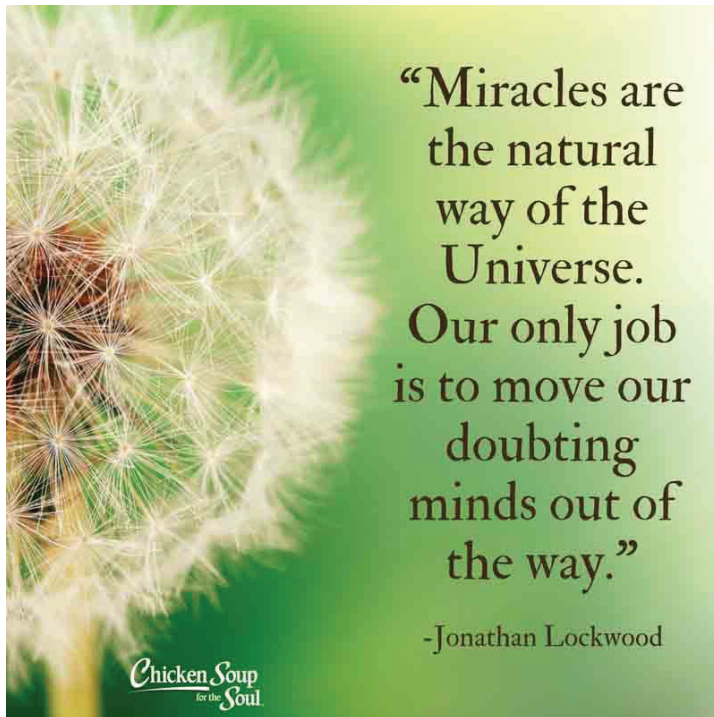


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Tuesday, April 17: Track at Webster is **cancelled**
Tuesday, April 17: Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 18: NSU Math Contest, 9 a.m.
Thursday, April 19: JH Track Meet at Groton is **cancelled**
Friday, April 20: Middle School Talent Show, 7 p.m., GHS Gym
Friday, April 20: Kindergarten Screening, 8-4, Elementary School

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.



FROST
CONSTRUCTION INC.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR
605.290.1535
custom homes | remodels | additions

Prom Correction

In yesterday's GDI, the presidents of the junior and senior class were incorrectly identified. Taylor Holm is the president of the junior class and Alex Stange is the president of the senior class. The changes have been made and the corrected issue from yesterday has been uploaded. We apologize for the mistake.

Closed: Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

© 2018 Groton Daily Independent

Six-man football, state dual wrestling tourney considered

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — Big changes may be on the way for football and wrestling after the first reading of handbook proposals at Monday's meeting of the South Dakota High School Activities Association.

Among the many handbook changes considered were the advent of six-man football and the addition of a dual title to the state wrestling tournament. Starting in the 2019-20 season, six-man football would replace the 9B classification, leaving only two classifications of nine-man football.

The new classification would be open to any school with an average daily membership of 40 or fewer male students. That number was too high for Jay Wammen, head football coach at Harding County.

Wammen said he knew that some coaches would field a six-man team with 30 players on the sideline just so they could have a "powerhouse six-man team." He suggested the number be cut to 25.

Wammen also noted that six-man football doesn't offer players the full range of experience they would need to go on to play football in college.

"We hope a lot of our kids get to play at the college level," Wammen said.

SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand said the decision to use the average daily membership of 40 was designed to be more inclusive.

Board member Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley asked if the advent of six-man football would mean the dissolution of some football cooperatives.

Krogstrand said that might happen, but it would be the only way that some small communities could get back to hosting high school football games.

"They can have their Friday nights back home," Krogstrand said.

The board approved the first reading of the creation of six-man football on a 5-2 vote. Board members Dave Planteen of Baltic and Steve Morford of Spearfish cast the dissenting votes.

Krogstrand said wrestling coaches have been hopeful that the dual tournament would be reinstated.

"The coaches are hungry to get it back," Krogstrand said. "If we're bringing it back, we have to make sure that we do it right."

Getting it right was the subject of a lengthy debate. The original proposal called for implementing the tournament during the next school year. Some athletic directors in the room, who already had their dual schedules set for next year, balked at making the change so fast.

Some board members agreed.

"I feel like we're trying to build the airplane while we fly it," said board member Brian Maher of Sioux Falls.

The motion that passed unanimously called for implementing the tournament in the 2019-20 school year with SDHSAA staff tasked with figuring out how teams would qualify for the tournament.

In addition to the athletic handbook, first readings were also held for changes to the fine arts handbook. One of those changes included a major change for show choir.

SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director Brooks Bowman said each year fewer teams are taking part in show choir. The change approved Monday would discontinue the State Show Choir Competition to have it eventually replaced by an All-State Show Choir.

"We would not sponsor show choir next year," Bowman said, explaining that the show choir advisory board is working on the details for the All-State event.

The handbook changes will have their second and final reading at SDHSAA's June meeting.

Activities association signs up for webcast of postseason games

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — Starting in the next school year, high school sports fans separated by distance from their favorite team will be able to follow the postseason action on the Internet.

On Monday the South Dakota High School Activities Association entered a five-year agreement with NFHS Network to provide Internet coverage of sub-state postseason games. South Dakota Public Broadcasting will continue its exclusive coverage of state tournaments.

For the rights to those games, the NFHS Network will pay the association \$35,000 a year, according to chief executive officer Mark Koski. A fan logging in to the NFHS Network would pay \$9.95 which allows for a month of viewing.

Koski said the network has broadcast more than 250,000 events. Statistics show that 80 percent of the network's viewers are located an average of 150 miles from the site of the game. Koski said most viewers are grandparents, parents who are overseas or casual fans from outside the state.

Board member Steve Moore of Watertown wondered how the new relationship would change the way games are currently broadcast in his town where radio stations and the newspaper offer those games on the Internet.

"By and large, those media outlets do us a favor," said board member Brian Maher of Sioux Falls.

Koski said the local outlet broadcasting the game could continue as long as it shares its stream with the NFHS Network. Viewers of those games would not need to pay the NFHS Network fee.

Currently South Dakota media outlets that stream substate games pay a small fee or allow time on the broadcast for SDHSAA public service announcements.

Asked about his member's concerns, South Dakota Newspaper Association Executive Director Dave Bordewyk said a change in the fee structure was the most troubling aspect.

"They'd like to see something similar" to the current fee structure, Bordewyk said.

The SDHSAA board approved the sale of substate broadcast rights on a 7-0 vote. They were also unanimous in their approval of an agreement with Huddle Tickets, also represented by Koski.

He explained that the association would be guaranteed \$10,000 to allow Huddle Tickets to provide e-tickets at substate events. The association would also be able to collect 30 cents from the \$1.50 convenience fee charged for being able to get the tickets online.

Venues that have access to Ticketmaster or another ticketing system would not need to use Huddle Tickets. Tickets would still be available at the box office for fans.

Board member David Planteen of Baltic asked if there would be training for ticket takers to be able to understand the system that will allow fans to bring tickets to the game on their phones.

"You watch a two-minute video and you're ready to go," Koski said.

—30—

Two SDHSAA board positions filled, one goes to vote

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — School districts will vote on replacing one South Dakota High School Activities Association board member as well as cast their ballots on an amendment to the organization's constitution.

Nominated at the SDHSAA annual meeting Monday were principals Craig Cassens of Faulkton Area, Patrick Frederick of Platte-Geddes, Paul Nepodal of Deubrook Area, Travis Aslesen of Elk Point-Jefferson and Kelly Messmer of Harding County.

The winner will complete the final three years of the term of Jim Aisenbrey of Baltic who resigned from the board for health reasons.

A run-off is likely between the top two in balloting as SDHSAA rules call for the winner to receive the majority of the votes cast.

Elected without opposition at the annual meeting were Dakota Valley Superintendent Jerry Rasmussen representing Division III schools and Paul Turman of Pierre representing school board members from large schools.

Rasmussen will replace Bud Postma, Madison High School athletic director. Turman will replace Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley. Both new board members will serve five-year terms.

Member schools will also vote on a proposed constitutional change that clarifies language about the eligibility of students who live in Bureau of Indian Education residence halls. Constitutional changes must receive 60 percent of the vote to be approved.

Ballots will go out to member schools by April 26 and must be returned to the SDHSAA office in Pierre by May 30.

—30—

SDHSAA meetings will include public forum

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The South Dakota High School Activities Association has adopted a policy that calls for an open forum at each of its board meetings. The SDHSAA board took the action at its Monday meeting. The forums will start with the group's June meeting.

The association's action follows legislation passed this winter in Pierre that calls for an open forum to be included on the agenda for each meeting of public government entities.

In the case of the SDHSAA, the board will allow 30 minutes for an open forum with each speaker having five minutes to speak. Time limits may be adjusted if there are more than six speakers.

Comments must be germane to an item on the SDHSAA agenda. The chairman may cut off discussion if the speaker strays too far from the topic or begins to discuss specific students or individuals.

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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Dispute arises on city's SW border

There is a dispute on the city border on the southwest part of Groton. There are two different versions of the area which includes the development property and some farm property. Gene Loeschke from the Brown County Assessor's office presented the map that the county has that states the property is within the city limits. The city map on file shows it outside of the city limits. Both maps are made by Clark Engineering and no one is for sure of which map is correct. Loeschke said he needs to know so the property is taxed correctly.

The city will need to do more investigating into the situation and notify the county of its results. The issue came up when an equalization claim was filed with Groton Township; however, they stated that it belonged to the city. Then the border was found to be in conflict.

The council gave Terry Herron, Groton's city supervisor, permission to rent a crack filling machine to fill cracks in the streets. Herron said it would cost around \$10,000 to have it hired done while the city could rent the machine and pay around \$4,000, which includes two pallets of tar. Also, a Kerf Cutter for water gate valve boxes was discussed. A presentation was made at the meeting. The Kerf Cutter would allow the city to cut off the damaged valve box and replace it with a new one without having to tear up the street around it. The Kerf Cutter would be around \$3,300 for the kit. A salesman will come around to demonstrate it and then the city will decide if it works as easy as it is shown on the video.

The electrical pole behind MJ's was discussed. The pole has been hit several times over the last few years and is on the city's list to be removed. Now that the trees are being removed behind the First State Bank, there is no more need to put the whole stretch into underground, according to Electric Superintendent Shawn Lambertz. The scope of the project could be reduced down so the pole behind MJ's Sinclair could be removed.

Herron also talked about a hoop barn to house the salt sand that is currently being exposed to the elements. The hoop barn would cost around \$22,000. It would eliminate the need of using tires to hold down a tarp as the tires are a mosquito haven. No action was taken.

The Billy Vander Vorste family has donated two benches for the city park.

City Finance Officer Hope Block was authorized to attend the Northeast Area Finance Officer Group Meeting April 19 in Aberdeen and to attend the Human Resource and Finance Officer School in Sioux Falls June 5-8.

The city's share of \$5,000 from Heartland Consumers Power District for rebates has already been used up. No more water heater rebates or LED lighting rebates can be made for 2018.

The council hired Susan Fjeldheim as the U12 softball coach, Bradley Penning as the U10 softball coach and Kayla Krause as the U8 softball coach. In addition, Alyssa Locke and Madison Bjerke were hired as ticket takers and Peyton Johnson was hired as a groundskeeper.

Middle School Music Department to host 2nd Annual Talent Show

On Friday April 20th, the Groton MS School Music Department will be hosting "Our Talent is a Hidden Treasure" Pirate-Themed Talent Show. The event will be held at the Groton High Old Gym at 7:00 pm. The talent show is a fundraiser for the MS Music Students to earn money for their future music trips. The show will consist of talent acts made up of middle school students and popcorn. For people that purchase tickets in advance there will be a drawing for special prizes at the end of the show. The general admission cost is \$5.00. Tickets will not be sold at the door, but a \$5.00 donation will be requested. The 6th Grade/JH Band and JH Show Choir will also perform. You can get your tickets from any MS Music Student. Come enjoy a fun-filled night of talent and music. Thank you all for your support!

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Groton City March 2018 Financial Report

1st State Bank Checking Acct	\$ 615,671.61
1st State Bank Savings Acct	\$ 145,281.93
General Cash	\$ 300.00
Wells Fargo Savings Acct	\$ 102,707.51
SD FIT Acct	\$ 954,957.44
1st State Bank Water CD	\$ 81,200.00
SD FIT Water CD	\$ 100,000.00
BB Trust CD	\$ 1,500.00
SD FIT CD	\$ 200,000.00
Cemetery Perp Care CD	\$ 32,876.69
Total	\$ 2,234,495.18

Invested In		
Cash	\$ 300.00	0.01%
1st State Bank	\$ 876,530.23	39.23%
Wells Fargo Bank	\$ 102,707.51	4.60%
SD Fit	\$ 1,254,957.44	56.16%
Total	\$ 2,234,495.18	100.00%

	Beginning	Receipts	Expenditures	Transfers	Ending
	Cash Balance				Cash Balance
General	\$ 516,289.79	\$ 59,568.22	\$ 61,350.37		\$ 514,507.64
Bed, Board, Booze Tax	\$ 5,724.95	\$ 1,480.55			\$ 7,205.50
Baseball Uniforms	\$ 1,710.20				\$ 1,710.20
Airport	\$ 12,513.75	\$ 10,762.50	\$ -		\$ 23,276.25
**Debt Service	\$ 493,566.07	\$ 3,732.50	\$ -		\$ 497,298.57
Cemetery Perpetual Care	\$ 34,706.69				\$ 34,706.69
Water Tower	\$ 180,000.00				\$ 180,000.00
Water	\$ 65,233.13	\$ 22,175.48	\$ 12,241.97		\$ 75,166.64
Electric	\$ 547,201.57	\$ 181,162.68	\$ 127,967.81		\$ 600,396.44
Wastewater	\$ 157,076.67	\$ 17,901.97	\$ 4,410.34		\$ 170,568.30
Solid Waste	\$ 25,798.39	\$ 6,739.85	\$ 6,500.71		\$ 26,037.53
Family Crisis	\$ 4,147.96		\$ -		\$ 4,147.96
Sales Tax	\$ 17,419.45	\$ 10,911.08	\$ 9,587.47		\$ 18,743.06
Employment	\$ (8,489.24)	\$ 752.33	\$ (2,171.13)		\$ (5,565.78)
Utility Prepayments	\$ 8,272.46	\$ 5,194.28			\$ 13,466.74
Utility Deposits	\$ 72,124.83	\$ 850.00	\$ 500.00		\$ 72,474.83
Other	\$ 354.61				\$ 354.61
Totals	\$ 1,590,381.28	\$ 321,231.44	\$ 220,387.54	\$ -	\$ 2,234,495.18

**Debt to be Paid		
**2015 Refinance	\$ 2,775,000.00	by 12/1/2035
**Sewer Lagoon	\$ 55,068.52	by 1/1/2019
**West Sewer	\$ 123,851.51	by 10/15/2022
**RR Sewer Crossing	\$ 73,277.83	by 7/15/22
Total Debt	\$ 3,027,197.86	

National Gas Price Average Hits Highest Price Since Summer 2015

April 16, 2018 - At \$2.71, gas prices are at their most expensive point in nearly three years and continue to climb. On the week, the national average increased a nickel. Motorists in six west coast states are paying more than \$3/gallon. Across the country, only 27 percent of gas stations are selling gas for \$2.50 or less.

"Expensive crude oil prices, unrest in the Middle East, strong domestic demand, record production rates and global oil supply surplus have created the perfect storm to drive spring gas prices toward new heights," said Marilyn Buskohl, AAA spokesperson. "Consumers can expect gas prices to increase another 5 to 10 cents this season, but the national average is not expected to reach the \$3 mark."

Today's gas price average is 18-cents more than a month ago and 30-cents more than a year ago.

South Dakota Average Gas Prices:

Current Avg. \$2.594
Yesterday Avg. \$2.610
Week Ago Avg. \$2.575
Month Ago Avg. \$2.545
Year Ago Avg. \$2.410

"AAA forecast that two-thirds of the 88 million families taking vacation this summer plan to drive to their destination. With more expensive gas prices on the horizon, travelers should plan now for the additional costs," added Buskohl.

Quick Stats

The nation's top 10 largest increases from one year ago are: California (+55 cents), Utah (+54 cents), Hawaii (+50 cents), Idaho (+49 cents), Arizona (+45 cents), Nevada (+43 cents), Oregon (+38 cents), Georgia (+36 cents), Indiana (+35 cents) and Tennessee (+34 cents).

The nation's top 10 least expensive markets are: Oklahoma (\$2.43), Arkansas (\$2.44), Missouri (\$2.45), Mississippi (\$2.46), Louisiana (\$2.47), South Carolina (\$2.48), Alabama (\$2.49), Kansas (\$2.49), Texas (\$2.49) and Minnesota (\$2.51).

Central and Great Lakes Region

Gas prices are more expensive on the week across all states in the Great Lakes and Central region. With a 6 cent or more increase, three states land on this week's top 10 list with the largest increases: Michigan (+10 cents), Illinois (+7 cents) and Missouri (+7 cents).

