

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 1 of 50

“ST. PATRICK’S DAY IS AN ENCHANTED TIME — A DAY TO BEGIN TRANSFORMING WINTER’S DREAMS INTO SUMMER’S MAGIC.”

-ADRIENNE COOK

Chicken Soup  
for the Soul

“From minor scratches to a complete rebuild . . . we can do it all”

**NOW OPEN**  
*Harris*  
Auto Body ABDN

225 Brown County Hwy 19 South  
Aberdeen: 605/725-4900

## Henry Township Review Board Notice

Henry Township Equalization Meeting Notice:  
Notice is hereby given that the governing body section will serve as review board of Henry Township, Brown County. They will be meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, March 19, 2018, at Doug Abeln Seed Company office for the purpose of reviewing and correcting of the assessment set of the tax districts for the year 2018. All persons considering disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk of the board no later than March 15, 2018. Hearings are by appointment only.

Darlene Sass  
13120 403 Ave, Groton  
Henry Township Clerk

© 2018 Groton Daily Independent

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Harr Auto Body Ad
- 1- Columbia City Notice
- 1- Henry Township Notice
- 1- Bates Township Notice
- 2- Thune’s Weekly Column
- 3- Noem campaign release
- 3- BDM Rural Water Ad
- 3- Help Wanted at Groton Care & Rehab
- 4- Lana’s Annals
- 5- Vote by Mail Ballot Question Petition Rejected by Secretary of State
- 6- Fines Higher signs go up
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Today’s Forecast
- 9- Yesterday’s Weather
- 9- Today’s Weather Info
- 9- National Weather Map
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2018 Community Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

### Columbia City Review Board Notice

The Columbia City Board of Equalization will meet on Wednesday, March 21, 7 p.m.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the finance officer prior to the meeting.  
Cara Dennert, Finance Officer

### Bates Township Review Board Notice

Bates Township Equalization Meeting Notice:  
The Bates Township Board of Equalization will meet at the Clerk’s home on Tuesday, March 20th, 2018 at 7 pm.

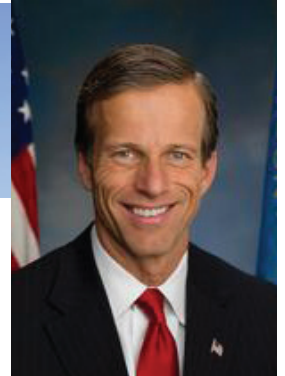
All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Betty Geist  
Bates Township Clerk  
14523 409th Ave, Conde, SD 57434

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

**The cardboard/paper**  
recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

**John Thune**  
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



## 21st Century Ideas for 21st Century Infrastructure

As chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I've hosted my fair share of memorable hearings over the last three-plus years, several of which have included folks from right here in South Dakota. While they're all notable for one reason or another, my recent hearing, which featured five of the president's cabinet secretaries, will likely be one of the more memorable events – for the topic we covered, the people who attended, and the history that was set.

In the mid-20th century, President Eisenhower and Congress saw the need to move people and goods quickly across the country. Their vision of an interconnected nation paid off, helping fuel decades of economic growth. The infrastructure that was built more than one-half century ago continues to fuel the economy today. With aging infrastructure, though, we're facing challenges when it comes to maintaining and improving these critical assets.

It's with that in mind that I invited several members of the president's team to come up to Capitol Hill to examine the current state of infrastructure in America and discuss potential policy options that we can pursue in Congress to help strengthen and modernize it.

It was the first time in nearly two decades that five cabinet secretaries testified at once during a Senate hearing. Secretaries from the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Transportation, Labor, Energy, and Agriculture all addressed their department's role in developing strong and robust infrastructure across the nation, which continues to evolve in today's more technologically advanced society.

While the underlying principle of keeping our nation more interconnected remains the same, the way we do it is always changing. It's no longer just roads, bridges, and railroads that primarily define our nation's infrastructure. For example, in rural states like ours, lack of access to reliable high-speed internet can make all the difference in the world for a family or small business.

In response to these growing needs, the president released an ambitious proposal to rebuild our nation's infrastructure and help bring it further into the 21st century. He hopes to achieve these goals – goals that I share – by limiting the overly burdensome permitting process and reforming workforce training, both of which would help speed up project delivery and lower costs. The president's proposal also dedicates funding to rural community needs since toll roads and other revenue-dependent strategies for building new infrastructure in urban areas wouldn't work in states like South Dakota.

The Senate Finance Committee, of which I'm also a member, will be responsible for examining ways to pay for these proposals, but it will be up to other committees, like the one I chair, to first develop them, and I hope this is an area where bipartisanship is achievable.

For example, both sides want to invest in and modernize our infrastructure. Both sides want that investment to address an array of infrastructure needs – not only roads and bridges, but also needs like broadband and waterways. Both sides want to break down barriers for innovative technologies. And both sides want to make our existing programs work better for South Dakotans and the rest of the American people. Together we can make it happen.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 3 of 50

**And . . . Noem responds to Jackley's claim**

## **FACT CHECK: Jackley Didn't Create the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force**

Despite repeated claims, Marty Jackley did not create the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. ICAC was created in July 2002 and moved to the South Dakota Office of the Attorney General in May 2003.

A Department of Justice press release from October 15, 2007, announced the creation of multiple stand-alone ICAC Task Forces throughout the U.S. At this time, South Dakota's ICAC Task Force was transitioned to a stand-alone model. To aid in the transition, the South Dakota Office of the Attorney General, in which Jackley did not serve at the time, was awarded a \$250,000 grant. Marty Jackley was appointed Attorney General in 2009.

"Only in a lawyer's office does filing a different set of paperwork for an existing entity mean you created something new," said Justin Brasell, Kristi for Governor Campaign Manager. "South Dakotans deserve an honest accounting of what happened. Marty Jackley needs to correct the record and change his misleading TV commercial."

## **Maintenance Supervisor Wanted:**

Under the direction of the Facility Administrator, the Maintenance Supervisor oversees the daily operations of the Maintenance. Performs maintenance and repair of physical structures of buildings.

## **Day Shift C.N.A. Wanted**

### **Sign-on Bonus**

☆☆☆ **\$1,500 for CNAs** ☆☆☆

Contact Brynn Pickrel or Nellie Hatfield at 605-397-2365 or apply in person.

EOE/AA/M/F/V/D-Drug Free Workplace



**GROTON**  
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

**1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton**

## **BDM RURAL WATER SYSTEM, INC.**

## **38th Annual Meeting**



Monday, March 26, 2018

6:00 p.m.

BDM Building, Britton, SD

*Lunch after the meeting • Door Prizes*

- **Board and Management Report**
- **Election of Directors**

***Please attend your water system's annual meeting!***

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 4 of 50



## Lana's Annals

**Lana Greenfield  
District 2  
State Representative**

The last week of session always consists of days where one "hurries up and then waits." By this I mean are many conference committees are appointed to settle differences between the two chambers on several bills. While the bills were worthy of passage, at times amendments were put on by one chamber or the other so a consensus has to be reached on whether to keep the changes or not.

The following are some projects for which the budget has allowed this session:

1. Compensation for dual credit for high school students.
2. A 2,000,000 dollar funding fee for the new Precision ag building located on SDSU's campus.
3. Providing money toward building a health education building at Lake Area in Watertown.
4. Allocations for start up and maintenance money for a new State Veterans Cemetery near Sioux Falls.

Along with some of the above funding, we also accomplished some other tasks, which should create favorable outcomes. They are as follows:

1. Micro-breweries can expand sales, and wine growers have greater flexibility to operate.
2. Marsy's Law re-vamping will allow law enforcement to release information regarding criminal activity. While we do need to change this to improve it, I did not vote to have it on the June ballot. The cost for putting it on there is 200,000 dollars. I felt that if the Mary's Law people knew that changes were urgent, they should have helped defer some or all of this cost. Otherwise, it could wait until the fall. Most did not see it that way so we will see it on the spring ballot.

3. We lifted the sunset clause on HB1081, which focused on non-meandered water. The sunset clause, to me, was unnecessary. By the year 2021 (as clause suggested), we would have some new people in the legislature, and they would have to re-visit the entire subject, thus taking up an immense amount of time treading the same old ground, same ideas, same arguments as have already taken place.

As far as where our money goes in South Dakota's budget, I will share percentages as to who gets what:

1. Education.....49.4%
2. Taking care of people.....35.3%
3. Protecting the public.....10%
4. State government.....5.3%

The aforementioned lays out where your tax dollars go. While we try to be frugal in our state and submit a yearly balanced budget, we should always watch how our money is being spent.

At the time of this writing, we are still unaware of what vetoes may be forthcoming. I am sure we will be finding out shortly as March 26th we return to Pierre to either concur with the Governor's vetoes or override them with a 2/3 majority. Since I have been in office, I can only remember one time that we have overridden a veto. I believe it was bill addressing stray voltage.

In closing, I would like to say that I have truly enjoyed the past 4 years in the House of Representatives. It has been a learning experience far beyond what I could ever verbalize. I enjoy the conversations with you constituents and have felt that you have approached me with thoughtfulness and respect. Hopefully, I have reciprocated that as well. I look forward to serving you in the future. Thank you for your prayers and good wishes.

Sincerely,  
Rep. Lana Greenfield  
lana.greenfield@gmail.com

## Vote by Mail Ballot Question Petition Rejected by Secretary of State

PIERRE, S.D. – Today, Secretary of State Shantel Krebs announced that the petition submitted for an initiated measure allowing certain elections to be conducted through a voting-by-mail process was rejected by her office.

“An initiated measure requires 13,871 valid signatures in order to be placed on the ballot,” stated Secretary Krebs. “This initiated measure petition submitted 15,718 signatures, only 10,955 were found to be valid after the random sampling.”

15,718 x 69.70% validity rate = 10,955 valid signatures, not meeting the 13,871 signature requirement.

A rejected petition cannot be challenged to the office of the Secretary of State, however that does not prohibit a citizen from challenging the denial of a ballot question petition in circuit court.

The remaining two ballot question petitions will be reviewed by the Secretary of State’s office in the order in which they were received.

South Dakota citizens also have the ability to submit a referendum petition concerning laws passed during the 2018 Legislative session.

For more detailed information on potential 2018 Ballot Questions, [click here](#).

###

2-1-17.1. Submission of affidavit challenging petition to secretary of state--Appeal. Within thirty days after a statewide petition for an initiated constitutional amendment, initiated measure, or referendum has been validated and filed, any interested person who has researched the signatures contained on the petition may submit an affidavit to the Office of Secretary of State to challenge the petition. The affidavit shall include an itemized listing of each specific deficiency in question. Any challenge to the following items is prohibited under this challenge process:

- (1) Signer does not live at address listed on the petition;
- (2) Circulator does not live at address listed on the petition;
- (3) Circulator listed a residence address in South Dakota but is not a South Dakota resident;
- (4) Circulator did not witness the signers;
- (5) Signatures not included in the random sample; and
- (6) Petition that was originally rejected.

Any challenge by the same person or party in interest shall be included in one affidavit.

The original signed affidavit shall be received by the Office of Secretary of State by 5:00 p.m. central time on the deadline date. If the affidavit challenges any item that is prohibited by this section, only that line item shall summarily be rejected. A challenge to a line item is not a challenge to the petition as a whole.

The secretary of state's decision regarding a challenge may not be challenged a second time with the secretary of state, but may be appealed to the circuit court of Hughes County. If a person fails to challenge a petition pursuant to this section, it does not deny that person any other legal remedy to challenge the filing of an initiative or referendum petition in circuit court. A challenge to a petition in circuit court may include items prohibited in this section.



## Fines Higher in school zone

A new sign was installed on the poles holding the school zone blinking lights on Thursday. The crew from Ringgenberg Electric installed the "Fines Higher" signs on each of the two poles. With the addition of the sign, the lights had to be repositioned. According to a Department of Transportation official, the sign was overlooked in the project and was added to conform to state law.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 7 of 50

## Today in Weather History

March 17, 1997: High winds of 30 to 50 mph, gusting to over 60 mph, occurred over much of northeast South Dakota through the morning and into the early afternoon hours. Several homes and businesses sustained some roof damage. In Aberdeen, the high winds tore a large piece of the roof off the bowling alley and also ripped a part of a roof off an appliance store. The wind damaged some power lines and connections in Aberdeen, including some traffic lights. In Aberdeen, the power was out for 2500 customers for a few hours in the morning. The wind also damaged two old farm buildings west of Aberdeen. One barn lost 75 percent of its roof. The second barn was pushed six inches off of its foundation suffering minor structural damage. The Edmunds County Highway Department Shop, under construction east of Ipswich, suffered much of damage as many rafters came down and the sidewall frame shifted. Finally, much small to medium-sized branches were brought down by the high winds. Some peak wind gusts across the area included 58 mph in Aberdeen and 63 mph in Watertown.

1892: A winter storm in southwestern and central Tennessee produced 26.3 inches of snow at Riddleton and 18.5 inches at Memphis. It was the deepest snow on record for those areas.

1906: The temperature at Snake River Wyoming dipped to 50 degrees below zero, a record for the U.S. for March.

1906: A magnitude 7.1 earthquake caused significant damage in Taiwan. According to the Central Weather Bureau in China, this earthquake caused 1,258 deaths, 2,385 injuries, and destroyed over 6,000 homes.

1952: The ban on using the word "tornado" issued in 1886 ended on this date. In the 1880s, John P. Finley of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, then handling weather forecasting for the U.S., developed generalized forecasts on days tornadoes were most likely. But in 1886, the Army ended Finley's program and banned the word "tornado" from forecasts because the harm done by a tornado prediction would eventually be greater than that which results from the tornado itself. The thinking was that people would be trampled in the panic if they heard a tornado was possible. The ban stayed in place after the Weather Bureau; now the National Weather Service took over forecasting from the Army. A tornado that wrecked 52 large aircraft at Tinker Air Force Base, OK, on 3/20/1948, spurred Air Force meteorologists to begin working on ways to forecast tornadoes. The Weather Bureau also began looking for ways to improve tornado forecasting and established the Severe Local Storm Warning Center, which is now the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, OK. The ban on the word "tornado" fell on this date when the new center issued its first Tornado Watch.

1987 - A powerful spring storm produced severe thunderstorms over the Central Gulf Coast States, and heavy snow in the High Plains Region. A tornado caused three million dollars damage at Natchez MS, and six inches of rain in five hours caused five million dollars damage at Vicksburg MS. Cactus TX received 10 inches of snow. Western Kansas reported blizzard conditions. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A winter storm produced heavy snow from the northeast Texas panhandle to the Ozark area of Missouri and Arkansas. Up to fifteen inches of snow was reported in Oklahoma and Texas. Snowfall totals in the Ozark area ranged up to 14 inches, with unofficial reports as high as 22 inches around Harrison AR. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

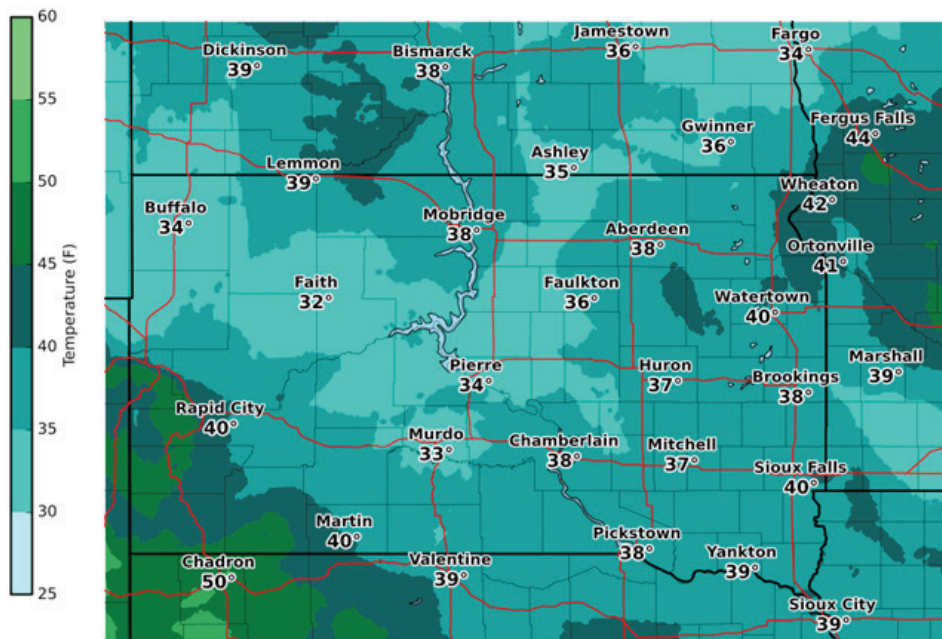
1989 - Strong northerly winds ushered snow and arctic cold into the north central U.S. Winds gusted to 58 mph at Sydney NE and Scottsbluff NE, Cadillac MI received 12 inches of snow, and International Falls MN reported a record low of 22 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Showers and thunderstorms associated with a slow moving cold front produced torrential rains across parts of the southeastern U.S. over a two day period. Flooding claimed the lives of at least 22 persons, including thirteen in Alabama. Up to 16 inches of rain deluged southern Alabama, with 10.63 inches reported at Mobile AL in 24 hours. The town of Elba AL was flooded with 6 to 12 feet of water causing more than 25 million dollars damage, and total flood damage across Alabama exceeded 100 million dollars. Twenty-six counties in the state were declared disaster areas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 8 of 50

Sat Mar 17	Sun Mar 18	Mon Mar 19	Tue Mar 20	Wed Mar 21	Thu Mar 22	Fri Mar 23
37°F	41°F	37°F	36°F	40°F	43°F	42°F
22°F	28°F	24°F	22°F	24°F	30°F	33°F
E 6 MPH	S 8 MPH	NNE 8 MPH Precip 40%	NNW 6 MPH	SSW 6 MPH	ESE 15 MPH Precip 10%	ESE 17 MPH Precip 70%



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD  
[www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr)

St. Patrick's Day  
Forecast  
Cloudy and Cool

Record Highs Today:  
Aberdeen: 77 in 2012  
Sisseton: 78 in 2012  
Watertown: 78 in 1894  
Pierre: 80 in 2012  
Mobridge: 79 in 2012

Record Lows Today:  
Aberdeen: -10 in 1906  
Sisseton: -11 in 1902  
Watertown: -10 in 1993  
Pierre: -3 in 1989  
Mobridge: -4 in 1939

3/17/2018 5:17 AM

Partly to mostly cloudy skies, along with cool conditions are expected today. Highs will range in the 30s and lower 40s.



