

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Groton Chiropractic Clinic

Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.  
1205 N 1st St., Groton 397-8204

**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**

## 2018 Statewide Homeless Count Results

PIERRE – The 2018 Statewide Point-in-Time Homeless Count revealed that 1,159 individuals were experiencing homelessness in South Dakota on Jan. 23, 2018. The count conducted within a 24-hour time period, includes sheltered individuals who are staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing or motels paid for by an agency and unsheltered individuals who are staying in vehicles, on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation.

Of the 1,159 homeless individuals counted:

- 75 percent were adults over the age of 24, 18 percent were children under 18, and 7 percent were young adults 18 to 24 years of age
- 75 percent of those surveyed were sheltered on the night of the count and 25 percent of those surveyed were unsheltered on the night of the count
- 110 persons were veterans compared to 130 in 2017, a decrease of 15 percent; of the veterans counted, 81 percent were sheltered
- 218 persons were children (under age 18) compared to 202 in 2017, an increase of 8 percent
- 424 females and 735 males
- 874 persons were sheltered and 285 were unsheltered in 2018

Compared to the 2017 count of 955, the 2018 count of 1,159 represents a 21 percent increase. The one-day snapshots tend to be undercounted and are heavily influenced by factors such as the weather. The 2018 count day weather conditions were greatly improved as compared to the severe winter storm of 2017 count day. Additional service providers, agencies, and volunteers participated in 2018.

The Point in Time Homeless Count was conducted by the South Dakota Housing for the Homeless Consortium (SDHHC) in collaboration with community agencies, government, individual volunteers, and homeless service providers. All counties participated in South Dakota. Detailed information on the 2018 and prior years' homeless counts can be found at [www.housingforthehomeless.org](http://www.housingforthehomeless.org).

SDHHC is a statewide organization created to address homelessness in South Dakota. Individuals or organizations interested in learning more about SDHHC are encouraged to visit the website [www.housingforthehomeless.org](http://www.housingforthehomeless.org) and attend the 13th Annual Homeless Summit being held June 12 – 13, 2018, in Oacoma.

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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda  
April 2, 2018 – 7:00pm  
Groton Community Center

1. Groton Fireman - Special Event Retail On Sale Liquor License April 14, 2018
2. Open resurface bids
3. Minutes
4. Bills
5. Clean up week
6. Mayor sign grant agreement for generator
7. Heartland Annual Mtg. May 11<sup>th</sup> - Madison
  - a. May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Load Management Workshop - Madison
8. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
9. Hire summer employees

## 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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## Langford Lions Thank You

To all the individuals, businesses, and Langford Lion fans: Thank You! We want to thank all those who contributed to the hospitality room and meals fed to our athletes and coaches. From food, drinks, money, time, etc you all made this a memorable experience at the 2018 State B Boys Basketball Tournament for our team. Your continued support shows what great people we have supporting the Langford Area students. Go Lions!!

Langford Lion Parents



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")**

An Easter-themed advertisement for Dairy Queen Groton. The background is purple with a gold border and white flowers. At the top left is a golden cross with a white lily. The text reads: "At Easter..." in a decorative font, followed by "...The celebration of holy love", "...The day of resurrection", and "... The day that brings us new hope". Below this is the text "Have a great and wonderful Easter!". At the bottom is the Dairy Queen logo with "GROTON" written above it in red.

**At Easter...**  
...The celebration of  
holy love  
...The day of resurrection  
... The day that brings  
us new hope  
**Have a great and  
wonderful Easter!**  
**GROTON**  
**DQ Dairy Queen**

## South Dakota Snowmobile Season Ends Saturday

PIERRE, S.D. – March 31 marks the official end of snowmobile season in South Dakota. The season saw good trail conditions in the Black Hills, but short-lived snows late in the season East River.

“The Black Hills trails really got going in February, and we had frequent snows and great trail conditions through March,” said snowmobile trails coordinator, Ryan Raynor. “Unfortunately, East River trails saw little snow, and when the snow did come, it didn’t last.”

Starting April 1, crews will remove signs and facilities. At that time, snowmobiling is allowed on U.S. Forest Service property only. Snowmobilers should have a current forest service map and avoid riding on the state Black Hills trails system or private property.

The snowmobile trails in South Dakota are open from Dec. 15-March 31 each year.

-GFP-

## July Fourth Camping Reservations in State Parks Open Soon

PIERRE, S.D. – Camping reservations open soon for Fourth of July weekend at South Dakota state parks. Reservations can be made online at [campsd.com](http://campsd.com) or by calling 1.800.710.2267.

“Fourth of July weekend is always a busy time in the parks,” said Katie Ceroll, state parks director. “Campers will want to plan ahead to get their favorite camping spots.”

Saturday, March 31, is the first day to make reservations for a June 29 arrival, which is the Friday preceding the Fourth of July. Reservations open 90 days in advance of the arrival date, so those arriving earlier can make reservations earlier.

Reservations open at 7 a.m. CT on the first day of the 90-day period, both online and through the call center. Campers can make reservations 24 hours a day within 90 days of their stay. A non-refundable reservation fee of \$7.70 is applied to each site; however, this fee is waived for South Dakota residents. An additional \$2 fee is charged to anyone making reservations over the phone.

Campers can make reservations for arrivals up to one year in advance at Custer State Park and for all of the parks’ group lodges.

For more detailed information on making reservations or to view the 90-day window calendar, visit [gfp.sd.gov](http://gfp.sd.gov) or contact South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks at 605.773.3391 or email [parkinfo@state.sd.us](mailto:parkinfo@state.sd.us).

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## Today in Weather History

March 30, 1967: Prolonged strong southerly winds of 20 to 30 mph, with gusts to 55 mph, caused areas of blowing dust in eastern South Dakota, reducing visibilities to near zero. A metal roof on lumber shed in Vermillion was blown off. The strong winds also piled ice along the shore of Lake Poinsett to heights of 20ft, causing damage to some cabins along the lakeshore.

March 30, 2009: A major winter storm moved across the Northern Rockies and into the Northern Plains producing from 2 to 22 inches of snowfall along with widespread blizzard conditions. Most area schools and events were canceled. Travel was challenging and not advised. Interstate 29 from Watertown to the North Dakota line and Interstate 90 across Jones and Lyman counties were both closed during the storm. There were several vehicle accidents with no serious injuries reported. However, this storm took a toll on area ranchers as the calving season was underway. Storm total snowfall amounts included; 6 inches in Blunt, Timber Lake, Gettysburg, and Wilmot; 7 inches in Doland and Pierre; 8 inches in Clark, Clear Lake, Leola, Hosmer, Gettysburg, southeast of McIntosh, and Kennebec; 9 inches south of Bristol, Waubay, and near Chelsea; 10 inches in Eagle Butte and Mobridge; 11 inches in Pollock and Turton. Locations with a foot or more of snowfall included; 12 inches in Aberdeen, Britton, Andover, Sisseton, and Faulkton; 13 inches at Lake Sharpe, Roy Lake, and eight miles southwest of Keldron; 14 inches in Miller, Redfield, and Webster; 15 inches near Highmore and near Columbia; 16 inches southwest of Stratford; 17 inches 14 miles northeast of Isabel; 20 inches in McLaughlin, Ree Heights, and 4 miles northeast of Victor with almost 22 inches northwest of Stephan.

March 30, 2010: Scattered light rain showers falling into a very dry air mass were responsible for several heat bursts that occurred across central South Dakota from Pierre to Onida during the evening hours of March 30th. Between 853 pm and 1053 pm CDT, observations from the Pierre airport (KPIR) showed a marked increase in temperature (+10F), a decrease in dew point temperature (-4F), the pressure falls, and gusty surface winds (a peak wind gust of 48 mph). On a farm outside of Pierre, winds were estimated up to 70 mph as some shingles were blown off the roof along with damage to several outbuildings. The Onida airport recorded a peak wind gust of 66 mph in the early evening.

1805: New York's City's Battery Park was strewn with 24-inch snow rollers, from a ferocious storm between the March 26th and March 28th. Snow rollers are natural snowballs that are formed when winds blow over a snow-covered surface.

1848: On six reported occasions, the water flow over the American Falls has been entirely blocked by ice and ceased to fall. But only once has this happened on the much larger Horseshoe Falls.



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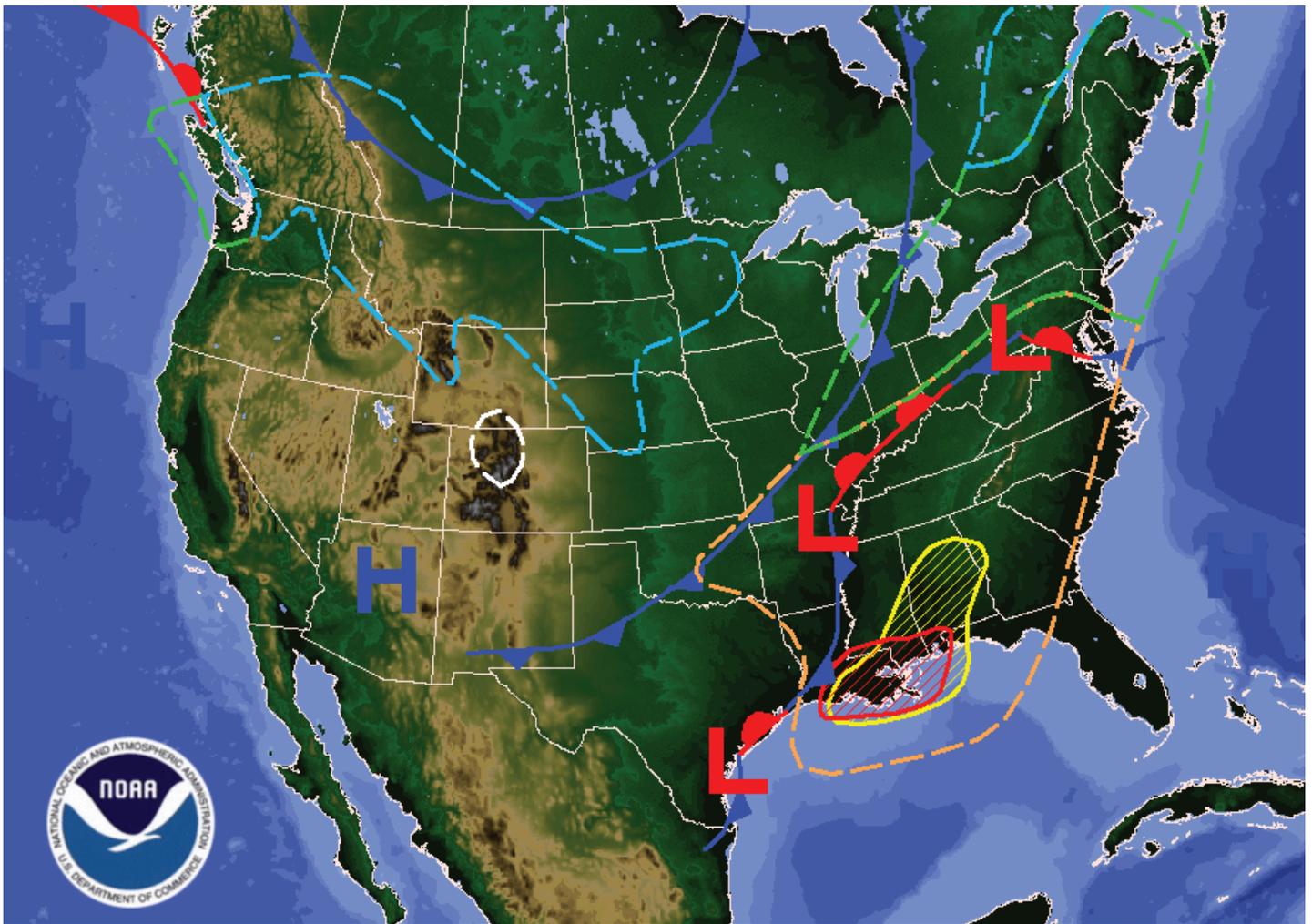
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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 39.5 F at 5:14 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: 22.7 F at 2:37 AM**  
**Wind Chill:**  
**High Gust: 19.0 Mph at 11:50 AM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 81° in 1943**  
**Record Low: -14° in 1969**  
**Average High: 48°F**  
**Average Low: 25°F**  
**Average Precip in March: 1.11**  
**Precip to date in March: 1.66**  
**Average Precip to date: 2.13**  
**Precip Year to Date: 2.07**  
**Sunset Tonight: 7:59 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:15 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Thu, Mar 29, 2018, issued 4:53 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Mcreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

**Rain**  
**Rain and T'Storms**  
**Rain and Snow**  
**Snow**

**Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)**  
**Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)**  
**Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)**  
**Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)**

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## IMPAIRED VISION

"What the eyes cannot see," says an old Dutch proverb, "the heart cannot crave." And the Italians seem to agree with one of their own: "If the eyes do not admire, the heart will not desire."