The average gas price in the region is \$2.60 with Missouri (\$2.45) selling the cheapest and Michigan (\$2.78) selling the most expensive gasoline.

Oil Market Dynamics

At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI settled at \$67.39. Last week, WTI traded at the highest levels since December 2014 and are expected to continue to build momentum this week. Oil prices edged higher last week following new concerns about tension in the Middle East. Following the weekend's air strikes in Syria, it's likely prices will go higher. Although Syria is not a major oil producer, tension in the country could ripple to other countries in the region and restrict global oil supply flows.

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

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Today in Weather History

April 17, 2006: A strong spring storm moved across the Northern and Central Plains, bringing precipitation and stiff northwest winds. Sustained winds of 30 to 50 mph, with gusts around 70 mph, were felt across a good portion of western South Dakota for more than 24 hours as the storm slowly crossed the region.

1922: Southern Illinois and Western Indiana saw two rounds of severe weather, including tornadoes. The first significant tornado occurred just before midnight on the 16 near Oakdale, Illinois. This tornado killed 4 and injured 22 others. Five additional tornadoes took place between midnight and 3 AM on the 17. During the mid-morning and early afternoon hours, two estimated F4 tornadoes caused devastation in Hedrick and near Orestes in Indiana. A postcard from one farm near Orestes was dropped near Mt. Cory, Ohio, 124 miles away.

1942: West Palm Beach, FL was soaked by 8.35 inches of rain in just two hours.

1922 - A family of at least six tornadoes caused death and destruction along parts of a 210 mile path from north of Ogden IL to Allen County OH, killing sixteen persons. A post card, picked up in Madison County IN, was found 124 miles away near Mount Cory OH. (The Weather Channel)

1953 - One of the few severe hailstorms accompanied by snow, sleet, glaze, and rain, pelted parts of Kay, Osage, Creek, Tulsa, Washington, and Rogers Counties in northeastern Oklahoma late in the day. Nearly 10,000 insurance claims were filed. (The Weather Channel)

1965 - The Mississippi River reached a flood crest at Saint Paul MN four feet higher than any previous mark. During the next two weeks record levels were reached along the Mississippi between Saint Paul and Hannibal MO. Flooding caused more than 100 million dollars damage, but timely warnings kept the death toll down to just twelve persons. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Twenty-two cities in the central U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Temperatures warmed into the 70s and 80s from the High Plains Region to the Mississippi Valley, with readings in the low 90s reported in the Southern Plains Region. Tulsa OK hit 92 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Heavy snow blanketed northern Arizona. Snowfall totals ranged up to 16 inches at Pinetop, with 10 inches reported at Flagstaff. Afternoon thunderstorms spawned a couple of tornadoes in Idaho. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Arctic cold invaded the north central U.S. Missoula MT was blanketed with four inches of snow, and Glasgow MT reported a record cold morning low of 14 degrees above zero. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - High winds in northern Utah, gusting to 90 mph in Weber County, blew a trampoline through a living room window, and strong winds associated with a cold front crossing the Middle Atlantic Coast Region gusted to 75 mph in the Chesapeake Bay area of Virginia. Unseasonably cold weather prevailed in the north central U.S. Valentine NE was the cold spot in the nation with a record low of 10 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Tue Apr 17	Wed Apr 18	Thu Apr 19	Fri Apr 20	Sat Apr 21	Sun Apr 22	Mon Apr 23
47°F	40°F	49°F	45°F	48°F	53°F	56°F
30°F	27°F	28°F	32°F	33°F	35°F	40°F
ESE 15 MPH	N 13 MPH Precip 70%	NNW 6 MPH	SSE 7 MPH	ESE 9 MPH	S 14 MPH	S 9 MPH

Highs Today

- Aberdeen: Upper 40s
- Watertown: Upper 30s
- Pierre: Mid 40s
- Mobridge: Upper 40s
- Sisseton: Mid 40s
- Timber Lake: Mid 40s
- Kennebec: Mid 40s
- Wheaton: Mid 40s

*Increasing Clouds



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Snow This Evening through Wednesday Morning

Location	Snow Amount Potential			Chance of Snow Within These Ranges					
	Low End Snowfall	Expected Snowfall	High End Snowfall	0"	0.1-1"	1-2"	2-4"	4-6"	6-8"
Aberdeen, SD	0	2	4	22%	16%	22%	31%	8%	1%
Miller, SD	<1	3	5	10%	9%	16%	37%	22%	5%
Mobridge, SD	<1	1	4	7%	18%	29%	38%	8%	0%
Ortonville, MN	0	2	4	18%	16%	22%	34%	9%	1%
Pierre, SD	0	2	5	18%	14%	16%	30%	16%	5%
Redfield, SD	<1	3	4	13%	12%	19%	39%	15%	2%
Sisseton, SD	0	1	3	23%	18%	22%	30%	6%	1%
Watertown, SD	<1	3	5	13%	10%	15%	38%	21%	3%

Range For Most Locations Is From Just
A Light Accumulation To A Few Inches

Impact Will Be Mainly During The Morning Commute

www.weather.gov/abr

Graphic created
4/17/2018 3:54 AM

Published on: 04/17/2018 at 4:03AM

Relatively (for this season anyway) mild temperatures can be expected today however another spring storm system will bring snow to the area. Generally look for a few inches for the morning commute Wednesday.

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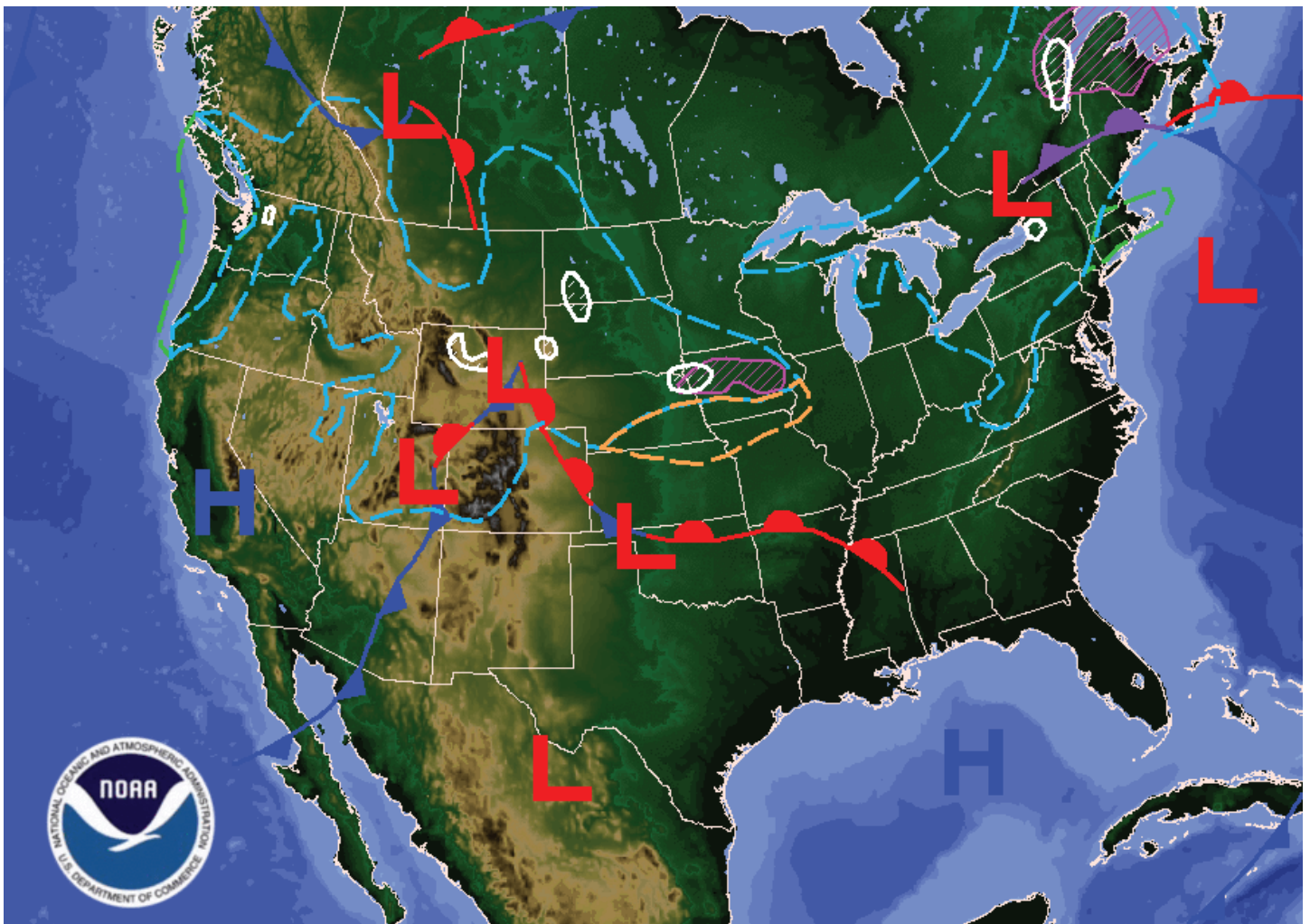
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 45.3 F at 5:05 PM
Low Outside Temp: 22.2 F at 7:38 AM
Wind Chill:
High Gust: 16.0 Mph at 3:27 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 92° in 1913
Record Low: 10° in 1953
Average High: 58°F
Average Low: 32°F
Average Precip in April: 0.86
Precip to date in April: 0.61
Average Precip to date: 3.04
Precip Year to Date: 2.68
Sunset Tonight: 8:22 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:42



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Apr 17, 2018, issued 4:47 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

While watching a large oceangoing cargo ship slip quietly into the Atlantic, I noticed a mark on the side of the ship. Having been in the Navy for several years, I was rather embarrassed to ask my friend what it meant.

"It's a Plimsoll Mark," he said with authority. It was not an answer that helped at all, so I asked, "What's a Plimsoll Mark?"

"It's a load-line on the ship that shows how much cargo the ship can carry safely under different conditions. For example, the closer the line is to the water, the more 'at-risk' the ship would be in a storm."

The Lord has a "load-line" marking on each of us. As we read in Psalm 103:14, "for He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust." The Psalmist assures us that God knows our limitations - what we can safely and securely "carry."

None of us are immune to trials - nor are any of us excused from being tempted. All of us, in one way or another and at one time or another, face similar types of trials and temptations. None are new. None are different. They come at different times in different situations from different directions appealing to our different weaknesses.

As Paul wrote, "No temptation has seized you that is not common to others, And, God is faithful! He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide you a way out."

He knows our "load-lines" and will not let us sink. However, we must be careful not to put ourselves at risk.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to realize that You created us, that You know us and that You will protect us if we allow You to. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 103:14 for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

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

Supreme Court hearing case about online sales tax collection

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is hearing arguments about whether a rule it announced decades ago in a case involving a catalog retailer should still apply in the age of the internet.

The case on Tuesday focuses on businesses' collection of sales tax on online purchases. Right now, under the decades-old Supreme Court rule, if a business is shipping a product to a state where it doesn't have an office, warehouse or other physical presence, it doesn't have to collect the state's sales tax. Customers are generally supposed to pay the tax to the state themselves, but the vast majority don't.

States say that as a result of the rule and the growth of internet shopping, they're losing billions of dollars in tax revenue every year. More than 40 states are asking the Supreme Court to abandon the rule.

Large retailers such as Apple, Macy's, Target and Walmart, which have brick-and-mortar stores nationwide, generally collect sales tax from their customers who buy online. But other online sellers that only have a physical presence in a few states can sidestep charging customers sales tax when they're shipping to addresses outside those states.

Sellers who defend the current rule say collecting sales tax nationwide is complex and costly, especially for small sellers. That complexity was a concern for the Supreme Court when it announced the physical presence rule in a case involving a catalog retailer in 1967, a rule it reaffirmed in 1992. But states say software has now made collecting sales tax easy.

The case the court is hearing has to do with a law passed by South Dakota in 2016, a law designed to challenge the Supreme Court's physical presence rule. The law requires out-of-state sellers who do more than \$100,000 of business in the state or more than 200 transactions annually with state residents to collect and turn over sales tax to the state.

The state wanted out-of-state retailers to begin collecting the tax and sued Overstock.com, home goods company Wayfair and electronics retailer Newegg. The state has conceded in court, however, that it can only win by persuading the Supreme Court to do away with its current physical presence rule.

Follow Jessica Gresko on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jessicagresko>

Police: Missing Spearfish man died of hypothermia

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — Police say a missing Spearfish man whose body was found in a steep, rugged area of Deadwood apparently died of hypothermia.

According to a preliminary finding by the Lawrence County coroner's office, 28-year-old Christopher Oien died as a result of exposure. The Black Hills Pioneer reports the cause of death is pending toxicology tests.

Oien's body was found last week in a remote area by a person searching for deer antlers. He had been missing for three months after disappearing in Deadwood.

Authorities had searched extensively for Oien.

Snow records toppled in South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Records fell as an April snowstorm blanketed the Upper Midwest.

The National Weather Service says the 14.9 inches (37.8 centimeters) at Minneapolis airport from Friday through Sunday set a record for the largest April snowstorm ever there. It's also the snowiest April on record in the Twin Cities. And it's the snowiest start to a calendar year there, with 70.3 inches (178.6 centimeters) since Jan. 1.

In South Dakota, Sioux Falls set records for a single day in April at 13.7 inches (34.8 centimeters) Saturday and a record April total of 24.9 inches (63.2 centimeters). Huron and Mitchell set two-day record totals for

April of 15.5 (39.4 centimeters) and 16.2 inches (41.1 centimeters) respectively.

In Wisconsin, the storm ranks as the all-time second largest snowstorm in Green Bay at 23.5 inches (59.7 centimeters) and a record April total of more than 35 inches (89 centimeters) there.

Keystone XL developer to meet with Nebraska landowners

By GRANT SCHULTE, Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The developer of the Keystone XL pipeline plans to meet with landowners along its planned route through Nebraska, South Dakota and Montana this week and will start aerial surveying of the route in all three states, a company spokesman said Monday.

TransCanada Inc. spokesman Matt John said the company will make financial offers to all landowners along the proposed route, including those who have already granted the company access to their land. Company officials are forging ahead despite pending lawsuits in Nebraska and Montana that aim to derail the project.

"It's important that all of our landowners are treated fairly, and offering these agreements to all landowners who have previously signed easements is part of our commitment," John said.

The \$8 billion, 1,179-mile pipeline would transport Canadian crude through Montana and South Dakota to Nebraska, where it would connect with lines to carry oil to Gulf Coast refineries.

John said company officials will offer a "construction completion bonus" as an incentive to get landowners to sign easement agreements. They also plan to award bonuses to early signers and will give landowners time to review the contracts with outside attorneys. John said TransCanada still hopes to begin construction in early 2019.

Opponents said they're still confident they will thwart the project.

In Nebraska, landowners have filed a lawsuit challenging the Nebraska Public Service Commission's decision to approve a route through the state. A federal lawsuit brought by Montana landowners and environmental groups seeks to overturn President Donald Trump's decision to grant a presidential permit for the project, which was necessary because it would cross the U.S.-Canadian border.

President Barack Obama's administration studied the project for years before Obama finally rejected it in 2015, citing concerns about carbon pollution. Trump reversed that decision in March 2017, but John said the State Department has begun a supplemental environmental review of the route. The State Department has previously reviewed the route, but another analysis became necessary because the Nebraska Public Service Commission approved a different route than the one TransCanada had preferred.

"We know this song and dance very well," said Jane Kleeb, president of the Bold Alliance, a leading pipeline opposition group. "This pipeline will never be built. It's all P.R., and this is so typical of TransCanada."

The pipeline faces intense resistance from environmental groups, Native American tribes and some landowners along the route who worry about its long-term impact on their groundwater and property rights. But in Nebraska, many affected landowners have accepted the project and are eager to collect payments from the company.

"People here are a step above being OK about it — they're enthusiastic," said Ron Schmidt, a Madison County commissioner and farmer who owns property on the route. "I've talked to landowners who want the route to move just a little so it can go through their property."

Schmidt said he views the project as a one-time boost for the local economy that would help generate tax revenue. He said he also sees it as a way to promote the nation's energy independence, an assertion that many opponents dispute.

Farmer Art Tanderup, who has fought the pipeline since 2012, said he's still hopeful the project will never move forward and that TransCanada is "trying to appease its investors" with its announcement.

He said he opposes the project because of its potential impact on the Ogallala Aquifer, a massive groundwater system in Nebraska and seven other states, and concerns about a foreign company trying to use eminent domain on U.S. landowners.

"It's easy for us to tell them 'no' if they do come knocking," Tanderup said.

Follow Grant Schulte on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/GrantSchulte>

Sturgis files motion to intervene in incorporated town case

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — A city in western South Dakota is seeking permission from the state Supreme Court to intervene in a case challenging the incorporation of a nearby town.

