

Groton Daily Independent

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The Groton Area School District will be opening 2 hours late on Monday, March 26. There will be no 8:30 AM preschool. OST will be open at 7:00 AM.

- 1- Recycling trailers
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Dairy Queen Ad
- 1- Bates Township ROW Notice
- 2- DQ Blizzards half off today
- 2- C&MA holds Easter Cantata
- 3- School Board Agenda
- 3- Sun Dial Manor Help Wanted
- 3- Help Wanted at Groton Care & Rehab
- 4- Winter Weather Advisory
- 4- Farmers Union PSA
- 5- Today in Weather History
- 6- Today's Forecast
- 7- Yesterday's Weather
- 7- Today's Weather Info
- 7- National Weather Map
- 8- Daily Devotional
- 9- 2018 Community Events
- 10- News from the Associated Press

Oven Fresh Sandwiches Hot Desserts Snack Melts

11 E Hwy 12, Groton ~ 397-8627

Bates Township ROW Notice

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and expenses charged to the landowner.

Landowner is responsible for spraying all noxious weeds.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors
Betty Geist
Township Clerk

Today's Events

7:00pm: National Honor Society Induction, Groton Area High School

8:00pm: School Board Meeting, Groton Area Elementary School

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**

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All Blizzards
1/2 Price
Today, March 26

Check out our NEW Summer Blizzard Menu!

GROTON
DQ Dairy Queen.

11 East Hwy 12
397-8627

The advertisement features a large Dairy Queen Blizzard cone on the left. The background is light blue. The text is in various colors: black for the main headline, red for the price, green for the menu announcement, and white on a blue background for the Dairy Queen logo. The address and phone number are in black text on the right side.



Members of the Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church had their Easter Cantata Sunday evening entitled, "The Road to Calvary." In case you missed it, you can view it on the Archived Videos at 397news.com. It is posted under 2017-18, Other Events. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting March 26, 2018 – 8:00 PM

Groton Area Elementary Commons

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.

2. Program Overview Presentations

a. Grades 4 and 5... J. Guthmiller, S. Fjeldheim, J. Lone, S. Hendrickson

3. School Board Committee Reports:

a. Building, Grounds, & Transportation: Clint Fjelstad, Merle Harder

b. Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum: Deb Gengerke, Kara Pharis

c. Negotiations: Steve Smith, Grant Rix, Marty Weismantel

4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Adopt resolution authorizing membership in the South Dakota High School Activities Association for the 2018-2019 School Year.

2. Approve 2018-2019 Groton Area Elementary School Wide Title I Application.

3. Declare 1999 Ford Windstar Van Surplus and advertise for sealed bids.

4. Approve hiring Whitney Berner, High School Math Teacher, for the 2018-2019 school year.

5. Approve resignation from Cory Harder, Girls Soccer Coach.

6. Approve Open Enrollment Applications #18-20 (Grade 9), #18-21 (Grade 8), #18-22 (Grade 6), #18-23 (Grade K) from Northwestern Area School District.

ADJOURN

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



1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton



Sun Dial Manor in Bristol
is accepting applications for
full time and part time CNA's.
12 hr. shifts- days and nights
(SIGN ON BONUS OFFERED)

DIETARY OPENINGS

Full time cook, 8 hr. shifts
(WITH SIGN ON BONUS)

Part time Dietary Tech

For more information,
call 605-492-3615

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WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY

Expiration: 7:00 PM Mon, Mar 26, 2018

...Wintry Weather Expected Today...

...WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL
7 PM CDT /6 PM MDT/ THIS EVENING...

* **WHAT...**Mixed precipitation. Wet snow accumulations around an inch or two and ice accumulations of a light glaze are expected.

* **WHERE...**Portions of central, north central and northeast South Dakota.

* **WHEN...**Until 7 PM CDT /6 PM MDT/ this evening.

* **ADDITIONAL DETAILS...**Plan on slippery road conditions, including during the morning commute. Expect reduced visibilities at times.

A Winter Weather Advisory means that periods of snow, sleet or freezing rain will cause travel difficulties. Expect slippery roads and limited visibilities, and use caution while driving.

The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 5 1 1.



All auto owners!
Save \$2-\$4 /tank
& grow your local economy
by choosing low carbon
Super Premium E30's
94 octane, more power,
same mileage, fewer
carbon deposits, lower
maintenance costs,
slashed benzene & related
genotoxic, carcinogenic
tailpipe emissions;
*see sdfu.org's E30 tab for
info, E30 prices\locations.

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

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Today in Weather History

March 26, 1977: During the early morning, severe weather event, hail up to 1.75 inches in diameter fell 1 mile NE of Watertown in Codington County. Also, hail up to 1.50 inches in diameter fell in Milbank, Grant County.

March 26, 1995: Heavy snow fell over most of central South Dakota, as well as in the northern Black Hills. Heavier accumulations included 14 inches at Murdo, 13 inches at Lead, and 12 inches at Eureka, and Leola. Only a few traffic accidents were reported, although many other vehicles slid into ditches. There was some damage to power lines and poles. Some livestock losses were feared, as the snow fell during the calving season, although this could not be assessed in the short term.

March 26, 2008: An area of low pressure moving across the Northern Plains brought heavy snow from 6 to 15 inches in a band across much of central and northeast South Dakota from the evening to the early morning hours. Schools were delayed or canceled and road travel was difficult, if not impossible. Some snowfall amounts included: 6 inches at Stephan, Willow Lake, Harrold, Miller, and near Hoven; 7 inches at Hayti, east of Hayes, and Eagle Butte; 8 inches at Highmore and Doland; 9 inches at Orient, Bryant, and near Onida; 10 inches at Gettysburg and Faulkton; 11 inches at Seneca and Redfield. Locations with a foot or more of snowfall included: 12 inches 23 miles north of Highmore; 13 inches near Agar; 15 inches 24 miles north of Highmore.

1948: Good Friday tornadoes moved from Terre Haute to Redkey, Indiana killing 20 people. About 80% of the town of Coatesville was destroyed, and 16 people were killed. The Coatesville Carnegie Library was a total loss. The path was a half mile wide.

2009: The proof is in the pudding - A NOAA Weather Radio can save your life. Near Belk, AL, a family was alerted to a tornado by their weather radio; they went to their storm cellar. They heard the "jet roar" of the EF1 tornado as it damaged their home; they were unhurt.

1913 - The Ohio River Basin flood reached a peak. Ten inch rains over a wide area of the Ohio River Basin inundated cities in Ohio, drowning 467 persons, and causing 147 million dollars damage. The Miami River at Dayton reached a level eight feet higher than ever before. The flood, caused by warm weather and heavy rains, was the second mostly deadly of record for the nation. (David Ludlum)

1954 - The temperature at Allaket, AK, plunged to 69 degrees below zero. (The Weather Channel)

1971 - Parts of northern and central Georgia experienced their worst snow and ice storm since 1935. Two day power outages ruined two million eggs at poultry hatches. Two persons were killed when a tree landed on their car. (25th-26th) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front crossing the Plateau Region produced high winds in Utah causing some property damage. Winds gusted to 51 mph at Salt Lake City. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 73 degrees at Flagstaff AZ, 90 degrees at Sacramento CA, 95 degrees at Santa Maria CA, 95 degrees at Los Angeles CA, 99 degrees at Tucson AZ, and 100 degrees at Phoenix AZ set records for March. (The National Weather Summary)








1989 - The Easter Bunny brought record warm temperatures to the central U.S. while such records were still welcome. A dozen cities reported record warm readings, including Dodge City KS with an afternoon high of 88 degrees. Strong southerly winds gusted to 51 mph at Dodge City, and reached 55 mph at Salina KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Fair weather prevailed across the nation for the second day in a row. Freezing temperatures were reported in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region in the wake of an early spring snowstorm. Afternoon highs were again in the 70s and 80s in the southeastern U.S., and for the ninth day in a row, temperatures in the southwestern U.S. reached the 90s. (The National Weather Summary)

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Groton, South Dakota, Weather Forecasts - Metric Units

Mon Mar 26	Tue Mar 27	Wed Mar 28	Thu Mar 29	Fri Mar 30	Sat Mar 31	Sun Apr 1
						
34° F 25° F	46° F 33° F	43° F 23° F	40° F 19° F	34° F 14° F	32° F 14° F	33° F 22° F
ENE 7 MPH	W 9 MPH	SW 14 MPH	NNW 7 MPH	N 13 MPH	ENE 11 MPH	N 11 MPH

***Light Rain – Snow – Drizzle
& Fog This Morning***

***Temperatures Around Freezing
Warming Above Freezing This Afternoon***

***Some Ice & Snow Accumulations
Expect Difficult Driving This Morning***



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

www.weather.gov/abr

Published on: 03/26/2018 at 5:31AM

Graphic Created
3/26/2018 5:28 AM

A weak system is bringing a mix to the area, with some light ice accumulations. This is expected to result in hazardous travel conditions until temperatures warm above freezing this afternoon. Cool, inclement weather can be expected for the majority of the work week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 33.8 F at 3:51 PM

Low Outside Temp: 30.6 F at 2:21 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 37.0 Mph at 3:31 AM

