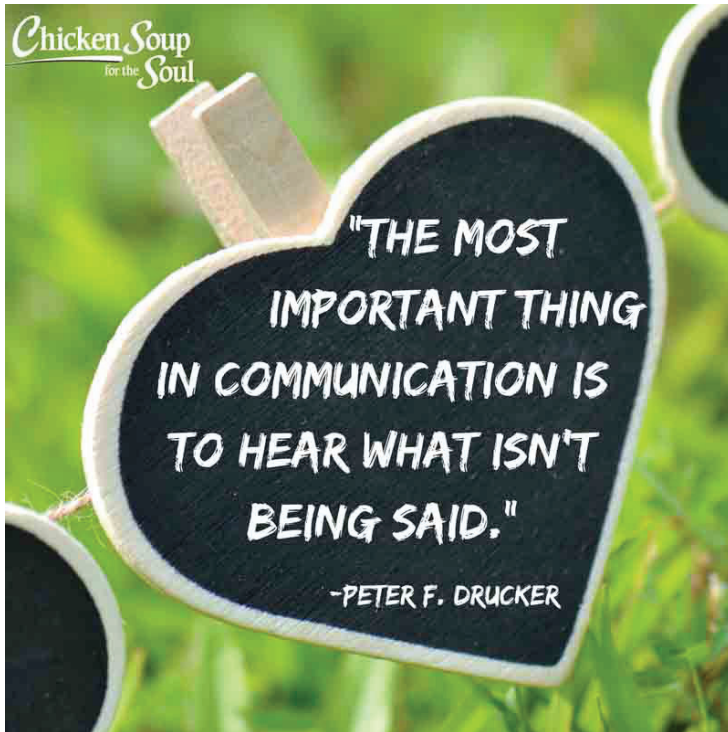


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- 1- Dakota Outdoors Ad
- 1- Blood Drive Ad
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 2- City Council Agenda
- 2- Help Wanted at Langford's Front Porch
- 2- Carlson Bridal Shower
- 3- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column
- 4- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column
- 5- Rep. Noem's Weekly Column
- 5- Kindergarten Screening Ad
- 6- Gov. Dugaard's Weekly Column
- 7- Today in Weather History
- 8- Today's Forecast
- 9- Yesterday's Weather
- 9- National Weather map
- 9- Today's Weather Almanac
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

Saturday: Prom at GHS, Grand March at 7 p.m.
Monday, April 16: Girls Golf at Milbank postponed
Monday, April 16: JH Track at Ipswich is cancelled
Tuesday, April 17: Track at Webster is cancelled
Tuesday, April 17: Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 18: NSU Math Contest, 9 a.m.
Thursday, April 19: JH Track Meet at Groton, 3:30 p.m.

Dakota Outdoors

Erik Dean

402 N Main St
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605.229.0123

dakoutdoors@midconetwork.com

Blood Drive!

Monday, April 16
Noon to 6 p.m.
Groton American Legion

To make an appointment, call **JUST**
Carol Osterman: 397-8498 **1 DONATION**
or June Ackman: 397-8369 **SAVES**
3 LIVES

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

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The big blizzard hit at exactly 7 o'clock, as scheduled. Oh, wait, it was suppose to hit at 7 a.m. and it actually hit at 7 p.m. Just talked with Don Hoops in Huron and he said they've had 14-18 inches of snow and it's snowing down there. We only received about half-inch to three-quarters inch of snow; otherwise, yesterday was a beautiful day in the northern parts of South Dakota. Can't say the same for the rest of the state where the Interstate system was entirely shut down last night and only a section from North Dakota to Summit is open. It's open between Rapid City and Wall, but only to local traffic.



Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

April 16, 2018 – 7:00pm
Groton Community Center

Help Wanted

Full-time and Part-time cook positions available at The Front Porch in Langford. Day and evening hours available. Apply in person or call 605-493-6570, ask for Suzie. (0411.0418)

Bridal Shower

A bridal shower for Holly Carlson, bride-to-be of Tyler Candor, will be held Saturday, April 28, 2018, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton.

1. Minutes
2. Bills
3. March Finance Report
4. Department Reports
5. Vander Vorst Family donated 2 benches for the City park
6. Northeast Area Finance Officer Group Meeting – April 19th in Aberdeen
7. Human Resource and Finance Officer School – June 5-8th in Sioux Falls
8. Swimming pool season updates – Pool Managers
9. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
10. Hire summer employees



Working Hard to Advance Pro-Growth Economic Policies

Each year in April, millions of Americans file their federal income tax returns. This year's tax day will be the final year using the old, broken system. Because of the recently-passed historic Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, next year will be the first year we can file under the modernized tax code. But already, Americans are feeling the benefits.

In addition to simplifying the tax filing process, the tax reform law has allowed more Americans to keep more of their hard-earned dollars. Businesses large and small are hiring more workers, increasing wages and offering other benefits to employees. The average American family will get to keep more than \$2,000 this year under our tax law. In addition to lowering the rates for every income bracket, this law doubles the standard deduction, doubles the child tax credit and repeals Obamacare's individual mandate which imposed an unfair tax on families making less than \$50,000 a year. All of this will help to grow a healthy, American economy.

Congress and the administration are working hard to advance pro-growth economic policies. In addition to the historic Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, this includes rolling back thousands of unnecessary, burdensome regulations that were stifling economic growth. However, as South Dakotans have heard me say time and again, we must also focus on changing our budget process and getting our debt under control if we want to have a healthy economy in the long-term.

We know that the budget process Congress has in place today is not working. Instead of thoughtfully debating how to fund federal programs and agencies each year, Congress has resorted to passing short-term spending bills that often lack any policy changes and continue to fund the government at the same levels as the year before. It is not a sustainable way to do business.

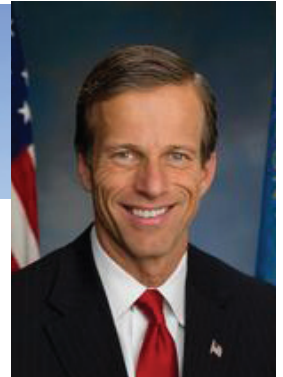
The long-term driver of our federal debt and deficit remains the rapid, unchecked growth of mandatory payments, including Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Already, spending on these mandatory payments, as well as interest on our debt, account for 70 percent of all federal spending. And, according to the latest budget outlook, this level is expected to rise to nearly 80 percent within the next ten years.

Since the passage of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, Congress has not exercised proper oversight of mandatory payment programs. There is no specific committee with oversight over the efficiency of these necessary expenditures. Instead, Congress has focused on defense and non-defense discretionary spending, which makes up just over a quarter of our entire budget today.

If Congress can change the way it manages the budget to include proper oversight of mandatory payments, we can begin to get our spending under control. This does not necessarily mean cutting important programs—it means actively managing them to make them sustainable for generations to come.

I'm working with a number of my colleagues in the Senate toward fixing our budget process so we can finally address our budget crisis once and for all. We have made significant gains in growing our economy over the last year, and getting our debt under control is an important part of achieving long-term economic success.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Preventing a Privacy Nightmare for Facebook Users

Mark Zuckerberg is nearly as much of a household name as the platform he created itself. Facebook, which was developed by Zuckerberg in his college dorm room, has revolutionized how people connect with one another. Each month, it's used by more than 2 billion people from all corners of the world – 1.4 billion people use it every single day. That's more than four times the population of the United States and 1500 times the population of South Dakota.

People have the ability to share a wide variety of content on Facebook. Nearly half of American adults say they receive at least some of their news on the platform, among other content like photos, updates about family and friends, articles, and opinions. In fact, it's possible that you found this very column through a Facebook post in your newsfeed. If you're viewing this online, there's likely a button nearby that would allow you to quickly share it with your Facebook community. That's how engrained the platform has become in so many Americans' daily lives.

As many of these users have come to find out, though, social media platforms, including Facebook, are not immune to online vulnerabilities. And if you take the possibility of a hack, data breach, or simply a breach of trust and expand it over a multi-billion-person community, there's a strong potential for adverse effects, no matter how powerful a communication tool it is.

One recent incident involving Facebook and data analytics firm Cambridge Analytica led to a historic hearing on Capitol Hill, which I was fortunate enough to lead. The Senate Commerce Committee, which I chair, has jurisdiction over federal consumer protection efforts, among many other issues. We teamed up with the Senate Judiciary Committee to host a joint hearing that featured nearly half of the U.S. Senate and examined a significant breach of trust between Facebook and its users, one that led to the information of 87 million users being obtained by Cambridge Analytica.

While Mr. Zuckerberg provided answers to several of my questions, there's a lot more Congress needs to know, not just about this incident, but also how consumers are being protected across the internet ecosystem. We need to know that when Americans sign up for Facebook, other social media platforms, or use online tools, it's easy for them to understand exactly how the information they put online will be used and shared. We also need to know exactly how Facebook and others plan to take more responsibility for what happens on their platforms. And we need to ensure that political speech is strongly protected, whether it's left, right, or center.

As I told Mr. Zuckerberg at the hearing, in many ways, his story and the company he created represents the American Dream. Many people, young and old, are inspired by what he's accomplished. But at the same time, it's up to him to ensure that dream doesn't become a privacy nightmare for the millions of Americans who use Facebook. If he fails to do so, new laws may be necessary to secure Americans' privacy. The world is watching, and Congress is, too.

KRISTI NOEM
REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH DAKOTA



Tax Reform: Making Taxes Less Taxing

When you sent in your 2017 taxes, you filed your last return under the old tax code. Because of the historic tax cuts I helped negotiate with President Trump, next year's bill will be significantly lower for many. In fact, the average South Dakota family of four is projected to save more than \$2,400.

For me, the bottom line has always been that you work hard for your money and the federal government ought to respect that. It's because of this foundational principle that I pushed, as one of only five House Republicans on the final negotiating team, for lower tax rates and to double the standard deduction. It's also why I fought beside Ivanka Trump to double the Child Tax Credit and maintain the Child Care Credit. We also eliminated the marriage penalty and won key provisions for farmers, ranchers, and South Dakota job creators.

But until a person punches in the numbers, it can be difficult to conceptualize what these changes really mean. Rather than waiting for Tax Day 2019, I wanted to share a few examples of what you can expect. Let's look at Jim and Kelsie. Both are teachers making \$45,600 each, which is about average in South Dakota. The couple has two children. Under previous law, the family would owe \$6,288. Because their tax rate fell, their standard deduction was doubled, and their Child Tax Credit went from \$1,000 per child to \$2,000 per child, Jim and Kelsie will now owe \$3,683 – a \$2,605 savings!

Let's look at another example. Liz has been working in marketing for seven years. She makes around \$54,000 and doesn't have any children. Because of the historic tax cuts, Liz will get to keep an extra \$100 a month from her paycheck, helping her save for a much-needed new car.

For many, the benefit on their tax returns is only part of it. Millions across the country have received bonuses, pay raises, or better benefits. Many companies – including major employers like Walmart – have increased their minimum wages. We're seeing new companies pop up, energy costs are going down, and people are feeling more confident about the direction our country is headed in.

At the end of the day, around 90 percent of Americans will see an increase in their take-home pay because of the tax cuts. It was the honor of a lifetime to work with President Trump to negotiate this deal and help deliver on his agenda to make taxes just a little less taxing on South Dakota families.

2018 Groton Area Elementary

Kindergarten Roundup (Screening) for children turning

5 on or before September 1, 2018

When: Friday, April 20

Parents of children who will be turning 5 on or before September 1, 2018, in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to set up a screening time or to confirm their screening time.

***Students currently attending Junior Kindergarten will not be screened at this time.**

Packets will be sent home shortly with a scheduled time and additional paperwork that will need to be completed.

Kindergarten Roundup will take place at the Groton Area Elementary School. Please check in at the office.



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A Legacy That Still Inspires

This coming week will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Gov. George S. Mickelson. On April 19, 1993, Governor Mickelson was returning from Cincinnati, Ohio, where he had been meeting with the owners of the John Morrell packing plant in Sioux Falls. The plane crashed near Dubuque, Iowa.

On board with Mickelson were Roland Dolly, commissioner of the Governor's Office of Economic Development; Ron Reed, director of the State Office of Energy Policy; Angus Anson, general manager for Northern States Power in South Dakota; Dave Birkeland, president and CEO of First Bank of South Dakota; Roger Hainje, president of the Sioux Falls Development Foundation; and state pilots Ron Becker and David Hansen.

Losing Governor Mickelson was a shock for every South Dakotan, and many knew other passengers as well. I had attended country school with Roger Hainje and our families were good friends; in fact, his younger brother was the best man in my wedding. Dave Birkeland had given me my first job in banking when I returned to Sioux Falls after law school.

It is hard to believe it has been 25 years since that terrible day. All these years later, Gov. Mickelson's legacy is still one that inspires us. As the Fighting Stallions Memorial recalls, "South Dakota was just a century old when a new leader emerged. Eyes sparkling with vision, he embraced life. His smile created instant friendship, his devotion to family inspired. With limitless energy and genuine compassion, he challenged us to realize bigger dreams. George Mickelson made a difference."

This year, the South Dakota State Legislature voted to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Governor Mickelson's death with a bronze bust of Mickelson, to be placed in the State House of Representatives lobby. Spearfish sculptor James Michael Maher displayed his clay bust in Pierre last month, and the bronze cast will be placed in the Capitol later this year.

The House lobby is a very suitable location for the Mickelson bust. Mickelson had been speaker of the house before he was governor. In fact, his middle name was "Speaker," because when he had been born in 1941, his father, George T. Mickelson, was speaker of the house. During the past two sessions, his son, G. Mark Mickelson, has served as speaker. The Mickelson bust will "bookend" a bronze bust of Peter Norbeck, another great South Dakota governor who is memorialized in the State Senate lobby.

South Dakota will never forget the tragic events of April 19, 1993. I hope, however, that we will also remember the example of public service set by George S. Mickelson and those who died with him. That is their true legacy to our state.

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Today in Weather History

April 14, 1991: Thawing ice on top of a television tower fell onto buildings below in Garden City, Clark County. The ice had accrued during a freezing rain event on the 11th and 12th. No one was injured, but damage estimates ranged from \$35,000-\$40,000.

April 14, 2005: A dust devil developed on the west side of Bison as a dry cold front passed through the area. As it moved east across town, it blew out windows on several automobiles, damaged a 160 square foot section of roof from a house, and tore shingles off several buildings. The dust devil also pulled a flagpole out of the ground. No one was injured. The dust devil was approximately 20 feet wide, and the path length was one and a half miles.

1873 - A famous Easter blizzard raged across Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota. Gale force winds blew the wet snow into massive drifts, however there were few deaths due to the sparse population and due to the gradual increase of the storm. (David Ludlum)

1886: The deadliest tornado in Minnesota history razed parts of St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids, leaving 72 dead and 213 injured. 11 members of a wedding party were killed including the bride and groom. The bottom of the Mississippi River was seen during the tornado's crossing.

1912: On her maiden voyage, the RMS Titanic rammed into an iceberg just before midnight. The "unsinkable ship" sank two hours and forty minutes later into the icy water of the Atlantic Ocean near Newfoundland, Canada. Tragically, 1,517 passengers including the crew were lost. A nearby ship, the Carpathia, rushed to the Titanic and was able to save 706 people.

1922: The Mississippi River reached a record height of 21.3 feet at New Orleans, Louisiana, and the river was still rising, with the crest still a week away. Understandably, the City of New Orleans was nervous as reports of levees failing upriver reached the city. A crevasse below New Orleans would relieve the pressure on the town's strained levees on the 27th, spared the city from disaster.

