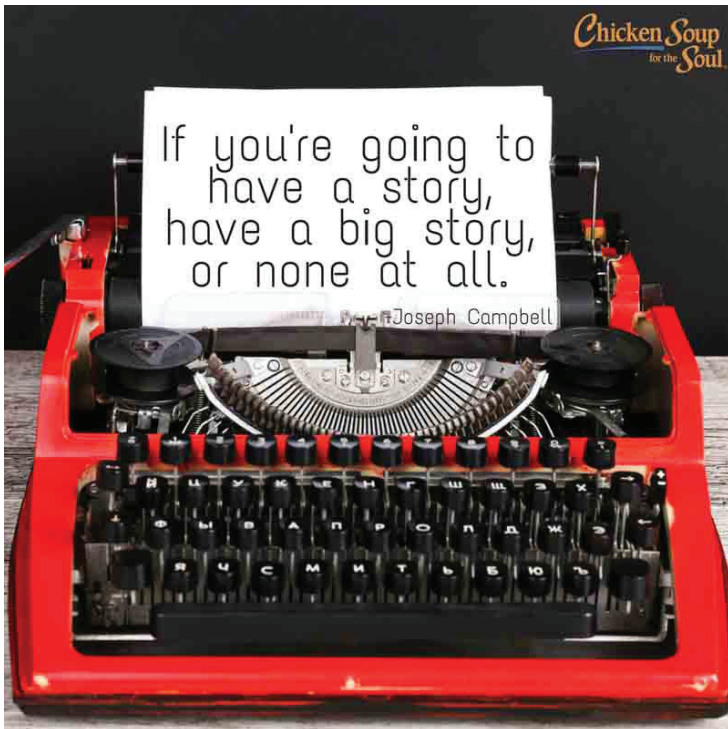


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- 1- Harr Motors Ad
- 1- Help Wanted at Langford's Front Porch
- 1- Carlson Bridal Shower
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 2- Middle School Talent Show
- 6- Drought Monitor
- 7- Today in Weather History
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- 9- National Weather map
- 9- Today's Weather Almanac
- 10- Daily Devotional
- 11- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 12- News from the Associated Press

Saturday, April 21: Track Meet at Ipswich, 10 a.m.
Saturday, April 21: Piano Recital, GHS Gym, 4 p.m.



www.harrmotors.com

605-225-3078 ~ 1-800-658-3463

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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Trinity Smith, Ava Kramer and Carter Barse were the masters of ceremony of the second annual Groton Area Middle School Talent Show entitled, "Our Talent is a Hidden Treasure." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Elliana Weismantel had a piano solo entitled, "Rockin' Robin." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

Middle School Talent Show

Julianna Kosel and Trinity Smith sang a duet entitled, "Dynamite." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



The sixth grade band performed, "Suftrin' U.S.A." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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Caleb Hanten and Andrew Marzahn had a piano duet. They performed, "Phantom of the Opera." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Cadance Tullis sang, "One Day." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

Anna and John Bisbee had a duet entitled, "Popular." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



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The junior high band performed, "Can't Stop the Feeling." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Julianna Kosel had a solo entitled, "Titanium." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Stella Meier had a piano solo entitled, "The Music Box." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



Shaylee Peterson and Sierra Ehresmann had a vocal duet entitled, "Stay." They were accompanied by El-lie Weismantel. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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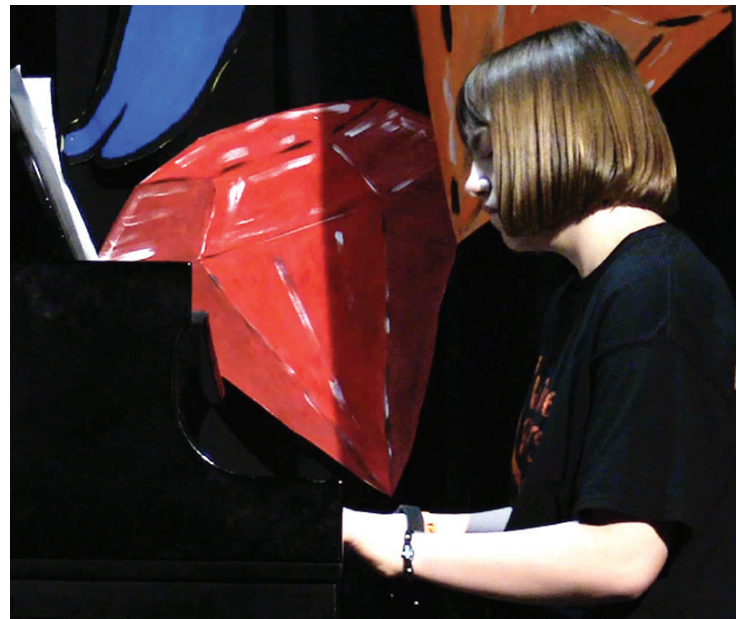
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Anna Bisbee and Kyrie Yeigh had a vocal duet singing, "Part of Your World." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)



The directors of the event were
Desiree Yeigh
Cody Swanson
Austin Fordham

In case you missed the event, you can watch it in the Video Archives at www.397news.com. Members of the GDI have access to the videos.

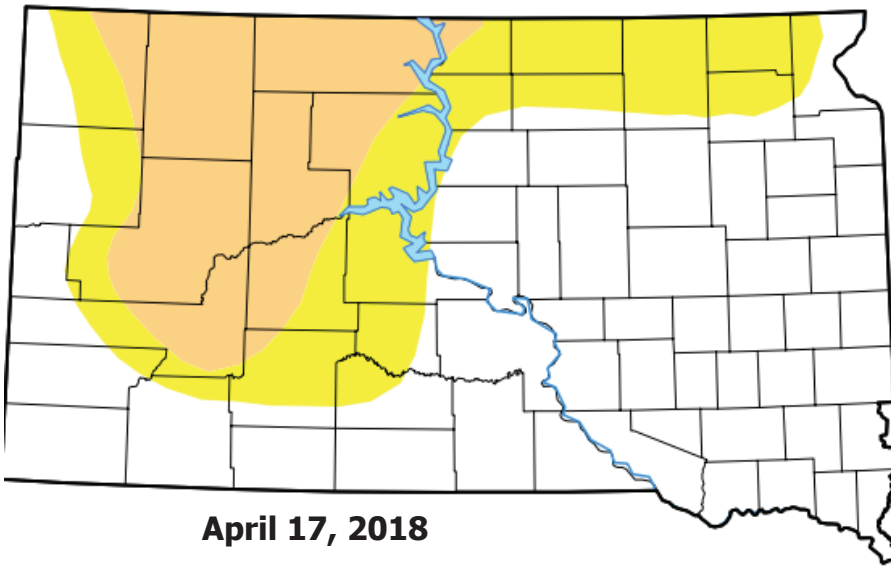


The junior high show choir performed, "Sieze the Day." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

Emily Clark played, "Festival Fanfare." (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

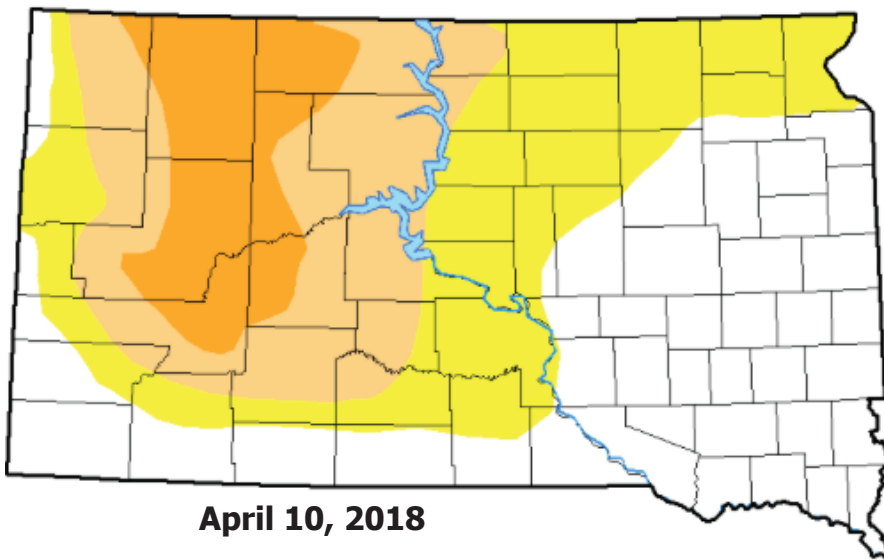


Drought Monitor



April 17, 2018

Heavy snow also blanketed portions of the northern Plains, while dry, windy weather dominated drought-affected areas of the central Plains. The storm contributed to the elimination of severe drought (D2) from the Dakotas, and brought substantial reductions in the coverage of abnormal dryness (D0) and moderate drought (D1). In South Dakota, 2-day April snowfall records were broken on April 13-14 in Mitchell (16.2 inches) and Huron (15.5 inches), while peak gusts were clocked to 60 and 57 mph, respectively. Sioux Falls, South Dakota, received 14.5 inches of snow from April 13-15, and reported a gust to 67 mph on the 14th. Most of Sioux Falls' snow—13.7 inches—fell on the 14th, easily becoming the snowiest April day on record in that location (previously, 10.5 inches on April 28, 1994). Farther south, however, topsoil moisture was rated 72% very short to short on April 15 in Kansas, along with 61% in Colorado. On the same date, winter wheat in Kansas was rated 46% very poor to poor. In Colorado, there was a significant introduction of exceptional drought (D4) into the southwestern corner of the state, where winter snowfall was abysmal and spring and summer runoff prospects are poor.



April 10, 2018

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Today in Weather History

April 21, 2007: Heavy rains of 2 to 2.50 inches caused flash flooding in and around Watertown. Many streets were flooded in town, along with several roads outside of town. A warm front extending across the region was the focus for heavy rain, along with severe weather, during the evening across far north-east South Dakota. Hail up to the size of quarters, along with heavy rains of over 2 inches, caused some flooding mainly in Codington and Hamlin counties.

1885: A tornado struck the town of Denison, Texas in 1883 that destroyed a church. The congregation rebuilt the church. On this date, a second tornado destroyed the newly rebuilt church.

1967 - Severe thunderstorms spawned 48 tornadoes in the Upper Midwest. Hardest hit was northern Illinois where sixteen tornadoes touched down during the afternoon and evening hours causing fifty million dollars damage. On that Friday afternoon tornadoes struck Belvidere IL, and the Chicago suburb of Oak Lawn, killing 57 persons. (David Ludlum)

1980 - The temperature at International Falls MN hit 90 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1987 - Unseasonably warm weather prevailed from the Gulf of Mexico to New England and the Great Lakes Region, with twenty-nine cities reporting record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 82 degrees at Caribou ME, 94 degrees at Mobile AL, 95 degrees at Monroe LA, and 93 degrees at New Orleans LA, were records for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - After having had just twelve rainouts in the previous twenty-six years at Dodger Stadium, a third day of heavy rain in southern California rained out a double-header at Dodger Stadium which had been scheduled due to rainouts the previous two days. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)








1989 - The temperature at Las Animas, CO, soared to 100 degrees to establish a state record for April. Twenty-two cities in the central and southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Eight cities equalled or exceeded previous April records. (The Weather Channel) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail in Oklahoma, and also caused some flash flooding in the state. Thunderstorms over the Southern High Plains produced golf ball size hail at Roswell NM and El Paso TX. Easterly winds and temperatures near zero produced wind chill readings as cold as 50 degrees below zero for the spring festival (Piuraagiaqta) outdoor events at Barrow AK. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2007 - The South Plains and Panhandle of West Texas were hit by an outbreak of severe thunderstorms. Between the hours of 5 and 6 pm, several thunderstorms developed across the western South Plains. Around 7 pm, a supercell produced a tornado which touched down around Fieldton (southwest of Olton) and then moved just south and east of Olton, doing damage to several structures and equipment. The thunderstorm continued to move northeast across northeast Lamb, northwest Hale, southeast Castro and southwest Swisher Counties, producing a long-lived tornado (along with hail up to the size of tennis balls). By 7:45 pm, the storm approached the town of Tulia in Swisher County. A tornado touchdown was reported in the town, causing major damage. The tornadic thunderstorm continued to move northeast across Swisher County over open country through about 8:30 pm. (NWS Lubbock, TX)





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Sat Apr 21	Sun Apr 22	Mon Apr 23	Tue Apr 24	Wed Apr 25	Thu Apr 26	Fri Apr 27
						
58°F 35°F	63°F 40°F	69°F 42°F	54°F 32°F	61°F 39°F	56°F 34°F	60°F 44°F
S 11 MPH	S 13 MPH	S 7 MPH	NNE 19 MPH Precip 50%	WSW 11 MPH	NW 17 MPH	NW 10 MPH

Weekend Forecast

for central and northeastern SD and west central MN

Today	Tonight	Sunday
		
Highs: 49 to 59, coolest in southern SD	Lows: 33 to 37	Highs: 58 to 63
 National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD	www.weather.gov/abr	Graphic created 4/21/2018 3:51 AM

Published on: 04/21/2018 at 3:53AM

Clouds will keep temperatures below normal today, but we'll see plenty of sunshine on Sunday with warmer conditions.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 56.2 F at 1:44 PM

Low Outside Temp: 29.2 F at 3:27 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 19.0 Mph at 2:35 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 97° in 1980