But long before them David had his own proverb that addressed the same issue: "I will set before my eyes no vile thing."

Our eyes are the gateway to our hearts, souls and minds. It is what we see, day after day, that shapes our thoughts and values and - ultimately our behavior. What we see we desire and what we desire is what drives us in one direction or another. Our vision triggers our thoughts and our thoughts our behavior. Here's an example:

When Jericho was destroyed no one was to take any of the spoils. But Achan disobeyed the order; he stole a beautiful garment, a bag silver and a bar of gold. This was unfortunate because disaster visited Israel as a result of his greed and thirty-six were left dead on the battlefield. Joshua was alarmed and decided to search the tents of his soldiers. He found the "accursed thing" in Achan's tent.

In making his confession before being stoned to death and being buried in a criminal's grave Achan said, "I saw...I coveted...I took...and I hid."

And that's the path to sin: First we look. Then we desire. Then we decide. Then we sin. Then we try to find an excuse. Then we lie. Then we try to hide our wrongdoing. But it's too late. The consequences will come.

It all begins with a simple glance.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to keep our eyes upon You and away from the "things" that would defeat and destroy us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 101:3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.

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## 2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- 11/18/2017-3/31/2018 Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meat- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 1/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 3/24/2018 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 4/13/2018 Elementary School Carnival, 5 p.m.
- 5/5/2018 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2018 Historic Trinity Church Pump Organ Concert.
- 5/28/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- 6/14/2018 Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- 6/15/2018 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/16/2018 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2018 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/22/2018 Summer Fest (4th Sunday in July)
- 9/8/2018 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/6/2018 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/12/2018 Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2018 Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/10/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/01/2018 Olive Grove Golf Course 2018 Holiday Party
  
- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

## News from the Associated Press

### **Suspect in reservation shooting convicted of assault**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Porcupine man has been convicted at trial of seriously injuring another man in a shooting on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation a year ago.

The Rapid City Journal reports that 45-year-old Kison Robertson was found guilty March 21 of federal assault and weapons charges. He was acquitted of attempted murder.

He faces between 10 years and life in prison at his sentencing on June 22.

Authorities say Robertson shot Urva Quick Bear Sr. in the stomach on March 30, 2017, following an argument with Quick Bear's son.

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

### **Official says Sioux Falls park review wasn't a safety audit**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A 2-year-old audit of Falls Park that Sioux Falls officials used to defend park safety protocol after a 5-year-old girl drowned in the area was actually a training exercise.

Documents released Wednesday to the Argus Leader show that what the city cited as an "independent review" and "safety audit" of the park was a training exercise for employees of the South Dakota Public Assurance Alliance, the city's insurance company. The member-owned alliance helps insure more than 400 local government entities in the state.

Sioux Falls officials referred to the "safety audit" last week as evidence that the park's safety precautions are adequate following the March 18 drowning death of Maggie Zaiger, who fell into the Big Sioux River at Falls Park. Maggie's mother and several elected officials have called for more safety measures at the park, such as a barricade near the river's edge.

No formal safety review of Falls Park was conducted in 2016, according to Robert Anderson, an attorney representing the assurance alliance.

Anderson said the SDPAA conducted internal training exercises during the summer of 2016. The exercises were administered by O'Connell Consulting, a safety management company. The alliance received permission to use Sioux Falls facilities and departments in the training, according to Anderson.

Alliance Executive Director Judith M. Payne later sent Mayor Mike Huether a letter giving the city high scores in risk management practices, but didn't specifically determine which city assets the company inspected.

City Emergency Manager Regan Smith said he erred in calling the 2016 review an audit when addressing the media March 19.

"I inadvertently called it an audit and did not clarify that the SDPAA findings were relayed orally to the city team in 2016," said Smith. "But I felt it was important to make myself available regarding safety measures taken at our city's namesake and that no additional recommendations were made in 2016 beyond those implemented in 2013."

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

### **Great Lakes Airlines causes trouble for Pierre, Watertown**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Pierre and Watertown-area travelers have been experiencing scheduling difficulties after Great Lakes Airlines suspended flying operations.

The airline's partner, Aerodynamics Inc., or ADI, will continue operating the Great Lakes Jet Express flights between Denver and the two South Dakota cities, but travelers said booking has become more complicated.

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United, Delta and American airlines at the Denver airport told passengers this week that the companies won't honor tickets from Pierre made through Great Lakes Airline's booking system, the Capital Journal reported. Pierre passengers flying to a connecting flight in Denver will instead need to cancel that leg, get a refund and re-book the leg through ADI as a separate flight.

Passengers can use a travel agent, a service such as Travelocity or book directly with ADI, said Mike Isaacs, manager of the Pierre Regional Airport.

Great Lakes had been decreasing the number of cities it serves, but the company announced Monday it's immediately discontinuing air routes. The airline operated in the West and Midwest for decades.

ADI confirmed after the announcement that they'd continue the air routes each week from Watertown to Pierre and on to Denver as scheduled.

Isaacs said ADI officials have been working to obtain an interline agreement with major airlines to resolve the inconvenience.

"Our apologies for any confusion in this matter," ADI said in a statement. "We are working quickly to rectify this issue with all major airlines and expect to have this issue resolved quickly. We look forward to serving your future flying needs."

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

## Expected South Dakota corn, soybean acres nearly unchanged

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers are expected to plant the same amount of corn this year as last, and a slightly smaller soybean crop.

The differs from the national trend. The federal Agriculture Department says in its annual prospective plantings report that U.S. farmers will seed more soybeans than corn for the first time in 35 years, due primarily to profitability.

Other South Dakota crops with forecast increases in acres are spring wheat, sorghum, flaxseed and hay.

Crops with projected declines in acres are sunflowers, oats and dry peas. Winter wheat acres seeded last fall also are estimated to be down.

## Soybean acres to exceed corn for the first time in 35 years

By DAVID PITT, Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Corn has been dethroned as the king of crops as farmers reported Thursday they intend to plant more soybeans than corn for the first time in 35 years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said in its annual prospective planting report.

Profitability is the primary reason farmers indicate they intend to plant 89 million acres in soybeans and 88 million acres in corn.

Corn costs much more to plant because of required demands for pest and disease control and fertilizer. When the profitability of both crops is close, farmers bet on soybeans for a better return, said Chad Hart, an agriculture economist at Iowa State University.

"We're hearing a lot more folks talk about when they've looked over the past couple of years beans have performed better than corn in terms of farm returns," Hart said. "When they're feeling a little pinched they do tend to look to control their cost side and that's where beans have an advantage over corn."

Soybeans cost about 60 to 70 percent as much as corn to plant, he said.

The report is an estimate based on farmer surveys and could change depending on weather and commodity prices at planting time.

The only year that soybean acres beat corn in recent memory was 1983 but it was due to government manipulation as the USDA pushed farmers to plant fewer acres in an effort to boost prices in the midst of the nation's worst farm crisis.

Hart estimates at prices prior to the report Iowa farmers could turn a profit of between \$8 and \$15 an acre for both crops which explains why the acreage intentions between the two are very close.

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Narrow profitability explains why total acreage planted for all major U.S. crops will fall by about 1 million acres this year. Much of the land will likely be removed from production and used for pasture or remain unplanted, Hart said.

Corn acres nationally will be 2 percent lower, about 2 million acres, and soybean acres will be down 1 percent, about 1 million acres. Some of the previous corn and soybean land will be planted in wheat, which is growing by 3 percent in acreage planted and cotton, which will be up 7 percent this year or about 858,000 acres.

Ray Gaesser, who grows corn and soybeans on 6,000 acres in southwest Iowa near Corning said planting intentions often change and acres devoted to corn and soybeans could rise from the estimates.

"We'll probably see those total acres go up at planting time but probably not as large as folks were thinking a month ago because the market is telling us to do something different," said Gaesser, who also is chairman of the American Soybean Association.

Farmers in Iowa, the top corn producing state, expect to plant 13.3 million acres, the same as last year. Illinois, Nebraska and Minnesota all plan on fewer corn acres. Ohio is the only state expecting an increase, the USDA said.

Illinois, the top soybean producer, will plant 10.6 million acres, the same as last year. North Dakota also will plant the same as last year. Decreases of 100,000 acres or more are anticipated in Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Ohio.

Prices for benchmark December corn rose 13 cents after the report's release to \$4.10 a bushel and the benchmark November soybean futures price surged 30 cents to \$10.46 a bushel.

## **Suspect arrested in a shooting that left 4 injured**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police say a suspect has been arrested in a downtown Rapid City shooting that left four people injured.

Investigators say the suspect fired multiple shots into a vehicle about 10 p.m. Wednesday. Police say the driver was shot multiple times and two other occupants were injured by gunfire. A fourth occupant was injured when the vehicle crashed and came to rest in a ditch.

The victims were taken to the hospital. There's no word on their conditions.

After speaking with residents of the neighborhood, police identified a possible suspect and found him at a residence. The 28-year-old Rapid City man was arrested with help from a police dog and was Tasered before he was handcuffed.

## **Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials**

**By The Associated Press**

### **Capital Journal, Pierre, March 27**

#### **Rodeo club, change the name of your fundraiser**

Imagine your ancestors were brought to this country against their will and were forced to work as slaves, often in conditions so unimaginably horrible that mere descriptions of what they suffered can cause nightmares. Imagine that your ancestors spent the better part of a century after being freed from such bondage living as second-class citizens in a country for which they fought wars and helped to make a better place. Imagine that even after your ancestors won the right to vote and helped to eliminate laws aimed at keeping them as second-class citizens, you still find yourself treated differently, sometimes with hostility, because of how you look.

Now, imagine that you move to a place that annually holds a slave auction. It's tongue-in-cheek, to be sure. No one is actually selling anyone else into slavery. But it can't feel too great knowing that the community you've chosen to spend your life in treats the thought of slavery in such a cavalier fashion. It would, we imagine, be a pretty big deal to you.

This, unfortunately, is not a hypothetical in Pierre or Fort Pierre. It's actually happened.

