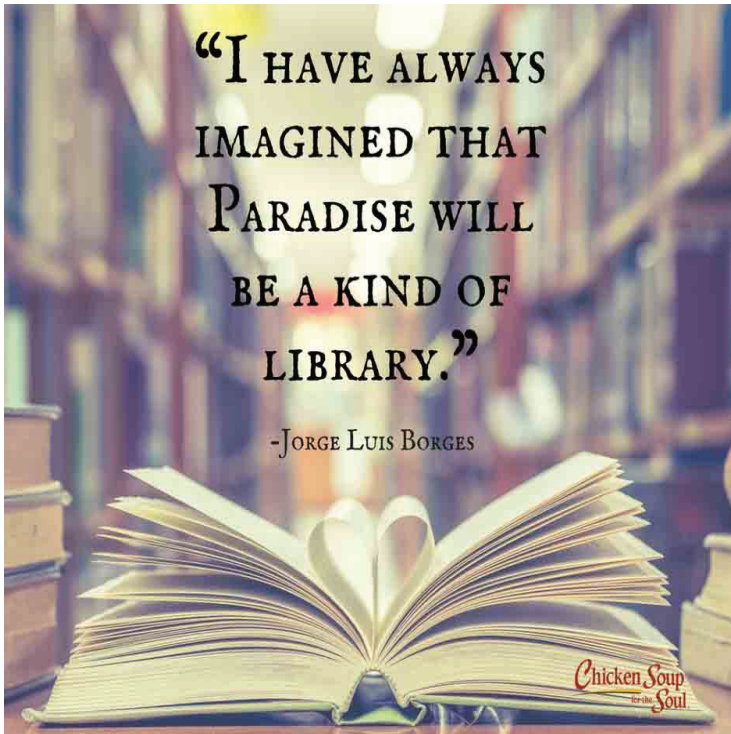


# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 1 of 43



- 1- Hanlon Brothers Ad
- 1- Help Wanted at Langford's Front Porch
- 1- Carlson Bridal Shower
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 2- Wet and Cool Pattern Fades into Summer Season
- 3- National Map Temperature Trend
- 4- Kindergarten Screening Ad
- 4- Groton Garden Club News
- 5- Today in Weather History
- 6- Today's Forecast
- 7- Yesterday's Weather
- 7- National Weather map
- 7- Today's Weather Almanac
- 8- Daily Devotional
- 9- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 10- News from the Associated Press

Friday, April 20: Middle School Talent Show, 7 p.m., GHS Gym

Friday, April 20: Kindergarten Screening, 8-4, Elementary School

Saturday, April 21: Track Meet at Ipswich, 10 a.m.

Saturday, April 21: Piano Recital, GHS Gym, 4 p.m.

**Hanlon Brothers**  
**Gravel Hauling**  
New & Cleaning of  
Stockdams with our  
60' reach trackhoe  
**605/395-6531**

## 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.

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

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## Wet and Cool Pattern Fades into Summer Season

BROOKINGS, S.D. - According to April 19, 2018 National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center outlooks, the relentless cool and wet climate pattern throughout South Dakota is likely to fade away as summer approaches.

"The outlooks show a transition away from cool and wet in the month ahead," said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist.

Based on the models, Edwards said South Dakota is less likely to have cooler than average conditions in May, with the exception of the northwest.

### Record breaking spring

Reflecting on the cooler than average start to the month, Edwards said that some South Dakota locations, like Sioux Falls, broke monthly snowfall records.

"The growing season is off to a slow start with cold air and soil temperatures, and not just wet, but snowy conditions. The first half of April has been the coldest start on record across the region," she said.

Already this winter and spring, there have been record or near-record snowfall in central and eastern Montana as well. Moving into May, the outlooks show Montana and a portion of northwest South Dakota are likely to continue to be wetter than average.

"Gradually, the drought is easing in the Northern Plains region," Edwards said. "Even with cold temperatures, stock ponds are refilling and soil moisture is being slowly replenished."

She referenced the U.S. Drought Monitor's maps over recent weeks which shows improvements across the region. The worst drought areas from 2017 are now in D0, Abnormally Dry, or D1, Moderate Drought, severity levels in South Dakota.

"This is a two-class improvement from mid-winter," Edwards said.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been keeping a close watch on snowpack in Montana as it has melted. They are prepared for the remaining snowmelt runoff and any spring rainfall to be captured in the reservoir system.

"The Corps is expecting higher runoff than usual this season. However, reservoir levels are low enough to accommodate the snowmelt runoff and rainfall from the prairies and mountains," Edwards said.

### Summer 2018: What can we expect?

Looking ahead to the early summer season, Edwards said it is predicted that the wet soils will prevent air temperatures from getting very warm in the region.

"For the months of May through July, South Dakota has equal chances of warmer, cooler or near average temperatures overall," she said.

Precipitation is often a challenge for long-term climate forecasts in the summer season in the Northern Plains. Currently, according to NOAA, our region has equal chances of wetter, drier or near average rainfall.

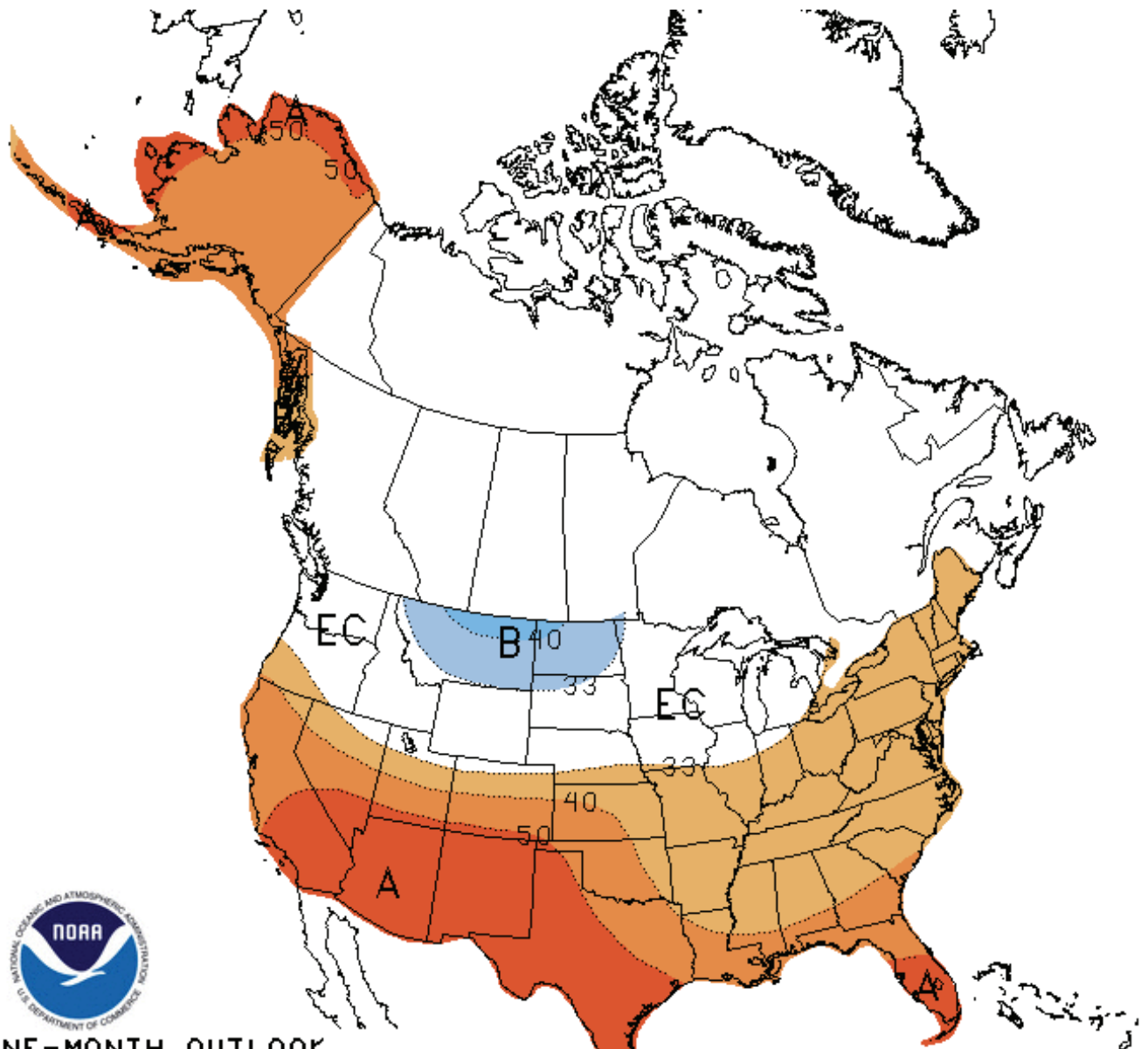
"The forecast for the next one to two weeks gives some optimism that spring-like temperatures will finally arrive, as warmer air gradually comes in from the west," Edwards said.

She added that drier weather is expected overall, which will help to melt snow and dry the soils.

"This spring has been one of the most difficult for calving and lambing in recent years, with a continued pattern of cold, wet mud and snow. Perhaps at last we can plant spring wheat, and get ready for corn and soybean planting in the coming weeks," Edwards said.

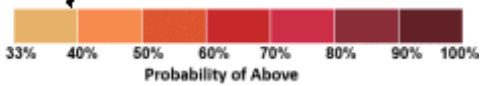
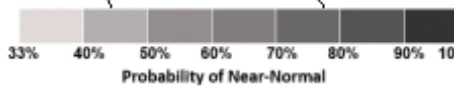
# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 3 of 43



ONE-MONTH OUTLOOK  
TEMPERATURE PROBABILITY  
0.5 MONTH LEAD  
VALID MAY 2018  
MADE 19 APR 2018

EC MEANS EQUAL  
CHANCES FOR A, N, B  
A MEANS ABOVE  
N MEANS NORMAL  
B MEANS BELOW



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 4 of 43

## Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden Club met at the Groton Rehab Center with Linda Anderson and Pat Larson hosting. Eight members answered roll call with a favorite spring flower. Correspondence included information about the State SDFGC meeting in Moberge April 27-28. A letter was read from the Groton community Historical Society asking for assistance with the roof project for the Congregational church. Officers for the 2018-19 year are Beverly Sombke, president; Mark Overacker, Vice president; Linda Gengerke Secretary; Pat Larson, Treasurer; The constitution and by-laws were reviewed. The May 21 meeting will be with Deb McKiver with Bev Sombke assisting. Marj Overacker will give the program.

Following the meeting, Linda Gengerke gave the program, "Early Spring Annuals."

### 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.**





# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 5 of 43

## Today in Weather History

April 20, 1966: Canadian high pressure brought frigid air to the Rockies and northern Plains. Record lows included: 3 below in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, two below in Cheyenne and Casper, Wyoming, two above in Rapid City, 11 above in Fargo, Williston, and Aberdeen, and 15 in Huron.

April 20, 2007: Severe thunderstorms moved through parts of central and northeast South Dakota during the afternoon and evening hours, producing large hail. The most significant hail measured 1.75 inches in diameter and fell 3 miles east of Westport, in Brown County.

1912: A tornado moved north-northeast from 5 miles southeast of Rush Center, KS across the east half of Bison, KS. Farms were wiped out near Rush Center. The loss at Bison was \$70,000 as half of the town, about 50 homes, were damaged or destroyed. There were 15 injuries in town. A dozen farms were nearly wiped out. Debris from the farmhouses was carried for 8 miles. A senior man who made light of the storm was killed with his granddaughter on a farm 2 miles southwest of Bison.

1920: Tornadoes in Mississippi and Alabama killed 219 persons. Six tornadoes of F4 intensity were reported. Aberdeen, Mississippi was hard hit by an F4 tornado that killed 22 people. This same tornado killed 20 in Marion County, Alabama. Nine people in one family died in Winston County, Alabama.

1984: A temperature of 106 degrees at Del Rio, Texas set a new record high for April.

2004: A strong F3 tornado moved across the town of Utica, near LaSalle-Peru in north-central Illinois. This tornado destroyed several homes, a machinery building, and a tavern. The roof of the tavern collapsed, killing eight people inside; many of these people had come into town from nearby mobile homes, seeking sturdier shelter. The tornado dissipated on a steep bluff on the northeast side of the city. Another tornado developed shortly afterward, crossing I-80 near Ottawa. Several other tornadoes developed across north central and northeast Illinois, affecting areas around Joliet and Kankakee.

1901 - A spring storm produced unusually heavy snow in northeast Ohio. Warren received 35.5 inches in thirty-six hours, and 28 inches fell at Green Hill. Akron OH established April records of 15.6 inches in 24 hours, and 26.6 inches for the month. Pittsburgh PA established April records of 12.7 inches in 24 hours, and 13.5 inches for the month. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1952 - The tankers Esso Suez and Esso Greensboro crashed in a thick fog off the coast of Morgan City LA. Only five of the Greensboro's crew survived after the ship bursts into flame. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Fifty-two cities in the central and eastern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The high of 92 degrees at Memphis TN was a record for April, and the high of 94 at Little Rock AR equalled their April record. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A storm in the western U.S. brought heavy rain to parts of California. Mount Wilson was soaked with 4.15 inches of rain in 24 hours. The heavy rain caused some flooding and mudslides in the Los Angeles area, and a chain reaction collision of vehicles along the Pomona Freeway which resulted in 26 injuries. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hot weather spread from the southwestern U.S. into the Great Plains Region. Twenty-three cities reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 104 degrees at Tucson AZ was an April record, and highs of 87 at Provo UT, 90 at Pueblo CO, and 85 at Salt Lake City UT, equalled April records. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - A fast moving Pacific storm produced heavy snow in the central mountains and the Upper Arkansas Valley of Colorado, with a foot of snow reported at Leadville. Thunderstorms in the south central U.S. produced wind gusts to 76 mph at Tulsa OK, and heavy rain which caused flooding of Cat Claw Creek in the Abilene TX area. Lightning struck the building housing a fish farm in Scott AR killing 10,000 pounds of fish. Many of the fish died from the heat of the fire. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

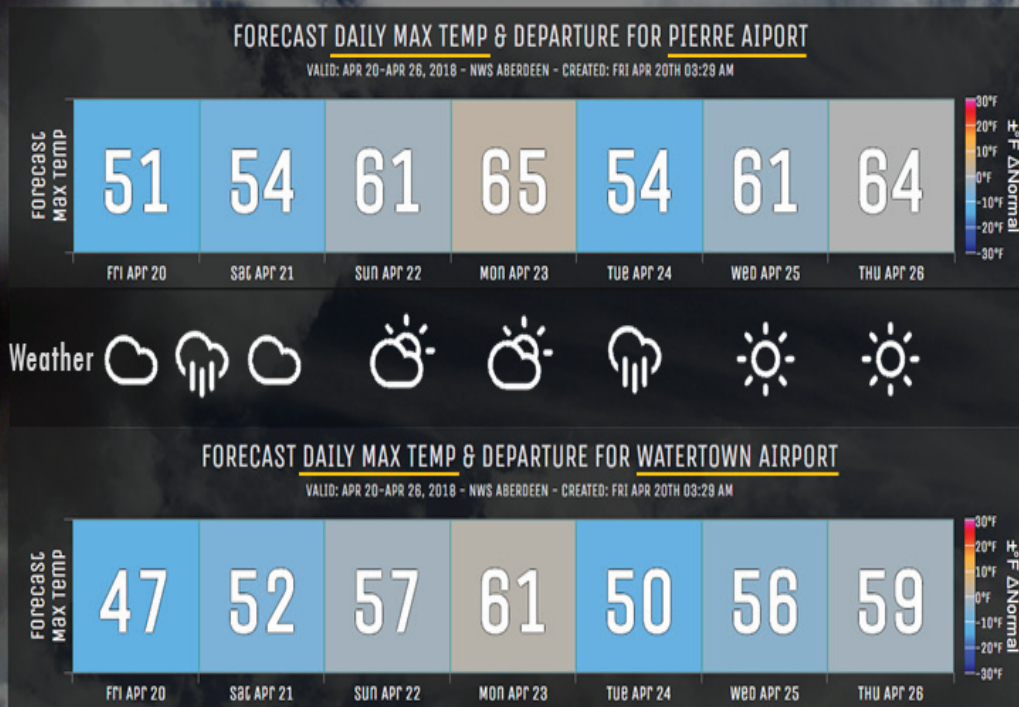
2006 - Up to five feet of snow falls in the Dakotas. I-94 and other highways were closed, power was out for thousands and caused at least four deaths.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 6 of 43

Fri Apr 20	Sat Apr 21	Sun Apr 22	Mon Apr 23	Tue Apr 24	Wed Apr 25	Thu Apr 26
57°F	58°F	62°F	68°F	53°F	57°F	61°F
38°F	37°F	39°F	39°F	33°F	37°F	44°F
SE 11 MPH	SSE 11 MPH	S 14 MPH	S 8 MPH	N 17 MPH Precip 50%	NW 9 MPH	SSE 13 MPH

## Spring Temperatures Remain into Next Week



### National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



[weather.gov/Aberdeen](http://weather.gov/Aberdeen)



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 4/20/2018 4:11 AM Central

Published on: 04/20/2018 at 4:14AM

Spring temperatures into this weekend will lead to the melting of any remaining snow across the region. There are a couple opportunities for rain, with the first occurring this afternoon into Saturday morning. Rain is also expected Monday night into Tuesday.