Record Low: 16° in 1936

Average High: 60°F

Average Low: 34°F

Average Precip in April: 1.11

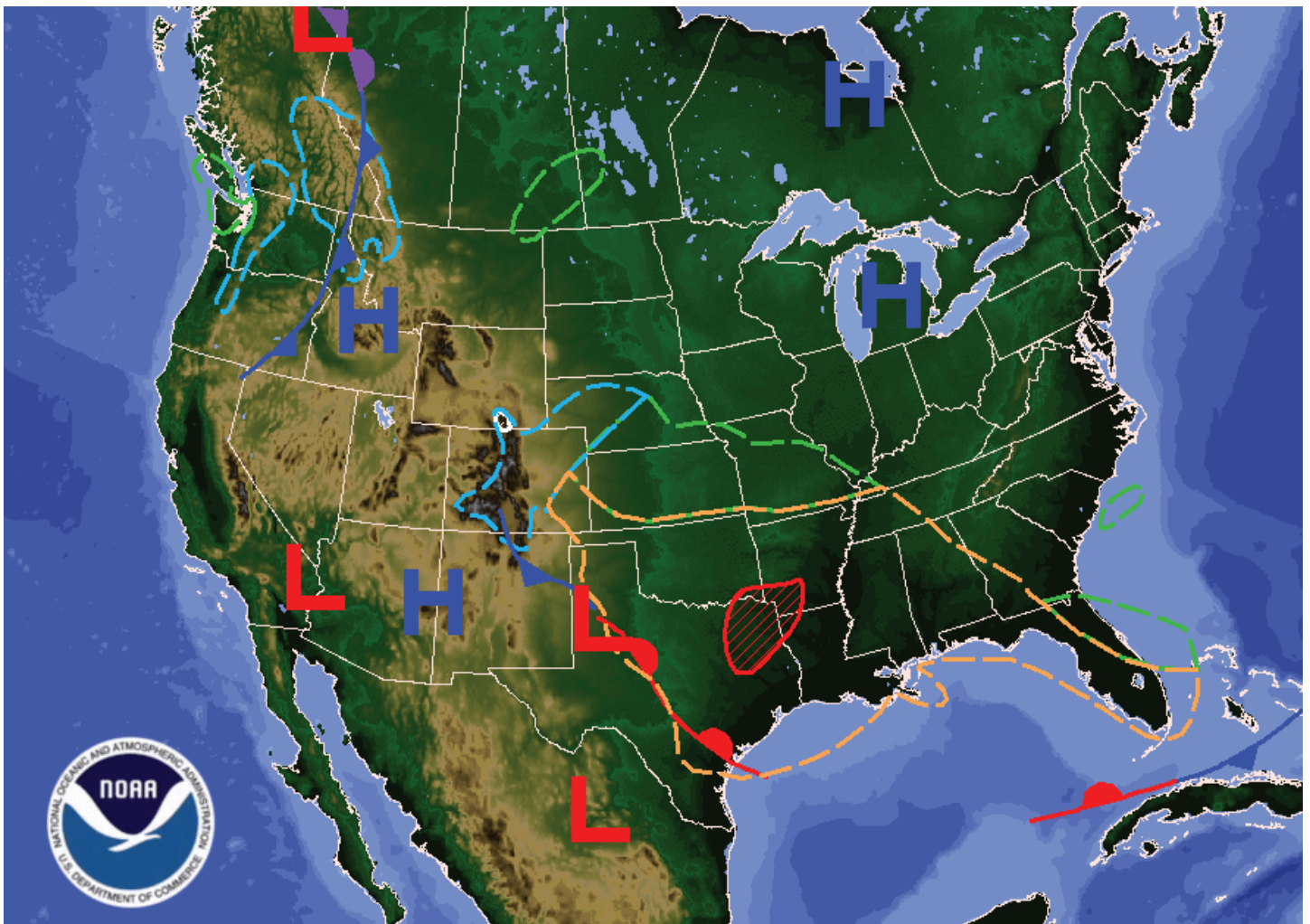
Precip to date in April: 0.61

Average Precip to date: 3.29

Precip Year to Date: 2.68

Sunset Tonight: 8:27 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:36 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Apr 21, 2018, issued 4:42 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Tate with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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WHO IS THE GREATEST?

Alexander was the son of a king and tutored by Aristotle, known as one of the world's most remarkable philosophers. Because of his many accomplishments as a very great military leader, warrior, and king, he came to be known as Alexander the Great.

There is One, however, who is recognized as being even greater! He is acknowledged an admirer as being "very great." The writer of Psalm 104 exclaimed confidently, "O Lord my God, You are very great!"

He is very great because He is the creator of the universe. With great certainty, the Bible's opening statement declares that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." From nothing came everything reflecting His great power, glory, majesty and might.

He is very great because He is the sustainer of the universe. Imagine the power and wisdom of God as He sustains His universe. It functions flawlessly day and night, year after year and century after century. Nothing is ever left undone or incomplete. Season follows season and morning after night and no star or planet has ever veered from where God placed it.

He is very great because He sent His Son to be our Savior. Sin thoroughly damaged His creation and every creature He formed out of the earth to reflect His image. One day this very great Savior will reclaim His creation and restore it to its original condition. He is working out His plan of redemption and reconciliation at this very moment and one day all things will be new, once again!

Prayer: We marvel, Heavenly Father, at Your greatness. Others come and go, but Your greatness, Lord, is forever. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 104:1 Praise the Lord, my soul. Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

News from the Associated Press

Garretson couple marries in record-shattering snowstorm

By DANIELLE FERGUSON, Argus Leader

GARRETSON, S.D. (AP) — At this time last year, Cody Linneweber was wearing shorts on a golf course. So when he and his fiance were looking at dates for their wedding, they figured April 14 would be somewhat safe for a spring-ish wedding at the Meadow Barn at Country Orchards in Harrisburg.

"We were expecting a 50-degree day," he said.

That wasn't the case.

The Argus Leader reports that South Dakota reared its unpredictable nature by dumping a record-shattering 14-inch snowfall, 50 mph winds and 30-degree days across the area that day.

The couple wasn't going to let the snow get in their way of tying the knot.

"It's hard to move a wedding like this when we had this much time and commitment already," Linneweber said. "We would have probably had to wait another year if we wanted to do it here."

Linneweber's new wife, M'Lynn Linneweber, checked the forecast "75 times a day" in the week leading up to their big day, she said.

"I didn't believe it," she said.

On April 12, when the forecast was more solidly set, the couple started playing phone tag with their guests, the caterer, the venue, hairdressers and bridal party. The original expected guest list of over 300 was slashed by about 100. Tables were removed from the set-up and caterers prepared less food.

The snow brought a few more hiccups.

M'Lynn's hairdressers were unable to make it to the venue, the catering van couldn't push through the snow, the singer for the ceremony couldn't make the drive and the business from where the grooms-men were renting their tuxedos was in a tizzy keeping up with a local high school changing its prom date multiple times.

Despite the blustery frenzy, everything worked out.

"Nothing went according to plan, but it all worked out perfectly," M'Lynn, originally from Flandreau, said. "I was so nervous in the beginning, but after I saw him I was calm."

M'Lynn's family is full of people who love doing hair and came together to give her a wedding-worthy up-do. Several of Cody's friends with four-wheel drive made trips to bring food to the venue from the caterer. The venue employees moved snow every 20 minutes.

"They were team players," Cody said. "We were going to do it no matter what. We were going to get married if there were 10 people there."

The guests managed to have plenty of wedding fun, the couple said, and some made snow angels and battled in a few snowball fights.

"Of course (our wedding) had to be something wild," M'Lynn laughed.

The unique circumstances of their wedding followed suit with their headline-making proposal story.

Cody, a member of the Garretson Fire Department, pulled a proposal prank on M'Lynn by setting up a simulator smoke machine in their house and having the department respond with full force.

"She was freaking out," he said. "She thought she started it by leaving a straightener plugged in or something."

He was in full gear when he came out of the house to tell her what had started the fire.

That's when he pulled out a ring, went down on one knee and asked her to marry him.

"It worked out perfectly," he said.

Their wedding will certainly be memorable, but for more than just the snow.

The couple walked into their venue to see an unexpected 165 guests.

"It meant the world to us that so many people showed up," Cody said. "We were ecstatic that many people came."

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The two spent their first day of marriage opening presents in their Garretson home — after a few hours of moving a 5-foot drift of snow all the way down their driveway.

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

Deer farmers raise unusual livestock in Brown County

By VICTORIA LUSK, Aberdeen American News

BATH, S.D. (AP) — This time of year his farm can be pretty boring, Chris Kassube said.

The fences on his Bath-area farm stretch higher than most, 10 feet toward the dull sky. And they hold what most South Dakotans are only used to seeing in the wild: about 60 white-tailed deer.

Kassube began deer farming about three years ago. That was two years after Carl Hanson, who farms deer north of Bath.

Each farm is tucked away and accessible only by traveling down rural gravel roads, muddied by the first signs of spring.

That's when things will pick up on the farms.

"Spring will bring fawns," Kassube said.

And a lot of them at that. Does almost always have twins and sometimes triplets, he said.

The Aberdeen American News reports that while the size of their herds grow, deer farming itself seems to be an increasing trade, especially in northeastern South Dakota, where the practice can come as a surprise to some.

According to the most recent figures from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, there were 231,431 head of deer on 4,042 operations in the country during its 2012 census, with 89 captive deer in South Dakota on just five operations. The 2017 census of agriculture is still being conducted.

Now, however, there are 43 farms that have captive nondomestic permits for either deer or elk throughout the state, said Mendel Miller, assistant state veterinarian with the South Dakota Animal Industry Board. Miller estimates about a quarter of those are in northeastern South Dakota.

In order to obtain a state permit, a farmer has to have the facility that will hold the animals, and is inspected and approved by a state-sanctioned veterinarian. Above all, the facility has to ensure that captive animals are kept in and wild deer are kept out, Miller said.

That is primarily for disease control, but also for inventory purposes.

The reasons for farming deer vary, he said.

"Some just have them because they like them and they don't do too much with them. They just have them to look at. There are some facilities that sell them to other in-state or out-of-state farms, and some that offer hunts," he said.

Both Kassube and Hanson got into deer farming for virtually the same reason: the animal itself.

"I've always just kind of liked deer," Hanson said.

That includes the antlers on bucks.

"The bigger the horns, the more value they have," he said.

The antlers can be sold by the pound to businesses such as Beadles Fur Trading, Hanson said, with a pound netting \$6 to \$7 on average. Bigger antlers, however, can go for substantially more. He estimated that 200-inch antlers could fetch \$500 or \$1,000.

The antlers on his bucks will span 200 inches in two years, "which is really good. Most hunters don't shoot 150-inch deer in the wild," Hanson said.

The figure comes from a series of measurements on the antlers, including the inside spread, length of each side and the main beam.

Kassube waits to sell his antlers until the buck is 3 years old. That's because bigger seems to be best, he said, and each year the horns grow more. He keeps every shed antler in order to compare year by year and show potential buyers the progression.

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The antlers grow faster on farms because the deer don't have the same stress as wild deer. Their diet — a mix of corn, soybeans and minerals — is balanced. And their genetics can be traced.

Kassube recently traded five does for one because her father had "super genetics," he said.

Genetics, stress and feed are the three big factors in deer farming, Hanson said.

Antlers can be used for home decor, like chandeliers, or to make items such as knife handles or coat hangers, Hanson said.

Hanson waits until the bucks shed their antlers naturally, while Kassube cuts them off. That's because the bucks will fight to the death, he said.

Hanson once experienced that first hand. He lost a buck last year at the antlers of another, he said.

Hanson, 46, has worked his whole life on the farm started by his grandfather. He grows soybeans and corn and raises longhorn cattle, along with the deer.

"With farming, you almost have to get into different things," Hanson said. "I got into (deer) as a hobby, but also to make money."

This year could be the first time the deer part of his farm is profitable, he said.

He's grown his herd to 17 head, including four bucks that are almost 2 years old and another that is almost 5. In captivity, white-tailed deer can live six to 14 years, on average, according to animal facts on National Geographic's website.

Hanson will need to fence more pens before he expands his herd, but that's his goal.

Kassube, 43, also started with two bred does. With 60 head, he's at maximum capacity, and that's where he plans to stay. About 20 of those deer are bucks, he said.

Both farmers bought their first deer from farms in Minnesota, where deer farming is more popular, Hanson said.

One of Kassube's favorites is Daisy, a doe triplet born to a deer named Rosie. Then there's Ashley, a doe friendly enough to pet.

She was fed from a Coke bottle that had the name Ashley on it, he explained. That's how Squirt got his name, too.

Kassube doesn't name all of his deer, but he can pick out his favorites by just glancing into one of his pens.

"They all look a little different," he said.

There is one that certainly stands out from the rest. Nyla is an albino fawn.

"The albino would get more money, but she's not going anywhere. She'll stay here her whole life," he said.

Nyla has a one in 10 chance of having an albino fawn herself, Kassube said.

There aren't a whole lot of differences between raising deer and cattle.

"You feed them every day, work them once a year, have babies and sell them," Hanson said.

Kassube does his chores every morning, walking into each of his five pens with a bucket of feed. "It doesn't take me but a half-hour a day," he said.

The farmers are heavily regulated, Kassube said. Every year a state-approved vet inspects the fence and ensures the deer are tagged, which has to happen within a year of birth.

When tagged, the deer are given antibiotics, Hanson said.

Deer breed in November and have babies in May. The farmers almost always are hoping for bucks.

"That's where the money is. That's what you can sell," Hanson said.

Bigger bucks can be sold to hunt farms. Does can be sold as breeders or for venison. Neither has yet sold deer as venison, but Hanson was hoping to sell a few in order to thin his herd. He hadn't yet decided on an exact price, but he figured around \$200 per deer.

Had Kassube not traded some of his does for another, he would have sold some as well.

Per state regulations, a deer would have to be slaughtered at the farm, inspected by a veterinarian before it left, and then taken to the meat locker of the consumer's choice, he said. That's because the state mandates that inventory be kept of all deer.

Selling the animals is just another way that the deer are no different than raising livestock, Kassube said.

"You know they'll go somewhere and that's what happens," he said. "It's just part of the deal, part of

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farming.”

Any live deer that leaves the farm for another has to be permitted by the state, Hanson said.

After three years of raising deer, he has changed his own perspective a little, however.

“You change your standards a bit. I haven’t shot a wild deer for a number of years now,” Kassube said. Simply watching the deer is one of the best parts, both farmers said.

“Just watching them, seeing the babies, and watching their horns grow,” Hanson said.

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

01-15-18-32-45, Mega Ball: 4, Megaplier: 2

(one, fifteen, eighteen, thirty-two, forty-five; Mega Ball: four; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$80 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$142 million

Aberdeen man pleads not guilty in fatal apartment fire

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — An Aberdeen man accused of shooting and killing an Andover woman and setting her apartment on fire has pleaded not guilty.

Thirty-six-year-old Jose Quinones-Rodriguez is charged with first-degree murder, arson and burglary, among other charges. Prosecutors say Quinones-Rodriguez killed 25-year-old Tawny Rockwood between Feb. 8 and 9.

The American News reports that a judge on Friday denied a request to lower the defendant’s \$1 million cash bond. Trial was set for Jan. 2.

Court documents show that Rockwood was shot twice in the back of the head.

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

Logging debris fueled fire at South Dakota lake

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Waste piles from logging operations fueled a fire near a lake in South Dakota that grew to be the third largest wildfire in the Black Hills region’s history, according to a state meteorologist.

The Legion Lake fire originated near piles of unwanted tree tops left behind after logging, the Rapid City Journal reported . The Dec. 11 fire likely would not have grown as large without the debris, according to Darren Clabo, a state fire meteorologist.

“It would’ve been a little 7-acre postage stamp that we wouldn’t be talking about here today,” Clabo said at a conference Thursday.

Logging waste is typically destroyed by controlled burns when snow is on the ground.

The fire began when a tree fell onto a power line in Custer State Park, according to a fire investigator’s report. The blaze grew to more than 54,000 acres (21,800 hectares) over several days despite being spotted and reported quickly.

Dry conditions, lack of snow, low humidity and strong winds also contributed to the fire’s growth, Clabo said.

The largest December fire previously recorded in the Black Hills was only about 20 acres (8 hectares), Clabo said. Most of the area’s wildfires occur in July.