Precip: Snowing

Today's Info

Record High: 74° in 1905

Record Low: -13° in 1964

Average High: 45°F

Average Low: 24°F

Average Precip in March: 0.92

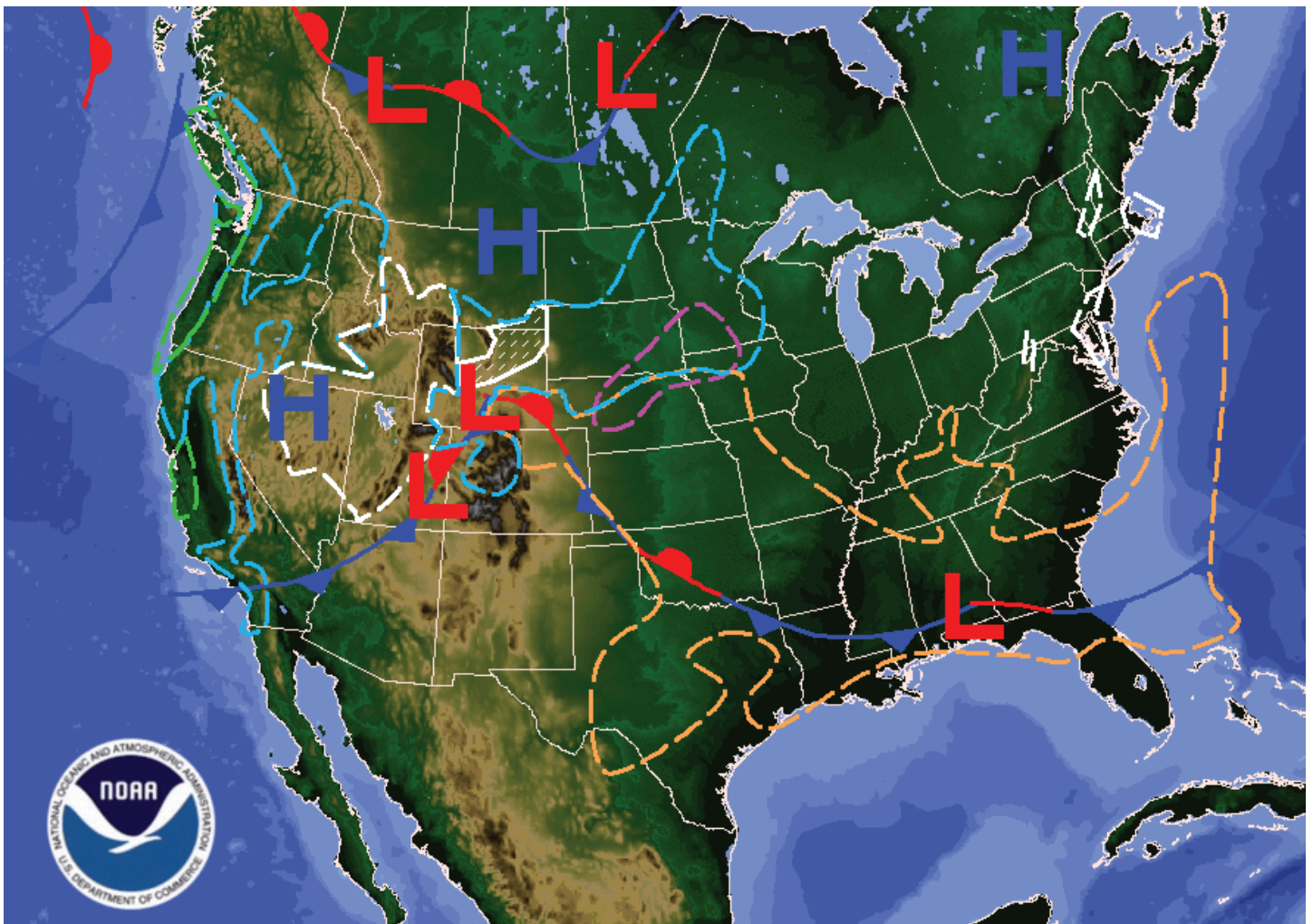
Precip to date in March: 1.14

Average Precip to date: 1.94

Precip Year to Date: 1.55

Sunset Tonight: 7:54 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:23 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Mar 25, 2018, issued 4:50 PM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Roth with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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PARDONED AND SET FREE

A soldier in a combat zone learned that his wife was desperately ill and not expected to live. He applied for an "emergency leave" but was denied. After a sleepless night he decided that he would desert his post and fellow soldiers and go to her bedside. As he was leaving his barracks, he was apprehended and placed in the stockade.

A few weeks later he was ordered to stand trial. After the evidence was presented to the judge and jury, he was found guilty and condemned to death for leaving his post.

"I understand, Sir," he said to the judge "that I left my post and deserted my colors. I deserve the verdict of the court." Asked the judge, "Do you have anything more to say?"

"No, your honor," came the reply.

"Well, I do," said the judge. "There is something more to say." And he read the soldier a pardon.

Standing tall and filled with gratitude, he began to weep violently for the mercy the court offered him. In humility he offered his gratitude, and saluted the judge. He was then restored to duty and returned to combat.

Our God is a holy God and cannot look at our sins. And because we have sinned, we deserve to be punished. But because of His great love He offers us a pardon through the death of His Son. It was His Son, who on our behalf, accepted our punishment, rescued us and set us free from the penalty of death. The moment we accept His mercy we are set free from our punishment.

Prayer: How grateful we are, Father, for the reminder of the Psalmist that YOU are "the God who forgives!" In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 99:8a You answered them, O Lord our God;

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- 11/18/2017-3/31/2018 Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meat- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 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)
- 12/01/2018 Olive Grove Golf Course 2018 Holiday Party
- 1/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm

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

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News from the Associated Press

Small theater brings South Dakota community together

By **KELDA J.L. PHARRIS**, Aberdeen American News

STRATFORD, S.D. (AP) — Broadway's best won't be found at 267 Rondell Ave., but that is where you can locate the heart of Stratford.

Stratford Community Theatre began with some errant scripts and a bar bet in 1994.

"Years ago, when I was a little kid in Stratford, the community, school, PTA would put on a play," Kristi Bruner said. "We'd always talk about doing it again, when people weren't so busy in the winter."

The Stratford born-and-raised woman's memory then took her to a visit with a friend at a bar a generation ago.

"A gal from the elevator brought in a bunch of scripts from Conde. She said, 'Here, put your money where your mouth is,'" Bruner said.

The scripts had been rejected by another small-town theater group because the play called for a couple of men to dress as women. Bruner took her friend, Kristy Henjum of Conde, up on the idea. That year, proceeds went to the community center in Stratford and some other charitable causes. Bruner tucked away the last \$250, just in case the group decided to do it again.

And it has — for 25 consecutive years now, Aberdeen American News reported.

In the quarter-century, the group has raised and donated hundreds of thousands of dollars. Bruner lost count after she tracked the total to \$300,000, and that was years ago. She said that after costs, the theater puts \$10,000 to \$12,000 back into Stratford and surrounding communities annually. And that's likely an underestimate, she said.

The group does about 10 performances over three weekends each March. Sometimes more. There are dinner theater, wine-and-cheese and soup-and-sandwich options offered during the run. It costs 30 bucks to get in the door, but the cost and show times don't matter if you don't yet have your tickets for this year's selection, "The Money in Uncle George's Suitcase."

"We sold out in about three hours," Bruner said. "It always sells out."

The theater added an 11th performance this year. It also sold out, then had to be postponed a week after March 6's winter storm made road conditions miserable.

Performances continued through mid-March.

The popularity of the annual event is not because of Tony-worthy performances or an exquisitely crafted menu, but the result of the unity felt by members of the small town of Stratford and the surrounding communities. Fun plays are chosen and the atmosphere is relaxed.

Sherri Hansen has been in every play except one in the early 2000s when she had shoulder surgery and had to drop out at the last minute. Hansen couldn't pick a favorite role, saying they've all been fun.

Stratford has a population of about 85, Bruner estimated. It's less than that — in the low 70s, according to recent Census estimates. And it takes nearly that many people to pull off the shows. There are eight cast members and three crew members this year. And others help with duties like cooking, serving and cleaning. Forty to 50 meals are needed just to feed volunteers. Those are in addition to the 120 needed for people who have tickets to each performance.

Boy Scouts and 4-H'ers help wash dishes and clean.

"Local cooks make food, the local bar cooks the entrees, local men act as waiters," Bruner said. "To put on the dinner theater it takes the whole area."

That effort and good faith go full circle as the theater then pours those glad tidings back into the communities.

In the past year, the community theater was able to give six \$1,000 scholarships to students in Leola, Northwestern, Groton and Warner. In other years it has helped fund a new fire hall in Stratford and donated to the Aberdeen Rural Fire Department, numerous churches, families with medical costs and school clubs.

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In 2015, the theater auctioned a table for the construction of a new 4-H building on the state fairgrounds in Huron on behalf of the Rondell Robins 4-H Club.

In the early years, Stratford Community Theatre would go on tour. At the time, there was no stage with a seating area in Stratford. Eventually enough money was raised to add a permanent stage and seating to the Stratford Community Center. That was in the early 2000s. That area is now the heart of the community every March.

"I always wanted to be on stage when I was in high school and stuff. I prayed to be on stage, I just forgot to tell God I wanted to get paid for it, too," Hansen said. "But we get paid in the long run with everything we help, so it's worth it."

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Sioux Falls sees more international food options

By ALEXA GIEBINK, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — As the population in Sioux Falls grows, so does the city's palate.

An assortment of new and established ethnic grocery stores in town provides a variety of international foods, from Ethiopian and Eastern European, to Mexican and Asian.

Newly arrived immigrants are comforted with familiar foods from home, while longtime residents are given a chance to try something new.

Many of the shop owners are driven by the same desire: To serve the Sioux Falls community by providing quality products.

A number of factors pushed and pulled these entrepreneurs to Sioux Falls, including conflict in their home countries and the search for better opportunities.

There are quite a few international grocery stores in Sioux Falls, and each has its own tale. Here are four businesses we've chosen to highlight due to their interesting stories.

Regardless of the reason, the business owners featured below have decided to open up shop, and our taste buds are thankful.

On a typical weekday, Ethiopian native Mohammed Seid rings up customers while an employee cooks injera in the back of the store.

Seid owns East African Grocery located at 318 N. Cliff Ave. The store, which opened in 2002, specializes in Middle Eastern and African products such as spices and coffees.

In 1996, Seid moved from Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, to the United States in search of better work. Seid had family in Sioux Falls who sponsored their immigration, the Argus Leader reported.

"I don't want to work for a company. There's more benefit to owning a store," said Mohammed Seid, who gets most of his products from Chicago and Minneapolis. The store offers a variety of items from jars of butter ghee and spices, to blankets and perfume.

As you walk in the front of East African Grocery, you can't miss the stacks of homemade injera, an African flatbread with a slightly spongy texture. Customers can buy it fresh or purchase a griddle to cook it at home.

"Even American people love our injera," said Mohammed Seid.

The Gurung family is a group of young, energetic entrepreneurs from Bhutan.

Their store, Dragon Asian Market, opened a year ago at 2300 E. 10th St. Manager Durga Gurung owns the business with his brother Lali, nephew Aita and wife Kamala.

"This kind of store is very essential," said Lali Gurung. "There's a lot of demand. Our focus is to stock international foods."

Dragon Asian Market has rows of shelves packed with fresh vegetables, dried goods, frozen items, and even gift items like clothes. Customers can buy bottles of mango lassi or a three-foot-long rohu fish.

"We didn't find this at Walmart or the immigrant groceries," said Durga Gurung as he grabbed a bunch of white amaranth greens from the produce display.

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Before moving to the United States in 2010, the Gurung family lived in a refugee camp in Nepal for 20 years. Because of their Nepalese ancestry, the Bhutanese government said they had no right to stay in Bhutan.

"They sent a warning letter. My dad just got scared so he said, 'Let's go. Let's leave Bhutan, because maybe they would kill us,'" said Durga Gurung.

Durga was able to leave the camp for short periods of time to teach, but he felt life there offered little freedom and opportunity.

"We decided to move here to fulfill our future lives," said Durga. "First we came to Idaho. From there we saw a lot of opportunity in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and that's why we moved here."