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 9 of 50

## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 36.8 F at 4:12 PM**

**Low Outside Temp: 24.8 F at 8:08 AM**

**Wind Chill:**

**High Gust: 25.0 Mph at 6:41 AM**

**Precip:**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 77° in 2012**

**Record Low: -10° in 1906**

**Average High: 40°F**

**Average Low: 20°F**

**Average Precip in March: 0.55**

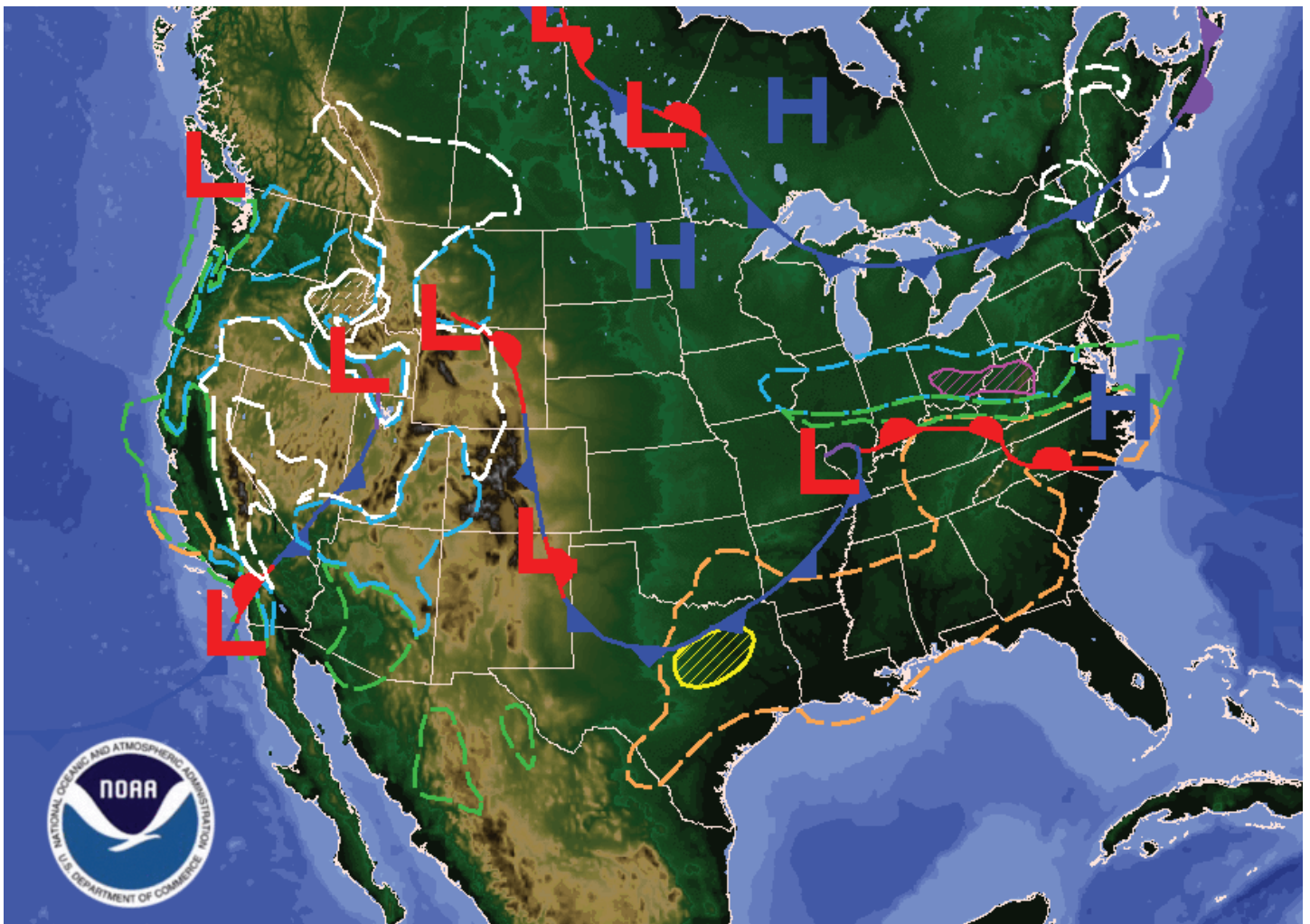
**Precip to date in March: 0.94**

**Average Precip to date: 1.57**

**Precip Year to Date: 1.35**

**Sunset Tonight: 7:42 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:40 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Mar 17, 2018, issued 4:23 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Kong with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 10 of 50



## WHAT KIND OF LOVE IS THIS?

"You know how much I love you, Josie - more than anyone or anything in the world!" began his text message. "Can't wait until I see you this evening. Will be there if I don't go to the ball game with Rob. Love, Steve."

It didn't take Josie long to erase the message and text her friend Ruth asking if they could get together for dinner. She had trouble understanding that kind of love. And so does God. We say one thing to Him and then live a life that is entirely inconsistent with His understanding of love and what He expects us to do if we love Him.

"You who love the Lord," said the Psalmist, "hate evil!" That is a very straight forward, simple statement. It is one of Scriptures If/Then challenges that God puts in our pathway. Put another way we might ask, "If we don't hate evil can we truly love God? And, if we hate evil, how will our lives show those around us that we do?"

Loving God means that we will do whatever is necessary to align ourselves with His plan and purpose for His world. We will work with Him to reach out to those around us with a heart full of His love to show them His grace and mercy. We will be uncomfortable if we know of someone, somewhere who needs something that we have that we can share with them that will bring hope and healing to their lives.

People who lie abandoned in convalescent homes and children who are abused through no fault of their own and individuals who crave a smile and a hug need to know that "we love the Lord." They will if we reach out.

Prayer: Trouble our hearts and minds, Father, and give us no peace if we know someone in need and do nothing! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 97:10a You who love the Lord, hate evil!

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 11 of 50

## 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)
- 4/13/2018 Elementary School Carnival, 5 p.m.
- 5/5/2018 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2018 Historic Trinity Church Pump Organ Concert.
- 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 12 of 50

## News from the Associated Press

### Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

#### BOYS BASKETBALL

##### Class AA

##### Consolation Semifinal

Douglas 80, Sioux Falls Lincoln 73

O Gorman 68, Sioux Falls Washington 63

##### Semifinal

Harrisburg 60, Rapid City Stevens 52

Yankton 60, RC Central 52

##### Class A

##### Consolation Semifinal

Dakota Valley 68, Pine Ridge 65

Red Cloud 70, Crow Creek 68

##### Semifinal

Madison 58, Sioux Valley 55

Tea Area 76, Sioux Falls Christian 68

##### Class B

##### Consolation Semifinal

Canistota 69, Lower Brule 49

Timber Lake 38, Langford 37

##### Semifinal

Clark/Willow Lake 67, Bridgewater-Emery 62

Sully Buttes 56, White River 34

#### GIRLS BASKETBALL

##### Class AA

##### Consolation Semifinal

Sioux Falls O'Gorman 56, RC Central 51

Sioux Falls Washington 56, Rapid City Stevens 46

##### Semifinal

Aberdeen Central 44, Brandon Valley 43

Harrisburg 53, Sioux Falls Lincoln 51, OT

\_\_\_ Some high school basketball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

## Commercial drone franchise launches in Rapid City

By JIM HOLLAND, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Remote control drones are seemingly everywhere these days, some buzzing overhead for fun, with others strictly flying for business.

Co-owners Trevor Plett and John Herrera have obtained a franchise for a nationwide commercial drone firm primarily specializing in inspections of high-altitude places highly dangerous, or at least highly incon-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 13 of 50

venient, for human eyes to be.

Their Measure of the High Plains drone firm, based in Rapid City, will inspect utility transmission lines, cell towers, solar farms, wind turbines and power plants, perform on high agricultural crop surveys and visually chart progress of construction projects.

Plett and Herrera formed a corporation in early 2017, then decided to obtain a franchise with Washington, D.C.-based Measure a Drone as a Service Co., the Rapid City Journal reported .

"We just saw that as an opportunity to get in early and establish ourselves as a drone service provider," Plett said.

Their Measure franchise covers South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming. Chief pilot Jeff Rizza is based in Missoula, Montana.

Measure headquarters provided training to a high standard and also gave them access to data processing and drone assets, Plett said. The franchise also allows them first access to work for national accounts, such as cellular service providers, within their region.

One big factor differentiating a commercial drone business from a hobbyist is the amount of training and certification required, Plett said.

All drones, for work or play, must be registered with the Federal Aviation Administration, but adding the commercial component takes the regulation to another level.

Many people, he said, would be surprised to learn of the training, insurance and regulation required for commercial drone operation with the FAA, including the need to receive clearance to work within certain airspace. For example, Ellsworth Air Force Base and Rapid City Regional Airport create a lot of controlled airspace in the area, he said.

"Having a commercial license, you have to know how to operate within that or around (controlled airspace)," Plett said. "It's a real business. It's not just a couple of people messing around with drones out there."

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

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

01-13-26-33-52, Mega Ball: 11, Megaplier: 3

(one, thirteen, twenty-six, thirty-three, fifty-two; Mega Ball: eleven; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$345 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$455 million

## Hahn, Tucker 3-pointers lead Wildcats in overtime

By TODD BURLAGE, Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — Villanova is making its first trip to the NCAA Tournament last a little longer. Adrianna Hahn scored 24 points, including a key 3-pointer in overtime to help the No. 9 seed Wildcats beat eighth-seeded South Dakota State 81-74 on Friday night in the first round of the women's NCAAs.

This was the first NCAA Tournament win for the Wildcats since 2004 when they beat Mississippi State 66-63 in the opening round. Villanova, which hadn't played in the NCAAs in five years, had to work for the victory.

South Dakota State trailed by 12 early in the fourth quarter before rallying to tie the game when Madison Guebert banked in a 3-pointer from the wing just before the buzzer at the end of regulation.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 14 of 50

"We just kind of chipped away the whole game and gave ourselves a chance there in overtime," Guebert said.

"When I saw that shot go in my heart sunk and I just couldn't believe that we were going to continue playing the game," Hahn said of the game-tying shot. "But we just had to keep playing just like we played at the beginning."

In a game that Villanova never trailed and that was tied only twice, the Wildcats needed some hot 3-point shooting in overtime to finally squelch the Jackrabbits' comeback and secure the win.

With the game tied at 70 in overtime, the Wildcats hit three straight 3-pointers — the first two by Jan-nah Tucker. Hahn's 3-pointer made it 79-70 with 55 seconds left and Villanova (23-8) advanced to play top seed and former Big East rival Notre Dame.

Tucker finished with 20. Mary Gedaka had 15 and Alex Louin added 10.

Macy Miller paced the Jackrabbits (26-7) with 25 points. Guebert had 21 points and Ellie Thompson had 16 to round out double-digit scorers for South Dakota State.

In a game that saw the script flipped, Villanova proved that experience didn't necessarily matter for success in the postseason.

South Dakota State was making its eighth appearance in the last 10 NCAA Tournaments while the Wild-cats were making their first appearance in the last five years.

None of the Villanova players had ever played in an NCAA Tournament game while five Jackrabbits were on a team that played two games in the 2016 tournament.

The inexperienced Wildcat players weren't impressed, especially early on.

Hahn sparked an immediate 3-point barrage for Villanova with three triples in the first four minutes of the game as the Wildcats built a quick 14-4 lead that ballooned to 26-11 at the end of the first quarter.

"They're a great team and they don't beat themselves," Tucker said of knowing South Dakota State would make a comeback. "So we knew if we let up and if we continue to make little mistakes, they were going to make us pay for them."

The Wildcats came into the contest averaging 8.7 made 3-pointers per game.

They had 10 3-pointers at halftime, which already tied their season high for 3-pointers in game, and finished with 16 total triples on 38 long-range attempts, also a season high.

"We had to make threes to win the game," said Villanova coach Harry Perretta, who told his team before the game that at least 12 3-pointers were needed to have a chance. "The big talk at halftime was to continue shooting the three, and that was the big talk before the game."

On the other side, the Jackrabbits shot only three of 16 3-pointers for the game.

"Three-point shooting was clearly the difference," said South Dakota State Aaron Johnston. "We're a better shooting team than that. We just couldn't get any of them to go."

## BIG PICTURE

Villanova: Louin recorded her sixth double-double of the season with 10 points and 14 rebounds.

South Dakota State: The Jackrabbits missed their quest for a second round of 32 appearance in the last three seasons.

## VETERAN LEADERSHIP

In his 18th season coaching South Dakota State, Johnston might be considered one of the graybeards of this NCAA Tournament. But that tenure pales in comparison to Perretta's 40 seasons at Villanova.

## ROAD TRIP

A lively and large contingent of South Dakota State fans made the 667-mile trip from Sioux Falls to South Bend. About 400 faithful, clad in their yellow and blue, were part of the 4,431 total attendance at Purcell Pavilion on the campus of Notre Dame.

## Company authorized to study South Dakota gold mine

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Federal and state regulators are entrusting a water pollution study at an abandoned South Dakota gold mine to a company that is potentially interested in reopening the mine.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the South Dakota Department of Environment & Natural Resources have signed an agreement with Agnico Eagle Mines, a publicly traded company based in Toronto, Canada. Agnico is trying to determine whether there's enough remaining gold to reopen the Gilt Edge Mine near Lead.

Mining at Gilt Edge stopped in 1999, when the parent company of the mine's then-operator, Bohm Mining, declared bankruptcy in Canada. The company left behind pits containing a combined 150 million gallons of acidic water laden with lead, arsenic and cadmium. The EPA added the mine to its National Priorities List in 2000, making its cleanup eligible for Superfund money. Cleanup has been ongoing ever since.

The new agreement authorizes Agnico to conduct and finance an estimated \$1.5 million toxic cadmium contamination investigation. It's not clear when the investigation will begin, but it's expected to take from 18 months to 2 years.

Gregg Loptien, Agnico's U.S. exploration manager, said they plan to delegate the work.

"We are not environmental specialists," Loptien told the Rapid City Journal. "We will be hiring contractors, and that is their job."

Loptien said the company will have to go through a permitting process if they want to reopen the mine. He said Agnico would likely be held responsible for the eventual reclamation of the entire site.

Joy Jenkins, remedial project manager for the EPA, stressed that the current agreement is for information-gathering only, and doesn't allow re-mining.

Lilias Jarding, a Black Hills Clean Water Alliance official, is skeptical of Agnico's involvement in the study. "There's obviously going to be mixed motives there, because a mining company exists to mine," Jarding said.

Public comments are being requested through April 2. It's unclear what effect public input will have on an agreement that has already been signed.

---

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

## 2017 traffic fatalities in South Dakota up 11 percent

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Highway traffic fatalities in South Dakota last year were up about 11 percent over 2016.

The Department of Public Safety says there were 129 fatalities in the state in 2017, up 13 from the previous year.

Office of Highway Safety Director Lee Axdahl says the state was on target to finish the year with fewer than 100 traffic fatalities for the first time in history, but there were 42 fatalities in the last three months of the year — about one-third of the yearly total.

Axdahl says South Dakota still has one of the lowest traffic fatality rates in the nation.

## FBI: Man killed by officer on Rosebud Sioux reservation

PARMELEE, S.D. (AP) — The FBI says a tribal officer has fatally shot a man on the Rosebud Sioux reservation in Parmelee.

The Argus Leader reports the officer was confronted by a man with a weapon just before midnight Wednesday and when he failed to respond to commands he was shot. The man later died of his wounds.

The FBI says there are no other injuries and there is no further danger to the public. FBI spokesman Jeffrey Van Nest said Friday there are no other details the agency is releasing.

---

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

## South Dakota State football coach pleads no contest to DUI

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota State University football coach John Stiegelmeier has pleaded no contest to drunken driving.

Stiegelmeier was arrested Jan. 27 and later apologized for what he said was a poor decision.

Brookings County prosecutor Teree Nesvold tells the Argus Leader that Stiegelmeier pleaded no contest in a March 5 court appearance, and the judge granted a suspended imposition of sentence. If Stiegelmeier complies with the terms of probation, the case eventually will be wiped from his record.

Nesvold says the arrangement is common with first-offense DUIs.

Stiegelmeier is the winningest football coach in South Dakota State history, leading the Jackrabbits to a 148-97 record in 21 seasons.

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

## Father expected to plead guilty to starving infant

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Wounded Knee father accused of fatally starving his newborn son is expected to plead guilty to second-degree murder in agreement with federal prosecutors. He's expected in federal court in Rapid City Friday.

Prosecutors say 25-year-old Darwin Wade Red Cloud withheld sustenance from the 2-month-old as a pattern of child abuse in October 2014. The Rapid City Journal reports the baby was born in good health at Pine Ridge Hospital.