# Groton Daily Independent

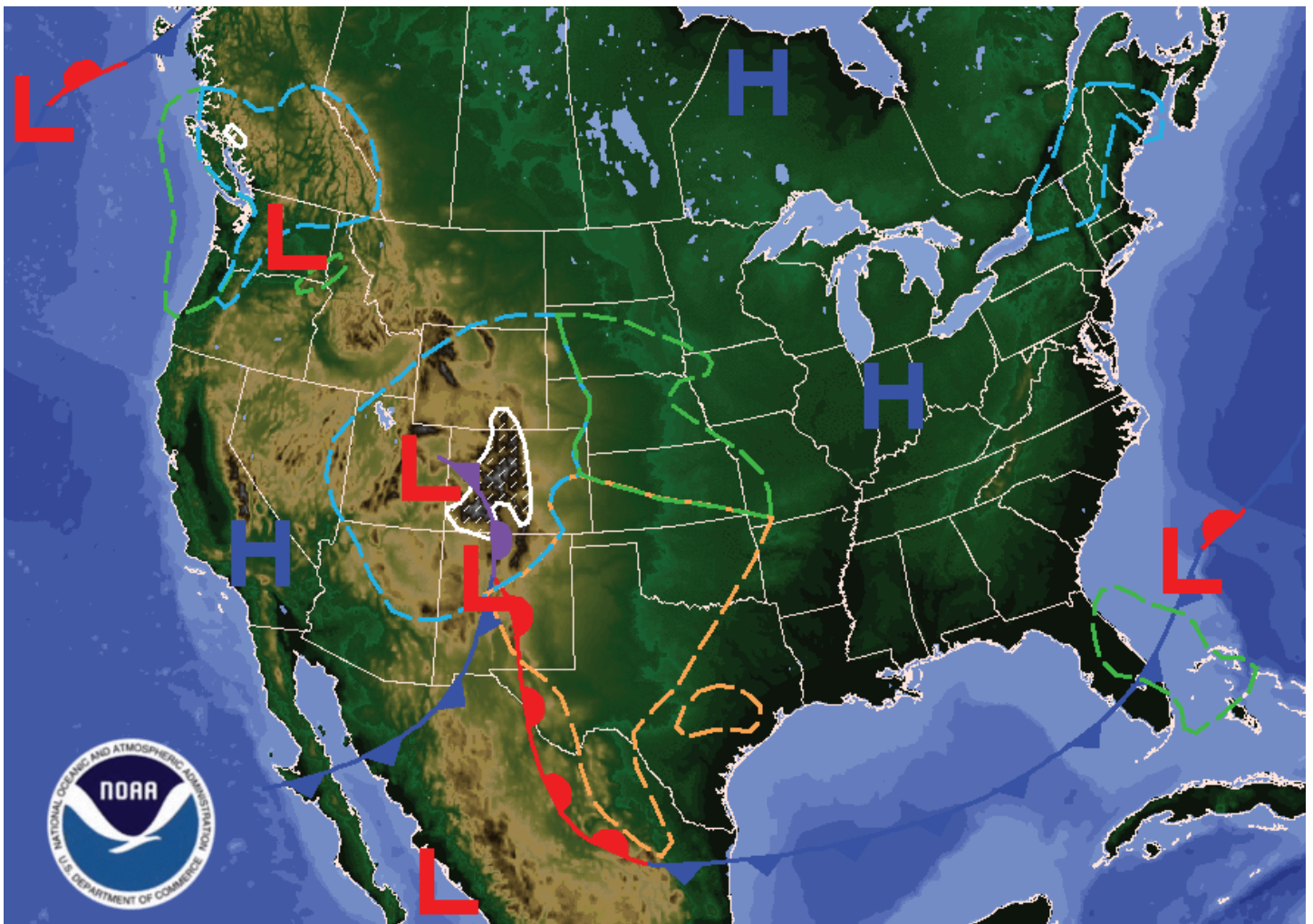
Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 7 of 43

## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 54.7 F at 5:23 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: 27.9 F at 5:14 AM**  
**Wind Chill:**  
**High Gust: 16.0 Mph at 5:52 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 93° in 1980**  
**Record Low: 11° in 1966**  
**Average High: 60°F**  
**Average Low: 34°F**  
**Average Precip in April: 1.04**  
**Precip to date in April: 0.61**  
**Average Precip to date: 3.22**  
**Precip Year to Date: 2.68**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:26 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:37**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Apr 20, 2018, issued 4:49 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)





## WANT TO BECOME AN ANGEL?

Marie asked her mother what she could do to become an angel. After a moment's thought, she looked caringly at her and said, "Be good, Marie - very good, and if you are, someday, when you go to heaven, you will become an angel."

But no one goes to heaven because of the life they lived or their good deeds. Entrance to heaven - eternal life with our Heavenly Father - is through Jesus Christ His Son, our Savior.

Angels, or heavenly hosts as David calls them, have an interesting status. They are older than man, but they are not eternal. They are mighty, supernatural beings who surround the throne of God and follow His commands and do whatever He asks them as His "special messengers." They are part of God's angelic army and His celestial court. While there has never been an increase in the number of angels, the Bible says that their company - or number - is "countless."

David says something very interesting about them, "Praise the Lord, all His heavenly hosts, you His servants who do His will." As His servants they have special roles and relationships with Him. But more importantly, they have special responsibilities. They are His messengers, bring comfort in times of need and distress, give military assistance, provide protection, guard and give guidance to those who are His own.

Finally, an angel will come from heaven, seize Satan, bind him in chains and cast him into "the pit."

Prayer: Help us, Father, to live in complete obedience to You as do Your angels. May we always follow Your will. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 103:21 Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 9 of 43

## 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

### **Constitutionality of murder conviction upheld by high court**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of a man's conviction for killing his 4-year-old son.

Forty-four-year-old Chris Miller was sentenced to life in prison for the death of his son, Jacob Miller, and an additional 50 years for aggravated assault in January 2013.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says the Supreme Court found Miller failed to show his attorney was ineffective and that the jury selection process was flawed.

### **Dakotas sunflower seed competitors settle federal lawsuits**

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Federal lawsuits between two sunflower seed competitors in the Dakotas who accused each other of false advertising have been settled out of court.

Wahpeton, North Dakota-based Giant Snacks Inc. filed the original lawsuit against Mound City, South Dakota-based Wild Dutchman Products Inc. and one of its partners. It accused Wild Dutchman of misleading consumers about the amount of salt in its products.

Wild Dutchman then filed a countersuit for what it said were bogus claims that Giant Snacks, which calls its seeds "Giants," was making about its relationship with sunflower farmers.

Court documents show that the two sides reached an agreement during a meeting with a federal magistrate judge on Tuesday. Terms were not disclosed.

Giant Snacks attorneys Donna Gonzales and Joel Leviton and Wild Dutchman lawyer William Harrie did not return messages seeking comment.

### **April rural bankers survey drops slightly in April**

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A monthly survey of bankers shows that concerns over a trade war have hurt confidence in the economy in rural parts of 10 Plains and Western states.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss says weak farm income continues to weigh on the rural economy, but that the survey in recent months shows the economy is trending upward.

The overall Rural Mainstreet index slipped slightly to 53.5 in April from 54.7 in March. Any score above 50 suggests a growing economy in the months ahead, while a score below 50 indicates a shrinking economy.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

South Dakota mountain lion season harvest data is stable

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — This year's mountain lion harvest in South Dakota was about the same as last season, despite more purchased licenses and more snow that can help hunters track the animals.

The Rapid City Journal reports hunters killed 31 lions in the Blacks Hills, 19 of them female. Last season, 30 lions were killed, 16 of them female.

John Kanta with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks says snowfall isn't the only factor in hunter success. And he says just because more licenses were purchased doesn't mean they were used — colder weather can keep some hunters inside.

The harvest numbers the past two years are down from 41, 43, 53 and 56 in preceding years. Kanta says the downward trend fits with the lion population, which is stable to slightly decreasing.

## Mickelson remembered on 25th anniversary of plane crash

By STU WHITNEY, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — At a time when so many things feel wrong about politics, it's easy to get nostalgic for less divisive days, when open arms defined populism more than tightly closed fists.

George Mickelson was a hulking South Dakota Republican who was born to be governor and lived up to that legacy, gaining the office in 1986 and winning re-election four years later.

By the time he embarked on an economic development trip to Cincinnati in April of 1993 with four state employees and three business leaders, his enthusiasm for the task of brightening the prospects of all South Dakotans pushed partisanship and well-worn stereotypes aside.

"He was pleased to be called a politician," former Kansas senator and Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole told the Argus Leader. "Politics to George Mickelson meant making a difference in people's lives."

The enduring heartbreak for South Dakota is that the extent to which Mickelson succeeded in that mission was made evident by unthinkable tragedy, 25 years ago.

The state's 28th governor was killed April 19, 1993 at about 4 p.m. when a twin-engine, eight-seat airplane encountered engine trouble from a broken propeller blade and crashed into a farm silo about 10 miles south of Dubuque, Iowa, killing everyone on board.

"It was almost surreal," says Mark Mickelson, George's oldest son, a Sioux Falls businessman who served six years in the state legislature. "You hear about tragic things happening to other people, and it had never been us. But then there it was."

The sudden nature of the loss, coupled with the number of families impacted, made that evening and the ensuing days among the most anguished and consequential in state history. As the rest of the nation followed reports of a federal siege on a religious compound in Waco, Texas, that led to a massive fire and 76 deaths, South Dakotans looked within.

Also killed in the crash were two state pilots, Ron Becker and David Hanson, banker David Birkeland, power company executive Angus Anson, Sioux Falls Development Foundation leader Roger Hainje, economic development commissioner Roland Dolly and energy commissioner Ron Reed.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who served as development director for Children's Home Society at the time, received a call from one of the society's board members around informing him of the crash. As he turned on the TV to watch news reports, the enormity of the tragedy took hold.

"I knew many of those on the plane," said Daugaard. "Roger Hainje was a schoolmate at the one-room school we both attended, and our families were very close. David Birkeland had given me my first job after I returned to South Dakota, following law school. Angus Anson was a donor to Children's Home Society. It was truly a tragedy for our state, and it affected many people who lost personal friends."

The death of the 52-year-old Mickelson, a former Brookings lawyer whose father served as governor more than 40 years earlier, set off a period of statewide mourning and reflection that made past differences - political, geographical, racial - seem shamefully insignificant.

Lieutenant governor Walter Dale Miller, a longtime friend of Mickelson, declared the rest of April a special period of mourning after huddling in Pierre with staff members, who had received a call from the Federal Aviation Administration around 5 p.m. with news that the state-owned plane had gone down.

Plans were made for Miller to be sworn in as governor the next day, though facing the future seemed a daunting prospect for a state just beginning to grieve. As he left the Capitol that night, stepping out into darkness, Miller had a simple message for reporters that had gathered.

"Say a prayer for us," he said.

Mark Mickelson was attending Harvard Law School in 1993 and had run the Boston Marathon on the morning of April 19, commemorated as Patriots Day in New England.

Fatigued from churning through the 26-mile course in cloudy and drizzly weather, the 27-year-old was lounging around watching a movie with friends at his apartment that afternoon when the phone rang.

"There's been an accident," his uncle told him. "Your mom needs to talk to you."

As Linda Mickelson shared the shattering news, Mark knew his life was forever altered. The older sibling

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 12 of 43

to sister Amy and brother David would need to be strong despite waves of grief and doubt that threatened to knock him to the ground.

Back home, there was boundless support for a family that had been part of South Dakota politics since George T. Mickelson, Mark's grandfather, entered the state legislature more than a half-century earlier.

Much was expected of the namesake, George S. Mickelson, and he delivered. At 6-foot-5 and 250 pounds, his physical size was matched by ambitious ideas, many of which reflected principle more than party line.

He worked to raise teacher salaries and increase state aid to schools while stressing economic development and manufacturing growth. He addressed a problem that many state leaders averted their eyes from, seeking to improve white and Native American relations by declaring 1990 the Year of Reconciliation.

Though some viewed that outreach as merely symbolic, it signified a willingness to step forward in good faith to explore solutions, no matter how long the process may take.

"He was a politician who was not driven by the power of the pull of the next election," said Miller. "His motives all involved doing good things for other people, not himself. And his compassion for other people had no limits."

On April 22, three days after the crash, an estimated 12,000 people walked past Mickelson's flag-draped casket in the Capitol rotunda during the six-hour period before an afternoon memorial service, many pausing to admire a nearby portrait of the governor with his trademark smile.

Attending the service were 12 governors from other states, national Republican leaders such as Dole and John Sununu, and former South Dakota chief executives Frank Farrar, Harvey Wollman and Bill Janklow. Boy Scouts served as ushers and occasionally brushed away tears.

"For those of us who survived, there is a feeling that George did not live long enough to do all that he might have done," said the Mickelsons' former pastor, the Rev. Don Veglahn of Asbury United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls. "Life is not really measured by years, but by what we do with those years. By that measure, George Mickelson lived two lifetimes."

For South Dakota as a whole, mourning for Mickelson was mixed with the realization that tragedy couldn't stop the march of time. Other voices would have to emerge.

"When you lose one of your leaders, it's like losing a leader in combat," said former governor and World War II fighter pilot Joe Foss. "You step up and take the slack."

Janklow challenged Miller in the 1994 Republican primary and prevailed, setting up his return to Pierre for two terms, followed by eight-year stints by Mike Rounds and Daugaard.

If the hope was that Mickelson's broad-based example would spark a fresh era of leadership for all South Dakotans, that goal saw fits and starts. With healing came new agendas and priorities, but to heal does not mean to forget.

Later this year, the 25th anniversary of Mickelson's death will be commemorated with a bronze bust to be placed in the House of Representatives lobby, a testament to the fact that his passion for public service and love for South Dakota continued to shine long after the darkest of days.

"It would be a tragedy of far greater proportion," said Rev. Veglahn, "if we allowed a mangled airplane and silo on an Iowa farm to be the final word."

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

## Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

### American News, Aberdeen, April 19

#### County needs to fix Gmail problems ASAP

For months, Brown County officials and employees have not been receiving much of the email sent to them from Google accounts.

If your email is "somethingsomething2018@gmail.com," for instance, and you have tried to reach a county



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 13 of 43

official this year, she or he probably hasn't seen that message.

That's a problem.

County officials and the information technology chief must make this a priority.

The issue was first discussed at a county commission meeting two weeks ago, where it was learned that the problem had been ongoing for months — and continues today.