Sturgis filed a motion with the state's high court Thursday, citing the need for the city to protect its interests, the Black Hills Pioneer reported .

City Manager Daniel Ainslie said Sturgis wants the Supreme Court to review more issues surrounding the state's case, including whether Buffalo Chip met the 30-voters threshold to form a town. Buffalo Chip only had eight registered voters at the time of the town's incorporation, Ainslie said.

When Buffalo Chip applied for incorporation, state law said a municipality cannot incorporate if it has fewer than 100 legal residents or 30 voters. The law's threshold has since changed to 100 legal residents and 45 registered voters.

"Buffalo Chip has never contended that it has had more than 100 people — we had 52," said Kent Hagg, Buffalo Chip's attorney. "What we have always argued is that we had more than 30 voters. That fact was also in accordance with the opinion of the office of Secretary of State at the time."

City Attorney Greg Barnier said Buffalo Chip violated a different state law requiring municipalities to be more than 3 miles (4.8 kilometers) apart. Buffalo Chip is less than 3 miles away from Sturgis' municipal airport, Barnier said.

Hagg said Sturgis has no legal basis to file the motion, calling it "a regurgitation of the same old mud-slinging."

Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

How a Supreme Court case could affect your online purchases

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Do businesses have to collect sales tax on purchases made on the internet? The answer right now is: It depends. But a Supreme Court case being heard Tuesday could change that. Some questions and answers about the issue and the case:

Q: Who charges sales tax online right now?:

A: Large retailers such as Apple, Macy's, Target and Walmart, which have brick-and-mortar stores nationwide, generally collect sales tax from their customers who buy from them online. But other online sellers can often sidestep charging sales tax. If a business is shipping to a state where it doesn't have an office, warehouse or other so-called physical presence, it doesn't have to collect the state's sales tax.

Q: Where does the physical presence rule come from?

A: The rule is the result of two decades-old Supreme Court cases. The court first adopted its physical presence rule on sales tax collection in a 1967 case dealing with a catalog retailer. At the time, the court was concerned in part about the burden collecting sales tax would place on the catalog company. The court reaffirmed the rule in 1992.

Q: What are examples of online retailers that don't collect sales tax nationwide?

A: Jewelry website Blue Nile, pet products site Chewy.com, clothing retailer L.L. Bean, electronics retailer Newegg, internet retailer Overstock.com and home furnishings site Wayfair are among the sites that don't collect sales tax nationwide. Sellers on eBay and Etsy, which provide platforms for smaller sellers, also don't collect tax nationwide. Amazon.com has since 2017 collected sales tax in every state that imposes one, but third-party sellers who sell goods on the site don't have to.

Q: How does this affect states?

A: States say they're losing out on billions of dollars in tax revenue each year because of the Supreme

Court's physical presence rule. States generally require residents who weren't charged sales tax on a purchase to pay it themselves, often through self-reporting on their income tax returns. But states have found that few people comply. States say their losses mean cuts to critical government programs and that those losses compound as online shopping grows. More than 40 states are asking the Supreme Court to get rid of the physical presence rule.

Q: What is the case for businesses that don't currently collect sales taxes nationwide?

A: Sellers who defend the current rule say collecting sales tax nationwide would be costly and extraordinarily complex, especially for small sellers. Tax rates and rules vary not only by state but also by city and county. Taxes can even vary within a zip code.

Sellers who want the court to keep the current rule say free or inexpensive software touted as a cure for the challenges of tax collection isn't accurate. They say more sophisticated software is expensive and collecting taxes nationwide would also subject them to potentially costly audits.

Q: Why is the Supreme Court taking up this issue now?

A: South Dakota passed a law in 2016 designed to challenge the Supreme Court's physical presence rule. The law requires out-of-state sellers who do more than \$100,000 of business in the state or more than 200 transactions annually with state residents to collect and turn over sales tax to the state. It's South Dakota's law that's now at the center of the case at the Supreme Court.

Follow Jessica Gresko on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jessicagresko>

State withdraws death penalty possibility in slaying case

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Sturgis man accused of hiring others to kill his girlfriend will not face the possibility of the death penalty if convicted.

Jonathon Klinetobe has pleaded not guilty to multiple felonies including first-degree murder in the May 2015 stabbing death of 22-year-old Jessica Rehfeld. Her body was found in a remote grave near Rockerville a year later.

Prosecutors last year said they planned to seek the death penalty against Klinetobe should he be convicted. They announced during a Monday court hearing that they're withdrawing that prospect.

The decision was made at the request of Rehfeld's family, who said the death penalty could drag out the case for years and keep the family from recovering Rehfeld's personal belongings kept as police evidence.

Klinetobe now will face a life sentence if convicted.

Mission man previously convicted of murder faces new charge

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Mission man who was convicted of murder two decades ago is facing a new murder charge.

The U.S. attorney's office says 55-year-old Narvin Bordeaux recently pleaded not guilty to second-degree murder in the Oct. 3 stabbing death of Sonny White on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. No other details have been released.

The Rapid City Journal reports that Bordeaux was convicted of killing Shelby White Bear during a drinking party on the Rosebud Reservation in 1991. He served time in federal prison and was released in January 2012.

Bordeaux faces up to life in prison if convicted in the slaying last fall. A trial date wasn't immediately scheduled.

Starbucks faces image crisis after arrest of 2 black men

By ALEXANDRA OLSON, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Three years ago, Starbucks was widely ridiculed for trying to start a national conversation on race relations by asking its employees to write the words "Race Together" on coffee cups. The initiative, though it backfired, was in line with the company's longstanding effort to project a progressive

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and inclusive image.

The company is now through the looking glass, trying to tamp down a racially charged uproar over the arrest of two black men at one of its stores in Philadelphia. How could Starbucks, which once urged its employees to start conversations about race with customers, now be under fire for its treatment of black people?

The episode highlights the risks large corporations run when they tie their brands so closely to social messaging. In 2015, then-CEO Howard Schultz shrugged off the "Race Together" fiasco as well-intention mistake and pressed on with his public efforts to engage in the debate over race in America. His successor, Kevin Johnson, is now scrambling to keep the Philadelphia incident from shattering the message Schultz was going for: Starbucks is a corporation that stands for something beyond profit.

"The more your brand is trying to connect emotionally to people, the more hurt people feel when these kinds of things happen," said Jacinta Gauda, the head of the Gauda Group, a New York-based strategic communications firm affiliated with the Grayling network. "They are breaking a promise. That's what makes it hurt deeper."

Beyond racial relations, Starbucks has staked much of its brand on its dual promise of providing good customer service and treating its employees well, said John Gordon, a restaurant industry analyst with Pacific Management Consulting Group. The Seattle company has a reputation for well-managed stores, "a point of difference that allows them to sell primarily drinks and coffees that have a higher cost," he said.

But in a multinational company with more than 28,000 stores worldwide, there has "to be a situation every day where some human being handles things wrong. You can't have that many employees and not have something stupid happen," Gordon said. "Even with a huge operations manual that lays out what to say and what to do, you can't cover everything."

Still, Starbucks has set its own high bar.

Last month, the company claimed it had achieved 100 percent pay equity across gender and race for all its U.S. employees and committed to doing the same for its overseas operations, an initiative publicly backed by equality activist Billie Jean King. The company also touts the diversity of its workforce, saying minorities comprise more than 40 percent of its employees in the U.S.

In 2016, Starbucks promised to invest in 15 "underserved" communities across the country, trying to counter an image of a company catering to a mostly white clientele. One of those stores opened in Ferguson, Missouri, the scene of the 2014 protests that erupted following the police shooting of Michael Brown, one of several such killings that moved Schultz to launch the Race Together campaign.

Those efforts are in stark contrast to the video that went viral over the weekend showing the two black men being arrested by police who were called by an employee. Officials have said police officers were told the men had asked to use the store's restroom but were denied because they hadn't bought anything and they refused to leave.

On Monday, about two dozen protesters took over the Philadelphia shop, chanting slogans like, "A whole lot of racism, a whole lot of crap, Starbucks coffee is anti-black." The hashtag #BoycottStarbucks trended on Twitter.

Johnson, who called the arrests "reprehensible," arrived in Philadelphia this weekend to personally confront the crisis. He said he hopes to meet with the two men in the next couple of days and apologize to them face-to-face. And he promised to revamp store management training to include "unconscious-bias" training.

"I watched the video, which was hard to watch. That is not what Starbucks is about. That is not representative of our mission, our values and our guiding principles," Johnson said.

Gauda, who has developed workplace inclusion and diversity strategies for corporate clients, cautioned that any unconscious-bias training should not be treated as "special subject" but incorporated as a core part of its employee training. She warned Starbucks against treating Philadelphia as a one-off affair, urging the company to investigate whether there were any warning signs.

"I would suspect that this particular issue is something that has occurred before," Gauda said. "The company is in crisis mode now, but they should not look at this as an isolated issue."

Gauda and other corporate communications experts said they were impressed that Johnson immediately took a hands-on approach to addressing the crisis, saying his efforts would pay off in an age where corporations are under the glare of social media.

"I'm actually surprised he is handling it the way a CEO should be handling it. He went in head first and he took the blame for it," said M.J. McCallum, vice president and creative director of Muse Communications, an advertising and communications agency with an African-American focus. "I definitely applaud that. Most people won't jump on the bomb."

"Starbucks has a great reputation. They stand for a better culture. They have stores in inner cities," McCallum said. "I think he realizes what this one incident can do for his brand."

Associated Press Writer Joe Pisani contributed to this story from New York.

Corrects to "comprise" in 8th paragraph; deletes extraneous "said" in 12th paragraph.

Inmate: Bodies stacked in 'macabre woodpile' in prison riot

By MEG KINNARD, Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — As the hours dragged on during a riot at a South Carolina prison, bodies piled up on the sidewalk. An inmate inside watched in dismay as several fellow prisoners, two he knew well, lay dead and dying, their bodies leaving trails of blood leading back inside the prison walls.

One bloodied man tried to get up before he "started into that 'death rattle' people often hear about, but never experience firsthand," the inmate told The Associated Press after the attack. Moments later, the dying man was silent, another casualty of the night's events.

The inmate sent messages to AP as events unfolded overnight Sunday into Monday morning at Lee Correctional Institution. At the end of the seven-hour ordeal, seven inmates lay dead, with 17 others sent to hospitals for treatment.

With many cell door locks broken at Lee, a maximum-security prison, the inmate told AP he freely went outside, where he said he saw bodies "literally stacked on top of each other, like some macabre woodpile."

State officials Monday blamed the carnage on a turf war between gangs over territory, money and contraband items like cellphones. For seven hours, Corrections Director Bryan Stirling said, inmates armed with handmade knives fought each other, leaving seven dead in the worst U.S. prison riot in a quarter-century. Most of the slain were stabbed or slashed; the remainder appeared to have been beaten, Lee County Coroner Larry Logan said.

The first fight started in a dorm about 7:15 p.m. Sunday and appeared to be contained before suddenly starting in two other dorms. No prison guards were hurt. Stirling said they followed protocol by backing out and asking for support. It took several hours to restore order, but once a special SWAT team entered, the inmates gave up peacefully, he said.

The prisoner who saw the riot exchanged messages with AP on the condition of anonymity because he is not allowed to have a cellphone and fears retribution from other inmates. He said he saw several attackers taunt a rival gang member who was badly injured.

"The man died laying on a sidewalk with some of the people who helped kill him laughing at him and taunting him," the inmate told AP.

The inmate said he and other prisoners roamed around freely at the prison in Bishopville, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) east of Columbia. Hours after the violence started, no corrections officers or medical personnel attended to the dead or dying, he said.

"The COs (corrections officers) never even attempted to render aid, nor quell the disturbance," he said. "They just sat in the control bubble, called the issue in, then sat on their collective asses."

Stirling said the response teams entered as fast as they could.

"We gathered as many people as we could, as quickly as we could and went in as soon as we thought it was safe for our staff," he said.

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The slain were serving anywhere from 10 years to life in prison, and their crimes ranged from murder to trafficking crack cocaine. The youngest was 24 years old; the oldest was 44. According to Stirling, the injured inmates required medical attention outside the prison, which made restoring order more difficult for authorities.

The coroner described a chaotic scene upon his arrival, with inmates still fighting. The maximum-security facility in Bishopville houses about 1,500 inmates and 44 guards were there when the first fight started.

The riot was the latest violence in the South Carolina prisons system, where at least 13 other inmates have been killed by fellow prisoners since the start of 2017. It was the most inmates slain in a single riot in the U.S. since nine prisoners and a guard died in 1993 at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, said Steve Martin, a consultant who helps the federal government monitor prison systems.

Cellphones helped stir up the trouble, according to Stirling, who urged the federal government to change a law and allow state institutions like his to block prisoners' cell signals.

Gov. Henry McMaster told reporters that jamming signals from contraband cellphones — already banned in prison but smuggled in by the thousands via visitors, errant guards, even delivered by drone — would “go a long way” in preventing future violence in prison.

When pressed on proposing a solution other than jamming, McMaster offered no specifics.

“We do the best we can,” he said.

State Sen. Gerald Malloy, a Democrat whose district includes Lee Correctional, summed up the day more bluntly.

“It’s an incredibly bad day in South Carolina,” he told AP. “We failed. That’s it.”

Associated Press writers Jeffrey Collins and Christina Myers in Columbia contributed to this report.

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False alarm, not outside attack, sets off Syria air defenses

By ZEINA KARAM, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A false alarm set off Syrian air defense systems early on Tuesday, the military said, denying earlier reports of an “outside aggression” and incoming airstrikes and underscoring the chaotic nature of the multiple actors in Syria’s theater of war.

Syrian state media reported hours earlier that the country confronted yet another assault, shooting down missiles over the central region of Homs and a suburb of Damascus before dawn.

The reports did not say who carried out the alleged strikes, adding to Mideast jitters only days after the United States, Britain and France conducted airstrikes targeting Syria’s alleged chemical weapons facilities in retaliation for a suspected chemical weapons attack that they blamed on the Syrian government.

The Syrian Central Media said six missiles targeted the Shayrat air base in Homs on Tuesday, adding that Syrian air defenses shot down most of them. The Syrian outlet also reported another, separate airstrike on the Dumayr air base, in a suburb of the capital, Damascus.

The Pentagon denied any American military activity in the area. There was no comment from Israel, which frequently carries out airstrikes in Syria but rarely acknowledges them.

Only hours later, Syrian TV carried a military statement saying that air defenses fired a number of missiles because of a “false alarm,” without providing more information.

Earlier this month, four Iranian military personnel were killed in an airstrike on Syria’s T4 air base, also in Homs. Syria and its main allies Iran and Russia blamed Israel for that attack. Israel did not confirm or deny mounting the raid.

The report came as experts from the international chemical weapons watchdog were in Damascus, waiting to visit the site of the suspected chemical attack in the town of Douma, just east of Damascus.

On Monday, Syrian and Russian authorities prevented investigators from the Organization for the Prohi-

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bition of Chemical Weapons from going to the scene, the head of the OPCW said, blocking international efforts to establish what happened and who was to blame.

The U.S. and France say they have evidence that poison gas was used in the April 7 attack in Douma, killing at least 40 people, and that Syrian President Bashar Assad's military was behind it.

But they have made none of that evidence public, even after they, along with Britain, carried out airstrikes on Saturday, bombing sites they said were linked to Syria's chemical weapons program.

Syria and its ally Russia deny any chemical attack took place, and Russian officials went even further, accusing Britain of staging a "fake" chemical attack. British Prime Minister Theresa May accused the two countries — whose forces now control the town east of Damascus — of trying to cover up evidence.

The lack of access to Douma has left unanswered questions about the attack. OPCW Director-General Ahmet Uzumcu said Syrian and Russian officials cited "pending security issues" in keeping its inspectors from reaching Douma.

"The team has not yet deployed to Douma," Uzumcu told an executive council meeting of the OPCW in The Hague on Monday.

Instead, Syrian authorities offered them 22 people to interview as witnesses, he said, adding that he hoped "all necessary arrangements will be made ... to allow the team to deploy to Douma as soon as possible."

Russian military police were ready to help protect the OPCW experts on their visit to Douma, said Maj. Gen. Yuri Yevtushenko of the Russian military's Reconciliation Center in Syria. Igor Kirillov, a Russian chemical weapons protection expert in The Hague, said the team is set to visit the site Wednesday.

Earlier Monday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said the inspectors could not go to the site because they needed approval from the U.N. Department for Safety and Security. He denied that Russia was hampering the mission and suggested the approval was held up because of the Western airstrikes.

However, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations has "provided the necessary clearances for the OPCW team to go about its work in Douma. We have not denied the team any request for it to go to Douma."

Until Saturday, Douma was the last rebel-held town near Damascus, and the target of a government offensive in February and March that killed hundreds and displaced tens of thousands.

Hours after the alleged chemical attack, the rebel faction that controlled the town, the Army of Islam, relented and was evacuated along with thousands of residents.