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Several years ago, an African American man approached the Pierre/Fort Pierre Rodeo Club and asked its members to consider changing the name of one of the group's fundraising events.

The event's name, you see, was and still is, hurtful to African Americans or really any group of people who has suffered through slavery. The ignominious name of this event is the Pierre/Fort Pierre Rodeo Club Slave Auction. Those last two words should cause everyone in America a little bit of pause when attached to anything intended to raise money for any group. There are myriad reasons for this but the two most obvious are: 1) There can be nothing lighthearted about the sale and/or ownership of human beings by other human beings and 2) Fairly recent history.

Our nation has a well-documented, horrible, tragic and disgraceful history with slavery. And, given the country's more recent racial reckoning, it is hard to imagine how any responsible, thinking person can see the phrase "slave auction" attached to the actual sale of someone's labor to raise money for a cause, however noble that cause may be, and not think to themselves; "Gee maybe, just maybe, the name of this event might be a teensy bit inappropriate."

The fact that the use of the phrase "slave auction" apparently hasn't caused the members of the area's high school rodeo club or its advisors to stop and think for more than a few minutes one time a few years ago, is a problem. So too, is the fact that the club's members a few years ago, after being told flat out that other members of the community find the use of the phrase hurtful — a word that does not even begin to describe what the phrase "slave auction" means to an African American person — couldn't come up with a less disgraceful name for their event.

The club's current advisors have said they strive to let the kids make their own decisions. That's great. They should be encouraging kids to think through tough issues and decide for themselves what to do about it. But if the decision is to keep a clearly hurtful, not merely offensive mind you, name for an event, then the adults failed in their duty to guide these kids toward making good choices. In today's world, naming as a slave auction any fundraising event where labor is sold is, at best, a display of profoundly bad judgment.

There is no evidence to suggest the rodeo club intended to cause harm to anyone with the name of their fundraiser. Indeed, the event and its name predate any of the club's current members. The club's members and its advisors simply haven't stopped recently to think about what feelings the name might conjure up in someone who has a visceral connection to slavery or its after effects in this country. It apparently never occurred to the club's members that holding an event called a "slave auction" could be seen as glorifying or, at best making light of, one of the darkest chapters in America's history.

The name of this event needs to change. May we suggest calling it a ranch hand auction or a labor auction or a Work-for-Hire auction or literally anything else other than a slave auction?

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## Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan, Yankton, March 27

### The ongoing cost of county roads

Yankton County's road issues have been well documented, and the efforts to fix them have been criticized and, on two occasions, rejected by a vote of county residents, which sent a pretty clear message. But that message has had consequences.

One consequence was a decision by the County Commission last year to grind up a paved road and convert it to gravel. Yankton has a lot of paved county roads — the ratio of paved to unpaved is nearly equal — and it can't afford to keep them all that way. OK, that's an easy conclusion to reach. But when commissioners started making the decision to convert some over, they heard complaints from those immediately impacted by it. It won't be the last time this happens.

The commission also took the step of re-posting the speed limit on the Johnson Bridge road, also known as the Volin road, to 40 miles per hour due to excessive breakup. Frankly, the condition of that road, which is an important traffic artery, is not a good look or a practical answer for the county, but there is little else that can be done.

Another consequence emerged recently with the posting of new load limits on county roads for the spring thaw. The commission has decided to go with six-ton-per-axle limit/80,000 gross vehicle weight limit, with

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a permit process for non-divisible loads.

Objections have been raised by farmers and truckers who use the county roads and see the as too restrictive.

A compelling argument was made last week when a person who runs a grain elevator in Lesterville, which is reachable only on county roads, said the six-ton limit would hurt his business. The commissioners acknowledged his concerns, but stated that they couldn't make a higher limit due to the recommendations of engineers. On that point, the commissioners seemed quite stern.

Lesterville is not the only town in the county that relies on such roads. But when those county roads are in poor shape, businesses and farmers who need better roads with higher load limits suffer. And that's not good for anyone.

Those are the consequences of not repairing the roads or keeping them in the condition they need to be.

This problem has been years in the making, which county officials admit. But the damage has been done, and now the bill is due. And there's little money to pay for it.

This leaves Yankton County where it is today: Miles of problems but with not enough dollars for anything by the most meager of solutions.

An attempt at a new road levy, if it were successful (and that's a really big if, given recent history) would not be a cure-all by any means. It would only allow the county to begin making a dent in a problem that is growing by the year.

So far, the county is heeding the message of the voters. And we have the roads and bridges to prove it.

The message must change eventually. Otherwise, we'll see more hard decisions, more complaints, more damage — and no answers.

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## Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, March 27

### Grant gives Custer State Park wildfire recovery efforts a boost

GOOD: A wildfire in December tore through one of our state's most beloved attractions, torching more than half of Custer State Park's 71,000 acres.

Recovery efforts started almost immediately after the Legion Lake Fire. Monetary donations poured in from around the country to replace hay burned in the fire. Park staff located buffalo and other animals displaced by the fire, and assessed their needs.

The park reopened Dec. 22, less than two weeks after the fire started Dec. 11. Recovery work, which is ongoing, got a major boost last week when the park received a \$1.8 million grant to support recovery efforts.

The grant was awarded to the park by The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust and will be used to support aerial mapping, tree thinning, reseeding, weed control, erosion control and stream rehabilitation work.

"The rebirth of Custer State Park is definitely happening," Matt Snyder, the park superintendent, said at a news conference Thursday.

Just like the arrival of spring, it's a rebirth that we can all look forward to.

BAD: Pennington County Commissioner George Ferebee appeared in court last week, for the seemingly umpteenth time, in a case in which he stands accused of violating a county zoning ordinance.

Ferebee, who lives in rural Hill City, was found guilty in September of maintaining a septic system that lacked an operating permit. The county ordinance states that on-site wastewater treatment systems need to be pumped, inspected and issued permits regularly. Ferebee appealed the conviction and has been granted a new trial.

On March 20, state Assistant Attorney General Robert Haivala — the prosecutor who got the conviction against Ferebee — was appointed to handle the new trial, scheduled for May 16 and 17 at the Pennington County Courthouse.

Ferebee was originally charged in October 2015, and since that time many high-profile cases in the county have been tried, prosecuted and resolved. There's no reason for this case to drag on much longer. Let's

hope this new trial proceeds as scheduled, and a resolution is reached in a timely manner.

UGLY: On March 14, an estimated 1,100 students at Central, Stevens and Rapid City high schools joined a national movement to honor victims of school shootings and protest congressional inaction on gun violence.

To their credit, the Rapid City Area School District allowed the walkouts to take place during school hours, and students were given 17 minutes to protest — one for each victim of the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla.

The schools were forced to place a moratorium on public visitors after receiving reports that counter-protests were “brewing and people wanted to visit the building on that day even if they had no kids in the school,” said Matt Seebaum, assistant superintendent of educational services.

It’s a shame anyone would want to disrupt these student-led protests. While opinions will always vary on gun control and how to make schools safer, we should all be in agreement that these bright, well-spoken students deserve to have their voices heard in this debate.

## **Mother whose son died in state custody withdrawing lawsuit**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Brookings woman who sued South Dakota Department of Corrections employees after her son died in state custody is withdrawing the lawsuit.

The Argus Leader reports Dawn Van Ballegooyen told a judge she would end the lawsuit and file a new action against the state in the death of Brady Folkens.

He died after becoming ill at the State Treatment and Rehabilitation Academy. Van Ballegooyen says her lawyer withdrew from the case and it was no longer tenable.

Van Ballegooyen was before Judge Larry Long on a separate issue: a doctor who conducted Folkens’ autopsy and a lawyer for the state accused her of stalking. They had sought protection orders against her.

Dr. Raed Sulaiman withdrew his request. Long extended attorney Gary Thimsen’s protection order, saying it would be canceled when Van Ballegooyen dismisses the case.

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

## **Man who fled from 3-day jail term now faces up to 10 years**

SALEM, S.D. (AP) — A Bridgewater man who attempted to flee police after being sentenced to three days in jail for petty theft now faces up to 10 years in prison.

The Daily Republic reports that 19-year-old Mason West fled Tuesday after being sentenced on the theft charge and taken to an office area to fill out paperwork. He had been apprehended by the next day, though McCook County authorities haven’t released details on his capture.

West is now charged with first-degree escape by a prisoner, a felony with a maximum sentence of a decade behind bars and a \$20,000 fine.

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

## **Sister identifies man killed by fed officers on reservation**

FORT YATES, N.D. (AP) — The sister of a man shot dead after a confrontation with federal officers on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation last fall has identified the victim.

Lacey Gipp tells The Bismarck Tribune that 35-year-old George “Ryan” Gipp Jr. was the man killed by Bureau of Indian Affairs officers on Oct. 23 near Fort Yates, on the North Dakota side of the reservation that straddles the Dakotas border.

The FBI has said BIA officers responded to a call of shots fired at a gas station. After a short vehicle chase, BIA officers tried to take the suspect into custody, and he was shot and killed.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office in Nebraska is investigating the shooting. Lacey Gipp says her brother was unarmed. Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Russell declined to comment. The BIA didn’t immediately comment.

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Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

## 2 inmates escape jail in Nebraska Panhandle

RUSHVILLE, Neb. (AP) — Officials say two men are still at large after overpowering a jailer and escaping from the Sheridan County Jail in the Nebraska Panhandle.

The two fled around 10 p.m. Monday after overpowering the jailer and reaching an office where they could climb out a window. A news release from County Attorney Jamian Simmons says someone with a car was waiting for them in an alley behind the jail.

Simmons also says the two may have stolen a car in Rushville that was found Tuesday morning in Rosebud, South Dakota.

The two are 26-year-old Hijinio (HEEN'-yoh) Garnette, of Gordon, and 23-year-old Esdon Haukass (HAH'-kuhs), of Mission, South Dakota. Garnette was awaiting sentencing on two convictions of failure to appear. Haukass is facing a charge of possession of methamphetamine for sale.

## Bishop's fate highlights China's power amid Vatican talks

By YANAN WANG, Associated Press

SAIQI, China (AP) — The twin-spired church in this southern Chinese village was packed with more than a thousand Catholics observing Good Friday, but the bishop who tends to the congregation was not among them. Just a day earlier, government agents had taken him away.

Bishop Guo Xijin is at the center of talks between the Vatican and the atheist Communist Party that will likely yield a deal on who appoints bishops in China. The move would be historic, uniting the country's Catholics for the first time since Beijing and the Holy See severed relations nearly seven decades ago.

At a pre-dawn Mass on Thursday, Guo had urged congregants at the Saiqi church to be brave and keep the faith. "Full of comfort and hope, we are inspired to more bravely face struggles and offer our love to God," he told them.

Not long after, government agents arrived and for the second time during Holy Week took Guo away for what they described as a "vacation" — a euphemistic term in China for an enforced disappearance.

For years, China's Catholics have been split between those who follow state-authorized churches outside the Vatican's authority and those who attend underground churches that swear fealty to the pope. Guo is the head of one such underground diocese.

Under the deal being discussed, the Vatican is expected to recognize seven Beijing-appointed bishops not chosen by the pope, and Guo and one other underground bishop would step aside.

Supporters say the deal would help the Holy See achieve its years-long goal of bringing all of China's 12 million Catholics ostensibly under the pope's wing.

Others, including a prominent Hong Kong cardinal, have accused the Vatican of selling out its followers to an authoritarian regime.