Dragon Asian Market celebrated their first anniversary in business in February with customer appreciation specials on non-food items and giveaways.

Igor Avetisov, owner of Beryozka Grocery at 3301 E. 26th St., takes pride in his products.

"Anytime if you want to open a store, you should know really good product," said Avetisov. "If you are not going to try all your products, you're not going to be able to suggest it to anyone."

Beryozka opened 11 years ago, and specializes in Eastern European foods of all kinds. Avetisov stocks teas, candies, meats, grains, cakes, cheese and more from all over Europe.

For customers looking to try something new, Avetisov will walk them through the store and help select the best product for their individual tastes. The store owner estimates 60 percent of his customers are Russian speakers.

"We get a lot of students who are living in Brookings and families coming from Yankton," said Avetisov.

Avetisov is of Armenian nationality but was born in Azerbaijan. His family and many others with Armenian heritage were forced to leave the country several decades ago due to political and religious conflict.

After fleeing Azerbaijan, Avetisov and his family moved to Armenia, then Ukraine, eventually arriving in the United States 24 years ago. Back in Europe, Avetisov learned about business from his father, who had a factory.

"Why I open the store? Because I enjoy working with people," said Avetisov.

On Tuesday evenings, Eswari Muthu and her husband Muthu Kasi serve lines of customers in search of fresh vegetables.

The couple opened the Indian grocery store Greens & Spices, located at 1016 W. 41st St., in April of last year. Every week on Tuesday they get a delivery of fresh vegetables to meet their customer demand.

"We want to serve the community mainly," said Muthu. "There are a lot of other stores out there, but we are trying to keep the price down and bring the new, fresh products every time."

The couple moved to the United States in 1989 for his education, and has lived in Sioux Falls since 2001. Muthu Kasi is now an agricultural engineering professor at South Dakota State University.

The products available at Greens & Spices range from snacks and frozen meals to religious articles and Halal meats. On the shelves, customers can also find an assortment of lentils.

"In India, people don't eat meat products much because that's a belief they have, so they have to get some kind of protein in their body," said Muthu.

The store aims to provide products from all parts of Indian and Asia. The spice section, for example, is organized based on the tastes of the different Indian states.

"People are from different places, and they like to use their own product because they're used to it," said Muthu. "So we try to accommodate everybody."

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

Augustana names 4 finalists for athletics director position

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Augustana University in Sioux Falls has announced four finalists for the college's director of athletics position.

The finalists will have on-campus interviews this week.

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The university said Saturday the finalists are: Nikki Fennern, director of athletics at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota; Josh Morton, assistant athletic director for Michigan State University; Steve Schofield, deputy athletic director for external operations at the University of Northern Iowa; and Travis Whipple, deputy director of athletics for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Augustana University competes in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference and is an NCAA Division II member.

Pennington County to revise policy for gathering signatures

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Pennington County is revising its policy over where petitioners can solicit and gather signatures on the county's campus.

The Pennington County Board of Commissioners directed the state attorney's office Tuesday to draft a policy clarifying where petitioners can conduct their business, the Rapid City Journal reported .

The move comes after a commissioner requested a review of current policy, which orders petitioners to work outside the county's courthouse and administration building unless "during periods of inclement weather." Inclement weather is defined as "weather that is at or below freezing temperature or weather which is actively storming."

But state's attorney Jay Alderman said the definition of inclement weather is subjective and vague. He said it doesn't account for wind chill or clearly define "actively storming." Alderman also said it doesn't provide guidance on what should be done once a storm ends. He added that the policy's description of areas outside and inside the courthouse is outdated due to recent remodeling.

Seventh Circuit Court judge Craig Pfeifle said the policy's subjectivity opened the county up to potential liability issues.

County Register of Deeds Donna Mayer said she's against allowing petitioners inside the administration building because it has affected her employees.

Alderman proposed creating a more comprehensive policy that addresses activities such as solicitation, sales and petitioning. It would map out where such activities can or cannot be conducted on the county's campus, as well as rewrite the definition of inclement weather.

Alderman has been directed to draft the policy for review at the commissioner's April 3 meeting.

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

Egyptians vote, with President el-Sissi certain winner

By **MAGGIE MICHAEL** and **BRIAN ROHAN**, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptians voted on Monday in a presidential election, with the outcome — a second, four-year term for President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi — a foregone conclusion and a sign that critics say shows the country is sliding back to the authoritarian rule that had prevailed since the 1950s.

For the general-turned-president, el-Sissi's only challenger is Moussa Mustafa Moussa, a little known politician who joined the race in the last minute to spare the government the embarrassment of a one-candidate election after several hopefuls were forced out or arrested.

Moussa, who supported el-Sissi until he joined the race in January, made no effort to challenge the incumbent who never mentioned his challenger once in public.

Authorities hope enough people — there are nearly 60 million eligible voters — will vote in the three-day balloting, which ends Wednesday, to give the election legitimacy. Powerful pro-government media have in past weeks relentlessly portrayed voting as a national duty, required to protect the country against foreign conspiracies.

Some of the presidential hopefuls who had stepped forward might have attracted a sizable protest vote but they were all either arrested or intimidated out of the race, making this the least competitive election since the 2011 uprising ousted longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak and raised hopes of democratic change.

El-Sissi cast his ballot as soon as the polls opened at 9 a.m. at a girls' school in the Cairo suburb of He-

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liopolis. He made no comments, only shook hands with election workers before he left.

There were no long lines of voters waiting in several Cairo districts — but past elections have shown many prefer to wait for the afternoon or evening to vote. Footage aired by local television networks showed women dominating the early voters. They also showed festive scenes outside polling centers, with women and school children singing.

Tens of thousands of policemen and soldiers have been deployed to protect polling centers as well as key state installations during the election.

"I'm not lazy or apathetic, I'm intentionally skipping this one," said Ahmed, a young man smoking a water pipe at a café near the Khidiwayah high school for boys in central Cairo who would not give his family name, fearing reprisals. A shopkeeper in downtown remarked that the world was laughing at Egypt.

According to an Interior Ministry statement late Sunday, police killed six militants believed to be involved in a weekend bombing in the coastal city of Alexandria that killed two policemen. The statement said they belonged to a Muslim Brotherhood-linked group and that they were killed in a raid on their hideout north of Cairo.

Mohammed Ibrahim Ali, a retired engineer, patiently waited for the polls to open at Cairo's bustling Sayda Zeinab middle-class neighborhood that is home to a much revered Islamic shrine.

"Even if there are 1,000 candidates, we will vote for el-Sissi," he said, struggling to be heard over the patriotic songs blaring from nearby giant speakers. "He is the one who makes life great here."

Ahmed Abdel-Atti, a 58-year-old doorman in the same neighborhood, voiced skepticism. "Do you see any other candidates?" he asked.

During the official campaign period, instead of addressing any of the scores of rallies held by his supporters or appearing in TV ads, el-Sissi has opted for carefully scripted and televised functions. The former general donned military fatigues on recent occasions, highlighting the war on Islamic extremists and perhaps reminding voters that he led the military overthrow of a divisive Islamist president in the summer of 2013.

Many Egyptians welcomed the overthrow of Mohammed Morsi and the crackdown on his Muslim Brotherhood group. For a time, el-Sissi enjoyed a wave of popular support bordering on hysteria, with downtown shops selling chocolates with his portrait on them.

But that aura faded over the last four years, which could explain a clampdown ahead of the election on the media and critics.

In the Sinai Peninsula, an insurgency that gained strength after Morsi's overthrow and is now led by the Islamic State group has only grown more ferocious, with regular attacks on security forces and deadly church bombings. An assault on a mosque in November killed more than 300 people — the worst terror attack in Egypt's modern history.

The government has meanwhile enacted a series of long-overdue economic reforms — including painful subsidy cuts and the floatation of the currency. That improved the investment climate and earned Egypt a \$12 billion bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund. But the austerity measures sent prices soaring, exacting a heavy toll on ordinary Egyptians, especially the more than 25 percent living below the poverty line.

On Monday, some risked voicing criticism about the fallout from el-Sissi's ambitious economic reforms and the economy weighed heavily on some voters' minds.

"I was a wholehearted supporter, but not anymore," said Abu Ali, who recently lost his job in a telecommunications company and now works at a Cairo gas station. "Yes, there are big projects but he (el-Sissi) takes from us, the poor, not from them, the rich. We are the people who are living day to day."

Khaled Abdel-Lateef, a fresh juice seller in downtown Cairo, struck an upbeat note, saying authorities need more time. "We need to be patient," he said. "The good things will come. At the very least, we have security."

Thousands of Islamists and several leading secular activists have been jailed, and unauthorized protests have been outlawed. The media is dominated by virulently pro-government commentators and hundreds of websites have been blocked. Independent journalists have been arrested or deported.

In late February, authorities expelled The Times of London correspondent Bel Trew, arresting her after

she conducted an interview in Cairo's central Shoubra district, saying she did not have valid accreditation and was filming without a permit.

El-Sissi, meanwhile, has worked to cultivate the image of a folksy populist, going on at length about his devotion to God, reverence for his late mother, and love for Egypt. In a one-hour puff piece TV interview, he said he wished he had one or two trillion dollars of his own money that he could spend on modernizing the country.

In the interview, el-Sissi insisted that the lack of candidates was "completely not my fault."

"Really, I swear, I wish there were one or two or even 10 of the best people and you would get to choose whoever you want," he said. "We are just not ready."

Russian shopping mall fire kills 64; no alarms reported

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — With the fire alarms silent and staff reportedly nowhere to be seen, a fire at a shopping mall packed with children and their parents on the first weekend of the school recess killed 64 people in Russia's Siberia.

The fire at the Winter Cherry mall in Kemerovo, a city about 3,000 kilometers (1,900 miles) east of Moscow, was extinguished by Monday morning after burning through the night. Firefighters were still recovering bodies as parts of the buildings were still smoldering. Some of the dead were found inside a cinema, which one witness said had been locked shut.

On Monday morning, Kemerovo residents were bringing flowers, candles and stuffed animals to a plaza outside the mall, and local hospitals reported an influx of people wanting to donate blood for the victims.

Sixty-four deaths were confirmed after the firefighters finished combing through the four floors of the mall, Emergency Situations Minister Vladimir Puchkov told a televised briefing. Six of the bodies have not yet been recovered. Puchkov would not immediately say how many of the victims were children as only 17 people have been identified.

Ten people have been hospitalized. Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova, who visited the Kemerovo hospital where the victims were receiving treatment, said on Russian state television that the patient in the gravest condition is an 11-year-old boy who jumped out of a window from the fourth floor. The boy's parents and younger sister died in the fire, Skvortsova said.