Red Cloud was initially charged with first-degree murder and felony child abuse and neglect. It's not clear if the child's mother was charged in her son's death. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined to comment since she was 15 when the baby was born.

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

Winner man caught in Sturgis sex trafficking sting sentenced

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Winner man caught during an undercover sex trafficking sting during the 2016 Sturgis Motorcycle Rally has been sentenced to five years in federal prison.

The U.S. attorney's office says 62-year-old Duane Hosek requested pornographic pictures from someone he believed to be a minor and tried to solicit a minor via the internet.

He was convicted of attempting to receive child porn. He'll be on supervised release for five years following his prison term.

Hosek was among 10 men indicted in the sting.

## TIPPING OFF: UMBC upset puts underdogs in NCAA spotlight

By GENARO C. ARMAS, AP Sports Writer

The University of Maryland-Baltimore County proved that anything can happen in the NCAA Tournament. After pulling off the upset of all NCAA upsets, the 16th-seeded Retrievers get a day to rest and recharge following their history-making win over No. 1 seed Virginia.

No. 11 seed Loyola-Chicago and No. 13 seed Buffalo return to the floor when the second round opens Saturday, hoping to keep the underdog mojo going.

Though maybe don't call them "Cinderella" teams.

"I feel like the way — not only the game last night but the way we won, showed everybody that it wasn't a fluke," guard CJ Massinburg said Friday, referring to the Bulls' 89-68 blowout of fourth-seeded Arizona in the first round.

Buffalo advanced to face Kentucky — another NCAA blue blood — in Boise, Idaho, in a South Region matchup.



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 17 of 50

"If I were on their team I'd feel very confident, too," Wildcats coach John Calipari said, and that was hours before UMBC's victory. The Retrievers set a new bar for what might be considered an "upset."

In Dallas, Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt will be saying her prayers again for Loyola-Chicago. The 98-year-old nun is an unlikely social media star for being the Ramblers' biggest fan. She's the team chaplain who prays with the players before games and gives them scouting reports the next day.

Look out, Tennessee. The Volunteers are up next for the Ramblers in the South, and even Tennessee forward Grant Williams can't help but take a liking to his opponent's feel-good story.

"You like teams like these, the ones that fight all odds and compete, and that's something that you love," Williams said.

His tune might change if Tennessee becomes the latest high seed to fall.

## PERFECT BIG TEN

This might be considered a down year for the Big Ten with just four teams in the NCAA Tournament.

At least all four made it to the second round.

The Big Ten was the only power conference with a perfect record during the first two days of the tourney. Michigan State and Purdue won on Friday.

Ohio State and Michigan will try to keep the streak going on Saturday.

The fifth-seeded Buckeyes face a challenge from fourth-seeded Gonzaga in front of what could be a Bulldogs-friendly crowd in Boise, Idaho, in the West Region. It's a rematch of a game played in the PK80 Invitational in November, won by Gonzaga 86-59.

Third-seeded Michigan faces sixth-seeded Houston in the Midwest Region in Wichita, Kansas. After slogging through an opening-round win over Montana, the Wolverines will try to get to their fourth Sweet 16 under coach John Beilein.

## CONFERENCE SCORECARD:

The breakdown by conference after the first round, for leagues with at least three entries.

SEC: 6-2

ACC: 6-4

Big Ten: 4-0

Big East: 4-2

Big 12: 4-3

Atlantic 10: 2-2

Pac-12: 0-3

## THEY FEEL VIRGINIA'S PAIN

This will be one tough offseason for the Cavaliers.

The No. 1 overall seed made history in the men's NCAA Tournament for the wrong reason, losing to UMBC by 20 points.

"Yeah, I saw that score. This tournament just breaks your heart," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said after the Orange defeated TCU 57-52 in the first round.

He has an idea of what Virginia coach Tony Bennett might be going through. The Orange became the first No. 2 seed to lose to a 15th seed in the NCAAs, falling to Richmond in 1991.

Now that's just an asterisk in the record book, overtaken by Virginia's shocking loss.

"I've been there," Boeheim said. "It's a heartbreaking tournament. That's the only way to describe it."

Stanford women's coach Tara VanDerveer can relate, too.

The only other time that a No. 1 seed lost in the first round was in 1998 when Stanford fell to Harvard on the Cardinal's home court of Maples Pavilion.

VanDerveer says Virginia coach Tony Bennett and his team should be "exceedingly proud of their season" and that one game doesn't define them.

"Coach Bennett is a class act. He will only get better," she said. "Pain is a great motivator!"

## BIG GUY GOES DOWN

Purdue's Final Four hopes took a blow when big man Isaac Haas went down with a season-ending injury

in an otherwise easy win over Cal State Fullerton.

Haas broke his right elbow after taking a hard foul midway through the second half of the 74-48 win over Cal State Fullerton when forward Dominik Heinzl pulled him down while trying to defend him. Haas hurt the same elbow in November.

The second-seeded Boilermakers will have a day to figure out how to adjust without Haas before returning to the floor on Sunday against Butler. Matt Haarms, a 7-foot-3 freshman, will likely replace Haas, a senior who averaged 14.7 points and 5.7 rebounds per game.

This story has been corrected to show that the Pac-12 is 0-3, not 0-4, in the tournament.

AP Sports Writers Janie McCauley and Larry Lage contributed to this report.

More AP college basketball: <https://collegebasketball.ap.org> ; [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25) and <https://www.podcastone.com/ap-sports-special-events>

## Talks on trillion-dollar US budget bill reach crucial stage

By ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top-level congressional talks on a \$1.3 trillion catchall spending bill are reaching a critical stage as negotiators confront immigration, abortion-related issues and a battle over a massive rail project that pits President Donald Trump against his most powerful Democratic adversary.

The bipartisan measure is loaded with political and policy victories for both sides. Republicans and Trump are winning a long-sought budget increase for the Pentagon while Democrats obtain funding for infrastructure, the opioid crisis and a wide swath of domestic programs.

The bill would implement last month's big budget agreement, providing 10 percent increases for both the Pentagon and domestic agencies when compared with current levels. Coupled with last year's tax cut measure, it heralds the return of trillion-dollar budget deficits as soon as the budget year starting in October.

While most of the funding issues in the enormous measure have been sorted out, fights involving a number of policy "riders" — so named because they catch a ride on a difficult-to-stop spending bill — continued into the weekend. Among them are GOP-led efforts to add a plan to revive federal subsidies to help the poor cover out-of-pocket costs under President Barack Obama's health law and to fix a glitch in the recent tax bill that subsidizes grain sales to cooperatives at the expense of for-profit grain companies.

Trump has privately threatened to veto the whole package if a \$900 million payment is made on the Hudson River Gateway Project, a priority of top Senate Democrat Chuck Schumer of New York. Trump's opposition is alarming northeastern Republicans such as Gateway supporter Peter King, R-N.Y., who lobbied Trump on the project at a St. Patrick's luncheon in the Capitol on Thursday.

The Gateway Project would add an \$11 billion rail tunnel under the Hudson River to complement deteriorating, century-old tunnels that are at risk of closing in a few years. It enjoys bipartisan support among key Appropriations panel negotiators on the omnibus measure who want to get the expensive project on track while their coffers are flush with money.

Most House Republicans voted to kill the funding in a tally last year, however, preferring to see the money spread to a greater number of districts.

"Obviously, if we're doing a huge earmark ... it's troubling," said Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., a leader of House conservatives. "Why would we do that? Schumer's pet project and we pass that under a Republican-controlled Senate, House and White House?"

Schumer has kept a low profile, avoiding stoking a battle with the unpredictable Trump.

There's also a continuing battle over Trump's long-promised U.S.-Mexico border wall. While Trump traveled to California on Tuesday to inspect prototypes for the wall, what's pending now is \$1.6 billion for earlier designs involving sections in Texas that double as levees and 14 miles (23 kilometers) of replace-

ment fencing in San Diego.

It appears Democrats may be willing to accept wall funding, but they are battling hard against Trump's demands for big increases for immigration agents and detention beds they fear would enable wide-scale roundups of immigrants illegally living in the U.S.

Meanwhile, a White House trial balloon to trade additional years of wall funding for a temporary reprieve for immigrants brought to the country illegally as children — commonly called "Dreamers" — landed with a thud last week.

One battle involving Planned Parenthood appears to have been resolved as Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., dropped her insistence on a provision designed to make sure that the organization, intensely disliked by anti-abortion Republicans, receives a lion's share of federal family planning grants.

But another abortion-related provision — backed by House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. — that would strengthen "conscience protection" for health care providers that refuse to provide abortions remained unresolved heading into the final round of talks.

Chances for an effort to attach legislation to permit states to require out-of-state online retailers to collect sales taxes appear to be fading. And Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., faces strong opposition from Democrats on a change to campaign finance laws to give party committees like the National Republican Senate Committee the freedom to work more closely with their candidates and ease limits to permit them to funnel more money to the most competitive races.

One item that appears likely to catch a ride on the must-pass measure is a package of telecommunications bills, including a measure to free up airwaves for wireless users in anticipation of new 5G technology.

## US probes 4 deaths in Hyundai-Kia cars when air bags failed

By TOM KRISHER, AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Air bags in some Hyundai and Kia cars failed to inflate in crashes and four people are dead. Now the U.S. government's road safety agency wants to know why.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says it's investigating problems that affect an estimated 425,000 cars made by the Korean automakers. The agency also is looking into whether the same problem could happen in vehicles made by other companies.

In documents posted on its website Saturday, the safety agency says the probe covers 2011 Hyundai Sonata midsize cars and 2012 and 2013 Kia Forte compacts. The agency says it has reports of six front-end crashes with significant damage to the cars. Four people died and six were injured.

The problem has been traced to electrical circuit shorts in air bag control computers made by parts supplier ZF-TRW. NHTSA now wants to know if other automakers used the same computer.

On Feb. 27, Hyundai recalled nearly 155,000 Sonatas due to air bag failures, which the company has traced to a short circuit in the air bag control computers. Hyundai's sister automaker Kia, which sells similar vehicles, has yet to issue a recall. No deaths or injuries were disclosed in Hyundai's recall documents, which were posted by NHTSA in early March.

Hyundai spokesman Jim Trainor says the problem occurred in rare head-on collisions that were offset from the center of the vehicles. "It's very unusual to have that kind of collision," he said Saturday.

Dealers will consider offering loaner cars to owners until the problem can be repaired, he said. "We certainly would do everything we can to help our customers," Trainor said.

Messages were left Saturday with spokesmen for Kia and ZF-TRW.

According to NHTSA, Hyundai investigated and found the problem was "electrical overstress" in the computers. The company didn't have a fix developed at the time but said it was investigating the problem with ZF-TRW. Hyundai does not yet have a fix for the problem but said it expects the Sonata recall to start April 20. The problem also can stop the seat belts from tightening before a crash.

In the documents, NHTSA said it understands that the Kia Fortes under investigation use similar air bag control computers made by ZF-TRW. The agency says it also is looking into a 2016 recall involving Fiat Chrysler vehicles that had a similar problem causing the air bags not to deploy.

The agency says it will evaluate the scope of Hyundai's recall, confirm Kia's use of the same or similar air bag control computers and look into the cause. It also will investigate whether "any other vehicle manufacturers used the same or similar" ZF-TRW computers and whether there have been any similar air bag failures.

NHTSA says four crashes occurred in Sonatas and two happened in Fortes. One Forte crash happened in Canada.

## White House pushes back against reports of tumult, purges

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, CATHERINE LUCEY and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House is pushing back against talk of a staffing purge, insisting that reports of tumult and imminent departures are overblown.

Chief of staff John Kelly, himself the subject of rumors that his job may be in jeopardy, has assured some staffers that they're safe, at least for now.

The message he conveyed was an attempt at "reassuring them that there were no immediate personnel changes at this time and that people shouldn't be concerned," press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Friday.

But days after President Donald Trump's secretary of state was ousted, many close to Trump think more upheaval is coming soon.

Trump has been moving toward replacing national security adviser H.R. McMaster but has not settled on exact timing or a successor, according to four people with knowledge of White House deliberations. Kelly has also worn on the president, Trump confidants said. And Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, under fire for ethics violations, appears to be grasping to keep his job.

Sanders gave multiple reassurances about McMaster — first in a tweet Thursday and then from the briefing room podium the next day. She said Trump had indicated that no changes were coming.

McMaster said Sanders had "set it straight" but struck a slightly different tone.

"Everybody has got to leave the White House at some point," he told a reporter from ABC News outside the West Wing. "I'm doing my job."

But the air of stability the White House tried to project felt more like a pause than a permanent shift.

Trump is privately weighing still more changes, expressing frustration with some aides and sifting through possible replacements. Reports of tumult in the administration were at such a feverish pitch that the president on Thursday reflected on the latest staff departures during an Oval Office conversation with Kelly and Vice President Mike Pence.

With a laugh, Trump said: "Who's next?"

It's a question that has the whole White House on edge.

Kelly has told confidants that he believes he can weather the current storm. But he has grown increasingly frustrated with the constant turmoil in the West Wing, believing at times that Trump intentionally fuels the chaos to keep his staff on its toes and his name in headlines, according to a person familiar with Kelly's thinking. The person wasn't authorized to speak publicly about private conversations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

This account of the tensions in the White House is based on conversations with more than a dozen officials inside the White House and familiar with West Wing deliberations, all of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal matters.

After more than 14 months in office, Trump is reshaping his administration, seeking people more likely to fall in line with his policies and tolerate his moods. The factionalism that defined the early days of his tenure has faded, and he has lost some of the close aides who could manage his volatile impulses.

Trump's administration has set records for turnover among senior administration aides. Top economic adviser Gary Cohn and communications director Hope Hicks are leaving in the coming weeks. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was just unceremoniously ousted. Trump personal assistant John McEntee was

removed from his job and escorted off White House grounds — then quickly handed a job on Trump's re-election campaign.

In private conversations in recent weeks, Trump has reflected on his desire to reshape the administration. Though the drumbeat of the Russia probe has only grown louder, the president believes that his recent decisions on tariffs and North Korea have breathed new life into his administration, and he is eager to take more bold steps that make his own mark. He has told confidants he wants to rid himself of staffers who hold him back.

Trump chafes at McMaster's demeanor, complaining that his aide lectures him, according to three current and former administration officials. Officials said personal tensions have led McMaster to be sidelined in some internal discussions, including a recent meeting on Venezuela sanctions, with Kelly taking on a more active role in foreign policy decisions.

The president and McMaster have disagreed on a number of issues — including the Iran deal and the U.S. approach to North Korea — and the national security adviser has also clashed with Kelly and Defense Secretary James Mattis, according to the officials.

During an earlier round of Trump discontent, there was talk of providing McMaster, a three-star general, with a soft landing by giving him a fourth star along with a command in a priority area such as Afghanistan or Korea, according to a former senior administration official. But there are few openings for combatant commanders.

Kelly has been credited with imposing order on the chaotic West Wing, but his relationship with Trump has also come under strain. The president recently told an ally that he was still frustrated by an interview that Kelly gave to Fox News nearly two months ago in which he suggested that Trump had "evolved" in his thinking about the need for a wall on the Mexican border.

Lemire contributed from New York. Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Ken Thomas contributed to this report.

## Trump lauds firing of ex-top FBI official as 'great day'

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Jeff Sessions says he has fired Andrew McCabe, a former FBI deputy director who was a regular target of President Donald Trump's anger and criticism, just two days before McCabe's scheduled retirement date. McCabe suggested the move was part of the Trump administration's "war on the FBI."

The dismissal Friday was made on the recommendation of FBI disciplinary officials. An upcoming inspector general's report is expected to conclude that McCabe authorized the release of information to the media and was not forthcoming with the watchdog office as it examined the bureau's handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation.

"The FBI expects every employee to adhere to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and accountability," Sessions said in a statement.

McCabe said his credibility had been attacked as "part of a larger effort not just to slander me personally" but also the FBI and law enforcement.

"It is part of this administration's ongoing war on the FBI and the efforts of the special counsel investigation, which continue to this day," he added, referring to Robert Mueller's probe into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign. "Their persistence in this campaign only highlights the importance of the special counsel's work."

McCabe asserted he was singled out because of the "role I played, the actions I took, and the events I witnessed in the aftermath of the firing of James Comey," whom Trump fired as FBI director last May.

Mueller is investigating whether Trump's actions, including Comey's ouster, constitute obstruction of justice. McCabe, a Comey confidant, could be an important witness.

McCabe said the release of the findings against him was accelerated after he told congressional officials

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 22 of 50

that he could corroborate Comey's accounts of Comey's conversations with the president.

McCabe spent more than 20 years as a career FBI official and played key roles in some of the bureau's most recent significant investigations. Trump repeatedly condemned him over the past year as emblematic of an FBI leadership he contends is biased against his administration.

In a tweet early Saturday, Trump said it was "a great day for Democracy" and "a great day for the hard working men and women of the FBI." He asserted without elaboration that McCabe "knew all about the lies and corruption going on at the highest levels of the FBI."

McCabe had been on leave from the FBI since January, when he abruptly left the deputy director position. He had planned to retire on Sunday, and the dismissal probably jeopardizes his ability to collect his full pension benefits. His removal could add to the turmoil that has enveloped the FBI since Comey's firing and as the FBI continues its Trump campaign investigation that the White House has dismissed as a hoax.

The firing arises from an inspector general review into how the FBI handled the Clinton email investigation. That inquiry focused not only on specific decisions made by FBI leadership but also on news media leaks.

McCabe came under scrutiny over an October 2016 news report that revealed differing approaches within the FBI and Justice Department over how aggressively the Clinton Foundation should be investigated. The watchdog office has concluded that McCabe authorized FBI officials to speak to a Wall Street Journal reporter for that story and that McCabe had not been forthcoming with investigators. McCabe denies it.