Guo's exile serves as a stark reminder of the power of a state that has been seeking to center the people's devotion on the ruling party.

It also highlights how high-level deliberations in the marble-columned splendor of the Vatican City and in Beijing's walled leadership compound could have reverberations in places like rural Saiqi for generations to come.

Guo's church sits atop a sloping hill overlooking meandering streets of small barbershops and noodle joints. Parishioners say they don't know what to expect from a deal they discuss mostly in whispered conversations between morning and evening services.

For decades, they say, they've been able to peacefully practice their religion despite being under the watchful eye of the state. But it wasn't always that way.

The story of the Catholic Church's dark period in China during Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution has been told and retold to the young people at Guo's parish. They've heard the tales of elderly relatives hav-

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ing their Bibles torn up, being paraded down the streets during public shaming sessions or sent away to labor camps.

"That generation had to go through so much," said Huang Weiping, 37, who manages a shop selling rosary beads and portraits of Joseph and Mary.

He said his relative was Guo's predecessor, Bishop Huang Shoucheng, who spent many years in prison.

Lin Qigua, a 55-year-old parishioner, said bridging the divide between the official and underground church would be difficult.

"Our parents always told us that the Catholic Church comes from Rome, and then suddenly the Communist Party comes out with its own church," Lin said. "There's a conflict here, isn't there? Our ancestors sacrificed so much — was their blood shed for nothing?"

The state-backed Chinese church at recent conferences has stressed the need to remain independent of the Vatican and to "Sinicize" itself — code for accepting party leadership and rejecting foreign links.

A Vatican official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to reveal the content of the talks with China acknowledged there were downsides to the potential deal. The official said it would limit the Holy See's activities in China and cede power to Beijing to nominate bishops, with the pope only able to exercise what amounts to a papal veto.

China's State Administration of Religious Affairs declined to be interviewed.

The underground Churches have had regular communications with Chinese authorities since the 1990s, and officials even ask the church for help with local disputes, said Rev. Peng Zhenkang, a priest in Guo's parish.

"Villagers here will listen to clergy," Peng said.

He said Guo is often taken away during "sensitive" periods and that the bishop doesn't resist. This time, Peng said, his exile was surely linked to the Vatican talks.

Reached by phone on Thursday, a priest who had been asked by authorities to leave Saiqi along with Guo said they were just getting off a train in Xiamen, a city more than 160 miles (255 kilometers) away.

"It's inconvenient for the bishop to talk right now. I'm sorry," Rev. Xu Wenming said before hanging up.

The Vatican official said that under the proposed deal with China, Guo would become an auxiliary bishop to the official, state-recognized Bishop Zhan Silu, but would remain in charge of the churchgoers he had been leading. The official said Guo has agreed to that arrangement.

The other Vatican-appointed leader who would be affected by the deal is 88-year-old Bishop Zhuang Jianjian, the head of a rural parish in Guangdong province housed in a weathered stucco church built more than a hundred years ago.

Zhuang is described as a pillar of the Catholic communities in the villages clustered in Jiexi county. For decades, he has nurtured generations of Catholics and frequently administers blessings over newborns or newlyweds, the dead or dying, his parishioners say.

The bishop declined to speak to reporters outside his church.

"Please forgive me," Zhuang said, bowing in apology.

While several of Zhuang's parishioners expressed admiration for the bishop's generosity and dedication, none were certain they would oppose his departure if the Vatican ordered it.

"We will all stick to the church no matter how the negotiations go," said Huang Q. L., a descendant of three generations of Catholics whose hand-painted Biblical depictions adorn the church nave. "We have all experienced the faith deeply."

Zhuang's proposed replacement is Bishop Huang Bingzhang, who Beijing ordained "illicitly" in 2011 without Vatican approval. Zhuang declined to be interviewed.

One of his priests, Rev. Xu Jihua, said he expected Huang to be ordained by the Vatican. He said ending the divisions between the Vatican and Beijing will be good for Catholics across China.

"No one hopes to live a life of faith under these abnormal conditions," Xu said.

Then, repeating a belief expressed by underground and state-sanctioned churchgoers alike, the priest remarked: "The essence of faith, after all, is that it exists in light. If a faith is opaque and has its doors closed, that is darkness."

Associated Press writer Nicole Winfield in Rome contributed to this report.

## Brake failure, a blown tire? Search for clues in SUV wreck

By PAUL ELIAS and PHUONG LE, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Brake failure, a blown tire and factors such as the weather and road condition are among the factors that will be looked at by investigators trying to determine what caused an SUV carrying a Washington state family to plunge off a California cliff, but authorities might never figure out exactly what happened.

Authorities don't know exactly when or how the SUV — which was discovered Monday — went over the cliff alongside a spot commonly used by motorists to walk their pets. They say they have no reason so far to believe it was an intentional crash that claimed the lives of two women and at least three of their six adoptive children just days after child welfare authorities tried to contact the family over concerns about the kids' living conditions.

But they also said there were no skid marks or signs the driver braked as the GMC Yukon crossed a flat dirt pull-off area, about 75 feet wide, and went over the edge of the Pacific Coast Highway.

"There are a lot of unknowns on this," Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman said. "Several of the questions that have been asked today will never be answered."

Allman appealed to anyone who might have seen the family of eight to come forward. Three other children are missing and presumed dead.

The wreck was discovered by a passing motorist Monday afternoon. The women, both 38, were found dead inside the SUV, while three of their children — Markis Hart, 19, Jeremiah Hart, 14, and Abigail Hart, 14 — were discovered outside the vehicle.

A team on Thursday continued to search the rugged coastline for the three other children, also believed to have been in the SUV: Hannah Hart, 16, Sierra Hart, 12, and Devonte.

The brood was known as the Hart Tribe, a multiracial family of two women and six children who grew their own food, took spontaneous road trips to camp and hike, and traveled to festivals and other events, offering free hugs and promoting unity.

One of the children, Devonte Hart, drew national attention after the black youngster was photographed in tears, hugging a white police officer during a 2014 protest in Portland, Oregon, over the deadly police shooting of a black man in Ferguson, Missouri. Devonte was holding a "Free Hugs" sign.

Experts say accident reconstruction experts will have information to work with as they study how fast the car was going and other factors.

That model of Yukon was also presumably equipped with a black box recorder that would show its speed and use of the brakes, said Marcus Mazza, an engineer and accident-reconstruction expert with Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based Robson Forensic.

Investigators can calculate the SUV's speed based on where it landed and the height of the drop.

"It's basic physics," Mazza said.

Family friend Max Ribner took issue with the notion it was something other than a tragic accident. The couple -- Sarah and Jennifer Hart -- adopted the six children, many of whom came from "hard backgrounds," he said. "They transformed these kids' lives."

On Thursday, authorities in Washington state also searched the family's home for information. The Clark County Sheriff's Office said deputies were looking for bills, receipts or anything else to shed light on why the family left and other circumstances related to the trip, KGW-TV reported.

Well before the wreck, Sarah Hart pleaded guilty in 2011 to a domestic assault charge in Douglas County, Minnesota, telling authorities "she let her anger get out of control" while spanking her 6-year-old adoptive daughter, court records show.

Then, last week, Bruce and Dana DeKalb, next-door neighbors of the Harts in Woodland, Washington,

called state child protective services on Friday because Devonte, now 15, had been coming over to their house almost every day for a week, asking for food.

Dana DeKalb said Devonte told her his parents were "punishing them by withholding food." The boy asked her to leave food in a box by the fence for him, she said.

Social service authorities opened an investigation, and a state caseworker went to the house last Friday but didn't find anyone home, state officials said. The agency had no prior history with the family, said Norah West, a spokeswoman with the Department of Social and Health Services.

By Saturday, the family's SUV was gone from the driveway, said Bruce DeKalb.

Le reported from Seattle. Associated Press Writer Tom James contributed from West Linn, Oregon.

## US military: Syria bomb kills 2 coalition troops, wounds 5

By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

KOBANI, Syria (AP) — The U.S. military said Friday that two coalition personnel were killed and five others wounded by a roadside bomb in Syria in a rare such attack since the U.S.-led coalition sent troops into the war-torn country.

The military did not say where the incident occurred or the nationalities of the casualties but it came hours after a local Syrian official said that a roadside bomb exploded in the tense, mixed Arab-Kurdish town of Manbij that is not far from the border with Turkey.

Manbij is under threat of a Turkish military operation. Ankara says Syrian Kurdish militiamen it views as "terrorists" and an extension of Kurdish insurgents inside Turkey is in control of the town.

The U.S. military statement said the attack happened Thursday night and that the wounded were being evacuated for further medical treatment. The statement said details were being withheld pending further investigation.

It did not identify the casualties as U.S. soldiers, only coalition personnel members.

U.S. military spokesman Col. Ryan Dillon couldn't immediately say who was behind the attack.

"There is an investigation under way to identify who they could possibly be. We have our initial assessment and thoughts on that but we won't provide until the investigation is complete," he said.

Dillon refused to give the nationalities of the dead and wounded as well as the location of the attack until next of kin notification.

Dillon said the coalition has had fatalities in Syria before. "Perhaps by different means but there have been coalition deaths in Syria over the course of three years."

Mohammed Abu Adel, head of the Manbij Military Council, an Arab-Kurdish group in the town backed by the U.S., said the bomb went off hundreds of meters (yards) from a security headquarters that houses the council just before midnight on Thursday.

Earlier on Friday, Dillon said an incident involving coalition forces was reported in Manbij but said no more information was available.

The town has seen a number of small explosions, protests and an assassination attempt on a member of the Manbij military council in recent weeks. Local officials blame Turkey and other adversaries for seeking to sow chaos in the town that was controlled by Islamic State group militants until the summer of 2016.

The military council has since been in control and U.S. troops patrol the town and area with troops based nearby.

Meanwhile, near the capital Damascus, there were conflicting reports on whether a main rebel group will evacuate the largest and last rebel-held town in the area, known as eastern Ghouta.

Col. Gen. Sergei Rudskoi of the Russian military's General Staff said at a Friday briefing that the agreement envisages Army of Islam rebels and their families leaving the Syrian town of Douma, just outside of Damascus.

The announcement came after the Syrian government on Wednesday issued a three-day ultimatum to the Army of Islam group to leave Douma or face an all-out offensive.

Syrian state TV said an agreement is about to be reached for an Army of Islam evacuation but the group denied the reports.

Army of Islam military spokesman Hamza Bayraqdar told The Associated Press that the reports are false, adding that his group's stance is to reject displacement and demographic change in eastern Ghouta.

The Syrian government and the Russian military backing it have demanded that Army of Islam members leave the area for northern Syria, following other rebels who left eastern Ghouta.

Rudskoi said over 143,000 people, including 13,793 rebels and 23,544 members of their families have left eastern Ghouta. He also said some 40,000 residents have returned to their homes in eastern Ghouta as there has been no fighting over the last seven days

Associated Press writers Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow and Bassem Mroue in Beirut contributed to this report.

## California judge rules that coffee requires cancer warning

By BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Scientists haven't rendered a verdict on whether coffee is good or bad for you but a California judge has. He says coffee sellers in the state should have to post cancer warnings.

The culprit is a chemical produced in the bean roasting process that is a known carcinogen and has been at the heart of an eight-year legal struggle between a tiny nonprofit group and Big Coffee.