Some 200 animals are also believed to have died in the mall's petting zoo. The zoo's manager told the Tass news agency that the animals included rabbits, turtles, pigs, goats and rodents.

The Investigative Committee said it has detained four people for questioning, including one of the mall's tenants, but would not immediately give the cause of the fire, which started on the top floor on Sunday evening. The investigators have launched a probe into possible negligence and violations of the fire safety rules.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday it was too early to draw conclusions about whether local officials failed in Kemerovo.

Witness testimony indicated that the fire alarm did not go off and that staff did not arrange for the evacuation at the shopping mall, which was converted from a former confectionery factory in 2013.

Winter Cherry was one of Kemerovo's most popular entertainment centers for children, with its own indoor skating rink, petting zoo and trampolines. Kemerovo residents said the mall was packed with children and their parents.

The Ekho Mosvky radio station on Monday quoted witnesses who said the fire alarm did not go off and that the mall's staff did not organize the evacuation.

Anna Zarechneva who was on the top floor where the fire started, watching a movie with her husband and son, said they only found out about the fire when a man ran into the theater shouting.

"We didn't hear the fire alarm, they even didn't turn on the light during the show," she said. "That movie could have been the last for us, I've only just realized that."

Alexander Lillevyali lost three daughters, 11-year-old twins and a 5-year-old, who were in a cinema hall

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on the top floor watching a cartoon.

Lillevyali told the Meduza news website that one of his daughters called him, saying that they could smell the smoke but could not get out because the door was locked.

"I was shouting into the phone, telling her to get out but there was nothing I could do — the fire was in front of me," he said.

The Prosecutor General's Office on Monday ordered all shopping malls in Russia to be checked for fire safety features.

Russian companies routinely complain about excessive checks from various government agencies, which often abuse elaborate rules and regulations to pressure businesses. As a result, many companies prefer to pay bribes instead of complying with outdated and excessive regulations, including fire safety rules.

This story has been corrected to say that the boy who jumped lost his sister, not brother.

Another key redistricting case goes in front of high court

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court has already heard a major case about political line-drawing that has the potential to reshape American politics. Now, before even deciding that one, the court is taking up another similar case.

The arguments justices will hear Wednesday in the second case, a Republican challenge to a Democratic-leaning congressional district in Maryland, could offer fresh clues to what they are thinking about partisan gerrymandering, an increasingly hot topic before courts.

Decisions in the Maryland case and the earlier one from Wisconsin are expected by late June.

The arguments come nearly six months after the court heard a dispute over Wisconsin legislative districts that Democrats claim were drawn to maximize Republican control in a state that is closely divided between the parties.

The Supreme Court has never thrown out electoral districts on partisan grounds and it's not clear the justices will do so now. But supporters of limits on partisanship in redistricting are encouraged that the justices are considering two cases.

"In taking these two cases, the Supreme Court wants to say something about partisan gerrymandering. It's clear the Supreme Court is not walking away from the issue," said Michael Li, senior counsel at the New York University law school's Brennan Center for Justice.

The justices' involvement in partisan redistricting reflects a period of unusual activity in the courts on this topic. Over the past 16 months, courts struck down political districting plans drawn by Republicans in North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Federal judges threw out a state legislative map in Wisconsin and a congressional plan in North Carolina. In Pennsylvania, the state Supreme Court invalidated the state's congressional districts and replaced them with a court-drawn plan.

When the Supreme Court heard Wisconsin's appeal, the court appeared to be split along familiar lines. Four liberal justices seemed inclined to strike down the legislative map and four conservatives appeared more favorable to it. That left Justice Anthony Kennedy seemingly in control of the outcome.

A relatively quick resolution of the case also appeared likely, based on the way the court handled the case. A lower court had earlier struck down the districts and ordered new ones drawn. The justices blocked the drawing of a new map last summer, but set the case for arguments in the first week of its new term in October.

Then in December, the court said it would hear the case about Maryland's 6th congressional district, but provided no further explanation about why it was adding a second redistricting case.

Democrats who controlled redistricting in Maryland in 2011 made a conscious decision to try to increase the party's control of congressional districts from 6-2 to 7-1, said Michael Kimberly, the lawyer representing the Republican challengers.

They took a district that had been centered in rural, Republican-leaning northwestern Maryland, where

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a longtime Republican incumbent won by 28 percentage points in 2010 and turned it into a district that took in some Democratic Washington, D.C., suburbs and elected a Democrat who won by 21 percentage points in 2012.

The change violated the First Amendment rights of the Republican voters, Kimberly said.

Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, a Democrat, said in defending the district that it is competitive for both parties and has elected a moderate Democrat. In 2014, a friendlier year for Republican candidates, Democratic Rep. John Delaney's victory margin dropped to less than 2 points, though it rose again in 2016.

In some ways, the Wisconsin and Maryland cases complement each other. In Wisconsin, the justices have a broad theory about partisan line-drawing. The lower court that ruled for the Democratic challengers concluded that the districting plans were drawn to discriminate against Democrats, the Republicans' advantage would endure even in the face of a strong Democratic showing at the polls and the plans could not be explained by other, non-partisan reasons.

In Maryland, the single-district approach looks a lot like the way civil rights groups try to prove that race played too large a role in the drawing of districts. It would be both a more limited approach than the Wisconsin case, but also feel more familiar to justices who have decided many claims of racial bias in redistricting.

With two cases before them, the justices now have one in which each party is complaining about the other.

That could be significant based on Chief Justice John Roberts' stated distaste for putting the court's credibility at stake in politically charged cases.

"We'll have to decide in every case whether the Democrats win or the Republicans win," Roberts said in the Wisconsin arguments.

Another possibility is that the justices could already have decided that there's a procedural problem in the Wisconsin case, limiting their ability to address the merits of the Democratic voters' claim.

However the court views the two cases, it seems increasingly likely that a decision striking down districts won't result in any changes this year. The court frowns on making these sorts of changes so close to an election. The deadline to get on the primary ballot in Wisconsin is June 1. Maryland's deadline was last month.

The court also has blocked new congressional districts in North Carolina.

Only in Pennsylvania, where the state Supreme Court invoked the state constitution to strike down the congressional map, has a new map been put in place. The Supreme Court refused an emergency request from Pennsylvania Republicans to block it.

Witness in Mueller probe aided UAE agenda in Congress

By DESMOND BUTLER, TOM LOBIANCO and BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A top fundraiser for President Donald Trump received millions of dollars from a political adviser to the United Arab Emirates last April, just weeks before he began handing out a series of large political donations to U.S. lawmakers considering legislation targeting Qatar, the UAE's chief rival in the Persian Gulf, an Associated Press investigation has found.

George Nader, an adviser to the UAE who is now a witness in the U.S. special counsel investigation into foreign meddling in American politics, wired \$2.5 million to the Trump fundraiser, Elliott Broidy, through a company in Canada, according to two people who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. They said Nader paid the money to Broidy to bankroll an effort to persuade the U.S. to take a hard line against Qatar, a long-time American ally but now a bitter adversary of the UAE.

A month after he received the money, Broidy sponsored a conference on Qatar's alleged ties to Islamic extremism. During the event, Republican Congressman Ed Royce of California, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, announced he was introducing legislation that would brand Qatar as a terrorist-supporting state.

In July 2017, two months after Royce introduced the bill, Broidy gave the California congressman \$5,400

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in campaign gifts — the maximum allowed by law. The donations were part of just under \$600,000 that Broidy has given to GOP members of Congress and Republican political committees since he began the push for the legislation fingering Qatar, according to an AP analysis of campaign finance disclosure records.

Broidy said in a statement to AP that he has been outspoken for years about militant groups, including Hamas.

"I've both raised money for, and contributed my own money to, efforts by think tanks to bring the facts into the open, since Qatar is spreading millions of dollars around Washington to whitewash its image as a terror-sponsoring state," he said. "I've also spoken to like-minded members of Congress, like Royce, about how to make sure Qatar's lobbying money does not blind lawmakers to the facts about its record in supporting terrorist groups."

While Washington is awash with political donations from all manner of interest groups and individuals, there are strict restrictions on foreign donations for political activity. Agents of foreign governments are also required to register before lobbying so that there is a public record of foreign influence.

Cory Fritz, a spokesman for Royce, said that his boss had long criticized the "destabilizing role of extremist elements in Qatar." He pointed to comments to that effect going back to 2014. "Any attempts to influence these longstanding views would have been unsuccessful," he said.

In October, Broidy also raised the issue of Qatar at the White House in meetings with Trump and senior aides.

The details of Broidy's advocacy on U.S. legislation have not been previously reported. The AP found no evidence that Broidy used Nader's funds for the campaign donations or broke any laws. At the time of the advocacy work, his company, Circinus, did not have business with the UAE, but was awarded a more than \$200 million contract in January.

The sanctions bill was approved by Royce's committee in late 2017. It remains alive in the House of Representatives, awaiting a review by the House Financial Services Committee.

MEETINGS PROBED

The backstory of the legislative push is emerging amid continuing concerns about efforts by foreign governments or their proxies to influence American politics. While reports about possible Russian links to Trump's campaign and his presidential administration have been making headlines since 2016, questions are now arising about efforts during the Trump era to influence U.S. policy in the Middle East.

The U.S. has long been friendly with Saudi Arabia and the UAE as well as Qatar, which is home to a massive American air base that the U.S. has used in its fight against the Islamic State. But as political rifts in the Gulf have widened, the Saudis and Emiratis have sought to undercut American ties with Qatar.

Qatar and UAE have also exchanged allegations of politically motivated hacks. Scores of Broidy's emails and documents have leaked to news organizations, drawing attention to his relationship with Nader. Broidy has alleged that the hack was done by Qatari agents and has reported the breach to the FBI.

"It's no surprise that Qatar would see me as an obstacle and come after me in the way it has," he said in a statement.

A spokesman for the Qatari embassy, Jassim Mansour Jabr Al Thani, denied the charges, calling them "diversionary tactics." Representatives of the UAE did not respond to requests for comment.

The timeline of the influx of cash wired by Nader, an adviser to Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, the de facto leader of the UAE, may provide grist for U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller's legal team as it probes the activities of Trump and his associates during the 2016 campaign and beyond. However, it is not clear that Mueller has expanded his investigation in that direction.

Mueller's investigators are looking into two meetings close to Trump's inauguration attended by Nader and bin Zayed. The pair joined a meeting at New York's Trump Tower in December 2016 that included presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner and Steve Bannon, who was Trump's chief strategist at the time. A month later, Nader and bin Zayed were a world away on the Seychelles island chain in the Indian Ocean, meeting with Erik Prince, the founder of the security company Blackwater, and the Kremlin-connected head of a large Russian sovereign wealth fund, Kirill Dmitriev.