1935: Black Sunday refers to a particularly severe dust storm that occurred on April 14, 1935, as part of the Dust Bowl. During the afternoon, the residents of the Plains States were forced to take cover as a dust storm, or "black blizzard," blew through the region. The storm hit the Oklahoma Panhandle and Northwestern Oklahoma first and moved south for the remainder of the day. It hit Beaver around 4:00 p.m., Boise City around 5:15 p.m., and Amarillo, Texas, at 7:20 p.m. The conditions were the most severe in the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles, but the storm's effects were felt in other surrounding areas.

1987 - A storm system moving slowly northeastward across the Middle Mississippi Valley produced severe thunderstorms which spawned three tornadoes around Ottumwa IA, and produced up to four inches of rain in southeastern Nebraska, flooding rivers and streams. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A weather disturbance off the southern coast of California brought parts of southern California their first rain in six weeks. Rain-slickened roads resulted in numerous accidents in southern California, including a ten car pile-up at Riverside. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Late afternoon thunderstorms in northern Florida soaked the town of Golden Gate with 4.37 inches of rain in about two hours, resulting in local flooding. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in southeastern Texas during the mid morning hours. Thunderstorms produced dime size hail at Galveston, and wind gusts to 59 mph at Port Arthur. Afternoon thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana spawned tornadoes south of Bogalusa and at Rio. (Storm Data)

1999: In Sydney, Australia, a hailstorm causes \$1.6 billion in damage, making it the costliest hailstorm to strike a populated city in the country. The hail damaged some 22,000 homes and more than 60,000 vehicles. Also, aircraft damage at Sydney Airport was extensive.

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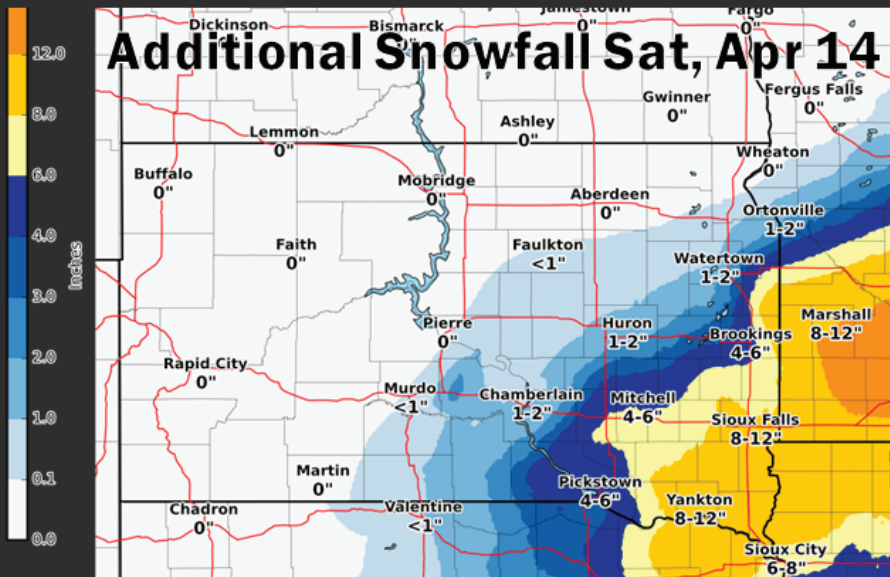
Sat Apr 14	Sun Apr 15	Mon Apr 16	Tue Apr 17	Wed Apr 18	Thu Apr 19	Fri Apr 20
33°F	38°F	43°F	44°F	43°F	47°F	46°F
18°F	16°F	27°F	31°F	26°F	28°F	35°F
NNE 21 MPH Precip 80%	NNE 10 MPH	SSE 8 MPH	ESE 21 MPH Precip 20%	NW 15 MPH Precip 40%	NW 10 MPH	NE 11 MPH



Blizzard Conditions Continue Today

Particularly across portions of eastern SD/western MN

Additional Snowfall Sat, Apr 14



Major impacts expected to continue today. Snowfall and strong winds exit from west to east this afternoon and early evening. Falling and blowing snow will result in continued significant reductions in visibility - travel is not recommended.

Tonight, low temps dip into the single digits across south central SD and teens/20's elsewhere.



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 4/14/2018 7:47 AM Central

Published on: 04/14/2018 at 7:53AM

A strong spring storm system will slowly exit the area today. Meanwhile, portions of eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota will continue experiencing heavy snow and blizzard conditions. Once conditions improve across the board by this early evening, cold air settles in. Possible record cold even across central/south central South Dakota.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 35.4 F at 12:00 AM

Low Outside Temp: 25.5 F at 8:01 PM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 36.0 Mph at 7:05 PM

Precip: About 3/4" inch of snow

Today's Info

Record High: 86° in 1942

Record Low: 9° in 1928

Average High: 57°F

Average Low: 31°F

Average Precip in April: 0.69

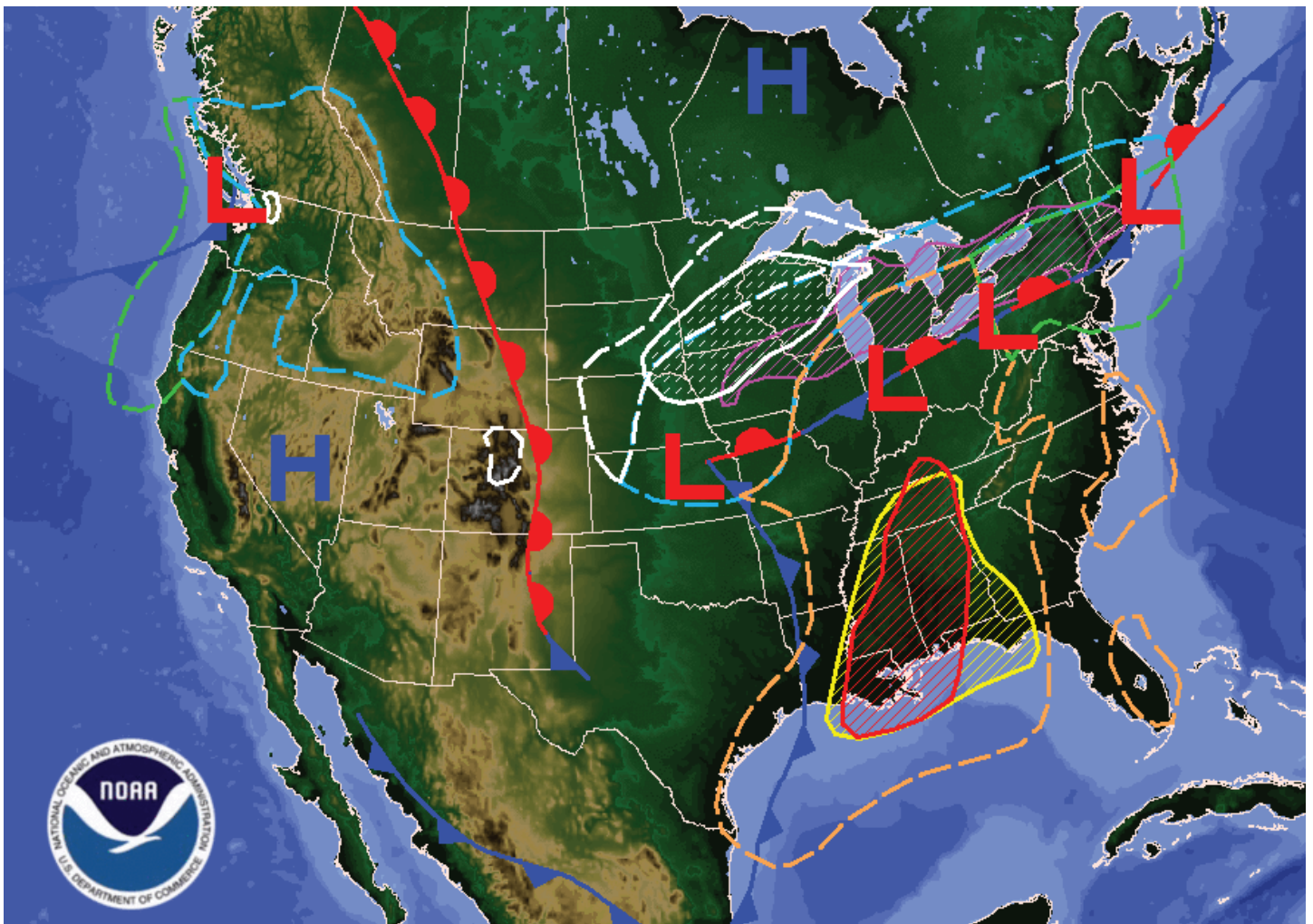
Precip to date in April: 0.61

Average Precip to date: 2.87

Precip Year to Date: 2.68

Sunset Tonight: 8:18 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:48



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Apr 14, 2018, issued 5:00 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds 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)



HOW MUCH MERCY IS ENOUGH?

Albert came home from school with bruises, a torn shirt and tears. "Fighting again?" sighed his mother. "I thought it was clear that you were to be a good Christian, not get angry and to stop getting into fights. Did you count to a hundred like I told you to?" she asked.

"Well, I tried," he said with resentment in his voice. "But John's mother told him to only count to fifty, and that's when he knocked me to the ground and jumped on me."

Many of us get angry quickly. But not the Lord. In Psalm 103:8 we read that "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love."

Imagine what life would be like with an angry God - one who was quick to punish us for any and every sin. Imagine, if you can, living life in fear of being "hammered" for breaking a commandment. And, if He were not compassionate and merciful, there would be no provision or pardon for our wrong-doings. Or again, if we were suffering and brokenhearted and filled with grief and guilt for betraying Him we would never hear Him say, "My grace is sufficient." In the Lord, we find mercy for our sins and comfort for our sorrows.

If God were not gracious, there would be no grace - no matter how wonderful and needed it is. But it only has significance when we understand that it means God, at no cost to us, will unconditionally and willingly forgive us of all of our sins. The Lord erases the ugliness of the past and provides us with clean, blank pages to fill with the potential of a new life committed to Him. Amazing grace!

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your love, combined with Your mercy that is freely ours because of Your grace. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 103:8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

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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

Storm system spawns tornado in Arkansas, blizzards in Plains

By STEVE KARNOWSKI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A potent spring storm system that's expected to persist through the weekend raked across the Midwest, spawning at least one tornado in Arkansas as blizzard conditions blanketed much of the Northern Plains.

A tornado ripped through the tiny Ozark Mountain town of Mountainburg, Arkansas, injuring at least four people and causing widespread damage Friday afternoon.

Crawford County Emergency Management Director Brad Thomas said there were at least three entrapments following the twister. He said he did not know the condition of the four people hospitalized.

Video from the scene showed uprooted trees, overturned cars, damaged buildings and downed power lines.

The huge storm, packing enough energy to cause widespread disruption, isn't unprecedented for April, said Jake Beitlich, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

"We do get pretty powerful systems coming throughout the Midwest, and on the cold side we do get snow. And this one is particularly strong. So we do have a lot of moisture with it, and a lot of energy," Beitlich said. "Over the next 24 hours cold air is going to get wrapped into this system and we're going to see a band of heavy snow develop from southwestern Minnesota through northern Wisconsin. Also we're going to have really strong winds, especially in western Minnesota."

Blizzard warnings stretched from northern Kansas across most of Nebraska and South Dakota into southwestern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa, with winter storm warnings and watches covering most of the rest of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Heavy snow already blanketed parts of western Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota by early afternoon Friday, closing major highways in South Dakota and many roads and highways in western Nebraska — including a 200-mile stretch of cross-country thoroughfare Interstate 80 from North Platte west to the Wyoming border.

A road conditions report said most roads in the Nebraska Panhandle to east of Valentine in the northern part of the state were impassable because of heavy snow cover.

The snow also led officials to shut down the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, airport Friday afternoon through Saturday night.

Snow, freezing rain and high winds were expected through Saturday night, with heavy ice accumulations in parts of Michigan through Sunday morning.

A swath of southern Minnesota, including Minneapolis though northern Wisconsin, was expected to get 8 to 12 inches of snow or more. Parts of northern Nebraska could get up to 18 inches, with up to 12 inches in northwestern Iowa. Wind gusts of up to 50 mph will make travel hazardous.

The National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma, had issued tornado watches Friday for eastern Texas and western Louisiana, moving up through eastern Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas and into Missouri and Iowa. The weather service also warned of the potential for strong thunderstorms, large hail and damaging winds for Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and eastern portions of Texas.

In Conway, Arkansas, strong winds caused damage at several buildings at the University of Central Arkansas on Friday. The school said on its Facebook page that students were evacuated from an all-female freshman dormitory after its roof was damaged. No injuries were reported.

In Mountain Home in northern Arkansas, authorities evacuated a nursing home after its roof was severely damaged by heavy winds. Police said no injuries were reported.

The threat of severe weather prompted officials with the French Quarter Festival in New Orleans to cancel all of Saturday's events, held outdoors across 23 stages scattered throughout the historic neighborhood. Organizers said the festival will reopen for its final day on Sunday at 11 a.m.

Forecasters said Alabama was also at risk for a weekend of severe weather, with the National Weather

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Service predicting storms beginning over north Alabama early Saturday will create a threat of winds up to 60 mph and tornadoes through Sunday.

The Storm Prediction Center said there's an enhanced risk of bad weather in an area that includes Birmingham, Huntsville and Mobile, and that Montgomery is on the fringe of the risk area.

Severe thunderstorms also popped up to the north Friday morning in parts of Wisconsin, Minnesota and South Dakota. Golf ball-sized hail fell Friday morning in parts of southwestern Wisconsin, covering the ground like snow in Richland Center and Gays Mills. Large hail also fell in Parker in southeastern South Dakota while pea-sized hail fell in nearby Sioux Falls.

"That that just kind of again speaks to how strong the system is, where you're going to get a lot of snow on the cold side, and severe thunderstorms in the warm part of the storm," Beitlich said.

In South Dakota, where a blizzard warning covered much of the state, authorities issued no-travel advisories for many highways and closed much of Interstate 90 in the western half of the state. Gov. Dennis Daugaard closed state government offices in 32 counties ahead the approaching blizzard. Dozens of school districts canceled classes ahead of snow accumulation expected to reach as much as 18 inches in some areas. Rapid City had already received 5.5 inches by 10 a.m.

Dangerous fire weather conditions in Oklahoma contributed to wildfires that forced hundreds of people to evacuate their homes near Woodward, about 125 miles (200 kilometers) northeast of Oklahoma City. Emergency crews in western Texas were also battling wildfires amid forecasts of extreme fire danger.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

08-09-32-42-59, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 4

(eight, nine, thirty-two, forty-two, fifty-nine; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$55 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$106 million

Podium that survived Hoven fire still collecting signatures

By KATHERINE GRANDSTRAND, Aberdeen American News

HOVEN, S.D. (AP) — When Hoven High School teacher Linda Coyne was the new kid in town, she took possession of a wooden half-podium from the outgoing agriculture teacher.

"When I started teaching, I sort of inherited everything nobody else wanted at the high school," she said. "You know, first-year teacher, you're not going to be ordering this or that. Somehow or another, this podium ended up in my room."

That was back in 1976, eight years after Coyne graduated from Hoven High School.

Coyne teaches social studies and French, the same subjects as when she started her career as a teacher in the early 1970s in Hot Springs.

"I'm now the senior member of the staff, when I used to be, years ago, the youngest member of the staff," she said. "Funny how that happens."

Once she became a fixture at the school, Coyne said the students started adding signatures to her podium in the 1990s.