The Associated Press, during a government-organized visit Monday to Douma, spoke to survivors and witnesses who described being hit by gas. Several said a strange smell started spreading and people screamed, "It's chlorine! It's chlorine!"

The AP visited a two-room underground shelter where Khaled Mahmoud Nuseir said 47 people were killed, including his pregnant wife and two daughters, 18-month-old Qamar and 2 1/2-year-old Nour. A strange smell lingered, nine days after the attack.

Nuseir, 25, said he ran from the shelter to a nearby clinic and fainted. After he was revived, he returned to the shelter and found his wife and daughters dead, with foam coming from their mouths.

He and two other residents accused the rebel Army of Islam of carrying out the attack. As they spoke, government troops were not far away but out of earshot. Nuseir said a gas cylinder was found leaking the poison gas, adding that he didn't think it was dropped from the air because it still looked intact.

Separately, the AP spoke to a medic who was among those who later were evacuated to northern Syria. Ahmed Abed al-Nafaa said helicopters were flying before the attack and when he reached the site, people were screaming "chlorine." He said he tried to enter the shelter but was overcome by a strong smell of chlorine and his comrades pulled him out.

The accounts contradict what the Syrian government and Russia have reported: that there was no gas attack in Douma.

Associated Press Writer Bassem Mroue in Douma, Syria, contributed to this report.

Trump to host Japan's Abe amid strain over N. Korea, tariffs

By JILL COLVIN and MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump will play host to Japan's Shinzo Abe at Mar-a-Lago this week amid growing strain between the two countries over the president's planned meeting with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un and his push for new tariffs.

The visit will be an opportunity for the two leaders to discuss Trump's upcoming summit with North Korea, which Japan eyes warily. It will also serve as a test of whether the fond personal relationship the two leaders have forged on the golf course and over meetings and phone calls has chilled over Trump's recent moves, including his failure to exempt Japan from new steel and aluminum tariffs.

"We expect it to be very positive," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Monday of Abe's visit. "Obviously, the president has got a great relationship there, and it's going to be centered primarily on preparation for talks with North Korea as well as a lot of trade discussion is expected to come up."

The official visit will begin Tuesday afternoon with a one-on-one meeting followed by a small group discussion with top national security officials focused on the Kim summit. In the evening, the president and first lady Melania Trump will have dinner with the Japanese prime minister and his wife.

On Wednesday, the topic will broaden to other issues affecting the Indo-Pacific region, including trade and energy. Trump and Abe will also hold a joint press conference before the president and first lady host the Japanese delegations for dinner. Abe will return to Japan on Thursday morning.

Golf is not on the official schedule, but senior administration officials didn't rule it out completely. Trump and Abe played together during Abe's last trip to Florida a year ago and during Trump's maiden trip to Japan late last year.

When Trump hosted Abe at his private Mar-a-Lago club just weeks after his inauguration, North Korea launched its first missile test of Trump's administration, and the two delivered a joint statement denouncing the launch.

This time, Abe's visit comes weeks after Trump took him — and the region — by surprise when he announced he had accepted an invitation to sit down with Kim following months of increasingly heated rhetoric over the North's nuclear weapons program.

Among the major powers in Northeast Asia, Japan has been left out of the recent flurry of diplomacy with North Korea. Abe will be seeking reassurance from Trump that security threats to Japan won't be overlooked in the U.S.-North Korea summit, slated for May or early June.

Mike Pompeo, Trump's pick for secretary of state, said the goal of the summit is to get North Korea to "step away from its efforts to hold America at risk with nuclear weapons."

Abe has voiced fears that short- and medium-range missiles that pose a threat to Japan might not be part of the U.S. negotiations and has said he worries Trump may "end up accepting North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons."

James Schoff, a former Pentagon adviser on East Asia policy and now a senior associate for the Asia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said the North Korea summit will be front and center of the visit.

"Abe will want to know what Trump's trying to get out of the meeting and what he's willing to offer," Schoff said. "Abe will want to reinforce the idea that maximum pressure must continue until we get complete denuclearization."

Abe is also expected to push for exemptions on new U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum imports that have been granted to several key U.S. allies.

Takehiro Shimada, a spokesman for the Embassy of Japan, said the country can't accept Trump's decision on the tariffs and will be pushing Trump to reconsider.

"That's what we really wanted to ask the America side is, 'Why?'" he said.

Japan could also express support for a U.S. return to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal that Trump abandoned on taking office. Trump opened the possibility of rejoining last week amid a trade dispute with

China.

Both sides insist that Trump and Abe remain close. U.S. officials stressed that Trump has met with Abe more than any other world leader and say they've been in "constant contact" since Trump accepted Kim's invitation.

Abe is also expected to push the issue of Japanese abductees, one of his top policy priorities. Pyongyang has acknowledging abducting 13 Japanese, while Tokyo maintains North Korea abducted 17. Five have been returned to Japan. North Korea says eight others died and denies the remaining four entered its territory. Japan has not been satisfied with North Korea's explanation and has demanded further investigation.

Shimada said Abe would make the case to Trump that releasing the abductees could help North Korea prove they can be trusted to negotiate in good faith after years of deception.

The U.S. itself is pushing for the release of three Americans.

After five years in office, Abe is one of Japan's longest-serving, post-World War II prime ministers but has suffered plummeting poll ratings over allegations that a school linked to his wife got preferential government treatment in a land sale.

That has sparked mass protests demanding Abe's resignation and imperils his chances of winning another term as ruling party leader in September and staying on as premier, despite a handy national election victory last year.

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Defending Trump in Russia probe? It's hardly a dream job

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Several prominent lawyers asked to help represent President Donald Trump in the last year have spurned the assignment at least partly out of concerns he wouldn't pay his bills and doesn't listen to legal advice, according to people familiar with the conversations.

The result is that as investigators intensify their focus on the president's inner circle, including his personal lawyer, Trump has been left with a lean legal team that has struggled to add criminal defense firepower. Though more lawyers may come aboard soon, Trump has time and again struck out in landing some of Washington's most notable attorneys. The extra help may be especially needed in the critical months ahead, as special counsel Robert Mueller seeks an interview with Trump and reaches conclusions on whether the president engaged in obstruction of justice.

That Trump does not have multiple brand-name criminal defense lawyers is startling since, in ordinary circumstances, representing the president in a hugely consequential legal fight would be a dream assignment. President Bill Clinton, for instance, was navigated through the Whitewater scandal by lawyers from Williams & Connolly, one of Washington's most highly regarded firms.

At least one lawyer who was approached but rejected the opportunity made clear to the White House that he'd expect Trump to refrain from discussing the investigation on social media, according to a lawyer familiar with the exchange who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss confidential client matters. That admonition has apparently gone unheeded.

In at least one other case, a major law firm that contemplated an overture to one of its lawyers was turned off by the idea of a "client who attacks the essence of our legal system" and concern that "he treats his lawyers like vendors he can avoid paying," according to one person at the firm who also spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss confidential client matters. That concern is rooted in a multitude of lawsuits Trump and his business organization have faced from lawyers, real estate brokers and others over unpaid bills. Just one example: A Florida golf club owned by Trump agreed this year to a multimillion-dollar settlement with former members who said the club refused to refund their deposits.

"Obviously this is an unusual situation because it's perfectly obvious that Mr. Trump likes to be his own lawyer, and lawyers have to be concerned about their own reputation. And I'm sure that factors into their thinking," said Bill Jeffress, once part of President Richard Nixon's legal team.

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On any lawyer's mind, Jeffress said: "Are your statements to the prosecutors going to be undercut by your client's tweet the next morning?"

Aside from any personal misgivings, many law firms in Washington and elsewhere already represent witnesses in the Mueller investigation and would have an untenable conflict in representing Trump, too. Practically speaking, a bank or financial institution that can guarantee multimillion-dollar payments to a major law firm often makes for a more desirable client than an individual with more limited resources.

The Trump legal team is led by Jay Sekulow, a conservative lawyer and radio talk show host with deep experience in constitutional law and in arguing religious liberty cases before the Supreme Court. He believes that experience is essential and that the case against Trump turns on core constitutional, rather than criminal, questions.

Sekulow has been assisted by other lawyers with ties to the American Center for Law and Justice, but he also works closely with Ty Cobb, an experienced former prosecutor and criminal defense lawyer whose primary role is representing the interests of the White House rather than Trump personally. Other lawyers do work for Trump, too, and the Russia team could grow in coming weeks.

Still, Trump's legal team has been marked by evolving strategies and turmoil in the last year.

It was initially led by Marc Kasowitz, a hard-charging New York attorney who has long been in Trump's corner but is better known for commercial litigation than criminal defense. The initial strategy involved pushing back hard against Mueller's investigation, including by researching potential conflicts on the special counsel team that could be used to seek his disqualification.

But he was soon sidelined and replaced by John Dowd, an experienced criminal defense lawyer who, despite having once extended a middle finger to a reporter who approached him outside a courthouse, had advocated a more conciliatory approach. Yet he raised eyebrows last month with a written statement calling for the Mueller probe to be shut down.

Dowd abruptly left after Trump tried to bring aboard Joe diGenova, a former U.S. attorney and TV pundit who has advocated firing Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. But that plan was stymied because of diGenova's conflicts — his law office represents other witnesses in the Mueller investigation, including Mark Corallo, a former spokesman for the Trump legal team.

Among the other heavyweight lawyers considered are Reid Weingarten, who has represented executives from BP and WorldCom, and A.B. Culvahouse, former White House counsel to President Ronald Reagan. Dan Webb, a former U.S. attorney who's represented General Electric and Philip Morris, passed because of a business conflict.

Ted Olson, one of the country's best-known lawyers and a former solicitor general who, among other matters, argued the Bush v. Gore Supreme Court case and a landmark California same-sex marriage case, was contacted last year and more recently, but his firm passed both times. That firm, Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher, also represents the political opposition research firm behind a dossier of allegations connecting Trump to Russia.

Any client benefits from lawyers with criminal defense savvy and experience negotiating with prosecutors in complex investigations, said Stephen Saltzburg, a law professor at George Washington University.

"In theory, it shouldn't matter," he said. "Any lawyer should be able to negotiate, but in practice, people who know which buttons to push negotiate a lot better."

Prosecutors in Cosby retrial build to conclusion of case

By MICHAEL R. SISK and CLAUDIA LAUER, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Prosecutors are building to the conclusion of their case against Bill Cosby with investigators and a pharmaceutical expert expected to take the stand beginning Tuesday in the comedian's sexual assault retrial.

The prosecution on Monday delivered a searing one-two punch as chief accuser Andrea Constand rejected defense allegations that she concocted her story to score a big payday, and her mother testified that Cosby apologized and called himself a "sick man."

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Andrea and Gianna Constand's testimony followed that of five additional accusers who told jurors that Cosby had drugged and assaulted them two decades earlier.

Andrea Constand withstood a defense cross-examination that sought to expose her as a con artist who set Cosby up, leaving the witness stand at his retrial without budging from her allegation that he drugged and molested her at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004.

"Did you ever fabricate a scheme to falsely accuse him for money?" Cosby lawyer Tom Mesereau asked her.

"No, sir," Constand replied.

Constand, a former Temple University women's basketball administrator, was mostly calm and composed in more than seven hours of testimony over two days.

Her mother followed her on the witness stand on Monday and was more feisty, often clashing with prosecutors and bristling when they asked her if she benefited from Andrea Constand's \$3.4 million civil settlement with Cosby.

"She didn't buy ME a house," Gianna Constand snapped. "This isn't about money."

The mother testified about a phone conversation she said she had with Cosby about a year after the alleged assault on her daughter in which he described in graphic detail their sexual encounter and then apologized.

Gianna Constand said she was "very combative" with Cosby, demanding he tell her the medication he had given her daughter and what he had done to her.

She said Cosby told her he had given Andrea Constand a prescription drug — not the cold and allergy medicine Benadryl as he has claimed — but did not provide the name of it. She said he described how he had touched Andrea Constand's breasts and vagina and guided her hand to his penis.

"He said to me, 'Don't worry, Mom, there was no penile penetration,'" Gianna Constand testified.

She told jurors that Cosby said he "felt like a dirty old perverted man" and, at the end of the call, conceded he was a "sick man." Her testimony prompted Cosby, sitting with his lawyers at the defense table, to open his eyes wide.

Andrea Constand told jurors last week that Cosby knocked her out with pills and then sexually assaulted her. Cosby, now 80, says Constand consented to a sexual encounter. His first trial ended with a hung jury.

At last year's trial, Cosby's lawyers suggested that Constand and the former "Cosby Show" star were lovers who had been intimate with each other in the past. This time, defense lawyers are trying to portray Constand as an opportunist who feigned romantic interest in him and then leveled a false accusation of sexual assault so she could file a lawsuit.

Constand has testified that she saw the former TV star as a mentor and had previously rejected his advances. And she said her phone calls to Cosby were about basketball and had nothing to do with romance.

The defense plans to call as a witness a former Temple administrator, Marguerite Jackson, to testify that before Constand lodged her allegations against Cosby in 2005, Constand had mused to her about setting up a "high-profile person" and filing suit. Jackson has said that she and Constand worked closely together, had been friends and had shared hotel rooms several times.

On Monday, Constand testified she did not "recall ever having a conversation with" Jackson.

A judge blocked Jackson from testifying at last year's trial after Constand took the stand and denied knowing her. At the time, Judge Steven O'Neill ruled Jackson's testimony would be hearsay.

The judge has ruled that Jackson can take the stand at the retrial but indicated he could revisit the issue after Constand was finished testifying.

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

Follow Mike Sisak at <https://twitter.com/mikesisak>.

For more coverage visit <https://www.apnews.com/tag/CosbyonTrial>.

Quirky 'Night Court' actor Harry Anderson dies at age 65

By TOM FOREMAN Jr., Associated Press

Harry Anderson, the actor best known for playing an off-the-wall judge working the night shift of a Manhattan court room in the television comedy series "Night Court," was found dead in his North Carolina home Monday.

Anderson was 65.

A statement from the Asheville Police Department said officers responded to a call from Anderson's home early Monday and found him dead. The statement said foul play is not suspected.

On "Night Court," Anderson played Judge Harry T. Stone, a young jurist who professed his love for singer Mel Torme, actress Jean Harlow, magic tricks and his collection of art-deco ties.

He also starred in the series "Dave's World" and appeared on "Cheers" as con man Harry "The Hat" Gittes. Anderson prided himself on being a magician as well as actor.

"I got into magic when I was a child," he told The Associated Press in 1987. "Unlike most kids, I stayed with it. My high school teachers were always asking me what I was going to do. It made me what I am today — available for weekend employment, parties and bar mitzvahs."

Anderson, was born in Newport, Rhode Island, on Oct. 14, 1952. He grew up in New York and moved to Oregon when he was a teenager and said that's where he became a hippie.

"The Shakespeare Festival at Ashland, Oregon, seemed like a good place to open a magic store," he said. "At 18, I was ready for retirement. It didn't last long, but I was established as the magician. I worked the streets in San Francisco and I did magic and special effects at the festival."

Anderson learned the ropes as a street performer in San Francisco, New Orleans, and Austin, Texas, among other cities. When he made his first appearance on "Saturday Night Live," he was right off the street.

"Cheers" was my first acting job, but it was basically the character I had developed on the street," he said. "That's how I made my living, hustling drinks in bars and quarters on the street."

"Night Court" ran on NBC from 1984 until 1992, and Anderson received three lead comedy actor Emmy nominations for his role. After the show ended, he was cast in the lead role in the CBS sitcom "Dave's World," which was based on the life of Pulitzer Prize-winning humor columnist Dave Barry. That series ran from 1993 until 1997.

A People magazine story in 2002 said Anderson disappeared from Hollywood and resurfaced as the owner of a New Orleans magic shop.

"I am richer than Davy Crockett," Anderson said in the story. "I can settle back and do what I want to do. And what I want to do is card tricks and magic." That includes magic shows for corporate clients ("Fifty-five minutes with applause," says Anderson) at \$20,000 a pop.

According to the story, Anderson was disenchanted by the prospect of chasing acting roles into middle age. "I don't understand why guys have that Don Knotts syndrome of having to be out there." He sold his home in Pasadena, California, and moved back to New Orleans, where he had lived in the 1970s.

Following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, he moved to Asheville.

Anderson had two children from his first marriage to Leslie Pollack. His second wife, Elizabeth Morgan, is among his survivors. There was no immediate word on funeral arrangements Monday night.

Associated Press Television Writer Lynn Elber contributed to this report from Los Angeles. Foreman reported from Charlotte, North Carolina.

Trump lawyer forced to reveal another client: Sean Hannity

By TOM HAYS and LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A legal fight over what should happen to records the FBI seized from President Donald Trump's personal attorney took a surprise twist Monday when the lawyer, Michael Cohen, was forced to reveal a secret — that he had also done legal work for Fox News host Sean Hannity.

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The disclosure came as a New York judge disappointed a lawyer for Trump by letting prosecutors proceed with the cataloguing of evidence including multiple electronic devices that were seized in raids while a system is set up to ensure that records protected by attorney-client privilege aren't disclosed to investigators.