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Nader, a Lebanese-American businessman, agreed to cooperate with Mueller's team after investigators stopped him at Dulles International Airport, according to a person familiar with his case.

That person and others who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity said they could not be identified because of the sensitivity of the issues surrounding the Mueller investigation.

A lawyer for Nader declined to comment for this story.

__POLICY PUSH

Broidy and Nader first met at Trump's presidential inauguration on Jan. 20, 2017, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

Both men have checkered legal histories. Nader was convicted in a Czech Republic court in 2003 of multiple counts of sexually abusing minors. Broidy, a businessmen and prolific Republican fundraiser, was sidelined for a few years after he pleaded guilty to bribery in a case stemming from an investment scheme involving New York state's employee pension fund.

Broidy later re-emerged as a player in GOP politics. During the 2016 Republican presidential primary, he raised money for U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, Sen. Marco Rubio and Sen. Ted Cruz. After Cruz bowed out of the race, Broidy signed on to help Trump during the 2016 election and beyond, co-hosting fundraisers across the country.

The meeting between Broidy and Nader at the dawn of Trump's presidency soon led the two to work together in an effort to shift U.S. policies on the Middle East.

On April 2, 2017, Nader asked Broidy to invoice his Dubai-based company for \$2.5 million, according to someone familiar with the transaction who spoke on condition of anonymity.

On the same day, Broidy attached an invoice for that amount from Xiemen Investments Limited, a Canadian company directed by a friend. The money was forwarded to his own account in Los Angeles from the Canadian account, the person said. It was marked for consulting, marketing and advisory services, but was actually intended to fund Broidy's Washington advocacy regarding Qatar, two people familiar with the transaction said. The financial transaction and the White House meetings were first reported by The New York Times.

It was on May 23, 2017, when Royce, a 13-term Congressman, appeared at a conference on Qatar's ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and announced that he was introducing the sanctions bill that would name Qatar a state sponsor of terrorism.

The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a think tank that hosted the conference, said Broidy had approached it about organizing the event. Broidy bankrolled that conference and contributed to the financing of a second conference hosted on a similar theme in October by another think tank, the Hudson Institute.

Both organizations said Broidy said that no money from foreign governments was involved. FDD says it does not accept money from foreign governments and Hudson only accepts money from Democratic countries allied with the U.S.

"As is our funding policy, we asked if his funding was connected to any foreign governments or if he had business contracts in the Gulf. He assured us that he did not," FDD said in a statement.

Broidy donated millions of his own money to efforts to fight Qatar, in addition to the \$2.5 million from Nader, according to someone close to him, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss Broidy's private finances.

Broidy's behind-the-scenes efforts unfolded as animosity was growing between the UAE and Qatar. These tensions came to a head when the UAE and Saudi Arabia launched an embargo with travel and trade restrictions against Qatar less than two weeks after Royce introduced the sanctions legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Weeks later, Trump himself waded into the fracas, accusing Qatar of funding extremism in tweets on June 6.

Royce and a staff member met with Broidy at Washington's Capitol Hill Club to discuss the bill, according to someone who was at the meeting. An associate, who Broidy paid for some of the work, also had frequent contact with congressional staff.

STRONG LANGUAGE

Broidy's effort to cultivate allies in Congress extended beyond Royce.

Broidy has personally given hundreds of thousands of dollars to Republicans over the past decade or more. But he gave nothing during the 2012 and 2014 election cycles and just \$13,500 during the 2016 cycle. Things changed after Trump's election as Broidy ramped up his advocacy on Middle East policy. Broidy has given nearly \$600,000 to GOP candidates and causes since the beginning of last year when he began his advocacy push— more than in the previous 14 years combined.

Campaign finance records going back two decades show Broidy had not given any money to Royce — until he gave the lawmaker a pair of \$2,700 donations on July 31, 2017.

By then, the sanctions bill was on a fast track.

The original draft considered by the Foreign Affairs Committee contained language singling out Qatar as a supporter of Hamas, a Palestinian organization that has been designated as a terrorist group by the U.S. State Department.

"Hamas has received significant financial and military support from Qatar," the draft bill states.

Soon Qatar was lobbying hard to have that language excised. Nikki Haley, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, declared in a statement to the committee that Qatar does not fund Hamas.

According to two people familiar with the committee deliberations, both Republican and Democratic staff members reached a consensus that because of the tensions in the Gulf, the language would look like the lawmakers were taking sides. They agreed to take it out of the bill.

Qatari officials and lobbyists thought the matter had been settled, according to one lobbyist and a committee staffer. But just before the bill was to be put up for debate ahead of the committee's vote, Royce ordered the language on Qatar not only reinstated, but strengthened, they say. The bill was approved by the committee in November with the stronger language on Qatar intact.

A Royce aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment, denied that Royce had ever considered removing the Qatar language.

In January, Royce announced that he would not seek re-election, saying that he wanted to focus on his committee in the last year of his chairmanship rather than a political campaign.

In the same month, Broidy's company signed the hefty contract with the UAE government for gathering intelligence, according to someone familiar with the work.

Associated Press writers Chad Day and Richard Lardner contributed to this report

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Porn star reveals details about alleged encounter with Trump

By KEN THOMAS and KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Adult film star Stormy Daniels says she was threatened to keep silent about an alleged sexual encounter with Donald Trump in 2006, telling her story in a highly anticipated interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" broadcast Sunday.

Daniels said she was threatened by an unidentified man in Las Vegas to keep quiet about her alleged relationship with Trump, an incident that she said happened while she was with her young daughter. She said in the interview that she had one encounter of consensual sex with the future president.

"He knows I'm telling the truth," said Daniels, whose legal name is Stephanie Clifford. She does not allege that she was coerced in her encounter with Trump, saying, "This is not a 'Me too.' I was not a victim."

The adult film actress provided little new evidence of her alleged 2006 affair with Trump but said she faced intimidation tactics aimed at ensuring her silence in 2011.

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Daniels said that in the incident, in a parking lot, the man told her: "Leave Trump alone. Forget the story." She said he then looked at her daughter and said, "That's a beautiful little girl. It'd be a shame if something happened to her mom."

Daniels received a \$130,000 payment days before the 2016 presidential election for her silence and has sought to invalidate a nondisclosure agreement.

The White House did not immediately comment Sunday on the interview. Trump, through his representatives, has denied the allegations. His attorney, Michael Cohen, has said Trump never had an affair with Daniels. Cohen has said he paid the \$130,000 out of his pocket.

Cohen has said neither the Trump Organization nor the Trump campaign was a party to the transaction with Daniels and he was not reimbursed for the payment.

However, Daniels' attorney Michael Avenatti told "60 Minutes" he has documents showing Cohen using his Trump Organization email address in setting up the payment and that the nondisclosure agreement was sent by FedEx to Cohen at his Trump Organization office in Trump Tower.

In the interview, Daniels described a sexual encounter with Trump that began with him talking about himself and showing her an issue of a magazine with his picture on the cover. She said she asked, "Does this ... does this normally work for you?" He was taken aback, she says. "And I was like, 'Someone should take that magazine and spank you with it.'" She says she then ordered him to drop his pants and, in a playful manner, "I just gave him a couple swats."

She said they talked some more, although he quit talking about himself, and that she became more comfortable.

"He was like, 'Wow, you — you are special. You remind me of my daughter.' You know — he was like, 'You're smart and beautiful, and a woman to be reckoned with, and I like you. I like you.'"

She said after dinner in Trump's room, they had sex. He didn't use a condom, she said, and she didn't ask him to. Afterward, he asked to see her again, she said.

Daniels said that before they had sex Trump had broached the idea of her being a contestant on "The Apprentice," and she likened it to a "business opportunity." She said he called her several times and would ask if they could get together again and that he had an update for her. She said she felt that he was holding out the opportunity to keep her coming back.

"Of course. I mean, I'm not blind. But at the same time, maybe it'll work out, you know?" Daniels said.

In July 2007, a year after they had met, Daniels said Trump asked to meet with her privately at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles. She said they did not have sex, but he wanted to.

Daniels reported that Trump called her the following month to say he had not been able to get her a spot on his TV show. She said they never met again.

Daniels was asked why she's talking now: "Because it was very important to me to be able to defend myself," she said.

Daniels said she was fine saying nothing at all. "But I'm not OK with being made out to be a liar, or people thinking that I did this for money and people are like, 'Oh, you're an opportunist. You're taking advantage of this.' Yes, I'm getting more job offers now, but tell me one person who would turn down a job offer making more than they've been making, doing the same thing that they've always done?"

"60 Minutes" correspondent Anderson Cooper noted during the interview that Melania Trump had given birth just a few months before. "Did he mention his wife or child at all in this?" Cooper said. "

"I asked. And he brushed it aside, said, 'Oh yeah, yeah, you know, don't worry about that. We don't even, we have separate rooms and stuff,'" Daniels said.

The CBS interview came as Trump deals with allegations about his sexual exploits long before he ran for president.

Former Playboy model Karen McDougal told Cooper in a CNN interview broadcast Thursday that her affair with Trump began at a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel in 2006. McDougal said she ended the relationship in 2007 out of guilt.

McDougal has filed suit in Los Angeles seeking to invalidate a confidentiality agreement with American Media Inc., the company that owns the supermarket tabloid National Enquirer. It paid her \$150,000 during

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the 2016 presidential election.

The lawsuit alleges that McDougal was paid for the rights to her story of an affair, but the story never ran. It also alleges that Cohen was secretly involved in her discussions with American Media.

Trump is also facing a New York defamation lawsuit filed by Summer Zervos, a former contestant on "The Apprentice." Zervos has accused Trump of unwanted sexual contact in 2007 after she had appeared on the show with him, and sued after he dismissed the claims as made up.

A judge ruled the lawsuit can move forward while the president is in office.

TIPPING OFF: Wild March stabilizes a bit with Final Four set

By AARON BEARD, AP Basketball Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Welcome to a Final Four filled with past national champions — just the way the NCAA selection committee drew it up, right?

OK, maybe not.

Sure, there's plenty of the expected with 1-seed Villanova making it to San Antonio in pursuit of the program's second title in three seasons. Kansas is the other 1-seed to navigate its way through a maze full of upsets as it pursues its first title since 2008.

And plenty figured No. 3 seed Michigan had a good shot to get to the Final Four as the Wolverines chase their first title since the Glen Rice-led group won the program's first in 1989.

But Loyola-Chicago? Consider the 11th-seeded Ramblers the representative for all the low seeds — UMBC, Marshall and Buffalo, to name a few — that pulled off the big stunners in an upset-filled and memorable March.

And yes, the Ramblers do have a national championship, won way back in 1963 during the Kennedy administration.

Now it's time to prepare for next Saturday's first national semifinal (Loyola vs. Michigan) featuring the upstart against the surging power-conference team in an undercard to the heavyweight matchup of top seeds in the nightcap.