In his statement, McCabe said he had the authority to share information with journalists through the public affairs office, a practice he said was common and continued under the current FBI director, Christopher Wray. McCabe said he honestly answered questions about whom he had spoken to and when, and that when he thought his answers were misunderstood, he contacted investigators to correct them.

The media outreach came at a time when McCabe said he was facing public accusations of partisanship and followed reports that his wife, during a run for the state Senate in Virginia, had received campaign contributions from a Clinton ally. McCabe suggested in his statement that he was trying to "set the record straight" about the FBI's independence against the background of those allegations.

Despite his defense, officials at the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility recommended the firing, leaving Justice Department leaders in a difficult situation. Sessions, whose job status has for months appeared shaky under his own blistering criticism from Trump, risked inflaming the White House if he decided against firing McCabe. But a decision to dismiss McCabe days before his retirement nonetheless carried the risk of angering his rank-and-file supporters at the FBI.

McCabe enjoyed a rapid career ascent in the bureau after joining in 1996. Before being named FBI deputy director last year, he led the bureau's national security branch and also the Washington field office, one of the its largest.

But he became entangled in presidential politics in 2016 when it was revealed that his wife, during her unsuccessful legislative run, received campaign contributions from the political action committee of then-Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a longtime Clinton friend. The FBI has said McCabe received the necessary ethics approval about his wife's candidacy and was not supervising the Clinton investigation at the time.

He became acting director following the firing last May of Comey, and immediately assumed direct oversight of the FBI's investigation into the Trump campaign.

He quickly found himself at odds with the Trump administration.

As a congressional hearing days after Comey's dismissal, McCabe contradicted White House assertions that the Trump campaign investigation was one of the "smallest things" on the FBI's plate. He also strongly disputed the administration's suggestion that Comey had lost the support of the bureau's workforce.

"I can tell you that the majority, the vast majority of FBI employees, enjoyed a deep and positive connection to Director Comey," McCabe said.

---

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

## Russia expels 23 British diplomats in spy-poisoning response

By ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia on Saturday announced it is expelling 23 British diplomats and threatened further measures in retaliation in a growing diplomatic dispute over a nerve agent attack on a former spy in Britain.

The Russian Foreign Ministry also said in a statement that it is ordering the closure of the British Council, a government organization for cultural and scientific cooperation, and that it is ending an agreement to reopen the British consulate in St. Petersburg.

It ordered the diplomats to leave within a week.

The announcement followed on the heels of Britain's order this week for 23 Russian diplomats to leave the U.K. because Russia was not cooperating in the case of Sergei Skripal and his daughter, both found March 4 poisoned by a nerve agent that British officials say was developed in Russia. The Skripals remain in critical condition.

Britain's foreign secretary accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of personally ordering the poisoning of the Skripals. Putin's spokesman denounced the claim.

The Russian statement said the government could take further measures if Britain takes any more "unfriendly" moves toward Russia. British Ambassador Laurie Bristow was called to the Foreign Ministry Saturday morning to be informed of the moves.

"We will always do what is necessary to defend ourselves, our allies and our values against an attack of this sort, which is an attack not only on the United Kingdom, but upon the international rules-based system on which all countries, including Russia, depend for their safety and security," Bristow told reporters after being informed of the expulsions.

"This crisis has arisen as a result of an appalling attack in the United Kingdom, the attempted murder of two people, using a chemical weapon developed in Russia and not declared by Russia at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as Russia was and is obliged to do under the Chemical Weapons Convention," he added.

A Russian lawmaker warned Britain against escalating the crisis.

"It is possible that (Britain) will continue to respond; we are ready for this. But London must understand that this will not do anything, it is useless to talk with Russia with such methods," Dzhubarov was quoted as saying by the state news agency RIA Novosti.

While Russia has vigorously denied involvement in the attack, Western powers see it as the latest sign of alleged Russian meddling abroad. The tensions threaten to overshadow Putin's expected re-election Sunday for another six-year presidential term.

Meanwhile new tensions have surfaced over the death this week of a London-based Russian businessman, Nikolai Glushkov. British police said Friday that he died from compression to the neck and opened a murder investigation.

Russia also suspects foul play in Glushkov's death and opened its own inquiry Friday.

British police said there is no apparent link between the attack on Glushkov and the poisoning of the Skripals, but both have raised alarm in the West at a time when Russia is increasingly assertive on the global stage and facing investigations over alleged interference in the Donald Trump's election as U.S. president.

The source of the nerve agent — which Britain says is Soviet-made Novichok — is unclear, as is the way it was administered. Russia has demanded that Britain share samples collected by investigators.

Top EU diplomats were expected to discuss next steps at a meeting Monday, with some calling for a boycott of the upcoming World Cup in Russia. British Prime Minister Theresa May is seeking a global coalition of countries to punish Moscow.

---

Jim Heintz in Moscow contributed to this story.

## Survivors of school shooting take gun control message abroad

By AYA BATRAWY, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Student survivors of the worst high school shooting in U.S. history took their message abroad for the first time on Saturday, calling for greater gun safety measures and sharing with educational professionals from around the world their frightening experience.

The Feb. 14 attack in Florida killed 17 people, 14 of them students, becoming one of the deadliest school shootings in U.S. history. The attack was carried out by a former student wielding an assault-style rifle who strode into one of the school buildings and opened fire.

"It's so important to be educated, and to be educated in a productive sense is to feel safe at school," Suzanna Barna, 17, said. "No child should ever have to go through what we did."

Barna and her classmates Kevin Trejos and Lewis Mizen, all seniors at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., each wore a red ribbon representing the color of their school in honor of the victims as they talked about their experience and their push for stricter gun safety measures. They spoke in Dubai at the Global Education and Skills Forum that coincides with the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize, awarded to one outstanding teacher from around the world each year.

Trejos, 18, described the ordeal as "scary" and said students were crying and trying to comfort one another as they hid inside a closet in a classroom for nearly two hours.

"We didn't know where the shooter was. We didn't know if he was coming to our classroom next," Trejos said.

"We need to improve school safety," he added, saying that the students are not trying to ban guns "because we understand it's practically impossible to do," but are working to limit the accessibility of guns to criminals or potential criminals.

Like other school shootings before it, the attack has renewed the national debate on gun control. On Wednesday, tens of thousands of students across the U.S. walked out of their classrooms to demand action from lawmakers on gun violence and school safety.

President Donald Trump and some gun supporters say the solution is to put more guns in the hands of trained school staff — including teachers. The student survivors speaking in Dubai strongly disagree, saying more guns is not the answer.

Mizen, 17, said protocols shouldn't be preparing schools for when shootings happen, but should be stopping them before they happen.

"Teachers are there to educate their students. They shouldn't have to serve as the first line of defense between them and a rampant gunman on campus," Mizen said, eliciting applause from the audience packed with educators.

Mizen said that addressing the global forum in Dubai was as a chance to talk to world education leaders and stress the importance of safety in schools.

"If we can get the international body on our side then that will make it so much easier to make change back at home," he told The Associated Press.

Barna said that despite the sharp political divide over gun control in the United States, all can agree that schools and children should be safe. She is calling for laws that would limit access to high-capacity magazine firearms, like the AR-15 assault-style rifle used by the shooter in Florida.

Students are next planning a "March for Our Lives" rally in Washington Mar. 24. Since the shooting, they have taken trips to the U.S. capital and the Florida capital of Tallahassee to confront lawmakers. In response, some major U.S. retailers have put curbs on the sale of assault-style rifles and will no longer sell firearms to people younger than 21.

The Florida shooting was the latest in an era of school massacres that began with a shooting in 1999 at Columbine High School in Colorado that killed 13 people. The country's deadliest school shooting killed 20 children in first grade and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012.

"We've had to grow up a lot," Barna told the AP. "Emotionally it's been tough to deal with the loss we have to see every day, but we're also in the process of getting back to normal. It will happen eventually,



but it's going to take time."

Follow Aya Batrawy on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ayaelb>

## State: Voicemail about cracking in bridge wasn't picked up

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and JENNIFER KAY, Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — An engineer left a voicemail two days before a catastrophic bridge failure in Miami to say some cracking had been found at one end of the concrete span, but the voicemail wasn't picked up until after the collapse, Florida Department of Transportation officials said Friday.

The voicemail left on a landline wasn't heard by a state DOT employee until Friday because the employee was out of the office on an assignment, the agency said in an email.

In a transcript released Friday night, Denney Pate with FIGG Bridge Group says the cracking would need repairs "but from a safety perspective we don't see that there's any issue there so we're not concerned about it from that perspective."

The bridge collapsed Thursday, killing at least six people. Authorities are slowly removing the debris, looking for more victims.

At a news conference Friday night, officials from the National Transportation Safety Board said they have just begun their investigation, and cannot yet say whether any cracking contributed to the collapse. They also said workers were trying to strengthen a diagonal member on the pedestrian bridge at Florida International University when it collapsed.

Robert Accetta, the investigator-in-charge for the NTSB, said crews were applying post-tensioning force, but investigators aren't sure if that's what caused the bridge to fall.

In a news release late Friday, FIGG Bridge Engineers said it "continues to work diligently" to determine the cause of the collapse, and is examining the steps its team has taken. It added, "The evaluation was based on the best available information at that time and indicated that there were no safety issues." It also asked for time to accurately determine what led to the accident.

A college student who narrowly escaped from a car that got smashed in the collapse said he watched helplessly as the structure tumbled down atop the vehicle and killed his friend Alexa Duran, who was sitting next to him in the driver's seat.

Richie Humble, who studies at FIU, was riding in a car under the pedestrian bridge when he heard a long creaking noise coming from the structure that spanned a busy Miami-area highway. It sounded different from anything he had ever heard before.

"I looked up, and in an instant, the bridge was collapsing on us completely. It was too quick to do anything about it," Humble said Friday in a phone interview with The Associated Press.

Once Humble realized he was alive, he also realized that he could not get to Duran. He called to her but got no response. A group of men outside the car started yelling at him to try crawling through the rear window.

He couldn't squeeze through because the window was crushed. The men outside grabbed a wooden plank and pried open the rear door to pull him free, he said.

"I was trying to get people to realize my friend was still in there," he said.

He suffered cuts to his leg from glass and a slight fracture to a vertebra, but he was able to walk away from the scene.

While families waited for word on their loved ones, investigators sought to understand why the 950-ton bridge gave way during construction. The cables supporting the span were being tightened following a "stress test" when it collapsed, authorities said.

The Florida DOT said in its Friday release that it had not been notified of any stress test.

Detectives declared the rubble a homicide scene.

Scheduled to open in 2019, the bridge would have provided safe passage over a canal and six lanes of traffic and created a showpiece architectural feature connecting the campus of FIU with the community

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 26 of 50

of Sweetwater, where many students live.

The \$14.2 million project was supposed to take advantage of a faster, cheaper and safer method of bridge-building promoted by the university.

Authorities have not confirmed the victims' names. Duran's family has said she died. The fatalities included a student at FIU. One person died at a hospital. Miami-Dade Police Director Juan Perez said five bodies were located with the help of cameras but had not yet been retrieved.

In a Facebook post, Chelsea Brownfield said she was awaiting any information about her husband, Brandon. According to a Go Fund Me page set up for the family, Brandon Brownfield was driving home from work when the collapse happened.

"The outpouring of love we have received is incredible," Chelsea Brownfield wrote. The post ended with the hashtag "praying for a miracle."

Brownfield declined to comment in a message to The Associated Press.

Jorge and Carol Fraga feared their relative's car was trapped beneath the bridge. Jorge's 60-year-old uncle, Rolando Fraga, lives in the area and frequently takes the nearby turnpike to work, but no one has heard from him since midday Thursday.

"The waiting is so ... I don't have words for that," Carol Fraga said through tears.

The bridge was put in place March 10, five days before the collapse.

When finished, the span would have been supported from above, with a tall, off-center tower and cables attached to the walkway. That tower had not yet been installed, and it was unclear what builders were using as temporary supports.

---

Associated Press writers Tim Reynolds, Josh Replogle, Freida Frisaro and Curt Anderson in Miami; Jason Dearen in Gainesville; Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg and Rodrique Ngowi in Boston contributed to this report.

## Trump's possible China tariffs send opponents scrambling

By **LISA MASCARO** and **JOSH BOAK**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is considering sweeping tariffs on imports from China, with an announcement possible as early as next week. And that has industry groups and some lawmakers scrambling to prevent the next front in a potential trade war that could reverberate across the U.S. economy.

Early indications from the White House have officials braced for tariffs across a wide variety of consumer goods, from apparel to electronics, and even on imported parts for products made in the U.S. The size and scope remain under debate, but the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is warning that annual tariffs of as much as \$60 billion on Chinese goods would be "devastating."

Trump's focus on China could be even more consequential, both at home and abroad, than the recently announced penalty tariffs on steel and aluminum. And amid the staff turmoil at the White House, it's being read as a sign of rising influence for the administration's populist economic aides, led by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and adviser Peter Navarro.

Even Larry Kudlow — an avowed free trader tapped to replace Gary Cohn as director of the White House National Economic Council — has said that China deserves a "tough response" from the United States and its friends. He told CNBC this week, "The United States could lead a coalition of large trading partners and allies against China."

But with these tariffs, the Trump administration appears so far to be content to go it alone.

On Friday, the National Retail Federation, which recently hosted industry groups to organize opposition to another round of tariffs, convened a conference call to update its members. "They're all concerned about this," said David French, vice president for government relations. "Tariffs are a tax on consumers and they're best used sparingly as tools."

Trade experts and economists say the tariffs could lead to rising prices for U.S. consumers and busi-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 27 of 50

nesses without accomplishing one of the president's stated goals: reducing last year's trade imbalance of \$566 billion.

China, the largest source of the trade imbalance, would likely respond to any tariffs by retaliating with higher import taxes on U.S. goods, among other possible restrictions.

"They signaled that they will aim at things that affect the United States politically as well as economically," said Claude Barfield, a scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute and former consultant with the U.S. trade representative.

"The farmer in Kansas or Iowa could feel it," he said. "U.S. high tech companies could feel it because the supply chains for iPhones go through China."

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill, who have largely been shut out of administration deliberations, fear tariffs would stunt economic benefits in the U.S. that could be stemming from the GOP tax cuts.

Republican leaders, including House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and Rep. Kevin Brady of Texas, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, have urged the administration to target any proposed tariffs as narrowly as possible, away from U.S. allies and focused on countries engaged in over-production and product dumping.

Republicans in Congress largely opposed Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs and are working with the administration on a process for allowing waivers or carve outs for certain countries or types of metals, beyond the exemption the White House is allowing for Canada and Mexico.

"We want to narrow this," Brady, who has been in talks with Ross all week, said Friday on Fox. "Tariffs are taxes — lower is better, zero is the best."

The new tariffs on China would be tied to an investigation into the country's failure to stop intellectual property theft, a probe that was launched in August as part of the rarely used Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Beyond the trade imbalance, the Trump administration hasn't fully explained to the public which specific steps it wants China to take, creating a degree of uncertainty.

"Is the endgame just the tariffs or is this the beginning of negotiation? It's hard to know what the ultimate intent of the administration is," said Rod Hunter, a lawyer at Baker & McKenzie who previously coordinated global economic policies during George W. Bush's administration.

Already, the steel and aluminum tariffs have sparked a response from the European Union, which Friday released a list of U.S. products — from whiskey and motorcycles to breakfast foods and batteries — it plans to introduce duties on if the 28-nation bloc is not exempted.

Trump is considering adjustments but appears undeterred on trade.

"The president's going to continue fighting for the American worker," said Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders. "He's also working with a number of individual countries and negotiating on areas of national security where we can work together, and there's some flexibility there, and we're continuing to have those conversations."

Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., a White House ally who spoke earlier this week with Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, said he has been talking with Trump on measured approaches toward using tariffs to remedy trade imbalances.

"His instincts are exactly right: We need a level playing field with the rest of the world," Perdue said recently on Fox Business. "And I think we'll see a measured approach going forward. This is not a guy that wants to create isolationism or a trade war."

---

Associated Press writers Ken Thomas in Washington and Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed to this report.

---

Follow Mascaro on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/LisaMascaro> and Boak at <http://twitter.com/JoshBoak>

## Bye-bye box seats? Tax law may curb corporate cash at games

By MARCY GORDON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Could the crackdown on tax loopholes clamp down on corporate schmoozing?

The new tax law ends a benefit prized by business for impressing customers or courting new ones. And the impact could be felt in the pricey boxes at sports stadiums, or even at Double-A baseball games in small towns with loyal company backers. In Washington, lobbyists who helped craft the Republican tax legislation could now be pinched by it.

U.S. companies spend hundreds of millions annually on entertaining customers and clients at sporting events, tournaments and arts venues, an expense that until this year they could partially deduct from their tax bill. But a provision in the new law eliminates the long-standing 50 percent deduction in an effort to curb the overall price tag of the legislation and streamline the tax code.

“Congress didn’t feel the government should subsidize it anymore. Firms are going to take a hard look at their entertainment budgets,” said Ryan Losi, a certified public accountant based in Glen Allen, Virginia.

The provision is one of the many under-the-radar consequences slowly emerging from the new tax legislation, the most sweeping rewrite of the tax code in three decades. Also embedded in the law are little-noticed provisions with the potential to bring major changes to mundane parts of American life — including home-buying, saving for school and divorce.

“You can believe there’s going to be more pressure on the sales people and marketing people to not go so crazy on the expenditures,” predicted Ruth Wimer, an executive compensation attorney at law firm Winston & Strawn who’s also a certified public accountant. “It’s going to be a consideration for companies — it’s going to cost them.”