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The fire also burned into Wind Cave National Park and privately owned land. No homes were lost and no one was killed, but some structures were destroyed, including fences, hay bales and pastures.

Some landowners affected by the fire said there's been discussion of potential litigation, though no lawsuits have been filed.

This story has been corrected to show that the largest December fire recorded in the Black Hills was 20 acres, not the largest fire ever.

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

University of South Dakota VP among finalists for president

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Board of Regents says a vice president at the University of South Dakota is among four finalists to become the school's president.

Sheila Gestring is vice president of finance and chief financial officer at the Vermillion college. She and the other three finalists will be on campus next week to meet with faculty, students, staff, alumni and regents.

The other finalists are Kellie McCormack Brown, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Georgia College & State University; Christopher Callahan, dean, vice provost, and professor at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication at Arizona State University; and Philip K. Way, interim president at Slippery Rock University.

South Dakota tribes want control of reservation hospital

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Three South Dakota American Indian tribes say they want to take over management of Sioux San Hospital in Rapid City from the U.S. Indian Health Service.

The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board says in the news release that the Oglala, Cheyenne River and Rosebud Sioux tribes passed resolutions approving the effort and authorizing the board to manage the hospital.

Jerilyn Church, CEO of the board, tells the Rapid City Journal that the recent history of poor care delivered at Sioux San and other Great Plains IHS facilities sparked the move.

The board says funding would continue to come from the federal government because of historical treaty obligations.

The action follows an IHS decision to close the hospital's emergency services and focus instead on outpatient and urgent care.

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

Ellsworth bombers debut new missiles ion Syrian mission

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Air Force says two bombers from the Ellsworth base debuted new cruise missiles during the mission in Syria last week.

The extended range missiles were launched by the B-1B Lancer bombers and struck the Barzeh Research and Development Center near Damascus on April 13.

The Rapid City Journal says the B-1s can carry up to 24 of the new missiles at a time. Each one costs about \$1.4 million.

Three Syrian sites were bombed by the U.S. and its allies after the Syrian government reportedly conducted chemical attacks on its own people.

Joint Staff Director Lt. Gen Kenneth McKenzie says fighter planes provided protection for the bombers by accompanying them up to the missile launch point.

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

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Guilty plea expected in reservation assault

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — A guilty plea is expected from a man accused of sexually assaulting a teenage girl who had been severely injured when she was run over by a vehicle on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

The Rapid City Journal says a federal plea agreement calls for 29-year-old Bishop Cottier to plead guilty to sexual abuse of a minor. Cottier has admitted sexually assaulting the girl at his home in Pine Ridge in April 2014.

The girl had been drinking with friends during a party. Authorities say she was dragged and run over when the friends got in a vehicle to leave. The teen was left behind intoxicated and severely injured.

Court documents say Cottier and a relative found the girl and brought her back to their home where Cottier assaulted her.

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

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.

Jeb Bush to eulogize mother, Barbara, in private service

By JUAN A. LOZANO, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Some 1,500 guests are expected Saturday at a private funeral for Barbara Bush at the nation's largest Episcopal church.

First lady Melania Trump, former President Bill Clinton and his wife, Hillary, and former President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, are among those expected to attend the by-invitation-only service at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Houston. Burial will follow at the Bush Library at Texas A&M University, about 100 miles (161 kilometers) northwest of Houston.

The burial site is in a gated plot surrounded by trees and near a creek where the couple's 3-year-old daughter, Robin, who died of leukemia in 1953, is buried.

In a statement released Friday, the family said Barbara Bush had selected son Jeb Bush, the former Florida governor, to deliver a eulogy along with her longtime friend Susan Baker, wife of former Secretary of State James A. Baker III, and historian Jon Meacham, who wrote a 2015 biography of her husband.

Thousands of people on Friday paid respects to Barbara Bush, wife of the nation's 41st president and mother of the nation's 43rd. Bush died Tuesday at her Houston home. She was 92.

Vive le France: Trump hosts glitzy White House state dinner

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Now it's President Donald Trump's turn to pull off the ultimate charm offensive.

Wined and dined on multiple state visits during his tour of Asia last year, Trump is paying it forward and celebrating nearly 250 years of U.S.-French relations by playing host to President Emmanuel Macron at a glitzy White House state dinner on Tuesday.

Months in the making, it's the first state visit and first big soiree of the Trump era in Washington.

"It sounds like what they're planning will be spectacular," said Jeremy Bernard, who was White House social secretary in 2014, the last time the U.S. feted a French president.

The White House has said little beyond the fact that dinner will be served, sticking to the tradition of trying to maintain an element of surprise for its guests.

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In fact, Macron will break bread twice with Trump.

On Monday, the president and Melania Trump will dine privately with Macron and his wife, Brigitte, at Mount Vernon, the home of America's first president, George Washington, on the banks of the Potomac River in Virginia. The White House said the setting will serve as a reminder of France's "unique status" as America's first ally.

Trump ended his first year without receiving a foreign leader on a state visit, making him the first president in nearly 100 years to do so and heightening the stakes for Tuesday.

Dinner tickets are typically highly sought after by Washington's political and business elite. A few inklings of who's in and who's out already are known: Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, is in, as are House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky was invited, but his office said he is unable to attend.

In a break with tradition, Trump invited no Democratic members of Congress or journalists, said a White House official familiar with the arrangements but not authorized to discuss them publicly. But at least one Democrat will be in the crowd: the office of Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards confirmed his attendance.

Approximately 150 guests will take their seats in the State Dining Room on Tuesday, making for a more intimate affair than those held by President Barack Obama. Obama's guest lists numbered into the hundreds, requiring that the event be held in a tented pavilion erected on the South Lawn because no room in the White House can accommodate that many people.

Most of the responsibility for executing a flawless celebration falls to the first lady and her staff, including such key details as what is served (Trump likes wedge salads and chocolate cake) and poured into glasses (Trump wine?), who sits next to whom, who performs after dinner and what the decor looks like.

One big moment is the first glimpse of the first lady in her gown. Fashion details are kept secret until the first couple steps on to the North Portico on Tuesday night to welcome their dinner guests.

Former first lady Michelle Obama often used state dinners to showcase the talent of up-and-coming designers. Some designers have cited Trump's politics in refusing to dress the current first lady, a former model. Still, a likely choice would be Dior, the French design house whose fashions Mrs. Trump often wears, or Herve Pierre, the French-American who designed her inaugural gown and other looks.

The last time a Republican president hosted his French counterpart was November 2007 when President George W. Bush welcomed the newly divorced Nicolas Sarkozy.

More than 100 guests feasted on lobster bisque, lamb with tomato fondue, green beans and sweet potato casserole, salad and dessert served in the State Dining Room. Among the guests were major league baseball pitcher Tom Glavine, Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, French chef Guy Savoy and several Louisiana politicians.

After dinner, guests strolled down the hall to the East Room to watch performers in the roles of Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, the Frenchman who served on Washington's staff in the Continental Army. Sarkozy toured Mount Vernon the following day.

When Macron's limousine first pulls up the White House driveway on Tuesday morning, Trump, the first lady, White House and administration officials, and hundreds of invited guests will be waiting on the South Lawn. The pomp-filled arrival ceremony is for the man who became the youngest president in French history when he was elected in 2017 at age 39 on his first run for office.

The visit also offers Macron his first Oval Office meeting and a joint White House news conference with Trump. There's also a State Department lunch hosted by Vice President Mike Pence before Macron and his wife arrive for the state dinner.

The Trump-Macron relationship appeared to get off to a bumpy start with a white-knuckler of a handshake when the political novices met for the first time at a NATO summit in Brussels last May. But Macron likely sealed the bond after Trump accepted his invitation to attend the annual Bastille Day military parade in the center of Paris in July. Macron and his wife also took Trump and the first lady on a tour of Napoleon's tomb and whisked them up into the Eiffel Tower for dinner overlooking the City of Light. The experience led Trump to order up a military parade for downtown Washington later this year.

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But the two part company on some significant issues, including the Paris climate accord, which Trump withdrew the U.S. from last year, and the Iran-nuclear deal, another multinational agreement that Trump is itching to pull out of. The president did successfully rally Macron and British Prime Minister Theresa May, with whom Trump has sparred, to mount a joint military operation against Syria in response to an apparent chemical attack this month that killed Syrian civilians. Macron still worries about Trump's desire to remove U.S. troops from Syria.

An art lover who speaks good English, Macron is known to watch what he eats. Yet he told reporters at an agricultural fair in Paris in February that "I drink wine at lunch and dinner."

Discerning his tastes, including likes and dislikes, even allergies, is one of the first things the White House tries to pin down for all guests, said Bernard.

"You're really focused on making sure the guest feels special," he said.

Mrs. Trump's social secretary, Rickie Niceta, came aboard last year after two decades of event planning for a caterer whose clients included the White House, the State Department and several embassies, in addition to working on the past five presidential inaugurations, including Trump's. The first lady, who speaks French, also has experienced hands running the kitchen, pastry shop and florist's lair. All three women helped execute more than a dozen state dinners for Obama.

Trump owns hotels, including one near the White House, and knows about good hospitality.

Bernard recalled that, just as invitations were about to go out for the 2014 dinner for then-French President Francois Hollande, news broke that Hollande and his longtime girlfriend had abruptly split. Mrs. Obama's staff anxiously sought clarity on whether Hollande would bring another date.

He didn't, and Bernard dealt with the awkwardness of the situation by seating Hollande between the two Obamas.

Associated Press writer Sylvie Corbet in Paris and AP News Researcher Randy Herschaft in New York contributed to this report.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

Hamas says man gunned down in Malaysia was important member

By FARES AKRAM, Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group said Saturday that a man who was gunned down in Malaysia was an important member of the organization, raising suspicions that Israel was behind the brazen killing.

Hamas said Palestinian engineer Fadi al-Batsh was a "loyal" member and a "scientist of Palestine's youth scholars." It gave no further details on his scientific accomplishments but said he had made "important contributions" and participated in international forums in the field of energy.

Hamas stopped short of blaming Israel, saying only that he had been "assassinated by the hand of treachery." But relatives of al-Batsh said they believe Israel targeted him.

Malaysian police say the 36-year-old al-Batsh was gunned down early Saturday by two assailants who shot at least eight bullets from a motorbike as he was heading to a mosque for dawn prayers in Kuala Lumpur. It said closed-circuit television showed him targeted by assassins who had waited for him for almost 20 minutes.

Malaysia's deputy prime minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the government was looking into the possibility of the involvement of "foreign agents" in his killing. He told local media that initial investigations showed the assailants were "white men" driving a powerful BMW 1100cc motorbike.

Besides his Hamas affiliation, al-Batsh was a cousin of Khaled al-Batsh, a senior official in the Islamic Jihad militant group, who accused the Israeli Mossad spy agency of the assassination, without providing evidence.

The Israeli government had no comment. But Israel has a long history of suspected targeting of wanted

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Palestinian militants in daring overseas operations around the globe and has been linked to other assassinations as well, though it has never acknowledged them.

Al-Batsh specialized in electrical and electronic engineering and worked at a Malaysian university. He had lived there with his family for the past eight years and was an imam at a local mosque.

He received his Ph.D degree from the University of Malaya in 2015 and was a senior lecturer at the British Malaysian Institute. His official biography said his research interests included power converters, power quality and renewable energy.

However, Israeli media reported that he was also deeply involved in the Hamas drone development project.

Israel and Hamas are bitter foes who have fought three wars since 2008. Tensions have risen in recent weeks with a series of mass protests along the Gaza border in which 32 Palestinians have been shot dead by Israeli troops since late March.

Hamas says the protests are aimed at breaking a crippling border blockade that was imposed by Israel and Egypt after the Islamic militant group overran Gaza in 2007, a year after winning Palestinian parliament elections. It says it also aims to assert the right of refugees to return to their former homes in Israel.

Israel accuses Hamas, which is sworn to Israel's destruction and has carried out dozens of deadly suicide bombings against it, of cynically exploiting Gaza civilians for its political aims by staging the protests and trying to carry out attacks under their cover.

Israel has used lethal force against unarmed protesters, but it says it is only targeting instigators who are trying to damage the border fence with explosives, firebombs and other means. However, the United Nations, the European Union and rights groups have questioned Israel's use of force when soldiers' lives are not in danger and the U.N. and E.U. have called for investigations.

Protests are aiming to culminate in a large border march on May 15, the 70th anniversary of Israel founding. The date is mourned by Palestinians as their "nakba," or catastrophe, when hundreds of thousands were uprooted in the 1948 Mideast war over Israel's creation.

Associated Press writer Eileen Ng in Kuala Lumpur contributed to this report.

Americans told to toss romaine lettuce over E. coli fears

By TERRY TANG, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — U.S. health officials on Friday told consumers to throw away any store-bought romaine lettuce they have in their kitchens and warned restaurants not to serve it amid an E. coli outbreak that has sickened more than 50 people in several states.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expanded its warning about tainted romaine from Arizona, saying information from new illnesses led it to caution against eating any forms of the lettuce that may have come from the city of Yuma. Officials have not found the origin of the contaminated vegetables.

Previously, CDC officials had only warned against chopped romaine by itself or as part of salads and salad mixes. But they are now extending the risk to heads or hearts of romaine lettuce.

People at an Alaska correctional facility recently reported feeling ill after eating from whole heads of romaine lettuce. They were traced to lettuce harvested in the Yuma region, according to the CDC.

So far, the outbreak has infected 53 people in 16 states. At least 31 have been hospitalized, including five with kidney failure. No deaths have been reported.

Symptoms of E. coli infection include diarrhea, severe stomach cramps and vomiting.

The CDC's updated advisory said consumers nationwide should not buy or eat romaine lettuce from a grocery store or restaurant unless they can get confirmation it did not come from Yuma. People also should toss any romaine they already have at home unless it's known it didn't come from the area, the agency said.

Restaurants and retailers were warned not to serve or sell romaine lettuce from Yuma.

Romaine grown in coastal and central California, Florida and central Mexico is not at risk, according to

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the Produce Marketing Association.

The Yuma region, which is roughly 185 miles (298 kilometers) southwest of Phoenix and close to the California border, is referred to as the country's "winter vegetable capital." It is known for its agriculture and often revels in it with events like a lettuce festival.

Steve Alameda, president of the Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association, which represents local growers, said the outbreak has weighed heavily on him and other farmers.

"We want to know what happened," Alameda said. "We can't afford to lose consumer confidence. It's heartbreaking to us. We take this very personally."

Growers in Yuma typically plant romaine lettuce between September and January. During the peak of the harvest season, which runs from mid-November until the beginning of April, the Yuma region supplies most of the romaine sold in the U.S., Alameda said. The outbreak came as the harvest of romaine was already near its end.

While Alameda has not met with anyone from the CDC, he is reviewing his own business. He is going over food safety practices and auditing operations in the farming fields.