Lawyers for Cohen and prosecutors both had reason to claim success after three hours of arguments before U.S. District Judge Kimba Wood, who said she may appoint a special master, a neutral lawyer, to help decide which materials should stay confidential.

Wood denied a request by Trump's lawyer, Joanna Hendon, that the president and Cohen get the first crack at designating which documents should be off-limits to investigators.

Hannity's name emerged after the judge pressed Cohen to divulge the names of the clients he's worked with since the 2016 election, whose privileged communications might be contained within his files.

Cohen's legal team said he had just three clients in 2017 and 2018.

One was Trump. Another was Elliott Broidy, a Trump fundraiser who resigned from the Republican National Committee on Friday after it was revealed that he paid \$1.6 million to a Playboy Playmate with whom he had an extramarital affair. The Playmate became pregnant and elected to have an abortion.

Cohen's lawyers resisted revealing the name of the third client, saying it would be embarrassing and unnecessary. Plus, the client had specifically asked for privacy and requested that they appeal any demand to divulge his name.

But Wood pressed on.

"I understand he doesn't want his name out there, but that's not enough under the law," she said, after hearing legal arguments from Robert Balin, a lawyer for five news organizations including The Associated Press.

When the name was announced, there were gasps and some laughter in a courtroom packed with journalists. A few of them raced from the courtroom.

Cohen's lawyers did not detail the type of legal work he did for Hannity.

On his radio show, Hannity said Cohen was never involved in any matter between him and any third party.

"Michael never represented me in any matter," Hannity said. "I never retained him in any traditional sense. I never received an invoice. I never paid a legal fee. I had brief discussions with him about legal questions where I wanted his input and perspective."

Later he added on Twitter the legal advice he got from Cohen was "almost exclusively about real estate."

Hannity addressed the controversy twice during his television show Monday night, brushing off criticism from lawyer Alan Dershowitz who told him, "you should have disclosed your relationship with Cohen when you talked about him on the show."

Hannity replied that the relationship was minimal and that he had a right to privacy. "It had to do with real estate and nothing political," Hannity told Dershowitz.

He gave a lengthier explanation at the end of his show, saying Cohen "never represented me in any legal matter." He called Cohen a great attorney, but said none of their discussions ever included a third party and were centered on real estate.

Hannity, an outspoken supporter of Trump, has been a fierce critic of special counsel Robert Mueller, who is looking into Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Monday's hearing began with an appearance by porn actress Stormy Daniels, who was swarmed by photographers and nearly fell as she was hustled into the courthouse, a scene that captured the sensational atmosphere around the case.

The last to enter court, she was among the first to leave. While in court, she smiled several times as she observed the proceedings from a folding chair near the back of the room. Outside afterward, she said Cohen has acted like he's above the law and that she and her lawyer are committed to making sure everyone learns the truth.

The April 9 raid on Cohen sought information on a variety of matters, including a \$130,000 payment made to Daniels, who alleges she had sex with a married Trump in 2006.

At stake is an investigation that could uncover the inner workings of Trump's longtime fixer and image protector. People familiar with the probe told the AP that agents were seeking bank records, records on

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Cohen's dealing in the taxi industry, Cohen's communications with the Trump campaign and information on payments made in 2016 to two women who say they had affairs with Trump, former Playboy model Karen McDougal and the porn star Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford.

Lawyers for Cohen filed papers Monday saying investigators "took everything" during the raids, including more than a dozen electronic devices.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas McKay said in court that the government took images of the contents of most electronic devices, leaving them behind after the raids, and that cataloguing evidence might be delayed because some devices must be sent to an FBI laboratory to "decrypt" because they require code words.

Prosecutors say that material should be reviewed by a team of Justice Department lawyers independent from the investigation who could identify records that should remain confidential. That team, they said, could provide the documents to Trump and other Cohen clients for their own review.

Trump, who was in Florida on Monday, said all lawyers are now "deflated and concerned" by the FBI raid on Cohen.

"Attorney Client privilege is now a thing of the past," he tweeted Sunday. "I have many (too many!) lawyers and they are probably wondering when their offices, and even homes, are going to be raided with everything, including their phones and computers, taken. All lawyers are deflated and concerned."

Times, New Yorker win Pulitzer for Weinstein scandal

By JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Times and The New Yorker won the Pulitzer Prize for public service Monday for breaking the Harvey Weinstein scandal with reporting that galvanized the #MeToo movement and set off a worldwide reckoning over sexual misconduct in the workplace.

The Times and The Washington Post took the award in the national reporting category for their coverage of Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and contacts between President Donald Trump's campaign and Russian officials.

The Press Democrat of Santa Rosa, California, received the breaking news reporting award for coverage of the wildfires that swept through California wine country last fall, killing 44 people and destroying thousands of homes.

The Washington Post also won the investigative reporting prize for revealing decades-old allegations of sexual misconduct against Senate candidate Roy Moore of Alabama. The Republican former judge denied the accusations, but they figured heavily in Doug Jones' victory as the first Democrat elected to the Senate from the state in decades.

One of the biggest surprises of the day came in the non-journalism categories when rap star Kendrick Lamar was awarded the Pulitzer for music, becoming the first non-classical or non-jazz artist to win the prize.

The Pulitzers, American journalism's most prestigious awards, reflected a year of unrelenting news and unprecedented challenges for U.S. media, as Trump repeatedly branded reporting "fake news" and called journalists "the enemy of the people."

The New York Times won three Pulitzers and The Washington Post and Reuters received two apiece.

In announcing the journalism prizes, Pulitzer administrator Dana Canedy said the winners "uphold the highest purpose of a free and independent press, even in the most trying of times."

"Their work is real news of the highest order, executed nobly, as journalism was always intended, without fear or favor," she said.

A string of stories in The Times and The Washington Post shined a light on Russian interference in the presidential election and its possible connections to the Trump campaign and transition — ties now under investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller. The president has called the investigation a "witch hunt."

The Pulitzer judges commended the two newspapers for "deeply sourced, relentlessly reported coverage in the public interest."

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In stories that appeared within days of each other in October, The Times and The New Yorker reported that movie mogul Weinstein faced allegations of sexual harassment and assault from a multitude of women in Hollywood and had secretly paid settlements to keep the claims from becoming public.

The Pulitzer judges said The Times' reporters, led by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, and The New Yorker's Ronan Farrow produced "explosive, impactful journalism that exposed powerful and wealthy sexual predators" and forced the issue of sexual abuse into the open.

"By revealing secret settlements, persuading victims to speak and bringing powerful men to account, we spurred a worldwide reckoning about sexual abuse that only seems to be growing," New York Times executive editor Dean Baquet said in remarks to the newsroom.

"People have been saying for decades that this kind of behavior is endemic in society," New Yorker editor David Remnick said, adding that he hoped the stories would "help not only bring it to light but change the culture."

Weinstein was ousted from the studio he co-founded and now faces criminal investigations in New York and Los Angeles. He has apologized for "the way I've behaved with colleagues in the past" but denied any non-consensual sexual contact.

The stories' impact spread beyond Weinstein to allegations against other powerful men in entertainment, politics and other fields, toppling such figures as "Today" show host Matt Lauer, actor Kevin Spacey, newsman Charlie Rose and Sen. Al Franken. Men and women, famous or not, have spoken about their own experiences with sexual harassment and assault in what has become known as the #MeToo movement.

"This moment gets called a reckoning, but we just started telling the truth about old abuses of power," Farrow tweeted Monday.

Weinstein spokeswoman Holly Baird declined to comment on the Pulitzer except to suggest similar recognition should be given to Tarana Burke, an activist who founded the #MeToo movement on Twitter about a decade ago to raise awareness of sexual violence.

In other categories, the Arizona Republic and USA Today Network won the explanatory reporting prize for a multi-format look at the challenges and consequences of building the Mexican border wall that was a centerpiece of Trump's campaign. The project included footage from a helicopter flight along the entire 2,000-mile border.

The local reporting award went to The Cincinnati Enquirer for what the judges called "a riveting and insightful" narrative and video about the heroin epidemic in the area. More than four dozen reporters and photographers dove into the drug's toll over one week.

Clare Baldwin, Andrew R.C. Marshall and Manuel Mogato of Reuters won the international reporting award for their coverage of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte's deadly crackdown on drugs, and the news agency's photographers received the feature photography prize for their images of the plight of Rohingya refugees who have fled Myanmar.

The breaking news photography award went to Ryan Kelly of The Daily Progress of Charlottesville, Virginia, who captured the moment a car plowed into counter-protesters demonstrating against a white nationalist rally in the college town. The car killed counter-demonstrator Heather Heyer.

Kelly made the photo on his last day at the newspaper before moving on to a job at a brewery. In a text Monday, Kelly described the prize as an "incredible honor" but added: "Mostly I'm still heartbroken for Heather Heyer's family and everybody else who was affected by that tragic violence."

Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, a freelance writer for GQ magazine, took the feature writing award for a profile of Dylann Roof, the avowed white supremacist convicted of killing nine black churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina.

The commentary award went to John Archibald of Alabama Media Group in Birmingham, Alabama, for pieces on politics, women's rights and other topics. Art critic Jerry Saltz of New York magazine won the criticism award.

Andie Dominick of The Des Moines Register received the editorial writing prize for pieces about the consequences of privatizing Iowa's administration of Medicaid.

Freelance writer Jake Halpern and freelance cartoonist Michael Sloan were awarded the editorial cartoon-

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ing prize for a graphic narrative in The New York Times about a family of refugees fearing deportation. The Pulitzers were announced at Columbia University, which administers the prizes. This is the 102nd year of the contest, established by newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer.

Winners of the public service award receive a gold medal; the other awards carry a prize of \$15,000 each.

Associated Press writers Justin Lynch and Colleen Long in New York and Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia, contributed to this report.

ABC makes unusual decision to release all of Comey talk

By DAVID BAUDER, AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Before airing George Stephanopoulos' interview with former FBI Director James Comey, ABC News made the unusual decision of releasing a full transcript of its nearly five-hour talk, including all the material that was not included in the broadcast.

ABC News President James Goldston said in an interview Monday that it was an important example of transparency, and that it had paid off with the transcript becoming by far the most popular item on ABC News' website.

Comey's interview, the first on the media tour to promote his book "A Higher Loyalty," was seen by 9.8 million viewers on Sunday night, the Nielsen company said. That's a good number for the network, which reached 3.6 million viewers in the same time slot the week before with the drama "Deception."

It was less than half of the 22 million people who watched adult film star Stormy Daniels talk on "60 Minutes" last month about her alleged affair with President Donald Trump, which he denies. Comey probably would have drawn more viewers if he gave his first interview to "60 Minutes"; the CBS show reached 10.4 million people on Sunday. But Comey reportedly sought more time on the air for his first interview, and ABC offered the full hour.

Trump was apparently one of his viewers — at least for awhile — as Comey described his contacts with the president and said Trump lacked the moral authority to be president. White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump had seen "bits and pieces of it."

"We didn't learn anything new," Sanders said.

Comey is on a media tour to promote his book that will include interviews by Jake Tapper of CNN, Judy Woodruff of PBS, Rachel Maddow of MSNBC, Bret Baier of Fox News Channel and appearances on Stephen Colbert's late-night show, "The View" and a CNN town hall.

But Stephanopoulos was first. The network released the full transcript of its interview with Comey when the show began airing.

Goldston said the decision to post the transcript was made after it was clear the network didn't have enough time to broadcast all of the material from the interview.

"We thought we had an obligation to put everything out there and let people look at it and decide," he said. "It's a part of modern journalism."

The decision could make ABC vulnerable to criticism from people who might not have liked the network's choices about what deserved to be on television and what didn't. But Goldston said it could have the opposite effect of insulating the network.

"We don't have anything to hide here," he said. It could prevent people from asking "why didn't you ask this, when we knew we had asked the question."

It was a lot of material to digest. CNN's Chris Cillizza jokingly tweeted that he had just gone through the entire transcript line-by-line, and accompanied it with a video of a man collapsing from exhaustion.

Al Tompkins, a broadcast news specialist at the Poynter Institute, said it was an unusual decision for a network, since journalism is largely about editing. In this case, seeing the full interview makes it easier to understand the context in which certain questions were asked and answered.

"I sure don't see a downside to it," Tompkins said.

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Commercial and critical darling Kendrick Lamar wins Pulitzer

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Kendrick Lamar won the Pulitzer Prize for music Monday, making history as the first non-classical or jazz artist to win the prestigious prize.

The revered rapper is also the most commercially successful musician to receive the award, usually reserved for critically acclaimed classical acts who don't live on the pop charts.

The 30-year-old won the prize for "DAMN.," his raw and powerful Grammy-winning album. The Pulitzer board said Monday the album is "a virtuosic song collection unified by its vernacular authenticity and rhythmic dynamism that offers affecting vignettes capturing the complexity of modern African-American life." He will win \$15,000.

Lamar has been lauded for his deep lyrical content, politically charged live performances, and his profound mix of hip-hop, spoken word, jazz, soul, funk, poetry and African sounds. Since emerging on the music scene with the 2011 album "Section.80," he has achieved the perfect mix of commercial appeal and critical respect.

The Pulitzer board has awarded special honors to Bob Dylan, Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane and Hank Williams, but a popular figure like Lamar has never won the prize for music. In 1997, Wynton Marsalis became the first jazz act to win the Pulitzer Prize for music.

That makes Lamar's win that much more important: His platinum-selling major-label albums — "good kid, m.A.A.d city," "To Pimp a Butterfly" and "DAMN." — became works of art, with Lamar writing songs about blackness, street life, police brutality, perseverance, survival and self-worth. His piercing and sharp raps helped him become the voice of the generation, and easily ascend as the leader in hip-hop and cross over to audiences outside of rap, from rock to pop to jazz. He's also been a dominator on the charts, having achieved two dozen Top 40 hits, including a No. 1 success with "Humble," and he has even collaborated with the likes of U2, Taylor Swift, Imagine Dragons, Rihanna and Beyonce.

His music, with songs like "Alright" and "The Blacker the Berry," have become anthems in the wake of high-profile police shootings of minorities as the conversation about race relations dominates news headlines. He brought a dose of seriousness to the 2015 BET Awards, rapping on top of a police car with a large American flag waving behind him. At the 2016 Grammys, during his visual-stunning, show-stopping performance, he appeared beaten, in handcuffs, with chains around his hands and bruises on his eyes as he delivered powerful lyrics to the audience.

Lamar's musical success helped him win 12 Grammy Awards, though all three of his major-label albums have lost in the top category — album of the year. Each loss has been criticized by the music community, launching the conversation about how the Recording Academy might be out of touch. "DAMN." lost album of the year to Bruno Mars' "24K Magic" in January.

The rapper, born in Compton, California, was hand-picked by "Black Panther" director Ryan Coogler to curate an album to accompany the ubiquitously successful film, giving Lamar yet again another No. 1 effort and highly praised project.

"DAMN.," released on April 14, 2017, won five Grammys, including best rap album, and the album topped several year-end lists by critics, including NPR, Rolling Stone, Pitchfork, BBC News, Complex and Vulture.

Finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in music were Michael Gilbertson's "Quartet," which debuted last February at Carnegie Hall, and Ted Hearne's "Sound from the Bench," a 35-minute cantata released last March.

Du Yun, who won the music Pulitzer last year for her opera "Angel's Bone," said she was thrilled about Lamar's win.

"'To Pimp a Butterfly' got my blood pumping and the video for 'DNA.' made me want to make the music I'm making now," she wrote in a statement. "Freedom of expression is the height of art, and Kendrick Lamar is the embodiment of that freedom."

US says California rejects proposed border duties for troops

By ELLIOT SPAGAT and LUIS ALONSO LUGO, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Trump administration said Monday that California Gov. Jerry Brown rejected terms of the National Guard's initial deployment to the Mexican border, but a state official said nothing was decided.

"The governor determined that what we asked for is unsupportable, but we will have other iterations," Ronald Vitiello, U.S. Customs and Border Protection's acting deputy commissioner, told reporters in Washington.

Brown elicited rare and effusive praise from President Donald Trump last week for pledging 400 troops to the Guard's third large-scale border mission since 2006.

But the Democratic governor conditioned his commitment on his state's troops having nothing to do with immigration enforcement, even in a supporting role.

Brown's announcement last week did not address what specific jobs the California Guard would and would not do, nor answer the thorny question of how state officials would distinguish work related to immigration from other duties.

Vitiello said the governor decided California will not accept terms of an initial troop rollout for the state that was similar to plans for the other three border states, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

According to two U.S. officials, the initial jobs for those troops include fixing and maintaining vehicles, using remote-control surveillance cameras to report suspicious activity to U.S. Border Patrol agents, operating radios and providing "mission support," which can include clerical work, buying gas and handling payrolls. The officials spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

California National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Thomas Keegan said "state officials have not rejected anything" since Brown proposed a formal agreement Wednesday with the Homeland Security and Defense Departments that prohibits any involvement in immigration.