The Council for Education and Research on Toxics wanted the coffee industry to remove acrylamide from its processing — like potato chip makers did when it sued them years ago — or disclose the danger in ominous warning signs or labels. The industry, led by Starbucks Corp., said the level of the chemical in coffee isn't harmful and any risks are outweighed by benefits.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Elihu Berle said Wednesday that the coffee makers hadn't presented the proper grounds at trial to prevail.

"While plaintiff offered evidence that consumption of coffee increases the risk of harm to the fetus, to infants, to children and to adults, defendants' medical and epidemiology experts testified that they had no opinion on causation," Berle wrote in his proposed ruling. "Defendants failed to satisfy their burden of proving ... that consumption of coffee confers a benefit to human health."

The suit was brought against Starbucks and 90 companies under a controversial law passed by California voters in 1986 that has been credited with culling cancer-causing chemicals from myriad products and also criticized for leading to quick settlement shakedowns.

The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act, better known as Proposition 65, requires warning labels for about 900 chemicals known to cause cancer or birth defects. It allows private citizens, advocacy groups and attorneys to sue on behalf of the state and collect a portion of civil penalties for failure to provide warnings.

"This lawsuit has made a mockery of Prop. 65, has confused consumers, and does nothing to improve public health," said William Murray, president and CEO of the National Coffee Association, who added that coffee had been shown to be a healthy beverage.

Scientific evidence on coffee has gone back and forth for a long time, but concerns have eased recently about possible dangers of coffee, with some studies finding health benefits.

In 2016, the cancer agency of the World Health Organization moved coffee off its "possible carcinogen" list.

Studies indicate coffee is unlikely to cause breast, prostate or pancreatic cancer, and it seems to lower the risks for liver and uterine cancers, the agency said. Evidence is inadequate to determine its effect on dozens of other cancer types.

Coffee companies have said it's not feasible to remove acrylamide from their product without ruining the flavor.

But attorney Raphael Metzger, who brought the lawsuit and drinks a few cups of coffee a day, said the industry could remove the chemical without impairing taste.

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"I firmly believe if the potato chip industry can do it, so can the coffee industry," Metzger said. "A warning won't be that effective because it's an addictive product."

Many coffee shops have already posted warnings that say acrylamide is cancer-causing chemical found in coffee. But signs that are supposed to be posted at the point of sale are often found in places not easily visible, such as below the counter where cream and sugar are available.

Customers at shops that post warnings are often unaware or unconcerned about them.

Afternoon coffee drinkers at a Los Angeles Starbucks said they might look into the warning or give coffee drinking a second thought after the ruling, but the cup of joe was likely to win out.

"I just don't think it would stop me," said Jen Bitterman, a digital marketing technologist. "I love the taste, I love the ritual, I love the high, the energy, and I think I'm addicted to it."

Darlington Ibekwe, a lawyer in Los Angeles, said a cancer warning would be annoying but wouldn't stop him from treating himself to three lattes a week.

"It's like cigarettes. Like, damn, now I've got to see this?" he said. "Dude, I'm enjoying my coffee."

The defendants have a couple weeks to challenge the ruling before it is final and could seek relief from an appellate court.

If the ruling stands, it could come with a stiff financial penalty and could rattle consumers beyond state lines.

The judge can set another phase of trial to consider potential civil penalties up to \$2,500 per person exposed each day over eight years. That could be an astronomical sum in a state with close to 40 million residents, though such a massive fine is unlikely.

California's outsized market could make it difficult to tailor packaging with warning labels specifically to stores in the state.

That means out-of-state coffee drinkers could also take their coffee with a cancer warning. Cream and sugar would still be optional.

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Associated Press writer Amanda Lee Myers in Los Angeles and AP Chief Medical Writer Marilynn Marchione in Milwaukee contributed to this story.

## Stanton, Davidson tee off, opening day turns into HR derby

By BEN WALKER, AP Baseball Writer

Giancarlo Stanton and Matt Davidson gave opening day quite a jolt.

A new baseball season began with a bang Thursday when Ian Happ of the Chicago Cubs homered on the very first pitch. World Series MVP George Springer connected, Adam Jones and Nick Markakis hit walkoff winners and Anthony Rizzo delivered the most emotional drive of the day.

Shohei Ohtani also got off to a nice start with a hit in his first at-bat.

But a year after big leaguers launched a record 6,105 longballs, Stanton and Davidson staged their own long-distance home run derby.

Stanton hit two hard homers and doubled in his debut with the New York Yankees during a 6-1 victory at Toronto. The reigning NL MVP led the majors with 59 home runs last year, then was traded from Miami to the Bronx.

"You want to get the first one out of the way and then you can relax," Stanton said.

Davidson did even better, hitting three home runs for the Chicago White Sox in a 14-7 romp at Kansas City. He became the fourth player with a three-homer performance on opening day, joining Detroit's Dmitri Young (2005), the Cubs' Tuffy Rhodes (1994) and Toronto's George Bell (1988).

"Special day in anybody's book," White Sox manager Rick Renteria said.

Not every pitcher got tagged, though.

Justin Verlander pitched six shutout innings for the champion Houston Astros in a 4-1 win over Texas. Luis Severino threw one-hit ball over 5 2/3 scoreless innings for the Yankees. Boston ace Chris Sale gave up just one hit in six innings, but Tampa Ray rallied for six runs in the eighth to win 6-4.

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And in Seattle, Felix Hernandez used a biting curveball to outduel Cleveland ace and AL Cy Young award winner Corey Kluber. Hernandez pitched 5 1/3 scoreless innings, while Kluber allowed two runs over eight in the Mariners' 2-1 win.

The new season has a couple new numbers on the scoreboard, too.

As part of MLB's pace of play initiatives, mound visits are now counted. Teams are allowed six without pitching changes — by the managers, coaches or infielders — before a trip triggers a mandatory change on the mound.

There didn't appear to be any flaps with umpires over the new policy, though it seemed to have an early effect in Miami, where Jose Urena gave up a home run to Happ on his first pitch. Dwight Evans is the only other player to connect on the first pitch of a season, doing it for the Red Sox in 1986 off Jack Morris at Tiger Stadium, the Elias Sports Bureau said.

"I was thinking fastball first pitch there," Happ said.

Urena hit three batters in the first inning and walked two. Even so, it took a while before pitching coach Juan Nieves went to see him — when he did, the scoreboard at Marlins Park counted down the MVs from six to five.

The next inning, Rizzo earned a standing ovation after his home run at Miami.

Both teams wore patches to honor the 17 people killed at his former high school in Parkland, Florida. Crossing home plate, the Cubs star patted the patch on his chest and pointed to the sky.

"That was probably the most out-of-body experience I've had hitting a home run in my life," Rizzo said. "It just felt really good."

Early in the day, the rain was the big winner.

The Pittsburgh-Detroit game at Comerica Park was rained out, a day after the Washington-Cincinnati game was postponed in advance.

Under gray skies, it was somber at Citi Field, where the New York Mets mourned former star Rusty Staub, who died hours before the opener.

In Toronto, the Blue Jays held a pregame tribute to late ace Roy Halladay and retired the pitcher's number No. 32.

All over the majors, there was expanded netting to provide extra protection for fans sitting near the field. And in Arizona, the new bullpen buggy — a nod to the past — was set for its first ride to shuttle relievers from bullpens to the mound.

Aaron Boone of the Yankees and Mickey Callaway of the Mets won in their first games as major league managers, Alex Cora of the Red Sox and Gabe Kapler of the Phillies lost.

Ohtani got on the board with his first swing, grounding a hard single to right field for the Los Angeles Angels.

The two-way newcomer from Japan often looked overmatched at the plate in spring training, but did fine in his first try while batting eighth as the designated hitter. The 23-year-old will make his pitching debut Sunday against the Athletics.

It will be a little longer until Greg Holland pitches for St. Louis, but at least he has a job. The closer and the Cardinals agreed to a \$14 million, one-year contract less than two hours before they faced the Mets.

Dozens of free agents remain without deals, including Jose Bautista, Mark Reynolds, Carlos Ruiz, Matt Holliday and Melky Cabrera.

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

## Security high in Pakistan's Swat but Malala visit uncertain

By **SHERIN ZADA** and **MUNIR AHMED**, Associated Press

MINGORA, Pakistan (AP) — A Pakistani women's activist said Friday that Malala Yousafzai, who has returned to Pakistan's capital Islamabad for the first time since Taliban militants shot her in 2012, was hoping to visit her Swat Valley hometown but that the trip depended on security clearances from the government.

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Security was visibly beefed up in Mingora, the Nobel Peace Prize winner's hometown, but authorities wouldn't confirm whether she would be arriving there. Yousafzai is expected to return to London on Monday.

Activist Adnan Tabassum, also from Swat, met with Yousafzai on Thursday in Islamabad. She said Yousafzai told her that she wanted to travel to Swat to see her former school friends and relatives.

According to Tabassum, 20-year-old Yousafzai asked authorities to allow her to go to Shangla village in Swat, where a school has been built by her Malala Fund.

"Malala is not afraid of going to Swat, where the terrorists opened fire on her in 2012 and wounded her. It is her wish to again see her hometown, her school and her home, where she spent years of her life," she told The Associated Press.

In October 2012, Yousafzai was shot in the head by a Taliban assassin who had jumped inside her school van and yelled, "Who is Malala?" She had been targeted for speaking out on education in her home of Mingora in the Swat Valley. Only 14 when she was shot, Yousafzai has since delighted in telling the Taliban that instead of silencing her, they have amplified her voice. She has since written a book, spoken at the United Nations and met with refugees.

Schoolgirls in Yousafzai's town said they were keen to see her.

"I admire Malala because she strived to promote girls' education," said Amna Khan, 12, as she entered one of the schools in Mingora.

On Thursday, Yousafzai met with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at his office, where she also attended a gathering and made an emotional speech in which she said it was one of the happiest days of her life to be in Pakistan.

Yousafzai won praise from across Pakistan on her return home, but some critics on social media have tried to undermine her efforts to promote girls' education, though these efforts have been snubbed by Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb and Yousafzai's admirers.

Since her attack and recovery, Yousafzai has led the Malala Fund, which she said has invested \$6 million in schools and to provide books and uniforms for schoolchildren. She became the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

Yousafzai landed in Pakistan just before dawn Thursday, flanked by heavy security. Secrecy surrounded her arrival as well as details of her visit. The security was extraordinary as the Taliban had warned in the past that they would again target her again if she came back to Pakistan.

Ahmed reported from Islamabad.

## **Kin of Japanese abducted to N. Korea want Trump's help**

**By MARI YAMAGUCHI, Associated Press**

TOKYO (AP) — Families of Japanese abducted by North Korea decades ago urged Japan's leader on Friday to persuade U.S. President Donald Trump to help win the abductees' release during a possible summit with North Korea's leader.

Trump has said he will meet Kim Jong Un by the end of May, though North Korea hasn't directly commented on a message from a South Korean envoy that Kim wants to meet Trump.

Also Friday, a senior Chinese official briefed South Korean President Moon Jae-in in Seoul on the outcome of President Xi Jinping's meeting this week with Kim in Beijing. Moon and Kim are scheduled to meet on April 27.

The abductees' families urged Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to seek Trump's help because this could be their last chance to win their loved ones' release. Abe plans to visit the U.S. in April for talks with Trump.

"Please ask President Trump to discuss (with Kim) how to achieve the abductees' return," Shigeo Iizuka, 79, head of a group representing the families of abduction victims, told Abe. "We would like President Trump to ask Kim Jong Un to make specific arrangements for the abductees to return home."