This story has been corrected to restore the full name of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

N. Korea, setting stage for talks, halts nuclear, ICBM tests

By KIM TONG-HYUNG and ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea announced that it will suspend nuclear tests and intercontinental ballistic missile launches ahead of its summits with Seoul and Washington, but stopped short of suggesting it has any intention of giving up its hard-won nuclear arsenal.

The announcement, which sets the table for further negotiations when the summits begin, was made by leader Kim Jong Un at a meeting of the North Korean ruling party's Central Committee on Friday. It was reported by the North's state-run media early Saturday.

Kim justified the suspension to his party by saying the situation around North Korea has been rapidly changing "in favor of the Korean revolution" since he announced last year that his country had completed its nuclear forces.

He said North Korea has reached the level where it no longer needs underground testing or test-launching of ICBMs, and added that it would close its nuclear testing facility at Punggye-ri, which was already believed to have been rendered unusable due to tunnel collapses after the North's test of its most powerful bomb to date last year.

The announcement is Kim's opening gambit to set the tone for summit talks with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, set for next Friday, and U.S. President Donald Trump, expected in late May or early June.

Trump almost immediately responded with a tweet, saying, "This is very good news for North Korea and the World" and "big progress!" He added that he's looking forward to his summit with Kim.

South Korea's presidential office also welcomed North Korea's announcement as "meaningful progress" toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Presidential official Yoon Young-chan said in a statement that the North's decision brightens the prospects for successful talks between Seoul, Pyongyang and Washington.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe offered a more guarded reaction.

"What is crucial here ... is how this development is going to lead to the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of nuclear arms, weapons of mass destruction and missiles," he said. "And I will keep a close eye on that."

Pyongyang residents, who have been largely kept in the dark about Kim's plans to meet Trump, gathered at subway stations, where newspapers are posted for the public, or around large screens in city plazas to see the reports.

One resident, 34-year-old Son Kum Chol, said he read the news in the ruling party's newspaper. North

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Koreans are extremely cautious when speaking to the media, but Son told The Associated Press that the news made him feel the "future road will be brighter and prosperous."

Some analysts believe Kim feels he is entering the summit negotiations from a position of strength and is hoping to achieve tacit recognition that his country is now a nuclear power. They believe he wants to engage in talks and make some concessions around the edges that would convince Washington and other countries to ease sanctions on his struggling economy.

In his speech at the party meeting, Kim praised his nuclear policy as "a miraculous victory" achieved in just five years. A resolution passed after his speech also stressed that the country had successfully achieved its goals of obtaining a viable nuclear force and suggested it intends to keep that force.

Using the acronym for North Korea's official name, it said the North would "never use nuclear weapons nor transfer nuclear weapons or nuclear technology under any circumstances unless there are nuclear threats and nuclear provocation against the DPRK."

"This was a smart move by Kim," Vipin Narang, an associate political science professor and nuclear proliferation expert at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said in an email. "Although it largely formalizes previous pledges on the moratoria from last November and March, it still leaves a lot of wiggle room for circumventing the pledges in the future, and nothing in there is irreversible. And nothing in there mentions denuclearization, of any variety."

Narang noted that North Korea has already conducted as many nuclear tests as Pakistan and India — six — and may indeed not need to conduct any more underground testing.

Tossing out another nugget that could be used at the summits, Kim stressed at the party meeting his desire to shift the national focus to improving the country's economy, which has been hit hard by international sanctions and the "maximum pressure" strategy pushed by Trump.

The announcement ends what had been an ominous silence from Pyongyang regarding the stunning diplomatic moves Kim has been making since the beginning of this year, including his summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping last month.

It also gives the best idea yet of what Kim intends to bring with him in his summits with Moon and Trump.

Seoul says Kim has expressed genuine interest in dealing away his nuclear weapons. But North Korea for decades has been pushing a concept of "denuclearization" that bears no resemblance to the American definition, vowing to pursue nuclear development unless Washington removes its troops from the peninsula.

Some important items were also left off the North's resolution — such as midrange missile or space rocket launches — suggesting either that the North isn't willing to go that far or that it wants to wait and see how much it can gain by further concessions once actual talks begin.

Talmadge, the AP's Pyongyang bureau chief, reported from Tokyo.

Romney seeks Utah Republican Party nomination at convention

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST, Associated Press

WEST VALLEY CITY, Utah (AP) — Mitt Romney may have one of the best-known names in national politics, but he's still going to have to face down nearly a dozen Republican contenders in Utah on Saturday in his bid to restart his political career with a U.S. Senate seat.

Romney will face an unpredictable crowd of far-right-leaning delegates at the Utah Republican Party convention. But while a loss would be awkward for the former presidential candidate, it wouldn't end his campaign.

That's because candidates can also win a primary spot in Utah by gathering voter signatures, which Romney has done. Though the law is a source of contention in the party, some high-profile candidates like Utah Gov. Gary Herbert have taken that route to victory despite losing at convention.

Romney will be one of 12 candidates vying for the support of core party members in the race to replace long-serving Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch.

A win on Saturday would let Romney bypass the June primary and likely cruise to Election Day victory

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in deep-red Utah.

The state party delegates elected by their neighbors are gathering at the convention to choose nominees for races ranging from U.S. Senate to state Legislature.

Republican U.S. Reps. Rob Bishop, John Curtis and Chris Stewart are all facing off against challengers and looking to secure the path to re-election. U.S. Rep. Mia Love is unopposed in seeking the nomination, but could face a well-known Democratic opponent in a general election battle in November.

Romney, 71, will ask for the delegates' vote after spending two months on the campaign trail visiting dairy farms, taking selfies with college students and making stump speeches in small towns.

After his failed 2012 presidential campaign, he moved to Utah, where he is also known for his role in the 2002 Winter Olympics and for becoming the first Mormon presidential nominee of a major political party.

He's worked to keep the focus on state issues rather than his history of well-documented feuds with President Donald Trump, whom he called a "con-man" and a phony during the 2016 race. Trump fired back that Romney "choked like a dog" during his own White House run. But the two men have shown fresh signs of burying the hatchet, and Romney has accepted Trump's endorsement.

Romney's competitors are largely political newcomers aside from state Rep. Mike Kennedy, a Republican from Alpine who has served in the Legislature since 2013.

Giuliani adds toughness, star power to legal team for Trump

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP) — For weeks, President Donald Trump had grown increasingly frustrated with the cable news chatter that he couldn't hire a big-name attorney for his legal team.

But the president boasted to a confidant this week that he had struck a deal that he believed would silence those critics: He was hiring "America's F---ing Mayor."

With the addition of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Trump gains a former U.S. attorney, a past presidential candidate and a 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 Russia investigation to a close. Trump has been weighing whether to sit for questioning by Mueller's team, and his lawyers have 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.

The deal was finalized over dinner in the last week at Mar-a-Lago, the president's coastal Florida retreat. On Monday, Giuliani was spotted at a West Palm Beach hotel, gleefully puffing on a cigar but declining to talk to the press.

Giuliani's addition to the legal team fulfills his long-delayed hope for a White House job. After drawing wide praise for his leadership in New York after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, Giuliani ran for president seven years later, only to see his bid quickly falter.

He has known Trump for decades — his bomb-throwing rhetorical style can at times mirror that of the president — and he became an aggressive surrogate for the celebrity businessman from the early days of his insurgent presidential campaign. Giuliani had been widely expected to join Trump's administration, but was passed over for the position of secretary of state, the position he badly wanted, and eventually left without a Cabinet post.

But the president kept in touch with Giuliani, sometimes calling to ask for advice, both on policy and personnel, and frequently asking for the ex-mayor's take on how the stories surrounding the administration were playing in the media.

Trump frequently sought Giuliani's opinion of developments in the special counsel's ongoing probe into possible Russian collusion, according to three people familiar with the conversations but not authorized to publicly discuss private talks. At one point last summer, the president informally floated hiring Giuliani, but did not follow through, according to one person familiar with his thinking.

Trump then moved to formalize the arrangement in recent days, touting Giuliani's tenacity — and raving about his star power with the vulgar variation of Giuliani's "America's Mayor" nickname while talking with

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one person, who not authorized to discuss a private conversation.

In a statement announcing Giuliani's hire, the president expressed his wish that the investigation wrap up soon.

A number of Trump allies have believed that Trump has been ill-served by his current legal team and applauded the addition of the hard-charging Giuliani.

"I for one will sleep much easier knowing that Mayor Giuliani and these other people have joined the team to give the president's team extra power," said Jason Miller, a senior adviser to Trump's 2016 campaign who also served as deputy communications director when Giuliani ran for president in 2008. "I know that Rudy has made it clear that the goal is to try to get this wrapped up here as expeditiously as possible."

The White House has struggled to retain prominent lawyers as Mueller's probe continues to expand, leaving its team feeling overwhelmed and overmatched. One person close to the White House expressed surprise that Giuliani would accept a job under such challenging conditions.

Trump's 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.

Giuliani also previously served as associate attorney general, the Justice Department's No. 3 position, during the Reagan administration.

Cohen's office, home and hotel room were raided last week by the FBI, which is 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 criticism of the Mueller investigation, calling it "an attack on our country."

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.

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.

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writer Chad Day contributed from Washington.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Colvin at <http://twitter.com/@colvinj>

DOJ looks into how AT&T, Verizon handle defecting customers

NEW YORK (AP) — The Justice Department has opened an antitrust investigation into whether AT&T, Verizon and a standards-setting group worked together to stop consumers from easily switching wireless carriers.

The companies confirmed the inquiry in separate statements late Friday in response to a report in The New York Times.

The U.S. government is looking into whether AT&T, Verizon and telecommunications standards organization GSMA worked together to suppress a technology that lets people remotely switch wireless companies without having to insert a new SIM card into their phones.

The Times, citing six anonymous people familiar with the inquiry, reported that the investigation was opened after at least one device maker and one other wireless company filed complaints.

Verizon, which is based in New York, derided the accusations on the issue as "much ado about nothing" in its statement. It framed its efforts as part of attempt to "provide a better experience for the consumer."

Dallas-based AT&T also depicted its activity as part of a push to improve wireless service for consumers and said it had already responded to the government's request for information. The company said it "will continue to work proactively within GSMA, including with those who might disagree with the proposed standards, to move this issue forward."

GSMA and the Justice Department declined to comment.

News of the probe emerge during a trial of the Justice Department's case seeking to block AT&T's its proposed \$85 billion merger with Time Warner to over antitrust concerns. That battle centers mostly on the future of cable TV and digital video streaming.

Verizon and AT&T are the two leading wireless carriers, with a combined market share of about 70 percent.

Leak crackdown talk yields rare Comey, Trump agreement

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — James Comey and President Donald Trump seem to disagree on most everything, but the ex-FBI director's memos show consensus on at least one thing: the need to hunt down leakers.

The two men bonded over the idea of a proposed leak crackdown, even sharing a chuckle over a crude joke involving jailed journalists, according to memos written by Comey and obtained by The Associated Press.

The jocularly over leakers and journalists is striking given the otherwise tense nature of their conversations, which touched on loyalty pledges, Russian prostitutes and open FBI investigations.

The memos kept by Comey show his unease with Trump's requests and his concern that the president was blurring the bright line between politics and law enforcement, including with a request that he end an investigation into former White House national security adviser Michael Flynn.

A sign of the ongoing tension between the two was a Friday night tweet from Trump at his Mar-a-Lago estate in south Florida which appears to be aimed at undermining Special Counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation by suggesting it was prompted by "illegally leaked" memos. Trump tweeted that Comey "illegally leaked classified documents to the press in order to generate a Special Council?"

Trump said that, "Therefore, the Special Council was established based on an illegal act?" adding: "Really, does everybody know what that means?"

Trump was referring to the memos Comey wrote documenting his conversations with Trump before he was fired. Comey asked a friend to release them to the press.

Comey has said he hoped the memos' release would lead to the appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate Russian election meddling and potential coordination with Trump's campaign. The memos, which were obtained this week by the AP, were unclassified, though some portions were blacked out as classified.

Yet Trump and Comey were clearly on the same page about leaks, even if they weren't quite in agreement on whom to hold accountable for them.

Comey recounts an Oval Office conversation from February 2017 in which Trump raises the prospect of jailing journalists who benefit from leaked information. According to the memos, Comey told Trump it would be tricky legally to jail reporters but said he saw value in going after leakers and "putting a head on a pike as a message" by bringing such a case.

Trump shot back that sending that message may involve jailing reporters.

"They spend a couple days in jail, make a new friend, and they are ready to talk," Trump says in one memo. Comey laughed as he walked out of the room, according to the memo.

The Trump administration has loudly complained about leaks, and Trump himself has repeatedly accused Comey of being a leaker. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has said there are several dozen leak investiga-

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tions open, though that aggressiveness is similar to that of the Obama Justice Department, which was frequently criticized by media organizations and free press advocates.

Comey's memos 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 documents cover the early 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 memos 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 distanced himself from a salacious allegation concerning himself and prostitutes in Moscow, according to one memo. Comey says Trump did not say when Putin had made the comment.

In another memo, Comey recounts a private White House dinner in which Trump 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.

The foreign leader's name is redacted in the documents, but two people familiar with the call tell the AP it was Putin. They were not authorized to speak publicly about the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

"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, Comey says, Trump cleared the Oval Office of other officials and encouraged him to drop the investigation into Flynn. Flynn pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI and is now cooperating with Mueller's investigation.

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

Associated Press writers Tom LoBianco, Jonathan Lemire and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

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

Trump lawyer must say why he wants porn star's case delayed

By **BRIAN MELLEY** and **MICHAEL BALSAMO**, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — President Donald Trump's personal lawyer must declare in writing that his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination may be jeopardized if legal proceedings aren't delayed in a lawsuit filed by porn actress Stormy Daniels, a judge said Friday.

U.S. Judge S. James Otero in Los Angeles said there were "gaping holes" in Michael Cohen's request for a delay and it was not enough for his attorney to file a statement on his behalf. He gave Cohen until Wednesday to do so himself.

Daniels says she had an affair with Trump in 2006 and is suing to dissolve a confidentiality agreement

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that prevents her from talking about it. She's also suing Cohen, alleging defamation.

Cohen sought to delay the civil case 90 days after FBI agents raided his New York office and residence, seeking records about the \$130,000 agreement that Daniels signed days before the 2016 presidential election.

Otero, speaking from his experience on the bench and without knowledge of the investigation, said it was "substantially likely" there would be some criminal action.

"This is not your standard case," Otero said. "I would expect something big to follow."

Cohen's lawyer argued that because the criminal investigation overlaps issues in the lawsuit, Cohen's right against self-incrimination "may be adversely impacted if this case proceeds" because he won't be able to respond and defend himself.

Otero said attorney Brent Blakely had not shown a large enough overlap to justify a delay but noted that the defense was in a conundrum because the "breadth and scope of the investigation is a mystery."

