatted on the risers before the class photo next to a cardboard cutout of Agnes Varda brought to the event by her "Faces Places" co-director JR.

Gerwig playfully choked best supporting actor nominee Sam Rockwell on the red carpet, and many of the stars and filmmakers exchanged laughs as they assembled — all 170 of them — for the class photo.

The nominee having the most fun was Kobe Bryant, whose "Dear Basketball" is up for animated short. Bryant wore a permanent grin and posed for photos with anyone who asked.

The event includes some pointers about giving good speeches, and also a chance for nominees to reflect on their place in this Oscars season.

Here are some more moments from interviews with nominees conducted by The Associated Press at the nominees' luncheon event:

BEST PICTURE MISTAKE STILL STINGS

Returning Academy Awards host Jimmy Kimmel has been poking fun at last year's best picture mix up in promotional spots for this year's Oscars, but it's not a laughing matter for some.

"La La Land" lyricist Justin Paul says the envelope gaffe was a bit of a soft spot for some of his friends and colleagues involved in the film. Paul says that he understands why it's still being talked about and to not mention it at all would be awkward.

"We have some wonderful, brilliant friends and colleagues who you know, it was a little bit of a soft spot, a sore spot in that moment, so we can totally understand it but I don't know if we're the ones laughing along the most," Paul said Monday.

"La La Land" was mistakenly announced as the best picture winner at last year's Oscars before the error was caught and "Moonlight" was named the winner of the evening's top prize.

Paul and Benj Pasek are nominated year for "The Greatest Showman" song "This is Me."

They said that they're able to enjoy awards season a little more this time and are five percent less terrified at every event.

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DEE REES LOOKS BEHIND HER HISTORIC NOMINATION

"Mudbound" director and co-writer Dee Rees said Monday she is more interested in the future than she is excited about making history.

Rees recently became the first black woman to get nominated for a best adapted screenplay Academy Award. "Mudbound" also scored another historic nomination for cinematographer Rachel Morrison, who became that category's first female nominee.

Rees said she wants the entertainment industry to get to a place where this is an everyday occurrence and not news.

"I think it's like cause for reflection and to really ask ourselves you know could there have been other moments and why is this the first time," Rees said. "And again I think it's more about using the moment to think how do we make the future a place where this isn't news making or this is an everyday occurrence."

Unlike many of the nominees, her film was released by Netflix on the streaming platform. Rees says it proves that audiences are interested in content and not business models. She says watching Indiana Jones on television growing up didn't impact her awe of the filmmaking.

OH, I GET IT NOW

"The Shape of Water" director Guillermo del Toro was still riding high Monday from his Directors Guild Award win on Saturday night. The Mexican director was all smiles thinking about the evening with his peers.

Del Toro said the night was fun and praised Judd Apatow's hosting skills, although he admitted that one joke aimed at him went over his head at the time.

Apatow poked fun during Saturday's ceremony at del Toro's director's photo, quipping that it was like an eHarmony profile picture.

Del Toro said Monday that he didn't actually know what eHarmony was when Apatow made the joke and that he had to look it up. He thinks it's quite funny now.

BRUISED, BUT NOT GIVING UP ON BASKETBALL

Common was looking so dapper Monday for the nominees' luncheon you could hardly tell he was trying to hide a black eye.

The musician and producer said he was trying to look good after getting beat up on the basketball court this weekend. Common donned a pair of glasses in hopes of hiding the little remaining bruise, although he was quick to pull out his phone and show photos of how his face looked after the accidental hit.

Common laughed that might have gotten a mild concussion from it.

It certainly didn't sour him on basketball: he was one of numerous stars who posed for photos with retired Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who is nominated for his short animated film "Dear Basketball."

Common is nominated for a best original song alongside Diane Warren for "Stand Up for Something" from the film "Marshall."

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

House committee votes to release Democrats' classified memo

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House intelligence committee's probe of Russian interference in the 2016 election spun further into charges and counter-charges among angry U.S. lawmakers and President Donald Trump as the panel voted to release a second classified memo about whether the FBI and Justice Department conspired against him.

This memo was written by Democrats on the panel who are pushing back against a GOP document, declassified by Trump last week, that criticizes the methods the FBI used to obtain a surveillance warrant on a onetime Trump campaign associate. The Democratic document attempts to counter some of the arguments and evidence put forward by the Republicans.

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The battle of classified memos has further deepened the partisan divide on the committee, which is supposed to be jointly investigating the Russian meddling and possible connections between Russia and the Trump presidential campaign. It also takes attention from the separate investigations by special counsel Robert Mueller and the Senate intelligence committee.

Trump said over the weekend that the GOP memo "totally vindicates" him. Both Republicans and Democrats disputed that, and Democrats also bemoaned the release of formerly classified information and the possibility the precedent could compromise future investigations.

After the House committee's Monday evening vote, which was unanimous, Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the panel's top Democrat, said he believed the Democratic document would "help inform the public of the many distortions and inaccuracies in the majority memo." But he also said he was concerned about "political redactions" the White House might make before its release.

The president now has five days to decide whether to allow the material's publication.

Schiff said he would compare any deletions the FBI and the Department of Justice might request with any White House edits to try to identify any attempts to withhold information for political purposes.

Texas Republican Rep. Mike Conaway, a leader of the panel's Russia probe, said after the vote that parts of the document should not be released.

"There are things in the memo that I would be uncomfortable with if the White House did not redact," he said.

Tensions between Trump and the Democrats were high before the vote, as the president and Schiff traded insults on Twitter Monday morning — less than a week after Trump called for more bipartisanship in his State of the Union address.

Trump tweeted that Schiff is "one of the biggest liars and leakers in Washington" and "must be stopped."

Schiff quickly shot back: "Instead of tweeting false smears, the American people would appreciate it if you turned off the TV and helped solve the funding crisis, protected Dreamers or ... really anything else."

White House spokesman Raj Shah said merely that consideration of a release would "allow for a legal review, national security review led by the White House counsel's office."

As a second week of memo-watching commenced, the committee was also prepared to interview Steve Bannon, Trump's former chief strategist, as part of the Russia probe. But that meeting was put off, according to two people familiar with the committee's schedule. They declined to be named because the schedule is private.

It was unclear if the House would hold Bannon in contempt. He has been subpoenaed and has now delayed answering the panel's questions three times as the committee negotiates with his lawyer and the White House over the terms of his interview.

At issue is whether the White House will allow him to answer questions about his time in the Trump administration.

As the committee continues to negotiate Bannon's interview, Democrats have been raising questions about whether the committee chairman, Rep. Devin Nunes of California, coordinated with the White House in drafting the GOP memo. After the document's release last week, the president quickly seized on it to vent his grievances against the nation's premier law enforcement agencies.

"The goal here is to undermine the FBI, discredit the FBI, discredit the Mueller investigation, do the president's bidding," Schiff said.

"I think it's very possible his staff worked with the White House," Schiff added, referring to Nunes.

Nunes was asked during a Jan. 29 committee meeting whether he had coordinated the memo with the White House. "As far as I know, no," he responded, then refused to answer when asked whether his congressional staff members had communicated with the White House. He had previously apologized for sharing with the White House secret intelligence intercepts related to an investigation of Russian election interference before talking to committee members.

Trump praised Nunes in a separate tweet Monday, calling him "a man of tremendous courage and grit, may someday be recognized as a Great American Hero for what he has exposed and what he has had to endure!"

The Republican memo released last Friday alleges misconduct on the part of the FBI and the Justice Department in obtaining a warrant under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to monitor former Trump campaign foreign policy adviser Carter Page. Specifically, the memo takes aim at the FBI's use of information from former British spy Christopher Steele, who compiled a dossier containing allegations of ties between Trump, his associates and Russia.

The underlying materials that served as the basis for the warrant application were not made public. Even as Democrats described that memo as inaccurate, some Republicans quickly cited it — released over the objections of the FBI and Justice Department — in their arguments that the FBI investigation that Mueller inherited is politically tainted. Still, some Republicans, including Rep. Trey Gowdy of South Carolina and House Speaker Paul Ryan have said the memo should not be used to undermine Mueller's probe.

The GOP memo's central allegation is that agents and prosecutors, in applying in October 2016 to monitor Page's communications, failed to tell a judge that Steele's opposition research was funded in part by Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and the Democratic National Committee. Page had stopped advising the campaign sometime around the end of that summer.

Steele's research, according to the memo, "formed an essential part" of the warrant application. But it's unclear how much or what information Steele collected made it into the application, or how much has been corroborated.

Associated Press writer Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

Hawaii emergency worker threatened after misleading photo

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — When an erroneous alert was sent out last month telling people in Hawaii that there was an incoming ballistic missile, Jeffrey Wong was an island away from the state's emergency management agency office where he works as an operations officer.

Wong helped gather hundreds of panicked guests at his hotel on the island of Kauai to seek shelter in a restaurant until he confirmed the alert was a mistake.

Then an Associated Press photograph circulated picturing Wong months earlier at the agency's Honolulu operations center on Oahu island — and people mistakenly thought Wong was the "button-pusher" who sent out the alert, wrongly accusing him in online comments of causing widespread panic and confusion.

Wong told The Associated Press last week he quickly learned how cruel the internet can be: "A lot of anger, a lot of ignorance came out as a result of that."

He added: "It's very hurtful to be wrongly accused, wrongly marked as an individual that's responsible for actions that affected, in a negative way, a lot of people within the state of Hawaii and possibly around the world."