Abe promised to do so, saying, "We should not let the abduction issue, which is very important to us, be left behind."

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Iizuka's younger sister, Yaeko Taguchi, then 22, was kidnapped by North Korean agents in 1978, leaving behind two children — a baby boy and a girl — at a nursery. Iizuka adopted the boy and raised him as his fourth child, and the girl was adopted by an aunt.

Taguchi's whereabouts weren't known for nearly a quarter century until North Korea, after years of denials, acknowledged in 2002 abducting 13 Japanese citizens. Japan says North Korea has abducted at least four more Japanese.

North Korea allowed five of them to visit Japan in 2002 — and they stayed — but said the other eight had died, though their families say what the North said cannot be trusted. North Korea also promised a re-investigation of the eight and set up a committee, but its results were never presented as the North's missile and nuclear threats escalated.

Iizuka said he and the other families want Abe to "make use of each upcoming meeting" to achieve the abductees' return.

"We see a big chance coming up, and there will be no greater chance than this," he said.

In Seoul, Yang Jiechi, a member of the Chinese Communist Party's powerful political bureau who was sent as Xi's special envoy, met with Moon and delivered a detailed explanation of the talks between Xi and Kim, according to Moon's office. The office said Yang confirmed Chinese intentions to "actively cooperate" in seeking the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Yang earlier in the day met with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-hwa, who said it was encouraging that Kim during his talks with Xi expressed a "firm willingness" for dialogue with Seoul and Washington. Yang told Kang that Beijing hopes the Kim-Xi meeting will prove helpful to the success of talks between Pyongyang, Seoul and Washington, according to Seoul's Foreign Ministry.

Ahead of Moon's planned summit with Kim in late April, a group of 160 South Korean musicians is performing in North Korea this Sunday and Tuesday. The group, which includes some of South Korea's biggest pop singers, is to fly to the North on Saturday.

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Associated Press writer Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul contributed to this story.

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Find her work at <https://www.apnews.com/search/mari%20yamaguchi>

## US consulate staff in St. Petersburg prepare to leave

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia (AP) — U.S. consulate staff in St. Petersburg, Russia's second-largest city, were preparing on Friday to wind up operations after the Russian government ordered the consulate's closure.

Russia on Thursday announced the expulsion of more than 150 diplomats, including 60 Americans, in response to mass expulsions of Russian diplomats by Western countries over the poisoning of a former Russian spy and his daughter in Britain.

Speaking to reporters in Moscow on Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov insisted that "Russia didn't start any diplomatic wars" and had to respond. Peskov said Russia was open to improving ties with all countries including the U.S.

Russia also ordered the closure of the U.S. consulate in St. Petersburg in response to the U.S. announcement to shut the Russian consulate in Seattle.

An Associated Press reporter on Friday saw consulate staff carrying boxes from the building and loading them into a van. Several mini-vans drove out of the consulate while security also detained a man who threw a Starbucks cup at the building.

Some of the passers-by near the U.S. consulate in St. Petersburg cheered the expulsions.

"Let them get out of here," said 61-year-old pensioner Viktor Fedin. "You won't put Russia on its knees."

Others were more cautious, worried that the closures would affect visa processing for Russians.

"The Russian government has to respond to the hostile actions against Russia," said 32-year-old researcher Yelena Bogomazova.

"But the escalation is bad. The closure of the consulate will make it difficult for people to get U.S. visas, they will have to go to Moscow."

After Russia expelled several dozens of U.S. diplomats, the waiting list for U.S. visa applications in Russia has increased to weeks if not months. The U.S. embassy said it was unable to process visa applications faster because of the staff shortage.

## Devotees reenact Good Friday crucifixions in Philippines

By AARON FAVILA, Associated Press

SAN PEDRO CUTUD, Philippines (AP) — Filipino Roman Catholic devotees, including a woman, were nailed to wooden crosses in a gory Good Friday reenactment of Jesus Christ's sufferings that was watched by thousands of spectators but frowned upon by church leaders.

At least three of eight devotees wearing crowns of twigs were crucified by midafternoon by villagers north of Manila who were dressed as Roman centurions.

The spectacle in San Pedro Cutud village reflects a unique brand of Catholicism that merges church traditions with folk superstitions. Many of the mostly impoverished penitents undergo the ritual to atone for sins, pray for the sick or a better life, or give thanks for what they believe were God-given miracles.

The Lenten rituals are frowned upon by church leaders in the Philippines, Asia's largest Roman Catholic nation, especially if the event is used to boost tourism and business. The reenactments of the crucifixion, however, have persisted and became an awaited tourist attraction in the largely unknown village in Pampanga province, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of the capital.

While the crucifixions have become a summer tradition to locals, they still leave many foreign tourists bewildered.

"It's terrible," Luke Henkel from Florida said. "You wanna stop it."

Mayor Edwin Santiago of San Fernando, the city where San Pedro Cutud lies, said more than 400 police officers were deployed and first-aid stations set up to look after the huge crowds.

"We provide assistance because we can't stop the influx of tourists," Pangilinan said. "We don't promote it as a festival but it's rather a show of respect to a local tradition."

Villagers used the crowd-drawing events to peddle food, water, fans, umbrellas and souvenirs and rent out parking slots and toilets. A leading cellphone company provided tents for shade with its name embossed on them.

Archbishop Socrates Villegas said it's best for Catholics to mark Lent in prayers and acts of love and charity.

"Instead of spilling your blood on the streets, why not walk into a Red Cross office and donate blood? Choose to share life. Share your blood," Villegas said in remarks posted in a Catholic church website.

Friday's crucifixions would be the 32nd for Ruben Enaje, a 57-year-old sign painter who began his yearly rites after surviving a fall from a building. He plans to stop when he turns 60.

Maryjane Sazon, a 39-year-old beauty salon worker, said she had joined the reenactments seven years ago in the hope of being cured of a severe headache and nervous breakdown. Her crucifixion Friday was dedicated to her sick sister.

Prior to the crucifixions, dozens of male penitents walked several kilometers (miles) through village streets, beating their bare backs with sharp bamboo sticks and pieces of wood. Some of them had their backs cut to keep them bloody.

Foreigners have been banned from taking part since an Australian comic was nailed to a cross under a false name a few years ago near Pampanga. Authorities also believe that a Japanese man sought to be crucified as part of a porn film in 1996.

## Mormon youth interviews with bishops under scrutiny

By BRADY McCOMBS, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A group of people demanding an end to one-on-one interviews between Mormon youth and lay leaders and the sexual questions that sometimes arise during the meetings plan to march

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to church headquarters Friday to show they're not satisfied despite a rule change this week that allows children to bring parents with them.

Group organizer Sam Young, a Mormon father from Houston, says a parent or adult should be required for all meetings that usually happen twice a year starting at age 12. He said sexual questions often become explicit and argues children should only be asked if they are obeying the faith's law of chastity.

Young is expecting several hundred people at the event that comes one day before a twice-annual conference put on by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They plan to deliver 55,000 signatures supporting the cause.

Church officials have said the interviews allow bishops to get to know youth better and determine their religious habits and obedience to God. The bishops are instructed how to handle the meetings and swear to keep the conversations confidential.

The rule change giving children the option to bring a parent or adult with them during one-on-one interviews with local church leaders known as bishops was announced as part of updated guidelines for sexual abuse reporting.

Parents were only allowed in a hallway or adjacent room under old rules. Youth can still go in alone if they choose.

The meetings with children usually happen twice a year starting at age 12. Bishops ask about topics such as school, sports, hobbies, education goals and family issues. The questions sometimes delve into sexual behavior because of the church's strict teachings on abstinence before marriage.

The bishops asking the questions are always men who make up the religion's lay clergy and run local congregations for several years at a time while also doing their normal day jobs.

Young's group took out a full page ad in The Salt Lake Tribune on Thursday telling church leaders in a mock letter that they appreciate the adjustment to the rules but that by not requiring an adult be with the child the religion is "leaving the door wide open for predators."

"The vast majority of our leaders are good upstanding men. Nevertheless, we do have sexual predators in our leadership," Young said in the ad, and later, "Many bishops ask disgusting, repulsive and pornographic questions."

Scott Gordon, president of FairMormon, a volunteer organization that supports the church, said he agrees that bishops shouldn't be asking inappropriate sexual questions but disagrees with Young's demand to require that parents be in every interviews and a ban on questions about a teen's sexual activities.

"What they're asking is a step too far," Gordon said. "It's making the assumption that bishops are sexual predators. They're not."

Gordon, who has served a stint at bishop, said he's fine with parents being in the interview if the child wants, but said that in some cases having parents in the meeting can prevent a child from reporting abuse in the home.

He said questions about sex can be done without bishops probing for explicit details. When he would find out about sexual transgressions, he would follow a similar script.

"I would tell them, 'Don't tell me explicit details, but in general, where were you, what got you in that situation, what can we do to prevent it in future?'" Gordon said.

## Brother of unarmed man killed by police redirects protests

By DON THOMPSON AND SOPHIA BOLLAG, Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Hours after an emotional interruption at his brother's funeral, Stevante Clark helped defuse tension in California's capital city by asking protesters not to block thousands of fans from entering a downtown NBA arena for a third night.

Police in riot gear stood waiting outside the Golden 1 Center as fans wove through barricades and fencing Thursday to enter for a Sacramento Kings-Indiana Pacers game. But protesters never came, heeding calls from Stevante Clark and Black Lives Matter organizers to avoid the arena. Instead, they blocked rush hour traffic on nearby downtown streets.

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The March 18 shooting of Stephon Clark, 22, by Sacramento police officers has sparked near daily protests downtown, with his name becoming a rallying cry for police reform in California and beyond.

Two officers responding to a call of someone breaking car windows shouted that Clark had a gun before firing 20 bullets at him, but he had only a cellphone. The family's attorney, Ben Crump, will on Friday release results of an independent autopsy.

Delivering Stephon Clark's eulogy Thursday, the Rev. Al Sharpton praised demonstrators for their restraint and urged them to follow the lead of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and his advocacy of nonviolent protest.

"I want the folks in California to know that there's nothing wrong with how these young people are standing up," he thundered. "They're not being violent, they're asking for you to stop being violent to them."

More than 500 people packed into the church to celebrate Stephon Clark's life, remembering his dance moves, smarts and love for his two young sons.

Stevante Clark interrupted the musical and scriptural celebration by hugging and kissing the casket, leading the crowd in chanting his brother's name, pounding his chest and shouting. Others on the stage attempted to calm him, with limited success.

Sharpton hugged and consoled him and told the crowd not to judge how families grieve.

"This brother could be any one of us, so let them express and grieve," Sharpton said. "We are proud of them for standing up for justice."

The Kings and their owner have been supportive of the Clark family.

The team announced plans to set up an education fund for Stephon Clark's children and a partnership with Black Lives Matter Sacramento to bring "transformational change" to the city's black communities. Former Kings player Matt Barnes attended the funeral, as did Mayor Darrell Steinberg, who promised to work with Stevante Clark days after he disrupted a City Council meeting.

The protests have caused disruption, though largely peaceful, around the arena, a focal point of the city's revitalization efforts in a downtown that's struggled economically and has a heavy homeless population. Some businesses have been shutting down early while commuters have been snarled in rush hour traffic due to closed streets during the protests.

West Sacramento resident Onyeabo Aduba, 33, said he canceled reservations Thursday at a restaurant near the arena for his girlfriend's birthday because of the protests. But Aduba said he's supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement and frustrated that efforts such as requiring police to wear body cameras haven't made real change.