It's a particular relief for Kansas, which had a No. 1 seed for the third straight season and lost in the Elite Eight the past two seasons — including in 2016 to Villanova as the Wildcats marched to the national title.

"You think about it, hey, in their careers all we've been is the No. 1 overall seed, the No. 2 overall seed and the No. 3 overall seed and haven't gotten to a Final Four," coach Bill Self said after Sunday's overtime win against Duke in Omaha, Nebraska. "So that means that these guys have done so well to put us in a position but we hadn't kicked the door in yet.

"I'm happy for us, staff, school, everything, but I'm more happy for these guys because they deserve to experience what the best of college basketball is — and that will be what takes place Saturday and Monday."

FORESHADOWING?: If you're into good omens, note that Kansas won its last title in San Antonio by beating North Carolina and Memphis under Self a decade ago. And that was the program's first since Danny Manning and The Miracles won the 1988 title as a No. 6 seed — now an even 30 years ago.

So maybe years ending in eight bring a bit of luck for the Jayhawks?

RANKING THE SEEDS: Villanova was the No. 2 overall seed behind Virginia on Selection Sunday, putting the Wildcats as the headliner followed by Kansas at third. Michigan was No. 11 and Loyola-Chicago was No. 46.

WINING UGLY: Villanova and Michigan should arrive in Texas with an extra bit of confidence after winning games when they shot poorly.

The Wildcats shot just 33 percent and made 4 of 24 3-pointers (.167) in Sunday's East final against Texas Tech . The Wolverines shot nearly 39 percent but made just 4 of 22 3s (.182) in Saturday night's West final against Florida State .

On top of that, they combined to make 4 of 27 3s after halftime (.148). Yet here they are.

TITLE HISTORY: Top seeds have hoisted the trophy on the final Monday night of the season in 18 of the past 26 NCAA Tournaments, while No. 3 seeds have won three times (Syracuse in 2003, Florida in 2006,

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Connecticut in 2011) in that span.

Villanova remains the lowest-seeded team to win a title as a No. 8 in 1985.

NOT SO WILD AFTER ALL: With all the upsets, it sure looked like the Final Four had a chance to be filled with surprises. It didn't end up that way.

The sum of the seeds for the four teams is 16, the highest since 2014 (18). But it was a far cry from joining the four other years since the tournament began seeding teams in 1979 that the combined total was at least 20: 1980 (21), 2000 (22), 2006 (20) and 2011 (26).

The last two of those were the most recent to feature an 11-seed before Loyola-Chicago's run, with George Mason getting there in 2006 and VCU doing it in 2011. The only other Final Four to feature a No. 11 seed came in 1986 with LSU, though the combined seed total was 15 on the strength of 1-seeds Duke and Kansas, and 2-seed Louisville (the eventual champion behind freshman Pervis Ellison) joining the Tigers in Dallas.

ACC'S MISS: The Atlantic Coast Conference was trying to get a team into the national-title game for the fourth straight year but ultimately fell short of the Final Four.

Duke won the championship in 2015. Rival North Carolina lost to Villanova in the 2016 title game before coming all the way back and winning the 2017 title against Gonzaga. And 10th-seeded Syracuse was a surprise semifinalist in 2016 after upsetting No. 1 seed Virginia in a regional final.

IMPROVED NUMBERS: ESPN said none of the 17.3 million entrées had the Elite Eight teams correct in its Tournament Challenge picks contest. But 550 people correctly had the Final Four teams.

Villanova was the most popular pick to get there, winning the East Region on 58.4 percent of the submitted brackets.

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

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Mueller probe witness secretly backed UAE agenda in Congress

By **DESMOND BUTLER, TOM LoBIANCO and BRADLEY KLAPPER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A top fundraiser for President Donald Trump received millions of dollars from a political adviser to the United Arab Emirates last April, just weeks before he began handing out a series of large political donations to U.S. lawmakers considering legislation targeting Qatar, the UAE's chief rival in the Persian Gulf, an Associated Press investigation has found.

George Nader, an adviser to the UAE who is now a witness in the U.S. special counsel investigation into foreign meddling in American politics, wired \$2.5 million to the Trump fundraiser, Elliott Broidy, through a company in Canada, according to two people who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. They said Nader paid the money to Broidy to bankroll an effort to persuade the U.S. to take a hard line against Qatar, a long-time American ally but now a bitter adversary of the UAE.

A month after he received the money, Broidy sponsored a conference on Qatar's alleged ties to Islamic extremism. During the event, Republican Congressman Ed Royce of California, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, announced he was introducing legislation that would brand Qatar as a terrorist-supporting state.

In July 2017, two months after Royce introduced the bill, Broidy gave the California congressman \$5,400 in campaign gifts — the maximum allowed by law. The donations were part of just under \$600,000 that Broidy has given to GOP members of Congress and Republican political committees since he began the push for the legislation fingering Qatar, according to an AP analysis of campaign finance disclosure records.

Broidy said in a statement to AP that he has been outspoken for years about militant groups, including Hamas.

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"I've both raised money for, and contributed my own money to, efforts by think tanks to bring the facts into the open, since Qatar is spreading millions of dollars around Washington to whitewash its image as a terror-sponsoring state," he said. "I've also spoken to like-minded members of Congress, like Royce, about how to make sure Qatar's lobbying money does not blind lawmakers to the facts about its record in supporting terrorist groups."

While Washington is awash with political donations from all manner of interest groups and individuals, there are strict restrictions on foreign donations for political activity. Agents of foreign governments are also required to register before lobbying so that there is a public record of foreign influence.

Cory Fritz, a spokesman for Royce, said that his boss had long criticized the "destabilizing role of extremist elements in Qatar." He pointed to comments to that effect going back to 2014. "Any attempts to influence these longstanding views would have been unsuccessful," he said.

In October, Broidy also raised the issue of Qatar at the White House in meetings with Trump and senior aides.

The details of Broidy's advocacy on U.S. legislation have not been previously reported. The AP found no evidence that Broidy used Nader's funds for the campaign donations or broke any laws. At the time of the advocacy work, his company, Circinus, did not have business with the UAE, but was awarded a more than \$200 million contract in January.

The sanctions bill was approved by Royce's committee in late 2017. It remains alive in the House of Representatives, awaiting a review by the House Financial Services Committee.

MEETINGS PROBED

The backstory of the legislative push is emerging amid continuing concerns about efforts by foreign governments or their proxies to influence American politics. While reports about possible Russian links to Trump's campaign and his presidential administration have been making headlines since 2016, questions are now arising about efforts during the Trump era to influence U.S. policy in the Middle East.

The U.S. has long been friendly with Saudi Arabia and the UAE as well as Qatar, which is home to a massive American air base that the U.S. has used in its fight against the Islamic State. But as political rifts in the Gulf have widened, the Saudis and Emiratis have sought to undercut American ties with Qatar.

Qatar and UAE have also exchanged allegations of politically motivated hacks. Scores of Broidy's emails and documents have leaked to news organizations, drawing attention to his relationship with Nader. Broidy has alleged that the hack was done by Qatari agents and has reported the breach to the FBI.

"It's no surprise that Qatar would see me as an obstacle and come after me in the way it has," he said in a statement.

A spokesman for the Qatari embassy, Jassim Mansour Jabr Al Thani, denied the charges, calling them "diversionary tactics." Representatives of the UAE did not respond to requests for comment.

The timeline of the influx of cash wired by Nader, an adviser to Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, the de facto leader of the UAE, may provide grist for U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller's legal team as it probes the activities of Trump and his associates during the 2016 campaign and beyond. However, it is not clear that Mueller has expanded his investigation in that direction.

Mueller's investigators are looking into two meetings close to Trump's inauguration attended by Nader and bin Zayed. The pair joined a meeting at New York's Trump Tower in December 2016 that included presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner and Steve Bannon, who was Trump's chief strategist at the time. A month later, Nader and bin Zayed were a world away on the Seychelles island chain in the Indian Ocean, meeting with Erik Prince, the founder of the security company Blackwater, and the Kremlin-connected head of a large Russian sovereign wealth fund, Kirill Dmitriev.

Nader, a Lebanese-American businessman, agreed to cooperate with Mueller's team after investigators stopped him at Dulles International Airport, according to a person familiar with his case.

That person and others who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity said they could not be identified because of the sensitivity of the issues surrounding the Mueller investigation.

A lawyer for Nader declined to comment for this story.

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__POLICY PUSH

Broidy and Nader first met at Trump's presidential inauguration on Jan. 20, 2017, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

Both men have checkered legal histories. Nader was convicted in a Czech Republic court in 2003 of multiple counts of sexually abusing minors. Broidy, a businessmen and prolific Republican fundraiser, was sidelined for a few years after he pleaded guilty to bribery in a case stemming from an investment scheme involving New York state's employee pension fund.

Broidy later re-emerged as a player in GOP politics. During the 2016 Republican presidential primary, he raised money for U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, Sen. Marco Rubio and Sen. Ted Cruz. After Cruz bowed out of the race, Broidy signed on to help Trump during the 2016 election and beyond, co-hosting fundraisers across the country.

The meeting between Broidy and Nader at the dawn of Trump's presidency soon led the two to work together in an effort to shift U.S. policies on the Middle East.

On April 2, 2017, Nader asked Broidy to invoice his Dubai-based company for \$2.5 million, according to someone familiar with the transaction who spoke on condition of anonymity.

On the same day, Broidy attached an invoice for that amount from Xiemen Investments Limited, a Canadian company directed by a friend. The money was forwarded to his own account in Los Angeles from the Canadian account, the person said. It was marked for consulting, marketing and advisory services, but was actually intended to fund Broidy's Washington advocacy regarding Qatar, two people familiar with the transaction said. The financial transaction and the White House meetings were first reported by The New York Times.

It was on May 23, 2017, when Royce, a 13-term Congressman, appeared at a conference on Qatar's ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and announced that he was introducing the sanctions bill that would name Qatar a state sponsor of terrorism.

The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a think tank that hosted the conference, said Broidy had approached it about organizing the event. Broidy bankrolled that conference and contributed to the financing of a second conference hosted on a similar theme in October by another think tank, the Hudson Institute.

Both organizations said Broidy said that no money from foreign governments was involved. FDD says it does not accept money from foreign governments and Hudson only accepts money from Democratic countries allied with the U.S.

"As is our funding policy, we asked if his funding was connected to any foreign governments or if he had business contracts in the Gulf. He assured us that he did not," FDD said in a statement.

Broidy donated millions of his own money to efforts to fight Qatar, in addition to the \$2.5 million from Nader, according to someone close to him, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss Broidy's private finances.