Brown County Chief Information Officer Paul Sivertsen is stumped.

"I've had the state look at this, and we're set up the best we possibly can be and it's all a Google issue," he said.

Could be. But we have a feeling that Google knows how to do email.

Various studies indicate that 60 percent of email users have Google Gmail as their main service. And only about 15 percent of Americans don't have any internet service.

Thus, most of us not only use internet services such as email, but most use Gmail.

Much more likely is that the problem is on the county's side.

County officials have discussed bringing in someone who could help solve the problem.

Commissioner Nancy Hansen asked Sivertsen if he knew how much it would cost to hire somebody who could work on the issue. Sivertsen didn't estimate the cost, but said it would have to be someone highly dedicated to sifting through bits of data to pinpoint the exact cause.

That seems like his job.

Sivertsen is the county's highest-paid employee, and we take no issue with that. We'd all love to be the best-paid person where we work.

But this is his problem to deal with, and he should have a better grasp on what's wrong. Or, at the least, should have sought a solution sooner.

With that higher pay comes a higher level of responsibility.

What if the county's telephones were not working for months?

That would be a problem many county residents would be upset about. In fact, it would be likened to an emergency, a disruption of services and the ability to effectively do business for county government.

We think most would be looking for an emergency work-around in hours or days. Not months.

Not getting Gmails? It's the same thing.

To their credit, county commissioners are accessible. And their phone numbers are listed on the county's website at [brown.sd.us/commission/home](http://brown.sd.us/commission/home). But sending an email in this day and age should be simple.

The hindered communication has already caused serious issues for many county departments. As one county official said of not getting Gmail, "We look stupid."

As a test, American News reporter Shannon Marvel sent emails through Gmail last week to six county department heads. Only one department head replied back. That means the other five didn't get the message (or didn't check their email or respond — different problems).

Gmails sent from the "contact us" webpages for various county departments do get though, workers say. But it really shouldn't be that difficult.

That the problem has festered for months and has aggravated people and groups the county works and does business with is what's most disappointing.

But the problem is significant enough that it needs attention now.

County business is being hindered. Our business.

This is a big deal.

---

## Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, April 19

### Arena forum needs to be civil, fair

It could be great and will certainly be interesting. In one corner will be Rapid City Mayor Steve Allender and city officials; in the other, four former mayors. The topic: the proposed new Rushmore Plaza Civic Center arena.

The key question, however, is will this be the objective fact-gathering session that organizers promise

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 14 of 43

or an opportunity for opponents to criticize the plan in a public forum likely to garner considerable media attention?

The two-hour event on May 1 is being organized by South Dakota Citizens for Liberty, the same group that circulated petitions to put the issue on the ballot after the city council approved plans to build a new civic center arena to replace the 40-year-old Barnett Arena.

Tonchi Weaver is spearheading the forum as was the case with the petition drive. In a story that appeared in Wednesday's Journal, she said the goal is to present "a balanced picture for the public." In an interview Wednesday morning, she said, "I want it to be fair."

It also is fair to say, however, that Weaver and Citizens for Liberty are at least perceived as opponents of a new 12,000- to 13,000-seat arena that according to the city will cost \$130 million with another \$50 million in financing costs.

In March, Weaver and others distributed information at the Black Hills Home Builders Association Home Show that claimed the city was misleading the public and the actual cost of a new arena was closer to \$250 million.

Allender said at the time this was a misinformation campaign to encourage residents to sign petitions. "They're handing out inaccurate propaganda that shows that they want to kill the project," he told the Journal.

When pressed to name who did the analysis on the arena's costs, Weaver declined to disclose that person's identity. Allender, meanwhile, has done more than 40 public presentations on the project and the city has posted a power-point presentation on its website about it.

Weaver said she has attended three of the mayor's presentations and compares them to a grand jury proceeding where only prosecutors lay out their case. The forum, she said, will better serve the public.

Brian Fisher, formerly of KIMM Radio and described as "fair-minded" by Weaver, will moderate the forum. The format calls for opening and closing statements and allows members of the public to ask questions that are to last no longer than 90 seconds, a time limit Weaver said will be enforced.

The first question, Weaver said, will be posed by Mike Mueller, the president of Citizens for Liberty. It is a question that will likely set the tone for the forum.

Mayor Allender deserves credit for accepting the invitation to participate as there is little doubt that a number of arena opponents will show up at the forum.

It will be up to Citizens for Liberty, the moderator and the four ex-mayors — Alan Hanks, Jim Shaw, Ed McLaughlin and Keith Carlyle — to hold a forum that is fair, even-handed and most of all civil.

The city's plan to build a new arena has become an emotional issue in the community with some opponents going so far as to launch personal attacks on the mayor and suggest this is a legacy project for him.

That, of course, is not the case. Many people in the community believe it is essential for the city build a modern arena rather than spend \$25-30 million to upgrade an old one. The mayor is simply fulfilling his duties by presenting a plan that will not raise anyone's taxes nor divert money from other funds to build it.

If the forum meets the goals outlined by Weaver, it can be a fair fight. If it turns into an assault on the mayor's proposal and character, it becomes a cage fight and no one wins if that's the case.

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## Capital Journal, Pierre, April 3

### The wind is blowing, let's try not to get swept away

Wind power is a growing enterprise around the world and by many accounts, this "gold rush" might be coming soon to a county near you.

Actually, we know there's at least one company working to establish a large wind farm on the east end of Hughes County. The promises are great. There will be hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxable property added to the county tax base. Farmers and ranchers will get many thousands of dollars' worth of stable lease payments all for the low, low cost of signing an easement for the use of an acre or two of land for up to 30 years. Tax dollars and cash payments, we're told, will flow like milk and honey.

That's a bit of hyperbole but, generally, the folks behind wind power projects do tend to promise quite a

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 15 of 43

lot. They are, after all, hoping to cash in on what is essentially an unlimited resource. There's a lot, we're talking billions of dollars on the line here. As more states move to require that more and more of the electricity their citizens use come from "renewable sources," there will be even more money on the line. That, of course, assumes there isn't some other energy revolution sometime in the next few decades or that nuclear power doesn't undergo a renaissance.

In the short term, the giant multinational corporations who are the only folks with the means to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on building the hundreds of turbines it takes to approximate the electrical-generating capacity of a single coal or gas power plant, are trying desperately to get as many projects going as possible before a tax credit expires in 2019. The credit gives wind-power producers a break on the profits they make from selling the electricity they generate. Many more millions of dollars are on the line in the case of this Renewable Electricity Production Tax Credit.

The rush to get wind-power projects into construction means South Dakota, which has heretofore found itself lagging behind other wind-rich states, has become the focus of so many new wind projects. There are 25 proposed and two pending wind farms in the state. Each one of those projects covers hundreds, if not thousands of acres. Their size and expense should cause all of us a bit of concern.

For one thing, South Dakota doesn't have very good rules on who is responsible for tearing down turbines that are no longer used. A developer is required to submit a plan to the state Public Utilities Commission but there is no decommissioning bond requirement. Instead, the commission can choose to require a bond on a case-by-case basis.

A single turbine, some estimates suggest, can cost more than \$25,000 to decommission, when you subtract the salvage value of its pieces and parts from the total cost. Using this estimate on the project proposed in eastern Hughes county, the cost to decommission the project would range between \$3.7 million and \$5 million. That's a lot of money.

What, if any, is the state's or a landowner's legal recourse if, in 10, 20 or 30 years, a wind-power company is forced to shut down and can't sell its turbines or afford to take them down? Has anyone asked? We live in an unpredictable world, so this is not an unfathomable circumstance. We've seen taxpayers on the hook for cleaning up old mining operations whose former owners went bankrupt and couldn't fix the damage they'd done.

On the topic of natural resources, states to the east such as Minnesota and Iowa who dived whole hog into wind farms didn't have much in the way of native prairie left when the wind turbines came. Pretty much every inch of arable land there had already fallen to the plow. There wasn't much to be concerned about when it came to disturbing grassland habitats.

In South Dakota, we run the risk of impacting many already struggling species, mostly birds, who require large, mostly undisturbed grasslands to survive. Greater prairie chickens are just one species who might be impacted and they are already declining in most of their current range. There are many song birds, too, that could be affected by the 500-foot turbine towers.

While the impact on birds is bad, what could and likely would be worse is what happens if and when wind farms help drive a species toward the federal endangered-species list. When that happens, everyone, whether they agreed to host a wind turbine or not, will face the consequences. This scenario is not as unlikely as it first may seem.

Oklahoma, Texas and western Kansas, thanks in no small part to the rapid expansion of wind farms, now are facing the prospect of the lesser prairie chicken being placed on the endangered-species list. An Invasive tree species as well as oil-and-gas development played a role in the lesser prairie chicken's plight but unless something changes, ranchers, wind developers and oilmen all will find themselves hamstrung by the endangered-species act within a few years.

We also can look to the debacle surrounding sage grouse, which require massive tracts of undisturbed sagebrush habitats. Energy development, including wind power, has played a large role in that species' decline. It took the threat of the endangered-species act for states and industry leaders to get on board with conservation efforts.

In both the case of the lesser prairie chickens and of sage grouse, no one stopped to think about when

and where to develop until the endangered-species act was invoked. It is almost always advisable to avoid trouble rather than to rush headlong into it. Right now, it feels like we're rushing headlong into it.

The problem of harming a grassland bird or having to decommission a wind farm may feel far off, but if we want to avoid potentially serious problems down the line, we've got to answer these questions now. We need to take a measured approach on wind development and as a state, we should look for ways to hold developers accountable for their actions when the time comes.

## North Dakota State football coach signs contract extension

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota State's Chris Klieman has signed a two-year contract extension with the perennial Football Championship Subdivision powerhouse.

Klieman is entering his fifth season leading the Bison, who have won six of the last seven FCS titles. He was an assistant at the Fargo school for three years before he was promoted to head coach when Craig Bohl moved to Wyoming.

The 50-year-old Klieman signed a six-year contract extension in 2016 that called for a base salary of \$300,000 a year, with minimum pay increases of at least 4 percent annually. Those terms remain unchanged. The new deal increases various performance bonuses and appearance fees.

Klieman has a 54-6 record with NDSU. He's a native of Waterloo, Iowa, and played defensive back at Northern Iowa.

## California company purchases 17 South Dakota properties

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A recently formed California company is buying up hotels and motels across South Dakota.

AG Dakota has acquired 17 properties in South Dakota so far this year, including the Fort Pierre Motel, the Capital Journal reported. The group plans to invest \$50 million over the next decade.

AG Dakota has already spent around \$15 million, said David Hooper, the company's senior director of operations.

"We're not trying to take over all the hotels and motels in a place and then spike prices; we're absolutely not trying to do that," he said. The company aims to invest in "towns, cultures, and experiences," he said.

South Dakota's lack of state income tax makes the area business-friendly, Hooper said. The state has a culture of tourism built into it, he said.

The hospitality industry can make money in rural America's small towns, and the company's business can help the economy of those towns, Hooper said.

Some of AG Dakota's newly acquired properties are located in towns such as Ipswich and Murdo, with populations estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau to have shrunk since 2010.

Hooper said he debated temporarily closing the Hospitality Hotel in Ipswich after purchasing it because the hotel only had a manager on staff. But residents raised concerns about the economic impact of a closure because local contractors stay at the hotel for weeks at a time. The concerns led to Hooper keeping the hotel open during the transition to a new management team and staff.

The company will keep the current names of the purchased properties, Hooper said. The buildings will eventually get updated signage with a tagline indicating the new ownership.

The company's hotels and motels will eventually be operated off the same property management and payroll software system, Hooper said. The properties are currently listed under online travel agencies.

AG Dakota also has one hotel in North Dakota and one in Minnesota.



## Sanford Health to present at Vatican City conference

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Sanford Health officials in North Dakota and South Dakota will take part in a conference in Vatican City about using the latest scientific breakthroughs to “Unite to Cure” people around the world.

The Bismarck Tribune reports that the Fourth International Vatican Conference will be held next week from April 26-28.

David Pearce is the president of Sioux Falls, South Dakota-based Sanford Research. He says the conference is a “tremendous platform for Sanford to present.”

Sanford officials will present on a variety of topics, including some of their research and clinical trials. They’ll be joined by scientists, doctors, faith leaders, government officials and philanthropists, including Pope Francis, as well as Meghan McCain and Dr. Mehmet Oz.

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

## Judge refuses to dismiss charges in bestiality case

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A judge has refused to dismiss charges against an Ipswich man accused of bestiality.

Fifty-seven-year-old James Schumacher is accused of engaging in sexual acts with two calves on a Bath-area farm. He’s pleaded not guilty to six felony charges and faces trial in late July.

Defense attorney Marshall Lovrien argued in March that the bestiality counts were unconstitutional. He cited U.S. Supreme Court cases including one that upheld a person’s right to engage in private, intimate conduct of his or her choosing.

Brown County State’s Attorney Chris White argued that there are exceptions.

The American News reports that Judge Scott Myren sided with prosecutors.

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

## Citi laying off 57 in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Citi is laying off 57 customer service employees in Sioux Falls.

But, the financial services company says it’s committed to its operations in Sioux Falls where it employees about 1,800. Citi announced plans last year to building a new center in southwest Sioux Falls.

Citi says it will provide outplacement services to the employees losing their jobs.

## Woman who lost pink house, court case seeks box office win

By JESSICA GRESKO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Susette Kelo’s Supreme Court case now has a Hollywood ending, just not the one she hoped for.

What Kelo wanted when she took her case to the high court more than a decade ago was to get to stay in her little pink house in New London, Connecticut. The city was trying to force her out to make way for development, and Kelo didn’t want to go. The high court ruled against her.

Now, however, Kelo’s story has been turned into a movie, “Little Pink House,” opening Friday in limited nationwide release. It’s a movie she and those involved in the film hope will get people to think about the government’s power to take private property for public use. Governments can use that power, called eminent domain, as long as they fairly compensate owners.

Kelo, who was in Washington this week to speak about the film, said what city and state officials did “ripped our hearts out.”

Kelo wasn’t looking for a fight when she bought her house overlooking the Thames River in 1997 and had it painted Odessa Rose pink. Divorced and with five grown sons, she was looking for a place of her

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 18 of 43

own. She found it in the 100-year-old cottage. Shortly after she moved in, pharmaceutical manufacturer Pfizer announced it would move in nearby, building a research facility that opened in 2001.

New London hoped Pfizer's move could help revitalize the city and, with the help of a private nonprofit development corporation, sought to redevelop land near the facility. A hotel, housing, office space, restaurants and shopping were planned. To get it done, the city authorized the use of eminent domain.

Kelo thought that was wrong, and she and a small group of other homeowners took on the city. They acknowledged eminent domain could be used to take their homes for public uses such as a road or military base, but they argued the planned development didn't count.

"She was just fearless," said Oscar-nominated actress Catherine Keener, who plays Kelo in the movie. "She took on everybody."

Kelo had help. The Virginia-based Institute for Justice represented her and the other homeowners. The group was also instrumental in the new movie's making, bringing a book about the case to the attention of filmmakers Courtney Moorehead Balaker and Ted Balaker.

Courtney Balaker, the movie's writer and director, said she was "blown away" by Kelo's case but also by Kelo herself. She compared her story to that of Erin Brockovich, a nonlawyer and divorced mother of three who took on utility company PG&E over contaminated groundwater in Hinkley, California, inspiring a 2000 movie. One big difference: Brockovich won.

In 2005, the Supreme Court ruled against Kelo 5-4. Three justices who sided with the city — Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer and Anthony Kennedy — are still on the court. The two others — John Paul Stevens and David Souter — have since retired. The justices wrote that the city had carefully crafted a development plan it believed would benefit the community. They agreed the use of eminent domain was permitted.

"I want people to walk away thinking about if that's right," Balaker said.

Stevens, the Supreme Court justice who authored the opinion, has acknowledged it was the most unpopular one he wrote. Justice Antonin Scalia, who dissented from the decision, ranked it among the court's biggest mistakes.