He said the community's level of support for the demonstrators has been surprising.

"Sacramento is more liberal than conservative but I think it's a pretty neutral city," he said. "I've been surprised by the amount of compassion from people."

Turning the focus nationally, Sharpton and others chastised President Donald Trump for failing to comment on police shootings of young black men. On Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders was asked about the Clark shooting and demurred, referring to it as a local issue.

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Associated Press reporters Kathleen Ronayne and Haven Daley in Sacramento, John Antczak and Brian Melley in Los Angeles contributed.

## Bill Cosby judge won't step aside as lawyers target accuser

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — The judge in Bill Cosby's retrial rejected demands from the comedian's defense lawyers to step aside during a Thursday hearing in which they made clear they plan to attack his accuser as a greedy liar who falsely accused him of sexually assaulting her to collect a payoff.

Judge Steven O'Neill shot down what amounted to a last-ditch effort to postpone the trial by defense lawyers who lost their bid to overturn his ruling allowing up to five additional accusers to testify against Cosby.

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Lawyers argued the judge should remove himself because his wife is a social worker and advocate for assault victims, pointing to a \$100 donation made in her name to an organization that gave money to a group planning a protest outside the retrial.

The judge said the donation was made 13 months ago by the department where his wife works at the University of Pennsylvania and he's "not biased or prejudiced" by her work.

Jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday as the 80-year-old Cosby faces charges he drugged and molested former Temple University athletics administrator Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004.

While Cosby's lawyers sparred with the judge in court Thursday, they also are counting on him to make critical rulings to bolster their defense that Constand is a money-grubbing liar.

They want the judge to let them call Marguerite Jackson, who says Constand spoke of framing a celebrity before she went to police with allegations Cosby drugged and molested her in 2004. They also want to let jurors know how much Cosby paid her in a 2006 civil settlement.

"Those are the bookends: I have a motive, and I have a payoff," lawyer Kathleen Bliss argued. "The jury should be allowed to view the full context of that."

Assistant District Attorney Kristen Fedden said prosecutors doubt the discussion with Jackson happened and Constand's lawyer has said Jackson is "not telling the truth."

The judge blocked Jackson from testifying at Cosby's first trial, saying her testimony would be hearsay. Prosecutors want him to do the same for the retrial.

Prosecutors say the theory that Constand wanted to set up Cosby is undermined by his testimony in a 2005 deposition that she only visited his home when invited and that he gave her pills without her asking for them.

Prosecutors also argued the settlement is irrelevant to the criminal case but if it's allowed in jurors should also hear about negotiations that led to the settlement.

Assistant District Attorney Stewart Ryan contended that Cosby's negotiators initially asked that he be released from any criminal liability and tried to bar Constand from cooperating with law enforcement. He said that amounts to obstruction of justice.

"Those things are inconsistent with a person who believes he's innocent," Ryan said.

Thursday's hearing started with arguments over the judge's wife, Deborah O'Neill, a psychotherapist who coordinates a team that cares and advocates for student sexual assault victims.

The judge said the donation cited by Cosby's lawyers didn't involve his wife's money or their joint assets. "How are my wife's independent views of an independent woman connected to me?" he said. "She's an independent woman and has the right to be involved in anything that she believes in."

He said Cosby's old lawyers raised the prospect of having him step aside in December 2016 but never followed through. He said he could've rejected the recusal request because Cosby's lawyers waited too long to ask.

He said the lawyers were aware of his wife's work as far back as December 2016 but waited until getting several adverse rulings just before retrial to raise it as an issue.

He spoke glowingly about his wife and said it was difficult to have her accomplishments "trivialized" in a legal motion. He said Cosby's lawyers had presented an antiquated view of marriage in which spouses must agree on everything.

Cosby's lawyers could still appeal the judge's decision to allow the other accusers to testify to the state's Supreme Court.

The pretrial hearing will continue Friday, including arguments over whether jurors can hear about a 2005 phone call in which Constand says she told her mother about the assault for the first time.

The judge agreed the retrial won't start until at least April 9 and the jury chosen from suburban Montgomery County will be sequestered in a local hotel.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, which Constand has done.

Follow Mike Sisak at [twitter.com/mikesisak](https://twitter.com/mikesisak)

For more on the Cosby trial, go to <https://apnews.com/tag/CosbyonTrial>

## Red-state teacher rebellion hits Oklahoma, grows in Arizona

By SEAN MURPHY, Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — A teacher rebellion that started in the hills of West Virginia spread like a prairie fire to Oklahoma this week and now threatens to reach the desert in Arizona.

In the deep red state of Oklahoma, the Republican-led Legislature approved money for teacher raises and more school funding, even hiking taxes on the vaunted oil and gas industry to do it. Republican Governor Mary Fallin rushed to sign the measures into law Thursday.

Oklahoma teachers were inspired by West Virginia, another red state where a 9-day strike led to 5-percent teacher raises. Oklahoma teachers haven't had a raise in a decade of Republican control and they won raises of between 15 and 18 percent. Now, teachers in Arizona thronged their GOP-run Capitol this week, demanding a 20 percent teacher pay hike.

"West Virginia woke us up," Arizona Educators Association President Joe Thomas told a cheering crowd at a protest this week in Phoenix.

In Oklahoma, the tax hikes on cigarettes, fuel and oil and gas production will be enough for raises averaging about \$6,100 annually, as well as funding boosts for schools, support personnel and state workers.

Oklahoma ranks 47th in the nation in public school revenue per student, nearly \$3,000 below the national average, while its average teacher salary of \$45,276 ranks 49th, according to the most recent statistics from the National Education Association.

"A lot of teachers are just tired of the promises," said Alberto Morejon, a junior high history teacher from Stillwater, Oklahoma, who launched a teacher walkout page on Facebook that quickly reached more than 70,000 followers.

Many GOP-led states are feeling the pushback after years of tax cuts that have slashed funding for core government services such as public schools, said Lily Garcia, president of the teachers union NEA.

"It has been an unmitigated disaster, and it's now coming home to roost on all those folks who blindly cut taxes, not caring how that was going to impact communities," said Garcia.

The reversal on tax cuts in Oklahoma was particularly stunning, because lawmakers there included a hike on the normally sacrosanct energy industry, increasing the production tax on oil and natural gas from 2 percent to 5 percent. In the Legislature, where lawmakers needed a three-fourth's majority in both bodies to pass a new tax, the House voted even as billionaire oil baron Harold Hamm, the chairman and CEO of Continental Resources, glared at them from the gallery.

Fallin, who in 2014 signed into law tax cuts on both income and energy production, signed the measures quickly with a hope of averting statewide school closures. Earlier, she praised bipartisan support of the package and said she hopes the teacher walkouts scheduled to start on Monday will instead become a one-day rally for education.

"That'll be up to the teachers, but I hope that they can come up here, say 'thank you' on Monday and go back to the classrooms," Fallin said.

In both Arizona and Oklahoma, teachers are mulling whether the current offer from the Legislature is enough to avert a work stoppage. The union in Oklahoma was demanding \$75 million in new funding for education, and is expected to get \$50 million under the plan.

While some Oklahoma school administrators and board members are giddy over the infusion of new cash, many rank-and-file teachers are demanding that all of their needs are met before they agree to stop a walkout.

"They need to fund our schools better, and until that happens, we're going to walk out," said Adrien Gates, an elementary school teacher in Norman. "We need to take this all the way. Otherwise we're settling."

Associated Press reporter Melissa Daniels contributed to this report from Phoenix.

Follow Sean Murphy at [www.twitter.com/apseanmurphy](http://www.twitter.com/apseanmurphy)

## **Rusty Staub, slugger who played 23 seasons, dies at 73**

**By MIKE FITZPATRICK, AP Baseball Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Rusty Staub was a huge hit on both sides of the border.

Instantly recognizable for his fiery orange hair and gregarious personality, the outfielder who charmed baseball fans in the United States and Canada during an All-Star career that spanned 23 major league seasons died Thursday. He was 73.

Staub died after an illness in a hospital in West Palm Beach, Florida, hours before the start of the baseball season, the New York Mets said in a statement. The team learned of his death from friends of Staub who were with him at the hospital, a spokesman added.

Affectionately dubbed "Le Grand Orange," Staub was a six-time All-Star and the only player in major league history to have at least 500 hits with four teams. Popular with fans and teammates in two countries, he was most adored in New York and Montreal.

"He could be as tough as hell and as soft as a mushroom," said Mets teammate and close friend Keith Hernandez, who choked back tears as he spoke about Staub at Citi Field before New York hosted the St. Louis Cardinals.

A savvy, reliable slugger with left-handed power and a discerning eye, Staub played from 1963 to 1985 and finished 284 hits shy of 3,000. He had 3½ great seasons with the Detroit Tigers and batted .300 for the Texas Rangers in 1980.

He broke into the majors as a teenager with Houston, lasted into his 40s with the Mets as a pinch-hitter deluxe and spent decades doing charity work in the New York area.

"There wasn't a cause he didn't champion," the Mets said.

Staub, who would have turned 74 on Sunday, survived a 2015 heart attack on a flight home from Ireland. Years earlier, the gourmet cook owned and operated a pair of popular restaurants in Manhattan that bore his name. He also authored a children's book titled "Hello, Mr. Met!"

"What a unique personality he was. I never met anyone like him," former Mets pitcher Ron Darling said. "He was a renaissance kind of man."

The Mets saluted Staub on the stadium video board before Thursday's season opener. The number 10 he wore during some of his time with the team (he also wore No. 4) was painted in white on the back of the pitcher's mound.

"Rusty was a superb ambassador for our sport and a generous individual known for community efforts," Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement.

Staub was the first star for the expansion Montreal Expos in 1969, embraced by French-Canadian fans at Parc Jarry who appreciated that he learned their language.

He made three straight All-Star teams with Montreal and hit a career-high 30 home runs for the last-place Expos in 1970. Though he spent only three full seasons in Montreal, plus a 38-game reunion in 1979, his No. 10 became the first uniform jersey retired by the club in 1993.

Long after the Expos moved to Washington and were renamed the Nationals before the 2005 season, he remains one of the most beloved players in franchise history.

"He gave his heart and soul to the franchise and to the city of Montreal. He immersed himself in the city's culture as much as any Expo and the fans loved him for it," Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame director of operations Scott Crawford said in a statement. "We'll miss Le Grande Orange, but we'll never forget him."

Staub was traded to the Mets in 1972 and one year later helped lead them to a surprising National League pennant. Spurred by a now-famous rallying cry from reliever Tug McGraw — "Ya Gotta Believe!" — the Mets upset heavily favored Cincinnati, with Staub socking three home runs in the first four games

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of their best-of-five NL playoff.

Staub separated his right shoulder when he crashed hard into the outfield wall to make a fantastic catch in the 11th inning of Game 4. He sat out Tom Seaver's decisive win in Game 5 and missed the World Series opener against Oakland, yet returned to the lineup the following game.

Barely able to make weak, underhand throws during the Series, he still batted .423 with a home run, two doubles and six RBIs as New York lost in seven games. In all, Staub hit .341 with 11 RBIs in his only postseason, a clutch and gritty performance that endeared him to Mets fans forever.

In 1975, he became the first Mets player to drive in 100 runs in a season, setting a club record with 105 that wasn't broken until 1990.