Daniels' attorney, Michael Avenatti, said it was a "strategic and purposeful" decision by Cohen not to previously file a declaration. Outside court, Avenatti said it was "clear to me Michael Cohen and the president do not want to publicly state" that Cohen intends to invoke the Fifth Amendment.

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, has offered to return the \$130,000 so she can "set the record straight." She argues the agreement is legally invalid because it was only signed by her and Cohen, not by Trump.

Cohen, who has denied there was ever an affair, said he paid the money out of his pocket using a home equity loan. He has said neither the Trump Organization nor the Trump campaign was a party to the transaction with Daniels and he was not reimbursed for the payment.

Trump answered questions about Daniels for the first time earlier this month and said he had no knowledge of the payment made by Cohen and didn't know where Cohen had gotten the money. The White House has repeatedly said Trump denies the affair.

Cohen's attorneys have accused Daniels of violating the confidentiality clauses more than 20 times and said she could be liable for \$1 million in damages for each violation.

Blakely said the agreement had not stopped Daniels from doing interviews with "60 Minutes" and "The View" and that Avenatti had done 53 television appearances, "54 if you count tonight's show with Bill Maher."

Otero agreed, saying several times that Daniels was "undeterred."

The case took on new significance last week when FBI agents raided Cohen's office, hotel and residence.

The agents were seeking any information on payments made to Daniels and a former Playboy model, Karen McDougal, according to people familiar with the investigation but not authorized to discuss it publicly.

The search warrants also sought bank records, records on Cohen's dealings in the taxi industry and his communications with the Trump campaign, the people said.

A spokesman for Daniels' former lawyer, Keith Davidson, who negotiated the nondisclosure agreement, said Friday that he had been contacted by federal investigators as part of the Cohen investigation.

Davidson provided them with "certain limited electronic information" and "will continue to cooperate to the fullest extent possible under the law," said the spokesman, Dave Wedge.

Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens charged over charity donor list

By JIM SALTER, Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — St. Louis prosecutors on Friday charged Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens with a felony for using a charity donor list for his 2016 political campaign, adding to the woes of the first-term Republican governor who responded by calling it another effort to "smear" him.

The charge of tampering with computer data is in addition to an earlier charge alleging Greitens took and transmitted a nonconsensual photo of a partially nude woman with whom he had an extramarital affair in 2015. The new charge accuses Greitens of disclosing the donor list from The Mission Continues in 2015 without permission from the St. Louis-based charity that Greitens founded.

The Associated Press first reported in October 2016 that Greitens' campaign obtained a list of top donors

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to The Mission Continues and raised nearly \$2 million from donors who were on it.

Greitens has been facing increasing pressure to resign — including from fellow Republicans — since a special House investigative committee's report released April 11 that detailed allegations from the woman with whom he had the affair. She testified that Greitens restrained, slapped, grabbed, shoved and threatened her during a series of sexual encounters that at times left her crying and afraid.

Greitens has denied committing any crimes and vowed to remain in office, calling the investigations into him a "political witch hunt." On Friday, he accused Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner, a Democrat, of wasting "thousands and thousands of taxpayer dollars."

"Her original case is falling apart — so today, she's brought a new one," Greitens said in a statement. "By now, everyone knows what this is: this prosecutor will use any charge she can to smear me."

Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley, a Republican whose office has been investigating The Mission Continues, announced Tuesday that he had found evidence to support a felony charge against Greitens, but said it was up to the St. Louis circuit attorney's office to file charges. That office had to move quickly because the statute of limitations was approaching.

A probable cause statement says Greitens directed a person identified as K.T. to disclose the charity's donor list to a political fundraiser on April 22, 2015. It doesn't identify the fundraiser. The initials match those of Krystal Taylor, an employee of the Greitens Group who had previously worked at The Mission Continues.

The court filing says Greitens and K.T. knew the charity donor list had been taken without the permission of the charity and used without its consent. Federal law generally prohibits charities such as The Mission Continues from becoming involved in political campaigns, and the charity has repeatedly denied granting permission for Greitens — its former CEO — to use the list for political purposes.

House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty, a Democrat, cited the new charge as additional grounds for lawmakers to try to quickly remove Greitens from office.

"One way or another, Eric Greitens' short tenure as Missouri governor is about to end. The only person who doesn't understand that is Eric Greitens," Beatty said. "Since he will not resign, the House of Representatives must immediately begin impeachment proceedings."

Republican House Speaker Todd Richardson, who also has called on Greitens to resign, said Thursday that a special House investigatory committee is moving expeditiously toward a recommendation on whether to impeach Greitens. He said a "substantial" number of House Republicans have already signed a petition calling for a special session to consider impeachment.

Hawley's office has said that its investigation into The Mission Continues began after the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported in February that it had obtained a copy of an email indicating that Taylor had shared the charity donor list in January 2015 with Michael Hafner, who had been working for Greitens' gubernatorial exploratory committee, and Danny Laub, Greitens' first campaign manager. But that incident wasn't cited in the criminal charge, because it was past the three-year statute of limitations.

When the AP first reported about the campaigns' access to the charity donor list in 2015, Greitens initially denied to the AP that he had used the donor list for his campaign. But in April 2017, Greitens agreed to pay a \$100 fine for failing to report that his gubernatorial campaign had, in fact, received the charity's donor list. Greitens' campaign filed amended finance reports referring to the list as an in-kind contribution valued at \$600 and received March 1, 2015, from Laub.

Greitens' attorney, Edward L. Dowd Jr., said the new charge "makes no sense at all," noting that it was Greitens who built the charity and raised millions of dollars for it through "an extraordinary act of public service."

"Now he's being accused of stealing an email list from an organization he built? Give me a break," Dowd said in a statement. "Not only did he create this list donor by donor, friend by friend, but the Mission Continues still has the list."

The charge intensifies the feud between Greitens and Gardner. He has called her a "reckless liberal prosecutor" for leading the investigation that resulted in the invasion-of-privacy charge. His attorneys, in court hearings and filings, have painted a picture of an incompetent prosecutor who rather than working

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with police to investigate Greitens hired a private investigator who bungled the investigation, hid evidence and lied to the court.

Gardner's office began investigating after KMOV-TV in St. Louis first reported on the affair on Jan. 10, the day Greitens was giving his annual State of the State speech. The governor acknowledged the affair but denied allegations that he had threatened to release a compromising photo of the woman if she disclosed the relationship. His trial in that case is scheduled to begin May 14.

Greitens, a former Navy SEAL officer and Rhodes Scholar, and Hawley both won election in 2016 as maverick political outsiders. Hawley is now running to unseat Democratic U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, and Democrats have been running TV ads linking Hawley to Greitens. Democrats have criticized Hawley's earlier investigation that found no wrongdoing in Greitens' use of a text message-destroying app, and claimed he stepped up his investigation of the charity only after it became politically beneficial.

In the Legislature, meanwhile, Senate leaders are considering holding off on sending bills to Greitens amid the multiple investigations. Republican Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard and Democratic Minority Floor Leader Gina Walsh have not made a final decision, but Walsh has said she doesn't believe any bills signed by Greitens should become law.

Associated Press reporter David A. Lieb contributed from Jefferson City.

In court, Dems allege conspiracy between Trump camp, Russia

By TOM LOBIANCO and LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Democratic Party sued Donald Trump's presidential campaign, Russia, WikiLeaks and Trump's son and son-in-law Friday, accusing them of an intricate conspiracy to undercut Democrats in the 2016 election by stealing tens of thousands of emails and documents.

The lawsuit filed in Manhattan federal court seeks unspecified damages and an order to prevent further interference with computer systems of the Democratic National Committee.

"During the 2016 presidential campaign, Russia launched an all-out assault on our democracy, and it found a willing and active partner in Donald Trump's campaign," DNC Chairman Tom Perez said in a statement. He called it an "act of unprecedented treachery."

The Democrats accuse Trump and his associates of trading on pre-existing relationships with Russian oligarchs tied to President Vladimir Putin and of collaborating with Russia as it worked to undermine Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.

The president has said repeatedly there was no collusion between his campaign and Russia. On Friday, his campaign scorned the lawsuit as "frivolous" and predicted it would be quickly dismissed.

"This is a sham lawsuit about a bogus Russian collusion claim filed by a desperate, dysfunctional and nearly insolvent Democratic Party," Trump campaign manager Brad Parscale said in a statement.

He said the campaign would seek to turn the tables on the Democrats, using the legal discovery process to try to pry documents from the DNC including any related to a dossier detailing allegations of links between Trump and Russia. The dossier — a collection of memos — was written by an ex-British spy whose work was funded by Clinton and the DNC.

Trump himself tweeted that the DNC lawsuit could be "very good news," saying his campaign "will now counter for the DNC Server that they refused to give to the FBI" as well as Hillary Clinton's emails.

Trump's tweet also referred to "the Wendy Wasserman Schultz Servers and Documents held by the Pakistani mystery man." He appeared to be referring to former DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz and reports of an IT specialist who once worked for some House Democrats. Wendy Wasserstein was a playwright whose dramas included the Pulitzer Prize-winning "The Heidi Chronicles."

Requests for comment from the Russian Embassy in Washington were not immediately returned.

The Democrats' lawsuit doesn't reveal new details in the sprawling storyline of connections between the Trump campaign and Russian operatives working on behalf of the Kremlin.

Instead it knits many of the threads that have emerged in public over the past two years to paint a picture

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of an alleged conspiracy between the Trump campaign, the Kremlin and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

The DNC says the "brazen attack on American democracy" began with a cyberattack on DNC computers and phone systems in 2015, allowing the extraction of tens of thousands of documents and emails. WikiLeaks then blasted out many of the documents on July 22, 2016, shortly before Clinton was to be nominated -- upsetting the Democrats' national convention.

That added up to a "campaign of the presidential nominee of a major party in league with a hostile foreign power to bolster its own chance to win the presidency," the DNC lawyers write in the lawsuit.

That conspiracy violated the laws of the U.S., Virginia and the District of Columbia, the lawsuit says, and "under the laws of this nation, Russia and its co-conspirators must answer for these actions."

The DNC accuses Donald Trump Jr. of secretly communicating with WikiLeaks, and blames the president, too, saying he praised the illegal dissemination of DNC documents throughout fall 2016, making it a central theme of his speeches and rallies.

The DNC also fingers Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner as a co-conspirator for his role overseeing the Trump campaign's digital operation.

WikiLeaks responded to the lawsuit caustically.

"DNC already has a moribund publicity lawsuit which the press has become bored of--hence the need to refile it as a 'new' suit before mid-terms," the group said in a tweet. "As an accurate publisher of news-worthy information @WikiLeaks is constitutionally protected from such suits."

Assange, avoiding detention, remains in the Ecuadorean Embassy in London.

Special counsel Robert Mueller has filed charges against multiple former Trump campaign aides stemming from his federal Russia probe. But Mueller has directly accused only former Trump campaign foreign policy aide George Papadopoulos of trying to work with Russian operatives to support the Trump campaign.

Mueller also has indicted 13 Russian individuals working for the Internet Research Agency accused of running an elaborate scheme to meddle in the U.S. elections. The indictment alleges one of Putin's close allies, Yevgeny Prigozhin, oversaw the effort.

The hacking of the DNC has long been a sore spot for Democrats across the board since Clinton's stunning loss in November 2016. The hack and subsequent release of the emails hit the party just before it formally nominated Clinton, and the emails remained a major issue through Election Day.

Wasserman Schultz lost her job as party chairwoman just hours before the nominating convention after emails were released showing the DNC appearing to favor Clinton over Bernie Sanders in the primaries. The emails ripped open fresh wounds and formed a rallying cry for Sanders supporters hoping for a last-minute chance to deny the Clinton the nomination in Philadelphia.

Wasserman Schultz confronted then-FBI Director James Comey a few months later, in January 2017 during a private briefing at the Capitol, accusing him of helping throw the election to Trump because of his handling of the Clinton email investigation. DNC staffers at the time accused the FBI of not doing enough immediately after the hack was discovered in 2015 to alert them to the problem.

Democrats have similarly been critical of President Barack Obama for not doing enough in 2016 to fight back against Russia. Obama expelled Russian diplomats and shuttered diplomatic compounds in December 2016.

This is the second time in recent history that the DNC has sued a Republican president.

The Democrats sued Richard Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President in 1973, following the break-in at the DNC's Watergate Hotel headquarters.

Associated Press reporter Chad Day contributed to this report from Washington. LoBianco reported from Washington.

Israeli fire in new Gaza border protest kills 4 Palestinians

By **FARES AKRAM** and **KARIN LAUB**, Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli soldiers firing Friday from across a border fence killed four Palestinians, including a 15-year-old boy, and wounded more than 150 others, health officials said, as several thousand people in blockaded Gaza staged a fourth round of weekly protests on the border with Israel.

Huge black plumes of smoke from burning tires engulfed the border area. Some of the activists threw stones toward the fence or flew kites with flaming rags dangling from their tails.

The latest deaths brought to 32 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops in protests since late March. More than 1,600 have been wounded by live rounds in the past three weeks, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

The rising Palestinian casualty toll signaled that Israel's military is sticking to its open-fire rules despite international criticism of the use of lethal force against unarmed protesters. Israel says it's defending its border, and alleges Gaza's ruling Hamas uses protests as cover for attacks.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian U.N. ambassador, said in a letter to the U.N. Security Council late Friday that Israeli forces continue demonstrating the "cruelty of their occupation machine, responding to the calls of unarmed civilians for freedom and justice with brutal and lethal force." He said one of the latest victims was a 25-year-old disabled man.

Israeli soldiers are positioned on the other side of the border fence, including snipers taking cover behind earthen berms, and none have been hurt.

Turnout for the marches has fluctuated, with the biggest showing on March 30, but Friday's crowd appeared to have been somewhat larger than the one the previous week.

The marches are part of what organizers, led by Hamas, have billed as an escalating showdown with Israel, to culminate in a mass march on May 15.

The top Hamas leader, Ismail Haniyeh, said Friday that people should get ready for large crowds spilling across the border that day. "Our people will outnumber the occupation and force it from our land," he said, referring to Israel.

Hamas says the protests are aimed at breaking a crippling border blockade that was imposed by Israel and Egypt after the Islamic militant group overran Gaza in 2007, a year after winning Palestinian parliament elections.

The marches also press for a "right of return" of Palestinian refugees and their descendants to what is now Israel. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled or were forced from homes in the 1948 war over Israel's creation. Palestinians mark May 15, the anniversary of Israel's founding, as their "nakba," or catastrophe, to mourn their mass uprooting.

"We will stay here until we reclaim our lands," said Ahmed Nasman, 21, speaking in a protest tent camp east of Gaza City, as activists near him prepared kites. "Every day, we will come here with a new way to resist them," he said, referring to Israel.

Several thousand protesters flocked to the border area Friday, most gathering at five tent camps several hundred meters (yards) away from the border. Smaller groups advanced toward the fence, throwing stones, burning tires and flying kites with burning rags.