Broidy's behind-the-scenes efforts unfolded as animosity was growing between the UAE and Qatar. These tensions came to a head when the UAE and Saudi Arabia launched an embargo with travel and trade restrictions against Qatar less than two weeks after Royce introduced the sanctions legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Weeks later, Trump himself waded into the fracas, accusing Qatar of funding extremism in tweets on June 6.

Royce and a staff member met with Broidy at Washington's Capitol Hill Club to discuss the bill, according to someone who was at the meeting. An associate, who Broidy paid for some of the work, also had frequent contact with congressional staff.

__STRONG LANGUAGE

Broidy's effort to cultivate allies in Congress extended beyond Royce.

Broidy has personally given hundreds of thousands of dollars to Republicans over the past decade or more. But he gave nothing during the 2012 and 2014 election cycles and just \$13,500 during the 2016 cycle. Things changed after Trump's election as Broidy ramped up his advocacy on Middle East policy.

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Broidy has given nearly \$600,000 to GOP candidates and causes since the beginning of last year when he began his advocacy push— more than in the previous 14 years combined.

Campaign finance records going back two decades show Broidy had not given any money to Royce — until he gave the lawmaker a pair of \$2,700 donations on July 31, 2017.

By then, the sanctions bill was on a fast track.

The original draft considered by the Foreign Affairs Committee contained language singling out Qatar as a supporter of Hamas, a Palestinian organization that has been designated as a terrorist group by the U.S. State Department.

“Hamas has received significant financial and military support from Qatar,” the draft bill states.

Soon Qatar was lobbying hard to have that language excised. Nikki Haley, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, declared in a statement to the committee that Qatar does not fund Hamas.

According to two people familiar with the committee deliberations, both Republican and Democratic staff members reached a consensus that because of the tensions in the Gulf, the language would look like the lawmakers were taking sides. They agreed to take it out of the bill.

Qatari officials and lobbyists thought the matter had been settled, according to one lobbyist and a committee staffer. But just before the bill was to be put up for debate ahead of the committee’s vote, Royce ordered the language on Qatar not only reinstated, but strengthened, they say. The bill was approved by the committee in November with the stronger language on Qatar intact.

A Royce aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment, denied that Royce had ever considered removing the Qatar language.

In January, Royce announced that he would not seek re-election, saying that he wanted to focus on his committee in the last year of his chairmanship rather than a political campaign.

In the same month, Broidy’s company signed the hefty contract with the UAE government for gathering intelligence, according to someone familiar with the work.

Associated Press writers Chad Day and Richard Lardner contributed to this report

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AP sources: Trump plans to oust Shulkin as VA secretary

By HOPE YEN and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump is planning to oust embattled Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin amid an extraordinary rebellion at the agency and damaging government investigations into his alleged spending abuses, three administration officials told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Two officials said an announcement on Shulkin could happen this week, subject to Trump’s final decision as the White House hones in on possible replacements to head the Department of Veterans Affairs. One of the officials rated Shulkin’s chances of being pushed out in the next day or two at “50-50.” The three officials demanded anonymity to discuss a sensitive personnel matter.

Trump, who spent the weekend at his Mar-a-Lago estate, told associates that he would keep two other administration officials who had been under fire: White House chief of staff John F. Kelly and Housing Secretary Ben Carson.

“He did say that he’s expecting to make one or two major changes,” said Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a Trump confidant who spoke with the president over the weekend, on ABC’s “This Week.”

“Now, other White House sources, not the president, tell me that Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin is likely to depart the Cabinet very soon,” Ruddy said.

The White House did not immediately comment. Shulkin did not respond to a request for comment Sunday.

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Speculation over Shulkin's fate has ramped up in recent weeks following a blistering report by VA's internal watchdog in February that found he had improperly accepted Wimbledon tickets and his staff had doctored emails to justify his wife traveling to Europe with him at taxpayer expense. Earlier this month, two people familiar with the White House discussions told the AP that Trump increasingly viewed Shulkin as a distraction as the White House floated the names of possible candidates to replace him, including conservative "Fox & Friends" contributor Pete Hegseth.

A separate VA watchdog investigation, due out in the coming weeks, is also looking into a complaint that Shulkin asked his security detail to accompany him to a Home Depot store and cart furniture items, according to two people familiar with the allegation who requested anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

One person familiar with the White House discussions told the AP on Sunday that the White House was looking closely at roughly half a dozen candidates to head the VA, the government's second-largest department with 370,000 employees.

Among the candidates being vetted include Hegseth, a former military officer and former CEO of the conservative Concerned Veterans for America; former Rep. Jeff Miller, who had been chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee; retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg; Michael Kussman, a former VA undersecretary of health; Toby Cosgrove, a former president and CEO of the Cleveland Clinic; and Leo Mackay Jr., a former VA deputy secretary who is now senior vice president at Lockheed Martin Corp.

In the event of Shulkin's departure, deputy VA secretary Tom Bowman would serve as acting head of the VA until a nominee is confirmed by the Senate. Bowman has also come under criticism at the White House for being too moderate to push Trump's agenda of fixing veterans' care.

During the presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly pledged to fix the VA by expanding access to private doctors and firing bad employees, criticizing the department as "the most corrupt." Last year, Trump promised to triple the number of veterans "seeing the doctor of their choice."

But a Trump administration plan to expand the Veterans Choice program remains in limbo after lawmakers declined last week to include it in a massive spending bill.

In response to the ethics issues, Shulkin has denied wrongdoing and complained about internal drama at the agency that has made it difficult for him to push through VA improvements, citing a half dozen or so political appointees there who were rebelling against him.

But Kelly, the White House chief of staff, recently made it clear to Shulkin that he had become weary of the VA secretary's tendency to run to the media to voice complaints and claim a White House mandate that he did not fully have, according to a person familiar with the conversations who wasn't authorized to discuss them publicly and insisted on anonymity.

The department provides medical care and other benefits to 9 million military veterans in more than 1,700 health facilities around the U.S.

Yen reported from Washington. Washington bureau chief Julie Pace and Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Jill Colvin contributed to this report.

Lone dog: No. 11 Loyola joins list of regulars at Final Four

By EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

Three teams that need no introduction. One from out of nowhere.

Though the 2018 NCAA Tournament produced the biggest upset in the history of the event along with a seemingly endless string of wild finishes and unexpected results, the Final Four will look very much like it has over the last handful of seasons.

In one of next Saturday's semifinals, it's a barnburner of a matchup between top-seeded programs with rich histories: Villanova vs. Kansas.

In what will quickly become known as the "other" semifinal, it's an upstart vs. another school that knows this road: No. 11 Loyola-Chicago vs. No. 3 Michigan .

Remarkable as Loyola's run — and this tournament — have been, this marks the fifth time over the last

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six seasons that three teams seeded 1 through 4 have been joined by another seeded 7 or higher.

The four previous times, the underdog has bowed out in the semifinal.

"Why not us?" Ramblers coach Porter Moser said, repeating his team's oft-used mantra this month — one he hopes can lead to yet another history making upset. "You have to have high-character guys that believe to truly do that."

The teams will have trouble topping the show Kansas and Duke put on Sunday with the last spot in San Antonio up for grabs. The Jayhawks topped the Blue Devils 85-81 in overtime to send Kansas back to the site of its last national title, in 2008.

The Kansas-Villanova matchup is sure to re-ignite calls for some form of reseeding heading into the Final Four. The winner between the top seeds will almost certainly be favored in the final. This year's most notable underdog — outside of Maryland-Baltimore County, which beat Virginia in the tournament's first week to pull off the first 16 vs. 1 upset — is Loyola-Chicago.

Urged on by their 98-year-old nun, Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt, the Ramblers are the fourth 11th seed to make college basketball's final weekend — joining LSU (1986), George Mason (2006) and VCU (2011).

A look at some of the history behind these Final Four teams:

LOYOLA-CHICAGO: It's not totally accurate to say the Ramblers are from nowhere. This program won the title in 1963 in one of the most significant championship runs in the sport's history — including a game known as the "Game of Change." The Ramblers, with a mostly black roster, defeated an all-white team from Mississippi State, which served as prelude to the better-known title game in which Texas Western and its all-black starting lineup defeated Kentucky. Loyola went on to beat Cincinnati in overtime for the title. After the win Saturday, Les Hunter, a member of the 1963 team, said the Ramblers are capable of bringing home another championship. "I think they're the best right now," Hunter said. "They work so well together. They can play with anybody — anybody — right now."

MICHIGAN: All the freshmen dominating today's game should pay homage to the Fab Five — the group of five freshmen, including Jalen Rose and Chris Webber, who made baggy shorts the rage and took the Wolverines to the Final Four in 1992. This year's Wolverines were a middle-of-the-pack Big Ten team in early February, after a loss at Northwestern dropped them to 8-5 in the conference. They haven't lost since, and their 13-game winning streak is second in the country only to the Ramblers, who have won 14 straight. "We don't get caught up in the win streak that we're on," guard Charles Matthews said. "We didn't even know we were on a 13-game win streak."

VILLANOVA: Juniors Jalen Brunson and Mikal Bridges were there for Villanova's national title two years ago. They are the team's leading scorers. The Wildcats haven't been seriously pushed yet in the tournament, winning every game by double-digits and paying no mind to the upsets that have busted brackets for the past two weeks. The key to all this success? "At this point, you don't really try to figure out why," coach Jay Wright said. "You're kind of saying, 'Why us,' you know, and just soaking it in."

KANSAS: Since winning it all in 2008, the Jayhawks had been seeded No. 1 five times and failed to make the Final Four any of those times. If Grayson Allen's shot at the buzzer in regulation hadn't gone in and out — twice — this might have marked No. 6. But Malik Newman scored all 13 of Kansas' points in overtime to help the Jayhawks top Duke. "There's a lot of players out there who deserve the best of the best," Jayhawks coach Bill Self said. "They get to experience the very best there is. I'm happy for them."

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

Anguished students take aim at gun laws, next election

By MARTHA IRVINE, AP National Writer

Charlie Goodman looked at the massive crowd around him, the largest youth-led protest in Washington since the Vietnam War era. He listened to people speak about toughening gun laws. They included some of his peers at the Florida high school who've sparked this movement, as well as the 9-year-old grand-

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daughter of the Rev. Martin Luther King.

When she spoke, he was moved to tears.

"This is truly a revolution," said Goodman, a sophomore at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, where 17 people were gunned down last month. "We can really change the world."

The marches unified hundreds of thousands of people in cities across the country and have galvanized this movement, he and others say. Now they are vowing to get young voters registered and send a message in upcoming elections.

"We have a lot of people who are inspired," said Kobey Lofton, a student from Chicago's South Side who also traveled overnight to Washington on Friday with 12 busloads of fellow students and adults.