After the decision, more than 20 states significantly revised their laws to make it more difficult to take property through eminent domain, said Dana Berliner, litigation director for the Institute for Justice.

Those changes didn't help Kelo, who had to move. And despite the lengthy legal battle, her land still stands empty. Pfizer announced in 2009 that it would leave New London. But submarine builder General Dynamics Electric Boat now occupies its former facility with many more employees, said New London Mayor Michael Passero.

Passero said that's now helping spur development. Passero, a Democrat who grew up in the city, said while the movie vilifies the development corporation, he believes the people behind it had good motives, though they also made mistakes. More than anything, he said, the story is a cautionary tale about two sides becoming so polarized they couldn't find a middle ground.

Kelo's little pink house was ultimately saved. Disassembled and moved but still painted pink, it stands on New London's Franklin Street. Although Kelo doesn't live there, she says she thinks about her former home and her legal fight often.

"A lot of people ask: 'How are you all doin'? ... How are your neighbors? How did you survive this?" she said of recent appearances in connection with the movie. She answers that they've left the city, bought new homes and are trying to do "the best we can to recover."

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

## In Comey memos, Trump talks of jailed journalists, 'hookers'

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, ERIC TUCKER and CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a series of startlingly candid conversations, President Donald Trump told former FBI Director James Comey that he had serious concerns about the judgment of a top adviser, asked about the possibility of jailing journalists and described a boast from Vladimir Putin about Russian prostitutes, according to Comey's notes of the talks obtained by The Associated Press on Thursday night.

The 15 pages of documents contain new details about a series of interactions with Trump that Comey found so unnerving that he chose to document them in writing. Those seven encounters in the weeks and months before Comey's May 2017 firing include a Trump Tower discussion about allegations involving Trump and prostitutes in Moscow; a White House dinner at which Comey says Trump asked him for his loyalty; and a private Oval Office discussion where the ex-FBI head says the president asked him to end an investigation into Michael Flynn, the former White House national security adviser.

The documents had been eagerly anticipated since their existence was first revealed last year, especially since Comey's interactions with Trump are a critical part of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into whether the president sought to obstruct justice. Late Thursday night, Trump tweeted that the memos "show clearly that there was NO COLLUSION and NO OBSTRUCTION."

The president also accused Comey of leaking classified information. The memos obtained by the AP were unclassified, though some portions were blacked out as classified. Details from Comey's memos reported in news stories last year appear to come from the unclassified portions.

In explaining the purpose of creating the memos, which have been provided to Mueller, Comey has said he "knew there might come a day when I would need a record of what had happened" to defend not only himself but the FBI as well.

The memos cover the first three months of the Trump administration, a period of upheaval marked by staff turnover, a cascade of damaging headlines and revelations of an FBI investigation into potential ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. The documents reflect Trump's uneasiness about that investigation, though not always in ways that Comey seemed to anticipate.

In a February 2017 conversation, for instance, Trump told Comey how Putin told him, "we have some of the most beautiful hookers in the world" even as the president adamantly, and repeatedly, distanced himself from a salacious allegation concerning him and prostitutes in Moscow, according to one memo.

In another memo, Comey recounts how Trump at a private White House dinner pointed his fingers at his head and complained that Flynn, his embattled national security adviser, "has serious judgment issues." The president blamed Flynn for failing to alert him promptly to a congratulatory call from a world leader, causing a delay for Trump in returning a message to an official whose name is redacted in the documents.

"I did not comment at any point during this topic and there was no mention or acknowledgment of any FBI interest in or contact with General Flynn," Comey wrote.

By that point, the FBI had already interviewed Flynn about his contacts with the Russian ambassador, Sergey Kislyak, and the Justice Department had already warned White House officials that they were concerned Flynn was vulnerable to blackmail.

Flynn was fired Feb. 13, 2017, after White House officials said he had misled them about his Russian contacts during the transition period by saying that he had not discussed sanctions. The following day, according to a separate memo, Comey says Trump cleared the Oval Office of other officials, encouraged him to let go of the investigation into Flynn and called him a good guy. Flynn pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI and is now cooperating with Mueller's investigation.

The memos reveal that days before Flynn's firing, then-White House chief of staff Reince Priebus asked Comey if Flynn's communications were being monitored under a secret surveillance warrant.

"Do you have a FISA order on Mike Flynn?" Priebus asked Comey, according to the memos, referring to an order under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Comey said he "paused for a few seconds and then said that I would answer here, but that this illustrated the kind of question that had to be asked and answered through established channels."

Comey's response is redacted on the unclassified memos.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 20 of 43

The memos also show Trump's continued distress at a dossier of allegations — compiled by an ex-British spy whose work was funded by the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign — examining potential ties between him and his aides and the Kremlin. Comey writes how Trump repeatedly denied to him having been involved in an encounter with Russian prostitutes in a Moscow hotel.

"The President said 'the hookers thing' is nonsense," Comey writes, noting that Trump then related the conversation with Putin about the "most beautiful hookers." Comey says Trump did not say when Putin had made the comment.

The documents also include the president's musings about pursuing leakers and imprisoning journalists. They also provide insight into Comey's personal and professional opinions. He judges the administration's travel ban to be legally valid, and he takes a swipe at former Attorney General Loretta Lynch, calling her predecessor, Eric Holder, "smarter and more sophisticated and smoother."

The memos were provided to Congress earlier Thursday as House Republicans escalated criticism of the Justice Department, threatening to subpoena the documents and questioning officials.

In a letter sent to three Republican House committee chairmen Thursday evening, Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd wrote that the department was sending a classified version of the memos and an unclassified version. The department released Boyd's letter publicly but did not release the memos. The chairmen issued a statement late Thursday saying the memos show that Comey clearly never felt threatened, and Trump didn't obstruct justice.

Justice officials had allowed some lawmakers to view the memos but had never provided copies to Congress. Boyd wrote that the department had also provided the memos to several Senate committees.

Boyd wrote in the letter that the department "consulted the relevant parties" and concluded that releasing the memos would not adversely affect any ongoing investigations. Mueller is investigating potential ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 campaign as well as possible obstruction of justice by the president.

Comey is on a publicity tour to promote his new book, "A Higher Loyalty." He revealed last year that he had written the memos after conversations with Trump.

He said in an interview Thursday with CNN that he's "fine" with the Justice Department turning his memos over to Congress.

"I think what folks will see if they get to see the memos is I've been consistent since the very beginning, right after my encounters with President Trump, and I'm consistent in the book and tried to be transparent in the book as well," he said.

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Associated Press writer Tom LoBianco contributed to this report.

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Link to the memos:  
<http://apne.ws/dwhMe9R>

## First clues emerge about Cuba's future under new president

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN and ANDREA RODRIGUEZ, Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Miguel Diaz-Canel has been the presumptive next president of Cuba since 2013, when Raul Castro named the laconic former provincial official to the important post of first vice president and lauded him as "neither a novice nor an improviser," high praise in a system dedicated to continuity over all.

Castro said nothing about how a young civilian from outside his family could lead the socialist nation that he and his older brother Fidel created from scratch and ruled with total control for nearly 60 years.

Exiles in Miami said Diaz-Canel would be a figurehead for continued Castro dominance. Cubans on the island speculated about a weak president sharing power with the head of the communist party, or maybe a newly created post of prime minister. No one who knew was talking. And no one who was talking knew.

The first clues to the mystery of Cuba's future power structure were revealed early Thursday when Raul Castro handed the presidency to Diaz-Canel, who took office when the 604-member National Assembly



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 21 of 43

said 603 of its members had approved the 57-year-old as the sole official candidate for the top government position.

With Castro watching from the audience, Diaz-Canel made clear that for the moment he would defer to the man who founded Cuba's communist system along with his brother. Diaz-Canel said he would retain Castro's Cabinet through at least July, when the National Assembly meets again.

"I confirm to this assembly that Raul Castro, as first secretary of the Communist Party, will lead the decisions about the future of the country," Diaz-Canel said. "Cuba needs him, providing ideas and proposals for the revolutionary cause, orienting and alerting us about any error or deficiency, teaching us, and always ready to confront imperialism."

Perhaps more importantly, Castro's 90-minute valedictory speech offered his first clear plan for a president whom Castro seemed to envision as the heir to near-total control of the country's political system, which in turn dominates virtually every aspect of life in Cuba. Castro said he foresees the white-haired electronics engineer serving two five-year terms as leader of the Cuban government, and taking the helm of the Communist Party, the country's ultimate authority, also for two five-year terms, when Castro leaves the powerful position in 2021.

"From that point on, I will be just another soldier defending this revolution," Castro said. The 86-year-old general broke frequently from his prepared remarks to joke and banter with officials on the dais in the National Assembly, saying he looked forward to having more time to travel the country.

State media struck a similar valedictory tone. The evening newscast played black-and-white footage of Castro as a young revolutionary, with the soundtrack of "The Last Mambi" a song that bids farewell to Castro as a public figure and was written by Raul Torres, a singer who composed a similar homage to Fidel Castro after the revolutionary leader's death in 2016.

The plan laid out by Raul Castro on Thursday would leave Diaz-Canel as the dominant figure in Cuban politics until 2031.

"The same thing we're doing with him, he'll have to do with his successor," Castro said. "When his 10 years of service as president of the Council of State and Council of Ministers are over, he'll have three years as first secretary in order to facilitate the transition. This will help us avoid mistakes by his successor, until (Diaz-Canel) retires to take care of the grandchildren he will have then, if he doesn't have them already, or his great-grandchildren."

Diaz-Canel pledged that his priority would be preserving Cuba's communist system while gradually reforming the economy and making the government more responsive to the people.

"There's no space here for a transition that ignores or destroys the legacy of so many years of struggle," Diaz-Canel said.

Diaz-Canel said he would work to implement a long-term plan laid out by the National Assembly and Communist Party that would continue allowing the limited growth of private enterprises like restaurants and taxis, while leaving the economy's most important sectors such as energy, mining, telecommunications, medical services and rum- and cigar-production in the hands of the state.

"The people have given this assembly the mandate to provide continuity to the Cuban Revolution during a crucial, historic moment that will be defined by all that we achieve in the advance of the modernization of our social and economic model," Diaz-Canel said.

Cubans said they expected their new president to deliver improvements to the island's economy, which remains stagnant and dominated by inefficient, unproductive state-run enterprises that are unable to provide salaries high enough to cover basic needs. The average monthly pay for state workers is roughly \$30 a month.

"I hope that Diaz-Canel brings prosperity," said Richard Perez, a souvenir salesman in Old Havana. "I want to see changes, above all economic changes allowing people to have their own businesses, without the state in charge of so many things."

But in Miami, Cuban-Americans said they didn't expect much from Diaz-Canel.

"It's a cosmetic change," said Wilfredo Allen, a 66-year-old lawyer who left Cuba two years after the Castros' 1959 revolution. "The reality is that Raul Castro is still controlling the Communist Party. We are

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 22 of 43

very far from having a democratic Cuba.”

After formally taking over from his older brother Fidel in 2008, Raul Castro launched a series of reforms that led to a rapid expansion of Cuba’s private sector and burgeoning use of cellphones and the internet. Cuba today has a vibrant real estate market and one of the world’s fastest-growing airports. Tourism numbers have more than doubled since Castro and President Barack Obama re-established diplomatic relations in 2015, making Cuba a destination for nearly 5 million visitors a year, despite a plunge in relations under the Trump administration.

Castro’s moves to open the economy even further have largely been frozen or reversed as soon as they began to generate conspicuous displays of wealth by the new entrepreneurial class in a country officially dedicated to equality among its citizens. Foreign investment remains anemic and the island’s infrastructure is falling deeper into disrepair. The election of President Donald Trump dashed dreams of detente with the U.S., and after two decades of getting Venezuelan subsidies totaling more than \$6 billion a year, Cuba’s patron has collapsed economically, with no replacement in the wings.

Castro’s inability or unwillingness to fix Cuba’s structural problems with deep and wide-ranging reforms has many wondering how a successor without Castro’s founding-father credentials will manage the country over the next five or 10 years.

“I want the country to advance,” said Susel Calzado, a 61-year-old economics professor. “We already have a plan laid out.”

At the U.S. State Department, spokeswoman Heather Nauert expressed disappointment at the handover, saying Cuban citizens “had no real power to affect the outcome” of what she called the “undemocratic transition.”

Vice President Mike Pence tweeted at Castro that the U.S. won’t rest until Cuba “has free & fair elections, political prisoners are released & the people of Cuba are finally free!”

Diaz-Canel first gained prominence in Villa Clara province as the top Communist Party official, a post equivalent to governor. People there describe him as a hard-working, modest-living technocrat dedicated to improving public services. He became higher education minister in 2009 before moving into the vice presidency.

In a video of a Communist Party meeting that inexplicably leaked to the public last year, Diaz-Canel expressed a series of orthodox positions that included somberly pledging to shutter some independent media and labeling some European embassies as outposts of foreign subversion.

But he has also defended academics and bloggers who became targets of hard-liners, leading some to describe him a potential advocate for greater openness in a system intolerant of virtually any criticism or dissent.

International observers and Cubans alike will be scrutinizing every move he makes in coming days and weeks.

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Associated Press writer Ben Fox contributed to this report.

## **Former NFLer Chris Borland helps others adjust to retirement**

**By JOSH DUBOW, AP Pro Football Writer**

Chris Borland knows firsthand all about the challenges of early retirement, having stepped away from a promising football career after one year because of concerns over head injuries.

Instead of playing in front of boisterous crowds on the big NFL stage, Borland spends his time now helping other football players and military veterans make that adjustment to their new lives that often lack the thrill and competitiveness of life in the armed forces or professional sports.

“One healthy thing I’d like for players to know, whether they’re active or former, is you likely can’t replicate the thrill of playing before 100,000 people and big hits and making that much money,” Borland said. “We can get ourselves into trouble trying to. Coming to terms with transitioning is one of the harder lessons I’ve had to learn the last couple of years, is that life is a little more methodical than in sports. The peaks

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 23 of 43

aren't as high and the valleys aren't as low.

"That's an adjustment we have to make."

Borland, whose brothers Joe and John serve in the Army, sees similar retirement challenges for veterans, who like football players often have to deal with physical injuries and mental problems that are far less obvious as they go into society.

"It would be ill-advised to compare war and a sport, but I don't think the brain knows the difference," Borland said. "With post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries in blasts with veterans, we see a very similar and somewhat unique issue with repetitive brain injuries in football. There are very similar physical struggles, but also two populations that have a hard time transitioning out whether it is the military or football and reintegrating into society."

Borland has tried to bridge those two populations with his work with the After the Impact Fund, which facilitates custom treatment plans for veterans and athletes with traumatic brain injuries.

He is raising money and awareness for the issue this week by taking part in "Pat's Run" on Saturday in Tempe, Arizona, alongside his brothers Joe and John. The run is named after Pat Tillman, who gave up his own promising NFL career to join the Army in 2002 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and died while serving in Afghanistan in 2004.

"A lot of what you do as a teammate is you sacrifice for others and support others," John Borland said. "There are people we've all been teammates with, for us it's soldiers. For Chris, it's ex-football players. You don't just forget your teammates as soon as the game is over. They're still your teammates. There are people who still need support, who worked hard and are with you. These are guys you shared blood with."

John Borland is a major in the U.S. Army, an instructor at West Point and also served in Iraq. Joe Borland is a captain in the US Army JAG Corps who has served in Iraq and Afghanistan, returning just last month from his latest tour.

They see plenty in common with what their friends in the military deal with after leaving the service and what ex-athletes go through as well.

"The similarities and the overlap is they both are young when they start off and young when they're done as well for the most part," Joe Borland said. "They potentially would have suffered similar injuries but in a different way. The impacts in the NFL and the impacts we might have with an explosion or trauma in the military can be similar."

Those brain injuries are why the 27-year-old Borland retired from football three years ago in a decision that shocked many outsiders, but was one his brothers knew came from careful consideration.