New York traded Staub to Detroit in December 1975 and he made his final All-Star team with the Tigers in 1976. He had 121 RBIs and finished fifth in AL MVP voting in '78, becoming the first major leaguer to play all 162 games in a season at designated hitter.

Staub re-signed with the Mets before the 1981 season and was a player-coach for them in '82. Late in his career, often sporting black batting gloves and choking way up on the bat, he became one of baseball's best pinch-hitters, tying an NL record in 1983 with eight consecutive pinch-hits and equaling a major league mark with 25 pinch-hit RBIs.

His final season was 1985, one year before the Mets won the World Series. After spending nine seasons with New York, he was inducted into the team's Hall of Fame in '86 and when he was honored at Shea Stadium, smiling ex-teammates such as Hernandez and Darryl Strawberry wore long, orange wigs for the on-field ceremony.

"Rusty was good at everything," Darling said. "He just had a connectivity to people."

Staub was known for his uncanny ability to spot opponents tipping pitches, and he kept their specific tendencies written down in a little red book.

Hernandez told an endearing story about asking Staub for the book but being told he hadn't earned it. When he retired, Staub gave his friend the book as a gift — and Hernandez said he still has it at home.

"It was quite extraordinary," Hernandez said.

Staub worked as an announcer on Mets television broadcasts from 1986-95. He was inducted into the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame in 2012.

Only 11 days after his heart attack — Staub was revived by doctors and nurses on the plane as it made an unscheduled return to Ireland — he threw out the first pitch at Citi Field before a Mets playoff victory in 2015.

"It's a little mind-boggling that I'm here, considering what went down," Staub told MLB.com that night. "I mean, I was tap dancing in front of Saint Peter. He could have taken me easily. But maybe he had some more good for me to do. You know, I do some pretty good work. And I don't know how much time I've got. So I guess I better hurry up."

The next April, he was on hand again to help raise the NL championship banner.

At the end of his distinguished career, Staub founded the New York Police and Fire Widows' and Children's Benefit Fund. In a statement, the charity said he "worked tirelessly" on behalf of the families of "New York City's fallen heroes."

The organization said "due to his vision and his leadership" it has provided more than \$140 million to the families of first responders killed in the line of duty.

"He cared about each and every family and they felt the same way about him. Rusty started more than just a charity — he started a family," said Stephen Dannhauser, chairman of Answer the Call: the New York Police and Fire Widows' & Children's Benefit Fund. "While many admire Rusty for his impressive record as a baseball player, it is his work off the field that truly made him one of the greats."

Following the 9-11 terrorist attacks in 2001, Mets players and coaches donated their entire salaries from their first game back, about \$450,000, to Staub's foundation.

Staub also helped serve meals to thousands of the hungry and homeless at food pantries across New York City through Catholic Charities, with funds from his annual golf tournament and wine auction dinner.

"Rusty helped children, the poor, the elderly and then there was his pride and joy The New York Police

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and Fire Widows' and Children's Benefit Fund," the Mets said.

Hernandez said Staub was in intensive care for a couple of months. Mets general manager Sandy Alderson said he was among those who visited Staub during spring training and had reason to hope he would recover.

Alderson said he has an autographed Staub jersey that he bought at an auction mostly out of respect for the person he was, rather than the player.

"A class act all the way," longtime Mets fan Stephen Rosina said at Citi Field. "A humanitarian. ... It was just wonderful to root for him."

Born and raised in New Orleans, Daniel Joseph Staub was called Rusty because of his bright red hair. He made his major league debut with the Houston Colt .45s in 1963, eight days after his 19th birthday, and led the NL with 44 doubles in 1967 for the renamed Astros, earning his first All-Star selection.

Playing mostly right field and some first base, too, Staub retired with a .279 career average, 292 home runs and 1,466 RBIs.

He reached 500 hits with the Astros, Expos, Mets and Tigers, and joins Ty Cobb, Alex Rodriguez and Gary Sheffield as the only players to homer in the majors before age 20 and after 40 .

"You would sit on the bench with him and you would get a tutorial on how to play the game, the history of the game," Darling said. "He changed Keith's life and he certainly changed mine."

Staub had a .362 career on-base percentage. He drew 1,255 walks and struck out only 888 times in 9,720 at-bats over 2,951 games, 13th-most in big league history.

He appeared on the Hall of Fame ballot seven times, never receiving more than 7.9 percent of the vote. He dropped off after getting 3.8 percent in 1997.

He is survived by brother Chuck and sisters Sue Tully and Sally Johnson.

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AP freelance writer Scott Orgera contributed.

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

## Asian shares track tech, consumer stocks' rally on Wall St

By ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer

Shares rose in Asia on Friday after technology and consumer-focused stocks led an overnight rally on Wall Street, marking a dramatic end to the market's most volatile quarter in more than two years. Many regional markets were closed for Good Friday.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 index added 1.1 percent to 21,391.47 and the Kospi in South Korea climbed 0.8 percent to 2,455.35. The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1 percent higher to 3,163.95 and shares rose in Taiwan and Thailand.

WALL STREET'S SURGE: Banks and industrial stocks also lifted the market and recent laggards such as Facebook and Boeing rose. Even so, the solid gains couldn't prevent the stock market's first quarterly loss since the third quarter of 2015. The S&P 500 rose 1.4 percent to 2,640.87. The Dow gained 1.1 percent to 24,103.11 and the Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks also picked up 1.1 percent, to 1,529.43. The Nasdaq added 1.6 percent to 7,063.44, closing the quarter with a gain of 2.3 percent. U.S. stock markets will be closed for the Good Friday holiday.

TECH FACTOR: Thursday's run-up in technology stocks signaled that investors believe the sector was oversold in recent weeks, said Terry Sandven, chief equity strategist at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. "Volatility has ramped up, inflationary pressures are more prevalent, interest rates are on the cusp of change, so that presents a higher level of uncertainty and higher investor angst," he said.

JAPAN DATA: Data released Friday showed industrial production rebounded in February, gaining 4.1 in February from the month before, after a 6.8 drop in January. "The rebound in industrial production in February wasn't strong enough to prevent a slump in output last quarter and we reiterate our forecast that GDP shrank in Q1," Marcel Thieliant of Capital Economics said in a commentary.

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ENERGY: Trading stopped for the long Easter weekend. On Thursday, benchmark U.S. crude rose 56 cents to \$64.94 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 74 cents to \$70.27 per barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 106.22 yen from 106.43 yen on Thursday. The euro strengthened to \$1.2317 from \$1.2301.

AP Business Writer Alex Veiga contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press.

Today in History

Today is Good Friday, March 30, the 89th day of 2018. There are 276 days left in the year. The Jewish holiday Passover begins at sunset.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 30, 1981, President Ronald Reagan was shot and seriously injured outside a Washington, D.C. hotel by John W. Hinckley, Jr.; also wounded were White House press secretary James Brady, Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy and a District of Columbia police officer, Thomas Delahanty.

On this date:

In 1822, Florida became a United States territory.

In 1842, Dr. Crawford W. Long of Jefferson, Georgia, first used ether as an anesthetic during an operation to remove a patient's neck tumor.

In 1867, U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward reached agreement with Russia to purchase the territory of Alaska for \$7.2 million, a deal ridiculed by critics as "Seward's Folly."

In 1870, the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibited denying citizens the right to vote and hold office on the basis of race, was declared in effect by Secretary of State Hamilton Fish. Texas was readmitted to the Union.

In 1923, the Cunard liner RMS Laconia became the first passenger ship to circle the globe as it arrived in New York.

In 1945, during World War II, the Soviet Union invaded Austria with the goal of taking Vienna, which it accomplished two weeks later.

In 1959, a narrowly divided U.S. Supreme Court, in *Bartkus v. Illinois*, ruled that a conviction in state court following an acquittal in federal court for the same crime did not constitute double jeopardy.

In 1964, John Glenn withdrew from the Ohio race for the U.S. Senate because of injuries suffered in a fall. The original version of the TV game show "Jeopardy!," hosted by Art Fleming, premiered on NBC.

In 1975, as the Vietnam War neared its end, Communist forces occupied the city of Da Nang.

In 1991, Patricia Bowman of Jupiter, Florida, told authorities she'd been raped hours earlier by William Kennedy Smith, the nephew of Sen. Edward Kennedy, at the family's Palm Beach estate. (Smith was acquitted at trial.)

In 2002, Britain's Queen Mother Elizabeth died at Royal Lodge, Windsor, outside London; she was 101 years old.

In 2006, American reporter Jill Carroll, a freelancer for The Christian Science Monitor, was released after 82 days as a hostage in Iraq.

Ten years ago: The U.S. Army said the remains of Sgt. Keith Matthew Maupin (MAW'-pin), captured in Iraq in 2004, had been found and identified. Chinese spectators cheered as Greece handed off the Olympic flame for its journey to Beijing and relay through 20 countries, but protesters brandishing Tibetan flags stole the limelight. President George W. Bush threw out the ceremonial first pitch at Washington's new stadium, Nationals Park; the Washington Nationals defeated the Atlanta Braves, 3-2, in the first regular-season game played at the park. Cambodian-born journalist Dith Pran, whose story became the subject of the award-winning film "The Killing Fields," died in New Brunswick, New Jersey, at age 65.

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Five years ago: Kaufman County, Texas, District Attorney Mike McLelland and his wife, Cynthia, were found killed in their house two months after one of his assistants, Mark Hasse, was gunned down near their office. (Ex-Justice of the Peace Eric Williams was later sentenced to death for the murder of Cynthia McLelland while his wife, Kim, received 40 years for her role in the killings.) The Associated Press became the first international news agency to open a bureau in Myanmar. Phil Ramone, 79, the masterful award-winning engineer, arranger and producer, died in New York.

One year ago: A massive fire caused an interstate bridge to collapse during rush hour in Atlanta; no one was hurt. (A homeless man has been charged with arson and criminal damage to property.) North Carolina rolled back its "bathroom bill" in a bid to end a yearlong backlash over transgender rights that had cost the state dearly in business projects, conventions and basketball tournaments. At Cape Canaveral, SpaceX successfully launched and then retrieved its first recycled rocket. Twitter said it was easing its 140-character limit in replies.

Today's Birthdays: Game show host Peter Marshall is 92. Actor John Astin is 88. Actor-director Warren Beatty is 81. Rock musician Graeme Edge (The Moody Blues) is 77. Rock musician Eric Clapton is 73. Actor Justin Deas is 70. Actor Paul Reiser is 62. Rap artist MC Hammer is 55. Singer Tracy Chapman is 54. Actor Ian Ziering (EYE'-an ZEER'-ing) is 54. TV personality Piers Morgan is 53. Rock musician Joey Castillo is 52. Actress Donna D'Errico is 50. Singer Celine Dion is 50. Actor Mark Consuelos is 47. Actress Bahar Soomekh is 43. Actress Jessica Cauffiel is 42. Singer Norah Jones is 39. Actress Fiona Gubelmann is 38. Actress Katy Mixon is 37. Actor Jason Dohring is 36. Country singer Justin Moore is 34. Actress Tessa Ferrer is 32. Country singer Thomas Rhett is 28. Rapper NF is 27.

Thought for Today: "In the best of times, our days are numbered anyway. So it would be a crime against nature for any generation to take the world crisis so solemnly that it put off enjoying those things for which we were designed in the first place: the opportunity to do good work, to enjoy friends, to fall in love, to hit a ball, and to bounce a baby." — Alistair Cooke, British-born American broadcaster (born 1908, died this date in 2004).