"The federal government has not yet responded," Keegan said in an emailed statement.

Homeland Security Department spokesman Tyler Houlton said the federal government was committed to working with Brown and that the California leader shares interest in a secure border with Mexico.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense Integration Robert G. Salesses said the administration wanted 237 troops for work in two parts of the state that California "has indicated they will not perform."

Vitiello emphasized that California may participate in other ways that must still be worked out.

"We are anticipating additional requirements, and we got a signal from California that they are interested in improving border security," Vitiello said. "So, at some point that might come together."

Brown was clear last week that California troops will help go after drugs, guns and criminal gangs, but not immigrants. Drawing that line will likely prove difficult because the Border Patrol combats illegal immigration but also drug smuggling and other crimes.

Brown's pledge of 400 troops allowed Trump to boast support from all four border-state governors and helped put the president above the lower end of his threshold of marshaling 2,000 to 4,000 troops that he wants to fight illegal immigration and drug trafficking.

The Democratic governor cast his decision as a welcome infusion of support paid for by the U.S. government to fight transnational criminal gangs and drug and firearms smugglers.

Republican governors from Arizona, New Mexico and Texas have openly embraced the Trump administration's plans and specific jobs for their troops, as California did in previous Guard deployments. Texas National Guard members are already doing aerial and ground surveillance. The Arizona National Guard said last week that its troops will provide air and ground support.

The Guard had about 900 troops working on the border mission Monday, a number that changes daily, said Lt. General Daniel R. Hokanson, the National Guard Bureau's vice chief. Nearly 250 were in Arizona, more than 60 in New Mexico and about 650 in Texas.

___ Alonso Lugo reported from Washington.

What's in those seized records? Trump's biggest new worry

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and his allies have hit a new level of anxiety after the raid on his personal attorney's office, fearful of deeper exposure for Trump, his inner circle and his adult children — and more than concerned that they don't know exactly what is in those records and electronic devices seized last week.

There is also some worry that Michael Cohen, the self-described legal fixer who helped make bad stories go away and took a leading role in Trump Organization projects in foreign outposts, may strike a deal with prosecutors out of concern about his own prospects.

"I think it's a huge minefield for Donald Trump and the Trump Organization," said trial attorney Joseph Cammarata, who represented Paula Jones in her sexual harassment suit against President Bill Clinton. "I think this is on its own track and this train is coming down the track with brute force."

The wild legal show continued to play out Monday, at a court hearing in New York before a federal judge who is considering what to do with the material that the FBI seized from Cohen. The scene was punctuated by dramatic entrances and revelations. Stormy Daniels — the porn actress who alleged she had a sexual affair with the president — made an appearance, stumbling on her high heels as she was swarmed by press. Cohen was forced to reveal that another one of his clients is Fox News host Sean Hannity, a high-profile confidant of the president.

Trump left the White House for Florida, for a two-day summit with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the president's Mar-a-Lago estate. Advisers are hoping the meeting will draw attention from the legal tempest in Washington and New York.

On the trip south, White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders sought to put distance between Trump and Cohen, saying: "I believe they've still got some ongoing things, but the president has a large number of attorneys, as you know."

The federal raid, carried out a week ago in New York City, sought bank records, information on Cohen's dealing in the taxi industry, Cohen's communications with the Trump campaign and information on payments he made in 2016 to former Playboy model Karen McDougal and to Daniels, both of whom allege relationships with Trump, people familiar with the raid told the Associated Press. The court proceedings Monday dealt with who gets to look at Cohen's seized documents and devices before they are turned over to prosecutors.

Though Cohen once said he "would take a bullet" for Trump, he is aware of the possible outcome — including potential prison time — and has expressed worry about his family, said a person who has spoken to the lawyer in recent days but is not authorized to discuss private conversations. Cohen has not been charged with anything.

Trump's moods have grown darker in recent days, as he lashes out at the "overreach" of the raid. Further angering the president is that the raid was triggered in part by a referral from special counsel Robert Mueller, who is looking into Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The raid was authorized by the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

On Twitter Sunday, Trump said that all lawyers are now "deflated and concerned" by the FBI raid on Cohen, adding that "Attorney Client privilege is now a thing of the past." Trump has also taken to downplaying Cohen's role.

The president also inveighed further against former FBI Director James Comey, who said Monday morning that Trump was morally unfit to be president. That was a few hours after Comey said the same and worse in a highly promoted ABC interview.

Many in the White House view the aftershocks of the Cohen raid as potentially more threatening than Mueller's Russia probe, fearful of what skeletons may be in the lawyer's closets, according to five officials and outside allies who all spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

"I agree with the consensus forming that it's very dangerous for the president, probably the most serious thing yet," said Sol Wisenberg, a defense attorney who was a deputy independent counsel during

the Starr special counsel investigation into Clinton. "Even if you shut Mueller down some way, how do you shut down the Southern District (federal court)?"

Trump's anger at the probe has intensified, with him musing publicly about firing Mueller and the man who authorized the probe, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. Those around Trump have hoped that this week's visit to Mar-a-Lago, where he is generally happier, along with the tightly scheduled summit with Abe, would somewhat distract him from Cohen and from Comey's ongoing publicity tour.

But White House aides have also expressed worry that they can control Trump less at his palatial Florida estate, where he is known to seek out counsel from club members and get revved up by their at-times provocative advice. One recent presidential dinner guest was Hannity, a longtime Trump ally whose connection to Cohen shed more light on the attorney who was more than just a lawyer for Trump.

Cohen has long been a key power center in the Trump Organization and a fixture along the edges of Trump's nascent political life. In Cohen's own estimation, he is Trump's Ray Donovan, the bruising television character who takes whatever steps are needed to fix problems for the tycoon he serves.

He has regularly threatened lawsuits against those who pose a challenge to Trump. He has berated reporters for writing unflattering words about his boss. He has worked with tabloids, including the National Enquirer, to kill unfavorable stories about Trump. He has said he used a home-equity loan to finance a \$130,000 payment to Daniels in the final days of the 2016 campaign and did so without Trump's knowledge.

The president has consistently denied a relationship with Daniels, who claims the two had sex not long after first lady Melania Trump gave birth to the couple's son Barron. He has also pushed back against other claims from women.

A recent Trump fundraising email praised Mrs. Trump, with the president calling her "my rock and foundation."

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Chemical weapons team in Syria kept from alleged attack site

By **BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press**

DOUMA, Syria (AP) — Syrian and Russian authorities prevented independent investigators from going to the scene of a suspected chemical attack, the head of the chemical watchdog group said Monday, blocking international efforts to establish what happened and who was to blame.

The U.S. and France say they have evidence that poison gas was used in the April 7 attack in the opposition-held town of Douma, killing dozens of people, and that Syrian President Bashar Assad's military was behind it.

But they have made none of that evidence public, even after they, along with Britain, bombarded sites they said were linked to Syria's chemical weapons program.

Syria and its ally Russia deny any chemical attack took place, and Russian officials went even further, accusing Britain of staging a "fake" chemical attack. British Prime Minister Theresa May accused the two countries — whose forces now control the town east of Damascus — of trying to cover up evidence.

The lack of access to Douma by inspectors from the watchdog group, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, has left unanswered questions about the attack.

OPCW Director-General Ahmet Uzumcu said Syrian and Russian officials cited "pending security issues" in keeping its inspectors from reaching Douma.

"The team has not yet deployed to Douma," Uzumcu told an executive council meeting of the OPCW in The Hague.

Instead, Syrian authorities offered them 22 people to interview as witnesses, he said, adding that he hoped "all necessary arrangements will be made ... to allow the team to deploy to Douma as soon as possible."

Russian military police were ready to help protect the OPCW experts on their visit to Douma, said Maj. Gen. Yuri Yevtushenko of the Russian military's Reconciliation Center in Syria. Igor Kirillov, a Russian chemi-

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cal weapons protection expert in The Hague, said the team is set to visit the site Wednesday.

Earlier Monday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said the inspectors could not go to the site because they needed approval from the U.N. Department for Safety and Security. He denied that Russia was hampering the mission and suggested the approval was held up because of the Western airstrikes.

"As far as I understand, what is hampering a speedy resolution of this problem is the consequences of the illegal, unlawful military action that Great Britain and other countries conducted on Saturday," he said.

However, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations has "provided the necessary clearances for the OPCW team to go about its work in Douma. We have not denied the team any request for it to go to Douma."

Early Tuesday, the government-run Central Military media reported a missile attack on the Shayrat air base in Homs province. It said Syrian air defenses shot down most of the six missiles fired at the base. It also reported a separate airstrike on the Dumayr air base near Damascus.

It did not elaborate or say who carried out the airstrikes. A Pentagon spokeswoman said there was no U.S. military activity in the area.

Earlier this month, four Iranian military personnel were killed in an airstrike on Syria's T4 air base in Homs. Syria and its allies blamed Israel for that attack. Israel did not confirm or deny mounting the raid.

In Douma, at least 40 people are believed to have died in the suspected chemical attack on April 7. Until Saturday, the city was the last rebel-held town near the capital and the target of a government offensive in February and March that killed hundreds and displaced tens of thousands. Hours after the alleged chemical attack, the rebel faction that controlled the town, the Army of Islam, relented and was evacuated along with thousands of residents.

The Associated Press, during a government-organized visit Monday to Douma, spoke to survivors and witnesses who described being hit by gas. Several said a strange smell started spreading and people screamed, "It's chlorine! It's chlorine!"

The AP visited a two-room underground shelter where Khaled Mahmoud Nuseir said 47 people were killed, including his pregnant wife and two daughters, 18-month-old Qamar and 2 1/2-year-old Nour. A strange smell lingered, nine days after the attack.

Nuseir, 25, said he ran from the shelter to a nearby clinic and fainted. After he was revived, he returned to the shelter and found his wife and daughters dead, with foam coming from their mouths.

He and two other residents accused the rebel Army of Islam of carrying out the attack. As they spoke, government troops were not far away but out of earshot. Nuseir said a gas cylinder was found leaking the poison gas, adding that he didn't think it was dropped from the air because it still looked intact.

Separately, the AP spoke to a medic who was among those who later were evacuated to northern Syria. Ahmed Abed al-Nafaa said helicopters were flying before the attack and when he reached the site, people were screaming "chlorine." He said he tried to enter the shelter but was overcome by a strong smell of chlorine and his comrades pulled him out.

The accounts contradict what the Syrian government and Russia have reported: that there was no gas attack in Douma.

On Sunday, Syria's state-run Al-Ikhbariya TV broadcast interviews with nearly a dozen doctors and medics who said they found no trace of poison gas in Douma. One medic said he heard someone scream "Chemical!" but saw no patients with symptoms. Others said that dust can seep into underground shelters, causing choking and other symptoms associated with chemical attacks.

The Russian military said last week its officers in Douma found no evidence to support reports of a gas attack. The Russian military taskforce in Syria said it visited the hospital in Douma and talked to staff who said they did not confirm reports of such an assault.

Both Russia and the Syrian government have welcomed the OPCW mission. The team arrived in Syria on Saturday. The OPCW team does not have a mandate to assign blame for the attack.

Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad has said his country is "fully ready" to cooperate with the OPCW mission. He said government officials met with the delegation several times to discuss cooperation.

Government forces and Russian troops have been deployed in Douma, which is now controlled by the

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Syrian government. Opposition activists have said the troops might have removed any evidence of chemical weapons' use.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov denied that Russia interfered with any evidence.

"I can guarantee that Russia has not tampered with the site," Lavrov told the BBC on Monday.

Alexander Shulgin, the Russian envoy at the OPCW in The Hague, said allegations that Russia might destroy evidence reflected Washington's effort to justify Saturday's strikes.

"It's a clumsy effort to find an explanation if the claim of the chemical weapons use in Syria fails to get confirmation," Shulgin said at a briefing. "Our American partners are clearly getting nervous. They are frantically looking for some justification if their claims that served as the reason for the strike don't receive confirmation."

In London, British Prime Minister Theresa May accused Syria and Russia of trying to cover up evidence. She said Syrian officials have been searching evacuees from Douma to ensure samples are not smuggled out.

"A wider operation to conceal the facts of the attack is underway, supported by the Russians," she told lawmakers.

The weekend's airstrikes have increased international tension, as the U.S. and Russia exchanged threats of retaliation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday warned that if the strikes continue, "it will inevitably entail chaos in international relations."

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said the strikes were a "clear message" to Assad, Russia and Iran that chemical weapons use is not acceptable and that the allies would not stand idle. He spoke in an interview with Turkey's NTV television.

Associated Press writers Nataliya Vasilyeva in Moscow, Albert Aji in Damascus, Sarah El Deeb in Beirut, Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations and Raf Casert in Luxembourg contributed.

White House says Russia sanctions still under consideration

By **MATTHEW LEE** and **ZEKE MILLER**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House scrambled Monday to walk back U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley's weekend announcement that new economic sanctions against Russia are imminent, but stressed the penalties are still being considered.

Haley created a firestorm Sunday when she said the new sanctions would be imposed by the Treasury Department on Monday, when, in fact, no such announcement was planned, according to two officials familiar with the matter.

In a statement, White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders tried to clarify the situation, but her explanation created more confusion and led to suggestions that President Donald Trump had personally intervened to halt the sanctions from taking effect Monday.

"We are considering additional sanctions on Russia and a decision will be made in the near future," Sanders said in a statement.

The two officials, who were not authorized to discuss private administration deliberations publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Haley had misspoken when she said on CBS' "Face the Nation" that Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin would announce the sanctions Monday "if he hasn't already." Haley said the sanctions would target those who are enabling Syrian leader Bashar Assad's government to continue using chemical weapons.

The two officials said the administration had no plans to announce Syria-related sanctions on Russia this week, although they noted that two entities were hit with such penalties last month in a largely overlooked portion of a sanctions package that dealt mainly with Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and hacking.

After Haley's comments, some in the administration suggested the sanctions now being considered could

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be rolled out Monday. But others said it would be wiser and more effective to wait for a period longer than three days after the U.S., British and French infuriated Russia with their missile strikes on Syria on Friday.

The officials could not say when the new sanctions would be announced.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump continued to hail the missile attack as perfectly carried out.

Trump tweeted "Mission Accomplished" on Saturday after U.S., French and British warplanes and ships launched more than 100 missiles nearly unopposed by Syrian air defenses. While he declared success, the Pentagon said the pummeling of three chemical-related facilities left enough others intact to enable the Assad government to use banned weapons against civilians if it chooses.

Trump's choice of words recalled a similar claim associated with President George W. Bush following the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Bush addressed sailors aboard a Navy ship in May 2003 alongside a "Mission Accomplished" banner, just weeks before it became apparent that Iraqis had organized an insurgency that would tie down U.S. forces for years.

Later Sunday, Trump sent a letter to congressional leaders informing them in writing of his decision to order the strike. Under the War Powers Resolution, the president must keep Congress informed of such actions.

The nighttime assault on Syria was carefully limited to minimize civilian casualties and avoid direct conflict with Russia, but confusion arose over the extent to which Washington warned Moscow it was coming. The Pentagon said it gave no explicit warning. The U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Jon Huntsman, said in a video, "Before we took action, the United States communicated with" Russia to "reduce the danger of any Russian or civilian casualties."

Linden wins Boston Marathon, 1st US woman since '85

By JIMMY GOLEN, AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — After slogging through just a few miles of icy rain and a near-gale headwind that made her feel like she was running in place, Desiree Linden decided she'd seen enough of the Boston Marathon for another year.

"My hands were freezing, and there are times where you were just stood up by the wind. It was comical how slow you were going, and how far you still had to go," Linden said.

"At six miles I was thinking, 'No way, this is not my day,'" she said. "Then you break the tape and you're like, 'This is not what I expected today.'"

A two-time Olympian and the 2011 Boston Marathon runner-up, Linden decided to stick around, outlasting the weather and the rest of the field to win the race's 122nd edition on Monday in 2 hours, 39 minutes, 54 seconds. That was more than four minutes better than second-place finisher Sarah Sellers but the slowest time for a women's winner in Boston since 1978.

Yuki Kawauchi splashed through the pelting rain, temperatures in the mid-30s and wind that gusted as high as 32 mph to win the men's race, passing defending champion Geoffrey Kirui in Kenmore Square to earn Japan's first Boston title since 1987 and the \$150,000 first prize.

Wearing a white windbreaker that was drenched and billowing in the wind, Kirui slowed and stumbled across the Copley Square finish line in second, 2:25 back, followed by Shadrack Biwott and three other U.S. men. The winning time of 2:15:58 and was the slowest since Jack Fultz overcame temperatures in the high 90s to win the "Run for the Hoses" in 1976.

"For me, it's the best conditions possible," said Kawauchi, who competed in 12 marathons last year — six times the usual number for an elite runner — and also works as a school administrator.