Borland was a third-round pick in the 2014 NFL draft by San Francisco after a stellar college career at Wisconsin, where he was Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year and a second-team All-American in 2013.

Borland led the 49ers in tackles as a rookie and was named to the all-rookie team and was a Pro Bowl alternate before stepping away for a post-playing career that includes a company he started, T Mindful, to help bring meditation into sports.

"About 10 percent of the time, I miss 3 to 5 percent of the game," Borland said. "I look back and I'm happy that I played. I'm not wistful. You miss big games. I miss the locker room camaraderie. Sometimes I miss the lifestyle. It's great to get around old players because in a society where people like to dance around topics, it's good to be around like-minded people who cut the BS and are able to rib one another. I enjoyed that. But I don't long for it or reminisce daily. A piece of my heart will always be in football, but my mind ended it."

Borland, who started playing tackle football in ninth grade, finds it preposterous that children are still playing the sport with fewer rules protecting them than the adults in the pros.

Even the rules in the NFL like limits on contact in practice and a recent rule change to outlaw leading with the helmet are only small steps.

"Those are all incremental improvements," Borland said. "A lot of it is PR. When they do those things, they're able to say the game is safer than ever. Safer than ever is a euphemism for dangerous and football is inherently dangerous. The way it's played, if it's going to retain what it is as a game, it will always be dangerous. What's not being done that could be are measures outside the lines like waiting until high

school to play and having high schools and colleges adopt the same contact rules as the NFL.”

For more NFL coverage: <http://www.pro32.ap.org> and [http://www.twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](http://www.twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Arizona teachers vote for statewide walkout

By MELISSA DANIELS, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Arizona teachers have voted to walk off the job to demand increased school funding, marking a key step toward a first-ever statewide strike that builds on a movement for higher pay in other Republican-dominant states.

A grassroots group and the state’s largest teacher membership group said Thursday that teachers will walkout April 26.

Arizona jumped into a movement for higher teacher pay that started in West Virginia, where a strike garnered a raise, and spread to Oklahoma, Kentucky and most recently Colorado.

Thursday’s vote followed weeks of protests in Arizona and an offer from Republican Gov. Doug Ducey to give teachers 20 percent raise by 2020. Many teachers kept up the pressure at schools and on social media, saying the plan failed to address much-needed funding for classrooms and support staff.

“The worst possible thing we could do is not take action right now,” said Noah Karvelis, an organizer for Arizona Educators United.

The historic vote was announced at a press conference at the Arizona Education Association headquarters. Around 78 percent of the 57,000 teachers voted in favor of the walkout, according to Joe Thomas, president of Arizona Education Association.

“This is undeniably, clearly, a mandate for action,” Thomas said.

Arizona House Democratic Leader Rebecca Rios released a statement supporting the planned teacher walkout.

“The women and men who work so hard to educate our children at our neighborhood public schools have earned a meaningful and sustainable pay increase that’s based on a real revenue source, not smoke and mirrors,” Rios said. “We call on superintendents and school boards to support their teachers and support staff during this time.”

The governor said “no one wants to see teachers strike” and reiterated his proposal on Twitter after the vote was announced.

“We have worked side by side with the education community to develop a sustainable plan to give teachers a 20 percent raise by 2020,” Ducey wrote.

Thomas said the governor’s plan was “falling apart as we speak,” and added that two letters asking the governor to sit down with educators have gone unanswered.

Ducey’s proposal drew support from the business community and some school organizations, but others were concerned about finding the money. The plan would cost about \$650 million when fully implemented.

The Arizona PTA pulled its support for the proposal, saying its analysis showed the finances were not realistic. An education advocacy group, Save Our Schools Arizona, said it’s worried the plan isn’t a “sustainable or comprehensive” way to reinvest in schools.

Legislative budget analysts this week predicted a \$265 million deficit in 2020 if the governor’s plan is approved. Ducey’s office strongly disputes that analysis, saying much of the funding comes from revenue increases.

Teachers on both sides of the walkout vote have shared concerns. It could pose child care difficulties for thousands of families and leave teachers at risk of losing their credentials. How a strike could play out in more than 200 public school districts will vary but could leave hourly workers like custodians without their paychecks.

Beth Simek, president of the influential Arizona PTA, she feels the pain of teachers who are torn. Some are concerned about the effect on support staff and what kids might do without school, she said.

“I know they’re toiling with that,” Simek said. “I also know they need these raises.”



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 25 of 43

Parents and communities already have been making plans for child care, with some stay-at-home parents stepping up to watch children so other parents can work, she said. Local parent-teacher associations also are putting together food boxes for kids who rely on free breakfast and lunch at school.

"There's been a lot of mobilization by the community to prepare," Simek said.

Teachers themselves could face consequences in this right-to-work state, where unions do not collectively bargain with school districts and representation is not mandatory. The Arizona Education Association has warned its 20,000 members about a 1971 Arizona attorney general opinion saying a statewide strike would be illegal under common law and participants could lose their teaching credentials.

The logistics of a walkout will vary by district. The state's largest, Mesa Public Schools in suburban Phoenix, would close and hourly staffers would not be paid, Superintendent Michael Cowan has said.

The Dysart School District west of Phoenix would "make every effort" to avoid closing schools," but they would have to shut down if too few staff members show up, Superintendent Gail Pletnick has told parents.

Sara Bresnahan, a spokeswoman for the Phoenix Elementary School District, said a walkout is "uncharted territory" but its schools would try to stay open for as many students as possible.

"Some kids will be coming to school and really need a place to be," she said.

Karvelis wouldn't say how long the walkouts could last.

"I don't want to put any limitations on it right now," Karvelis said.

Nancy Maglio, a teacher at Magee Middle School in southern Arizona's Tucson Unified School District, said teachers are motivated to walk out and demand funding because of what it means for their students.

"None of us went to school, none of us spent money on tuition, on books, none of us spend our time and our energy to not care," she said. "We went into a field where caring is mandatory."

While Maglio voted in support of the walkout, it wasn't without conflicted feelings.

"I am eagerly anticipating the walkout, but I'm not eagerly anticipating leaving my students," she said.

## 2 black men arrested at Starbucks get an apology from police

By ERRIN HAINES WHACK, AP National Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Rashon Nelson initially brushed it off when the Starbucks manager told him he couldn't use the restroom because he wasn't a paying customer.

He thought nothing of it when he and his childhood friend and business partner, Donte Robinson, were approached at their table and were asked if they needed help. The 23-year-old entrepreneurs declined, explaining they were just waiting for a business meeting.

A few minutes later, they hardly noticed when the police came into the coffee shop — until officers started walking in their direction.

"That's when we knew she called the police on us," Nelson told The Associated Press in the first interview by the two black men since video of their April 12 trespassing arrests touched off a furor around the U.S. over racial profiling or what has been dubbed "retail racism" or "shopping while black."

Nelson and Robinson were led away in handcuffs from the shop in the city's well-to-do Rittenhouse Square neighborhood in an incident recorded on a white customer's cellphone.

In the week since, the men have met with Starbucks' apologetic CEO and have started pushing for lasting change at the coffee shop chain, including new policies on discrimination and ejecting customers.

"We do want to make sure it doesn't happen to anybody again," Robinson said. "What if it wasn't us sitting there? What if it was the kid that didn't know somebody that knew somebody? Do they make it to jail? Do they die? What happens?"

On Thursday, they also got an apology from Philadelphia police Commissioner Richard Ross, a black man who at first staunchly defended his officers' handling of the encounter.

"I should have said the officers acted within the scope of the law, and not that they didn't do anything wrong," Ross said. "Words are very important."

At a news conference, a somber Ross said he "failed miserably" in addressing the arrests. He said that the issue of race is not lost on him and that he shouldn't be the person making things worse.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 26 of 43

"Shame on me if, in any way, I've done that," he said.

He also said the police department did not have a policy for dealing for such situations but does now and it will be released soon.

Nelson and Robinson said they went to the Starbucks to meet Andrew Yaffe, a white local businessman, over a potential real estate opportunity. Three officers showed up not long after. Nelson said they weren't questioned but were told to leave immediately.

Yaffe showed up as the men were being handcuffed and could be seen in the video demanding an explanation for the officers' actions. Nelson and Robinson did not resist arrest.

"When you know that you did nothing wrong, how do you really react to it?" Nelson said. "You can either be ignorant or you can show some type of sophistication and act like you have class. That was the choice we had."

It was not their first encounter with police. But neither had been arrested before, setting them apart from many of those they grew up with in their gritty southwest Philadelphia neighborhood.

Nelson and Robinson spent hours in a jail cell and were released after midnight, when the district attorney declined to prosecute them.

Nelson said he wondered if he'd make it home alive.

"Any time I'm encountered by cops, I can honestly say it's a thought that runs through my mind," Nelson said. "You never know what's going to happen."

Starbucks has said the coffee shop where the arrests occurred has a policy that restrooms are for paying customers only, but the company has no overall policy. The men's attorney, Stewart Cohen, said they were illegally profiled.

The arrests prompted protests at the Starbucks and a national boycott. Kevin Johnson, CEO of the Seattle-based company, came to Philadelphia to meet with the men, called the arrests "reprehensible" and ordered more than 8,000 Starbucks stores closed on the afternoon of May 29 so that nearly 175,000 employees can receive training on unconscious bias. Starbucks has not identified the employee who called police.

Robinson said that he appreciates the public support but that anger and boycotting Starbucks are not the solution.

The men said they are looking for more lasting results and are in mediation with Starbucks to make changes, including the posting in stores of a customer bill of rights; the adoption of new policies on customer ejections and racial discrimination; and independent investigations of complaints.

"You go from being someone who's just trying to be an entrepreneur, having your own dreams and aspirations, and then this happens," Nelson said. "How do you handle it? Do you stand up? Do you fight? Do you sit down and just watch everyone else fight for you? Do you let it slide, like we let everything else slide with injustice?"

Whack is The Associated Press' national writer for race and ethnicity. Follow her work on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/emaravelous>

## Files show rising alarm in Prince's circle as health failed

By AMY FORLITI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Some of Prince's closest confidants had grown increasingly alarmed about his health in the days before he died and tried to get him help as they realized he had an opioid addiction — yet none were able to give investigators the insight they needed to determine where the musician got the fentanyl that killed him, according to investigative documents released Thursday.

Just ahead of this weekend's two-year anniversary of Prince's death, prosecutors announced they would file no criminal charges in the case and the state investigation was closed.

"My focus was lasered in on trying to find out who provided that fentanyl, and we just don't know where he got it," said Carver County Attorney Mark Metz. "We may never know. ... It's pretty clear from the evidence that he did not know, and the people around him didn't know, that he was taking fentanyl."

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 27 of 43

Metz said Prince had suffered from pain for years and likely believed he was taking a common painkiller. Prince was 57 when he was found alone and unresponsive in an elevator at his Paisley Park studio compound on April 21, 2016. His death sparked a national outpouring of grief and prompted a joint investigation by Carver County and federal authorities.

An autopsy found he died of an accidental overdose of fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 50 times more powerful than heroin.

The investigative materials — including documents, photos and videos — were posted online Thursday afternoon. Several images show the music superstar's body on the floor of his Paisley Park estate, near an elevator. He is on his back, his head on the floor, eyes closed. His right hand is on his stomach and left arm on the floor.

The documents include interviews with Prince's inner circle. That included longtime friend and bodyguard Kirk Johnson, who told investigators that he had noticed Prince "looking just a little frail," but said he did not realize he had an opioid addiction until he passed out on a plane a week before he died.

"It started to all making sense though, just his behavior sometimes and change of mood and I'm like oh this is what, I think this is what's going on, that's why I took the initiative and said let's go to my doctor because you haven't been to the doctor, let's check it all out," Johnson said, according to a transcript of an interview with investigators.

Johnson said after that episode, Prince canceled some concerts as friends urged him to rest. Johnson also said that Prince "said he wanted to talk to somebody" about his addiction.

Johnson asked his own doctor, Michael Todd Schulenberg, to see Prince on April 7, 2016. Schulenberg told authorities he gave Prince an IV; authorities said he also prescribed Vitamin D and a nausea medication — under Johnson's name. Johnson then called Schulenberg on April 14, asking the doctor to prescribe a pain medication for Prince's hip. Schulenberg did so, again under Johnson's name, Metz said.

On the night of April 14 to April 15, Prince passed out on a flight home from Atlanta, and the private plane made an emergency stop in Moline, Illinois. The musician had to be revived with two doses of a drug that reverses effects of an opioid overdose.

A paramedic told a police detective that after the second shot of naloxone, Prince "took a large gasp and woke up," according to the investigative documents. He said Prince told paramedics, "I feel all fuzzy."

A nurse at the hospital where Prince was taken for monitoring told detectives that he refused routine overdose testing that would have included blood and urine tests. When asked what he had taken, he didn't say what it was, but that "someone gave it to him to relax." Other documents say Prince said he took one or two pills.

The documents show that Johnson contacted Schulenberg again on April 18, and expressed concern that Prince was struggling with opioids. At that time, Schulenberg told investigators, Johnson apologized for asking the doctor to prescribe the previous painkiller.

An assistant to Prince told investigators that he had been unusually quiet and sick with the flu in the days before he was found dead. Meron Bekure said she last saw Prince a day earlier, when she was going to take him to the doctor for a checkup but that Prince told her he would go with Johnson instead.

On that day, Schulenberg saw Prince and ran some tests and prescribed other medications to help him. A urinalysis came back positive for opioids. That same day, Paisley Park staffers contacted California addiction specialist Dr. Howard Kornfeld. The doctor sent his son, Andrew, to Minnesota that night, and the younger Kornfeld was among those who found Prince's body. Andrew Kornfeld was carrying buprenorphine, a medication that can be used to help treat opioid addiction.

Andrew Kornfeld told investigators that Prince was still warm to the touch when he was found, but that rigor mortis had begun to set in.

The documents also show that Prince's closest confidants knew he was a private person and tried to respect that, with Johnson saying: "That's what pisses me off cause it's like man, how did he hide this so well?"

Metz said some of Prince's friends might have enabled him as they tried to protect him.

"There is no doubt that the actions of individuals will be criticized, questioned and judged in the days

and weeks to come," Metz said. "But suspicions and innuendo are categorically insufficient to support any criminal charges."

The U.S. attorney's office also said Thursday it had no credible evidence that would lead to federal criminal charges. A law enforcement official close to the investigation told The Associated Press that the federal investigation is now inactive unless new information emerges. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the federal case remains open.

But federal authorities announced that Schulenberg had agreed to pay \$30,000 to settle a civil violation from the allegation that he illegally prescribed the opioid oxycodone for Prince in Johnson's name. Schulenberg admitted to no facts or liability in the settlement, which includes stricter monitoring of his prescribing practices, and authorities said he is not the target of a criminal investigation.

Oxycodone, the generic name for the active ingredient in OxyContin, was not listed as a cause of Prince's death. But it is part of a family of painkillers driving the nation's addiction and overdose epidemic, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nearly 2 million Americans abused or were addicted to prescription opioids, including oxycodone, in 2014.

A confidential toxicology report obtained by the AP in March showed high concentrations of fentanyl in the singer's blood, liver and stomach. The concentration of fentanyl in Prince's blood alone was 67.8 micrograms per liter, which outside experts called "exceedingly high."

Prince did not have a prescription for fentanyl.

Metz said several pills were found at the Paisley Park complex after Prince died, and some were later determined to be counterfeit.

The underground market for counterfeit prescription pain pills is brisk and can be highly anonymous, said Carol Falkowski, CEO of Drug Abuse Dialogues, a Minnesota-based drug abuse training and consulting organization. Buyers often don't know who they're dealing with or what's in the drugs they purchase, she said.

The likelihood of people buying pain pills on the street or online that turn out to be counterfeits laced with fentanyl is "extremely high," said Traci Green, a Boston University Medical Center epidemiologist who focuses on the opioid epidemic.

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Associated Press writers Steve Karnowski and Doug Glass in Minneapolis, Ryan J. Foley in Des Moines, Iowa, and Tammy Webber in Chicago contributed this report.