Wong said he wanted to set the record straight so the public knows he didn't send out the alert. The employee who did has been fired. That man, who spoke to reporters separately on the condition that his name not be revealed, said he was devastated for causing panic but believed at it was a real attack at the time.

Wong, who oversees day-to-day operations at the agency, said he neither hired the other man nor did the man report directly to him. He said the former employee's supervisor does report to him.

The AP took the photo in July 2017 to accompany a story about Hawaii preparing for a North Korean missile threat. The news agency did not resend it after the false missile alert, but people found it online and recirculated it on social media.

Some of their comments called for Wong to be shot and water-boarded and there were also racially derogatory comments with some people questioning his loyalty to Hawaii and the U.S., he said.

The photo also included a yellow sticky note in the background that appeared to have a password on it, which people circulating the photo after the false alert pointed out as a reason to criticize the emergency management agency — prompting even more online rage.

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Fearing for his safety, Wong took screen-shots and print-outs to Honolulu police and filed a police report four days after the Jan. 13 false alert. Authorities are conducting a first-degree terroristic threatening and harassment investigation, said police spokeswoman Michelle Yu.

While Wong has been overwhelmed by the criticism he has endured, guests at the hotel where he was attending a civil air patrol conference praised his efforts to keep them safe.

"We appreciate your actions greatly and are grateful that you happened to be there and showed yourself to be strong, calm and positive," Marc Tiar, who was vacationing with his family, wrote in an email to Wong after returning home to Nevada. "We are safe at home in Reno now, but my family and I will never forget that day or the man who made sure we would be as safe as possible."

Former leader, 2 Supreme Court judges arrested in Maldives

By MOHAMED SHARUHAAN, Associated Press

MALE, Maldives (AP) — Security forces in the Maldives stormed the Supreme Court overnight, arresting two judges and later a top opposition politician, after the government declared a state of emergency in the Indian Ocean nation famous its luxurious resorts.

The government of President Yameen Abdul Gayoom has moved to assert its power since the Supreme Court ordered several imprisoned opposition politicians to be freed late last week. The government announced a 15-day state of emergency Monday night, giving it sweeping powers, including to make arrests, search and seize property and restrict freedom of assembly.

Yameen has cracked down on civil liberties since coming to power in 2013, imprisoning or forcing into exile nearly every politician who opposes him.

Hours after the state of emergency was declared, security forces in riot gear and blue camouflage stormed the Supreme Court building, arresting two of its judges, including Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed. It was not immediately clear what charges they faced, if any. The whereabouts of the court's other two judges were not clear Tuesday morning.

Later, former dictator and opposition politician Maumoon Abdul Gayoom was seen on cellphone video shot by his daughter being quietly escorted from his home by security forces, hugging friends and family and waving to supporters before being driven away.

Shortly before his arrest he sent a message on Twitter saying a large deployment of police had surrounded his house: "To protect me or to arrest me? No idea."

His lawyer, Maumoon Hameed, said Gayoom faced charges including bribery and attempting to overthrow the government.

Gayoom was president from 1978 to 2008, when the Maldives became a multiparty democracy.

The president's main rival, exiled former President Mohamed Nasheed, denounced the emergency decree and urged people not to obey what he called an "unlawful order."

"This declaration is unconstitutional and illegal," Nasheed, the country's first democratically elected leader, said in a statement.

Nasheed, who lives in exile, was among the opposition politicians ordered freed by the Supreme Court.

The Maldives is an archipelago of more than 1,000 islands with fewer than 400,000 citizens, more than one-third of them living in the crowded capital city, Male. Tourism now dominates the country's economy, with wealthy foreigners flown to hyper-expensive resort islands.

But it remains, in many ways, a small community. Gayoom, the former dictator, is the half brother of President Yameen. The two men are now political enemies. Nasheed, the opposition leader, unseated Gayoom in the country's first democratic elections in 2008. But he and Gayoom are now political allies in an opposition alliance.

The surprise, unanimous Supreme Court ruling last week ordering the release of the imprisoned opposition leaders has led to increasing turmoil, with Yameen lashing out at the court, opposition protests spilling into the streets of Male, and soldiers in riot gear stopping lawmakers from meeting in the parliament building.

Yameen, in a statement issued after the state of emergency was announced on state television, said that

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while "certain rights will be restricted, general movements, services and businesses will not be affected."

The emergency decree followed a series of letters exchanged by the government and the Supreme Court, arguing whether last week's order was legal and whether the prisoners could be freed.

Nasheed was one of the opposition leaders the Supreme Court had ordered freed, ruling that the guilty verdicts had been politically influenced.

The United Nations, United States and other foreign governments have urged the Maldives to respect the court order.

The U.S. also strongly criticized the emergency decree, with State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert saying Yameen has "systematically alienated his coalition, jailed or exiled every major opposition political figure" since his election.

She called on Yameen, the army, and police to comply with the rule of law, and for the constitutional rights of Maldivians to be restored.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said he was "gravely concerned" about the Maldives situation and asked Yameen and the Maldives government to "peacefully end the state of emergency, restore all articles of the constitution, take immediate steps to implement in full the order of the Supreme Court, and to permit and support the full, free and proper functioning of Parliament."

In addition to ordering the release of the political prisoners, the court also reinstated 12 lawmakers who had been ousted for switching allegiance to the opposition. When those lawmakers return, Yameen's Progressive Party of the Maldives will lose its majority in the 85-member parliament, which could result in the legislative body functioning as a rival power to the president.

The Maldives became a multiparty democracy 10 years ago after Gayoom's rule, during which he was repeatedly the only candidate for the presidency.

Nasheed won the nation's first democratic election in 2008 but resigned during his term following protests over the arrest of a judge. He lost the 2013 presidential election to Yameen, then was convicted under Maldives' anti-terrorism laws in a trial widely criticized by international rights groups.

He was granted medical leave in 2016 and traveled to Britain where he was granted asylum. He is currently in nearby Sri Lanka, watching as the political turmoil unfolds.

Nasheed said last week after the court ruling that he would mount a fresh challenge for the presidency this year.

China, Australia and the United States updated their travel advice during the latest unrest. China urged people to avoid travel there and Australia and the U.S. told citizens to be cautious.

32 Russians appeal to CAS seeking Olympic spots

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH, AP Sports Writer

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea (AP) — Six-time Olympic gold medalist Viktor Ahn and three former NHL players are among 32 Russian athletes who filed appeals Tuesday seeking spots at the Pyeongchang Olympics.

The 32 athletes all failed to pass the mandatory International Olympic Committee vetting — imposed as a result of Russian doping at the 2014 Sochi Olympics — and weren't invited to the games.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport said it would likely hear the case Wednesday in Pyeongchang. If the Russian athletes force the IOC to invite them, it would mean the medal contenders in some sports change dramatically only days before the games open on Friday.

CAS added that as well as short-track speedskating great Ahn, the 32 include world cross-country skiing champion Sergei Ustyugov and world biathlon champion Anton Shipulin.

Also on the list are former NHL players Sergei Plotnikov, Anton Belov and Valeri Nichushkin, who had been considered possible candidates for the Russian team in Pyeongchang.

If figure skater Ksenia Stolbova is invited, she could compete as soon as Friday morning in the pairs short program component of the team event.

Some of the 32 Russians are already in Far East countries like Japan so they will be acclimatized and

ready to travel to Pyeongchang if invited.

John Coates, the Australian IOC member who also oversees CAS operations, said Tuesday that the 32 had also filed appeals in Swiss courts, but didn't give details.

The IOC hasn't said why any of the individual Russians weren't invited, but did say it used a newly available database detailing past doping when it decided who should be eligible.

It is a separate case from the 28 Russian athletes who last week overturned doping bans from the 2014 Olympics at CAS. The IOC is also refusing to invite 13 of those that are still active.

Any Russians who win late invitations would compete under "Olympic Athletes from Russia" because the Russian team is formally banned for doping at the Sochi Olympics. That means they will compete under the Olympic flag and wearing uniforms without national insignia. If they win gold medals, the Olympic anthem will be played.

Late invitations could result in other Russians being cut, especially in sports such as hockey where a full roster is already registered. It's not clear how that process would work.

Stock drop rattles investors after long market run-up

By ADAM GELLER, AP National Writer

Working alone at home, Erik Lovequist often turns on a TV sports channel to supply background chatter. But when stock prices plummeted Monday afternoon, the music research specialist quickly flipped to a financial news show and leaned in to listen.

"I don't follow it all the time," said Lovequist, of Billerica, Massachusetts. He was among the millions of individual investors who, until the last few days, savored a bull market so steady it seemed nearly immune to a setback. "Then I saw something in the afternoon that the Dow is down 1,000 and I thought 'What?!'"

If it's any reassurance to Lovequist, he is hardly alone.

The 1,175-point drop in the Dow Jones industrial average Monday — about 4.6 percent of its value — capped two days of losses that have erased the stock market's gains for the year. The Dow is still up 21.3 percent over the last 12 months. But while many investors took comfort in the possibility that the setback to their retirement and college nest eggs might be short-lived, the sell-off still felt like a shock to some.

The run-up has been so strong for so long, even some who told themselves the market would reverse directions eventually were caught off-guard.

"Everybody was riding pretty high on how the markets were doing before and all of a sudden something that seems relatively optimistic has just come crashing down," said Chris Cornutt, a security engineer in the Dallas area who has been putting money into stocks in hopes that they will help put his two grade-school-age children through college.