Before the march, Lofton and his fellow Peace Warriors at North Lawndale College Prep High School had already met with the Florida students — young people from different worlds, but both impacted by gun violence.

Now they and other students across the country are planning voter registration drives through the fall. Voter registration groups, including Rock the Vote, Voto Latino and HeadCount, a nonpartisan group that usually focuses on registering people at concerts and music festivals, also helped mobilize teams at Saturday's marches in 30 U.S. cities and have created a registration tool kit for high school students.

"I've never felt the energy that I felt," HeadCount spokesman Aaron Ghitelman said of the registration training that preceded the march in Washington. In a matter of hours, he said the groups registered nearly 5,000 people, many of them millennials.

"More young people are realizing that we can have a voice and we can have a seat at the table," he said. "But people realize that you have to fight for that seat at the table."

"We have to force them to do something," agreed Lofton, who was referring to elected officials, including President Donald Trump. The White House issued a statement about the student-led march and also pointed to the president's support for the Stop School Violence Act, which authorized grants to schools to bolster security and attempts to improve background checks.

But Cameron Kasky, a student leader at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, says the current laws and legislation don't go far enough.

The students, he said, are demanding an assault weapons ban, prohibition of sales of high-capacity magazines and universal background checks. But Kasky said this won't happen if his peers across the nation don't get more involved.

"The youth of America needs to step up and start voting. (You) see the statistics. It's an embarrassing turnout," Kasky said Sunday on the CBS program "Face the Nation."

Compared with 2012, voter turnout for millennials, those ages 18 to 35, increased to just below 50 percent in the last presidential election, according to the Pew Research Center and U.S. Census data. But that turnout still lags behind other generations.

Still, Dianne Daley, a 60-year-old corporate events planner from Long Beach, California, said the students have done a lot to inspire their older peers.

"Maybe that's what it's going to take — children leading us," Daley said. She comes from a family of educators and marched Saturday in her hometown with three generations of her family, including her 87-year-old father, an Air Force veteran.

Some students from "the silent minority" still said they felt excluded.

Kyle Kashuv, another student at the Florida school, also appeared on "Face the Nation" to voice his support for the 2nd Amendment and for enforcement of existing gun laws. He expressed his disappointment that he was not invited to speak at Saturday's march and placed blame for the deadly shooting at his school on local law enforcement and the FBI.

"This kid was flagged," Kashuv said of accused shooter Nikolas Cruz and reports to law enforcement before the shooting that he posed a threat.

Rick Santorum, a former Republican Senator from Pennsylvania and now a CNN commentator, suggested Sunday that students shouldn't look to others to solve their problem. "Do something about maybe taking

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CPR classes or trying to deal with situations that when there is a violent shooter that you can actually respond to that," Santorum said on CNN's "State of the Union."

However, Sen. Mark Warner, a Virginia Democrat who has previously voted against stricter laws on high-capacity magazines and semi-automatic weapons, said the student rallies will likely make a difference as Congress takes on the issue again.

Some of the Florida students said they realize that compromise will be necessary. But, even as he rested back in Florida on Sunday, Goodman said the marches are only the beginning.

He and his peers will be regrouping this week on their spring break, he said.

"I considered myself more politically aware than politically active. I was very intrigued with the (last) election," he said.

But something has changed in him. "Now this is something that I must do," he said.

Saudis say 1 dead during missile barrage by Yemen rebels

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Yemen's Shiite rebels fired a barrage of ballistic missiles targeting Saudi Arabia late Sunday on the third anniversary of a kingdom-led war in Yemen, with fragments of one missile over Riyadh killing one person and wounding two.

The casualties were the first in Saudi Arabia's capital since the Saudi-led war in Yemen began in March 2015, though previous rockets fired by the Yemeni rebels have caused deaths in other parts of the kingdom.

The rebels known as Houthis said they launched a missile attack targeting Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport and other sites, again showing their ability to strike deep into the neighboring kingdom amid the stalemated war in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country.

The barrage likely will spark new criticism of Iran's role in the conflict as well, as the Houthis identified some of the missiles fired as a type that the United Nations and the West say comes from Tehran.

The Saudi military said it intercepted seven ballistic missiles fired by the Houthis at the kingdom, three of them targeting Riyadh, two targeting Jazan and one apiece targeting Najran and Khamis Mushait.

The Saudi-owned satellite news channel Al Arabiya aired footage that it said showed Patriot missile batteries firing at the incoming Houthi missiles. Online videos showed what appeared to be a missile fuselage lying on a street in Riyadh.

One Egyptian national was killed and two other Egyptians suffered wounds when a fragment of a missile over Riyadh fell on a residential neighborhood, the state-run Saudi Press Agency said.

Houthi ballistic missiles have increased in range over time, with the first one targeting Riyadh fired on May 19, 2017, according to the United Nations. A Nov. 4 launch previously targeted King Khalid International Airport, showing the missiles had a range of over 1,000 kilometers (620 miles).

The Nov. 4 attack saw the Saudi-led coalition escalate its attacks. It wasn't immediately clear how the coalition would react to Sunday's attack, though the barrage marks some 90 Houthi ballistic missile launches targeting Saudi Arabia.

Al Masirah, a Houthi-run satellite news channel, identified some of the missiles fired as the Burkan, or Volcano, missile. The United Nations, Western countries and the Saudi-led military coalition fighting in Yemen all say the Burkan mirrors characteristics of an Iranian Qiam ballistic missile. They say that suggests Tehran either shared the technology or smuggled disassembled missiles to the Houthis who then rebuilt them.

Iran long has denied supplying arms to the Houthis, though a growing body of evidence contradicts their claim.

Meanwhile, the U.S. provides logistical support and weaponry to the Saudi-led coalition, which has been criticized for its airstrikes on Yemen killing civilians, as well as a blockade of Yemeni ports that has brought the country to the edge of famine.

Over 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict, which began after the Houthis and their allies seized Yemen's capital, Sanaa, in September 2014 and began a march south.

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Jon Gambrell on Twitter: www.twitter.com/jongambrellap. His work can be found at <http://apne.ws/2galNpz>

Today in History By The Associated Press.

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 26, the 85th day of 2018. There are 280 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On March 26, 1945, during World War II, Iwo Jima was fully secured by U.S. forces following a final, desperate attack by Japanese soldiers. Former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, 82, died in Ty Newydd, Llanystumdwy, Wales.

On this date:

In 1812, an earthquake devastated Caracas, Venezuela, causing an estimated 26,000 deaths, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1827, composer Ludwig van Beethoven died in Vienna.

In 1874, poet Robert Frost was born in San Francisco.

In 1892, poet Walt Whitman died in Camden, New Jersey.

In 1917, the Seattle Metropolitans became the first U.S. team to win the Stanley Cup as they defeated the Montreal Canadiens in Game 4 of the finals by a score of 9-1.

In 1934, Britain enacted a Road Traffic Act reimposing a 30 mile-per-hour speed limit in "built-up areas" and requiring driving tests for new motorists.

In 1958, the U.S. Army launched America's third successful satellite, Explorer 3. "The Bridge on the River Kwai" won seven Academy Awards, including best picture of 1957.

In 1967, Pope Paul VI issued an encyclical, "Populorum Progressio," on "the progressive development of peoples," in which he expressed concern for those trying to escape hunger, poverty, endemic disease and ignorance.

In 1979, a peace treaty was signed by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin (men-AH'-kem BAY'-gihn) and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and witnessed by President Jimmy Carter at the White House.

In 1988, Jesse Jackson stunned fellow Democrats by soundly defeating Michael S. Dukakis in Michigan's Democratic presidential caucuses.

In 1992, a judge in Indianapolis sentenced former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson to six years in prison for raping a Miss Black America contestant. (Tyson ended up serving three years.)

In 1997, the bodies of 39 members of the Heaven's Gate techno-religious cult who committed suicide were found inside a rented mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

Ten years ago: Behind the Pentagon's closed doors, U.S. military leaders told President George W. Bush they were worried about the Iraq war's mounting strain on troops and their families, but indicated they'd go along with a brief halt in pulling out troops during summer 2008. The space shuttle Endeavour landed at Cape Canaveral, Florida, making a rare nighttime touchdown that ended a 16-day mission.

Five years ago: A study from the Society of Actuaries said that insurance companies would have to pay out an average of 32 percent more for medical claims under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul. President Obama named veteran Secret Service agent Julia Pierson as the agency's first female director. Italy's top criminal court overturned the acquittal of American Amanda Knox in the grisly murder of British roommate Meredith Kercher and ordered Knox to stand trial again. (Although convicted in absentia, Knox was exonerated by the Italian Supreme Court in 2015.)

One year ago: President Donald Trump took to Twitter to attack conservative lawmakers for the failure of the Republican bill to replace former President Barack Obama's health care law. A man was fatally shot and 16 other people were hurt when a dispute escalated into a gunbattle at the Cameo club in Cincinnati; police arrested two men on murder charges.

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Today's Birthdays: Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is 88. Actor Alan Arkin is 84. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is 83. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (puh-LOH'-see) is 78. Actor James Caan is 78. Author Erica Jong is 76. Journalist Bob Woodward is 75. Singer Diana Ross is 74. Actor Johnny Crawford is 72. Rock singer Steven Tyler (Aerosmith) is 70. Singer and TV personality Vicki Lawrence is 69. Actor Ernest Thomas is 69. Comedian Martin Short is 68. Country singer Ronnie McDowell is 68. Movie composer Alan Silvestri is 68. Rock musician Monte Yoho is 66. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao is 65. Radio talk show host Curtis Sliwa is 64. Country singer Dean Dillon is 63. Country singer Charly McClain is 62. TV personality Leeza Gibbons is 61. Actress Ellia English is 59. Actress Jennifer Grey is 58. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Marcus Allen is 58. Actor Billy Warlock is 57. Actor Eric Allan Kramer is 56. Basketball and College Basketball Hall of Famer John Stockton is 56. Actor Michael Imperioli is 52. Rock musician James Iha (EE'-hah) is 50. Country singer Kenny Chesney is 50. Movie director Martin McDonagh (Film: "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri") is 48. Actress Leslie Mann is 46. Actor T.R. Knight is 45. Rapper Juvenile is 43. Actress Amy Smart is 42. Actress Bianca Kajlich (KY'-lihk) is 41. Moderator Margaret Brennan (TV: "Face the Nation") is 38. Actor Sterling Sulieman is 34. Actress Keira Knightley is 33. Rapper J-Kwon is 32. Actress Carly Chaikin is 28.

Thought for Today: "Our whole life is an attempt to discover when our spontaneity is whimsical, sentimental irresponsibility and when it is a valid expression of our deepest desires and values." — Helen Merrell Lynd, American sociologist and author (1896-1982).