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## At trial, experts debate drug Cosby gave to his accuser

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — It's long been one of the most enduring mysteries of Bill Cosby's sexual assault case: What drug did he give his chief accuser on the night she says he molested her?

Cosby has insisted he handed 1 ½ tablets of the over-the-counter cold and allergy medicine Benadryl to Andrea Constand to help her relax before their sexual encounter at his home outside Philadelphia more than a dozen years ago. Constand testified he gave her three small blue pills that left her incapacitated and unable to resist as he molested her.

A pair of drug experts — one for the prosecution, one for the defense — testified at the TV star's retrial Thursday that paralysis isn't known to be a side effect of Benadryl, though its active ingredient can cause drowsiness and muscle weakness, among other side effects.

And Cosby's expert, Harry Milman, said he doesn't know of any small blue pill that could have produced the symptoms that Constand described.

The "Cosby Show" star has previously acknowledged under oath he gave quaaludes — a powerful sedative and 1970s-era party drug that's been banned in the U.S. for more than 35 years — to women he wanted



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 29 of 43

to have sex with, but denied having them by the time he met Constand in the early 2000s.

Dr. Timothy Rohrig, a forensic toxicologist called by prosecutors, testified Thursday that quaaludes can make people sleepy. But he and Milman said the drug came in large white pills — not small and blue.

Prosecutors rested their case after Rohrig got off the witness stand. The defense immediately asked Judge Steven O'Neill to acquit Cosby and send jurors home, arguing prosecutors hadn't proved aggravated indecent assault charges. O'Neill refused.

The defense also contended there's no evidence to prove the alleged assault happened within the 12-year statute of limitations. Prosecutors countered that Constand and Cosby have both said the encounter was in 2004. Cosby was arrested in late 2015, just before the deadline to charge him.

As the legal wrangling continued, Thursday's testimony focused on the drug taken by Constand, who has testified she thought they were an herbal supplement meant to relieve her stress.

Constand said Cosby called the pills "your friends" and told her they would "help take the edge off."

She testified earlier this week that Cosby refused to tell her what they were when she confronted him about two months later. Her mother testified that Cosby told her in a January 2005 phone conversation that he'd have to look at a prescription bottle and would send the answer to her by mail.

She said he never did.

Cosby said in a subsequent police interview that he gave her Benadryl, then fondled her breasts and genitals. He said Constand never told him to stop.

Cosby, in a 2005 deposition read to jurors by a police detective, said he obtained seven prescriptions for quaaludes from his doctor in Los Angeles in the 1970s, ostensibly for a sore back, but added he did not use them himself because they made him tired.

He said he gave quaaludes to women he wanted to have sex with, using them "the same as a person would say, 'Have a drink.'"

Rohrig, the director of a regional forensic science center and medical examiner's office in Wichita, Kansas, called quaaludes "an old-timey sedative, hypnotic drug" that at one time were believed to be an aphrodisiac.

Qaaludes have been illegal in the U.S. since 1982. They're still legal in Canada and parts of Europe, Rohrig said.

The Cosby camp dismissed the quaaludes talk.

"Qaaludes were not blue," the comedian's spokeswoman, Ebonee Benson, shouted to reporters after the experts' testimony. "Today should be the last day the discussion of quaaludes is had regarding these accusations against Mr. Cosby."

Benson said prosecutors want jurors to accept "a fabricated story about three small, blue pills" and believe that they're "somehow quaaludes."

The expert testimony came on the ninth day of Cosby's retrial on sexual assault charges that could send the star to prison for years.

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

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

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

## Rudy Giuliani to join Trump legal team in Russia probe

By CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, an outspoken supporter of Donald Trump since the early days of his campaign, is joining the team of lawyers representing the president in the special counsel's Russia investigation.

With the addition of Giuliani, Trump gains a former U.S. attorney, a past presidential candidate and a

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 30 of 43

TV-savvy defender at a time when the White House is looking for ways to bring the president's involvement with special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation to a close.

The president has been weighing whether to sit for questioning by Mueller's team, and his legal team has repeatedly met with investigators to define the scope of the questions he would face. Giuliani will enter those negotiations, filling the void left by attorney John Dowd, who resigned last month.

It's a precarious time for Trump. His legal team has been told by Mueller that the president is not a target of the investigation, suggesting he's not in imminent criminal jeopardy. But he is currently a subject of the probe — a designation that could change at any time.

Trump personal attorney Jay Sekulow told The Associated Press that Giuliani will be focusing on the Mueller investigation — not the legal matters raised by the ongoing investigation into Trump attorney Michael Cohen. That probe is being led by the U.S. attorney in Manhattan, an office that Giuliani headed in the mid- to late 1980s.

Cohen's office, home and hotel room were raided last week by the FBI, who are investigating the lawyer's business dealings, including suspected bank fraud. They also sought records related to payments to porn actress Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal, who both claim to have had sexual encounters with Trump several years ago. The White House has denied the claims.

The raids enraged Trump, prompting him to publicly weigh whether to fire Mueller or Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. He also intensified his public attacks on the Mueller investigation, calling it "an attack on our country."

In a statement announcing Giuliani's hire, Trump expressed his wish that the investigation wrap up soon and praised Giuliani, a fellow New Yorker, confidant and Mar-a-Lago regular.

"Rudy is great," Trump said. "He has been my friend for a long time and wants to get this matter quickly resolved for the good of the country."

Giuliani will be joining Sekulow on Trump's personal legal team but will be working closely with White House lawyer Ty Cobb, who has also been handling the administration's cooperation with the Mueller investigation.

"It is an honor to be a part of such an important legal team, and I look forward to not only working with the President but with Jay, Ty and their colleagues," Giuliani said in a statement.

In addition to Giuliani, two other former federal prosecutors — Jane Serene Raskin and Marty Raskin — will be joining Trump's legal team. The two, who are married and run a law firm together, are based in Florida but handle cases across the United States. Both have extensive experience prosecuting organized crime and representing defendants in complex white-collar and fraud investigations.

Giuliani, who was New York mayor during the Sept. 11 attacks, has known Trump for decades and his aggressive, hard-charging rhetorical style can at times mirror that of the president.

He had widely been expected to join Trump's administration. But Giuliani rejected the idea of becoming attorney general, lobbying Trump to name him secretary of state. Trump picked Rex Tillerson and Giuliani was left without a Cabinet post.

The two men share similar policy ideals, publicly supporting law enforcement in ways that have alienated minorities, and taking bullish stances on immigration enforcement.

In 2016, for instance, Giuliani fiercely criticized the Black Lives Matter movement, saying it encouraged violence against police. More recently, he has said he was consulted by Trump on how to implement the travel ban put in place last year against Muslim-majority nations.

Giuliani has been working at the influential law firm Greenberg Traurig, where he has been a senior adviser and head of the firm's cybersecurity, privacy and crisis management practice.

On Thursday, the firm's executive chairman Richard A. Rosenbaum released a statement saying Giuliani would be taking a leave of absence "for an unspecified period of time to handle matters unrelated to the law firm or its clients."

Giuliani's addition to the Trump legal team puts a renewed spotlight on his past legal and consulting work. His flirtation with becoming Trump's secretary of state was thwarted, in part, because of growing concerns about his overseas business ties.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 31 of 43

After leaving office as mayor, Giuliani advised foreign political figures and worked for lobbying and security firms whose clients have had complicated relationships with the U.S. government. While not personally involved in lobbying, Giuliani spent years at firms that represented foreign governments and multinational companies, some of which had interests that diverged from those of the United States.

That included a trip Giuliani took to Belgrade to meet with leaders of a Serbian political party once allied with Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

His consulting firm also did work in the Persian Gulf monarchy of Qatar and received money for supporting the Mujahedin-e Khalq, the Iranian dissident group, even as it was a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization.

More recently, Giuliani's work for Greenberg Traurig, who is a registered foreign agent for the government of Turkey, has drawn attention for his involvement in a high-profile case with foreign policy implications for the U.S-Turkey relationship.

Last year, Giuliani joined former Bush administration attorney general Michael Mukasey in working to resolve the case of Reza Zarrab, a Turkish-Iranian businessman who was accused of participating in a scheme to help Iran evade U.S. sanctions. The case also focused on allegations of corruption against Turkish officials, including Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Erdogan's government had pressured the U.S. government to drop the case, and in early 2017, Giuliani met with Erdogan to discuss whether the case could be resolved outside of court.

Despite Giuliani's intervention, Zarrab later pleaded guilty and testified for U.S. prosecutors against a former Turkish bank official who was himself later convicted. Zarrab later said the failure of Giuliani's effort led him to cooperate with prosecutors.

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Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Stephen Braun and Jill Colvin in Washington and Jonathan Lemire in New York contributed to this report.

## Seoul: N. Korean leader removes major nuclear sticking point

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Thursday that his rival, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, isn't asking for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean Peninsula as a precondition for abandoning his nuclear weapons. If true, this would seem to remove a major sticking point to a potential nuclear disarmament deal.

North Korea, a small, authoritarian nation surrounded by bigger and richer neighbors, has always linked its pursuit of nuclear weapons to what it calls a "hostile" U.S. policy that is embodied by the 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea, the 50,000 stationed in Japan, and the "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee that Washington offers allies Seoul and Tokyo.

Although Moon reported that North Korea isn't asking for the U.S. troops to leave, he said the North still wants the United States to end its "hostile" policy and offer security guarantees. When North Korea has previously talked about "hostility" it has been linked to the U.S. troops in South Korea.

It won't be until Moon and Kim meet next week, and then when Kim is to meet U.S. President Donald Trump sometime in May or June, that outsiders might know just what North Korea intends. Until then, caution is needed over the statements the various leaders are using to set up their high-stakes negotiations.

Moon and Kim's summit on April 27 will be only the third such meeting between the countries' leaders. Moon, a liberal who is committed to engaging the North despite being forced to take a hard line in the face of repeated North Korean weapons tests last year, is eager to make the summit a success and pave the way for Kim and Trump to settle the deep differences they have over the North's decades-long pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Many analysts believe that Kim sees the meeting with Trump as a way to bestow legitimacy on his own leadership and on a rogue nuclear program that he has built in the face of international criticism and crippling sanctions. Many say it is unlikely that the North will trade away its hard-won nuclear weapons

without getting what it wants in return.

"North Korea is expressing a commitment to a complete denuclearization," Moon said during a meeting with the heads of media organizations in South Korea on Thursday. "They are not presenting a condition that the U.S. cannot accept, such as the withdrawal of the American troops in South Korea. ... North Korea is only talking about the end of a hostile policy against it and then a security guarantee for the country."

Trump revealed Tuesday that the U.S. and North Korea had been holding direct talks at "extremely high levels" in preparation for their summit. Trump also said that North and South Korea are negotiating an end to hostilities before next week's summit.

North Korea has long sought a peace treaty with the United States to formally end the 1950-53 Korean War. Some South Koreans fear the North could use such a treaty as a pretext for demanding the withdrawal of the American troops in the South. Some worry that potential discussions on formally ending the war may distract from already difficult efforts to rid the North of nuclear weapons and apply robust verification of that process.

The armistice that halted fighting in the war was signed by the U.S.-led United Nations Command, North Korea and China. South Korea was a member of the U.N. Command but was not a direct signatory.

In their previous summit in 2007, the Koreas declared a commitment toward ending the war and vowed to pursue discussions with others. But the efforts faltered and relations between the rivals worsened after a conservative government took office in Seoul in February 2008.

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Associated Press writer Hyung-jin Kim contributed to this report.

## **Southwest Airlines sought more time for engine inspections**

**By DAVID KOENIG and CLAUDIA LAUER, Associated Press**

DALLAS (AP) — Southwest Airlines sought more time last year to inspect jet-engine fan blades like the one that snapped off during one of its flights Tuesday in an accident that left a passenger dead.

The airline opposed a recommendation by the engine manufacturer to require ultrasonic inspections of certain fan blades within 12 months. Southwest said it needed more time, and it raised concern over the number of engines it would need to inspect. Other airlines also voiced objections.

It wasn't until after Tuesday's accident that the Federal Aviation Administration announced that it will soon make the inspections mandatory. It is unclear how many planes will be affected by the FAA order. Airlines including Southwest say they have begun inspections anyway.

An engine on a Southwest jet exploded over Pennsylvania on Tuesday, and debris hit the plane. Jennifer Riordan, a 43-year-old bank executive from Albuquerque, New Mexico, was sucked partway out of the jet when a window shattered. She died later from her injuries. The Boeing 737, bound from New York to Dallas with 149 people aboard, made an emergency landing in Philadelphia.

Investigators said the blade that broke off mid-flight and triggered the fatal accident was showing signs of metal fatigue — microscopic cracks from repeated use.

The National Transportation Safety Board also blamed metal fatigue for the engine failure on a Southwest plane in Florida in 2016 that was able to land safely.

That incident led manufacturer CFM International, a joint venture of General Electric Co. and France's Safran SA, to recommend in June 2017 that airlines conduct ultrasonic inspections of fan blades on many Boeing 737s.

In August, the FAA proposed making the recommendation mandatory. The oldest blades would be inspected within six months, while many others would face an 18-month deadline. CFM commented that the longer deadline be shortened to 12 months.

During the public-comment period, which closed in October, Southwest and several other carriers raised objections. Southwest pushed back against CFM's request for a 12-month deadline, and American Airlines asked for even more time — 20 months.

The FAA never issued a final decision. A spokesman said the agency juggles dozens of rules simultane-



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 33 of 43

ously, and the time to complete a final regulation varies based on many factors including complexity of the issue.

On Wednesday, the agency said it would issue a directive in the next two weeks to require the ultrasonic inspections of fan blades on some CFM56-7B engines after they reach a certain number of takeoffs and landings. Blades that fail inspection would need to be replaced.

Southwest announced its own program for similar inspections of its 700-plane fleet over the next month. When asked why the airline resisted the proposal last year, spokeswoman Brandy King said Southwest needed more time to find individual suspect blades within certain engines. She said Southwest had already inspected half of the blades identified in the engine maker's notice before Tuesday's accident.

A Delta Air Lines spokesman said that airline had done all the necessary inspections, but he didn't know how many planes that involved. American Airlines said it has inspected blades on the oldest affected engines, and United Airlines said it has started inspecting its 737s.

While recommendations from airplane and engine manufacturers like CFM are not mandatory — only regulators can force airlines to act — the carriers often follow the recommendations to reduce their liability in case of accidents. Critics said the airlines were slow to act.

"The public should be worried (because) a manufacturer sent out a warning, and Southwest and others didn't do it," said Mary Schiavo, a former inspector general of the Transportation Department, FAA's parent agency. "They didn't get the inspections done, and when the FAA was going to put out (an order) they all objected."

Last year, the agency estimated that an order would cover 220 engines on U.S. airlines, and each Boeing 737 has two CFM engines. Airlines say the number of engines needing blade inspections will be much higher, partly because since last summer more engines have hit the number of flights triggering an inspection.

The FAA estimated the industry's labor costs to comply would be just \$37,400, but that doesn't include the cost of new blades. One repair shop said new blades cost \$50,000 each while overhauled ones are less than \$30,000. Each CFM56 engine has 24 blades.

Tuesday's emergency broke a string of eight straight years without a fatal accident involving a U.S. airliner.

Robert Sumwalt, chairman of the NTSB, said the dangerous kind of engine breakup that occurred Tuesday — called an uncontained failure because pieces were shot out like shrapnel — should not have happened. But he and other aviation experts have cautioned against drawing any broad conclusions yet about the safety of CFM56 engines or Boeing 737 jets.

CFM International says the engines are used on 6,700 planes around the world. Uncontained engine failures are rare — about three or four a year, according to Sumwalt.

It is unknown whether the FAA's original directive would have forced Southwest to quickly inspect the engine that blew up.

Southwest CEO Gary Kelly said the plane was inspected on Sunday and nothing appeared out of order.

AP Airlines Writer David Koenig reported from Dallas.