Cornutt, 40, said he usually checks on the value of those investments once every few days. But on Monday he kept the stock charts up on a second screen of his computer at work, his aggravation growing the farther the indices dropped.

"I think everybody got lulled into a false sense of security," he said.

On Wall Street, traders took Monday's drop in stride, noting the tremendous changes in the markets since crashes like the one in 1987 that saw the Dow lose nearly 23 percent of its value in a single day.

With the modern market's computerization and built-in stop orders, "you're not going to have a 1987 kind of fear that spreads from guy to guy," said Stephen Guilfoyle of the private trading firm Sarge986. Still, he said, as stocks dropped Monday "people were looking at each other."

Matthew Cheslock, an equity trader at Virtu Financial, played down the drop.

"It's not a panic sell ... this is just a case where the market has gotten a little ahead of itself," he said.

Some Main Street investors agreed with that sentiment, saying they had no intention of withdrawing from the market.

"It'll come back. It always does," said Brandon Sweet, an insurance salesman in Farmington, Connecticut. On Monday he tweeted "RIP my 401k," but said he was really trying to make light of the situation. At 30, Sweet said he figures he has many years until he needs the money in his retirement account. "Who

knows? Next week it could be up, up, up.”

“You know, the market doesn’t go up in a smooth curve and it doesn’t go down in a smooth curve,” said B.D. Softley, a data base analyst in Lincoln, Nebraska, who is an active investor. “The worst thing to do in a downturn is to panic.”

Lovequist, who is 51, said he, too, intends to sit tight, reassured in part by the sizeable gains over the past year in the nest eggs he and his wife are setting aside for retirement. Until a week or so ago, those returns had been so robust, he’d begun wondering if they might not be able to stop working a couple of years ahead of their original schedule. But even with the setback, he’s still feeling pretty good about the substantial gains over the past year.

“I’ve been kind of waiting for today to happen to be honest because there’s just so high it can go,” he said.

AP reporter Deepti Hajela in New York contributed to this story.

Asian shares tumble after Dow has worst day since 2011

By ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Shares tumbled in Asia on Tuesday after a wild day for U.S. markets that resulted in the biggest drop in the Dow Jones industrial average in six and a half years.

Japan’s Nikkei 225 index skidded 6.1 percent to 21,296.03 by early Tuesday afternoon. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index lost 4.9 percent to 30,651.31 and Australia’s benchmark S&P ASX 200 had skidded 3.3 percent to 5,828.40. South Korea’s Kospi declined 2.9 percent to 2,418.70 and the Shanghai Composite index was off 2.2 percent at 3,412.55.

All other regional markets were lower.

The losses in Asia tracked the Dow’s 1,175 point plunge on Monday, its worst point drop of all time and its worst percentage decline since August 2011.

Two days of steep losses have erased the U.S. market’s gains from the start of this year, ending a spate of record-setting calm for stocks.

Market pros have been predicting a pullback for some time, noting that declines of 10 percent or more are common during bull markets. There hasn’t been one in two years, and by many measures stocks had been looking expensive.

The same is true of many global markets, where investors have been bracing for a correction while hoping not to see one.

“There would be few places to hide from the risk-off atmosphere that is expected to extend its stay in Asian markets today in a significant manner,” Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary. “This is fear rolling over itself,” she said.

Panic in other markets can send investors racing for the “safe haven” of Japanese yen holdings, she noted. That is painful for Japanese and other regional export manufacturers, whose competitiveness is hurt by stronger currencies that push their prices relatively higher.

The U.S. dollar weakened against the Japanese yen early Tuesday, trading at 108.61 yen, down from 109.12 on Monday.

Australian shares shed four months of gains in just morning trading, with all sectors losing ground.

In U.S. trading, banks fared the worst as bond yields and interest rates nosedived. Health care, technology and industrial companies took outsized losses and energy companies sank with oil prices.

By late morning Asian time benchmark U.S. crude had fallen 73 cents to \$63.42 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Monday, it gave up \$1.30 to \$64.15 per barrel. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, shed 73 cents to \$66.89 per barrel.

After the market’s big gains in 2017 and early 2018, stocks were overdue for a drop, said David Kelly, the chief global strategist for JPMorgan Asset Management.

“It’s like a kid at a child’s party who, after an afternoon of cake and ice cream, eats one more cookie and that puts them over the edge,” said David Kelly, the chief global strategist for JPMorgan Asset Management.

During Monday’s roller-coaster trading on Wall Street, at its lowest ebb, the Dow was down 1,597 points

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from Friday's close. That came during a 15-minute stretch where the 30-stock index lost 700 points and then gained them back.

The Dow finished down 4.6 percent at 24,345.75.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index, the benchmark most professional investors and many index funds use, sank 4.1 percent, to 2,648.94. That was its biggest loss since August 2011, when stocks were reeling as investors were fearful about European government debt and the U.S. had its credit downgraded after the debt ceiling impasse.

The Nasdaq composite fell 3.8 percent to 6,967.53. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks sank 3.6 percent to 1,491.09.

The slump began Friday as investors fretted that creeping signs of higher inflation and interest rates could derail the U.S. economy along with the market's record-setting rally.

The S&P 500 has fallen 7.8 percent since January 26, when it set its latest record high. Investors are worried that rising inflation might push the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates more quickly, which could slow down economic growth by making it more expensive for people and businesses to borrow money.

The highest bond yields in years are making bonds more appealing to investors compared with stocks.

As bad as Monday's drop is, the market saw worse days during the financial crisis. The Dow's 777-point plunge in September 2008 was equivalent to 7 percent, far bigger than Monday's decline.

The last 10 percent drop for markets came in early 2016, when oil prices were plunging as investors worried about a drop in global growth, which could have sharply reduced demand. U.S. crude hit a low of about \$26 a barrel in February of that year. A drop of 10 percent from a peak is referred to on Wall Street as a "correction."

Bond prices jumped after a steep decline on Friday. The yield on the 10-year Treasury slipped to 2.66 percent from 2.84 percent. That hurt banks by sending interest rates lower, meaning they cannot charge as much money for mortgages and other types of loans.

AP Markets Writer Marley Jay contributed to this story from New York. He can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MarleyJayAP> His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/marley%20jayt>

Rod McGuirk contributed to this story from Canberra, Australia.

Athletes vow to keep fighting in doctor sex-abuse scandal

By DAVID EGGERT, Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, Mich. (AP) — The worst sex-abuse case in sports history ended Monday with a third long prison sentence for Larry Nassar, and his victims vowed to keep fighting for accountability in the scandal that upended the gymnastics world and raised alarms about the sport's ask-no-questions culture.

Long after the disgraced doctor is locked up in a federal prison, investigations into his misconduct will go on, perhaps for years.

"We have taken care of one perpetrator. We have not taken care of the systems that allowed him to flourish," said Rachael Denhollander, who filed a police report in 2016 about how Nassar had molested her 16 years earlier, when she was 15, with her mother in the room.

The latest sentence of 40 to 125 years was for molesting young athletes at Twistars, an elite Michigan gymnastics club. The sentence is largely symbolic because Nassar, who pleaded guilty, is already assured of spending the rest of his life behind bars. Before serving his two state terms, the 54-year-old must first serve 60 years in federal prison for child pornography crimes.

An astonishing 250-plus women and girls gave statements in two Michigan courtrooms over 10 days of proceedings. The focus will soon shift to lawsuits and multiple probes of Nassar's actions and those of people around him when he worked for Michigan State University and USA Gymnastics, the sport's governing body.

Those inquiries include a special prosecutor and a legislative probe in Michigan, a law firm investigating

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the U.S. Olympic Committee and a Texas Rangers review of claims that Nassar assaulted some of the world's best gymnasts while they trained at a ranch southeast of Huntsville.

The NCAA has signaled that it may investigate potential rules violations related to Nassar's crimes. The Education Department is reviewing how Michigan State handled complaints about Nassar. And Congress is investigating USA Gymnastics, the university and the committee.

Larissa Boyce and another teen gymnast in 1997 reported Nassar to Michigan State's then-gymnastics coach, but he was not investigated until 2004, when another teen filed a complaint with police. Even then, that report did not result in criminal charges.

"I felt like a weight lifted off of me," Boyce said of Nassar's latest sentence. "Finally, I don't have to face him in court anymore."

Boyce said she hopes the university and USA Gymnastics will "show the world how Nassar's actions were missed, the mistakes that were made ... so that other people can take a look and make changes where they need to make changes so this never happens again."

Katie Black, a Michigan State student who said she was sexually assaulted by Nassar when she was younger, returned for the sentencing after speaking in court Friday.

"I feel almost a sense of closure and that this is all over and things are going to be taken care of," Black said.

Nassar listened to 48 victims for two days last week and was almost attacked by a man whose three daughters said they were abused.

His abuse "robbed these girls and women of one of the most truly important human qualities — trust," Eaton County Judge Janice Cunningham said.

In a brief statement before he was sentenced, Nassar attempted to apologize.

"It's impossible to convey the breadth and depth of how sorry I am to each and every one," he said.

In all, some 265 women and girls have reported being molested by Nassar. Some of the cases date back to the 1990s. The judge said the abuse "spans the country and the world," noting that she heard from participants not only in gymnastics but also soccer, figure skating, rowing, softball, cheerleading, wrestling, diving, dance, and track and field. Other victims were non-athletes treated for back, leg and other injuries, she said.