Ending the deduction will save the government about \$2 billion a year and \$23 billion through 2027 in formerly lost revenue, Congress’ bipartisan Joint Committee on Taxation estimates.

Of course many companies will continue to spend without the tax incentive, for the benefits they get from entertaining such as the payoff in future revenue. But the tax change still could have a financial impact on sports teams and cultural institutions.

The prestigious U.S. Open tennis tournament held for two weeks every summer in Flushing Meadows, New York, offers court-side suites. It sees around 40 percent of its revenue coming from corporate sales.

Chris Widmaier, managing director for corporate communications at the U.S. Tennis Association, said it hasn’t seen an impact yet on ticket sales, but noted it’s still fairly early in the sales season.

“It’s a fair question,” he said.

“It is a concern,” said Kate McClanahan, director of federal affairs at Americans for the Arts, an advocacy group that coordinates local cultural organizations and business donors around the country. “It can have a negative impact on both the commercial and nonprofit arts.”

The industries that spend the most on this type of entertaining are banks and financial services, airlines, automakers, telecoms and media. This kind of organized socializing also is a staple of lobbying firms, of course. The K Street lobbyists often party with clients at Washington Nationals ball games or Capitals hockey games. The firms may have tough decisions to make regarding spending on future outings.

“There’s also the psychological impact,” said Marc Ganis, a co-founder of Sportscorp Ltd., a sports consulting firm. “When something is deductible, people think it’s less expensive; effectively the government is paying for part of it.”

Companies could fall into two camps around the impact of the tax change, experts suggest. Those that are profitable, paying taxes at the former top rate of 35 percent and using the 50 percent deduction for entertainment, were previously able to cut their tax rate to 17.5 percent. Now, with a zero deduction and a new 21 percent corporate tax rate, their tax liability would increase by only 3.5 percent, not a huge deal. By contrast, companies that are struggling or have been paying an effective tax rate below 35 percent because they were using deductions — they could see a substantial impact on their bottom line.

The irony of Washington lobbyists falling victim to their own successful work on the tax bill isn’t lost on some in the “swamp.”

Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, a member of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee and a fierce critic of the tax legislation, called the end of the deduction for lobbyists' entertaining "one positive sign in an otherwise dismal bill."

Still, deductible or not, lobbyists and their company clients still will have "much to celebrate over fine wine and entertainment" from the legislation's big corporate tax cuts, Doggett said.

## Vatican convicts ex-Guam archbishop accused of abuse

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican on Friday removed the suspended Guam archbishop from office and ordered him not to return to the Pacific island after convicting him of some charges in a sex abuse trial.

The Vatican didn't say what exactly Archbishop Anthony Apuron had been convicted of, and the sentence was far lighter than those given high-profile elderly prelates found guilty of molesting minors. It amounts to an early retirement anywhere in the world but Guam, a remote U.S. Pacific territory where nearly everyone is Roman Catholic.

Apuron is 72, while the Vatican retirement age is 75.

The Vatican spokesman declined to comment. Calls placed to the tribunal judge weren't answered. Apuron's whereabouts weren't immediately known.

"While I am relieved that the tribunal dismissed the majority of the accusations against me, I have appealed the verdict," said a statement from Apuron distributed by his Guam attorney, Jacqueline Terlaje. "God is my witness; I am innocent and I look forward to proving my innocence in the appeals process."

Pope Francis named a temporary administrator for Guam in 2016 after Apuron was accused by former altar boys of sexually abusing them when he was a priest. Dozens of cases involving other priests on the island have since come to light, and the archdiocese is facing more than \$115 million in civil lawsuits alleging child sexual abuse by priests.

Apuron strongly denied the charges and said he was a victim of a "calumny" campaign. He wasn't criminally charged. The statute of limitations had expired.

A statement from the tribunal in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which handles sex abuse cases, said Apuron had been convicted of some of the accusations against him.

Under an appeal, the penalties could be suspended until the case is resolved. However, it's not clear whether that has happened now that Apuron has indicated he has appealed.

In the past, when an elderly or infirm priest has been convicted by the Vatican of sexually abusing minors, he has often been removed from ministry and sentenced to a lifetime of "penance and prayer." Younger priests convicted of abuse have been defrocked, removed from ministry or forbidden from presenting themselves as priests.

Francis, however, has intervened in a handful of cases to lower sentences, and several high-ranking Vatican prelates oppose defrocking convicted molesters and have long lobbied for more lenient sentences.

In the case of Apuron, no restrictions on his ministry as a priest were announced.

An ailing Apuron greeted Francis at the pope's Feb. 7 general audience.

Apuron is one of the highest-ranking churchmen to be convicted by a Vatican sex abuse tribunal, and his rank as archbishop may have played a role in his seemingly light sentence.

Assuming the evidence against him was grave and credible, the Vatican might still have been reluctant to remove him from the clerical state, as it has done in hundreds of cases of defrocked priestly abusers, because Apuron would still remain a bishop theologically speaking, noted Kurt Martens, professor of canon law at Catholic University of America in Washington.

That means he could continue ordaining priests — ordinations that would be considered illicit but still valid — a schismatic conflict the Vatican would want to avoid.

The Catholic community on Guam has been convulsed by the Apuron scandal, with weekly protests demanding his ouster.

One of the former altar servers who accused Apuron of molesting him said he felt relieved by the Vati-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 30 of 50

can's announcement.

"The verdict was what we were hoping for," Roland Sondia said from Guam, where it was already Saturday. "I think the fact that he won't be able to return to the island is justice."

While The Associated Press doesn't typically name victims of sex abuse, Sondia has come forward publicly identifying himself as one of Apuron's accusers.

The attorney for the victims said he was overjoyed with the outcome. "We're ecstatic. It's a justified verdict," said David Lujan.

Archbishop Michael Byrnes issued a statement early Saturday afternoon, also praising the decision.

"It is a monumental marker in our journey toward healing as one Church, one people in God. I pray that all people would embrace this call for healing," Byrnes said.

The accusations against Apuron also involved grave financial problems in the archdiocese and the purchase of a valuable property by Apuron for a diocesan seminary that he actually turned over to a controversial Catholic movement.

A lay group that agitated for Apuron's removal, "Concerned Catholics of Guam," pushed for an investigation into the archdiocesan seminary, which Apuron opened in 1999 and moved to an 18-acre (seven-hectare) property thanks to a \$2 million anonymous donation.

A Vatican-backed inquiry found the property's control had effectively been transferred to Neocatechumenal Way administrators without Vatican approval.

The seminary controversy came to a head when the Carmelite order of religious sisters revealed it had provided the \$2 million donation, but said the money had been intended for an archdiocesan seminary to train diocesan priests, not a Neocatechumenal Way seminary to train missionaries.

In a remarkable 2016 news conference to denounce the transfer, Carmelite Mother Superior Dawn Marie announced that her small community of nuns had left the island after a 50-year presence because of the "toxic environment" created by the controversy.

Melinda Burke, a parishioner of Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica — Guam's mother church where Apuron is pastor— said she was worried about Apuron's health when she heard he was found guilty.

"I love him very much," she said. "Archbishop Apuron has a very beautiful, Christ-like side."

Mark Mendiola, 41, said news of Apuron's verdict spread like wildfire on social media overnight. "I was glad a decision was made," he said. "It will bring closure for some people."

Mendiola who's not Catholic yet attends Mass at a nearby village church and also attends occasional rosary prayers for families and friends, said he's never seen the Catholic Church this divided. "Somebody needs to bring it back together."

---

Grace Garces Bordallo contributed to this report from Hagatna, Guam.

## No. 16 UMBC etches name in sports lore, routs No. 1 Virginia

By STEVE REED, AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Jairus Lyles couldn't suppress a smile, knowing that a school known more for chess than hoops had finally made it happen — a 16 ousting a 1 in March Madness.

The University of Maryland-Baltimore County stunned the sports world by pulling off the most surprising upset in college basketball history, trouncing Virginia 74-54 on Friday night to become the first No. 16 seed ever to beat a No. 1 seed in the men's NCAA Tournament.

The Retrievers secured their underdog legacy in sports lore, alongside Buster Douglas, the 1980 United States Olympic hockey team and Joe Namath's Jets.

Virginia entered the NCAA Tournament as the No. 1 overall seed after going 31-2 in the regular season, including 20-1 in ACC competition.

Frankly, the question wasn't whether the Cavaliers would win this game, but if they'd get to the Final Four and win it all.

But UMBC — an afterthought for fans who filled out brackets — didn't just beat Virginia, it dominated

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 31 of 50

throughout the second half, dismantling the 20 1/2-point favorites by 20 points. UMBC scored 53 points in the second half — 1 point shy of how many Virginia scored in the entire game.

Lyles scored 28, the Retrievers cruised and then raced off the floor together in their yellow-and-black uniforms, fingers pointed toward the ceiling to celebrate the victory.

"These are the moments that you dream of," Lyles said. "It's always exciting to make history."

In a chaotic UMBC locker room after the game, players shouted: "All brackets gone! No perfect brackets! Put that in the news!"

Others talked about the need for a 30 for 30 special.

UMBC's Jourdan Grant said it was hard to put his emotions into words.

"It felt like my soul left my body, man," Grant said. "When I walked over to the sideline and up in front of the sea of yellow of our fan section, they were going crazy with us. And to look back and see my teammates going crazy, too, man it's unbelievable."

A 77-72 stunner by NAIA team Chaminade over Ralph Sampson and No. 1-ranked Virginia in 1982 in Hawaii was generally considered the most remarkable upset in college basketball. But that was the regular season and almost nobody watched it as it actually played out.

This came when it mattered the most — in the NCAA Tournament.

No. 1 seeds in the NCAA Tournament were 135-0.

"Unbelievable — it's really all you can say," said UMBC coach Ryan Odom, who grew up in Charlottesville, Virginia, and whose father Dave Odom was a former assistant coach at UVA.

Before Friday night, UMBC was better known for making runs at a different Final Four — in college chess.

Its powerhouse program gives scholarships to players from around the world and competed in the President's Cup, informally known as the Final Four of chess, for 15 straight years before the streak ended in 2016.

On the other side of the floor, there were tears as some Cavaliers players walked off with their jerseys over their eyes.

Virginia's Ty Jerome, when asked if he knew that a No. 16 seed had never beaten a No. 1 before in men's play, said: "I think everyone is aware of that."

"Thanks for bringing that up again, but I was aware of it," he said.

Virginia, playing without ACC sixth man of the year De'Andre Hunter, couldn't get anything generated on offense and the nation's top-ranked defense — allowing only 53.4 points per game coming in — couldn't contain the American East Conference champions who won their conference tournament at the buzzer.

The 74 points were the most Virginia had allowed this year — and they had played powerhouses like Duke and North Carolina.

But UMBC shredded it.

The Retrievers shot 67.9 percent from the field in the second half and held Virginia to 42 percent after intermission.

"We got thoroughly outplayed and that's the reality of it," Virginia coach Tony Bennett said.

Lyles was the catalyst.

He diced up Virginia's defense in the second half, getting to the hole easily six different times to convert layups. He also knocked down a pair of 3-pointers as UMBC built a 16-point lead.

"I always let him play," Odom said. "I never hold him back. When he gets going like that it breeds confidence in other guys."

The game was tied at halftime, but the Retrievers came out confident and motivated in the second half and built a double-digit lead that Virginia could never erase.

Joe Sherburne, who had 14 points, was huge early in the second half and made believers out of everyone. He scored on an and-1 drive and then knocked down a 3-pointer from the top of the key after a behind-the-back pass from KJ Maura. After Virginia made a foul shot, the shifty 5-foot-8, 140-pound Maura drove the lane for uncontested layup.

A Tony Bennett timeout couldn't stop the bleeding, as Lyles hit two more 3's and Sherburne hit one

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 32 of 50

more to extend UMBC's lead to 14 with about 15 minutes left.

And when Arkel Lamer made a 3-pointer from the corner with 3 1/2 minutes left to put UMBC up by 17 and backpedaled down the court with his tongue hanging out, you knew history was inevitable.

"We all wanted to be in the 'One Shining Moment' video," Sherburne said.

It was yet another early exit for the Cavaliers in a season that seemed to hold so much promise. This was the fourth time in the last five seasons the Cavaliers have been either the No. 1 or 2 seed, but failed to reach the Final Four under Bennett.

Bennett said the Cavaliers had a historic season and then "a historic loss. That's life."

Instead of trying to chip away at the lead and pound the ball inside against the smaller Retrievers, Virginia repeatedly shot 3-pointers. Virginia missed 13 of its first 14 before getting hot for a brief stretch late in the game.

"Once we got down 8 or 10 we tried to make home run plays," Virginia's Kyle Guy said.

ONE OTHER TIME

In 1998, the No. 16 seed Harvard women beat top-seeded Stanford on the Cardinal's home floor.

UP NEXT

UMBC: Will face No. 9 seed Kansas State on Sunday in the second round.

More AP college basketball: <https://collegebasketball.ap.org> ; [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25) and <https://www.podcastone.com/ap-sports-special-events>

## Sessions fires former FBI Deputy Director McCabe

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Jeff Sessions said Friday that he had fired former FBI deputy director Andrew McCabe, a regular target of President Donald Trump's anger and criticism, just two days before his scheduled retirement date. McCabe immediately decried the move and suggested it was part of the Trump administration's "war on the FBI."

The dismissal was made on the recommendation of FBI disciplinary officials and comes ahead of an inspector general report expected to conclude that McCabe had authorized the release of information to the news media and had not been forthcoming with the watchdog office as it examined the bureau's handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation.

"The FBI expects every employee to adhere to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and accountability," Sessions said in a Friday night statement.

In an extraordinary rebuttal released immediately after the attorney general's announcement, McCabe said his credibility had been attacked as "part of a larger effort not just to slander me personally" but also the FBI and law enforcement.

"It is part of this administration's ongoing war on the FBI and the efforts of the special counsel investigation, which continue to this day," he added, referring to Robert Mueller's ongoing probe into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign. "Their persistence in this campaign only highlights the importance of the special counsel's work."

McCabe also asserted that he was being singled out because of the "role I played, the actions I took, and the events I witnessed in the aftermath of the firing of James Comey." Mueller is investigating whether Trump's actions, including firing Comey as FBI director last May, constitute obstruction of justice, and McCabe, a close Comey confidant, could be an important witness. McCabe said the release of the findings against him was accelerated after he told congressional officials that he could corroborate Comey's accounts of his conversations with the president.

Though McCabe had spent more than 20 years as a career FBI official, and had played key roles in some of the bureau's most recent significant investigations, Trump had repeatedly condemned him over the last year as emblematic of an FBI leadership he contends is biased against his administration. He appeared to revel in the termination, tweeting early Saturday that it was a "great day for Democracy" and a "great



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 33 of 50

day for the hard working men and women of the FBI.”

The dismissal is symbolic to an extent since McCabe had been on leave from the FBI since January, when he abruptly left the deputy director position. But it comes just ahead of his planned retirement, on Sunday, and likely jeopardizes his ability to collect his full pension benefits upon his departure. It could also add to the tumult that has enveloped the law enforcement agency in the last year amid the firing of former director James Comey in May and an ongoing FBI probe of the Trump campaign that the White House has dismissed as a hoax.

The firing arises from a wide-ranging inspector general review into how the FBI handled the Clinton email investigation. That inquiry view focused not only on specific decisions made by FBI leadership during the probe, but also on news media leaks.

McCabe came under particular scrutiny over an October 2016 news report that revealed differing approaches within the FBI and Justice Department over how aggressively the Clinton Foundation should be investigated. The watchdog office has concluded that McCabe authorized FBI officials to speak to a Wall Street Journal reporter for that story and that he had not been forthcoming with investigators, which McCabe denies.

In his statement, McCabe said he had the authority to share information with journalists through the public affairs office, a practice he said was common and continued under current Director Christopher Wray. He said he had honestly answered questions about whom he had spoken to and when, and that when he thought his answers were misunderstood, contacted investigators to correct them.

The media outreach came at a time when McCabe said he was facing public accusations of partisanship and followed reports that his wife, during a run for state political office, had received campaign contributions from a close Clinton ally. McCabe suggested in his statement that he was trying to “set the record straight” about the FBI’s independence against the background of those allegations.

Despite his defense, officials at the FBI’s Office of Professional Responsibility recommended the firing, leaving Justice Department leaders in a difficult situation. Sessions, whose job status has for months appeared shaky under his own blistering criticism from Trump, risked inflaming the White House if he decided against firing McCabe. But a decision to dismiss McCabe days before his firing nonetheless carried the risk of angering his rank-and-file supporters at the FBI.

McCabe enjoyed a rapid career ascent in the bureau after joining in 1996. Before being named FBI deputy director last year, he led the bureau’s national security branch and also the Washington field office, one of the its largest.

But he became entangled in presidential politics in 2016 when it was revealed that his wife, during an unsuccessful bid for the Virginia state Senate, had received campaign contributions from the political action committee of then-Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a close Clinton ally. The FBI has said McCabe received the necessary ethics approval about his wife’s candidacy and was not supervising the Clinton investigation at the time.

He became acting director following the firing last May of Comey, and immediately assumed direct oversight of the FBI’s investigation into the Trump campaign.

He quickly found himself at odds with the Trump administration.

As a congressional hearing days after Comey’s dismissal, McCabe contradicted White House assertions that the Trump campaign investigation was one of the “smallest things” on the FBI’s plate and strongly disputed the administration’s suggestion that Comey had lost the support of the bureau’s workforce.

“I can tell you that the majority, the vast majority of FBI employees, enjoyed a deep and positive connection to Director Comey,” McCabe said.