## Reds fire manager Bryan Price after 3-15 start

By JOE KAY, AP Sports Writer

CINCINNATI (AP) — The Reds' worst start since the Great Depression prompted a quick hook for Bryan Price.

Cincinnati fired its fifth-year manager on Thursday because of a 3-15 start, the first managerial change in the major leagues this season. The Reds hadn't changed managers so early in a season since Tony Perez was fired after 44 games in 1993.

It's the first time since 2002 that a manager has been fired in April, according to ESPN. Four managers were fired that April, including Phil Garner after an 0-6 start with the Tigers that matched the quickest hook in major league history.

Price managed a rebuilding effort that relied on rookies more than any other team in the majors during

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 34 of 43

his tenure. The Reds have lost at least 94 games in each of the last three seasons while finishing last in the NL Central.

Although the Reds have been patient with their coaching staff during the rebuild, their worst start since 1931 prompted the change.

"We felt we had to act now, we couldn't afford to wait," general manager Dick Williams said during a conference call. "I know it seems early to some people and it certainly is early in the regular season, but ... we've had a lot of chances to observe this group together and see them get off to the start we'd hoped, and it wasn't there."

Bench coach Jim Riggleman will manage the team on an interim basis, the fourth time in his career he's been promoted during a season. Riggleman also has managed the Padres, Cubs, Mariners and Nationals. He's expected to be a candidate for the full-time job. Williams said the club will pick its next manager later in the season.

Riggleman said his focus will be "to really put an exclamation point on the details of the game." Eight of the Reds' losses have been by two runs or less.

Second-year pitching coach Mack Jenkins also was fired Thursday. Triple-A Louisville manager Pat Kelly will be the bench coach, and Danny Darwin was promoted from Double-A Pensacola to serve as pitching coach.

The move came during an off-day in St. Louis. The Reds are coming off back-to-back 2-0 losses in Milwaukee, the first time they were blanked in consecutive games since 2015.

"We've got to show up for work every day," Williams said. "They've got to have a sense of urgency to win that day. They have to play the game hard and play it smart and play it right. We have to get this team playing that way because we know they have the ability to do that."

Price was given the job of leading the Reds during a massive overhaul. They were 279-387 under Price, who got the job when Dusty Baker was fired after the 2013 season for failing to get beyond the first round of the playoffs.

The Reds suffered significant injuries during spring training that contributed directly to the bad start. Top starter Anthony DeSclafani is sidelined indefinitely with a strained oblique — he missed all last season with an elbow injury — and left-hander Brandon Finnegan has been limited to one start by a biceps injury.

The offense also has taken significant hits. Third baseman Eugenio Suarez got a \$66 million, seven-year contract during spring training — Cincinnati's first significant deal during its rebuild — but he broke his right thumb when he was hit by a pitch and is sidelined indefinitely. Right fielder Scott Schebler also is out with a bruised elbow.

Price was given the job of presiding over the team's painful transition from contender to rebuild.

Cincinnati won the division twice during Baker's six-year tenure and went to the playoffs three times, but couldn't get beyond the first round. Baker was fired after a wild-card defeat to Pittsburgh in 2013, and Price was promoted from pitching coach.

The Reds lost 86 games in Price's first season, and the organization decided to begin a massive overhaul that involved trading every star player except Joey Votto and Homer Bailey. They've brought up rookie pitchers before they were ready to fill in while DeSclafani, Finnegan and Bailey were hurt.

Thirty-two Reds players have made their major league debuts in the last three seasons, the most in the majors. In the last four seasons, they've had a rookie start 254 of 504 games. Rookies made a club-record 110 starts in 2015, when the Reds lost 98 games.

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

## **Awww: 10 days old, she makes Senate history in her pink cap**

**By LAURIE KELLMAN, Associated Press Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tiny Maile Pearl made Senate history Thursday without making a sound.

The tightly wrapped 10-day-old baby, brought to the well of the chamber by her mother, Sen. Tammy

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 35 of 43

Duckworth, became the first newborn to appear there, just one day after the Senate approved a new rule permitting it.

"It's about time," the Illinois Democrat and Iraq War veteran told reporters on the way in to vote.

The rule had passed without objection — but there had been plenty of grumbling about babies threatening the Senate's cherished decorum. But when it actually happened, even stern Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell appeared to beam. In fact, he left a Senate vote open to allow Duckworth time to get there with little Maile Pearl Bowsbey.

"Thank you very much," Duckworth said to the Kentucky Republican. The double amputee, in a wheelchair with Maile, pronounced "Miley," in her lap, was on the floor for less than three minutes before they took off.

Like newborns, the Senate can be unpredictable.

The first sign that the two would meet Thursday was a tweet by Duckworth that she might vote on the nomination of Rep. James Bridenstine to run NASA.

"May have to vote today. Maile's outfit is prepped," she tweeted, with a photo of baby clothes. "Made sure she has a jacket so she doesn't violate the Senate floor dress code requiring blazers. Not sure what the policy is on duckling onesies but I think we're ready."

The idea was for Duckworth to vote only if she was needed to break a tie. Vice President Mike Pence arrived for the same reason. In the end, it was unnecessary and Bridenstine was confirmed. Duckworth cast a thumbs-down anyway, before her colleagues descended to coo over the wee baby. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer inquired about the well-being of Maile's sister and wished them a safe trip home.

When Duckworth wheeled around to leave, reporters in the press gallery above got their first glimpse of the baby's face, and a loud "aww" could be heard. The senators on the floor laughed, and Schumer called up to the gallery: "The press is finally interested in something worthwhile."

Senators of both parties had been interested, too, for the past two months. But many of their concerns revolved around whether babies would disrupt "decorum," the relatively civil style of discourse practiced in the Senate over the nation's business. Even a day earlier, they were fairly open about that.

"I'm not going to object to anything like that, not in this day and age," said Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., father of three and grandfather of six. He then noted that a person could stand in the door of the cloakroom, a lounge just off the chamber, and vote. "I've done it," he said. Allowing babies on the Senate floor, he said, "I don't think is necessary."

Sen. Orrin Hatch, the father of six, grandfather of 14 and great-grandfather of 23, said he had "no problem" with such a rules change, but he hoped the parents of newborns would use "discretion" in bringing them. "What if there are 10 babies on the floor of the Senate?" he wondered.

On Thursday, there was only Maile, wearing a little pink cap and getting all the attention without a sound. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., who had done some of the negotiating and behind-the-scenes reassuring of senators, clapped and gave Duckworth a hug when she arrived. With a big smile, Duckworth cast her "no" vote.

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Associated Press Writers Padmananda Rama, Mary Clare Jalonick and Andrew Taylor contributed to this report.

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Follow Kellman on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/APLaurieKellman>

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This story has been corrected to correct pronunciation of Maile.

## Syrian rebels give up Damascus area town to government

By PHILIP ISSA, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — The Syrian government took control of a town northeast of Damascus on Thursday after rebels evacuated to north Syria — the latest in a string of handovers by rebels to the government.

Residents in the town of Dumayr welcomed security forces into their town in a triumphant show for the

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 36 of 43

cameras of the state-affiliated al-Ikhbariya TV station.

Waving the national flag, they lifted al-Ikhbariya TV correspondent Rabieh Dibeh onto their shoulders and chanted their support for President Bashar Assad, after the last of 5,000 rebels and family members boarded buses and left the town.

There have been several handovers by rebels to the government in the capital region following a punishing government offensive against the rebellious eastern Ghouta region earlier this year.

More than 1,500 civilians were killed in the offensive, which culminated in allegations of a chemical weapons attack on the town of Douma, with reports that more than 40 people were killed.

Rebels surrendered towns across eastern Ghouta as the offensive drove on, giving up control of an area once home to an estimated 400,000 people in a matter of weeks.

The Army of Islam rebels in Dumayr followed their companions belonging to the same group from Douma to Jarablus, a town in north Syria shared between Turkish and Syrian opposition control.

The Syrian government has been following a proven strategy of besieging opposition areas until residents and fighters, desperate for food, medical treatment and relief, give up and accept government control.

The bruising offensives have displaced hundreds of thousands of residents, and tens of thousands more choose to leave to north Syria than to submit again to the government and be conscripted by the military.

U.N. officials and human rights groups say the strategy and the evacuation arrangements amount to forced population displacement, a war crime.

A similar arrangement to have Islamic State militants evacuate their pocket inside the capital appeared to collapse on Thursday.

Government forces began bombarding the Hajr al-Aswad neighborhood and Yarmouk Palestinian camp inside Damascus only hours after reports surfaced that IS militants would be given two days to leave.

Local opposition activist Sami Dreid, in the nearby Yalda neighborhood, said the militants were expected to relocate to IS-held territory in the east Syrian desert. He said it was not clear why the deal appeared to have fallen through.

Dumayr, in the Qalamoun mountains, is a short drive away from Douma, the site of the alleged April 7 chemical weapons attack.

Inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were still not able to reach the scene on Thursday, 12 days after the suspected attack.

The attack prompted the United States, France and Britain to strike at suspected Syrian chemical weapons facilities. The three countries said they held the Syrian government and its ally Russia responsible.

Damascus and Moscow denied responsibility.

A U.N. security team touring the sites of the alleged attack on Tuesday was shot at and subjected to a blast, said OPCW Director-General Ahmet Uzumcu.

The security team was supposed to give the all-clear for OPCW inspectors to follow, but their visit was put on hold pending the security situation, Uzumcu added.

A U.N. spokesman said discussions were taking place in the Syrian capital to arrange security to allow OPCW inspectors to visit Douma.

Stephane Dujarric said the U.N. did not want to "telegraph" when a U.N. security team would return, "due to the volatility" of the situation on the ground.

State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said U.S. officials "have credible information that indicates that Russian officials are working with the Syrian regime to deny and to delay these inspectors from gaining access to Duma."

"We believe it is an effort to conduct their own staged investigations," Nauert told reporters in Washington. "Russian officials have worked with the Syrian regime, we believe, to sanitize the locations of those suspected attacks and remove incriminating evidence of chemical weapons use."

Journalists visited Douma a day before the U.N. security team. They were not exposed to any weapons fire.

Associated Press journalists spoke to witnesses who said they were overwhelmed by the smell of chlorine



and experienced fainting during an April 7 assault.

First responders released videos purporting to show fatalities from the attack — lifeless bodies collapsed in an apartment, with foam around their mouths, a sign of asphyxiation.

The Army of Islam, which controlled Douma at the time of the attack, surrendered the town to the government days later.

Also on Thursday, neighboring Iraq launched airstrikes inside Syria targeting militants from the Islamic State group.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's office said Iraqi fighter jets launched "lethal" airstrikes against the extremists in an area along the Syria-Iraq border. The statement said the militants posed a threat to Iraq, without providing further details.

Syrian and Iraqi forces have driven IS from nearly all the territory the group once held, but the extremists have maintained a presence in the remote desert areas along the border. Iraq has carried out airstrikes in Syria against the group in the past.

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Associated Press writers Albert Aji in Damascus, Syria, Edith Lederer at the United Nations, and Sinan Salaheddin in Baghdad contributed to this report.

## Women take fall in Nobel scandal for man's alleged misdeeds

By **DAVID KEYTON and JAN M. OLSEN, Associated Press**

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Thousands of protesters called Thursday for the resignation of the secretive board that awards the Nobel Prize in Literature after a sex-abuse scandal linked to the prestigious Swedish academy forced the ouster of its first-ever woman head and tarnished the reputation of the coveted prize.

The ugly internal feud has already reached the top levels of public life in the Scandinavian nation known for its promotion of gender equality, with the prime minister, the king and the Nobel board weighing in.

On Thursday evening, thousands of protesters gathered on Stockholm's picturesque Stortorget Square outside the headquarters of the Swedish Academy, which has awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature since 1901, to demand all of its remaining members resign. Parallel demonstrations were planned in Goteborg, Helsingborg, Eskilstuna, Vasteras, and Borgholm.

The national protests have grown out of what began as Sweden's own #MeToo moment in November when the country saw thousands of sexual misconduct allegations surfacing from all walks of life. It hit the academy when 18 women came forward with accusations against Jean-Claude Arnault, a major cultural figure in Sweden who is married to Katarina Frostenson, a poet who is a member of the academy.

Police are investigating the allegations, which Arnault denies, but the case has exposed bitter divisions within the academy, whose members are appointed for life, and given rise to accusations of patriarchal leanings among some members.

The turmoil began when some of the committee's 18 members pushed for the removal of Frostenson after the allegations were levied against her husband, who runs a cultural club that has received money from the academy. In addition to sexual misconduct, Arnault is also accused of leaking Nobel winners' names for years.

After a closed-door vote failed to oust her, three male members behind the push — Klas Ostergren, Kjell Espmark and Peter Englund — themselves resigned. That prompted Horace Engdahl, a committee member who has supported Arnault, to label them a "clique of sore losers" and criticize the three for airing their case in public.

He also lashed out at Sara Danius, the first woman to lead the Swedish Academy, who was forced out last week amid criticism from male members of her handling of the scandal. Danius, a Swedish literature historian at Stockholm University, had cut the academy's ties with Arnault and hired investigators to examine its relationship to the club he ran with Frostenson. Their report is expected soon.

Supporters of Danius have described her as progressive leader who pushed reforms that riled the old guard.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 38 of 43

At Thursday's protests, many participants wore pussy-bow blouses like the ones worn by Danius. The high-necked blouses with a loosely tied bow at the neck have become a rallying symbol for those critical of the Swedish Academy's handling of the case.

Birgitta Hojlund, 70, who traveled several hours to attend the protest, said despite Sweden's progressive image, women still face inequality. "There are still differences, in wages and in honors and in professions," she said, calling for the Swedish academy to be "recreated from the bottom, and balance male and female."

"They're pushing women away, saying that sexism is OK, in this academy," agreed Torun Carrfors, a 31-year-old nurse. "They should leave, and we need to have new ones."

Last week, Frostenson announced she too was leaving the academy. On Thursday, a sixth member, writer Lotta Lotass, said she, was also planning to step down, citing backlash from tradition-minded male members of the board who questioned her credentials, the Dagens Nyheter newspaper reported.

The departures of the highly respected women have given rise to a flurry of protests on social media.

"Feminist battles happen every day," wrote Swedish Culture Minister Alice Bah Kuhnke, who posted a picture of herself last week wearing a white pussy-bow blouse like those worn by Danius. Other Swedish women also posted pictures of themselves in the blouses as anger grew over Danius' departure, including Social Affairs Minister Annika Strandhall, actress Helena Bergstrom and fashion designer Camilla Thulin.

The public controversy has also given rise to concerns about the Swedish Academy losing its credibility and tarnishing the reputation of the Nobel Prize.

"The Swedish Academy is an internationally acclaimed organization and it should stand for all the right values and at the present moment I don't think they do," said Carsten Greiff, a 32-year-old business developer, attending Thursday's protest. "It's dragging the international view of the Nobel Prize in the dirt."

King Carl XVI Gustaf said the resignations "risked seriously damaging" the academy, while Prime Minister Stefan Lofven emphasized the academy's importance to Sweden and urged its members to "restore faith and respect."

"Trust in the Swedish Academy has been seriously damaged," the Nobel Foundation said of the situation, while demanding the group take action to restore that trust.

Despite the resignations the academy, founded by King Gustav III in 1786, does not currently have a mechanism for its lifetime-appointed board members to step down.

The king — the academy's patron, who must approve its secret votes— said Wednesday in the wake of the recent events he wants to change rules to allow resignations.

"The number of members who do not actively participate in the academy's work is now so large that it is seriously risking the academy's ability to fulfill its important tasks," he said.

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Olsen reported from Copenhagen, Denmark. Associated Press writer David Rising in Berlin contributed to this report.

## After Syria missile strikes, US stuck in holding pattern

By **ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The drama of U.S. and allied missile strikes on Syria has obscured a sobering fact: The U.S.-led campaign to eliminate the Islamic State from Syria has stalled.