"I'm sure the first one I probably scolded and said, 'Don't you be writing on this thing,'" Coyne said. "Then it kind of happened that the next time I'd look at it there'd be a few more signatures and a few more. Some of them had even written on the inside of it to make sure that it doesn't get erased by someone else's name."

Now, when former students stop by to visit, they'll check out the podium to see if their name is still there. "First thing they do is they go look and make sure their name is still on there," Coyne said.

The Aberdeen American News reports that the podium somehow survived the 2014 Memorial Day weekend fire in the old Hoven High School building.

"I had it covered with a black garbage bag, and when I pulled the garbage bag off, I was really afraid that the names were going to come with it, and some probably did," Coyne said. "But I aired it out on the patio all summer after the fire — just let it sit out there, rain or shine — and that kind of got the smell out of it, and before school started, I put a coat of varnish over it."

She was hoping that would preserve the names. But the varnish didn't stop the tradition.

"They've added," Coyne said. "That was just so that if I wiped it off with something, it wouldn't come off on your hand."

Because of the classes she teaches, practically everyone who graduates from Hoven High School winds up signing the podium, Coyne said.

"A lot of lessons have been taught from that podium," she said. "As long as it's holding up — I've had a few slivers from it, but you just learn to avoid those spots."

While she has no immediate plans to retire — Coyne said she wants to keep teaching as long as she's healthy — when she does, the podium will find a new home at her home.

"It's a little out of place in the modern setting of the new school," she said. "I don't think it would mean anything to anyone else."

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

Did justice prevail in USD football players accused of rape?

By DANIELLE FERGUSON, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The thought of someone convicted of illegal sexual contact walking around a college campus is disturbing to rape victim Tara-Claire Whalen.

Whalen, a sophomore at the University of South Dakota, was shocked when in October, the heart of football season, two of the school's players were arrested on rape charges stemming from an incident at an off-campus residence.

What concerns her now is that one of them, who admitted to his involvement and was criminally convicted, is still enrolled.

"It's terrifying to think someone who should be in jail isn't and can still be walking around our campus and still has the potential to do this to someone else," said Whalen, who is part of student organization PAVE: Promoting Awareness, Victim Empowerment.

The Argus Leader reports Danny Rambo Jr., a USD junior, was charged with second-degree rape after a woman reported being sexually assaulted by him and another student, Dale Williamson Jr., while she was having consensual sex with a different student, who was also a football player. Williamson was charged with attempted rape and has pleaded not guilty.

In November, an arrest warrant for a separate case was issued for Williamson. He was charged with second- and third-degree rape from a March 2017 incident. Williamson is awaiting trial on both cases.

Neither individual is on the football roster, the university confirmed. Williamson is no longer enrolled.

Rambo's criminal case has closed up: he pleaded guilty to a lesser charge and received his sentence in February, leaving some to wonder how a student who admitted to a crime involving sexual contact can remain on campus.

But criminal procedures and college disciplinary processes are separate, and universities are strapped in their ability to respond until their own Title IX investigation can be completed.

USD officials said in October a Title IX investigation was taking place but have not said if it was completed.

"With the exception of interim measures and the general authority to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community, no action is taken against a student accused of violating the Student Code of

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Conduct until the conduct process is concluded and the student is found to have engaged in prohibited conduct," South Dakota Board of Regents general counsel Guilherme Costa said in an email.

Rambo is still enrolled at the university and won't be seeing much jail time, a result that isn't uncommon locally and nationwide. That's true even for an incident that was jarring when it was first reported last fall.

The victim and two of her friends joined Williamson, Rambo and another USD football player to watch a movie in his bedroom at an off-campus residence on Oct. 22, according to an affidavit for an arrest warrant.

The victim's friends left the residence, and Williamson and Rambo exited the room at 10:26 p.m., according to the court document.

The victim texted her friend until 11:06 p.m., when she told her friend that she and the third student were going to have consensual sex, according to the court documents. Rambo and Williamson re-entered the room without the victim's knowledge.

Rambo, according to court documents, approached the victim without her knowing and penetrated her with his fingers. She stopped him and he left the room. Williamson twice tried to force the victim to give him oral sex, according to the affidavit.

The victim told police that the other player, who is a senior and will graduate, did not seem surprised that Rambo and Williamson entered the room. She also said he did not ask them to leave the room.

The three players were suspended from the football team.

Rambo, 21, was initially charged with second-degree rape. In February, as part of a plea deal, he pleaded guilty to sexual contact without consent with a person capable of consenting, a Class 1 misdemeanor with a maximum sentence of a year in county jail. The charge does not require Rambo to register as a sex offender.

Rape in the second degree is a Class 1 felony, which would have given the judge the opportunity to sentence up to 50 years in prison.

Rambo was sentenced to spend 10 days in the Clay County Jail, starting Nov. 1.

Jason Rumpca, a Beresford lawyer who handled the defense proceedings, declined to comment beyond providing sentencing information.

Clay County State's Attorney Alexis Tracy said she was unable to comment on Rambo's case, as it is connected with Williamson's currently open case. But experts say a drastic drop in sentence parameters and charge level is nothing new in cases involving a sexual crime.

Sexual crime cases hinge upon victim involvement, said Minnehaha County State's Attorney Aaron McGowan. From identifying the assailant, if possible, to repeatedly providing intricate details to an intimately harrowing experience, the court process can be another barrier to closure.

But softer sentences can also be difficult to grasp.

"It's rough on victims when it gets (pleaded) down because a lot of them come to us and want justice to be done," said Michelle Markgraf, director of the Compass Center for sexual assault and domestic violence advocacy in Sioux Falls. "They don't see that as justice happening."

Each sexual assault case is unique. Best-case scenarios involve a participating survivor, DNA evidence, physical evidence and witnesses — elements that would give a jury confidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the person being accused of the assault is guilty.

That's rare.

Rape cases are fluid, McGowan said. A victim can change his or her mind halfway through the process and not want to continue the case. There could be no physical evidence to counter a denial from the accused.

For cases where evidence is unavailable and a victim isn't ready to share in open court, prosecutors often try to get what they can, such as working with the defense to reach a plea deal, which isn't always satisfying justice.

"Even at the beginning of the process when I'm in the ER with somebody who is reporting a sexual assault and is considering a rape kit, they want to know at that point, am I going to get justice?" Markgraf said. "That's so tough for me as an advocate because the chances are they won't get justice just because these cases are hard to prosecute and very rarely do they go to trial."

Nationally, about 1 in 10 rapists see jail time, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network

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(RAINN). That number includes the two-thirds of rapes that don't get reported to law enforcement, according to the same site.

About 16.5 percent of those charged with rape were convicted, according to a 2009 data analysis on felony defendants from the country's 75 largest counties from the Bureau of Justice. The majority of those were reached in a plea deal with attorneys rather than a jury trial.

The same trend carries into cases involving a college student.

Former Stanford University swimmer Brock Turner was given a six-month sentence but was released after only three for good behavior after a jury found him guilty of multiple felonies from a 2015 assault of an unconscious woman behind a dumpster.

University of Colorado student Austin Wilkerson was convicted by a jury of sexually assaulting a woman in March 2014. Prosecutors said he "isolated and raped the half-conscious victim" after a St. Patrick's Day celebration, according to The Guardian, after he had told his friends that he was going to take care of her.

He saw no prison time, and instead was ordered two years of "work release" and 20 years to life on probation.

The reality of sentencing in these cases could serve as a barrier to future victims who are considering reporting the offense, Whalen said.

"It's terrifying that (Rambo) got sentenced to 10 days in jail after admitting he did this to a girl," the Mobridge native said. "If it would happen to me again, I (wouldn't) want to tell anyone because they just get a slap on the wrist. I feel like it's more of a downer on people who would want to report."

The victim in Rambo and Williamson's case didn't report the incident to police, according to court documents. Someone known to the victim reported it to university police.

"The victim was very reluctant about having an investigation started due to the backlash she believed she would suffer from the football team, student population and community," according to the affidavit.

The fear of backlash hovers over nearly every survivor who walks into the Compass Center, Markgraf said. They're often told by people in whom they confide that their assailant "would never do this."

"They're not believed a lot of the time. We've seen it a lot," Markgraf said.

It's even more intimidating when the accused has the high profile of an athlete.

ESPN's Outside the Lines did a five-year look at 10 major college sports programs across the country. It found that the status of an athlete has a "chilling effect" on whether cases were brought to police and how the cases were investigated.

More than 2,000 documents showed that athletes from the 10 schools examined benefited from the "confluence of factors" readily available to many college sports programs, such as quick access to high-profile attorneys and intimidation felt by witnesses to take on a well-known accuser.

"Numerous cases never resulted in charges because accusers and witnesses were afraid to detail wrongdoing, feared harassment from fans and the media, or were pressured to drop charges in the interest of the sports programs," according to Outside the Lines.

"It's surprising to think that anyone would do this, and athletes are held to a higher standard than most," Whalen said. "It was crazy to think that they would risk everything for what they thought was fun."

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

Blizzard closes Interstates 90, 29 and Sioux Falls airport

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Quickly deteriorating blizzard conditions have shut down large stretches of two major interstates in South Dakota and led Sioux Falls Regional Airport to close.

The airport will be closed until Saturday night. Several flights have been cancelled.

The Department of Transportation says heavy snow and strong winds are creating zero visibility in some areas. Interstate 90 is closed from Rapid City to Mitchell — a stretch of about 276 miles (444 km) — an area that crosses most of the state.

Interstate 29 is also closed from the North Dakota border to Brookings.

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Dozens of school districts canceled classes Friday as snow accumulation is expected to be 12 to 16 inches. Gov. Dennis Daugaard closed many state government offices and several events were postponed, including Brandon Valley High School's prom, which was moved to Sunday.

Sioux Falls says park's safety reviews are oral, not written

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls doesn't have any written reports of safety reviews conducted over the last decade for a park where several people have drowned, most recently last month.

City Hall issued a news release Thursday saying Falls Park safety reviews "were conducted orally, and no written reports were prepared for the city," the Argus Leader reported. The announcement followed the newspaper's request for a 2016 safety audit cited after 5-year-old Maggie Zaiger drowned at the park on March 19.

City officials used the safety audit to defend the park's safety protocol and to argue against making any changes. The newspaper discovered last month that the 2016 audit cited was a training exercise conducted for employees of the city's insurance company.

City Emergency Manager Regan Smith said he erred in calling the review an audit when addressing the media after Maggie's death. The insurance company relayed its findings to the city orally, he said.

The newspaper also requested documents two weeks ago from safety protocol reviews conducted after two people drowned at the park in 2013. Sioux Falls Parks Director Don Kearney cited the 2013 reviews last month as well as evidence that the park's safety measures are adequate after the March drowning.

Sioux Falls reviews park safety annually using a loss control consultant hired by the city's insurance company, according to the Thursday release.

Doug Kirkus is the Safety Benefits Inc. loss control consultant who conducted the annual assessments. Kirkus declined to comment citing client confidentiality with the city's insurance company.

He said he has "not sent any reports to the city."

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

GOP devotes \$250M to midterm strategy: Keep House majority

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican National Committee has committed \$250 million to a midterm election strategy that has one goal above all else: Preserve the party's House majority for the rest of President Donald Trump's first term.

Facing the prospect of a blue wave this fall, the White House's political arm is devoting unprecedented resources to building an army of paid staff and trained volunteers across more than two dozen states. The RNC is taking the fight to Senate Democrats in Republican-leaning states, but much of the national GOP's resources are focused on protecting Republican-held House seats in states including Florida, California and New York.

"Our No. 1 priority is keeping the House. We have to win the House," RNC political director Justin Johnson said. "That is the approach we took to put the budget together."

RNC officials shared details of their midterm spending plan with The Associated Press just as several hundred volunteers and staff held a day of action on Saturday in competitive regions across the country. The weekend show of force, which comes as Democrats have shown a significant enthusiasm advantage in the age of President Donald Trump, was designed to train 1,600 new volunteers in more than 200 events nationwide.

There were more than three dozen events in Florida alone, a state that features competitive races for the Senate, the governorship and a half dozen House races.

Seven months before Election Day, there are already 300 state-based staff on the RNC's payroll. The committee expects to have 900 total paid staff around the country — excluding its Washington headquar-

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ters — before November's election, Johnson said. The number of trained volunteers, he said, has already surpassed 10,000.

The strategy is expensive. And it carries risk.

The RNC's focus on a sophisticated field operation designed to identify and turn out key voters, an approach favored by former chairman Reince Priebus and expanded by Trump's hand-picked chairwoman, Ronna McDaniel, leaves the RNC with no additional resources to run advertising on television or the internet. It also puts tremendous pressure on the president and senior party leaders to raise money to fund the massive operation.

And few believe that even the best field operation could wholly neutralize the surge of Democratic enthusiasm on display in recent special elections, which has some Republican strategists fearing that the House majority may be lost already.

Democrats need to pick up at least 24 seats to take control of the House for the last two years of Trump's first term. They need just two seats to claim the Senate majority, though the map makes a Democratic Senate takeover much less likely.

An optimistic McDaniel said strong Republican fundraising has allowed the aggressive strategy. During the first year of Trump's presidency, the GOP set a fundraising record by raising more than \$132 million.

"Our sweeping infrastructure, combined with on-the-ground enthusiasm for President Trump and Republican policies, puts us in prime position to defend our majorities in 2018," McDaniel said.

The \$250 million price tag for what she described as a "permanent data-driven field program" is the committee's largest ground-game investment in any election season. The resources are focused in some unfamiliar territory, including several House districts in Southern California, which Johnson described as "a huge focus."

At a minimum, each targeted state features an RNC state director, a data director and at least a few staff devoted to each competitive House district. They are aggressively recruiting and training local volunteers to expand the GOP's presence in key communities.

The teams are larger in some states than in others.

In Florida, there are already 60 permanent field staff on the ground, Johnson said, including some dedicated to building relationships with the influx of Puerto Ricans who recently migrated from the hurricane-ravaged island. Johnson expects close to 150 paid staff on the ground in the state by Election Day.

And there are roughly two dozen paid staff already on the ground in Ohio and Nevada, he said. Both states feature competitive races for the House and Senate.

Nevada state director Dan Coats has been on the ground in the state for a year. He said the Nevada team already features directors for voter registration, volunteer training and strategic initiatives, which include Hispanic outreach.

"We're building a volunteer army that will be a turnkey operation for every Republican campaign up and down the ballot," Coats said. "A strong field game like the one we have here can and will make a difference."

Missouri governor's scandal ensnares unwitting hairdresser

By TAMMY WEBBER, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — She was a St. Louis hairdresser whose marriage was on the rocks. He was a handsome, educated and ambitious client who bedazzled her with talk of his time as a Navy SEAL, author and volunteer.

What began as a crush on future Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens, the woman told lawmakers, led to a series of sexual encounters in 2015 in which he grabbed, slapped, shoved, humiliated and threatened her, sometimes leaving her crying and afraid. Greitens has repeatedly denied being violent or threatening and insisted the monthlong affair was consensual and a "personal mistake" made before his election. He has called the investigation by a legislative panel a "political witch hunt."

The woman's account was made public in a graphic report released Wednesday by a group of House members weighing whether to impeach Greitens. If accurate, her description of events shows her being

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threatened by one man — Greitens — and betrayed by another — her ex-husband, who gave a television station a secretly recorded conversation in which she described the first sexual encounter with Greitens.

She's also been drawn unwittingly into an intensely political process that could invite attacks on her character and credibility. And the snowballing controversy has unfolded despite the fact that she has never been publicly identified, never went to police and never sought an investigation.