Runners donned hats and extra layers, and the lead packs tried to draft off the media truck to avoid the rain that was hitting them horizontally at times. Wheelchair winners Marcel Hug of Switzerland and American Tatyana McFadden, both five-time champions, said they were unable to see through the spray that spun off their wheels.

"It was just tough, it was so freezing," Hug said through chattering teeth as a volunteer draped a second towel around his shoulders. "I'm just very glad that I made it."

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McFadden said she wore two jackets, with plastic bags between layers to stay dry, and hand warmers against her chest. The wet roads made it treacherous to turn and impossible to stop.

"I could start to feel my arms getting heavy just from all the rain soaking in," she said. "You can't put your brakes on right away, so you had to be tedious on the turns. I couldn't even see because the wind was so strong."

On the fifth anniversary of the finish line explosions that killed three and wounded hundreds more, Linden became the first U.S. woman to win since Lisa Larsen Weidenbach in 1985 — before the race began offering prize money that lured the top international competitors to town.

Linden nearly ended the drought in 2011 when she was outkicked down Boylston Street and finished second by 2 seconds. This time she made the turn off of Hereford with a lead of more than half of a mile.

"Probably 2011 is what put the fear in me," Linden said. "That sprint battle is not super fun. It was nice to get it right down Boylston this time, that's for sure."

A 34-year-old California native who lives in Michigan, Linden said she was so broken by the weather that she wanted to drop out after a couple of miles but instead stuck around in case she could help one of her fellow Americans.

When four-time Olympian and reigning New York City Marathon champion Shalane Flanagan fell behind after needing a bathroom break, Linden let her draft so she could catch up to the pack. Later, she helped Molly Huddle reconnect with the group.

"And it turned out I was in third, and I thought, 'Well, I probably shouldn't drop out,'" said Linden, who also earned \$150,000.

Sellers, who finished 4:10 behind, is a full-time nurse who had to train before or after work — at 4 a.m. or 7 p.m. She said didn't believe it when she was told she had finished second, or that she earned \$75,000.

"Yeah, I'm in shock about that," she said. It was the second competitive marathon for Sellers, who was a distance runner at Weber State.

Canada's Krista Duchene was third, with a total of seven Americans in the women's top 10 and — for the second straight year — six in the men's.

The East Africans who have dominated the professional era of the race had their worst performance in decades: Kirui was the only Kenyan in the top ten for the men's race; defending champion Edna Kiplagat, who was ninth, helped prevent a shutout in the distaff division.

"Some of the women I was passing, I was in complete disbelief," Sellers said. "I have the utmost respect for who they are as athletes and as people."

GAO says EPA violated spending law on Pruitt's privacy booth

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An internal government watchdog says the Environmental Protection Agency violated federal spending laws when purchasing a \$43,000 soundproof privacy booth for Administrator Scott Pruitt to make private phone calls in his office.

The Government Accountability Office issued its findings Monday in a letter to Senate Democrats who had requested a review of Pruitt's spending.

GAO General Counsel Thomas Armstrong determined that EPA's purchase of the booth violated federal law prohibiting agencies from spending more than \$5,000 for redecorating, furnishings or other improvements to the offices of presidential appointees without informing Congress. Because EPA used federal money in a manner specifically prohibited by law, Armstrong said the agency also violated the Antideficiency Act, and is legally obligated to report that violation to Congress.

EPA spokeswoman Liz Bowman said the agency is "addressing GAO's concern, with regard to congressional notification about this expense, and will be sending Congress the necessary information this week."

EPA has said previously that Pruitt needed the privacy booth to make secure phone calls with President Donald Trump and other senior administration officials without fear of eavesdropping. It is among several unusual security precautions taken by Pruitt that are now under scrutiny, like his use frequent use of first-

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class flights to avoid unpleasant interactions with other travelers.

The Associated Press first reported in December that EPA also spent about \$9,000 for an outside contractor to sweep Pruitt's office for secret listening devices and installed biometric locks.

Democratic Sen. Tom Udall of New Mexico, who requested the GAO review, said the finding was yet another example of the embattled EPA administrator flouting federal spending rules.

"An illegal privacy booth to conduct secret discussions with his polluter friends does nothing to help our health or environment," Udall said Monday. "Scott Pruitt is behaving like swamp emperor rather than EPA administrator — he has shown a shocking lack of regard for public health and safety, ethics and fairness. He has been a disaster, and it's past time for him to go."

Pruitt and those around him are under multiple investigations launched by government watchdogs and congressional committees. EPA's inspector general has at least five ongoing Pruitt-related probes, while the House oversight panel on Friday demanded interviews with five of the EPA administrator's closest aides.

Among the issues being probed by EPA's inspector general is whether Pruitt's office properly used authority granted to the EPA administrator under the Safe Drinking Water Act to hire and give raises to a limited number of employees.

Among those who have received massive raises under that authority are two young aides to Pruitt he brought with him to EPA from Oklahoma, where he previously served as state attorney general.

EPA senior legal counsel Sarah Greenwalt, 30, got two raises totaling more than \$66,000, bringing her salary to \$164,200 a year. Scheduling director Millian Hupp, 26, saw her salary jump to \$114,590, with raises totaling more than \$48,000.

In a combative Fox News interview on April 4, Pruitt insisted he didn't approve the big raises and didn't know who did.

In an unusual management alert issued Monday, EPA Inspector General Arthur Elkins said his staff had reviewed personnel documents for six employees who were hired or had received raises under the Safe Drinking Water Act since Pruitt came to the agency last year.

The inspector general said some hiring documents were signed by Pruitt himself, while Chief of Staff Ryan Jackson signed off on forms approving big raises, adding the words "for Scott Pruitt" to his signature.

The names of the employees at issue were blacked out from the documents released to the public, though the hire dates and raises awarded to two of the redacted employees exactly matched information for Greenwalt and Hupp.

The inspector general's audit into the raises is continuing, but Elkins' letter said the interim alert was issued to notify Pruitt "of certain factual information."

Democrats and a few Republicans have been calling on Pruitt either to resign or be fired since late last month, when media reports first disclosed that he had rented a Capitol Hill condo tied to an oil and gas lobbyist at the bargain rate of \$50 a night.

Republican Sen. John Barrasso of Wyoming, chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and typically a staunch defender of Pruitt, agreed that EPA needs to follow the law.

"It is critical that EPA and all federal agencies comply with notification requirements to Congress before spending taxpayer dollars," he said. "EPA must give a full public accounting of this expenditure and explain why the agency thinks it was complying with the law."

Other Republicans have been more forceful in criticizing Pruitt.

In a Fox News interview over the weekend, House oversight chairman Trey Gowdy said he was especially troubled by Pruitt's use of security concerns to justify spending on premium-class airfare.

"You need to go into another line of work if you don't want people to be mean to you," the South Carolina Republican quipped. "Like maybe a monk, where you don't come in contact with anyone."

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

This story has been corrected to say Sen. Udall is from New Mexico.

8-year-old boy at school slashes other students with knife

SAUK RAPIDS, Minn. (AP) — An 8-year-old student took a kitchen knife to a central Minnesota elementary school and randomly attacked three other children Monday, authorities said.

Police Chief Perry Beise said the victims — aged 8, 9 and 13 — suffered “superficial wounds” requiring stitches in the attack at Pleasantview Elementary in Sauk Rapids. No one else was hurt.

Beise told The Associated Press he didn’t know why the boy did it.

“If I could answer that question I would,” the police chief said. “He randomly cut three students then walked into the office and set the knife down.”

School Superintendent Bruce Watkins said the boy lashed out at the other students until an adult intervened. The incident lasted about 5 minutes and took place in a school hallway.

The incident happened about 7:15 a.m. as students were arriving for class, Watkins told the Star Tribune of Minneapolis. After putting his backpack away, the second-grade student took out a knife and slashed three students with it, the superintendent said. School officials immediately called police and an ambulance.

By the time officers arrived, Beise said, the boy was in an office with a counselor and the three injured students were being treated by the school nurse. He said the boy was cooperative with investigators. He said he didn’t know if the boy had been bullied, or if he had mental health issues.

Beise said the boy was released to his parents. The police report will be forwarded to the Benton County Attorney’s Office.

“They don’t charge children this young with crimes,” the chief said “You try to get them treatment and help them be successful. It’s also possible that human services will become involved in some way.”

In an email to parents, school officials said that the parents of the three injured students chose to take their children home or to get additional medical attention on their own.

One of the injured children is a seventh-grader who was waiting to catch a transfer bus. The other two are Pleasantview Elementary students.

Watkins said the school made mental health counselors available to students and staff. Classes went on as scheduled. The attacker will not be allowed back in school, the superintendent said.

Sauk Rapids is about 70 miles (113 kilometers) northwest of Minneapolis. Pleasantview has 720 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, according to the school district’s website.

Weapons in schools and school security have been ongoing issues in the U.S.

A 19-year-old former student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, is accused of bringing an assault rifle to the school in February and killing 17 students and staff members. In December 2012, Adam Lanza, 20, shot his mother to death at their Newtown, Connecticut, home before killing 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Lanza killed himself as police arrived at the school.

Trump builds on Obama opioid policy

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Deep within President Donald Trump’s plan to combat opioid abuse, overshadowed by his call for the death penalty for some drug traffickers, is a push to expand the use of medication to treat addiction.

It’s a rare instance in which Trump isn’t trying to dismantle Obama administration policies, and where fractious Republicans and Democrats in Congress have come together.

Trump declared last month that “we’re making medically assisted treatment more available and affordable,” even as Congress was working to approve \$1 billion for a new treatment grant program for opioids as part of the massive government funding bill.

Not to offer such treatment is like “trying to treat an infection without antibiotics,” new Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar told the National Governors Association earlier this year.

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Experts have long argued that medication-assisted treatment should be the standard of care for people addicted to heroin and other opioid drugs. But acceptance lags. Cost is a barrier, as are government regulations. Some of the medications are opioids themselves and there's no consensus on how long patients should remain in treatment.

In its final year, the Obama administration pushed through Congress \$1 billion for opioid crisis grants to states. Of that, \$500 million was to be released last year and the other \$500 million this year. States had to show that their opioid programs are based on clinical evidence, so medication-assisted treatment got a big boost.

The 2018 spending bill provides another \$1 billion, and the Trump administration says it will carry even more specific requirements for states to use treatment supported by clinical evidence, including medications.

"The government is talking about treatment and medication-assisted treatment in a way that the government has never done before," said Tom Hill, vice president of addiction and recovery at the National Council for Behavioral Health, which advocates for mental health and addiction treatment.

Overdose deaths from heroin, synthetics like fentanyl, and prescription painkillers, reached 42,000 in 2016, according to the latest statistics.

"This is being addressed as the illness that it is," said Elinore McCance-Katz, assistant secretary of HHS for mental health and substance abuse. "Most definitely the government is acknowledging the disease of addiction as it pertains to opioids — and other substances as well — but opioids of course are an emergency."

Grants are awarded to states based on a variety of factors, including overdose deaths and the number of people who can't find treatment.

A study looking at New England by the nonprofit Institute for Clinical and Economic Review found that every dollar invested in medication treatment would return about \$1.80 in savings, when factoring in society's costs from lost productivity and crime.

Vermont has been hard hit by the addiction epidemic and is among states that have previously gotten federal money for medication-assisted treatment. Its central goal is to improve access, according to a federal report. In Massachusetts, the plan is aimed in part at pregnant women and new mothers. Indiana wants to focus on rural residents.

One Vermont physician, Dr. Deborah Richter, says medications have helped her patients, especially when combined with counseling.

"People got back to what they were before the addiction seized them," she said.

As a doctor, "it was on a personal level so rewarding to save other mothers' children."

Skeptics of the government emphasis on medication-assisted treatment say it's not a cure-all.

Jonathan Goyer, manager of the Anchor recovery program in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, said he sees many patients who don't want to take medication, because they want to be free of drugs altogether.

"We should be increasing medication-assisted treatment," said Goyer. "But we should also be increasing everything else."

At the Neil Kennedy Recovery Centers in Youngstown, Ohio, outpatient director Pam Ramsey said her program emphasizes medication as an aid, not as the sole treatment.

"It really is an assist to the treatment," said Ramsey. Along with medication, treatment incorporates a version of the traditional 12-step approach to quitting, counseling sessions, group meetings, and follow-up. "Our goal is still abstinence."

Home remodeling contractor Rob Judy said he's wrestled with heroin addiction for more than 20 years. Medication alone did not keep him drug free, nor did a faith-based program.

Finally Judy signed up for comprehensive treatment at Neil Kennedy.

The medication puts out "the fire of active addiction, of having to wake up and use," said Judy. But he says that needs to be followed with counseling, peer support and follow-up care.

"I believe that addiction is based on and driven by loss, and at the core of it is pain," said Judy. "If you don't address those issues, sooner or later you're going to relapse."

Granddaughter: Barbara Bush is 'a fighter,' in good spirits

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Former first lady Barbara Bush, who was reported in "failing health" over the weekend, is in "great spirits" and the family is grateful for "everybody's prayers and thoughts," her granddaughter said Monday.

Bush family spokesman Jim McGrath said in a news release Sunday that "Mrs. Bush, now age 92, has decided not to seek additional medical treatment and will instead focus on comfort care" at home in Houston following consultations with her doctors and family.

McGrath did not elaborate on the nature of Bush's health problems but on Monday said she's suffered in recent years from congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. She also has been treated for decades for Graves' disease, which is a thyroid condition, had heart surgery in 2009 for a severe narrowing of her main heart valve and was hospitalized a year before that for surgery on a perforated ulcer.

Jenna Bush Hager, an anchor on NBC's "Today" show, told the program Monday morning that Bush is resting comfortably with family.

"She's a fighter. She's an enforcer," Hager said, using the family's nickname for her grandmother. "We're grateful for her, for everybody's prayers and thoughts, and just know the world is better because she is in it."

"We are grateful for her. She's the best grandma anybody could have ever had ... or have," she said.

Bush is one of only two first ladies who was also the mother of a president. The other was Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, the nation's second president, and mother of John Quincy Adams, the sixth president.

Bush married George H.W. Bush on Jan. 6, 1945. They had six children and have been married longer than any presidential couple in American history.

Eight years after she and her husband left the White House, Mrs. Bush stood with her husband as their son George W. was sworn in as the 43rd president.

Hager said the former president "still says, 'I love you Barbie' every night," describing their grandparents' close relationship as "remarkable."

McGrath said Bush was concerned more for her family than herself.

"It will not surprise those who know her that Barbara Bush has been a rock in the face of her failing health, worrying not for herself — thanks to her abiding faith — but for others," he said.

President Donald Trump's press secretary, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, said in a statement Sunday evening that "the President's and first lady's prayers are with all of the Bush family during this time."

Bush is known for her white hair and her triple-strand fake pearl necklace.

Her brown hair began to gray in the 1950s, while her 3-year-old daughter Pauline, known to her family as Robin, underwent treatment for leukemia and eventually died in October 1953. She later said dyed hair didn't look good on her and credited the color to the public's perception of her as "everybody's grandmother."

Her pearls sparked a national fashion trend when she wore them to her husband's inauguration in 1989. The pearls became synonymous with Bush, who later said she selected them to hide the wrinkles in her neck. The candid admission only bolstered her common sense and down-to-earth public image.

Her 93-year-old husband, the nation's 41st president who served from 1989 to 1993, also has had health issues in recent years. In April 2017, he was hospitalized in Houston for two weeks for a mild case of pneumonia and chronic bronchitis. He was hospitalized months earlier, also for pneumonia. He has a form of Parkinson's disease and uses a motorized scooter or a wheelchair for mobility.

Before being president, he served as a congressman, CIA director and Ronald Reagan's vice president.

Barbara Pierce Bush was born June 8, 1925, in Rye, New York. Her father was the publisher of McCall's and Redbook magazines. She and George H.W. Bush married when she was 19 and while he was a young naval aviator. After World War II, the Bushes moved to Texas where he went into the oil business.

Along with her memoirs, she's the author of "C. Fred's Story" and "Millie's Book," based on the lives

of her dogs. Proceeds from the books benefited adult and family literacy programs. The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy began during her White House years with the goal of improving the lives of disadvantaged Americans by boosting literacy among parents and their children. The foundation partners with local programs and had awarded more than \$40 million as of 2014 to create or expand more than 1,500 literacy programs nationwide.

Immune therapy scores big win against lung cancer in study

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE, AP Chief Medical Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — For the first time, a treatment that boosts the immune system greatly improved survival in people newly diagnosed with the most common form of lung cancer. It's the biggest win so far for immunotherapy, which has had much of its success until now in less common cancers.

In the study, Merck's Keytruda, given with standard chemotherapy, cut in half the risk of dying or having the cancer worsen, compared to chemo alone after nearly one year. The results are expected to quickly set a new standard of care for about 70,000 patients each year in the United States whose lung cancer has already spread by the time it's found.

Another study found that an immunotherapy combo — the Bristol-Myers Squibb drugs Opdivo and Yervoy — worked better than chemo for delaying the time until cancer worsened in advanced lung cancer patients whose tumors have many gene flaws, as nearly half do. But the benefit lasted less than two months on average and it's too soon to know if the combo improves overall survival, as Keytruda did.