Many of the accusers described an ultra-competitive gymnastics culture in which authority figures could not be questioned and Nassar was free to abuse young patients year after year. They said they had little choice to see doctors other than Nassar, who was renowned throughout the sport.

Assistant Attorney General Angela Povilaitis said people must stop blaming the victims and their parents, who have been criticized online, on the radio and elsewhere. She said people are taught to trust doctors above all, especially those who appear to be world-class.

"It could have happened to any parent," she said, noting that Nassar tricked parents who were police officers, doctors and engineers. "Regardless of their profession, he fooled them all."

Most victims who wanted to speak publicly or submit a statement did so earlier during Nassar's seven-day court hearing in Ingham County, including 2012 Olympic teammates Aly Raisman, Jordyn Wieber and McKayla Maroney.

The scandal has rocked Michigan State. Lou Anna Simon resigned as the university's president on Jan. 24, and athletic director Mark Hollis followed two days later.

The fallout has also pushed out many leaders at the top of competitive gymnastics.

The Olympic coach who operated Twistars, John Geddert, was suspended last month by USA Gymnastics until it completes its own investigation. Geddert, who coached the "Fierce Five" that won a team gold in 2012 in London, announced his retirement. And all of the agency's board members recently stepped down at the demand of the Olympic committee.

Denhollander blasted Michigan State for continuing to fight victims' lawsuits.

"At every turn, they have twisted words. They have refused to answer questions. They have put institutional protectionism ahead and above the souls of little children," she said.

With the criminal proceedings done, she said, victims "will now be turning our attention with even greater

force to the institutional dynamics that led to the greatest sexual assault scandal in history.”

Associated Press writer Mike Householder contributed to this report.

Follow David Eggert on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/DavidEggert00> . His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/David%20Eggert> .

House Republicans working on averting another shutdown

By **ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republican leaders have come out with a plan to keep the government open for six more weeks while Washington grapples with a potential follow-up budget pact and, perhaps, immigration legislation.

GOP leaders announced they would seek to pass the stopgap spending bill by marrying it with a full-year, \$659 billion Pentagon spending bill that’s a top priority of the party’s legion of defense hawks.

The measure would keep the government running through March 23 and also reauthorize for funding for community health centers that enjoy widespread bipartisan support.

Pairing the Pentagon’s budget with only temporary money for the rest of the government wouldn’t go anywhere in the Senate, vowed Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., who said it “would be barreling head first into a dead-end.”

On the other hand, the Senate might respond with a long-awaited spending pact to give whopping increases both to the Pentagon and domestic programs. Talks in the Senate on such a framework appeared to intensify in hopes of an agreement this week, aides and lawmakers said, and the House GOP strategy appeared designed in part to invite the Senate to complete budget negotiations and use the temporary spending bill to advance such a budget agreement.

Under Washington’s arcane ways, a broad-brush agreement to increase legally binding spending “caps” — which would otherwise keep the budgets for Pentagon and domestic agencies both essentially frozen — would be approved, then followed by a far more detailed catchall spending bill that would take weeks to negotiate.

“We are making real headway in our negotiations over spending caps and other important issues,” said Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.

Republicans had been scrambling to pass the stopgap measure through the House because they can’t count on support from Democrats — who feel stymied by inaction on legislation to protect young immigrants from deportation — to advance the legislation.

The situation in both the House and Senate was murky, though it’s clear Senate Democrats have no appetite for sparking another government shutdown. Their unity splintered during last month’s three-day shutdown.

One especially tricky question is whether House Democrats would approve of a spending agreement if there isn’t much progress in addressing the issue of immigrants left vulnerable with the looming expiration of former President Barack Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. That’s a top priority for many House Democrats, especially lawmakers from the influential Hispanic Caucus.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has linked progress on the budget with action to address the program but other Democrats are beginning to agitate for delinking the two, lest the opportunity for a budget pact be lost.

The broader budget picture is one in which GOP defense hawks are prevailing over the party’s depleted ranks of deficit hawks while Democrats leverage their influence to increase spending for domestic priorities such as combating opioid misuse.

The result could be the return of trillion-dollar deficits for the first time since former President Barack Obama’s first term.

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Details are closely held and subject to change. But at issue is a two-year deal to increase caps on spending set by a failed 2011 budget deal. Republicans have pushed for defense increases in the neighborhood of \$80 billion a year and have offered Democrats nearly as much — \$60 billion or so per year — for non-defense programs.

Add in \$80 billion to \$90 billion worth of hurricane aid for Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico, health care funding and money for President Donald Trump's border security plan, and the final tally could total close to \$400 billion. The potential cost, over the 2018-19 budget years, would rival the deficit impact of last year's tax measure over that period.

After last year's tax bill, the Congressional Budget Office says the deficit for 2018 will hit about \$700 billion — before any fresh increase. Next year's deficit is already estimated to reach \$975 billion, so the brewing agreement would mean the first \$1 trillion-plus deficit since Obama's first term.

Court allows Pennsylvania to redraw GOP-favored district map

By **MARK SCOLFORO** and **MARK SHERMAN**, Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday let a court-ordered redrawing of congressional districts in Pennsylvania proceed, raising Democratic hopes that a revamped map might yield them several more seats this fall.

Justice Samuel Alito, who handles emergency appeals from Pennsylvania, rejected the request from GOP legislative leaders and voters to put on hold an order from the state Supreme Court intended to produce new congressional districts in the coming two weeks.

The Pennsylvania high court ruled last month that the current map of 18 districts violates the state constitution because it unfairly benefits Republicans.

The decision comes just four days before the Republican-controlled Legislature's deadline for submitting a replacement map for Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf to consider. So far, there has been a notable lack of bipartisan movement on getting such a deal.

Pennsylvania's congressional delegation has been 13-5 in favor of Republicans during the three election cycles since the GOP-drawn 2011 map took effect, and experts have said those 13 seats are several more than would have been produced by a nonpartisan map.

Democrats have about 800,000 more registered voters than Republicans and hold all three elected statewide row offices, but Republicans enjoy solid majorities in both chambers of the Legislature.

Under the process laid out two weeks ago by four of the seven Pennsylvania Supreme Court justices, all Democrats, the Legislature has until Friday to approve a new map, after which Wolf will have until Feb. 15 to decide whether to endorse it and submit it to the justices.

Senate Republican Leader Jake Corman said Monday he's had "zero" discussions with Wolf and legislative leaders about new district boundaries and could not guarantee he will meet the deadline.

The state Supreme Court said it expects new districts to be in place by Feb. 19, and the new map is expected to be in play for the May 15 congressional primaries.

The two leaders who had gone to Alito in an effort to derail the redistricting process, Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati and House Speaker Mike Turzai, said in a statement they will do their best to negotiate a new map "but may be compelled to pursue further legal action in federal court."

Wolf's statement after the decision called gerrymandering wrong and said a replacement map should correct errors of the past.

"My team is ready, willing and able to work with the General Assembly to ensure a new map is fair and within the clear orders given by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court," Wolf said.

A redrawn Pennsylvania congressional district map could affect control of the U.S. House, and at last count, more than 60 people in the state have said they plan to run for Congress.

Democrats need at least two dozen pick-ups nationally in November's election to retake control of the U.S. House, and a Pennsylvania map that is less favorable to Republicans could provide some of those.

There are six congressional seats in Pennsylvania where incumbents are not running again, the most in

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four decades. Five of them have been held most recently by Republicans.

To accommodate the changes, the Department of State on Friday revised deadlines for congressional candidates, moving their deadlines — and not other races in the state — two weeks later. The last day to file paperwork to run for Congress is now March 20 — it had previously been March 6.

Turzai and Scarnati successfully defended the 2011 plan against a separate lawsuit in federal court and complained that the state court order did not provide sufficient guidance for them to draw a new map.

Corman said he did not know yet whether House Republican leaders are interested in drawing a new map, and he complained that lawmakers lack map-drawing direction because state justices have not published an opinion yet to explain their reasoning.

“Part of our problem is we have yet to hear from the Pennsylvania Supreme Court on why the map is unconstitutional,” Corman said. “Absent that, it makes it difficult for us to meet whatever requirement they are laying out for us.”

A group of voters persuaded all five Democrats on the state’s high court that the map violated the state constitution. The Jan. 22 majority order said new districts should be compact and contiguous and only split counties, cities, towns, boroughs, townships or wards when needed to ensure population equality.

Late last week, Scarnati and Turzai sought recusal of one of the state’s Democratic justices, David Wecht. They argued Wecht had made statements critical of gerrymandering during his successful 2015 campaign that they viewed as evidence of bias. Wecht on Monday denied their request, saying his comments during the campaign were “sometimes ardent” but did not merit dropping out of the case.

The U.S. Supreme Court last month delayed a lower-court order that would have produced new congressional districts in North Carolina. The justices are currently considering challenges to Wisconsin’s state legislative districts and a congressional district in Maryland.

Associated Press writer Marc Levy in Harrisburg contributed to this report. Sherman reported from Washington.

Will intelligence agencies stop confiding to Congress?

By DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top intelligence and law enforcement officials warn that last week’s release of a congressional memo alleging FBI surveillance abuse could have wide-ranging repercussions: Spy agencies could start sharing less information with Congress, weakening oversight. Lawmakers will try to declassify more intelligence for political gain. Confidential informants will worry about being outed on Capitol Hill.