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 34 of 50

## Unbelievable. Biggest upset reveals best in college hoops

By EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Time and again, you think you've seen it all, and time and again you're proven wrong. And then THIS happens.

The University of Maryland-Baltimore County — a program with a longer name than resume — goes out and beats Virginia.

Yes, a No. 16 seed beats a No. 1. For the first time ever.

College basketball can't die, and nights like Friday are why.

They are why tears flowed freely in the stands, and on the court, for a basketball game that should have been routine, and turned out to be anything but.

They are why, despite the sport's growing list of unseemly, unsolvable problems, there is so much worth saving.

"The biggest thing I love about this is, I love seeing them smile," UMBC coach Ryan Odom said of his players after their once-in-a-lifetime shocker, a 74-54 drubbing of the Cavaliers. "Great kids. High-character kids. They deserve it."

College basketball needed it.

It has not been a good season for the sport.

Dozens of programs have been ensnared in an FBI probe and subsequent media reports looking into improper benefits to players provided by unmoored coaches and shady agents. That has led the NCAA to trigger an investigation by none other than Condoleezza Rice, who should make her conclusions available shortly after the Final Four.

She will undoubtedly call for change. Critics will undoubtedly say the calls don't go far enough.

When all is said and done, the NCAA is unlikely to do anything to disassemble this tournament, which is worth more than \$820 million a year in TV money and provides the funding that keeps not only basketball, but every other college sport besides football, up and running.

The unspoken irony is that the tournament provides the stage for the small, out-of-nowhere programs that presumably do things the right way — programs like UMBC — to compete against, and sometimes defeat, all those monsters that presumably create all the problems that got the sport in this mess to begin with.

When a little guy beats a monster, the way it happened Friday night in Charlotte, tears well up and beautiful stories get told.

If it weren't for all those monsters to beat — to say nothing of that wonderfully designed, NCAA-created, 68-team piece of art called the bracket — the tournament wouldn't be anything more than an extension of a 5,000-game, 351-team regular season, 99 percent of which flies past mainstream America completely unnoticed.

"When you put a bunch of teams together and put brackets in there, then of course, you're going to get some great stories," said Robert Thompson, the pop culture professor at Syracuse who is, himself, a No. 1 seed when it comes to dissecting what America loves and why. "There's the excitement. And sometimes there's the uplifting, enlightening stuff that manages to seep in, in spite of everything else we've heard this season."

UMBC isn't the only amazing story from the first two days of the tournament.

There's the tale of a nun, Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt, who writes up scouting reports for Loyola-Chicago, and certainly had a prayer answered Thursday when Donte Ingram heaved up a shot from the logo at midcourt that went in just before the buzzer to lift the 11th-seeded Ramblers to a 64-62 victory over Miami.

Before UMBC became Friday's biggest — only? — news, 13th-seeded Marshall defeated No. 4 Wichita State 81-75 in an entertaining upset, though it was impossible to ignore the deeper meaning behind the matchup. The programs were bonded by the tragedies of a pair of airplane crashes that killed multiple members of their football teams over a six-week span in 1970.

No two-hour game can mend those wounds, not even a half-century later. But sports have always served as a great healer, and March is filled with stories that briefly take fans to a place where anything seems

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 35 of 50

possible.

Before Friday, No. 1 seeds were 135-0 against 16s. Now, they are 135-1.

"We had an historic season, and then we make history by being the first 1 seed to lose," Virginia coach Tony Bennett said. "I'm sure a lot of people are happy about that, and it stings. But it can't define you. ... When you step into the arena, the consequences can be historic losses, and you have to deal with it."

It will take time for Bennett's players to get over this loss.

All the other basketball fans: Who'd want to miss a single minute?

"It should make you forgive and forget," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. "You watch these games ... and it's definitely captivating, and it makes you want to believe in the good part of the sport, which is probably like 98 percent of it."

More AP college basketball: <https://collegebasketball.ap.org> ; [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25) and <https://www.podcastone.com/ap-sports-special-events>

## Trump's possible China tariffs bring loud protests \_ in US

By LISA MASCARO and JOSH BOAK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is considering sweeping tariffs on imports from China, with an announcement possible as early as next week. And that has industry groups and some lawmakers scrambling to prevent the next front in a potential trade war that could reverberate across the U.S. economy.

Early indications from the White House have officials braced for tariffs across a wide variety of consumer goods, from apparel to electronics, and even on imported parts for products made in the U.S. The size and scope remain under debate, but the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is warning that annual tariffs of as much as \$60 billion on Chinese goods would be "devastating."

Trump's focus on China could be even more consequential, both at home and abroad, than the recently announced penalty tariffs on steel and aluminum. And amid the staff turmoil at the White House, it's being read as a sign of rising influence for the administration's populist economic aides, led by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and adviser Peter Navarro.

Even Larry Kudlow — an avowed free trader tapped to replace Gary Cohn as director of the White House National Economic Council — has said that China deserves a "tough response" from the United States and its friends. He told CNBC this week, "The United States could lead a coalition of large trading partners and allies against China."

But with these tariffs, the Trump administration appears so far to be content to go it alone.

On Friday, the National Retail Federation, which recently hosted industry groups to organize opposition to another round of tariffs, convened a conference call to update its members. "They're all concerned about this," said David French, vice president for government relations. "Tariffs are a tax on consumers and they're best used sparingly as tools."

Trade experts and economists say the tariffs could lead to rising prices for U.S. consumers and businesses without accomplishing one of the president's stated goals: reducing last year's trade imbalance of \$566 billion.

China, the largest source of the trade imbalance, would likely respond to any tariffs by retaliating with higher import taxes on U.S. goods, among other possible restrictions.

"They signaled that they will aim at things that affect the United States politically as well as economically," said Claude Barfield, a scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute and former consultant with the U.S. trade representative.

"The farmer in Kansas or Iowa could feel it," he said. "U.S. high tech companies could feel it because the supply chains for iPhones go through China."

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill, who have largely been shut out of administration deliberations, fear tariffs would stunt economic benefits in the U.S. that could be stemming from the GOP tax cuts.

Republican leaders, including House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and Rep. Kevin Brady of Texas,

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 36 of 50

chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, have urged the administration to target any proposed tariffs as narrowly as possible, away from U.S. allies and focused on countries engaged in over-production and product dumping.

Republicans in Congress largely opposed Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs and are working with the administration on a process for allowing waivers or carve outs for certain countries or types of metals, beyond the exemption the White House is allowing for Canada and Mexico.

"We want to narrow this," Brady, who has been in talks with Ross all week, said Friday on Fox. "Tariffs are taxes — lower is better, zero is the best."

The new tariffs on China would be tied to an investigation into the country's failure to stop intellectual property theft, a probe that was launched in August as part of the rarely used Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Beyond the trade imbalance, the Trump administration hasn't fully explained to the public which specific steps it wants China to take, creating a degree of uncertainty.

"Is the endgame just the tariffs or is this the beginning of negotiation? It's hard to know what the ultimate intent of the administration is," said Rod Hunter, a lawyer at Baker & McKenzie who previously coordinated global economic policies during George W. Bush's administration.

Already, the steel and aluminum tariffs have sparked a response from the European Union, which Friday released a list of U.S. products — from whiskey and motorcycles to breakfast foods and batteries — it plans to introduce duties on if the 28-nation bloc is not exempted.

Trump is considering adjustments but appears undeterred on trade.

"The president's going to continue fighting for the American worker," said Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders. "He's also working with a number of individual countries and negotiating on areas of national security where we can work together, and there's some flexibility there, and we're continuing to have those conversations."

Sen. David Perdue, R-Ga., a White House ally who spoke earlier this week with Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, said he has been talking with Trump on measured approaches toward using tariffs to remedy trade imbalances.

"His instincts are exactly right: We need a level playing field with the rest of the world," Perdue said recently on Fox Business. "And I think we'll see a measured approach going forward. This is not a guy that wants to create isolationism or a trade war."

---

Associated Press writers Ken Thomas in Washington and Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed.

Follow Mascaro on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/LisaMascaro> and Boak at <http://twitter.com/JoshBoak>

## Rapid building technique gets scrutiny after bridge collapse

By JASON DEAREN, Associated Press

As the 950-ton concrete bridge section was swung into place over a highway last weekend, Florida International University officials were beaming with pride.

The pedestrian bridge on the edge of the Miami-area campus was a signature achievement of the school's Accelerated Bridge Construction University Transportation Center, a research group set up with federal funding a few years ago to show how spans could be built faster and cheaper in the U.S.

"FIU is about building bridges and student safety. This project accomplishes our mission beautifully," FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg boasted that day. "We are filled with pride and satisfaction at seeing this engineering feat come to life and connect our campus to the surrounding community."

Five days later, the bridge collapsed onto the busy six-lane highway, crushing cars and killing at least six people in a tragedy now under federal investigation.

While it's not yet clear what caused the failure of the unfinished span Thursday, the disaster has cast a spotlight on a rapid construction technique widely used around the U.S.

Accelerated bridge construction, or ABC, involves assembling large sections of a span offsite, then mov-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 37 of 50

ing the massive pieces into place all at once.

The technique eliminates the lengthy road closings and other traffic disruptions that can result when a bridge is built out over a highway piece by piece. It is also considered by some engineers to be safer for hardhat workers and motorists because much of the construction isn't done in the middle of traffic.

The general approach has been around since the mid-19th century — and has been used safely and successfully for a long time — but interest in ABC has increased in recent years as states have looked for quicker, less expensive ways to replace thousands of aging bridges.

In the case of the Florida tragedy, engineering experts said the question is where was the fatal mistake: in the design of the bridge, in the way its construction was carried out or in the materials used?

Civil engineering experts who viewed photos of the planned structure and the collapse have raised questions about how FIU and its contractors approached the project.

To some bridge engineers, the decision to install the span's main concrete segment over a busy road before building its main support tower was puzzling. Traditionally, the tower is constructed first, and the walkway or roadway is anchored to it with cables.

"It's odd," said Henry Petroski, a professor of civil engineering at Duke University and a leading authority on engineering failures. "That's probably why they used this so-called ABC method, so they could get the span over the roadway in one operation, because if you do it incrementally, you have to interrupt traffic."

Investigators will also be looking at the companies building the project, a collaboration between MCM Construction, a Miami-based contractor, and Figg Bridge Design, based in Tallahassee. Both companies have been involved in construction accidents before.

FIGG was fined in 2012 after a section of a bridge it was building in Virginia fell and injured several workers. Virginia's labor department later fined Figg for construction violations, and a subcontractor sued accusing the firm of negligence and poor design. MCM was accused of substandard work in a lawsuit filed this month by a worker injured when a makeshift bridge the company built at the Fort Lauderdale airport collapsed under his weight.

Professor Amjad Aref, a researcher at the University at Buffalo's department of civil, structural and environmental engineering, said it is unclear what the builders at FIU were using in lieu of a tower to support the segment that collapsed.

The span had some kind of cables to help support it, and the bridge section that collapsed was attached to two smaller pylons at either end.

But in ABC projects like the FIU span, the loss of the extra support from the main tower during construction is a risk, he said.

"Until all the pieces are put together to transmit the loads safely to the foundations, these bridges may suffer disproportionate or full collapse due to instability," Aref said. "Typically, this process requires a few weeks. During that time, they are often supported by another system to ensure stability because they are really vulnerable to collapsing."

"I am really puzzled that the tower does not exist," Aref said.

Utah started using the ABC technique in 2007 and it has since become the primary way bridges are built, with more than 200 of them around the state, said Carmen Swanwick, chief structural engineer with the state Transportation Department. She said the Miami collapse doesn't undermine her confidence in Utah's bridges, which are inspected every two years.

"I have no concerns," Swanwick said. "We believe it improves quality. A lot of times, the component or the bridge itself is constructed in a more controlled environment."

Engineers say the method has been used safely in other projects for years, and in general keeps the public safer.

"What really bothers me is with ABC, the benefits are so substantial that I would hate to see this accident lead to its reduced use," said Michael Culmo, a bridge engineer in Connecticut who has worked on accelerated construction projects for decades. "While this is a tragedy, the process itself is very safe."

Associated Press writer Brady McCombs contributed to this report from Salt Lake City.

Follow Jason Dearen on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/JHDearen>

## Appeals court nixes some FCC rules on robocalls

By RYAN NAKASHIMA, AP Technology Writer

MENLO PARK, Calif. (AP) — A federal appeals court rolled back rules intended to deter irritating telemarketing robocalls, saying they were too broad.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit said that 2015 regulations from the Federal Communications Commission could wrongly classify every smartphone as an autodialing device subject to anti-robocall fines. Those 2015 rules attempted to graft modern definitions onto a 1991 law that predated the iPhone by more than 15 years.

The court also struck down rules that could levy fines on telemarketers who repeatedly call phone numbers reassigned to people who have opted out of such calls.

FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel said in a tweet the ruling was “not good.” In a statement, she said, “robocalls will continue to increase unless the FCC does something about it.”

The court said the FCC’s Obama-era rules were “unreasonably expansive” and could have swept up just about anyone. Its ruling offered the example of someone organizing a get-together and texting 10 people without obtaining their prior consent, which under the rules could subject her to a potential fine of \$500 per person.

While it agreed smartphones could be used as autodialers by installing an app, the court said the FCC’s rules did not make a clear enough distinction between phones that had downloaded such software and those that hadn’t.

In voiding a one-strike rule intended to prevent telemarketers from dialing reassigned numbers more than once, the court found it would be difficult for companies to avoid calling a second time even if they were acting in good faith. It also said the current rule was being abused, citing reports of a new phone customer who waited to receive 900 text alerts intended for a previous subscriber in order to rack up potential penalties before filing a lawsuit.

Lawyer Megan Brown, whose firm Wiley Rein represents Fortune 500 companies sued for such violations, said the court’s ruling will “stop the litigation harassment of a bunch of regular companies for crippling damages” when the worst actors behind scams and spoof calls are overseas.

Current FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said in a statement that the ruling would not deter the FCC’s stepped up crackdown against illegal robocalls. He cited \$200 million in fines the FCC initiated last year against two U.S. firms in so-called “spoofing” scams, in which they disguised their caller IDs in order to sell vacation packages and health insurance.

The FCC is also working to require telecoms companies to report when numbers have been reassigned, and passed rules last year that allow phone companies to proactively block calls that are likely to be fraudulent.

## Pentagon: No survivors in American helicopter crash in Iraq

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — All seven service members aboard a U.S. helicopter that crashed in Iraq were killed, the Pentagon said Friday in a written statement.

The aircraft crashed in western Iraq a day earlier, said the officials, who insisted on speaking anonymously to release details of the crash before they were made public.

The crash did not appear to be the result of enemy activity and is under investigation, the Pentagon said.

“This tragedy reminds us of the risks our men and women face every day in service of our nations. We are thinking of the loved ones of these service members today,” said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Jonathan P.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 39 of 50

Braga, director of operations in the fight against the Islamic State extremist group in Iraq and Syria.

The helicopter was used by the Air Force for combat search and rescue and was shifting from one location to another when it went down Thursday afternoon near the town of Qaim in Anbar Province.

The Pentagon said an accompanying U.S. helicopter immediately reported the crash and a quick-reaction force comprised of Iraqi security forces and coalition members secured the scene.

The names of those killed would be released after next of kin are notified, the statement added.

New York City officials announced Friday that two of those killed were longtime members of the city's Fire Department — Lt. Christopher Raguso and fire marshal Christopher "Tripp" Zanetis. They were "truly two of New York City's bravest," Mayor Bill de Blasio said.

President Donald Trump offered his thoughts and prayers on Twitter Friday for the families of service members killed, saying he was thinking of the "brave troops," and adding that "their sacrifice in service to our country will never be forgotten."

The U.S.-led coalition battling the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria have an outpost in Qaim, which is located near the Syrian border. The anti-IS campaign accelerated through much of last year, as coalition and Iraqi forces battled to take back a string of cities and towns.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared victory over IS in Mosul in July. In the following months, Iraqi forces retook a handful of other IS-held towns including Tal Afar in August, Hawija in September and Qaim in October. In November, Iraqi forces retook the last Iraqi town held by IS — Rawah, near the border with Syria.

The U.S.-led coalition has continued to work with Iraq and Syrian Democratic Forces to shore up the border region to make sure that foreign fighters and insurgents can't move freely across the region.

Associated Press writers Susannah George in London and Lolita C. Baldor in Washington contributed to this report.

## Trump wildlife protection board defends trophy hunting

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Big-game hunters tapped by the Trump administration to help rewrite federal rules for importing the heads and hides of African elephants and lions as trophies defended the practice Friday, arguing that threatened and endangered species would go extinct without the anti-poaching programs funded in part by the fees wealthy Americans pay to shoot some of them.

The International Wildlife Conservation Council had its first meeting.

The Associated Press reported Thursday the advisory council appointed by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is stuffed with celebrity hunting guides, representatives from rifle and bow manufacturers, and wealthy sportspeople who boast of bagging the coveted "Big Five" — elephant, rhino, lion, leopard and Cape buffalo.

One appointee also co-owns a private New York hunting preserve with President Donald Trump's adult sons.

Retired Oklahoma congressman Bill Brewster was unanimously selected as the board's chairman. He said the fees and other costs paid by foreign hunters into African countries are essential to funding anti-poaching programs.

"As long as an animal has value, it will exist," Brewster said. "Most of us in this room enjoy hunting. But first has to come conservation and habitat preservation. Without that, there is no hunting."

Brewster is a lobbyist who has also served on the boards of Safari Club International and the National Rifle Association, groups that have sued the Fish and Wildlife Service to expand the list of countries from which trophy kills can be legally imported. An NRA profile lauded Brewster and his wife's five decades of participation and support for hunting, and his purchase of a lifetime NRA membership for his grandson when the boy was 3 days old.