The kites are part of a new tactic aimed at setting fields on the Israeli side on fire. Most kites showed the colors of the Palestinian flag. One white kite bore a Nazi swastika.

Earlier on Friday, Israeli military aircraft had dropped leaflets urging Palestinians to stay away from the fence and warning that they endanger their lives if they follow Hamas directives.

While Hamas and smaller Palestinian factions have taken a lead as organizers, the mass marches are also fueled by growing desperation among Gaza's 2 million residents.

The border blockade has trapped nearly all of them in the tiny coastal territory, gutted the economy and deepened poverty. Gaza residents typically get fewer than five hours of electricity per day, while unemployment has soared above 40 percent.

Yehiyeh Sinwar, a top Hamas official, told activists that even if conditions are tough, "we will not bargain

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on the Palestinian people's rights in exchange for bread."

Israel has accused Hamas of cynically exploiting Gaza civilians for its political aims. Hamas critics say the group's refusal to disarm has been a key obstacle to ending the blockade.

Gaza's Health Ministry said those killed Friday included three men in their 20s and a 15-year-old boy.

In addition, 729 protesters were hurt, including 156 hit by live fire, the ministry said, adding that five of the wounded were in serious condition. Some of the others were hurt by rubber-coated steel pellets or overcome by tear gas.

The military has said Palestinians have tried to damage the border fence with explosives, firebombs and other means. It has said snipers only target the "main instigators."

Rights groups have branded open-fire orders as unlawful, saying they effectively permit soldiers to use potentially lethal force against unarmed protesters.

Laub reported from Jericho, West Bank. Associated Press writer Ian Deitch in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

About 2,500 mourners pay respects to Barbara Bush at viewing

By JUAN A. LOZANO and NOMAAN MERCHANT, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — His daughter standing behind him, former President George H.W. Bush sat at the front of the cavernous sanctuary of St. Martin's Episcopal Church. He gazed up at the rose-draped casket holding his wife of 73 years.

After a few moments, an aide came forward to help Bush with his wheelchair, turning it so he faced the rest of the sanctuary. A string of mourners began to approach: adults and children, many of the women wearing his wife's favorite color, blue, and trademark pearls. He offered his hand and smiled as people shook it.

By Friday evening, officials said around 2,500 people stopped by to pay their respects to Barbara Bush, wife of the nation's 41st president and mother of the nation's 43rd. Among them was Houston social worker Varney Johnson, who like other mourners said he wanted to honor her work supporting literacy. "This woman dedicated her life to educating children," he said.

Barbara and George Bush were married longer than any other presidential couple when she died Tuesday at their home in Houston. One of just two first ladies to have a child elected president, Barbara Bush was widely admired for her plainspoken style and her advocacy for causes including literacy and AIDS awareness.

A hearse containing the former first lady's casket arrived before daybreak at St. Martin's, which is the nation's largest Episcopal church. Her body was to be in repose from noon until midnight. A spray of dozens of roses covered the closed light-colored metallic casket.

The 93-year-old former president arrived at the church shortly after the viewing opened, accompanied by daughter Dorothy Bush Koch. He hadn't been scheduled to visit, but he decided to go after watching video from the church, said family spokesman Jim McGrath. Bush shook dozens of hands and stayed for about 15 minutes.

"I think he was very touched by all of the people who were taking the time out of their lives," McGrath said. "It was just a natural inclination for him."

Lucy Orlando was one of the more than 100 people in line well before bus service began from a separate location to the church. Originally from Haiti, the 74-year-old Orlando had traveled from Weston, Florida, and said she has admired Barbara Bush for years, including for her work promoting literacy.

"She was a very sweet lady and she loves people," said Orlando, who was carrying a gray suitcase containing framed photos of the couple and members of their family, including former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and former President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura.

Jessica Queener, who works in special education and wears a cochlear implant to help with hearing loss, said Barbara Bush's work in education and helping people with disabilities "really resonates with me on

a personal level but also professionally." In Houston for work from Washington, D.C., Queener and her husband decided to attend the public viewing, saying she also credits the former first lady for being a positive influence when her husband signed the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990.

Barbara Bush's funeral will be held Saturday behind her husband's presidential library at Texas A&M University, about 100 miles (161 kilometers) northwest of Houston. The burial site is in a gated plot surrounded by trees and near a creek where the couple's 3-year-old daughter, Robin, who died of leukemia in 1953, is buried.

In a statement released Friday, the family said Barbara Bush had selected son Jeb to deliver a eulogy along with her longtime friend Susan Baker, wife of former Secretary of State James A. Baker III, and historian Jon Meacham, who wrote a 2015 biography of her husband.

Some 1,500 guests were expected to attend, including first lady Melania Trump, former President Bill Clinton and his wife, Hillary, and former President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle.

"Whether you're Democrat or whether you're Republican, whether you're young or old, she is the matriarch of America," said 52-year-old Houston resident Jamie Sumicek. "That's what moved me to visit."

Associated Press reporters Michael Graczyk and John L. Mone contributed to this report from Houston.

In new walkouts, students look to turn outrage to action

By COLLIN BINKLEY, Associated Press

Once again, they filed out of class. In a new wave of school walkouts, they raised their voices against gun violence. But this time, they were looking to turn outrage into action.

Many of the students who joined demonstrations across the country Friday turned their attention to upcoming elections as they pressed for tougher gun laws and politicians who will enact them. Scores of rallies turned into voter registration drives. Students took the stage to issue an ultimatum to their lawmakers.

"We want to show that we're not scared. We want to stop mass shootings and we want gun control," said Binayak Pandey, 16, who rallied with dozens of students outside Georgia's Capitol in Atlanta. "The people who can give us that will stay in office, and the people who can't give us that will be out of office."

All told, tens of thousands of students left class Friday for protests that spread from coast to coast. They filed out at 10 a.m. to gather for a moment of silence honoring the victims of gun violence. Some headed to nearby rallies. Others stayed at school to discuss gun control and register their peers to vote.

Organizers said an estimated 150,000 students protested Friday at more than 2,700 walkouts, including at least one in each state, as they sought to sustain a wave of youth activism that drove a larger round of walkouts on March 14. Activists behind that earlier protest estimated it drew nearly 1 million students.

HeadCount, a nonprofit group that registers voters at music events, said 700 people had signed up to vote through its website during the past week. That's up from just 10 people in the same period last year. Spokesman Aaron Ghitelman credited the uptick to walkout organizers who steered teens to the group's website.

Friday's action was planned by a Connecticut teenager, Lane Murdock, after a gunman stormed Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, on Feb. 14, leaving 17 people dead. It was meant to coincide with the 19th anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting in Littleton, Colorado.

The focus on the November elections reflects a shift after activists gained little immediate traction in Washington — and prospects for their influence remain uncertain. Congress has shown little inclination to tighten gun laws, and President Donald Trump backed away from his initial support for raising the minimum age to buy some guns.

Among those who helped orchestrate the walkout — and the voter registration push — was the progressive group Indivisible, which formed after the 2016 election to oppose Trump's policies.

In cities across the country, it was common to see crowds of students clad in orange — the color used by hunters to signal "don't shoot" — rallying outside their schools or at public parks.

Several hundred gathered at New York City's Washington Square Park, chanting "The NRA has got to

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go!" and "Enough is enough." A large group in Washington marched from the White House to the Capitol building to rally for gun control.

Nate Fenerty was among dozens of students who left class to rally in Richmond, Virginia. He registered to vote for the first time at tables set up by students at the protest and said he wants Congress to approve mandatory background checks for gun buyers.

"How many more times are we going to stand in memoriam for another school shooting before our policymakers to actually do something?" said Fenerty, who carried a sign saying "Am I Next?"

Virginia students had expected 10,000 people at the Richmond rally, but only about 300 showed up. Still, those who turned up said they weren't discouraged.

Shortly before the walkouts, news spread that there had been another shooting at a Florida school. Authorities say one student shot another in the ankle at Forest High School in Ocala early Friday. A suspect was taken into custody. Activists said it underscored the urgency of their work.

Student David Hogg, a Parkland survivor who has emerged as a leading activist, took to social media nearly every day this week urging students to register. On Thursday he made the motivation clear on Twitter: "The only way to make politicians listen to us is by voting in ones that will," he said.

Hogg was among about 50 students who walked out of Stoneman Douglas on Friday after administrators threatened protesters with unexcused absences.

Craig Smith and Terry McGary, both 17-year-old juniors, said they walked out because they want to show respect for the Columbine victims.

"It was a guilt trip to make us not walk out," McGary said about the threat.

The walkouts drew counter-protesters in some areas, including about 30 at a rally outside New Hampshire's statehouse. In Kansas, about 200 gun-rights supporters held their own demonstration outside the statehouse. Many carried signs and flags, and some brought holstered handguns.

Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, a Republican candidate for governor, addressed the crowd and later criticized the walkout movement.

"Instead of walking out of class, why don't you stay in class and spend that half hour studying the Second Amendment? You might learn something," Kobach said later.

Some students in Colorado participated in the walkouts but not at Columbine, which has closed on April 20 ever since the 1999 shooting that left 15 people dead. Some Columbine students attended a vigil with Parkland survivors on Thursday night, but on Friday, their school called on them to attend a day of service.

Principal Scott Christy said in a letter to other schools in his district that April "has long been a time to respectfully remember our loss, and also support efforts to make our communities a better place."

Binkley can be reached on Twitter at @cbinkley

Binkley reported from Boston. Associated Press writers Terry Spencer in Parkland, Florida; Verena Dobnik in New York City; Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Virginia; Jeff Martin in Atlanta; and Mitchell Willetts in Topeka, Kansas, contributed to this report.

Hot potato: Dems shy from Steyer's talk of impeaching Trump

By **BILL BARROW** and **LISA MASCARO**, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Tom Steyer is on a multimillion-dollar mission to impeach Donald Trump, but Democrats whose campaigns the California billionaire is helping bankroll aren't keen to follow his lead.

Steyer, whose appeals you may have seen on TV, is spending \$40 million on his "Need To Impeach" roadshow, with advertising and town halls around the country. But Democratic leaders in Congress and many candidates hoping to wrest House control from the Republicans shun the prospect of showy impeachment proceedings. Instead, they're counting on pocketbook issues and a growing voter interest in checks on the GOP government in Washington.

The tightrope balance for Democrats underscores their dilemma. The question is how to maximize

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liberal anger against the president, who is under the cloud of a special counsel's investigation, while not alienating Trump country independents and moderate Republicans who are unhappy with him but often detest his critics even more.

Steyer's largely freelancing effort is just one strain of a midterm cacophony where even tens of millions dollars in outside spending can get lost in the noise. Trump already commands most of the attention. Republicans are eager to counterpunch. And as much as Democrats steer clear of impeachment talk, it does offer a release valve for liberal voter angst.

"It is the most important issue in the United States right now," Steyer tells a crowd, nibbling on hors d'oeuvres in Atlanta before a wide-ranging discussion of "high crimes and misdemeanors" and Trump's fitness to handle nuclear launch codes. "It's about lawlessness and danger and urgency."

But in sounding his impeachment alarms, the liberal, green-energy guru is also serving up an opportunity for Republicans to portray Democrats as having no agenda other than to undo the 2016 election.

"I hope Steyer goes everywhere in the country and I hope he buys \$100 million of ads, and I hope he insists every Democrat sign a pledge to impeach the president," says former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who led the GOP in impeaching President Bill Clinton in 1998, only to lose seats that November.

Republicans see in Steyer a chance to extend their attacks on the liberal agenda, personified by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who could return to the speaker's rostrum if Democrats flip at least 24 GOP-held House seats this November.

Pelosi, Steyer's fellow San Franciscan, has listened to his argument on impeachment, her office said, but does not agree. She prefers to campaign for the majority with her own cold realism.

"What we're talking about is how we strengthen the financial stability of America's working families," she said recently. "That is what we are focused on."

Pelosi is certainly willing to take Steyer's help for the midterm elections. Steyer and his wife, Kat, live in Pelosi's congressional district, and the couple hosted a June 2017 dinner for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. The event raised \$593,500, officials said, including the couple's personal contribution of \$67,800.

Recent polling could explain Pelosi's approach.

A national survey, conducted by Marist for NPR and PBS, found 47 percent of registered voters would definitely vote against a candidate who wanted to remove Trump from office, while 42 percent said such a promise would earn their vote. That's a sobering reminder given House district lines that have been tilted to GOP advantage around the country by Republican-run state legislatures — and a 2018 Senate lineup that puts 10 Democratic incumbents up for re-election in states Trump won in 2016.

Yet, in communities across America, Steyer isn't alone.

One progressive leader, Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona, says he's routinely peppered with "When are you going to impeach him?" questions as he travels to and from his Tucson district.

"These are random people, I wouldn't describe them as wild-hair progressives," said Grijalva, who's co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. "My sense is there's going to come a point, as Trump continues to devolve, that that's going to become a more persistent question: 'If you are the majority, will you begin the process to looking at impeachment?' It won't be a nuanced question, it'll be a yes-or-no question."

Liberal House Democrats have forced two procedural votes on impeachment, but a December maneuver drew just 58 backers and another in January drew 66.

At the same time, there have been no such votes since, and even party liberals who align generally with Steyer's aggressive activism sound more like Pelosi and the Democratic establishment on the matter.

Democratic congressional hopeful Kara Eastman, running in the party's primary in Nebraska's Omaha-based 2nd District, treads carefully. "It's not a No. 1 thing," she says of impeachment.

At the Working Families Party, which backs liberals in Democratic primaries around the country, spokesman Joe Dinkin says candidates who want to "stop Trumpism" should focus on beating the president and his party at the polls.

That almost echoes the advice of former FBI Director James Comey, whom Trump fired last year. He

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told ABC News that "impeaching and removing Donald Trump from office would let the American people off the hook" from something they are "duty-bound to do directly" in the 2020 presidential election.

Certainly, Trump could scramble the situation — for Democrats and Republicans alike — if he fires special counsel Robert Mueller or Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, as he did Comey last year. In fact, some Democrats say, the Mueller investigation provides a rationale for not pursuing impeachment and allowing the probe to unfold.

"Folks back home get it," said Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., who says he's "appalled" at Trump's presidency, but trusts Mueller's work. "We have these investigations going on for a reason - to get to the truth."

And Democrats hurling "wild" accusations and impeachment cries, Gingrich says, actually "will make this election much cleaner" for Republican voters and independents on the fence.

At his Atlanta town hall, Steyer — who is also spending millions of dollars on NextGen America, his effort to register young voters under 35 in key midterm races — scoffs.

The 2018 election is already a referendum on the president, he argues, so face it head on. "Rather than trying to prevent their gain, why don't we play our game?"

Associated Press reporters Steve Peoples in New York contributed to this report.