The GOP-produced memo released last week contends that when the FBI asked a secret court for a warrant to do surveillance on a former associate in then-candidate Donald Trump’s campaign, the bureau relied too heavily on a dossier compiled by an ex-British spy whose opposition research was funded by Democrats.

Critics accuse Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., of abusing his power as chairman of the House intelligence committee to do the president’s bidding and undermine the investigation into whether any Trump campaign associates colluded with Russian during the 2016 election. His office rebuts that claim, saying the real abuse of power was using unverified information bought and paid for by one political campaign to justify government surveillance of former Trump campaign foreign policy adviser Carter Page.

This isn’t the first time intelligence has been politicized. Both Democrats and Republicans used the release of the so-called torture report in late 2015 outlining the CIA’s detention and interrogation program as political ammunition. In the 1960s, while intelligence agencies warned that the Vietnam War was being lost, the White House was telling the public the opposite. During the George W. Bush administration, cherry-picked intelligence about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction fueled momentum for the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Former CIA Director Mike Hayden worries that the memo’s release will damage congressional oversight and the effectiveness of law enforcement.

“We are chiseling away at processes and institutions on which we currently depend — and on which we will

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depend in the future," said Hayden, who has worked for both Democratic and Republican administrations.

Hayden, who also directed the National Security Agency, wrote an op-ed in The Cipher Brief, an online newsletter focused on intelligence issues, to urge Justice Department and intelligence professionals to speak out. He wondered, though, if they would, given Trump's penchant for honoring loyalty.

"A senior official in justice or a senior official in intelligence needs to say, 'We need to take a knee here. We need to take a deep breath'" Hayden said. "What we are now doing is destroying the institutions we need to keep America safe."

Josh Campbell, a former supervisory special agent with the FBI who investigated counterterrorism, recently resigned to do just that. Partisan attacks undermine the agency and national security, according to Campbell, who said he disagrees with colleagues who advised staying mum until the current controversy passes.

"FBI agents are dogged people who do not care about the direction of political winds," Campbell said in an editorial published Feb. 2 in The New York Times. "But to succeed in their work, they need public backing. Scorched-earth attacks from politicians with partisan goals now threaten that support, raising corrosive doubts about the integrity of the FBI that could last for generations."

FBI director Christopher Wray and the second-ranking official at the Justice Department, Rod Rosenstein, had urged Trump to keep the memo classified and out of public view, but the president declined. Last week, Trump attacked both agencies through his Twitter account, saying their leadership and investigators had "politicized the sacred investigative process in favor of Democrats and against Republicans."

Wray has defended the bureau and its agents throughout the memo controversy.

Rep. Will Hurd, R-Texas, who is a member of the House intelligence committee, said the memo is not a rebuke of the FBI rank-and-file or special counsel Robert Mueller.

"The memo is about a process and what kinds of information should be used in order to allow the federal government to spy on Americans," said Hurd, a former covert CIA officer. "In my opinion, unverified information, circular reporting and rumors should not be used in an application to spy on American citizens. We should be protecting our civil liberties."

Robert Litt, the former general counsel for the director of national intelligence, said the future relationship between intelligence agencies and their congressional overseers has been put at risk.

"The precedent that's been set here is very dangerous," Litt said. "You can only imagine if the Democrats get control of the House in the mid-year election; they will now be able to say look, 'We've established a precedent here. You've released classified information, and we're going to start doing it as well.'"

Democrats have prepared their own memo in response to the one Nunes released last week. The intelligence committee on Monday authorized its release and sent it to the president, who will decide whether it should be declassified.

Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the ranking Democrat on the House intelligence committee, said he too fears lawmakers will start seeking to disclose intelligence information in politically biased memos.

Schiff also worries that confidential sources could become more reluctant to provide information to U.S. intelligence agencies for fear that Congress could out them. Moreover, the American public could start wondering whether actions that law enforcement and intelligence agencies take to protect the country will be mischaracterized for political reasons, he said.

The contract between intelligence agencies and the House intelligence committee is broken, he warned.

"I have to think that it's going to have a chilling effect on what they're willing to share with us," he said. "It's also going to be very demoralizing for people at the FBI to see them being used as a piñata for partisan reasons."

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker and Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington contributed to this report.

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Eagles get hero's welcome after winning 1st Super Bowl title

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE, Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Fresh off their first Super Bowl title, the Philadelphia Eagles arrived home to a hero's welcome Monday afternoon, hours after overjoyed fans mobbed the streets in a sometimes unruly victory celebration nearly 60 years in the making.

Hundreds of fans greeted the team's plane at Philadelphia International Airport, cheering wildly and singing "Fly Eagles Fly" as Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie emerged with the Lombardi Trophy.

After getting off the plane, Lurie, Coach Doug Pederson and stars like tight end Zach Ertz and running back LeGarrette Blount approached the chain-link fence separating the team from the fans, smiling, pumping their arms and shooting video with their phones. Fans stood on cars and news trucks to catch a glimpse.

"It's been a long journey to redemption," said John Hall, 49, who works at Philadelphia's public transit agency. "We don't have to hear the negative anymore, that we don't have a ring. It's official now."

Dan Mazzoli, 53, a disabled construction worker and die-hard fan from New Jersey, shared the moment with his 12-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter.

"We've been waiting for this all our lives," he said.

Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles, the unassuming backup quarterback who took over for injured star Carson Wentz and played brilliantly throughout the playoffs, wasn't on the team plane. Foles headed — where else? — to Disney World, riding a float at the Orlando resort and fist-bumping Mickey Mouse amid a shower of green confetti.

"It's all right to yell," he told the cheering crowd. "We're world champs! We did it! We did it!"

The underdog Eagles won their first NFL championship since 1960 on Sunday night with a surprise 41-33 victory over the New England Patriots, ending a drought that had long tormented the city's football-crazed fans. Philly was the only team in the Northeast Corridor to have never won a Super Bowl.

The city scheduled a victory parade for Thursday along a 5-mile route that will stretch from the Eagles stadium complex to the steps of the Philadelphia art museum, whose steps Sylvester Stallone ran up during "Rocky." It's a fitting ending point for a team that Stallone had cheered on throughout the playoffs.

Revelers along the parade route will be able to indulge in free Bud Light at two dozen bars, thanks to a promise the beer maker made to Eagles offensive tackle Lane Johnson before the season.

Philly had some cleaning up to do Monday after pockets of Eagles fans turned unruly overnight, with rowdies smashing department store windows, looting a gas station convenience store and toppling a number of the city's famously greased light poles. The police commissioner said he and other officers were hit with bottles.

The vast majority of revelers celebrated peacefully, and police made only three arrests, said Ajeenah Amir, a spokeswoman for Mayor Jim Kenney.

"Tens of thousands came out and celebrated this amazing victory, and but for a handful of bad actors, the celebration was peaceful and jubilant," Amir said. She lauded police for "their assistance in getting the crowds dispersed and people home safely."

Just as Foles and the Eagles clinched victory in Minneapolis, the scene more than 1,000 miles away in Philly was one of jubilation and pandemonium.

Revelers shot off fireworks, drivers beeped their horns and Philadelphians young and old descended on Broad Street, the main thoroughfare that last hosted a major championship parade in 2008 for the Phillies' World Series win.

"The city deserved it," said 66-year-old Lou Potel, who threw a party at his home just off Broad before joining a much bigger party outside. "It's a great city, and now we have a Super Bowl to go along with it."

Fans clambered atop the awning at the swanky Ritz Carlton Hotel near City Hall, jumping off into the crowd in what one Twitter post called "Ritz Carlton Skydiving." The awning later collapsed with a large group of people on top of it. It wasn't clear if anyone was injured.

Nearby, windows were smashed at a Macy's department store and at an Old Navy clothing store.

And apparently no amount of grease in the world can keep some drunken Eagles fans from climbing

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poles in celebration. A few managed to shimmy up traffic lights and street sign poles.

Amir said there were reports of some injuries from falls near light poles but precise numbers weren't available.

Vandals were seen having an apparent food fight inside a gas station's convenience store, yelling "Everything is free!" and overturning a car outside a hotel. After 1 a.m., the only people allowed inside the 24-hour Wawa convenience store near City Hall were police officers.

Associated Press writers Kristen De Groot in Philadelphia and Michael Rubinkam in northeastern Pennsylvania contributed to this report.

After record school closures, new Chicago plan draws fury

By SOPHIA TAREEN and DON BABWIN, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Five years after the largest mass closure of public schools in an American city, Chicago is forging ahead with a plan to shutter four more in one of the city's highest-crime and most impoverished areas.

School officials are pitching the new closures around Englewood, a neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, to make way for a new \$85 million school they insist will better serve students and reverse low enrollment. But some parents, students and activists are skeptical, saying they're still reeling from the 2013 closures and the latest plan will make things worse, including the displacement of hundreds of mostly black and poor teenagers.

"The last thing they should do is close our schools," said 16-year-old Miracle Boyd, a student at John Hope College Prep, which could close. "They aren't the ones sitting in those chairs five days a week struggling to learn because we don't have the necessities we need as students. ... Why not use the \$85 million to improve our education and get our schools on the road to success?"

Like other cities, Chicago has long relied on closures to address underperforming and underutilized schools. Significant closures have taken place in Philadelphia, Detroit and St. Louis, but Chicago made history when it closed roughly 50 schools, affecting more than 12,000 students in mostly African-American and Latino neighborhoods.