Also on the board are Safari Club president Paul Babaz, a Morgan Stanley investment adviser from Atlanta, and Erica Rhoad, a lobbyist and former GOP congressional staffer who is the NRA's director of

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 40 of 50

hunting policy.

Trump has decried big-game hunting as a "horror show" in tweets. But under Zinke, a former Montana congressman who is an avid hunter, the Fish and Wildlife Service has quietly moved to reverse Obama-era restrictions on bringing trophies from African lions and elephants into the United States.

No import permits for importing elephant heads, hides or tusks have been issued since a ban was lifted earlier this month. But agency spokesman Gavin Shire said Friday that 37 permits for lions trophies from Zimbabwe and Zambia were issued since October, when they were first allowed.

Shire declined to comment on whether any of the 16 members of the council had received any of those permits.

Access to Friday's meeting inside the headquarters building for the Interior Department in Washington was tightly controlled, and an AP reporter was herded into a roped-off area at the back of the room. The room was lined with murals of Native American hunting scenes, including men mounted on horseback shooting bison with bows and arrows. After reporters complained about the roped-off area, the rope was removed following a lunch break.

As the meeting started, officials announced that Zinke was unable to attend the inaugural session of the council.

In a statement last year, Zinke said, "This council will provide important insight into the ways that American sportsmen and women benefit international conservation from boosting economies and creating hundreds of jobs to enhancing wildlife conservation."

Council members aren't being paid a salary, though the department has budgeted \$250,000 in taxpayer funds for travel expenses, staff time and other costs.

Among Zinke's appointees is Steven Chancellor, a longtime Republican fundraiser and chairman of American Patriot Group, an Indiana-based conglomerate that supplies Meals Ready to Eat to the U.S. military.

Chancellor said Friday that it is illegal poaching that is endangering African wildlife, not hunting. He said the council should work urgently to stop people without the proper licenses and permits from killing game.

"Poachers are killing 30,000 elephants and 1,000 rhinos every year," Chancellor said. "We need to be in a hurry."

AP reported Thursday that Safari Club member hunting records obtained in 2015 by the Humane Society show Chancellor has logged nearly 500 kills — including at least 18 lions, 13 leopards, six elephants and two rhinos.

In early 2016, records show Chancellor filed for a federal permit to bring home the skin, skull teeth and claws from another male lion he intended to kill that year in Zimbabwe, which at the time was subject to an import ban imposed by the Obama administration.

Chancellor declined to comment Friday when asked by AP if he had been granted any of the permits for lion trophies since the ban was lifted in October.

"This is not a forum for me to talk about me," Chancellor said. "This is a forum to talk about the conservation of wildlife. This is not about me."

In 2016, Chancellor also hosted a private fundraiser for then-candidate Trump and Mike Pence at his Evansville, Indiana, mansion, where the large security gates feature a pair of gilded lions.

Chancellor said he had never discussed trophy hunting or wildlife conservation with the president.

Appointees to the board also include professional hunters.

Peter Horn is an ex-vice president of the Safari Club International Conservation Fund and a vice president for high-end gun-maker Beretta. Horn wrote in his 2014 memoir that he co-owns a hunting property in upstate New York with Donald Trump Jr., who drew the ire of animal rights activists after a 2011 photo emerged of him holding a bloody knife and the severed tail of an elephant he killed in Zimbabwe. Eric Trump "put together" a 500-yard range target range at the property, according to Horn.

The AP reported last month that the Trump sons were behind a limited-liability company that purchased a 171-acre private hunting range in the bucolic Hudson Valley in 2013, complete with a wooden tower from which owners and their guests shoot at exploding targets.



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 41 of 50

Trump Jr. also is friendly with another member of the advisory council — hunting guide and TV show personality Keith Mark. He helped organize Sportsmen for Trump during the 2016 presidential campaign and recently posted photos on his Twitter page of himself with Trump Jr. and Zinke, standing before an array of mounted big-horn sheep and a bear.

"I see the world from a hunting lifestyle," Mark told the AP on Thursday. "It's the most pure form of hands-on conservation that there is. I will approach all decision-making with my background."

A coalition of more than 20 environmental and animal welfare groups has objected that the one-sided makeup of the council could violate the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which requires government boards to be balanced in terms of points of view and not improperly influenced by special interests.

"It is outrageous that the Department of the Interior is going to spend \$250,000 per year to convene members of the trophy hunting industry to promote their own financial interests by developing methods to decrease protections for species threatened with extinction," said Anna Frostic, a lawyer for the Humane Society. "This boondoggle violates federal law and impedes the agency's duty to make wildlife trade decisions based on the best available science."

Interior Department spokeswoman Heather Swift said the council has members "that represent all areas of conservation and varying opinions."

The only people who spoke against trophy hunting at Friday's meeting were members of the public who had signed up to provide comment to the board.

One of them, Bill Kitchen, pointed to the colorful murals on the walls of the meeting room.

"I wondering what happened to all the buffalo in this country?" he asked the board. "What kind of twisted logic says 'Let's kill elephants to save elephants'? What kind of message do we send to the rest of world when you lift the import ban on body parts so that rich Americans can get a so-called trophy?"

---

Follow Associated Press investigative reporter Michael Biesecker at <http://twitter.com/mbieseck>

---

Have a tip for the Associated Press? Send it securely and anonymously at [www.ap.org/tips](http://www.ap.org/tips)

## As rumors of an exodus swirl, White House pushes back

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, CATHERINE LUCEY and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With whispers of a staffing purge permeating the West Wing, the White House pushed back Friday and insisted that reports of tumult and imminent departures are overblown.

Chief of staff John Kelly, himself the subject of rumors that his days are numbered, assured a group of staffers their jobs were safe, at least for now.

"The chief of staff actually spoke to a number of staff this morning reassuring them that there were no immediate personnel changes at this time and that people shouldn't be concerned," said press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

But days after President Donald Trump's secretary of state was ousted, many close to the president think more upheaval is coming soon.

Trump has been moving toward replacing national security adviser H.R. McMaster but has not settled on exact timing or a successor, according to four people with knowledge of White House deliberations. Kelly has also worn on the president, confidants of the president said. And Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, under fire for ethics violations, appears to be grasping to keep his job.

With speculation about McMaster's future particularly intense, Sanders gave multiple reassurances about the national security adviser — first in a tweet Thursday and then from the briefing room podium the next day. She said Trump had indicated that no changes were coming.

"I spoke directly to the president last night," Sanders said. "He asked me to pass that message along to Gen. McMaster. I know the two of them have been in meetings today."

McMaster, for his part, said Sanders had "set it straight" but struck a slightly different tone.

"Everybody has got to leave the White House at some point," he told a reporter from ABC News outside

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 42 of 50

the West Wing. "I'm doing my job."

But the air of stability the White House tried to project felt more like a pause than a permanent shift.

Trump is privately weighing still more changes, expressing frustration with some aides and sifting through possible replacements. Reports of tumult in the administration were at such a feverish pitch — even on Trump's beloved Fox News — that the president on Thursday reflected on the latest staff departures during an Oval Office conversation with Kelly and Vice President Mike Pence.

With a laugh, Trump said: "Who's next?"

It's a question that has the whole White House on edge.

Kelly has told confidants that he believes he can weather the current storm. But he has grown increasingly frustrated with the constant turmoil in the West Wing, believing at times that Trump intentionally fuels the chaos to keep his staff on its toes and his name in headlines, according to a person familiar with the chief of staff's thinking. The person wasn't authorized to speak publicly about private conversations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

This account of the tensions in the White House is based on conversations with more than a dozen officials inside the White House and familiar with West Wing deliberations, all of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal matters.

After more than 14 months in office, Trump is reshaping his administration, seeking people more likely to fall in line with his policies and tolerate his moods. The factionalism that defined the early days of his tenure has faded, and he has lost some of the close aides who could manage his volatile impulses.

Trump's administration has set records for turnover among senior administration aides. Top economic adviser Gary Cohn and communications director Hope Hicks are leaving in coming weeks. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was just unceremoniously ousted. And Trump personal assistant John McEntee was removed from his job this week and escorted off White House grounds — then quickly handed a job on Trump's re-election campaign.

In private conversations in recent weeks, Trump has reflected on his desire to reshape the administration. Though the drumbeat of the ongoing Russia probe has only grown louder, the president believes that his recent decisions on tariffs and North Korea have breathed new life into his administration, and he is eager to take more bold steps that make his own mark. He has told confidants he wants to rid himself of staffers who hold him back.

Trump chafes at McMaster's demeanor, complaining that his aide lectures him, according to three current and former administration officials. Officials said personal tensions have led McMaster to be sidelined in some internal discussions, including a recent meeting on Venezuela sanctions, with Kelly taking on a more active role in foreign policy decisions.

The president and McMaster have disagreed on a number of issues — including the Iran deal and the U.S. approach to North Korea — and the national security adviser has also clashed with Kelly and Defense Secretary James Mattis, according to the officials.

During an earlier round of Trump discontent, there was talk of providing McMaster, a three-star general, with a soft landing by giving him a fourth star along with a command in a priority area such as Afghanistan or Korea, according to a former senior administration official. But there are few openings for combatant commanders.

Kelly has been credited with imposing order on the chaotic West Wing, but his relationship with Trump has also come under strain. The president recently told an ally that he was still frustrated by an interview that Kelly gave to Fox News nearly two months ago in which he suggested that Trump had "evolved" in his thinking about the need for a wall on the Mexican border.

---

Lemire contributed from New York. Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Ken Thomas contributed to this report.

## In Syria, at least 100 killed in attacks as more people flee

By PHILIP ISSA and BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Airstrikes in Syria killed more than 100 people on Friday as civilians, weary and many wounded, fled besieged areas for the second straight day.

Syrian government forces stepped up their offensive in the rebel-held eastern suburbs of the capital, Damascus, capturing a major town and closing in on another under the cover of Russia's air power.

The majority of the deaths occurred in eastern Ghouta, where government forces have been on a crushing offensive for three weeks, capturing 70 percent of the besieged area. The weeklong violence has left more than 1,300 civilians dead, 5,000 wounded and forced thousands to flee to government-controlled areas.

Friday's staggering death toll came a day after Syria passed the seven-year mark in its relentless civil war that has killed some 450,000 people and displaced half the country's population.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said bombing and shelling by government and Russian forces killed a total of 76 people in eastern Ghouta, including 64 killed in Kafr Batna and another 12 in Saqba. Government forces also captured the nearby town of Jisreen, it said.

"If the world does not move, Ghouta will be exterminated," said Siraj Mahmoud, a member of the opposition's Syrian Civil Defense search-and-rescue group.

The Observatory said another 36 people were killed in the Kurdish-held town of Afrin in northern Syria, where Turkish troops and Turkey-backed Syrian opposition fighters have been on the offensive since Jan. 20. The dead included nine killed in airstrikes that hit the town's general hospital.

Friday's government attack on Kafr Batna was with cluster bombs, napalm-like incendiary weapons, and conventional explosives, the Observatory said.

Photos and videos released from the area showed charred bodies covered with sheets lined up near what appeared to be shops.

A medical charity supporting hospitals in eastern Ghouta, the Syrian American Medical Society, said doctors in Kafr Batna were treating patients for severe burn wounds.

Oways al-Shami, a spokesman for the Syrian Civil Defense, said the airstrikes targeted a market and a nearby residential area where scores of people had gathered to buy bread and vegetables during a daily truce called by Russia.

"The medical situation is catastrophic. We can't stay in this situation for long," said Dr. Zouhair Kahaleh in the nearby town of Arbeen. Roads were closed, he said, and "we can't treat some of the cases here. It's a major challenge to reach the wounded because of the intensity of the airstrikes."

Exhausted and shell-shocked civilians streamed out of the rebel enclave Friday, a day after tens of thousands evacuated the area in the biggest single-day exodus of the war.

Syria's U.N. Ambassador Bashar Ja'afari told the U.N. Security Council that more than 40,000 civilians left eastern Ghouta on Thursday through a new security corridor opened by the government in the recently retaken town of Hamouria. An additional 30,000 people fled the Turkish military offensive on Afrin, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

A man interviewed in Hamouria Friday on state-affiliated al-Ikhbariya TV said he had gone two days without food. Others said rebels hoarded food and humiliated civilians, even shooting people trying to leave.

The United Nations has warned of a malnutrition crisis in eastern Ghouta, which human rights groups have blamed on the government's strangling blockade.

Staffan de Mistura, the U.N. envoy for Syria, told the Security Council that although a six-day cease-fire was largely holding in Douma, the largest city in eastern Ghouta, fighting has escalated elsewhere in the rebel-held region where 400,000 people are estimated to be holed up, as well as in Afrin and across many other parts of Syria.

In Afrin, the Turkish military urged civilians to leave and Syrian Kurdish militiamen to surrender to the besieging Turkish forces.

The media office for the Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-led and U.S.-backed force that operates in the Kurdish autonomous region, said at least 30 people were wounded in Friday's attacks.

Video posted by the Observatory showed victims lying dead in the streets in pools of blood.

Since their January offensive began, Turkish forces have nearly encircled Afrin as they press their campaign to drive the Syrian Kurdish fighters from the town and surrounding region, where tens of thousands of civilians are still believed trapped.

On Friday, Turkish aircraft dropped flyers in Arabic and Kurdish on Afrin, asking residents to stay away from "terrorist positions" — a reference to the Syrian Kurdish fighters — and to not let themselves be used as "human shields."

The leaflets claimed that civilians seeking to flee Afrin would be guaranteed safety by the Turkish military and urged Syrian Kurdish fighters to "trust the hand we extend to you."

"Come surrender! A calm and peaceful future awaits you in Afrin," the leaflets read.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Security Council again demanded a cease-fire throughout Syria and backed a U.N.-endorsed roadmap for a peaceful transition and elections. Members reaffirmed that U.N.-led talks in Geneva "remain the central process to find a political solution."

Mistura, the U.N. envoy for Syria, told the council that he hasn't been able to form a committee to draft a new constitution because President Bashar Assad's government hasn't engaged and "we need to have comprehensive participation of all Syrian parties."

Ministers from Russia, Turkey and Iran also underscored the need for a political solution in a joint statement after a meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Friday and urged international support for de Mistura's efforts to form a constitutional committee.

---

Associated Press writers Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey; Nataliya Vasilyeva in Moscow and Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed to this report.

## Senators want CIA to lift veil on nominee's black site past

By DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gina Haspel's long spy career is so shrouded in mystery that senators want documents declassified so they can decide if her role at a CIA black site should prevent her from directing the agency.

It's a deep dive into Haspel's past that reflects key questions about her future: Would she support President Donald Trump if he tried to reinstate waterboarding and, in his words, "a lot worse"? Is Haspel the right person to lead the CIA at a time of escalating Russian aggression and ongoing extremist threats?

Haspel's upcoming confirmation hearing will be laser-focused on the time she spent supervising a secret prison in Thailand. The CIA won't say when in 2002 Haspel was there, but at various times that year interrogators at the site sought to make terror suspects talk by slamming them against walls, keeping them from sleeping, holding them in coffin-sized boxes and forcing water down their throats — a technique called waterboarding.

Haspel also is accused of drafting a memo calling for the destruction of 92 videotapes of interrogation sessions. Their destruction in 2005 prompted a lengthy Justice Department investigation that ended without charges.

"We should not be asked to confirm a nominee whose background cannot be publicly discussed and who cannot then be held accountable for her actions," said Sen. Martin Heinrich, who joined other Democrats on the Senate intelligence committee in asking the CIA to declassify more details about Haspel. "The American public deserves to know who its leaders are."

Court filings, declassified documents and books written by those involved in the CIA's now-defunct interrogation program suggest Haspel didn't arrive at the secret prison in Thailand until after one detainee, Abu Zubaydah, was waterboarded 83 times in August 2002. But they indicate she arrived before another detainee, Abd al Rahim al-Nashiri, was waterboarded at least three times in November 2002.

Details about the two detainees' treatment were disclosed in a 2014 Senate report. It said the prison was shut down in December 2002.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 45 of 50

Even if Haspel was at the prison site for just a few months, Steven Watt, an American Civil Liberties Union attorney, said she was deeply involved in the interrogation program. For much of its existence, Haspel was deputy director of the CIA's counterterrorism center that ran the program using "enhanced interrogation techniques."

At least 119 men were detained and interrogated as part of the program, said Watt, who represented two detainees and the family of another in a 2015 lawsuit against a pair of CIA-hired psychologists.

It's unknown if Haspel ever was or currently is a gung-ho proponent of brutal methods, or if she was only implementing orders from CIA headquarters.

Several colleagues and former intelligence officials have come to her defense.

Mike Morell, who was an acting director of the CIA, worked closely with Haspel from 2006 until he retired in 2013. Morell has described her as a "warm and engaging" colleague with a "self-deprecating" sense of humor. She's a "simply exceptional" person who gets things done in a "quiet, yet effective way" and is "calm under fire."

"The media is also likely to refer to a moment in her career when she drafted a cable instructing a field station to destroy videotapes of CIA interrogations of senior al-Qaida operatives," Morell wrote when Haspel became deputy CIA director last year. "She did so at the request of her direct supervisor and believing that it was lawful to do so. I personally led an accountability exercise that cleared Haspel of any wrongdoing in the case."

While some of assignments have come under political fire, "in each case she was following the lawful orders of the president," Morell said. "And, in each case, she carried out her responsibilities within the bounds of the law and with excellent judgment. Any criticism of her in this regard is unfair."