On Twitter, follow Barrow at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP> and Mascaro at <https://twitter.com/Lisa-Mascaro>

Haley's pushback draws fans, rattles White House

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and MEG KINNARD, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The public split between the White House and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley this week over Russia sanctions threw a spotlight on her at-times uneasy relationship with President Donald Trump, even as her deft rebuttal bolstered talk about her own future political fortunes.

Haley's rejoinder to a putdown from a close Trump adviser about message confusion — she declared that "I don't get confused" — was seized as a rallying cry among some women and echoed the audacity the former governor displayed while upending the old boys' club in the South Carolina statehouse. But the episode also called into question her standing on Trump's national security team ahead of tough decisions on North Korea, Iran and other fronts.

"What distinguishes her from the star-struck sycophants in the White House is that she understands the intersection of strong leadership and public service, where great things happen," said Rob Godfrey, a spokesman for Haley when she was governor.

Haley, now considered to be on the shortlist of future presidential candidates, has consistently taken a harder line than Trump on Russia. While that has, at times, drawn Trump's ire, her hawkishness on other occasions has been appreciated by the president, who has allowed her to reprimand Moscow while he works toward a friendship with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

That dynamic broke down this week. Trump was angry Sunday when he saw Haley on television discussing new Russia sanctions that she said would be announced the next day. He blasted her for being out of step with the rest of the administration, according to two White House officials. They were not authorized to discuss private conversations and commented only on condition of anonymity.

Despite Haley's words, no new sanctions were imposed.

Asked for an explanation, Larry Kudlow, the president's new economic adviser, told reporters that Haley "got ahead of the curve" and he added, "She's a very effective ambassador, but there might have been some momentary confusion about that."

The next day, Haley hit back, releasing a statement to Fox News that read: "With all due respect, I don't get confused."

Kudlow apologized but Haley's differences with the White House had already pushed into the open.

At the United Nations, responding to a shouted question about her relationship with the president, she

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simply said, "It's perfect." But the White House was left scrambling to explain.

Haley's allies insist she always consults with the West Wing, and sometimes the president personally, before speaking publicly. White House officials said the plan about the sanctions changed after she was briefed and she wasn't told before she went on television. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin further muddled the narrative Thursday when he told Fox Business Network that the administration "refined the strategy after Nikki made that announcement."

He said, "She wasn't left twisting in the wind, this was a fluid situation, the decision changed."

Haley's pushback struck a chord, becoming something of an instant feminist motto in the way it rebelled against what some saw as a patronizing comment from a powerful man. The words carried additional resonance considering Haley's place as one of the few prominent women in Trump's inner circle. Her comment was compared in some quarters to the way Sen. Elizabeth Warren had appropriated "Nevertheless, she persisted" as a rallying cry after the remark was delivered by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell after he tried to silence Warren on the Senate floor last year.

"I feel sorry for Nikki Haley," said former Secretary of State Madeline Albright. "She has been very tough up there making points. She makes very clear that she's representing the president. And all of a sudden she's put into this ridiculous situation of looking as though she is out there by herself on something."

Trump has vented to confidants about the media attention the dustup has received, but he hasn't given any signal that he wants to dismiss his ambassador, according to White House officials and outside advisers. Her footing on Trump's revamped national security team remains unclear: She is tight with Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State nominee Mike Pompeo, but lost an ally when H.R. McMaster was replaced by John Bolton as national security adviser.

All the attention has restarted some wary West Wing whispers about Haley's ultimate goals.

Her rebuttal stood in stark contrast to the conduct of Attorney General Jeff Sessions and former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who largely remained silent when they were undermined by Trump. She did not support Trump in her state's primary election, was viewed by many as gunning for Tillerson's job last fall, and has been floated by some Republicans as a possible running mate for Pence if he makes his own White House run.

One West Wing aide joked recently that the only question was if Haley's name would appear on a ballot in 2020 or 2024.

And on Tuesday, her office mistakenly blasted an email containing a series of press clippings that mention Haley — a message meant for the ambassador herself — to a number of journalists. Among the headlines highlighted, one cited MSNBC "Morning Joe" host Joe Scarborough and read, "Scarborough: Nikki Haley would beat Donald Trump if she ran in 2020 GOP primary."

"She has an incredibly bright future and will be a major player for the Republican party in the years ahead," said Newt Gingrich, former House speaker and informal Trump ally. "I think she's a future secretary of state and vice president. And remember: this president learns a lot from television. She is a remarkably effective presence for the United States of America on television and the president likes that."

Haley, the daughter of Indian immigrants, grew up enduring racist taunts during her childhood in a small South Carolina town. She is accustomed to defying political expectations.

In her first campaign in 2004, she defeated the longest-serving member of South Carolina's House. One of only a handful of women in the Legislature, she showed the tough political skin she said was needed to make political progress.

"I don't know how to be intimidated," she declared.

She faced her biggest challenge in 2015, when a self-avowed white supremacist gunned down nine black worshippers in a Charleston church. Haley sat front-and-center for weeks at the funerals and later backed removing the Confederate flag from the South Carolina Statehouse grounds, where it had flown for more than 50 years.

Says former spokesman Godfrey: "She's not afraid to stand up to people who are bullies, whether it's a thug dictator on the next continent, or it's a thug state senator in the next county."

Kinnard reported from Columbia, South Carolina. Additional reporting by Associated Press writers Matthew Lee and Catherine Lucey in Washington and Edith Lederer at the United Nations.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Kinnard at <http://twitter.com/@MegKinnardAP>

Karolyis to NBC: 'No way' they knew about doctor's behavior

NEW YORK (AP) — Former USA Gymnastics women's national team coordinator Martha Karolyi and husband Bela tell NBC they were unaware of the abusive behavior by a former national team doctor now serving decades in prison.

Martha Karolyi led the national team for 15 years before retiring after the 2016 Rio Olympics. She tells Savannah Guthrie in "no way" did she suspect Larry Nassar was sexually abusing athletes under the guise of treatment.

"The whole gymnastics community couldn't recognize this," Martha Karolyi said in an excerpt provided to The Associated Press on Friday by NBC. "Everybody said, 'Larry Nassar is a good doctor. Larry Nassar is a good guy.'"

The Karolyis spoke as part of a Dateline NBC special entitled "Silent No More" scheduled to air Sunday. The one-hour special, the first prime-time event hosted by Guthrie, takes a look at the fallout from revelations about years of abuse by Nassar involving hundreds of former athletes, including several members of the U.S. Olympic team.

"The whole thing is just like an explosion, a bomb exploding," Bela Karolyi said. "Boom."

The Karolyis have been named as co-defendants in several civil lawsuits filed against Nassar and USA Gymnastics, including one by former national team member Mattie Larson.

Larson told The Associated Press she watched a portion of the Karolyis' interview excerpted on Friday and shrugged. The Karolyis made similar statements in a deposition in Larson's lawsuit.

"Who knows if they knew or not? I'm not in their heads," Larson told the AP. "I feel like if they really didn't know, it's because they set up the system to show they don't care what's going on."

Larson, a member of the 2010 World Championship team, pointed out the Karolyis allowed Nassar to treat them in his hotel room without supervision and that it wasn't unusual for Nassar to treat athletes not on a training table, but his hotel bed.

"Honestly I just believe they did not care about us when we were not in the gym," Larson said.

Several victims, including two-time Olympic medalist McKayla Maroney, say they were abused at the Karolyis' Ranch near Houston. The ranch served as the training home for USA Gymnastics during most of Martha Karolyi's highly successful tenure running the national team.

Several gymnasts and coaches previously interviewed by The Associated Press said the Karolyis institutionalized a win-at-all-costs culture that forced girls to train while injured. The toxic environment allowed Nassar to flourish in part because the athletes were afraid to challenge authority, according to witness statements in Nassar's criminal case and one of the lawsuits.

Guthrie spent hours with the Karolyis at the ranch after the couple agreed to speak publicly for the first time since Martha Karolyi's retirement following the 2016 Olympics.

"I think they felt like it was time for them to tell their side of the story," Guthrie said. "I think they've watched and seen as their reputation has really taken a hit and people have asked a lot of questions about what they knew and just as importantly what they should have known."

Guthrie said she was "surprised" the Karolyis came forward despite the potential legal fallout.

"They answered every question," Guthrie said. "At no time did their lawyer jump in and say 'You can't answer that.'"

Nassar spent nearly three decades at USA Gymnastics before being fired in 2015 after complaints about his behavior. He continued to work at Michigan State University through the fall of 2016 before being hit

with federal charges. Nassar is now serving decades in prison for molesting women and girls and for possessing child pornography.

Nassar was already established in the program when Martha Karolyi took over. He would visit the ranch during national team training sessions and also accompany the team to events around the world. Maroney said she was abused "hundreds" of times by Nassar.

Martha Karolyi denied having any knowledge about Nassar's pattern of abuse.

"I heard during the testimonies (at Nassar's sentencing) that some of the parents were in the therapy room with their own child and Larry Nassar was performing this," Martha Karolyi told Guthrie. "And the parent couldn't see. How I could see?"

Arizona is next stop for movement seeking better teacher pay

By **MELISSA DANIELS** and **BOB CHRISTIE**, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — The latest stop in the national movement seeking higher teacher pay and better education funding is Arizona, where tens of thousands of teachers have voted to walk off the job next week.

They want the Republican-controlled Legislature and Gov. Doug Ducey to improve on the governor's offer of 20 percent raises by 2020. That plan, the teachers say, fails to address several of their other goals, including a restoration of state funding to 2008 levels and a pledge not to adopt any new tax cuts until per-pupil state funding reaches the national average.

Arizona is one of several Republican-led states where teachers have demanded higher pay this year. The movement started in West Virginia, where a strike resulted in a raise, and spread to Oklahoma, Kentucky and most recently Colorado.

After West Virginia teachers won their raise in early March, Arizona educators joined forces using online platforms and held increasingly frequent demonstrations over the past six weeks.

"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," said Nancy Maglio, a middle school teacher in Tucson. "We went into a field where caring is mandatory."

Ducey, who is up for re-election in November, insisted for weeks that he was doing all he could to boost school spending. Then last week he proposed the 20 percent pay raise. But teachers want funding that goes beyond salaries, and a vote Thursday authorized an April 26 walkout.

The governor has refused to meet with the grassroots group or the state teacher association that supports the efforts. Organizers say setting the walkout date allows districts to prepare for possible closures and gives lawmakers time to act.

"If we maintain the status quo, that is way worse than missing a couple days of school," said Noah Karvelis, organizer of the grassroots group Arizona Educators United. "We can't continue to throw away academic futures."

On Friday, Ducey vetoed 10 pieces of legislation to send a message to the Legislature that he wants lawmakers to send him a state budget that raises teacher pay.

"Our teachers have earned this raise," Ducey said in his veto letter. "It's time to get it done."

Republican House Speaker J.D. Mesnard said he was disappointed that teachers did not give lawmakers a chance to continue negotiating before voting to strike.

"I'm not sure what a strike would accomplish beyond what we're already trying to the best of our ability to do," Mesnard said Friday.

Teachers say the walkout is years in the making. They are among the lowest paid in the nation, with similarly low-level per pupil spending. Last year, Ducey offered a 2 percent increase over 5 years that was widely panned as miserly. Lawmakers eventually gave teachers a 1 percent raise, and another 1 percent was planned for the coming year.

Ducey ran for governor in 2014 with a promise to cut taxes every year he's in office.

Arizona Education Association President Joe Thomas, who is partnering with Arizona Educators United to fuel the #RedforEd campaign, said lawmakers could fund the demands if they rolled back corporate

tax cuts and sent the money to schools.

"Here's the game that's played every year: tax cut, tax cut, tax cut," he said. "We're tired of that game."

Ducey spokesman Daniel Scarpinato said Friday that the governor is focused on getting his so-called #20x2020 plan passed. The bulk of funding for the \$650 million plan is supposed to come from the benefits of a growing economy. Adding any new taxes or tax hikes, Ducey has said, would jeopardize the state's growth.

Scarpinato would not say if Ducey would meet with Thomas, Karvelis or other members of Arizona Educators United ahead of the planned walkout.

"What we can control is public policy," he said.

Avicii, DJ-producer who performed around the world, dies

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Avicii, the Grammy-nominated electronic dance DJ who performed sold-out concerts for feverish fans around the world and also had massive success on U.S. pop radio, died Friday. He was 28.

Publicist Diana Baron said in a statement that the Swedish performer, born Tim Bergling, was found dead in Muscat, Oman.

"It is with profound sorrow that we announce the loss of Tim Bergling, also known as Avicii," the statement read. "The family is devastated and we ask everyone to please respect their need for privacy in this difficult time. No further statements will be given."

No more details about the death were provided. Oman police and state media had no immediate report late Friday night on the artist's death.

Avicii was an international pop star, performing his well-known electronic dance songs around the world for die-hard fans, sometimes hundreds of thousands at music festivals, where he was the headline act. His popular sound even sent him to the top of the charts and landed onto U.S. radio: His most recognized song, the country-dance mashup "Wake Me Up," was a multi-platinum success and peaked at No. 4 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart. On the dance charts, he had seven Top 10 hits.

But in 2016, the performer announced he was retiring from the road. He continued to produce songs and albums.

Avicii was part of the wave of DJ-producers, like David Guetta, Calvin Harris and Swedish House Mafia, who broke out on the scene as lead performers in their own right, earning international hits, fame, awards and more like typical pop stars.

Avicii earned his first Grammy nomination at the 2012 show — for a collaboration with Guetta. It was around the time he gained more fame for the Etta James-sampled dance jam, "Le7els," which reached No. 1 in Sweden.

He continued to collaborate with more high-profile acts, producing Madonna's "Devil Pray" and the Coldplay hits, "A Sky Full of Stars" and "Hymn for the Weekend." He was even part of Mike Posner's megahit "I Took a Pill in Ibiza," which featured the lyrics: "I took a pill in Ibiza/To show Avicii I was cool." The song was based off Posner's true story at an Avicii concert in Ibiza.

Avicii built a strong musical and personal friendship with Nile Rodgers, who called Avicii his "little brother" in an interview with The Associated Press on Friday.

"I'm shocked because I don't know medically what happened, but I can just say as a person, as a friend, and more importantly, as a musician, Tim was one of the greatest, natural melody writers I've ever worked with, and I've worked with some of the most brilliant musicians on this planet," Rodgers said.

Avicii had in the past suffered acute pancreatitis, in part due to excessive drinking. After having his gallbladder and appendix removed in 2014, he canceled a series of shows in attempt to recover.

"It's been a very crazy journey. I started producing when I was 16. I started touring when I was 18. From that point on, I just jumped into 100 percent," Avicii told The Hollywood Reporter in 2016. "When I look back on my life, I think: whoa, did I do that? It was the best time of my life in a sense. It came with a price - a lot of stress a lot of anxiety for me - but it was the best journey of my life."

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Rodgers said his last performance with Avicii — about three years ago — upset him because of Avicii's drinking.