The U.S. has 2,000 troops in Syria assisting local Arab and Kurdish fighters against IS, even as President Donald Trump resists deeper U.S. involvement and is eager to withdraw completely in coming months. Trump wants "other people" to deal with Syria, whose civil war has spawned the greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II in terms of refugees.

It's unclear whether Trump will go ahead with a total U.S. withdrawal while IS retains even a small presence in Syria.

Since January, when Trump asserted in his State of the Union address that "very close to 100 percent" of IS territory in Syria and Iraq had been liberated, progress toward extinguishing the extremists' caliphate, or self-proclaimed state, has ground to a halt and shows no sign of restarting. U.S. warplanes continue to

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 39 of 43

periodically bomb remaining pockets of IS in eastern Syria, but ground operations by U.S. partner forces have slowed.

"We've halted forward progress and are essentially attempting to avoid losing territory we've gained to date," said Jennifer Cafarella, an analyst at the Institute for the Study of War. She sees two potential solutions: send additional U.S. combat power to eastern Syria to take on IS more directly, or resolve a diplomatic dispute with Turkey that has largely sidelined the main U.S. military partner in Syria, the Syrian Democratic Forces.

Now that Trump has upped the ante by attacking Syria directly for the second time in just over a year, Cafarella said in an interview this week, it is possible that Syria and its two main international supporters — Russia and Iran — will retaliate militarily against American forces and their Kurdish and Arab partners in eastern Syria "in an attempt to compel an American withdrawal by raising the cost of continued American involvement."

The U.S. began bombing IS in Syria in September 2014 and deployed an initial contingent of 50 special operations troops in the country the following year. The anti-IS campaign gained momentum in 2016 and made its biggest gains during Trump's first year in office.

A spokesman for the U.S.-led military coalition against IS refused this week to say how many IS fighters remain. Col. Ryan Dillon said they are holed up mainly in two places in eastern Syria. He said they are in and around the town of Hajin on the Euphrates River north of Bukamal and in Dashisha near the city of Deir el-Zour. They are "contained" in these areas, he asserted, suggesting they are not in immediate danger of being ousted.

Of concern, Dillon said, are indications that IS is stepping up successful attacks against pro-government fighters elsewhere in Syria.

The Trump administration has been saying in recent months that 98 percent of IS territory has been liberated, suggesting the campaign was close to final victory, although on April 3 the Army general overseeing the campaign, Joseph Votel, put it differently, saying "well over 90 percent" of the caliphate had been retaken.

"The situation continues to become more and more complex," Votel said, alluding in part to the effects of a Turkish incursion into the town of Afrin in northwestern Syria.

The Afrin operation was part of a Turkish plan to drive the main Syrian Kurdish militia, known as the YPG, away from the Turkish border area. Turkey considers the YPG a threat to its national security and an extension of Kurdish insurgents inside Turkey. But the YPG also is America's main partner in Syria; it forms the backbone of the Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF. Turkey's advance on Afrin prompted the SDF to shift from fighting IS to confronting Turkey in Afrin.

The result: "We are no longer in an offensive effort on the ground against them (Islamic State)," Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters March 27.

Even so, eliminating IS in Syria remains the goal, he said after Trump announced the missile strikes to punish the Syrian government for its alleged chemical weapons use.

The barrage of 105 missiles launched by the United States, Britain and France last week to destroy elements of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal was designed to deter President Bashar Assad from repeating his alleged use of chlorine gas and perhaps nerve gas on civilians in a Damascus suburb. It was unrelated to the IS problem, except in the sense that it highlighted the jumble of actors involved and the absence of a broad U.S. strategy.

Sen. John McCain, one of the Congress' most vocal advocates for a fuller U.S. role in Syria, praised Trump for the missile strikes. But he also said the president needs to look beyond defeating IS and stopping further chemical weapons use by Assad to tackle the bigger challenge of regional conflict.

"Airstrikes disconnected from a broader strategy may be necessary, but they alone will not achieve U.S. objectives in the Middle East," he said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 40 of 43

## **It's (another) boy! Michigan family with 13 sons gets No. 14**

ROCKFORD, Mich. (AP) — There will be no shortage of hand-me-downs for this Michigan kid. The Grand Rapids Press reports that Kateri and Jay Schwandt welcomed the birth of their 14th son on Wednesday, five days before he was due. They have no daughters.

WOOD-TV reports that the boy weighs 8 pounds, 4 ounces (about 3.7 kilograms) and is 21 inches (53 centimeters) long. His name wasn't immediately announced.

As with their last few children, the couple from Rockford, north of Grand Rapids, didn't want to know the baby's sex ahead of time. Jay Schwandt said earlier this year that he would have loved to have a girl, but didn't think would be in the cards. He was right.

Kateri Schwandt has said she's used to large families, as one of 14 children herself.

The couple's oldest son is in his 20s.

## **EPA head showed penchant for travel, drivers even before DC**

**By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and SEAN MURPHY, Associated Press**

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Scott Pruitt's penchant for travel and concerns about security were notable even before he became head of the Environmental Protection Agency, according to newly obtained records that show that as Oklahoma's attorney general he frequently traveled out-of-state for appearances before conservative groups and used an office investigator as a driver.

As Oklahoma's top prosecutor from 2011 to 2016, Pruitt was raising his profile nationally as a conservative in favor of rolling back regulation and federal authority.

Records obtained by The Associated Press show Pruitt traveled extensively as Oklahoma's attorney general, taking 18 out-of-state trips in 2015 and 2016, for example, including 11 to Washington, D.C. Although some travel expenses were reimbursed by conservative think tanks where Pruitt spoke, records show no sign of reimbursement for several trips involving appearances before them.

Immediately after taking office as attorney general, Pruitt started using a full-time driver who chauffeured him in a large black SUV from his home in Tulsa to the office in Oklahoma City, about 90 miles (145 kilometers) away.

Pruitt's daily calendars show the driver — variously shown on the records as "driver" or "agent" — was often an office investigator, a licensed law enforcement officer who typically investigates crimes for the agency.

"It appears he created his own security detail," said Gary Jones, Oklahoma's state auditor and a fellow Republican.

As EPA administrator, Pruitt has been under intense scrutiny since it was first revealed last month that he had stayed last year in a bargain-priced Capitol Hill condo tied to a fossil-fuels lobbyist. Multiple investigations have been launched by government watchdogs and congressional committees looking into luxury travel expenses, outsized security spending and massive raises awarded to political appointees.

Lincoln Ferguson, a former spokesman for the attorney general who now serves as a senior adviser to him at the EPA, said if Pruitt's out-of-state travel was strictly for political purposes, it would have been paid for by campaign funds. But travel records show the trips were arranged through a state-contracted travel agency, and few show any reimbursement was made.

In Oklahoma, Pruitt routinely made the three-hour commute from his home in Tulsa to the state Capitol in Oklahoma City during the working day, according to the calendars.

The entry for Dec. 7, 2015, for example, shows the entry: "8:15 to 9:45, depart Tulsa for OKC" and "3:30-5, depart OKC for Tulsa."

That was despite Pruitt expanding his office's Tulsa branch during his time. The AP reported in December 2016 that the move to bigger, pricier offices in Tulsa were part of a 40 percent increase in his office's expenses as attorney general. Pruitt also added nearly 60 employees to the attorney general's office.

By contrast, Pruitt's predecessor, Democrat Drew Edmondson, who held the attorney general post for 16 years, said he typically used a four-door sedan and drove himself to events.



# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 41 of 43

Ferguson, the senior adviser to Pruitt, said "there was no wasted time" on Pruitt's commutes between Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

"He was working, reviewing documents, on the phone," Ferguson said.

Overall spending on travel by Pruitt's office averaged about \$270,000 a year in his last four years as Oklahoma's attorney general, up 26 percent from his predecessor's final year in office. The figures do not include a total for Pruitt's trips alone. The attorney general's office spent \$201,000 on travel during his predecessor's last year in the office.

The calendars are heavily redacted and entire days are blacked out.

But the records do show Pruitt frequently traveled to Washington to speak to groups including the Federalist Society; the Club for Growth, a free-enterprise advocacy group; and an anti-abortion rally. He also made similar appearances elsewhere, such as one before the small-government FreedomWorks group in Cleveland on "Battling the Regulatory State."

"If it's not state-related, then the state should not be responsible for" the cost, said Jones, the state auditor. "You can't use any public assets for personal or political reasons."

Records show many of the trips occurred during the workweek, when Pruitt was drawing a state salary of \$132,000. Oklahoma broadly bans first-class tickets for state employees. The travel records show only one first-class flight for Pruitt, with a scrawled note on it showing Pruitt's campaign paid for it.

Edmondson, who is now running for governor, said his travel expenses as attorney general typically covered national and regional conventions of attorneys general.

"I think you'll find that his out-of-state travel would far exceed any other attorney general" in Oklahoma, said former Gov. David Walters, a Democrat, who recalled Pruitt speaking before local clubs on topics such as the Obama administration, rather than crime or consumer fraud in Oklahoma.

Conservative groups hosting Pruitt appeared to reimburse most of Pruitt's flights and some other direct state travel expenses after 2015, and some beforehand.

But on one trip in January 2016, Pruitt billed taxpayers more than \$1,000 for a trip to Washington in which he held separate meetings with executives of three conservative think tanks: the APP Foundation, The Federalist Society and Club for Growth. There was no record of reimbursement for that trip. Three weeks later, Pruitt spent the weekend in California for a dinner and a speech to The Federalist Society, which reimbursed the state for his travel.

## Asian shares fall back on trade worries, tech outlook

By **YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Shares are lower in Asia after a major supplier to Apple forecast continued weak demand for mobile devices. A warning by the head of the IMF over the potential for trade tensions to harm global growth also weighed on sentiment.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 edged 0.1 percent lower to 22,183.05, shedding early gains. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.3 percent to 2,478.38 while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index fell 0.4 percent to 30,579.54. The Shanghai Composite Index slumped 1.2 percent to 3,080.01. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 retreated 0.2 percent to 5,870.10. Stocks in Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia also declined.

APPLE SUPPLIERS: Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. plunged 5.5 percent in Taiwan after the key Asian Apple supplier gave a lower-than-expected revenue forecast for the second quarter of \$7.8 billion-\$7.9 billion. The company predicted demand in the mobile sector would remain weak. Other Apple suppliers also traded lower. South Korea's LG Display Co. lost 0.8 percent and Samsung Electronics Co., tumbled 1.7 percent.

ANALYST'S TAKE: Weak guidance from Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., a major supplier to Apple, brewed concerns of weak iPhone demand, dragging technology shares lower, Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore, said in a commentary. "The corresponding impact would certainly be watched into the Asian session today with the supply chain sprawled across the region."

TRADE: The head of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, is urging countries to work out

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 42 of 43

their differences over trade and take advantage of the healthy world economy to reduce debt before the next downturn comes. Speaking as the IMF and World Bank began their spring meeting, Lagarde warned against complacency: "More needs to be done to sustain this upswing and foster long-term growth," she said.

**WALL STREET:** U.S. stock markets finished lower on Thursday, ending a three-day winning streak for the market as technology and consumer products companies went sour. The S&P 500 index fell 0.6 percent to 2,693.13. The Dow Jones industrial average slid 0.3 percent to 24,664.89. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.8 percent to 7,238.06. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks gave up 0.6 percent to 1,573.82.

**OIL:** Benchmark U.S. crude lost 1 cent to \$68.32 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract lost 14 cents to finish at \$68.33 per barrel on Thursday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 2 cents to \$73.80 per barrel in London. On Thursday, it rose 30 cents to close at \$73.78 per barrel in London.

**CURRENCIES:** The dollar rose to 107.65 yen from 107.38 yen. The euro fell to \$1.2340 from \$1.2345.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, April 20, the 110th day of 2018. There are 255 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 20, 1898, the United States moved closer to war with Spain as President William McKinley signed a congressional resolution passed the day before recognizing Cuban independence and authorizing U.S. military intervention to achieve that goal.

On this date:

In 1792, France declared war on Austria, marking the start of the French Revolutionary Wars.

In 1889, Adolf Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria.

In 1914, the Ludlow Massacre took place when the Colorado National Guard opened fire on a tent colony of striking miners; about 20 (accounts vary) strikers, women and children died.

In 1938, "Olympia," Leni Riefenstahl's documentary about the 1936 Berlin Olympic games, was first shown in Nazi Germany.

In 1948, United Auto Workers president Walter P. Reuther was shot and seriously wounded at his home in Detroit.

In 1968, Pierre Elliott Trudeau was sworn in as prime minister of Canada.

In 1972, Apollo 16's lunar module, carrying astronauts John W. Young and Charles M. Duke Jr., landed on the moon.

In 1977, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Wooley v. Maynard*, ruled 6-3 that car owners could refuse to display state mottoes on license plates, such as New Hampshire's "Live Free or Die."

In 1978, a Korean Air Lines Boeing 707 crash-landed in northwestern Russia after being fired on by a Soviet interceptor after entering Soviet airspace; two passengers were killed.

In 1988, gunmen who had hijacked a Kuwait Airways jumbo jet were allowed safe passage out of Algeria under an agreement that freed the remaining 31 hostages and ended a 15-day siege in which two passengers were slain.

In 1999, the Columbine High School massacre took place in Colorado as two students shot and killed 12 classmates and one teacher before taking their own lives.

In 2010, an explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform, leased by BP, killed 11 workers and caused a blow-out that began spewing an estimated 200 million gallons of crude into the Gulf of Mexico. (The well was finally capped nearly three months later.)

Ten years ago: Pope Benedict XVI celebrated his final Mass in the United States before a full house in Yankee Stadium, blessing his enormous U.S. flock and telling Americans to use their freedoms wisely. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice mocked anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr (mook-TAH'-duh ahl

# Groton Daily Independent

Friday, April 20, 2018 ~ Vol. 25 - No. 280 ~ 43 of 43

SAH'-dur) as a coward during a visit to Iraq. Danica Patrick became the first female winner in IndyCar history, capturing the Indy Japan 300.

Five years ago: A magnitude 7 earthquake struck the steep hills of China's southwestern Sichuan province, leaving nearly 200 people dead. On or about this date, movie musical star Deanna Durbin, 91, died near Paris.

One year ago: Arkansas overcame a flurry of court challenges that derailed three other executions, putting to death an inmate for the first time in nearly a dozen years. A 15-year-old Tennessee girl was rescued near a cabin in a remote part of northern California, more than a month after her 50-year-old teacher allegedly kidnapped her and set off a nationwide manhunt. In Paris, a gunman fatally shot a police officer on the Champs-Elysees just days before the French presidential vote; the gunman was killed by police. Cuba Gooding Sr., who sang the 1972 hit "Everybody Plays the Fool," died in the Woodland Hills section of Los Angeles; he was 72.

Today's Birthdays: Retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens is 98. Actor Leslie Phillips is 94. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., is 82. Actor George Takei is 81. Singer Johnny Tillotson is 80. Actor Ryan O'Neal is 77. Bluegrass singer-musician Doyle Lawson (Quicksilver) is 74. Actress Judith O'Dea is 73. Rock musician Craig Frost (Grand Funk; Bob Seger's Silver Bullet Band) is 70. Actor Gregory Itzin (iht-zihn) is 70. Actress Jessica Lange is 69. Actress Veronica Cartwright is 69. Actor Clint Howard is 59. Actor Crispin Glover is 54. Actor Andy Serkis is 54. Olympic silver medal figure skater Rosalynn Sumners is 54. Actor William deVry is 50. Country singer Wade Hayes is 49. Actor Shemar Moore is 48. Actress Carmen Electra is 46. Reggae singer Stephen Marley is 46. Rock musician Marty Crandall is 43. Actor Joey Lawrence is 42. Country musician Clay Cook (Zac Brown Band) is 40. Actor Clayne Crawford is 40. Actor Tim Jo is 34. Actor Carlos Valdes (TV: "The Flash") is 29.

Thought for Today: "History is the autobiography of a madman." — Alexander Herzen, Russian author (1812-1870).