"I can't help but feel sorry for her," said Lisa Aronson Fontes, a senior lecturer at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and an expert on sexual violence and coercive relationships. "The very least each of us would like to be able to do is to control intimate, personal and embarrassing information about ourselves."

Greitens is scheduled to stand trial next month on a felony invasion-of-privacy charge related to the woman's claim that he took a photo of her partially nude body, then threatened to make it public if she disclosed their relationship.

She told the legislative panel that Greitens explained later that he planned to run for governor, and the photo was protection to ensure she did not speak about the encounter. She said he also told her he erased it.

Greitens, 44, became a rising star in the national Republican Party and a welcome partner for state GOP lawmakers after his election in 2016. He seemed to have his sights set on even higher office, having secured the web address EricGreitensforPresident.com years before running for governor.

The governor's attorneys have asked for the case to be dismissed, claiming that prosecutors' video of an interview with the woman backs up Greitens' claim of consent. That recording was shared with the defense Wednesday night, after the release of the legislative report, which Greitens' attorneys said amounted to prosecutorial perjury and misconduct.

Greitens refused to testify before the panel and has resisted calls from Democrats and Republicans to step down. He has not answered directly when asked if he took a photo. Lawmakers said they found the woman credible.

Her testimony paints a portrait of someone unsure about her own marriage. She and her husband were separated, and she was flattered that a "perfect guy" like Greitens would take an interest in her. He's a former Rhodes scholar, Navy SEAL officer, author and motivational speaker who gained a national platform after founding The Mission Continues charity to help military veterans become involved in their communities.

She testified that she didn't want a sexual relationship when she went to Greitens' home in March 2015 to discuss another matter. She said he asked her to change into different clothes and go to his basement because he wanted to take her through a workout and show her "how to do a proper pull-up."

She said he "taped my hands to these rings and then put a blindfold on me" and began touching and kissing her body. She said she saw a flash through the blindfold and he allegedly told her, "You're never going to mention my name," and said he would release the photo and "everyone will know what a little whore you are."

She said she was left crying hysterically, but performed oral sex on him because she felt that she had no other choice. But she said she continued to see the married Greitens because she wanted to believe he had feelings for her.

"I felt really disgusted with myself that I allowed that first time to happen. Really embarrassed that he thought of me as a whore," she testified. Meanwhile, her husband told her he didn't want anything to do with her, and Greitens had returned to being "normal and so kind to me."

"I wanted to think that he actually really liked me and wanted to have a relationship with me of sorts," she testified.

During another encounter, she testified, he slapped her across the face and again called her a whore after she admitted that she had slept with her husband: "I felt like he was trying to claim me."

Fontes said the woman described classic signs of coercive control.

If the allegations are true, "we're talking about a woman with relatively low social rank" and "a man with a lot of social power" that he used, along with a threat, to control her behavior, said Fontes, adding that an incident at the hair salon, when the woman said Greitens ran his hand up her leg and to her crotch without her consent, would have been sexual assault.

"It is understandable to me that she would want to try to understand what happened and assume it was

something other than assault," Fontes said of the first encounter at Greiten's house.

She also said a threat to distribute a photo, if true, erases any notion that the encounters were consensual.

"He was asserting extreme power over her, and she, like many women, was trying to appease him," Fontes said.

Paul DerOhannesian, a former prosecutor in New York who has written a book on sexual assault trials, said that if the first encounter happened the way the woman claims it did, she might not have recognized it as assault.

"I think people don't realize that if one of the parties changes their mind, at that point, it is no longer consensual," DerOhannesian said. "Being able to prove it is the issue."

Follow Tammy Webber on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/twebber02>

Bon Jovi, Simone, Dire Straits to be inducted into Rock Hall

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Bon Jovi, the Cars and four first-time nominees, including Nina Simone, will be inducted Saturday night as the 2018 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame class.

Dire Straits, The Moody Blues and Sister Rosetta Tharpe, who died in 1973, will also earn the prestigious honor at the organization's 33rd annual ceremony at Public Auditorium in Cleveland, where the Rock Hall is based.

Bon Jovi, who have sold more than 120 million albums and launched multiple No. 1 hits, was first nominated in 2011. Jon Bon Jovi will be inducted alongside current bandmates David Bryan and Tico Torres, as well as former members Richie Sambora and Alec John Such. Sambora left in 2013; Such left in 1994.

The frontman said though he and the other current members haven't spoken to Sambora since he left the group, he invites the performer, along with Such, to be part of the Rock Hall festivities. The band will be inducted by Howard Stern.

Brothers Mark and David Knopfler, of English rockers Dire Straits, won't attend the event, according to bassist John Illsley.

"He just didn't feel like coming, it's as simple as that," Illsley, in an interview with Billboard, said of Mark Knopfler. "It just didn't appeal to him, and I appealed to him on several occasions."

Tharpe will be inducted with the "Award for Early Influence," while the other five acts will be inducted as performers. She was a pioneering guitarist who performed gospel music and was known to some as "the godmother of rock 'n' roll." She will be inducted by Brittany Howard, of blues rock band Alabama Shakes.

The jazzy and soulful Simone, who died in 2003, was a leader in pushing for civil rights and influenced the likes of Alicia Keys and Aretha Franklin. Mary J. Blige will induct Simone, while Andra Day will sing in her honor.

Rock Hall voters have recently opened their hearts to progressive rockers, which benefited "Nights in White Satin" singers The Moody Blues, to be inducted by Ann Wilson of Heart. The Cars, founded in Boston in 1976, combined New Wave and classic rock sounds. This year marked the band's third nomination; Brandon Flowers, of The Killers, will induct the band.

The 2018 class were chosen from a group of 19 nominees, including Radiohead, who were expected to enter in the Rock Hall in their first year of eligibility, but didn't make it.

Each year, between five and seven acts usually make it into the Rock Hall following a vote by 1,000 people, including performers, music historians and industry experts. Fans also were able to vote on the Rock Hall's website. All of the inductees had to have released their first recording no later than 1992 to be eligible.

The event will air May 5 on HBO and will also be heard on SiriusXM Radio.

Online: <https://www.rockhall.com/>

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Trump uses phrase that haunted Bush: 'Mission Accomplished!'

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As he declares the U.S.-led airstrikes against Syria a success, President Donald Trump is adopting a phrase that a previous president came to regret — “mission accomplished.”

On Saturday, Trump tweeted: “A perfectly executed strike last night. Thank you to France and the United Kingdom for their wisdom and the power of their fine Military. Could not have had a better result. Mission Accomplished!”

In May 2003, President George W. Bush stood on an aircraft carrier under a giant “Mission Accomplished” banner and declared that “major combat operations in Iraq have ended” — just six weeks after the invasion.

But the war dragged on for many years after that and the banner became a symbol of U.S. misjudgments and mistakes in the long and costly conflict. Bush was heavily criticized for the move.

After shifting explanations, the White House eventually said the “Mission Accomplished” phrase referred to the carrier’s crew completing its 10-month mission, not the military completing its mission in Iraq.

Bush, in October 2003, disavowed any connection with the “Mission Accomplished” message. He said the White House had nothing to do with the banner; a spokesman later said the ship’s crew asked for the sign and the White House staff had it made by a private vendor.

Said former White House press secretary Dana Perino in 2008: “We have certainly paid a price for not being more specific on that banner.”

The Pentagon backed Trump’s assertion in his tweet Saturday, with chief Pentagon spokeswoman Dana White saying: “We met our objectives. We hit the sites, the heart of the chemical weapons program. So it was mission accomplished.”

She added, “What happens next depends on what the Assad regime decides to do.”

Milos Forman, Oscar-winning director, dies at 86

By ANTHONY MCCARTNEY, Associated Press

Czech filmmaker Milos Forman, whose American movies “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” and “Amadeus” won a deluge of Academy Awards, including best director Oscars, died Saturday. He was 86.

Forman died about 2 a.m. Saturday at Danbury Hospital, near his home in Warren, Connecticut, according to a statement released by the former director’s agent, Dennis Aspland. Aspland said Forman’s wife, Martina, notified him of the death.

When Forman arrived in Hollywood in the late 1960s, he was lacking in both money and English skills, but carried a portfolio of Czechoslovakian films much admired internationally for their quirky, lighthearted spirit. Among them were “Black Peter,” “Loves of a Blonde” and “The Fireman’s Ball.”

The orphan of Nazi Holocaust victims, Forman had abandoned his homeland after communist troops invaded in 1968 and crushed a brief period of political and artistic freedom known as the Prague Spring.

In America, his record as a Czech filmmaker was enough to gain him entree to Hollywood’s studios, but his early suggestions for film projects were quickly rejected. Among them were an adaptation of Franz Kafka’s novel “Amerika” and a comedy starring entertainer Jimmy Durante as a wealthy bear hunter in Czechoslovakia.

After his first U.S. film, 1969’s “Taking Off,” flopped, Forman didn’t get a chance to direct a major feature again for five years. He occupied himself during part of that time by covering the decathlon at the 1972 Olympics for the documentary “Visions of Eight.”

“Taking Off,” an amusing look at generational differences in a changing America, had won praise from critics who compared it favorably to Forman’s Czech films. But without any big-name stars it quickly tanked at the box office.

Actor Michael Douglas gave Forman a second chance, hiring him to direct “One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest,” which Douglas was co-producing.

The 1975 film, based on Ken Kesey’s novel about a misfit who leads mental institution inmates in a revolt against authority, captured every major Oscar at that year’s Academy Awards, the first film to do so since

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1934's "It Happened One Night."

The winners included Jack Nicholson as lead actor, Louise Fletcher as lead actress, screenwriters Bo Goldman and Lawrence Hauben, Forman as director and the film itself for best picture.

The director, who worked meticulously, spending months with screenwriters and overseeing every aspect of production, didn't release another film until 1979's "Hair."

The musical, about rebellious 1960s-era American youth, appealed to a director who had witnessed his own share of youthful rebellion against communist repression in Czechoslovakia. But by the time it came out, America's brief period of student revolt had long since faded, and the public wasn't interested.

"Ragtime" followed in 1981. The adaptation of E.L. Doctorow's novel, notable for Forman's ability to persuade his aging Connecticut neighbor Jimmy Cagney to end 20 years of retirement and play the corrupt police commissioner, also was a disappointment.

Forman returned to top form three years later, however, when he released "Amadeus."

Based on Peter Shaffer's play, it portrayed 18th century musical genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart as a foul-mouthed man-child, with lesser composer Salieri as his shadowy nemesis. It captured seven Academy Awards, including best picture, best director and best actor (for F. Murray Abraham as Salieri).

Hunting for locations, Forman realized Prague was the only European capital that had changed little since Mozart's time, but returning there initially filled him with dread.

His parents had died in a Nazi concentration camp when he was 9. He had been in Paris when the communists crushed the Prague Spring movement in 1968, and he hadn't bothered to return home, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1975.

The Czech government, realizing the money to be made by letting "Amadeus" be filmed in Prague, allowed Forman to come home, and the public hailed his return.

"There was an enormous affection for us doing the film," he remarked in 2002. "The people considered it a victory for me that the authorities had to bow to the almighty dollar and let the traitor back."

Never prolific, Forman's output slowed even more after "Amadeus," and his three subsequent films were disappointments.

"Valmont" (1989) reached audiences a year after "Dangerous Liaisons," both based on the same French novel.

"The People vs. Larry Flynt" (1996) was an ill-advised attempt to paint the Hustler magazine publisher as a free-speech advocate.

"Man on the Moon," based on the life of cult hero Andy Kaufman, did win its star, Jim Carrey, a Golden Globe. But it also failed to fully convey Kaufman's pioneering style of offbeat comedy or the reasons for his disdaining success at every turn.

Larry Karaszewski, who co-wrote "Man on the Moon" and "The People vs Larry Flynt" with Scott Alexander, called Forman "our friend and our teacher" on Twitter. "He was a master filmmaker - no one better at capturing small unrepeatable moments of human behavior."

Jan Tomas Forman, born in Caslav, Czechoslovakia, was raised by relatives after his parents' deaths and attended arts school in Prague.

The director's first marriage, to actress Jana Brejchova ended in divorce. He left his second wife, singer Vera Kresadlova, behind with the couple's twin sons when he left Czechoslovakia. He married Martina Zborilova in 1999. They also had twin sons.

Associated Press writer Bob Thomas in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show the name of the 1996 film about the Hustler magazine publisher is "The People vs. Larry Flynt," not "The People vs. Larry Flint."

Syrians gather in capital in defiance after airstrikes

By **BASSEM MROUE, BASSAM HATOUM and ALBERT AJI, Associated Press**

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Hundreds of Syrians gathered at landmark squares in the Syrian capital Saturday, honking their car horns, flashing victory signs and waving Syrian flags in scenes of defiance that followed unprecedented joint airstrikes by the United States, France and Britain.

A few hours earlier, before sunrise, loud explosions jolted Damascus and the sky turned orange as Syrian air defense units fired surface-to-air missiles in response to three waves of military strikes meant to punish President Bashar Assad for his alleged use of chemical weapons.

Associated Press reporters saw smoke rising from east Damascus and what appeared to be a flame lighting up the sky. From a distance, U.S. missiles hitting suburbs of the capital sounded like thunder. Shortly after the one-hour attack ended, vehicles with loudspeakers roamed the streets of Damascus blaring nationalist songs.

"Good souls will not be humiliated," Syria's presidency tweeted after the airstrikes began.

Immediately after the attack, hundreds of residents gathered in Damascus' landmark Omayyad square, celebrating what they said was the army's success in shooting down or derailing some of the missiles. Many waved Syrian, Russian and Iranian flags. Some clapped their hands and danced, others drove in convoys, honking their horns in defiance.

"We are not scared of America's missiles. We humiliated their missiles," said Mahmoud Ibrahim, half his body hanging outside his car window, waving a Syrian flag. The crowd then moved toward the nearby Damascus University where pro-government fighters danced, waving their automatic rifles over their heads.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced Friday night that the three allies had launched military strikes to punish Assad for alleged chemical weapons use and to prevent him from doing it again. Trump said Washington is prepared to "sustain" pressure on Assad until he ends what the president called a criminal pattern of killing his own people with internationally banned chemical weapons.

The Syrian government has repeatedly denied any use of banned weapons. A fact-finding team of inspectors from the international chemical weapons watchdog was in Damascus and had been expected to head to the town of Douma on Saturday, scene of the suspected chemical weapons attack that killed more than 40 people.

The seemingly limited strikes with no apparent future strategy for how to deal with the wider civil war was a cause for celebration by Assad supporters but criticized by the Syrian opposition.

Mohammad Alloush, spokesman for the Army of Islam rebel group, called the airstrikes a "farce" in a Twitter posting. Nasr al-Hariri, a senior opposition leader, said Syrians need a strategy that leads to a political solution to "save it from the brutality of the Syrian regime."

A Syrian military statement said in all, 110 missiles were fired by the U.S., Britain and France and that most of them were shot down or derailed. Russia's military said Syrian air defense units downed 71 out of 103 cruise missiles launched by the U.S. and its allies.

The Syrian statement read by Brig. Gen. Ali Mayhoub said three civilians were wounded in one of the strikes on a military base in Homs, although the attack was aborted by derailing the incoming missile. He said another attack with "a number of missiles" targeting a scientific research center in Barzeh, near Damascus, destroyed a building and caused other material damage but no human losses. Mayhoub said the building housed an educational center and labs.