Psychologist James Mitchell, an architect of the CIA program who worked at the same black site, said Haspel won't filter the intelligence she distributes to Trump through a political lens to please him or jockey for political reward.

"We'd be shooting ourselves in the foot if she's not confirmed," he told Fox News. "She's got deep institutional knowledge. She has worked more than 30 years in the agency. She's earned the right to be there. She can go to work on Day One."

Former CIA spokesman Bill Harlow, who helped Mitchell write a book, said the focus on interrogation obscures the CIA director's wide-ranging portfolio. Instead of re-litigating the past, he said Haspel should be asked about Russia, China and cyber threats and how to improve intelligence collection on America's adversaries.

Ret. Air Force Col. Steven Kleinman, a longtime interrogator with lengthy experience during the first Gulf War, isn't sure. He said he doesn't know Haspel's personal views about the harsh interrogations, but said there's no indication she ever tried to halt them.

"That question has to be asked by the Senate: 'Did you at any time suggest that it be stopped because it's ineffective, immoral or illegal?'" Kleinman said. "I think we all deserve an answer to that."

## Britain points at Putin in poisoning attack as gulf widens

By ANGELA CHARLTON and JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The gulf between Russia and Britain widened on Friday as they cranked up pressure over a nerve agent attack and a suspected murder in Britain that have deepened Western worries about alleged Russian meddling abroad.

Britain's foreign secretary accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of personally ordering the poisoning of ex-Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, describing it as the most brazen such move since World War II.

Putin's spokesman denounced the claim as "shocking and inexcusable."

As relations between the two nations sank to a new post-Cold War low, nearly two dozen Russian diplomats in London were packing their bags to leave Tuesday after an expulsion order from Britain. British diplomats in Moscow were bracing for a retaliatory order from the Kremlin and were just waiting to be

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 46 of 50

told who had to leave and when.

Geopolitical tensions have been mounting since the poisoning of the Skripals in the English city of Salisbury on March 4, in what Western powers see as the latest sign of increasingly aggressive Russian interference in foreign countries. The tensions threaten to overshadow Putin's expected re-election Sunday for another six-year presidential term.

But that's not all.

New concerns surfaced Friday about the death this week of a London-based Russian businessman, Nikolai Glushkov, found dead at his south London home on Monday. British police said Friday that he died from compression to the neck and opened a murder investigation.

Russia also suspects foul play in Glushkov's death and opened its own inquiry Friday. Russia's top agency for major crimes was also investigating the attack on Yulia Skripal, who is a Russian citizen. Her father has British citizenship. Both are in critical condition.

British police said there is no apparent link to the attack on Glushkov and the poisoning of the Skripals.

But to the West, they are raising similar concerns.

While Britain has accused the Russian state of ordering the poisoning of the Skripals, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson took it a step further Friday and said it's "overwhelmingly likely" that Putin himself ordered the attack.

Top EU diplomats were expected to discuss next steps at a meeting Monday, with some calling for a boycott of the upcoming World Cup in Russia. British Prime Minister Theresa May is seeking a global coalition of countries to punish Moscow, and the U.S., France and Germany have already lined up against Russia over the Skripal attack.

Britain is expelling 23 Russian diplomats and taking other steps against Russian interests as the two nations' relations plummet.

"Our quarrel is with Putin's Kremlin, and with his decision, and we think it overwhelmingly likely that it was his decision, to direct the use of a nerve agent on the streets of the U.K., on the streets of Europe, for the first time since the Second World War," Johnson said.

Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted by Russian news agencies as calling Johnson's statement a "shocking and inexcusable breach of diplomatic propriety." Peskov reiterated Russian denials of involvement in the attack on the Skripals.

"We have never encountered this level of discussion on the global stage," Peskov told reporters.

Russia ordered a halt to high-level meetings with the U.K. and prepared Friday to expel British diplomats.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius told The Associated Press that the Salisbury attack was a direct challenge to Europe. He said Russia's recent provocations need a tough response, including action against Russian oligarchs with questionable ties who have used London as a safe haven.

The source of the nerve agent — which Britain says is Soviet-made Novichok — is unclear, as is the way it was administered.

Russia has demanded that Britain share samples collected by investigators.

Russia's envoy to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons told The AP that his country has no stocks of the Novichok group of nerve agents, insisting that Soviet-era research into the agents was totally dismantled before Russia joined the organization.

Ambassador Alexander Shulgin also sought to shift possible blame, saying Western special agents spirited Russian chemical weapons experts out of the country in the 1990s and work continued on their research.

He said even the name Novichok was a "Western invention" and that Russia never gave it a name.

Hamish de Bretton-Gordon, former commander of the British Army's chemical and biological weapons regiment, called the claim that U.S. or British agents could have developed Novichok "complete hogwash."

Speaking to the AP, he called it unlikely that some of the nerve agent could have gone missing in the years after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. He also cast doubt on the possibility that the nerve agent was sent through the mail or was placed in luggage that Skripal's daughter brought with her from Russia to Britain.

An 83-year-old Russian whistleblower who helped develop Novichok told the AP on Friday that no other country could have used that particular nerve agent to poison a former spy.

Vil Mirzayanov, who now lives in New Jersey, said that if the substance is Novichok, as Britain claims, it's "100 percent" clear it came from Russia.

Mirzayanov revealed details of Russia's chemical weapons in the 1990s because he said he was afraid of their impact.

While many British politicians have backed the government in blaming Moscow for the nerve agent attack, the U.K.'s main opposition leader has cautioned against a rush to judgment. Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn said in the Guardian that it's possible that "Russian mafia-like groups," rather than the Russian state, were responsible.

Lawless reported from London. Associated Press writers Mike Corder in The Hague, Michael Catalini in Princeton, N.J., Danica Kirka and Greg Katz in London, and Vladimir Isachenkov and Nataliya Vasilyeva in Moscow contributed to this report.

## UK opens murder probe into death of Russian Nikolai Glushkov

By JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British police said Friday they have launched a murder investigation into the death of London-based Russian businessman Nikolai Glushkov after an autopsy revealed that he died from compression to the neck.

Counterterrorism detectives are leading the case "because of the associations Mr. Glushkov is believed to have had," the Metropolitan Police force said.

Russia's top agency for major crimes, meanwhile, said it has launched its own investigation into Glushkov's death, which it is probing as murder.

Glushkov, 68, was an associate of Boris Berezovsky, a Russian oligarch and strong Kremlin critic who died under disputed circumstances in 2013.

Glushkov was found dead at his south London home on Monday. His death came a week after former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia were left critically ill from nerve agent poisoning in the city of Salisbury.

The London police force said "at this stage there is nothing to suggest any link to the attempted murders in Salisbury," and they said there was no evidence that Glushkov has been poisoned.

British authorities say the substance that poisoned the Skripals is a powerful Russian-developed nerve agent known as Novichok. A British police officer who responded to the attack in Salisbury is in serious condition, and police say 131 people may have come into contact with the nerve agent.

U.K. police say "there are no wider public health concerns" around the investigation into Glushkov's death.

Britain has accused the Russian government of responsibility for Skripals' poisoning and British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said Friday it is "overwhelmingly likely" that Russian President Vladimir Putin himself ordered the attack. Putin's spokesman denounced the comment as "shocking and inexcusable."

In light of the Salisbury attack, British police are looking again at the deaths of more than a dozen Russians in Britain, including Berezovsky.

After his death in 2013, an inquest failed to determine whether Berezovsky, who was found hanged at his home near London, had killed himself or died from foul play.

Glushkov, a longtime associate of the oligarch, had worked for various Berezovsky enterprises including the car factory AvtoVAZ and flagship Russian airline Aeroflot.

He was arrested in 1999 and put on trial for embezzling \$7 million from Aeroflot. In 2004, he was sentenced to three years and three months in prison, but released because of time served.

Russian media reported that Glushkov was granted political asylum in Britain in 2010.

In 2017, a Moscow court reviewed Glushkov's case and sentenced him in absentia to eight years for reportedly embezzling more than \$122 million from Aeroflot.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 48 of 50

Last year, Glushkov appeared on a list published by the Russian Embassy in London of Russian citizens wanted for serious crimes whom the U.K. had refused to extradite.

It said Russia had sought his extradition in 2015 "for committing a number of severe financial offences on the territory of Russia," but the British government refused.

## US stocks inch higher as banks and industrial companies rise

By MARLEY JAY, AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks edged higher Friday as gains from energy companies, industrial firms and smaller companies helped the market end a modest losing streak.

Oil and gas companies climbed along with the price of oil Friday while industrial companies recovered some of the losses they sustained earlier this month. Beauty products retailer Ulta and software company Adobe rose after strong quarterly reports. Tiffany dropped after reporting weak sales, and online retailers Overstock.com and Wayfair slumped as investors worried about a possible price war.

All this week, stocks moved higher in early trading only to shed those gains as the day went on. They broke out of that pattern Friday, even though the gains were modest.

"From an investor point of view, the fact that we haven't rallied right back to the highs is a good thing," said Randy Frederick, vice president of trading and derivatives at Charles Schwab. Positive news about the economy has been countered by concerns about rising tensions over international trade.

"The pullback that we've been in is pretty much driven by President Trump's proclamation about tariffs," Frederick said.

The S&P 500 index gained 4.68 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,752.01. The Dow Jones industrial average added 72.85 points, or 0.3 percent, to 24,946.51. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.25 points to 7,481.99. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks jumped 9.43 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,586.05.

After a dramatic drop at the beginning of February followed by a rapid recovery of some of their losses, stocks have bounced around for the last month. The Dow, which surged past 26,000 in mid-January, has been wobbling around 25,000 for about a month.

The S&P 500 fell for the first four days of the week and finished with a decline of 1.2 percent. The worst losses came Tuesday and Wednesday after President Donald Trump blocked Singapore-based chipmaker Broadcom's effort to buy its U.S. rival Qualcomm and European leaders warned about the risks of trade disputes.

The Federal Reserve said factory output continued to rise as companies in the U.S. produced more cars, computers and furniture. It reported that manufacturing output rose 1.2 percent in February after three months of weak results. Factory output has increased 2.5 percent over the last year.

The Commerce Department said homebuilders started work on fewer apartment buildings in February, and that caused overall housing starts to drop 7 percent. Builders have shifted their efforts to single-family homes recently as the economy has improved.

Benchmark U.S. crude rose \$1.15, or 1.9 percent, to \$62.34 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, used to price international oils, climbed \$1.09, or 1.7 percent, to \$66.21 a barrel in London.

Tiffany dropped \$5.20, or 5.1 percent, to \$97.51 after it reported weaker sales than analysts expected. Its forecast for the current year was also below what investors were looking for.

Online discount retailer Overstock.com said profit margins have fallen hard because of competition with Wayfair, and CEO Patrick Byrne said the company will "respond in kind," meaning Overstock will try to ramp up its growth and will be willing to lose money to achieve that goal. The stock dropped \$2.50, or 5.2 percent, to \$45.70 while Wayfair lost \$5.01, or 6 percent, to \$78.95.

While Broadcom is no longer trying to buy rival chipmaker Qualcomm, both companies are still at the center of deal discussions. The Financial Times reported that former Qualcomm chairman Paul Jacobs wants to take the company private and has had talks with potential investors and the Qualcomm board. Qualcomm added 73 cents, or 1.2 percent, to \$60.62, which gives it a market value of about \$90 billion.

With the Qualcomm deal finished, Broadcom says it still sees opportunities for other acquisitions. The



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 49 of 50

company also disclosed its quarterly results, and its shares fell \$12.89, or 4.8 percent, to \$254.87.

The top policymakers at the Federal Reserve will meet Tuesday and Wednesday, and they are expected to raise interest rates again. Since the market is fairly sure of what the Fed will do, there will be a lot of focus on what it says. After the meeting ends, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell will hold his first news conference since he replaced Janet Yellen last month.

Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.84 percent from 2.83 percent.

In other energy trading, wholesale gasoline gained 2 cents to \$1.95 a gallon. Heating oil picked up 2 cents to \$1.91 a gallon. Natural gas edged up 1 cent to \$2.69 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold dipped \$5.50 to \$1,312.30 an ounce. Silver lost 15 cents to \$16.27 an ounce. Copper fell 2 cents to \$3.11 a pound.

The dollar declined to 106.10 yen from 106.24 yen. The euro fell to \$1.2284 from \$1.2303.

The German DAX gained 0.4 percent while Britain's FTSE rose 0.3 percent. The CAC 40 in France added 0.3 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.6 percent while South Korea's Kospi edged 0.1 percent higher and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index dipped 0.1 percent.

AP Markets Writer Marley Jay can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MarleyJayAP>. His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/marley%20jay>

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, March 17, the 76th day of 2018. There are 289 days left in the year. This is St. Patrick's Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 17, 1968, a peaceful anti-Vietnam War protest in London was followed by a riot outside the U.S. Embassy; more than 200 people were arrested and over 80 people were reported injured.

On this date:

In A.D. 180, Marcus Aurelius, the last of what were considered the "Five Good Emperors" of Rome, died at his military headquarters in present-day Vienna at age 58; he was succeeded by his adopted son and co-emperor, Commodus.

In 1762, New York held its first St. Patrick's Day parade.

In 1776, the Revolutionary War Siege of Boston ended as British forces evacuated the city.

In 1861, Victor Emmanuel II was proclaimed the first king of a united Italy.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt first likened crusading journalists to a man with "the muckrake in his hand" in a speech to the Gridiron Club in Washington.

In 1912, the Camp Fire Girls organization was incorporated in Washington D.C., two years to the day after it was founded in Thetford, Vermont. (The group is now known as Camp Fire.)

In 1936, Pittsburgh's Great St. Patrick's Day Flood began as the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers and their tributaries, swollen by rain and melted snow, started exceeding flood stage; the high water was blamed for more than 60 deaths.

In 1943, the Taoiseach (TEE'-shuk) of Ireland, Eamon de Valera, delivered a radio speech about "The Ireland That We Dreamed of."

In 1958, the U.S. Navy launched the Vanguard 1 satellite.

In 1970, the United States cast its first veto in the U.N. Security Council, killing a resolution that would have condemned Britain for failing to use force to overthrow the white-ruled government of Rhodesia.

In 1988, Avianca Flight 410, a Boeing 727, crashed after takeoff into a mountain in Colombia, killing all 143 people on board.

In 1993, Helen Hayes, the "First Lady of the American Theater," died in Nyack, New York, at age 92.

Ten years ago: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton, recalling a goodwill trip she'd

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, March 17, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 246 ~ 50 of 50**

made to Bosnia as first lady in March 1996, said she remembered landing under “sniper fire” — a statement that conflicted with accounts of the time. David Paterson was sworn in as governor of New York, succeeding Eliot Spitzer, who resigned because of a prostitution scandal. Paul McCartney’s divorce from Heather Mills was settled for \$48.6 million.

Five years ago: Two members of Steubenville, Ohio’s celebrated high school football team were found guilty of raping a drunken 16-year-old girl and sentenced to at least a year in juvenile prison in a case that rocked the Rust Belt city of 18,000. Former Oklahoma quarterback Steve Davis, 60, who led the Sooners to back-to-back national championships in the 1970s, was killed in a private plane crash in northern Indiana. Louisville earned the top overall seed in the NCAA tournament after a topsy-turvy season in college basketball.

One year ago: President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel (AHN’-geh-lah MEHR’-kuhl) tried to sidestep their differences in a meeting at the White House, but their first public appearance was punctuated by some awkward moments (during a photo op in the Oval Office, the two did not shake hands before reporters). U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited the world’s most heavily armed border, greeting U.S. soldiers on guard near the tense buffer zone between rivals North and South Korea.

Today’s Birthdays: The former national chairwoman of the NAACP, Myrlie Evers-Williams, is 85. Former astronaut Ken Mattingly is 82. Singer-songwriter Jim Weatherly is 75. Singer-songwriter John Sebastian (The Lovin’ Spoonful) is 74. Former NSA Director and former CIA Director Michael Hayden is 73. Rock musician Harold Brown (War; Lowrider Band) is 72. Actor Patrick Duffy is 69. Actor Kurt Russell is 67. Country singer Susie Allanson is 66. Actress Lesley-Anne Down is 64. Actor Mark Boone Jr. is 63. Country singer Paul Overstreet is 63. Actor Gary Sinise is 63. Actor Christian Clemenson is 60. Former basketball and baseball player Danny Ainge is 59. Actor Arye Gross is 58. Actress Vicki Lewis is 58. Actor Casey Siemaszko (sheh-MA’-zshko) is 57. Writer-director Rob Sitch is 56. Actor Rob Lowe is 54. Rock singer Billy Corgan is 51. Rock musician Van Conner (Screaming Trees) is 51. Actor Mathew St. Patrick is 50. Actor Yanic (YAH’-neek) Truesdale is 49. Rock musician Melissa Auf der Maur is 46. Olympic gold medal soccer player Mia Hamm is 46. Rock musician Caroline Corr (The Corrs) is 45. Actress Amelia Heinle is 45. Country singer Keifer Thompson (Thompson Square) is 45. Actress Marisa Coughlan is 44. Rapper Swifty (D12) is 43. Actress Natalie Zea (zee) is 43. Actress Brittany Daniel is 42. Country musician Geoff Sprung (Old Dominion) is 40. Reggaeton singer Nicky Jam is 37. TV personality Rob Kardashian (kar-DASH’-ee-uhn) (TV: “Keeping Up With the Kardashians”) is 31. Pop/rock singer-songwriter Hozier is 28. Actress Eliza Hope Bennett is 26. Actor John Boyega is 26. Olympic gold medal swimmer Katie Ledecky is 21. Actor Flynn Morrison is 13.

Thought for Today: “When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive — to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love.” — Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-A.D. 180).