The debate over Chicago's latest proposed closures has exploded, with shouting matches and emotional pleas during community meetings. Residents have pleaded with the district to invest more in neighborhood schools and safety. Some have alleged that racial politics are at play. And they worry by pulling students out of schools near their homes and placing them in ones farther away, they are putting them in danger of gang members who will view them as the enemy just by virtue of their address.

Chicago Public Schools says nothing is final until an expected Feb. 28 board vote. The nation's third-largest school district argues it's tried to boost enrollment and resources to the four schools, but it hasn't helped.

The changes coincide with a major drop in black residents. Roughly 180,000 people moved from Chicago from 2000 to 2010, according to census data. In Englewood, about 10 miles from downtown, fewer than 500 students are enrolled in the four schools. As a result, one freshmen class has only 17 students and another school doesn't offer science.

"We have to move these kids. They don't have enough support in these buildings," schools chief Janice Jackson said. "We can't sit by and continue to watch people leave."

The new school, which would open in 2019, will enroll only freshmen at the beginning, and upperclassmen will be left to attend nearby schools. The district expects to spend millions on the transition, including on individualized plans to help students at risk of dropping out, paid summer job programs and possible shuttle buses to transport students.

Research on the benefits of school closures is mixed. In 2017, the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado Boulder compiled research finding that even when students transferred to higher-performing schools, those students saw an achievement drop in the first year and marginal gains later on.

"There's no ground to stand on for saying this will improve the educational opportunities," said Pauline

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Lipman, a University of Illinois at Chicago professor who has studied closures.

Chicago Public Schools officials disagree.

With past closures, they've emphasized cost savings. This time, they've pitched the proposal as a more desirable option for students. Renderings of the new school tout outdoor sports facilities and a community health center. City officials say it complements other recent investment in Englewood, including a new lower-cost Whole Foods.

But critics, including neighborhood activists and unions, say the district didn't do enough to address problems it helped create and there's a lack of trust, especially after two consecutive CPS leaders left office under scandal. The Chicago Teachers Union blames the city's push for charter schools. Roughly 90 percent of Englewood's students travel beyond neighborhood boundaries for school.

Experts say property values will drop, vacant buildings are magnets for street crime and sending students to new schools could put their lives at risk.

"What people don't understand is that if you are 16 years old and get on a bus, when you get off that bus you are gang-affiliated whether you are gang-affiliated or not," said activist Jitu Brown.

Tensions between students from different Chicago neighborhoods attending the same school have erupted in violence before. In 2009, 16-year-old honor student Derrion Albert was fatally beaten after getting caught in the middle of such a clash. The attack involving students from Fenger High School on Chicago's South Side was captured on cellphone video that was viewed online worldwide.

In Englewood, crime is still high despite a significant drop in homicides and shootings there last year. The violence that remains is startling considering the dwindling population. Demographers say Englewood's population decreased from 59,000 residents in 1980 to 26,000 by 2015. In 2016, there were 86 homicides in Englewood, up from 37 the year before.

The Chicago district has had trouble selling and repurposing buildings since 2013 and had to loosen guidelines for potential buyers. There are now about 27 schools on that list, but more than a dozen remain empty, including several in Englewood.

Among them is Yale Elementary School, which singing and acting star Jennifer Hudson attended. The eerily quiet brick building sits near boarded-up homes and empty lots. Letters on the school sign have fallen off.

Under the new proposal, one school would remain vacant, two would be taken over by existing charter schools and one would be demolished for the new school.

Not everyone opposes the district's plan.

"It would be a catalyst for new growth in the area. It gives us something that we can build on, here in Englewood," said Theodria Constanopolis, 74.

She has lived in Englewood most of her life, and one of her grandchildren could attend the new school.

Still, some educators remain skeptical, saying the closures mark the end of an era.

Harper High School theater teacher Michael Buino said his students can compete with those who attend schools considered to be Chicago's best. Michelle Obama, who is from Chicago, visited Harper High in 2013 while still first lady.

"Come to my classroom and see for yourselves," Buino said at a recent community forum. "And then tell me Harper is not worth saving."

Follow Sophia Tareen on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/sophiatareen> .

Bloody 24 hours as Syria, Russia escalate punishing attacks

By SARAH EL DEEB and PHILIP ISSA, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian opposition rescue teams pulled babies from incubators in a hospital under attack, rushing them to safety in a pick-up truck. Elderly patients lay motionless on the ground and rescue workers searched for survivors in the rubble of a destroyed apartment building as stepped up airstrikes by Syrian government forces and their Russian allies on the country's last remaining rebel strongholds

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killed at least 28 civilians on Monday.

"It is like the end of days," said Raed Saleh, the head of the first-responders known as White Helmets, describing the last 24 hours of attacks on the opposition-held eastern Damascus suburb of Ghouta and northwestern Idlib province.

The escalating offensive, which included a suspected chlorine attack a day earlier, reached a new ferocity after insurgents downed a Russian Su-25 over the weekend, the first time they scored such a major hit against the government's main ally, Moscow.

Russia has waged a punishing aerial campaign against Syria's armed opposition since intervening in the civil war on the side of its ally, President Bashar Assad, in 2015. Cease-fire deals have failed to quell the violence or restore humanitarian aid to besieged Ghouta, where 400,000 residents are holed up amid warnings of a looming humanitarian disaster.

"If a Russian plane was downed, revenge should not be on civilians and children," Saleh said. "Now more than any other day, we need the international community to restore the humanity it has lost in Syria."

The al-Qaida-linked Levant Liberation Committee, which is the dominant militant group in Idlib, said its fighters shot down the Russian jet near the town of Saraqeb in Idlib province and killed its pilot after he ejected from the plane. Rebels have previously claimed to have downed Syrian government planes or drones, but it was the first time they hit a Russian aircraft.

Russia's military bases in western Syria were also hit last month in a series of drone attacks, challenging Moscow's gains in the country still torn by conflict.

Since then, activists say Russian and Syrian government forces have stepped up their attacks.

Activists and rescue workers reported at least 28 civilians, including six children, were killed on Monday in Ghouta, where nearly 40 airstrikes hit the suburb that is the last opposition stronghold in Damascus.

In Idlib, two hospitals have been hit with airstrikes since Sunday and at least 14 people killed. Rescue workers continued Monday to sift through the wreckage of a six-story building flattened a day earlier, pulling out three bodies after daylight. At least eight residents remained missing when the search was suspended at nightfall, one rescuer said.

In Idlib, a hospital in the town of Kafranbel was bombed early Monday, according to the activist-run Edlib Media Center and the Observatory. Another hospital, in Maaret al-Numan, was struck three times late Sunday and put out of service, according to the Syrian American Medical Society, which runs the facility.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said at least 70 people were wounded Monday and the number of casualties was likely to climb as rescue operations got underway.

The dead included a rescue worker who was killed as his team searched for survivors in the town of Arbeen, which was hit by 15 airstrikes Monday afternoon.

Yousef al-Boustani, an opposition media activist in eastern Ghouta's Douma neighborhood, called the air raids "hysterical."

"We were seeing three planes in the air at a time," he said.

On Sunday, the White Helmets search-and-rescue group and a medical charity reported that several people suffered breathing difficulties after a suspected chlorine gas attack on Saraqeb, days after the Trump administration accused Assad's government of producing and using "new kinds of weapons" to deliver poisonous gases. Damascus denied the White House's charges, and The Associated Press could not independently verify the reports of a chlorine gas attack.

The White Helmets said three of its rescuers and six other people suffered breathing problems. The Syrian American Medical Society said its hospitals in Idlib treated 11 patients for suspected chlorine gas poisoning.

A U.N. investigative commission said in 2016 that the Syrian government was behind at least three chlorine gas attacks during the seven-year civil war, but activists and monitoring groups contend there have been more.

Meanwhile, Turkey dispatched a large military convoy deep inside rebel-held territory to establish an observation post at Tel al-Eiss, close to the front line with government forces, according to activists who

filmed the convoy's movements.

Turkey began deploying forces to northwestern Syria in October, as part of an agreement with Iran and Russia to stabilize the lines of conflict in war-torn Syria. But those deployments have failed to calm the fighting. Turkey says its forces are deployed in an observer role.

States and cities are taking the lead on bump stock bans

By LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press

In the immediate aftermath of the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history, there was a fevered pitch to ban bump stocks, the device that allowed the shooter's semi-automatic rifles to mimic the rapid fire of machine guns.

With that push stalled at the federal level, a handful of states and some cities are moving ahead with bans of their own.

Massachusetts and New Jersey — two states at the time led by Republican governors — as well as the cities of Denver and Columbia, South Carolina, have enacted laws prohibiting the sale and possession of the devices, which were attached to a half-dozen of the long guns found in the hotel room of the Las Vegas shooter who in October killed 58 people and injured hundreds more attending a nearby outdoor concert. A little over a dozen other states are also considering bans on bump stocks.

Gun-control advocates say the push fits a pattern in gun politics: inaction in Washington that forces states to take the lead. Gun-rights advocates call it a knee-jerk reaction that will do little to stop bad guys from killing, and vow a legal challenge.

For Zach Elmore, the issue is deeply personal. His sister among those wounded in the Las Vegas attack. He finds hope in the statewide and local efforts to ban bump stocks.