An Associated Press journalist arriving at the Center for Scientific Research on the northeaster edge of Damascus found it still smoking hours after it was hit. The three-story building appeared to be almost completely destroyed. Saeed Saeed, an official at the center, told journalists the facility was for the development of chemical and pharmaceutical industries, including the development of cancer medicines and serum.

The attack began at 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) with missiles hitting the eastern suburbs of Damascus, shaking the grounds from a distance. The sky looked orange over eastern Damascus, apparently as a result of fires. Air defense units fired surface-to-air missiles from different directions toward incoming missiles.

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Syrian TV called the attacks a "blatant violation of international law and shows contempt for international legitimacy."

U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said there were no reports of U.S. losses during the initial airstrikes. "Right now this is a one-time shot," he said but did not rule out further attacks. He said the airstrikes were launched against several sites that helped provide Assad's ability to create chemical weapons.

France's foreign minister said the "chemical escalation" in Syria is not acceptable because it violated the rules of war and of humanity. Jean-Yves Le Drian told reporters Saturday that the joint military operation in Syria is legitimate, limited and proportionate.

British Prime Minister Theresa May described the attack as neither "about intervening in a civil war" nor "about regime change" but a limited and targeted strike that "does not further escalate tensions in the region" and does everything possible to prevent civilian casualties.

The decision to strike, after days of deliberations, marked Trump's second order to attack Syria; he authorized a barrage of Tomahawk cruise missiles to hit a single Syrian airfield in April 2017 in retaliation for Assad's use of sarin gas against civilians.

Trump chastised Syria's two main allies, Russia and Iran, for their roles in supporting "murderous dictators," and noted that Russian President Vladimir Putin had guaranteed a 2013 international agreement for Assad to get rid of all of his chemical weapons. He called on Moscow to change course and join the West in seeking a more responsible regime in Damascus.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that the attack on Syria was a "crime" and declared the leaders of the U.S., France and the U.K. "criminals," according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency. The Iranian Foreign Ministry strongly condemned the strikes and warned of unspecified consequences.

Russia's U.S. embassy released a statement warning that the airstrikes will "not be left without consequences." It said that "all responsibility" rests with Washington, London and Paris.

The United Nations Security Council is set to meet later Saturday following Russia's request.

The U.S. missile strike in April 2017 was meant to deter Assad from further use of chemical weapons. That operation targeted the airfield from which the Syrian aircraft had launched their gas attack. But the damage was limited, and a defiant Assad returned to episodic use of chlorine and perhaps other chemicals.

Friday's strikes were aimed at further degrading Assad's ability to carry out such attacks. Pentagon Gen. Joseph Dunford said besides the scientific research center, a chemical weapons storage facility west of Homs was also targeted that he said he believed to be the main site of Syrian sarin production equipment. A chemical weapons equipment storage facility and an important command post, also west of Homs, were also targeted, he said.

Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb and Zeina Karam in Beirut, Angela Charlton in Paris, and Amir Vahdat in Tehran, contributed reporting.

While in Peru, Pence briefs US lawmakers on Syrian strikes

By KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence, soon after arriving in Peru for a regional summit, fulfilled an urgent assignment from the White House: informing top American lawmakers about the U.S.-led airstrikes on Syria before the Trump administration's announcement.

Latin American leaders were to hear Saturday from Pence about President Donald Trump's decision to join with Britain and France in the military operation intended as a response to a suspected chemical attack last weekend.

Pence left the Summit of the Americas late Friday so he could confer with U.S. congressional leaders by telephone from his hotel suite about Trump's plans to announce the missile strikes. Pence then attended a banquet hosted by Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra.

Trump pulled out of the summit earlier in the week as he set the stage for an allied response in Syria. Pence's motorcade took him from opening events surrounding the summit about 45 minutes before Trump

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addressed the U.S. public on the military attack. Aides said Pence was in touch with Trump "multiple times" as he traveled to Peru aboard Air Force Two and conferred with national security adviser John Bolton.

Jarrold Agen, Pence's deputy chief of staff, said the vice president intended to update summit participants on Saturday.

Pence has scheduled talks with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto, who has yet to meet with Trump amid an impasse over the wall Trump has pledged to build along the U.S.-Mexico border, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Trump's recent call to send National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border has added further tensions just as Mexico and Canada work to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Much of Pence's message during his brief visit to Peru was expected to be aimed at building support for further isolating Venezuela, which has faced U.S. sanctions amid a political crisis led by President Nicolas Maduro.

Shortly after arriving in Lima, Pence said the U.S. would provide nearly \$16 million in humanitarian assistance to Venezuelans who have fled their country and met with opposition leaders who pleaded for more sanctions.

In a series of meetings with Latin American leaders, Pence planned to promote good governance and democratic institutions and urge allies to maintain pressure on Maduro. The U.S. has sanctioned Maduro and dozens of top officials, accusing the country of human rights abuses and sliding into a dictatorship.

Maduro has been barred from the summit over his plans to hold a presidential election that the opposition is boycotting and that many foreign governments consider a sham.

On Twitter follow Ken Thomas at <https://twitter.com/KThomasDC>

Possible House leader Kevin McCarthy seen by Trump as ally

By ALAN FRAM and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump and top Republicans dined on filet mignon at the White House this week, just hours after House Speaker Paul Ryan announced his stunning retirement, Trump and Ryan's top lieutenant found themselves with a moment alone.

Do you really want to be the next speaker of the House, Trump asked Kevin McCarthy, one of his closest allies in Congress. The Californian — the leading but undeclared contender — told the president he wants the job, according to two sources familiar with the conversation.

McCarthy emerged from the Wednesday evening chat confident he had Trump's backing to succeed Ryan, said one of the sources, a GOP operative. Trump tried not to explicitly endorse McCarthy, said the other source, but it was clear the president would be "very happy" for McCarthy to ascend to the post.

Both people spoke anonymously about the conversation because they weren't authorized to relay details of a politically sensitive but possibly critical exchange. Trump's embrace could be crucial for McCarthy, the No. 2 House Republican leader, if he wants to nail down support from conservative lawmakers who have been leery of his GOP establishment ties and could sink his bid.

But even in a contest of Republican lawmakers, a Trump endorsement is a double-edged sword. The president is unpopular in many suburban and other swing districts, and many Republicans don't want their leader to be viewed as beholden to the whims of the unpredictable president. Others bristle at the idea of presidential meddling in their contest.

"This is a matter to be decided by the legislative branch of government, not the executive branch," Rep. Leonard Lance, R-N.J., said of Trump supporting a candidate.

Still, the Trump factor will be hard to avoid. With Ryan's departure slated for January, Republicans will lose another establishment force who, at times, pushed back at Trump.

It's far from clear McCarthy intends to play the same role.

He was one of Trump's earliest supporters and has never flinched as Trump endured criticism for his comments on women, minorities and others.

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Since Trump's election, the two have advertised their close relationship and a buddy-movie-style bond. Aides say the two men speak frequently. Trump sometimes calls out "my Kevin" at events.

It's a partnership that's benefited both men.

In McCarthy, Trump has a Capitol Hill confidant who fits the president's tendency to pluck allies from central casting — McCarthy looks the part of the silver-haired politician with his sharp suits and ready smile. McCarthy boosts his conservative credentials every time he is able to flash his link to Trump.

Neither man is tethered to strict GOP dogma, which creates space for the deal-making both favor. Both like to rely on gut political instincts than expertise in guiding decisions.

In one speed bump in their relationship, The Washington Post reported that a leaked 2016 audiotape included a suggestion by McCarthy that Trump was being paid by Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom Trump repeatedly praised during the presidential campaign. McCarthy aides said the remark to other GOP leaders was a bad joke.

The leadership vacancy comes at an awkward time for a GOP that could face massive losses in this November's congressional elections, perhaps losing House control. That would make the top Republican in the House the minority leader, not speaker. Many Republicans say it's crucial that the party unify behind an effort to pass additional bills on taxes and other subjects and focus on re-election campaigns, not a divisive internal contest over the next leader.

In a sign of the desire to tamp down intra-party squabbling, Ryan himself endorsed McCarthy in an interview to be broadcast Sunday on NBC News' "Meet the Press," saying, "We all think that Kevin is the right person."

Even with backing from the top, McCarthy's grasp on the top job is uncertain. In 2015, his effort to succeed Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, flopped in just a few days as he failed to corral enough votes, especially from conservatives.

As if to underscore that problem, a leader of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus said he's "open to running" and has been encouraged by colleagues to do so. A candidacy by Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, would seem all but certain to fall short and would be widely viewed as a way for that group's roughly 30 members to win leverage by trading their support for promises of leadership and committee posts.

Ryan's successor will need to secure 218 GOP votes because the entire House votes on the speaker and all Democrats would be sure to oppose the Republican candidate.

No. 3 House Republican leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana, who is viewed as more conservative than McCarthy, is seen as his top rival for the post. While Scalise has said he wouldn't run against McCarthy — a longtime friend — he's left the door open for seeking the post should McCarthy's effort fall short.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said Friday that Trump "has a great relationship" with McCarthy but declined to say whom he wants as speaker. Aides to McCarthy and Scalise declined to immediately provide comment.

AP congressional correspondent Lisa Mascaro contributed.

Syrians gather in capital in defiance after airstrikes

By **BASSEM MROUE** and **BASSAM HATOUM**, Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Hundreds of Syrians gathered at landmark squares in the Syrian capital Saturday, honking their car horns, flashing victory signs and waving Syrian flags in scenes of defiance that followed unprecedented joint airstrikes by the United States, France and Britain.

A few hours earlier, before sunrise, loud explosions jolted Damascus and the sky turned orange as Syrian air defense units fired surface-to-air missiles in response to three waves of military strikes meant to punish President Bashar Assad for his alleged use of chemical weapons.

Associated Press reporters saw smoke rising from east Damascus and what appeared to be a fire light up the sky. From a distance, U.S. missiles hitting suburbs of the capital sounded like thunder. Shortly after the one-hour attack ended, vehicles with loudspeakers roamed the streets of Damascus blaring nationalist

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songs.

"Good souls will not be humiliated," Syria's presidency tweeted after the airstrikes began.

Immediately after the attack, hundreds of residents began gathering in the landmark Omayyad square of the Syrian capital. Many waved Syrian, Russian and Iranian flags. Some clapped their hands and danced, other drove in convoys, honking their horns in defiance.

"We are your men, Bashar," they shouted.

Syrian state TV broadcast live from the square where a large crowd of civilians mixed with men in uniforms, including an actor, lawmakers and other figures.

"Good morning steadfastness," one broadcaster said.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced Friday night that the three allies had launched military strikes to punish Syrian Assad for alleged chemical weapons use and to prevent him from doing it again. Trump said Washington is prepared to "sustain" pressure on Assad until he ends what the president called a criminal pattern of killing his own people with internationally banned chemical weapons.

The Syrian government has repeatedly denied any use of banned weapons. A fact-finding team of inspectors from the international chemical weapons watchdog was in Damascus and had been expected to head to the town of Douma on Saturday, scene of the suspected chemical weapons attack that killed more than 40 people.

Syrian TV said three civilians were wounded in one of the U.S.-led strikes on a military base in Homs, although the attack was aborted by derailing the incoming missile. It said another attack with "a number of missiles" targeting a scientific research center destroyed a building and caused other material damage but no human losses. The network says the building in the research center included an educational center and labs.

It said earlier that the attacks targeted a scientific research center in Barzeh, near Damascus, and an army depot near Homs.

Syrian media reported that air defenses had hit 13 incoming rockets south of Damascus. It said the

The attack began at 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) with missiles hitting the eastern suburbs of Damascus, shaking the grounds from a distance. The sky looked orange over eastern Damascus apparently as a result of fires caused by the missiles hitting Syria. Air defense units fired surface-to-air missiles from different directions toward incoming missiles.

At about sunrise, the sound of explosions could be heard just as the loudspeakers from the city's mosques called for morning prayers.

A car with loudspeakers blaring the national song "Oh Syria, You Are My Love" could be heard driving through central Damascus amid the attack.

Syrian TV called the attacks a "blatant violation of international law and shows contempt for international legitimacy."

U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said there were no reports of U.S. losses during the initial airstrikes.

"Right now this is a one-time shot," he said but did not rule out further attacks. He said the airstrikes were launched against several sites that helped provide Assad's ability to create chemical weapons.

Britain's defense ministry said that while the effectiveness of the strike is still being analyzed, "initial indications are that the precision of the Storm Shadow weapons and meticulous target planning have resulted in a successful attack."

British Prime Minister Theresa May describes the attack as neither "about intervening in a civil war" nor "about regime change" but a limited and targeted strike that "does not further escalate tensions in the region" and does everything possible to prevent civilian casualties.

"We would have preferred an alternative path. But on this occasion there is none," May said.

The decision to strike, after days of deliberations, marked Trump's second order to attack Syria; he authorized a barrage of Tomahawk cruise missiles to hit a single Syrian airfield in April 2017 in retaliation for Assad's use of sarin gas against civilians.

Trump chastised Syria's two main allies, Russia and Iran, for their roles in supporting "murderous dictators," and noted that Russian President Vladimir Putin had guaranteed a 2013 international agreement for

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Assad to get rid of all of his chemical weapons. He called on Moscow to change course and join the West in seeking a more responsible regime in Damascus.

Russia's U.S. embassy released a statement warning that the airstrikes will "not be left without consequences." It said that "all responsibility" rests with Washington, London and Paris.

The allied operation comes a year after a U.S. missile strike that Trump said was meant to deter Assad from further use of chemical weapons. Since that did not work, a more intense attack would aim to degrade his ability to carry out further such attacks, and would try to do this by hitting Syrian aircraft, military depots and chemical facilities, among other things.

The one-off missile strike in April 2017 targeted the airfield from which the Syrian aircraft had launched their gas attack. But the damage was limited, and a defiant Assad returned to episodic use of chlorine and perhaps other chemicals.

Friday's strikes appear to signal Trump's willingness to draw the United States more deeply into the Syrian conflict. The participation of British and French forces enables Trump to assert a wider international commitment against the use of chemical weapons, but the multi-pronged attack carries the risk of Russian retaliation.

In his nationwide address, Trump stressed that he has no interest in a longtime fight with Syria.

"America does not seek an indefinite presence in Syria under no circumstances," he said. "As other nations step up their contributions, we look forward to the day when we can bring our warriors home."

The U.S. has about 2,000 troops on the ground in Syria as advisers to a makeshift group of anti-Islamic State fighters known as the Syrian Democratic Forces. They are in eastern Syria, far from Damascus. A U.S.-led coalition has been conducting airstrikes in Syria since September 2014 as part of a largely successful effort to break the IS grip on both Syria and Iraq.

Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb and Zeina Karam in Beirut and Albert Aji in Damascus contributed reporting.

Trump: US, allied strikes aimed at Syria's chemical weapons

By **ROBERT BURNS, JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States, France and Britain launched military strikes in Syria to punish President Bashar Assad for an apparent chemical attack against civilians and to deter him from doing it again, President Donald Trump announced Friday. Pentagon officials said the attacks targeted the heart of Assad's programs to develop and produce chemical weapons.

Explosions lit up the skies over Damascus, the Syrian capital, as Trump spoke from the White House.

Syrian television reported that Syria's air defenses, which are substantial, responded to the attack. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said there were no reports of U.S. losses in what he described as a heavy but carefully limited assault.

Trump said the U.S. is prepared to sustain economic, diplomatic and military pressure on Assad until he ends what the president called a criminal pattern of killing his own people with internationally banned chemical weapons.

"The evil and the despicable attack left mothers and fathers, infants and children, thrashing in pain and gasping for air. These are not the actions of a man; they are crimes of a monster instead," Trump said.