All of these immune therapy treatments worked for only about half of patients, but that's far better than chemo has done in the past.

"We're not nearly where we need to be yet," said Dr. Roy Herbst, a Yale Cancer Center lung expert who had no role in the studies.

Results were discussed Monday at an American Association for Cancer Research conference in Chicago and published by the New England Journal of Medicine. The studies were sponsored by the drugmakers, and many study leaders and Herbst consult for the companies.

ABOUT THE DRUGS

Keytruda, Yervoy and Opdivo are called checkpoint inhibitors. They remove a cloak that some cancer cells have that hides them from the immune system. The drugs are given through IVs and cost about \$12,500 a month.

Keytruda was approved last year as an initial treatment with chemo for the most common form of advanced lung cancer, but doctors have been leery to use it because that was based on a small study that did not show whether it prolongs life.

The new study, led by Dr. Leena Gandhi of NYU's Perlmutter Cancer Center, gives that proof. In it, 616 patients were given chemo and some also received Keytruda. Those not given Keytruda were allowed to switch to it if their cancer worsened.

After one year, 69 percent of people originally assigned to Keytruda were alive versus 49 percent of the others — a result that experts called remarkable considering that the second group's survival was improved because half of them wound up switching.

How much it ultimately will extend life isn't known — more than half in the Keytruda group are still alive; median survival was just over 11 months for the others.

The Keytruda combo also delayed the time until cancer worsened — an average of nine months versus five months for the chemo-only group.

That's a big difference for such an advanced cancer, said Dr. Alice Shaw, a Massachusetts General Hospital lung cancer expert and one of the conference leaders. "This is really a pivotal study ... a new standard of care," said Shaw, who has no ties to the drugmakers.

Rates of serious side effects were similar, but twice as many in the Keytruda group dropped out because of them. More than 4 percent of that group developed lung inflammation and three patients died of it.

THE COMPETITION

Dr. Matthew Hellmann of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York led a study testing the Opdivo-Yervoy combo versus chemo in a slightly different group of newly diagnosed advanced lung cancer patients.

The study design was changed after it was underway to look at results according to patients' tumor mutation burden — a measure of how flawed their cancer genes are, according to a profiling test by Foundation Medicine. Medicare recently agreed to cover the \$3,000 test for advanced cancers.

Of 679 patients, 299 had a high number of gene flaws in their tumors. In that group, survival without worsening of disease was 43 percent after one year for those on the immunotherapy drugs versus 13 percent of those on chemo. The immunotherapy drugs did not help people with fewer tumor gene flaws.

"We have a tool that helps us determine who are the patients that are most likely to benefit from this combination," Hellmann said.

The median time until cancer worsened was about 7 months on the immunotherapy drugs versus 5.5 months for chemo. Serious side effects were a little more common in the chemo group.

Another rival, Genentech, recently announced that its checkpoint inhibitor, Tecentriq, improved survival in a study similar to the one testing Keytruda. Details are expected in a couple months.

Marilynn Marchione can be followed on Twitter: @MMarchioneAP

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Comey speculates Russians may have damaging info on Trump

By CATHERINE LUCEY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In his scathing appraisal of the man who fired him as FBI chief, James Comey cited "some evidence of obstruction of justice" in President Donald Trump's actions and speculated that Russians might have dirt on the president. Trump struck back, branding Comey a criminal.

Their war of words escalated Monday after Comey, in an ABC interview broadcast the night before, labelled Trump "morally unfit" for office.

Trump tweeted that Comey drafted an exoneration of Hillary Clinton long before he talked to her as part of an investigation into her email practices. He labelled Comey "disgruntled" and accused him and allies of having "committed many crimes." For his part, Comey has said that nine or 10 months into the Clinton probe, he had a "clear picture" where it was going and it's common to draft statements before an investigation is complete.

Comey's remarks, coupled with the release of his forthcoming book, offer his version of events surrounding his firing and the investigations into Russian election meddling and Clinton's email practices. Several of the episodes he describes in detail, including a private conversation about former White House national security adviser Michael Flynn, are central to special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation and his recollections are presumably valuable for prosecutors examining whether the president's actions constitute obstruction of justice.

The ex-FBI director, who until his firing in May led an investigation into possible ties between Russia and the Trump campaign, acknowledged that it was "stunning" to think that Russia could have damaging information about a U.S. president. But he said that in Trump's case, he could not discount the possibility that the president had been compromised.

"These are more words I never thought I'd utter about a president of the United States, but it's possible," Comey told ABC News' chief anchor George Stephanopoulos. He also acknowledged he had no proof that Russia has dirt on Trump: "I think it's possible. I don't know."

He also answered "possibly" when asked if the president was attempting to obstruct justice when he cleared the Oval Office of other officials in February 2017 before encouraging him to close the investigation into Flynn, who by that point was suspected of lying to the FBI about his Russian contacts. The retired

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general pleaded guilty in December and is now cooperating with Mueller's investigation.

Comey also said he believed Trump treated women like "pieces of meat."

"A person who sees moral equivalence in Charlottesville, who talks about and treats women like they're pieces of meat, who lies constantly about matters big and small and insists the American people believe it — that person's not fit to be president of the United States, on moral grounds," Comey said.

Trump on Sunday rejected Comey's assertion that Trump had sought his loyalty at a January 2017 dinner, saying "I hardly even knew this guy. Just another of his many lies." He also suggested Comey should be imprisoned, tweeting, "how come he gave up Classified Information (jail), why did he lie to Congress (jail)." There is no indication Comey is under investigation for doing either.

The president began assailing Comey even before the interview came out.

He seized on an excerpt shown Saturday in which Comey said his belief that Clinton would beat Trump in the 2016 presidential election was probably a factor in his decision to disclose the investigation into her emails. Comey, Trump tweeted, "was making decisions based on the fact that he thought she was going to win, and he wanted a job. Slimeball!"

That argument was startling given that Comey's handling of the email investigation, including his disclosure shortly before the election that the FBI had reopened its probe, enraged Democrats. After Clinton's loss, many Democrats blamed Comey, and Clinton herself has said it hurt her election prospects.

Comey again defended his actions, telling ABC that he made what he thought was the best decision at the time. Comey said he did not remember "consciously thinking" about the election results as he decided to disclose that the FBI had reopened its investigation into candidate Clinton's email use. But, he acknowledged, "I was operating in a world where Hillary Clinton was going to beat Donald Trump, and so I'm sure that it was a factor."

"I don't remember spelling it out," he added, "but it had to have been that she's going to be elected president and if I hide this from the American people, she'll be illegitimate the moment she's elected, the moment this comes out."

Trump fired Comey in May 2017, setting off a scramble at the Justice Department that led to the appointment of Mueller as special counsel overseeing the Russia investigation. Mueller's probe has expanded to include whether Trump obstructed justice by firing Comey. So far, 19 people — including Flynn and Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort — have been charged in the investigation. Flynn and two of the president's campaign aides, Rick Gates and George Papadopoulos, have pleaded guilty and are cooperating with Mueller.

Asked whether he believed Trump ought to be impeached, Comey replied, "I hope not because I think impeaching and removing Donald Trump from office would let the American people off the hook and have something happen indirectly that I believe they're duty bound to do directly. People in this country need to stand up and go to the voting booth and vote their values."

He added: "But you cannot have, as president of the United States, someone who does not reflect the values that I believe Republicans treasure and Democrats treasure and independents treasure. That is the core of this country. That's our foundation. And so impeachment, in a way, would short circuit that."

'Full Metal Jacket' actor R. Lee Ermey dies at 74

By LINDSEY BAHR, AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — R. Lee Ermey, a former Marine who made a career in Hollywood playing hard-nosed military men like Gunnery Sgt. Hartman in Stanley Kubrick's "Full Metal Jacket," has died.

Ermey's longtime manager Bill Rogin says he died Sunday morning from pneumonia-related complications. He was 74.

The Kansas native was nominated for a Golden Globe Award for his memorable performance in "Full Metal Jacket," in which he immortalized lines such as: "What is your major malfunction?"

His co-stars Matthew Modine and Vincent D'Onofrio tweeted their condolences Sunday evening.

"#SemperFidelis Always faithful. Always loyal. Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against

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the dying of the light," Modine wrote, quoting the Dylan Thomas poem. "RIP amigo. PVT. Joker."

Vincent D'Onofrio added: "Ermev was the real deal. The knowledge of him passing brings back wonderful memories of our time together."

Born Ronald Lee Ermev in 1944, Ermev served 11 years in the Marine Corps and spent 14 months in Vietnam and then in Okinawa, Japan, where he became staff sergeant. His first film credit was as a helicopter pilot in Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now," which was quickly followed by a part in "The Boys in Company C" as a drill instructor.

He raked in more than 60 credits in film and television across his long career in the industry, often playing authority figures in everything from "Se7en" to "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" remake.

The part he would become most well-known for, in "Full Metal Jacket," wasn't even originally his. Ermev had been brought on as a technical consultant for the 1987 film, but he had his eyes on the role of the brutal gunnery sergeant and filmed his own audition tape of him yelling out insults while tennis balls flew at him. An impressed Kubrick gave him the role.

Kubrick told Rolling Stone that 50 percent of Ermev's dialogue in the film was his own.

"In the course of hiring the marine recruits, we interviewed hundreds of guys. We lined them all up and did an improvisation of the first meeting with the drill instructor. They didn't know what he was going to say, and we could see how they reacted. Lee came up with, I don't know, 150 pages of insults," Kubrick said.

According to Kubrick, Ermev also had a terrible car accident one night in the middle of production and was out for four and half months with broken ribs.

Ermev would also go on to voice the little green army man Sarge in the "Toy Story" films. He also played track and field coach and Nike co-founder Bill Bowerman in "Prefontaine," General Kramer in "Toy Soldiers" and Mayor Tilman in "Mississippi Burning."

Ermev also hosted the History Channel series "Mail Call" and "Lock N' Load with R. Lee Ermev" and was a board member for the National Rifle Association, as well as a spokesman for Glock.

"He will be greatly missed by all of us," Rogin said. "It is a terrible loss that nobody was prepared for."

Rogin says that while his characters were often hard and principled, the real Ermev was a family man and a kind and gentle soul who supported the men and women who serve.

Asian shares flat to slightly higher as geopolitics weigh

By YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares are flat to slightly higher amid persisting worries over trade tensions between China. Overnight, investors registered relief that air strikes on Syria were contained and unlikely to escalate.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 erased initial gains and was virtually unchanged at 21,837.88. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.4 percent to 5,861.50. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.2 percent to 2,452.35. Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed 0.1 percent at 30,300.30, while the Shanghai Composite dropped 0.4 percent to 3,099.90. Shares fell in Taiwan but rose in Singapore and Indonesia.

CHINA FACTOR: China's economic growth held steady in the quarter ending in March, buoyed by investment and rapid growth in e-commerce despite trade tensions with Washington. The world's second-largest economy expanded by 6.8 percent over a year earlier, in line with the quarter ending in December and down slightly from 2017's full-year expansion of 6.9 percent, data showed Tuesday.

GEOPOLITICAL FACTOR: Investors have begun putting aside concerns over Friday night's missile attack by the U.S., Britain and France on Syria's chemical weapons program. On Monday, the White House said it was considering imposing additional sanctions on Russia, a key ally of Syrian leader Bashar Assad.

WALL STREET: The S&P 500 index rose 0.8 percent to 2,677.84 and the Dow Jones industrial average gained 0.9 percent to 24,573.04. The Nasdaq added 0.7 percent to 7,156.28. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks picked up 0.9 percent to 1,563.03.

THE QUOTE: "Concerns on the situation in Syria have eased as markets saw U.S.-led air strikes largely as a one-off event rather than an ongoing crisis," Zhu Huani of Mizuho Bank in Singapore said in a commentary. "While there have been tentative evidences of de-escalation of trade tension, there are still

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lingering risks beneath the surface.”

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude added 29 cents to \$66.51 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It declined \$1.17 to settle at \$66.22 per barrel on Monday. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, rose 23 cents to \$71.65 per barrel.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 107.07 yen from 107.12 yen late Monday. The euro strengthened to \$1.2384 from \$1.2380.

Follow Yuri Kageyama on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, April 17, the 107th day of 2018. There are 258 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 17, 1961, some 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles launched the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in an attempt to topple Fidel Castro, whose forces crushed the incursion by the third day.

On this date:

In 1492, a contract was signed by Christopher Columbus and a representative of Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, giving Columbus a commission to seek a westward ocean passage to Asia.

In 1521, Martin Luther went before the Diet of Worms (vohrms) to face charges stemming from his religious writings. (Luther was later declared an outlaw by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.)

In 1861, the Virginia State Convention voted to secede from the Union.

In 1895, the Treaty of Shimonoseki ended the first Sino-Japanese War.

In 1924, the motion picture studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer was founded, the result of a merger of Metro Pictures, Goldwyn Pictures and the Louis B. Mayer Co.

In 1937, cartoon character Daffy Duck made his debut in the Warner Bros. animated short "Porky's Duck Hunt," directed by Tex Avery.

In 1941, Yugoslavia surrendered to Germany during World War II.

In 1964, Geraldine "Jerrie" Mock became the first woman to complete a solo airplane trip around the world as she returned to Columbus, Ohio, after 29 1/2 days in her Cessna 180. Ford Motor Co. unveiled the Mustang at the New York World's Fair. The first game was played at New York's Shea Stadium; the Pittsburgh Pirates defeated the Mets, 4-3.

In 1970, Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell, Fred W. Haise and Jack Swigert splashed down safely in the Pacific, four days after a ruptured oxygen tank crippled their spacecraft while en route to the moon.

In 1972, the Boston Marathon allowed women to compete for the first time; Nina Kuscsik was the first officially recognized women's champion, with a time of 3:10:26.

In 1986, at London's Heathrow Airport, a bomb was discovered in the bag of Anne-Marie Murphy, a pregnant Irishwoman about to board an El Al jetliner to Israel; she'd been tricked into carrying the bomb by her Jordanian fiance, Nezar Hindawi. The bodies of kidnapped American Peter Kilburn and Britons Philip Padfield and Leigh Douglas were found near Beirut; they had been slain in apparent retaliation for the U.S. raid on Libya.

In 1993, a federal jury in Los Angeles convicted two former police officers of violating the civil rights of beaten motorist Rodney King; two other officers were acquitted. Turkish President Turgut Ozal died at age 66.

Ten years ago: Pope Benedict XVI, during his visit to Washington, talked and prayed privately with survivors of the clergy sex abuse scandal in what's believed to be a first-ever meeting between a pontiff and abuse victims. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown met at Camp David with President George W. Bush; the two leaders sought to dispel doubts about their relationship, showing common ground on a range of

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issues. Danny Federici, the keyboard player for Bruce Springsteen, died in New York City at age 58.

Five years ago: Fifteen people were killed when a fertilizer plant exploded in West, Texas. Sports returned to Boston two days after the deadly Marathon bombing as the Buffalo Sabres defeated the Bruins in a 3-2 shootout (players on both teams wore "Boston Strong" decals on their helmets). Senate Republicans backed by a small band of rural-state Democrats scuttled the most far-reaching gun control legislation in two decades, rejecting tighter background checks for buyers and a ban on assault weapons.

One year ago: Opening his first White House Easter Egg Roll, President Donald Trump extolled the strength of America as thousands of kids, and some adults, reveled in the time-honored tradition of rolling hard-boiled eggs across the manicured lawn in his back yard. Kenyans ruled the Boston Marathon, with Geoffrey Kirui and Edna Kiplagat winning the race in their debut.

Today's Birthdays: Actor David Bradley is 76. Composer-musician Jan Hammer (yahn HAH'-mur) is 70. Actress Olivia Hussey is 67. Actor Clarke Peters is 66. Rock singer-musician Pete Shelley (Buzzcocks) is 63. Rapper Afrika Bambaataa is 61. Actor Sean Bean is 59. Former NFL quarterback Boomer Esiason is 57. Actor Joel Murray is 56. Rock singer Maynard James Keenan is 54. Actress Lela Rochon (LEE'-lah rohn-SHAHN') is 54. Actor William Mapother is 53. Actress Leslie Bega is 51. Actor Henry Ian Cusick is 51. Actress Kimberly Elise is 51. Singer Liz Phair is 51. Rapper-actor Redman is 48. Actress Jennifer Garner is 46. Country musician Craig Anderson is 45. Singer Victoria Adams Beckham is 44. Actress-singer Lindsay Korman is 40. Actor Tate Ellington is 39. Actor Nicholas D'Agosto is 38. Actor Charlie Hofheimer is 37. Actress Rooney Mara is 33. Actress Jacqueline MacInnes Wood is 31. Actor Paulie Litt is 23. Actress Dee Dee Davis is 22.

Thought for Today: "Beware of little expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship." — Benjamin Franklin (born 1706, died this date in 1790).