"Hopefully it's the start of a big movement versus just a flash in the pan," Elmore said. "Obviously you cannot legislate (against) evil, but you can legislate the things with which bad people will use to perpetrate evil."

The devices were originally intended to help people with disabilities and were little known and little sold until the Las Vegas shooting. They fit over the stock and pistol grip of a semi-automatic rifle and allow the weapon to fire rapidly, some 400 to 800 rounds per minute, mimicking a fully automatic firearm.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reviewed the devices and approved them in 2010, ruling they did not amount to machine guns that are regulated under the National Firearms Act that dates to the 1930s.

Richard Vasquez was assistant chief of the ATF's technology bureau and led the review of bump stocks. He stands by the agency's 2010 ruling, which relied on a key difference between semi-automatic and fully automatic firearms: While semi-automatic firearms require a separate and independent pull of the trigger to fire a bullet, fully automatic firearms can fire multiple rounds with a single trigger pull. ATF determined bump stocks didn't convert a semi-automatic firearm into one that is fully auto.

"It's a proper determination. Everybody wants to jump the gun and say that ATF made a mistake," said Vasquez, who left the agency in 2014. "ATF didn't make a mistake."

The federal agency is reviewing its ruling, something Vasquez and others caution is a dangerous move without Congress first changing the law to specifically make such devices illegal.

"If ATF is allowed to write a regulation to change the definition of this device, instead of a law, it's going to give all government agencies authority to change their regulations, which could affect us in a wide variety of ways," Vasquez warned.

Legislation in Congress has remained in limbo despite early signs from a bipartisan mix of lawmakers and advocates who voiced alarm that such a device was deemed legal and on the market. Even the National Rifle Association sounded open to great regulation of bump stocks.

Joyce Malcolm, a professor at George Mason University's Antonin Scalia School of Law, said the bans likely would withstand a legal challenge, but she wonders about more practical matters: How might they be enforced?

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"I don't see a real constitutional issue. I just wonder about actually getting these devices out of circulation for people who already have them," she said.

It's not known how many of the devices are in circulation. At the time of the Las Vegas shooting, gun dealers said they rarely had customers wanting to buy one — but then couldn't keep up with the demand in the days and months afterward. The leading manufacturer of bump stocks, Texas-based Slide Fire Solutions, briefly stopped selling them, posting a notice on its website that it had suspended sales to keep up with demand. It has since resumed sales.

Massachusetts, which has some of the nation's strictest gun laws, enacted its ban a month after the Las Vegas shooting, pushed through a Democratic-controlled Legislature and signed into law by a Republican lieutenant governor. New Jersey followed suit last month with a measure signed into law by outgoing Republican Gov. Chris Christie. About a dozen other states are considering similar bills.

"This is a very familiar story. The Congress cowers in the face of the NRA, and the states act," said John Feinblatt, president of Everytown for Gun Safety, which advocates for tougher gun laws.

Connecticut, home to some of the world's most legendary gun makers, is among the other states considering bans.

Rep. William Tong, a Democrat and House chairman of the Connecticut Legislature's Judiciary Committee, called it a commonsense measure that puts public safety first.

"The federal government has demonstrated that, given the composition of the Congress right now, it's not possible to pass commonsense gun laws," he said. "Connecticut can't wait."

Gun-rights advocates say the efforts undermine the Second Amendment and will do little to stop criminals. "Anti-gun Democrats love to ban things. That is their answer," said Erich Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America, who added bump stocks have rarely, if ever, been used in a crime before the Las Vegas shooting. "This is their chance to say, 'Hey, we're doing something. Look at us. We're doing something.' It's not going to do anything."

Follow Lisa Marie Pane at <http://twitter.com/lisamariepane>

Eagles, Foles persevere in soaring to Super Bowl title

By **BARRY WILNER, AP Pro Football Writer**

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (AP) — He has traveled a long road: starter and castoff, journeyman and backup. Now Nick Foles stands at the summit of his sport.

How did it happen? Oh, sure, there was the mid-December injury to rising star Carson Wentz, with Foles stepping in and stepping up. But how, in a breathtaking championship game Sunday night, did this quarterback beat Tom Brady at the five-time Super Bowl winner's specialty, a shootout?

For Foles — and for his Philadelphia Eagles — there is one underlying theme to it all: perseverance.

"The big thing is don't be afraid to fail," Foles, the Super Bowl, MVP, said sleepless hours after he guided the drive of a lifetime for the winning points in a 41-33 victory over league MVP Brady and the defending champion New England Patriots.

"In our society, with (social media) it's a highlight reel. I think when you have a rough day, you're feeling you can't — failure is a part of your life. I wouldn't be up here if I hadn't failed a million times.

"You share that. I'm human, not superman. When you struggle in your life, it's an opportunity to grow. If there's something going on in your life, embrace it."

That's exactly what Foles and coach Doug Pederson said Monday was the approach throughout the 2017 season by the Eagles. They had gone 7-9 the previous year with rookie Wentz as the starter. He improved meteorically this season and was a leading MVP contender before tearing up his knee in Week 14.

That was one of many key injuries the Eagles had to deal with on the way to their first Super Bowl title and the Lombardi Trophy — their first NFL crown since 1960, when they beat coach Vince Lombardi himself and the Green Bay Packers. Veteran tackle Jason Peters, versatile running back Darren Sproles, specials teams ace Chris Maragos and starting linebacker Jordan Hicks all were lost for the season.

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Adversity.

"It's tough," said Pederson, whose willingness to stay aggressive was a major reason the Eagles won the NFC East at 13-3, then won three more times in the postseason. "It's something you spend a lot of time thinking about how you want to talk to the team. Part of it was entrusting the players a little bit, allow them to sort of embrace it and the 'next man up' mentality."

Foles, of course, was the next man behind center. He hardly was a stopgap, though, and Pederson recognized that.

The coach went back to tapes of Foles' work with the Eagles under Chip Kelly, and then to his games with the Rams and Chiefs. Pederson made some adjustments to fit what made Foles most comfortable — the wheel route to backs and tight ends was particularly effective for Foles — and then turned loose his No. 2 QB.

"It was just a matter of him spending time with the guys, take a lot of repetitions in practice," Pederson said. "We knew in the building we'd be OK with him."

OK? Doug, you and the Eagles are NFL champions.

"I think this team is full of great character men," said Pederson, who was a player and coach for Andy Reid, his mentor, and now, perhaps ironically, has the trophy Reid hadn't been able to hoist. "The leadership in the locker room — part of the message was putting it back on the players and the players own it. Not having selfish coaches and players gives you a chance to win this game."

Philadelphia is a young team. Indeed, it might have arrived at the top ahead of schedule. It definitely arrived in a different manner than it expected.

That leaves the question of Foles' future. He's under contract for one more year and the Eagles can afford to keep him. Wentz clearly is the franchise QB, though his rehab could make him unavailable for much of the preseason.

"I knew I couldn't get off the stage" without being asked about the quarterback situation, Pederson joked Monday morning. "We'll just enjoy this moment, celebrate it with our fans in Philly. It's not about one guy, it's about the team."

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

Investors must make sense of a sudden drop in stock market

By SARAH SKIDMORE SELL, AP Personal Finance Writer

Stumble, fall or crash?

Investors may be wondering what to make of the dramatic sell-off in the stock market after months of tranquility. A slide that started early last week led to a sharp dive in markets Friday and Monday. The combined two-day drop represented a 6.3 percent decrease in the Standard & Poor's 500 index that undid the market's gains for the year.

Market professionals say there are still plenty of reasons to like stocks. But they can't say definitively that the selling is over.

So what should you do? Here are a few answers to common questions:

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

No one thing triggered this.

The markets took a marked turn downward Friday after the monthly U.S. jobs report showed that wages surged in January, representing the sharpest year-over-year gain since the recession. That stoked concerns about higher inflation because as companies raise pay, they often raise prices and that cycle can speed inflation.

The Federal Reserve is already expected to raise short-term interest rates this year with the economy growing. But inflation worries raise concerns that the Fed will increase rates at a quicker pace. Higher borrowing rates can be a challenge for corporations over time as they want to borrow money to grow and it drives investors to bonds rather than stocks.

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The selling continued Monday, in what most experts are saying is just an overdue correction. Some believe automated trading also played a role as the systems that buy and sell stocks may have been triggered.

HOW BAD WAS IT?

Not that bad, really.

The drop only erases a few months of gains. Plus, market pros have noted that declines of 10 percent or more are common during bull markets. There hasn't been one in two years, and by many measures stocks are awfully expensive. The S&P 500 is now down 7.8 percent from its Jan. 26 record.

"(Monday's) market drop, while understandably unsettling to investors, just takes us back about two months," said Greg McBride, chief financial analyst at Bankrate. "Market corrections are normal, no matter how nerve-wracking they are at the time."

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

The answer can be one of the toughest parts of investing: Stay calm.

"Just hang in there, maintain a long-term perspective and resist the urge for any knee-jerk reactions," McBride said.

People should be making their investments as part of a long-term plan, one that won't be entirely hijacked by a few days of losses. And there may even be more volatility ahead — there's no way to be sure.

Check in with your financial planner or investment firm if you are feeling uneasy. It may be a good time to look at your portfolio and make sure it has a mix of assets that you are comfortable with. You may have more of your portfolio weighted toward stocks that you realize after the market's big run-up.

Vanguard said that it counsels customers that changes to their portfolio should be made because their life circumstances, or their time horizon, have changed — not because of inflammatory headlines or "noise."