Mattis, however, said the assault was a "one-time shot," so long as Assad does not repeat his use of chemical weapons.

The strikes were carried out by manned aircraft and from ships that launched cruise missiles from the Mediterranean Sea.

Mattis disclosed that the U.S. had not yet confirmed that the most recent suspected Syrian chemical weapons attack, on April 7 in the Damascus suburb of Douma, included the use of sarin gas. He said at least one chemical was used — chlorine, which also has legitimate industrial uses and had not previously triggered a U.S. military response.

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Mattis said the targets selected by U.S., British and French officials were meant to minimize civilian casualties.

"This is difficult to do in a situation like this," he said, in light of the volatility of chemical agents.

At a Pentagon news conference alongside Mattis, and with British and French military officers beside them to emphasize allied unity, Gen. Joseph Dunford said the attacks targeted mainly three targets in western Syria.

Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said missiles first struck a scientific research center in the Damascus area that he said was a center of Syrian research, development, production and testing of chemical and biological warfare technology. The second target was a chemical weapons storage facility west of Homs. He said this was believed to be the main site of Syrian sarin and precursor chemical production equipment.

The third target was a chemical weapons equipment storage facility and an important command post, also west of Homs, Dunford said.

British Prime Minister Theresa May said in London that the West had tried "every possible" diplomatic means to stop Assad from using chemical weapons. "But our efforts have been repeatedly thwarted" by Syria and Russia, she said.

"So there is no practicable alternative to the use of force to degrade and deter the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime," May said. "This is not about intervening in a civil war. It is not about regime change."

French President Emmanuel Macron said in a statement that a target of the strike was the Syrian government's "clandestine chemical arsenal."

The Syrian government has repeatedly denied any use of banned weapons.

The decision to strike, after days of deliberations, marked Trump's second order to attack Syria. He authorized a barrage of Tomahawk cruise missiles to hit a single Syrian airfield in April 2017 in retaliation for Assad's use of sarin gas against civilians.

Mattis estimated the latest air campaign was about twice the size of the 2017 strike. He added that the U.S. expects the Syrian government and its allies to conduct a "significant disinformation campaign," which the Pentagon would rebut with additional information Saturday morning.

The air campaign could frustrate those in Trump's base who oppose military intervention and are wary of open-ended conflicts.

Trump chastised Syria's two main allies, Russia and Iran, for their roles in supporting "murderous dictators," and noted that Russian President Vladimir Putin had guaranteed a 2013 international agreement for Assad to get rid of all of his chemical weapons. He called on Moscow to change course and join the West in seeking a more responsible regime in Damascus.

"Russia must decide if it will continue down this dark path, or if it will join with civilized nations as a force for stability and peace," Trump said. "Hopefully, someday we'll get along with Russia, and maybe even Iran — but maybe not."

The Russian ambassador to the U.S., Anatoly Antonov, condemned the airstrikes and warned that "such actions will not be left without consequences."

The U.S. missile strike a year ago, which targeted the airfield from which Syrian aircraft had launched their gas attack, was meant to deter Assad from further use of chemical weapons. Since that did not work, a more intense attack would aim to degrade his ability to carry out further such attacks, and would try to do this by hitting Syrian aircraft, military depots and chemical facilities, among other things.

The strikes that hit early Saturday in Syria came hours before inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were set to arrive to inspect the site of the apparent attack.

A broader question is whether the allied attacks are part of a revamped, coherent political strategy to end the war on terms that do not leave Assad in power.

The strikes appear to signal Trump's willingness to draw the United States more deeply into the Syrian conflict. Just weeks ago, Trump said he wanted to end U.S. involvement in Syria and bring American troops home to focus on the homeland. The participation of British and French forces enables Trump to assert a

wider international commitment against the use of chemical weapons, but the multi-pronged attack carries the risk of Russian retaliation.

Dunford said the U.S. did not coordinate targets with or notify the Russian government of the strikes, beyond normal airspace "de-confliction" communications. But the description from an ally described things differently.

French Defense Minister Florence Parly said that "with our allies, we ensured that the Russians were warned ahead of time."

In his nationwide address, Trump stressed that he has no interest in a longtime fight with Syria.

"As other nations step up their contributions, we look forward to the day when we can bring our warriors home," Trump said. "And great warriors they are."

The U.S. has about 2,000 troops on the ground in Syria as advisers to a makeshift group of anti-Islamic State fighters known as the Syrian Democratic Forces. They are in eastern Syria, far from Damascus. A U.S.-led coalition has been conducting airstrikes in Syria since September 2014 as part of a largely successful effort to break the IS grip on both Syria and Iraq.

Jarrod Agen, Vice President Mike Pence's deputy chief of staff, said Pence called congressional leaders from his hotel suite in Lima, Peru, to notify them of the president's plan to address the nation about the Syrian air strikes.

Associated Press writer Ken Thomas contributed from Lima, Peru.

Justice watchdog: McCabe misled investigators on media

BY ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department watchdog says fired FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe misled investigators over his role in a news media disclosure.

The finding is contained in an inspector general report obtained Friday by The Associated Press.

The inspector general's finding led FBI disciplinary officials to recommend that the Justice Department fire McCabe. Attorney General Jeff Sessions dismissed him last month two days before his scheduled retirement for what he described as a lack of candor.

McCabe has disputed that assessment, and issued a point-by-point rebuttal on Friday. He says that when he believed his answers to the inspector general were misunderstood, he went back and tried to correct them. His lawyer says the inspector general unfairly tried to conclude its work before McCabe could retire.

Police: Woman who drove SUV with family off cliff was drunk

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A woman was drunk when she drove her large family off a Northern California cliff last month and her wife and several children had large amounts of a drug in their systems that can cause drowsiness, authorities said Friday.

Police had previously said they believed the Hart family died in a suicide plunge from a scenic overlook. The crash happened just days after authorities in Washington state opened an investigation following allegations the children were being neglected.

Preliminary toxicology tests found Jennifer Hart had an alcohol level of 0.102, said California Patrol Capt. Bruce Carpenter. California drivers are considered drunk with a level of 0.08 or higher.

Toxicology tests also found that her wife Sarah Hart and two of their children had "a significant amount" of an ingredient commonly found in the allergy drug Benadryl, which can make people sleepy. Toxicology results for a third child killed are still pending, Carpenter said.

Carpenter said none of the car's occupants were wearing seatbelts.

Sarah and Jennifer Hart and their six adopted children were believed to be in the family's SUV when it plunged off a cliff in Mendocino County, more than 160 miles (250 kilometers) north of San Francisco.

Authorities have said data from the vehicle's software suggested the crash was deliberate, though the

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California Highway Patrol has not concluded why the vehicle went off an ocean overlook on a rugged part of coastline. A specialized team of accident investigators is trying to figure that out with help from the FBI, Carpenter said.

"We believe that the Hart incident was in fact intentional," he said.

Carpenter said the family stopped in the small town of Naselle, Washington, about 80 miles (128 kilometers) northwest of their Woodland, Washington, home, during their drive to the California cliff. But investigators are still trying to determine why they stopped in Naselle, which added an hour and a half to their trip, and whether they contacted anyone. Naselle is near U.S. Highway 101, a popular, scenic route along the coast.

Five bodies were found March 26 near the small city of Mendocino, a few days after Washington state authorities began investigating the Harts for possible child neglect, but three of their children were not immediately recovered from the scene.

Two more are missing and another body has been found but not identified.

The 100-foot (31-meter) drop killed the women, both 39, and their children Markis Hart, 19; Jeremiah Hart, 14; and Abigail Hart, 14. Hannah Hart, 16; Devonte Hart, 15; and Sierra Hart, 12, have not been found.

Devonte drew national attention after he was photographed in tears while hugging a white police officer during a 2014 protest.

A neighbor of the Harts in Woodland, Washington, had filed a complaint, saying the children were apparently being deprived of food as punishment.

Long before the crash, Sarah Hart pleaded guilty in 2011 to a domestic assault charge in Minnesota over what she said was a spanking given to one of her children.

And authorities have said social services officials in Oregon contacted the West Linn Police Department about the family in 2013 while they were living in the area. Alexandra Argyropoulos, who told The Associated Press previously that she contacted Oregon child welfare officials, said in an email Friday that Jennifer Hart ran the household "like a regimented boot camp."

Argyropoulos wrote that as a family friend she initially thought Jennifer Hart was a loving mother. But after spending two weeks with the family Argyropoulos said she noticed kindness, love and respect for the children was largely absent. She says the six kids were regularly punished for common childlike and adolescent behavior, such as laughing too loudly.

Argyropoulos says the family's story has spurred her to start a petition calling for a national child abuse registry that would alert states of prior reports of abuse.

AP writer Lisa Baumann contributed to this story from Seattle.

In Kentucky, teachers claim victory as vetoes rejected

By **BRUCE SCHREINER** and **ADAM BEAM**, Associated Press

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — As Kentucky teachers declare victory after the Republican-dominated legislature overrode vetoes from the state's GOP governor of a spending plan that included new money for education, the question going forward is whether teachers will be able to sustain their momentum into the fall elections when Republicans will try to defend their super majority.

Teacher Karen Schwartz brought a sign to Kentucky's state Capitol on Friday declaring "Support our Schools." But it was her shoes, a comfortable pair of Crocs, that had a bigger message for state lawmakers. "They think we are going to get tired and go home," she said. "We're not going to get tired."

Teachers had been booing Republicans for months after they passed changes to the teachers' pension system. But Friday, teachers cheered as Republicans voted to override Gov. Matt Bevin's vetoes.

Those cheers were dampened later when Bevin decried teachers for leaving work to protest at the Capitol, causing more than 30 school districts in the states to close for the day.

"I guarantee you somewhere in Kentucky today a child was sexually assaulted that was left at home

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because there was nobody there to watch them," Bevin said, according to a video posted to Twitter by a reporter for WDRB-TV. "I guarantee you somewhere today a child was physically harmed or ingested poison because they were home alone because a single parent didn't have any money to take care of them. I'm offended by the idea that people so cavalierly and so flippantly disregarded what's truly best for children."

A spokesman for the Kentucky Education Association declined to comment. Mary Nishimuta, executive director of the Kentucky Democratic Party, said Bevin's comments "crossed a line. As a mother, suggesting children were abused as a prop for his political rhetoric is disturbing and absurdly in poor taste."

Thousands of teachers rallied inside and outside the Capitol on Friday. The rally took on a festival-like atmosphere as some teachers sat in lawn chairs or sprawled out on blankets. Crosby Stills, Nash and Young's hit "Teach Your Children" bellowed from the loud speakers.

"I don't want to be out of my classroom. I want to be in my classroom instructing future citizens, but I'm afraid that spending at the state level is getting worse and worse, and we need those dollars for a 21st century education," said Stephanie Ikanovic, who has been a teacher for 21 years.

Kentucky's two-year operating budget includes record new spending for public education, fueled by a 50-cent increase in the cigarette tax and a 6 percent sales tax on some services including home and auto repair. But Bevin vetoed both the budget and the money in it, calling the bills "sloppy" and "non-transparent." He said they would not raise enough money to cover the new spending.

The veto put Republican lawmakers in a tough position, asking them to vote a second time on a tax increase in an election year. But 57 Republicans eagerly voted to override, asserting their independence after a tumultuous year marred by a sexual harassment scandal.

"You can stand here all day and act like you are all for (education) until it comes time to pay for it. Well, that's a coward," said Republican Rep. Regina Huff, a middle school special education teacher. "We have to have this revenue to fund our schools."

Democrats sided with the governor, but for different reasons. They said the tax increase disproportionately harms the poor while benefiting the wealthy. They wanted the vetoes to stand, forcing the governor to call a special session of the state legislature to pass a new budget.

The house voted 57-40 to override the veto of the tax increase and 66-28 to override the veto of the budget. The Republican-controlled state Senate will take up the vetoes next.

Bevin followed the debate closely, responding to lawmakers' speeches with tweets. He said he met with House and Senate leaders all week to propose a more "responsible way to pay for 100 percent of the requested education funding."

"Crickets," Bevin tweeted.

The unrest comes amid teacher protests in Oklahoma and Arizona over low funding and teacher pay. The demonstrations were inspired by West Virginia teachers, whose nine-day walkout after many years without raises led to a 5 percent pay hike.

In Arizona, after weeks of teacher protests and walkout threats across the state, Gov. Doug Ducey promised a net 20 percent raise by 2020.

In Oklahoma, teachers ended two weeks of walkouts Thursday, shifting their focus to electing pro-education candidates in November. Gov. Mary Fallin signed legislation raising teacher salaries by about \$6,100 and providing millions in new education funding, but many say schools need more money.

Associated Press writer Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City contributed to this report.

FBI probes Trump lawyer Cohen's personal 'business dealings'

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and TOM HAYS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Federal prosecutors revealed on Friday that their probe of President Donald Trump's personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, involved suspected fraud and the attorney's personal business dealings and was going on long enough that investigators had already covertly obtained his emails.

The details in court papers came as lawyers for Cohen and Trump sought to block the Department of

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Justice from examining records and electronic devices, including two cellphones, seized by the FBI on Monday from Cohen's residences, office and safety deposit box.

The raids enraged Trump, who called them an "attack on the country." Trump, a Republican, sent his own lawyer to a hastily arranged hearing before a federal judge in Manhattan to argue that some of the records and communications seized were confidential attorney-client communications and off-limits to investigators.

Prosecutors blacked out sections of their legal memo in which they described what laws they believe Cohen has broken, but the document provided new clues about an investigation the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan had previously declined to confirm existed.

"Although Cohen is an attorney, he also has several other business interests and sources of income. The searches are the result of a months-long investigation into Cohen, and seek evidence of crimes, many of which have nothing to do with his work as an attorney, but rather relate to Cohen's own business dealings," said the filing, signed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas McKay.

Prosecutors said they took the unusual step of raiding Cohen's residence and home rather than requesting records by subpoena because what they had learned led them to distrust he'd turn over what they had asked for.

"Absent a search warrant, these records could have been deleted without record, and without recourse," prosecutors wrote.

The document was filed publicly after lawyers for Cohen appeared before U.S. District Judge Kimba M. Wood to ask that they, not Department of Justice lawyers, be given the first crack at reviewing the seized evidence to see whether it was relevant to the investigation or could be forwarded to criminal investigators without jeopardizing attorney-client privilege.

Trump attorney Joanna Hendon told the judge that the president has "an acute interest in these proceedings and the manner in which these materials are reviewed."

"He is the president of the United States," she said. "This is of most concern to him. I think the public is a close second. And anyone who has ever hired a lawyer a close third."

McKay, the assistant U.S. attorney, told the judge that he believed the proceedings were an attempt to delay the processing of seized material.

"His attorney-client privilege is no greater than any other person who seeks legal advice," he said.

Cohen's lawyers, Todd Harrison and Joseph Evans, rejected that argument in a legal memo. They also asked that certain documents related to the case remain sealed to protect the privacy rights of "innocent third parties" who would be subjected to a media circus if their names became public.

"The documents seized by the government are uniquely sensitive because they contain documents relating to privileged communications between the President of the United States and his personal lawyer," they wrote. "The retention of such privileged information from the President presents not only routine attorney-client privilege and attorney work product issues, but also creates constitutional concerns regarding officers of the Executive Branch rummaging through the private and privileged papers of the President."

Cohen wasn't present for the hearing. The judge, who didn't immediately rule, ordered him to appear at another court hearing Monday on the issue to help answer questions about his law practice.

In forceful language, prosecutors struck back at claims by Trump and others that the Monday raids violated the attorney-client privilege between Trump and Cohen or amounted to an improper extension of the work of Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

As part of the grand jury probe, they wrote, investigators had already searched multiple email accounts maintained by Cohen. Those emails, they said, indicated that Cohen was "performing little to no legal work, and that zero emails were exchanged with President Trump."

"This court should not accept Cohen's invitation to make new law and convert a duly authorized search warrant into a subpoena," prosecutors said, calling it a "dangerous precedent" to let defense lawyers delay a probe "in a case of national interest."

In a footnote, prosecutors wrote that although the investigation was referred to prosecutors by Mueller, it was proceeding independently.

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People familiar with the investigation have told The Associated Press the searches carried out Monday sought bank records, records on Cohen's dealing in the taxi industry, Cohen's communications with the Trump campaign and information on payments made in 2016 to a former Playboy model, Karen McDougal, and a porn actress, Stephanie Clifford, who performs under the name Stormy Daniels. Both women say they had affairs with Trump.

Clifford's lawyer, Michael Avenatti, spoke briefly in court. Outside court, he said: "We have every reason to believe that some of the documents seized relate to my client."

Avenatti said it's "very possible" that the porn actress would show up at Monday's hearing. He then followed with a suggestive tweet that "the weather forecast for Mon looks very Stormy."

Public corruption prosecutors in the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan are trying to determine, according to one person familiar with the investigation, if there was any fraud related to payments to McDougal and Clifford.

Cohen has denied wrongdoing.

McDougal was paid \$150,000 in the summer of 2016 by the parent company of the National Enquirer under an agreement that gave it the exclusive rights to her story, which it never published. Cohen said he paid Daniels \$130,000 in exchange for her silence about her claim to have had a one-night-stand with Trump.

The White House has consistently said Trump denies either affair.

Associated Press writers Michael Balsamo in Los Angeles and Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this report.

Chief Cosby accuser says she was too weak to 'fight him off'

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Bill Cosby's chief accuser took the witness stand for the second time to tell a story of molestation and broken trust, describing for jurors how the comedian knocked her out with three blue pills and then sexually assaulted her at his home.

"I was weak. I was limp, and I just could not fight him off," said Andrea Constand, who found herself in the same cavernous courtroom on Friday less than a year after a jury was unable to reach a verdict on charges against Cosby.

Her harrowing account of the events in 2004 was consistent with the one she gave at last year's trial in suburban Philadelphia, and jurors watched intently and scribbled notes as she told how Cosby, the good-guy celebrity she viewed as a mentor and friend, had betrayed her.

"Ms. Constand, why are you here?" prosecutor Kristen Feden asked.

"For justice," Constand said.

The defense has blasted Constand as a "con artist" who leveled false accusations against the star as part of a scheme to get money from him.

During cross-examination Friday, Cosby lawyer Tom Mesereau went through a thick binder of Constand's police statements and prior testimony as he tried to poke holes in her story. But the jury heard only minor discrepancies between what she said in the past and her account on the witness stand.

And, after telling jurors in his opening statement that Constand had operated a Ponzi scheme while running women's basketball operations at Temple University, Mesereau's evidence was a cut-and-paste email that Constand sent for a friend years ago. She testified that she barely remembered it.

The defense was expected to continue its cross-examination on Monday.

Under questioning by the prosecution, Constand said Cosby offered her pills and a sip of wine after she said she was "stressed" about telling the Temple basketball coach of her plans to leave to study massage therapy in her native Canada. She said Cosby, a Temple alum and powerful trustee, called the pills "your friends" and told her they would "help take the edge off."

Instead, Constand said, the pills made her black out. She awoke to find the actor known as "America's Dad" penetrating her with his fingers, touching her breast and putting her hand on his penis.

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She said she wanted Cosby to stop but couldn't say anything. She tried moving her arms and legs but couldn't do that either.

Constand said she awoke between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. to find her bra up around her neck and her pants half unzipped. She said Cosby stopped her as she went to leave: "All he said was there's a muffin and tea on the table and then, 'All right' and then I left."

Afterward, Constand said, "I was really humiliated. I was in shock. And I was really confused."

The now 80-year-old entertainer has said he gave Constand the cold medicine Benadryl and that she consented to a sexual encounter.

Constand testified she decided to report the assault to police in January 2005, about a year later, jarred to action by a nightmare and an increasing awareness of consent issues from her ongoing massage therapy training.

"I didn't want it to happen to anybody else, what had happened to me," she said.

She said she was "very scared" about going to police because "he was a Temple trustee. A very powerful man. An entertainer. A very famous person."

Constand's allegation is the only one among dozens against Cosby that has led to criminal charges. If convicted, the former TV star best known for his No. 1 family sitcom "The Cosby Show" faces up to 10 years in prison on each of three related aggravated indecent assault charges.

A jury deadlocked after last year's trial, unable to reach a verdict after more than 52 hours of deliberations over six days.

For this trial, prosecutors had the strategic advantage of putting Constand on the witness stand after a parade of other accusers who told jurors that Cosby had used the same tactics on them: preying on women who saw him as a mentor, debilitating them with pills or alcohol and then violating them when they were unable to fight back. Just one other accuser was permitted to testify at the first trial.

The defense has called the other accusers irrelevant, urging jurors to focus only on the charges that Cosby is facing.

Mesereau, best known for winning an acquittal in Michael Jackson's 2005 child molestation case, told jurors in his opening statement that Constand was a pauper who stiffed roommates on bills and racked up big credit card debt until she "hit the jackpot" in 2006, when Cosby paid her \$3.4 million to settle her civil lawsuit over the assault allegation.

Cosby's lawyers say Constand outlined her get-rich scheme to a Temple colleague, Marguerite Jackson. The defense plans to call Jackson as a witness and says she will testify that Constand mused about framing a celebrity before she lodged sexual abuse allegations against Cosby in 2005.

Jackson, a longtime Temple official, has said that she and Constand worked closely together, had been friends and had shared hotel rooms several times. She has said Constand once commented to her about setting up a "high-profile person" and filing suit.

Constand testified Friday that she remembers having a hotel room to herself at Temple's away basketball games and did not recall ever rooming with Jackson.

She told the jury she had nothing to gain financially by wanting Cosby locked up, saying "there is no upside" to her testimony. She said she was hesitant to get involved when prosecutors reopened the criminal investigation in 2015, saying she feared a flood of media attention and pain for her loved ones but decided to cooperate because it was the "right thing to do."

"This was a matter that was tugging at my heart, because I had moved on and I had healed an old wound and now I could slowly feel this wound opening up again," she said.

The AP does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, which Constand and the other women have done.

Associated Press Writer Claudia Lauer in Norristown contributed to this story.

Follow Mike Sisak at www.twitter.com/mikesisak .

For more coverage visit www.apnews.com/tag/CosbyonTrial .

Trump cries "slime ball" after former FBI director slams him

By ZEKE MILLER and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump laced into James Comey as an "untruthful slime ball" on Friday as the White House and the national Republican Party mounted a withering counterattack against the former FBI director and his stinging new memoir.

Comey is embarking on a publicity rollout of his book, "A Higher Loyalty," which offers his version of the highly controversial events surrounding his firing by Trump and the Russia and Hillary Clinton email investigations. In the book, Comey compares Trump to a mob boss demanding loyalty, suggests he's unfit to lead and mocks the president's appearance.

Press secretary Sarah Sanders stood at the White House podium Friday and called Comey "a liar and a leaker" whose loyalty is "only to himself," adding that Comey will "be forever known as a disgraced partisan hack."

Reading from prepared notes, she declared, "This is nothing more than a poorly executed PR stunt by Comey to desperately rehabilitate his tattered reputation and enrich his own bank account by peddling a book that belongs on the bargain bin of the fiction section."

Anticipating broad media attention for Comey as his book tour gets underway, Sanders scolded reporters in advance for preparing to "cover it endlessly, all day today, all day tomorrow, and my guess is every day next week with very little time given to the issues that people care about."

Unlike Michael Wolff's "Fire & Fury," which caught the White House unawares when it was published in January, the administration had weeks to polish its rebuttal rhetoric for Comey's book. Officials responded to the Wolff book by belatedly pointing out factual inaccuracies. In responding to Comey, the White House is choosing not to engage on specific claims, which have been reviewed by lawyers for accuracy, instead launching a broadside effort to undermine Comey's credibility.

Sanders accused Comey of leaking classified information and breaking his "sacred trust with the president of the United States, the dedicated agents of the FBI and the American people."

The Republican National Committee helped with the pushback effort against Comey by launching a website and supplying surrogates with talking points that question his credibility.

Comey acknowledged in congressional testimony last year that after he was fired he helped leak his personal, but unclassified, memos of his conversations with Trump to a reporter. In previous testimony, however, he said he never authorized an FBI subordinate to leak information about investigations of Trump or Clinton.

Former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe was fired last month, days before his retirement, following an internal review that accused him of being untruthful about his role in the leaking of damaging information on the Clinton email investigation. McCabe has suggested that Comey authorized the leak — a claim disputed in the independent inspector general report, which says McCabe allegedly misled Comey about the disclosure.

In a Friday tweet, Trump claimed without evidence that "McCabe was totally controlled by Comey - McCabe is Comey!! No collusion, all made up by this den of thieves and lowlives!"

White House aides said Sanders' unusual barrage at Comey reflected Trump's anger and that Trump was pleased by her performance. Sanders explained Trump's heated response to the book by attacking the media for giving Comey a platform, saying the president "has every right to call out that individual that you guys are propping up."

Trump watched cable news coverage Thursday night, angrily taking in segments devoted to Comey's book, according to a person familiar with the president's thinking but not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations.

Trump held his fire on Twitter for a time but unleashed Friday morning while stewing over more coverage. He repeated a favored talking point to one confidant, saying the former FBI director was "grandstanding"

in order to make money off Trump's name.

The president repeated his belief that Comey deserved to be fired and expressed confidence the American public "would see through his lies" and realize Comey was part of a "deep state" effort to undermine the administration.

In the book, which is to be released Tuesday, Comey compares Trump to a mafia don and calls his leadership of the country "ego driven." The book adheres closely to Comey's public testimony and written statements about his contacts with Trump and his own growing concern about Trump's integrity. The Associated Press purchased a copy this week.

The book also includes strikingly personal jabs at Trump that appear designed to irritate the president.

The 6-foot-8 Comey describes Trump as shorter than he expected with a "too long" tie and "bright white half-moons" under his eyes that he suggests came from tanning goggles. He says he made a conscious effort to check the president's hand size, saying it was "smaller than mine but did not seem unusually so."

Trump pardons Scooter Libby, says he was 'treated unfairly'

By CHAD DAY and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump issued a pardon Friday to I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, suggesting the former top aide to Vice President Dick Cheney had been "treated unfairly" by a special counsel. The pardon comes at a moment when the president faces an escalating special counsel investigation of his own.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders insisted the pardon was not intended to send a message to the special counsel investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election, saying, "One thing has nothing to do with the other." But critics noted the timing, coming as Trump fumes over Robert Mueller's probe, which he has dubbed a "witch hunt."

Trump said in a statement that he didn't know Libby, "but for years I have heard that he has been treated unfairly."

Libby, Cheney's former chief of staff, was convicted in 2007 of lying to investigators and obstruction of justice following the 2003 leak of the covert identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame, though no one was ever charged for the leak. President George W. Bush later commuted Libby's 30-month prison sentence but didn't issue a pardon despite intense pressure from Cheney.

In a statement, Libby thanked Trump, saying his family has "suffered under the weight of a terrible injustice." He said Trump "recognized this wrong and would not let it persist. For this honorable act, we shall forever be grateful."

Pardons are not a finding of innocence, but they do restore the civil rights that are normally lost because of a criminal conviction. The White House said that a witness against Libby later changed her version of events and that Libby had a decade of public service and an "unblemished" record since. He had been disbarred but was reinstated by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in 2016.

Conservatives have rallied around Libby's case, arguing he was the victim of an overly zealous and politically motivated prosecution by a special counsel. In a twist, the special counsel in Libby's case, Patrick Fitzgerald, was appointed by James Comey, deputy attorney general at the time. Comey later became head of the FBI but was fired by Trump in 2017 and has since written a book highly critical of the president.

Fitzgerald denied that Libby's prosecution was unjust.

"While the President has the constitutional power to pardon, the decision to do so in this case purports to be premised on the notion that Libby was an innocent man convicted on the basis of inaccurate testimony caused by the prosecution," he said Friday. "This is false."

Libby's attorneys, Joseph diGenova and Victoria Toensing, issued a statement thanking Trump for "addressing a gross injustice" they said was inflicted by Fitzgerald and Comey. Toensing told the Associated Press that she submitted the pardon papers for Libby to the White House counsel's office last summer. She said the president called her midday Friday to deliver the news.

"He said, 'He got screwed,'" Toensing recalled.

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Trump knows the attorneys and had sought to add them to his legal team in the Russian investigation, but it was determined diGenova and Toensing had conflicts of interest that would prevent them from joining.

A spokesman for Bush said the former president was "very pleased" for Libby and his family. Rep. Liz Cheney, a Wyoming Republican and daughter of the former vice president, said Libby was the victim of a "miscarriage of justice," and she thanked Trump for "righting a terrible wrong."

Critics questioned the timing of the pardon.

"It hasn't been done through the normal channels. He hasn't gone through the pardon office. And there's no particular reason to pardon Scooter Libby," Democratic Rep. Jerrold Nadler said earlier Friday, amid reports that a pardon was planned. "So one certainly suspects there's a message."

And Democratic Rep. Gerry Connolly of Virginia, the vice ranking member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, said Trump "is sending a clear signal to others that he will reward obstruction of justice. This is a sad moment for our democracy and justice system."

Plame, appearing on MSNBC on Friday before the pardon was issued, said granting one would send a message "that you can commit crimes against national security and you will be pardoned." After the pardon, she said in a statement that the argument that Libby had been treated unfairly was "simply false."

The pardon was the third for Trump. He issued one last year to former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio, who was awaiting sentencing for contempt of court. Trump also pardoned a U.S. Navy sailor who was convicted of taking photos of classified portions of a submarine.

Associated Press writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show Liz Cheney represents Wyoming, not Montana.

How Facebook ads target you

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY, AP Technology Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — If you want to tailor a Facebook ad to a single user out of its universe of 2.2 billion, you could.

Trying to pitch your boutique bed and breakfast to a 44-year-old "trendy mom" who lives in Seattle, leans conservative and is currently traveling in the Toronto area but hasn't booked a hotel for the night yet? Go right ahead. Interested in mail-ordering pet treats to a 32-year-old cat owner in Madison, Wisconsin who enjoys Japanese food, doesn't like pizza and has an anniversary coming up in the next two months? Not a problem.

Targeting ads, it turns out, is almost infinitely customizable — sometimes in surprising ways. The ads you might see can be tailored to you down to the most granular details — not just where you live and what websites you visited recently, but whether you've gotten engaged in the past six months, are interested in organic food or share characteristics with people who have recently bought a BMW, even if you've never expressed interest in doing so yourself.

Facebook made \$40 billion in advertising revenue last year, second only to Google when it comes to its share of the global digital advertising market. Even with a recent decision to stop working with outside data brokers to help advertisers target ads based on things like offline purchases or credit history, this number is expected to grow sharply this year.