Some people may want to take advantage of the dip to buy. Others may want to revisit their strategy. But those who want to get out of the stock market altogether should take pause, said Ken Hevert, senior vice president for retirement at Fidelity Investments.

It's easy to get out during down times but hard to get back in for a recovery. And drops of 5 percent to 10 percent are typically followed by a pretty rapid recovery period, he said, adding that current conditions are favorable for growth.

Selling public service or Rams? Firm defends Super Bowl spot

By COREY WILLIAMS, TOM KRISHER and ALEXANDRA OLSON, Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — In the 60-second spot aired during the Super Bowl, viewers see images of the rugged Ram pickup along with people working, helping others or hugging loved ones.

The images are set against audio of "The Drum Major Instinct" sermon delivered by Martin Luther King Jr. at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta exactly 50 years ago, in which he says that in order to be "great" and to serve the greater good, "you only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."

Missing from the Ram ad are the slain civil rights leader's words in the same speech guarding against commercialism: "In order to make your neighbors envious, you must drive this type of car ... And you know, before you know it, you're just buying that stuff. That's the way advertisers do it."

The irony is not lost on the throngs of critics who took to social media to question how Fiat Chrysler could use King's sermon to sell trucks.

"It should have been used for something more important — the things that are going on in America now," said Samantha Williams, 26, while visiting the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Site in Atlanta.

An FCA spokeswoman said the company intended to inspire people with King's words that everyone can be great by serving others. FCA, she said, knows that Ram truck owners often volunteer to use trucks for charitable work, and the ad was intended to reinforce their service.

"It was selling the message of serving in your community, that was the message," she said.

Unfortunately for FCA, not everyone got that message.

Chris Allieri, founder of the New York-based public relations agency Mulberry & Astor, said corporations often use the Super Bowl to showcase their corporate ethos — but Fiat Chrysler went too far.

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"Let's not fool ourselves ... this is about branding and selling products," Allieri said. "In an attempt to unite us, in increasingly divisive times, behind the words of a great American, it fell flat because it seems to co-opt and trivialize his monumental words to that of ad copy."

Allieri said it was difficult for him to imagine any scenario where using King's legacy to sell products would not cause a backlash.

"Dr. King's words should never be confused with ad copy. To me it really misses the mark," Allieri said. "If you are a marketer, using the words of Dr. King to sell your products is a hard no. There is no way I could see defending this."

FCA's spokeswoman said the company's advertising agency approached the King estate to get licensing to use words from "The Drum Major Instinct" sermon and was referred to Intellectual Properties Management Inc., which manages King's estate. Both his estate and the management firm were involved in every step of the ad, she said.

"The message of our spot and the quotes that were used were all about service and serving," the spokeswoman said. "That's something the estate felt comfortable with granting permission for us to use."

A similar debate was sparked nearly two decades ago when Telecom Alcatel used King's "I Have a Dream" speech in an ad that was also approved by IPM. That ad shows King giving his most famous speech to an empty Mall in Washington D.C. to illustrate the idea that "before you can touch, you must first connect."

Eric Tidwell, managing director of IPM, confirmed that it granted FCA permission and said in an email that the overall message of Ram Truck's "Built To Serve" ad embodies King's philosophy on serving others.

Business records filed with the Georgia secretary of state's office show that Dexter Scott King, one of the late King's children, is chief executive of IPM. It wasn't immediately clear Monday whether the younger King would have had to sign off on the use of his father's sermon or whether someone else within one of those companies would have been authorized to do so.

Dexter Scott King and his siblings Bernice King and Martin Luther King III are the sole shareholders and directors of the Estate of Martin Luther King Jr., Inc. Dexter is the estate's chief executive, records show.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, known as The King Center, was founded by Martin Luther King Jr.'s wife, Coretta Scott King, to carry on her husband's legacy. Bernice King is now the CEO of the center, located in Atlanta.

On Twitter, the King Center distanced itself from the Ram ad by noting that neither the center nor Bernice King "is the entity that approves the use of #MLK's words or imagery for use in merchandise, entertainment (movies, music, artwork, etc) or advertisement, including tonight's @Dodge #SuperBowl commercial." It also retweeted a YouTube clip of the civil rights leader's full sermon.

University of Detroit Mercy marketing professor Michael Bernacchi disagrees with how the Ram truck ad is being interpreted.

"To suggest it was to sell automobiles is just crazy," he said. "That wasn't the purpose of the ad. I think that's important. We have to doff our cap to that ad and to the brand for doing it."

Despite the uproar, the ad has become exactly what any company wishes after spending millions of dollars to get it aired — a talker.

Wayne Gibson, 51, founder of a Los Angeles nonprofit that works with troubled youth, said his take from the commercial was that the automaker was saying "we're going to try to start serving and helping people and indoctrinate Dr. King's philosophy."

"You don't connect Dr. King with selling a product," Gibson said. "It's logical to think these people are trying to do something different than the regularly automakers."

Meanwhile, the Drum Major Institute, a nonprofit think tank and social activist group, put out a statement reminding the public of what King's original sermon was all about: "As we observe the 50th anniversary of this sermon and his tragic death, let us all honor that wish by recommitting to once and for all realize upon his dream that all of our brothers and sisters have the opportunity to live in the beloved community he gave his life for."

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Associated Press writer Kate Brumback in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press.

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 6, the 37th day of 2018. There are 328 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 6, 1778, during the American Revolutionary War, the United States won official recognition and military support from France with the signing of a Treaty of Alliance in Paris.

On this date:

In 1788, Massachusetts became the sixth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1899, a peace treaty between the United States and Spain was ratified by the U.S. Senate.

In 1911, Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, was born in Tampico, Illinois.

In 1922, Cardinal Archille Ratti was elected pope; he took the name Pius XI.

In 1933, the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the so-called "lame duck" amendment, was proclaimed in effect by Secretary of State Henry Stimson.

In 1943, a Los Angeles jury acquitted actor Errol Flynn of three counts of statutory rape.

In 1952, Britain's King George VI, 56, died at Sandringham House in Norfolk, England; he was succeeded as monarch by his 25-year-old elder daughter, who became Queen Elizabeth II.

In 1968, the Winter Olympic Games were opened in Grenoble, France, by French President Charles de Gaulle.

In 1973, Dixy Lee Ray was appointed by President Richard Nixon to be the first woman to head the Atomic Energy Commission.

In 1987, Wall Street Journal reporter Gerald Seib (syb) was released after being detained six days by Iran, accused of being a spy for Israel; Iran said the detention was a result of misunderstandings.

In 1993, tennis Hall of Famer and human rights advocate Arthur Ashe died in New York at age 49.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton signed a bill changing the name of Washington National Airport to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Pop music star Falco, who had a 1986 hit with "Rock Me Amadeus," died in a traffic accident in the Dominican Republic; he was 40. Carl Wilson, a founding member of The Beach Boys, died in Los Angeles at age 51.

Ten years ago: At least 57 deaths were reported after two days of tornadoes that plowed across Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. The Bush White House defended the use of the interrogation technique known as waterboarding, saying it was legal — not torture as critics argued — and had saved American lives. The Phoenix Suns acquired Shaquille O'Neal in a stunning blockbuster deal that sent four-time All-Star Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks to the Miami Heat.

Five years ago: The U.S. Postal Service proposed eliminating Saturday mail delivery, an announcement that immediately drew protests from some lawmakers. At least nine people were killed by a tsunami that smashed into villages in the Solomon Islands, flattening dozens of homes in the South Pacific island chain. Toy maker Hasbro Inc. announced that Monopoly fans had voted online to add a cat token to the board game, replacing the iron.

One year ago: President Donald Trump accused the media of deliberately minimizing coverage of the threat posed by the Islamic State group; the president did not immediately offer evidence to support his claim, made during the new commander in chief's first visit to the headquarters of U.S. Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida. Irwin Corey, the wild-haired comedian and actor known for his improvisational riffs and nonsensical style who billed himself as "The World's Foremost Authority," died in New York at age 102.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Rip Torn is 87. Actress Mamie Van Doren is 87. Actor Mike Farrell is 79. Former NBC News anchorman Tom Brokaw is 78. Singer Fabian is 75. Actress Gayle Hunnicutt is 75. Actor Michael Tucker is 74. Producer-director-writer Jim Sheridan is 69. Actor Jon Walmsley is 62. Actress Kathy Najimy

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is 61. Rock musician Simon Phillips (Toto) is 61. Actor-director Robert Townsend is 61. Actor Barry Miller is 60. Actress Megan Gallagher is 58. Rock singer Axl Rose (Guns N' Roses) is 56. Country singer Richie McDonald is 56. Singer Rick Astley is 52. Rock musician Tim Brown (Boo Radleys) is 49. "Good Morning America" co-host Amy Robach is 45. Actor Josh Stewart is 41. Actor Ben Lawson is 38. Actor Brandon Hammond is 34. Actress Crystal Reed (TV: "Teen Wolf") is 33. Actress Alice Greczyn (GREH'-chihn) is 32. Actress Anna Diop is 30. Rhythm and blues singer/actress Tinashe is 25.

Thought for Today: "The first duty of a leader is to make himself be loved without courting love. To be loved without 'playing up' to anyone — even to himself." — Andre Malraux, French author (1901-1976).

(Above Advance for Use Tuesday, Feb. 6)

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Riddle Answer: A Stamp