Here are some ways advertisers can target you through Facebook:

— **MONITORING YOUR FACEBOOK ACTIVITY**

By now you've probably gathered that Facebook uses things like your interest, age and other demographic and geographic information to help advertisers reach you. Then there's the stuff your friends do and like — the idea being that it's a good indicator for what you might do and like. So, if you have a friend who has liked the New Yorker's Facebook page, you might see ads for the magazine on your Facebook feed.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Facebook and advertisers can also infer stuff about you based on things you share willingly. For example, Facebook categorizes users into an "ethnic affinity" based on what

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it thinks might be their ethnicity or ethnic influence. It might guess this through TV shows or music you've liked. Often, Facebook is wrong — and while it's possible to remove it, you can't change it. There is also no "ethnic affinity" option for whites.

While there are plenty of good reasons advertisers may want to target people of a particular ethnicity, this became a problem for Facebook in 2016, when ProPublica found that it let advertisers exclude specific ethnic groups from seeing their ads. When it comes to housing and employment ads, this is illegal.

In late 2017, Facebook said it was temporarily blocking advertisers' ability to target based on ethnic affinity, along with other things such as religious or LGBT affinity. Advertisers can still target those groups — just not exclude them. Facebook, which said it is conducting an audit of how the feature can be misused, did not say when it would lift the block.

While some advertisers want to reach large swaths of people, others like more specific targeting. As Facebook explains in a guide for advertisers, it's possible to refine an ad's audience on things like what people post on their timelines, apps they use, ads they click, demographics such as age, gender and location, and even the mobile device they use or their network connection. Based on this information, advertisers can either include or exclude categories such as homeowners, "trendy moms," people who moved recently, conservatives, or people interested in cooking, for example.

That said, Facebook warns advertisers not to narrow their audience too much by being overly specific, which can make the ads less effective — since fewer people will see them.

— FOLLOWING YOU OFF FACEBOOK

An ad offering called "custom audiences" lets advertisers target anyone who has already bought stuff from them or has visited their websites. They can also target anyone who has shared an email address or downloaded their app. So, if you use Netflix, you may see an ad on Facebook for a new TV show that might interest you. Or, if you gave your email address when you bought a pair of slippers from Land's End, you might get an ad for an upcoming slipper sale, since Facebook has your email address too.

Then there are "lookalike audiences." These are people who are similar to a business's existing customer base, but are not customers themselves. This can help advertisers reach people in different countries, for example. Advertisers can use this tool by first uploading their customers' data through the "custom audiences" feature. Then, Facebook's algorithms look for people similar to them. In addition, advertisers can also install a Facebook "pixel" on their site, a piece of code that tracks what people do off of Facebook.

— DYNAMIC ADS

A new type of ad Facebook launched recently, this lets businesses target people who have already shown interest in them. It uses "retargeting" — that sometimes-annoying way that a handbag you looked on a website can follow you around the internet regardless of whether you want to buy it. Dynamic ads, though, go a step further, and know if you were just browsing or if you put that handbag in your online shopping cart, and may nudge you with a 10 percent of coupon.

As Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg explained in a recent earnings call, dynamic ads let Holiday Inn target people who searched for hotels on its website but hadn't yet booked. The ads these Facebook users saw had a video personalized to the dates and places they searched for. The result: the hotel chain got three times the return on what it spent on these ads than on their previous ad campaigns, according to Sandberg.

3 US banks post higher profits with huge assist from tax law

By KEN SWEET and MATT OTT, AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Three of America's biggest banks reported higher profits Friday, with a huge assist from the tax law passed late last year.

JPMorgan reported a record quarterly profit, while Citigroup and Wells Fargo topped analyst expectations.

Banks are expected to be major beneficiaries of the tax overhaul, which sharply lowered corporate tax rates. Comparing each of the effective tax rates from last year to this year, the three Wall Street banks that reported earnings Friday appeared to have saved roughly \$1.6 billion altogether.

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The first-quarter earnings season will give investors and the public their first good look into how President Trump's tax law is impacting Corporate America. Publicly traded banks are the first major industry to report their results each quarter.

Net income at JPMorgan Chase, the nation's largest bank by assets and deposits, rose 35 percent to \$8.71 billion. The result was primarily driven by two factors: higher interest rates, which have allowed banks such as JPMorgan to charge more for customers to borrow, and the lower corporate tax rate.

However, JPMorgan had to set aside more money to cover bad loans in its consumer bank, where delinquencies have been steadily edging higher. JPMorgan shares fell 2.7 percent, while shares of Wells Fargo slipped 3.4 percent and Citigroup shares dropped 1.6 percent.

While JPMorgan's pretax income rose by \$2 billion in the quarter, the company said it effectively paid \$240 million less in taxes compared to a year earlier. The bank paid an effective tax rate of 18.3 percent in the quarter, compared with a rate of 22.7 percent a year earlier. Before the changes to tax law, JPMorgan's effective tax rate averaged in the high 20-percent range.

JPMorgan Chief Executive Officer Jamie Dimon has been a big promoter of the tax overhaul, saying it would be good for businesses as well as average Americans. Soon after President Donald Trump signed the law into place, the bank announced higher salaries for most of its retail bank employees, and said it would open branches in a handful of new markets. It also announced an expansion of small business lending.

"The global economy continues to do well, and we remain optimistic about the positive impact of tax reform in the U.S. as business sentiment remains upbeat, and consumers benefit from job and wage growth," Dimon in a statement.

Other bank executives were just as optimistic when speaking about the tax law's impact. Citigroup Chief Financial Officer John Gerspach told reporters Friday that businesses had only begun taking advantage of the changes.

"I think the best is yet to come," he said.

Rising interest rates helped JPMorgan Chase and Citigroup, but not Wells Fargo, which continues to struggle under the weight of several scandals and investigations. Wells disclosed as part of its earnings that they may have to pay as much as \$1 billion to federal regulators to settle investigations being conducted by financial regulatory agencies.

The Federal Reserve has been steadily raising interest rates for more than two years. Net interest income at JPMorgan was \$13.3 billion, up 10 percent from a year earlier. At Citigroup, net interest revenues were \$16.33 billion, up 12 percent from a year earlier. Wells Fargo reported a slight decline in interest income.

JPMorgan's investment bank also had a solid quarter, helped by much more volatile and active markets last quarter. Net income in the investment bank was \$3.97 billion, up from \$3.24 billion a year earlier.

There were some concerns about JPMorgan's credit quality, however. The bank had to set aside more money to cover potentially bad loans, and the bank's total charge-off rate — the percentage of loans it expects are not likely to be repaid — climbed to 1.20 percent of all loans. That compares to 1.07 percent of loans in the second quarter of 2017.

Citi also had to add to its loan-loss reserves, and reported an 8 percent increase in its total credit losses in the quarter.

JPMorgan's quarterly revenue was \$28.52 billion, up from \$25.85 billion. On a per-share basis, JPMorgan earned \$2.37 a share, up from \$1.65 per share, beating analysts' forecasts.

Citigroup reported a profit of \$4.62 billion, or \$1.68 a share, compared with a profit of \$4.09 billion, or \$1.35 per share, in the same period a year earlier. The results beat analysts' forecasts for earnings of \$1.61 a share, according to FactSet. It was the largest quarterly profit that Citi has reported since 2015.

Wells reported first-quarter earnings of \$5.9 billion, or \$1.12 per share, topping Wall Street's per-share expectations by 6 cents, according to a FactSet survey. That profit exceeds last year's \$5.46 billion, or \$1.03 per share, in profit.

Wells paid \$1.37 billion in taxes in the first quarter, about 36 percent less than the \$2.13 billion it paid last year.

Ken Sweet covers banks and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for The Associated Press. Follow him on Twitter at @kensweet.

Tumbling banks hold back S&P 500 as earnings season launches

By STAN CHOE, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Bank stocks buckled on Friday, even after several reported fatter profits than analysts expected, and the sharp declines overshadowed gains elsewhere in the market to drag the S&P 500 lower.

JPMorgan Chase and several other financial titans marked the unofficial start of the earnings reporting season, and expectations were high for them, as they are for most major companies. Wall Street is forecasting the strongest growth in seven years for S&P 500 companies, and the hope has been that healthy profit reports in coming weeks will steady the market following a rough couple of months.

But high expectations can be as much a burden as cause for optimism. JPMorgan Chase reported its biggest-ever profit and topped analysts' expectations. But investors were already anticipating the good news that it delivered, such as healthier trading revenue, and took note of things like an increase in charge-offs for credit cards. JPMorgan Chase's shares fell 2.7 percent to \$110.30 to lop off most of the big gains it had made earlier in the week.

The S&P 500 fell 7.69 points, or 0.3 percent, to 2,656.30. The loss pared the index's gain for the week to 2 percent.

The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 122.91, or 0.5 percent, to 24,360.14, and the Nasdaq composite lost 33.60, or 0.5 percent, to 7,106.65.

As a group, financial stocks in the S&P 500 fell 1.6 percent, more than double the loss for any of the other 10 sectors that make up the index.

PNC Financial Services Group had one of the biggest losses in the S&P 500 after reporting first-quarter results that fell short of some analysts' expectations. It dropped 4.1 percent to \$145.46.

Wells Fargo fell 3.4 percent to \$50.89, and Citigroup dropped 1.6 percent to \$71.01 even though both reported profits that beat expectations. The possibility of a big settlement with federal regulators hung over Wells Fargo's results.

After weeks where fears about a possible trade war dominated the market, many analysts along Wall Street were expecting strong profit reports to divert investors' attention. Over the long term, stock prices tend to track the progress of corporate profits.

Expectations for profit growth this year may have climbed so high, particularly following Washington's recent overhaul of the tax code, that they may be setting the stage for future disappointment, said Matthew Watson, portfolio manager at James Investment Research.

"In the near term, it looks like companies are beating expectations in general," he said. "Our concern comes over the next 12 months."

Outside financial stocks, other areas of the market were stronger. Energy stocks in the S&P 500 jumped 1.1 percent after the price of oil continued its strong climb.

Benchmark U.S. crude oil added 32 cents to \$67.39, its highest settlement price since 2014. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 56 cents to \$72.58.

Alaska Air Group jumped to the biggest gain in the S&P 500 after it gave an updated forecast for first-quarter revenue trends that was better than what it had previously given. Shares rose 6.1 percent to \$63.95.

Airline stocks have been strong after Delta Air Lines reported stronger-than-expected earnings on Thursday. Delta rose 2.8 percent over the last two days.

Broadcom had one of the biggest gains in the S&P 500 after it said it will repurchase up to \$12 billion of its stock. By taking shares off the market, buybacks can result in higher earnings per share for companies. The technology company rose 3.1 percent to \$246.94.

In the commodities market, gold rose \$6.00 to settle at \$1,347.90 per ounce, silver added 19 cents to \$16.66 per ounce and copper rose a penny to \$3.07 per pound.

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Natural gas rose 5 cents to \$2.74 per 1,000 cubic feet, heating oil gained 2 cents to \$2.10 per gallon and wholesale gasoline added 1 cent to \$2.07 per gallon.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note slipped to 2.82 percent from 2.84 percent late Thursday.

The dollar rose to 107.41 Japanese yen from 107.23 yen late Thursday. The euro rose to \$1.2334 from \$1.2329, and the British pound rose to \$1.4237 from \$1.4225.

In European stock markets, France's CAC 40 edged up 0.1 percent, and Germany's DAX gained 0.2 percent. The FTSE 100 in London rose 0.1 percent.

Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.5 percent, South Korea's Kospi advanced 0.5 percent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index edged down 0.1 percent.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, April 14, the 104th day of 2018. There are 261 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater in Washington.

On this date:

In 1775, the first American society for the abolition of slavery was formed in Philadelphia.

In 1828, the first edition of Noah Webster's "American Dictionary of the English Language" was published.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic collided with an iceberg in the North Atlantic at 11:40 p.m. ship's time and began sinking. (The ship went under two hours and 40 minutes later with the loss of 1,514 lives.)

In 1935, the "Black Sunday" dust storm descended upon the central Plains, turning a sunny afternoon into total darkness.

In 1939, the John Steinbeck novel "The Grapes of Wrath" was first published by Viking Press.

In 1949, the "Wilhelmstrasse Trial" in Nuremberg ended with 19 former Nazi Foreign Office officials sentenced by an American tribunal to prison terms ranging from four to 25 years.

In 1956, Ampex Corp. demonstrated the first practical videotape recorder at the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters Convention in Chicago.

In 1968, the gay-themed play "The Boys in the Band," by Mart Crowley, opened in New York.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon nominated Harry Blackmun to the U.S. Supreme Court. (The choice of Blackmun, who was unanimously confirmed by the Senate a month later, followed the failed nominations of Clement Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell.)

In 1981, the first test flight of America's first operational space shuttle, the Columbia, ended successfully with a landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1986, Americans got word of a U.S. air raid on Libya (because of the time difference, it was the early morning of April 15 where the attack occurred.) French feminist author Simone de Beauvoir died in Paris at age 78.

In 1994, two U.S. Air Force F-15 warplanes mistakenly shot down two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters over northern Iraq, killing 26 people, including 15 Americans. Turner Classic Movies made its cable debut; the first film it aired was Ted Turner's personal favorite, "Gone with the Wind."

Ten years ago: Delta Air Lines Inc. and Northwest Airlines Corp. announced they were combining. Kidnapped British journalist Richard Butler, who worked for CBS News, was rescued by Iraqi troops from a house in Basra after two months in captivity. Taylor Swift won video of the year and female video for her smash "Our Song" while newcomer Kellie Pickler took home three awards during the Country Music Television awards.

Five years ago: Hugo Chavez's hand-picked successor, Nicolas Maduro, won Venezuela's presidential election by a narrow margin over challenger Henrique Capriles. Adam Scott became the first Australian to win the Masters, beating Angel Cabrera (AHN'-hehl kuh-BREHR'-uh) on the second hole of a playoff

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on a rainy day at Augusta National. Colin Davis, 85, former principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and one of Britain's elder statesmen of classical music, died in London.

One year ago: Pope Francis, at the end of a 90-minute Good Friday procession, read a prayer he had composed that alternated between expressing shame for humanity's failings and hope that "hardened hearts" would become capable of forgiving and loving. Former NFL star Aaron Hernandez, already serving a life sentence for a 2013 murder, was acquitted in Boston in a 2012 double slaying prosecutors said was fueled by his anger over a drink spilled at a nightclub. (Five days later, Hernandez hanged himself in his prison cell.)

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Loretta Lynn is 86. Actress Julie Christie is 78. Retired MLB All-Star Pete Rose is 77. Rock musician Ritchie Blackmore is 73. Actor John Shea is 69. Actor-turned-race car driver Brian Forster is 58. Actor Brad Garrett is 58. Actor Robert Carlyle is 57. Rock singer-musician John Bell (Widespread Panic) is 56. Actor Robert Clendenin is 54. Actress Catherine Dent is 53. Actor Lloyd Owen is 52. Baseball Hall of Famer Greg Maddux is 52. Rock musician Barrett Martin is 51. Actor Anthony Michael Hall is 50. Actor Adrien Brody is 45. Classical singer David Miller (Il Divo) is 45. Rapper DaBrat is 44. Actor Antwon Tanner is 43. Actress Sarah Michelle Gellar is 41. Actor-producer Rob McElhenney is 41. Roots singer JD McPherson is 41. Rock singer Win Butler (Arcade Fire) is 38. Actress Claire Coffee is 38. Actor Christian Alexander is 28. Actor Nick Krause is 26. Actress Vivien Cardone is 25. Actor Graham Phillips is 25. Actress Skyler Samuels is 24. Actress Abigail Breslin is 22.

Thought for Today: "When I do good I feel good, when I do bad I feel bad, and that's my religion." — Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).