"It was a little bit sad to me because he had promised me he would stop drinking, and when I saw him he was drunk that night. And I was like, 'Whoa. Dude. C'mon. What are you doing? What's going on? You said that that was done,'" Rodgers recalled. "We did a show and I was a little upset. I didn't even stick around for his performance because it was breaking my heart. But we still had a great time. It was wonderful — we were that close."

Last year, Avicii posted this message on his website, promising to keep creating: "The next stage will be all about my love of making music to you guys. It is the beginning of something new."

Fans and members of the music community mourned his death on social media Friday.

"Something really horrible happened. We lost a friend with such a beautiful heart and the world lost an incredibly talented musician," Guetta wrote on Instagram. "Thank you for your beautiful melodies, the time we shared in the studio, playing together as djs or just enjoying life as friends. RIP @avicii."

Calvin Harris called Avicii "a beautiful soul, passionate and extremely talented with so much more to do." Ellie Goulding wrote that Avicii "inspired so many of us. Wish I could have said that to you in person."

Sweden's Prince Carl Philip and Princess Sofia, who knew Avicii from playing at their wedding, said they were saddened by his death.

"We are grateful that we got to know him and admired him as an artist and the great person he was. He made our wedding unforgettable with his amazing music. Our warmest thoughts go to his family," they said in a joint statement.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven called the lost star "one of Sweden's biggest musicians".

Avicii, a two-time Grammy nominee, won two MTV Europe Music Awards and one Billboard Music Award. His death comes just days after he was nominated for a 2018 Billboard Music Award for top dance/electronic album for his EP "Avicii (01)."

Avicii is the subject of the 2017 Levan Tsikurishvili documentary "Avicii: True Stories."

Muscat, where Avicii died, is the capital of the sultanate on the eastern edge of the Arabian Peninsula. It is a popular vacation destination on the Arabian Sea.

AP writers Mark Kennedy, Jon Gambrell and David Keyton contributed to this report.

Ex-FBI deputy director 'disappointed' in Comey comments

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Andrew McCabe, the former FBI deputy director, is "very upset and disappointed" by comments made by his former boss James Comey that contradict his account of a disclosure to the news media, McCabe's lawyer said Friday.

"Andy has at all times attempted to, and believes he's been successful in, playing it straight with Jim," Michael Bromwich told reporters as he again attacked an internal investigation process that led to McCabe's firing from the FBI last month and a criminal referral to federal prosecutors.

The disagreement involves conflicting recollections about a conversation the two men had following an October 2016 Wall Street Journal story about an FBI investigation into the Clinton Foundation.

McCabe says he told Comey that he had authorized FBI officials to share information with the reporter — specifically, details of a heated phone conversation with a senior Justice Department official — in order to push back against a story he felt was going to be unfair to the bureau and inaccurate.

Comey, however, has said McCabe did not acknowledge having done so and left the impression that he didn't know who had shared the information with the journalist.

The Justice Department's inspector general concluded that McCabe misled officials under oath about authorizing the disclosure. Attorney General Jeff Sessions fired him last month, and the inspector general's office in recent weeks referred the matter to the U.S. attorney's office in Washington for a possible criminal investigation.

Bromwich, a former Justice Department inspector general himself, said Friday that the threshold for criminal referrals is very low and that they very rarely end up in prosecutions. He said the investigation that led to McCabe's firing was "deeply flawed," "unprecedented" in its speed and accelerated so that McCabe could be dismissed before he could retire with full benefits.

Separately Friday, Bromwich announced the creation of a legal defense fund and said he was working with the law firm of Boies Schiller & Flexner to consider possible lawsuits on grounds such as wrongful termination and defamation. President Donald Trump has repeatedly attacked McCabe and Comey by name, and those insults have been amplified by the inspector general's findings.

The disagreement and contrasting memories have burst into public view this week, as Comey has insisted in television interviews that he stands by his account and that the FBI and Justice Department cannot tolerate lack of candor. He has said he feels conflicted about McCabe's legal problems given that the two men worked closely together.

"I like him very much as a person, but sometimes even good people do things they shouldn't do," Comey said in an interview with CNN on Thursday.

Bromwich also suggested that the disagreement was not personal, though he did note that McCabe feels "very upset and disappointed" by some of Comey's comments.

"Andy McCabe and Jim Comey had an excellent relationship. They worked closely with one another. They relied on each other," Bromwich said. "Andy McCabe looked up to Jim Comey. So we are not for a moment suggesting that Jim Comey is making things up or lying."

But, he added, "Nobody's memory is perfect. People are fallible. And we think on this one that Andy McCabe has a strong and clear recollection and Jim Comey does not."

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Chris Borland quit NFL, now helps those in 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 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

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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

Wells Fargo fined \$1B for mortgage, auto lending abuses

By KEN SWEET, AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wells Fargo will pay \$1 billion to federal regulators to settle charges tied to misconduct at its mortgage and auto lending business, the latest punishment levied against the banking giant for widespread customer abuses.

In a settlement announced Friday, Wells will pay \$500 million to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, its main national bank regulator, as well as a net \$500 million to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The fine is the largest ever imposed by the CFPB and its first since the Trump administration took control of the bureau in late November.

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Starting in September 2016, Wells has admitted to a number of abusive practices across multiple parts of its business that duped consumers out of millions of dollars. Regulators, in turn, have fined Wells several times and put unprecedented restrictions on its ability to do business, including forcing the bank to replace directors on its board. Even President Trump, whose administration has been keenly focused on paring back financial regulations, has called out Wells for its "bad acts."

In Friday's announcement, the CFPB and the OCC penalized Wells for improperly charging fees to borrowers who wanted to lock in an interest rate on a pending mortgage loan and for sticking auto loan customers with insurance policies they didn't want or need. The bank admitted that tens of thousands of customers who could not afford the combined auto loan and extra insurance payment fell behind on their payments and had their cars repossessed.

These abuses are separate from Wells Fargo's well-known sales practices scandal, where employees opened as many as 3.5 million bank and credit card accounts without getting customers' authorization. The account scandal torpedoed Wells Fargo's reputation as the nation's best-run bank.

In that case, Wells Fargo paid a combined \$187 million in fines and penalties to federal regulators, including the CFPB, and the Los Angeles City Attorney's office, and the company's then-CEO John Stumpf stepped down after being bashed by politicians on both side of the aisle.

Even with the latest settlement, Wells Fargo isn't in the clear. Its wealth management business is reportedly under investigation for improprieties similar to those that impacted its consumer bank. And the Department of Justice is investigating the bank's currency trading business.

The \$500 million paid to the Comptroller of the Currency will go directly to the U.S. Treasury, according to the order. The \$500 million paid to the CFPB will go into the bureau's civil penalties fund, which is used to help consumers who might have been harmed in other cases. Wells has previously said it began reimbursing auto loan and mortgage customers last year.

The settlement imposes further restrictions on Wells Fargo's business, a sign that regulators have lost patience with the bank's promises to turn itself around. Wells will need to come up with a risk management plan to be approved by bank regulators, and get approval from bank regulators before hiring senior employees. The OCC said in a statement that one reason for the size of the fine against Wells was "the bank's failure to correct the deficiencies and violations in a timely manner."

The \$500 million fine matches the largest fine ever handed out by the Comptroller of the Currency against HSBC in 2012.

The Federal Reserve cracked down on Wells earlier this year by restricting it from growing larger than the \$1.95 trillion in assets that it held at the time and requiring the bank to replace several directors on its board. The Federal Reserve cited "widespread abuses" for taking such an action.

"While we have more work to do, these orders affirm that we share the same priorities with our regulators and that we are committed to working with them as we deliver our commitments with focus, accountability, and transparency," said Wells Fargo CEO Tim Sloan in a statement Friday.

The action by the CFPB is notable because the penalty is the first imposed by the bureau under Mick Mulvaney, appointed by President Trump to take over the consumer watchdog agency in late November. The largest fine previously handed down by the CFPB was a \$100 million penalty also against Wells Fargo.

While banks have benefited from looser regulations and lower taxes under President Trump, Wells Fargo has been called out specifically by Trump as a bank that needed to be punished for its bad behavior.

"Fines and penalties against Wells Fargo Bank for their bad acts against their customers and others will not be dropped, as has incorrectly been reported, but will be pursued and, if anything, substantially increased. I will cut Regs but make penalties severe when caught cheating!," Trump wrote on Twitter back in December.

The White House said that, outside of his tweet, President Trump was not involved in the Wells Fargo investigation or settlement.

Consumer advocates have been critical of the Trump administration's record since it took over the CFPB. However, advocates were pleased to see Wells Fargo held to account.

"Today's billion dollar fine is an important development and a fitting penalty given the severity of Wells Fargo's fraudulent and abusive practices," said Pamela Banks, senior policy counsel for Consumers Union.

On Friday, Wells Fargo adjusted its previously reported first-quarter earnings to reflect the penalty. The nation's third-largest bank now says it made \$4.7 billion in the first 90 days of the year, down from \$5.46 billion in the same period a year earlier.

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

Defense says schedules show Cosby wasn't around for assault

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and CLAUDIA LAUER, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Jurors got a look Friday at Bill Cosby's travel records as his lawyers made the case that he never visited his suburban Philadelphia mansion in the month he is accused of drugging and molesting a woman there.

Cosby's lawyers say the alleged assault on Andrea Constand could not have happened in January 2004, when she says the comedian knocked her out with pills and violated her. The date is important because Cosby was not charged until December 2015, just before the 12-year statute of limitations was set to expire.

The defense produced logs for Cosby's private jet flights as well as several days' worth of schedules listing his whereabouts and media appearances. The schedules do not indicate what Cosby was doing during his personal time.

Debbie Meister, his personal assistant, testified that the flights on Cosby's Gulfstream IV — dubbed "Camille" after his wife of more than 50 years — coincided with comedy performances and other events on Cosby's schedule.

None of the records showed him flying into or out of Philadelphia-area airports from December 2003 to February 2004.

Cosby spokesman Andrew Wyatt said outside court that the records "connect the dots" that the comedian wasn't around Philadelphia at that time.

Cosby, 80, is charged with three counts of aggravated indecent assault. He says his sexual encounter with Constand was consensual.

Sequestered jurors got an early start to the weekend as Day 10 of the trial drew to a close shortly after lunch. Testimony will resume Monday. The jury is expected to get the case next week.

Earlier Friday, Cosby's lawyers told the judge they want jurors to hear from Constand's confidante before deliberations get underway, but said she's been unreachable.

The defense asked for permission to read parts of Sheri Williams' deposition into the record just as prosecutors did with Cosby's old testimony. Williams gave the deposition as part of Constand's 2005 lawsuit against Cosby, who wound up settling for nearly \$3.4 million.

Judge Steven O'Neill appeared skeptical of the defense request, saying he wants to hear from a witness who can show the defense has made a reasonable effort to serve Williams with a subpoena to testify in person. O'Neill put off a ruling until Monday.

Constand testified at Cosby's first trial last year that she and Williams were good friends and would speak "at all hours of the day: morning, noon, and night." She said they were in touch as she went to police in January 2005 with allegations Cosby drugged and molested her about a year earlier.

Cosby's lawyers said they expected Williams' testimony to refute Constand's claims that she was unaware he was romantically interested in her. And they said the testimony would show that Constand "could not have been the unwitting victim" prosecutors have portrayed.

Constand testified at the trial that Cosby had never expressed any romantic interest, though she called the passes she said he made at her before the alleged assault — touching her thigh and trying to unbutton her pants — "a little bit absurd."

"Mr. Cosby was just a little bit younger than my grandfather. He was a married man and I absolutely

showed no interest in him. But I wasn't threatened and I didn't judge him," she testified.

Cosby testified in his own deposition — also given as part of Constand's lawsuit — that he had a romantic relationship with her.

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

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

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

AP-NORC Poll: Americans expect Russia tension will get worse

By MATTHEW PENNINGTON and EMILY SWANSON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans largely fear the country's relationship with Russia and China will get worse in the coming year, and despite signs of diplomatic progress with Kim Jong Un on nuclear weapons, nearly half say the same about North Korea.

That's according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research that provides insight into the public's view on the direction of U.S. ties with those key strategic rivals, 15 months after President Donald Trump took office.

"Trump has opened up a whole bucket of worms, and he's doing it with too many countries all at once," said John Parker, 70, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. "It's almost like he's trying to get us into trouble."

The poll found that Americans are most downbeat about the relationship with Russia: 56 percent think it will get worse over the next year, while just 13 percent think it will improve. Even among Republicans, more expect the relationship with Russia to get worse than better, 40 percent to 20 percent, though another 40 percent expect it to stay about the same.

Eric Brammer, 30, an information technology specialist from Roanoke, Virginia, who describes himself as Democrat, said he expects tensions to continue over Russia's support of the government of President Bashar Assad in civil war-racked Syria, where the U.S., Britain and France last week launched missile strikes against Syrian chemical weapons facilities.

Brammer also said that if more allegations of Russian interference in U.S. elections come to light, it will sow more distrust among the American public and worsen the relationship.

On China — with which Trump has forged cooperation against North Korea but drawn sharp differences on trade — some 48 percent expect relations to get worse in the next year, while just 17 percent expect things to get better.

"The farmers here are worried about trade with China because of the soybeans, corn and hogs that all go there," said Dorothy Jorgensen, a retiree from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who expects relations with the world's second-largest economy to deteriorate. "If one side raises taxes and the other side does the same, it's not going to help either country."

As Trump looks to narrow the U.S. trade deficit, he has threatened to raise U.S. tariffs on up to \$150 billion of Chinese goods to counteract what he says are that country's unfair trade policies. That has fueled fears of a trade war. China has threatened to retaliate with tariffs of its own, including on American agricultural produce.

But Marta Vicentini, a retired neurophysiologist from Miami Beach, Florida, said Trump was right to hit back against China over theft of U.S. know-how and trade secrets and predicted his strategy would work in America's favor.

"They (China) have no alternative but to trade with the U.S.," she said.

Vicentini also supports the Republican president's approach toward North Korea. She said the imposition of sanctions is paying off and the young dictator Kim has been brought to the table by fears Trump will resort to military force and even a nuclear strike.

"He (Kim) is going to grow up and mature and he's going to realize that he's playing with fire," Vicentini

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said.

Trump is planning to meet with Kim by June, in search of a deal in which North Korea would give up his nuclear weapons. It would be the first U.S.-North Korea summit after six decades of hostility since the Korean War.

Despite the promise of the summit, far more Americans think relations with the North Korea will get worse than better, 47 percent to 20 percent. Republicans are more optimistic. Forty percent think that the relationship that grew increasingly tense last year will improve in the next year. Some 34 percent think it will stay about the same, and just 25 percent expect it to worsen.

Outside of foreign affairs, 40 percent of Americans approve of the overall job Trump is doing as president, the poll found. That's about the same percentage as said so a month ago, up slightly from where it's been for most of the year. Fifty-nine percent now say they disapprove of the job the president is doing.

Americans are also largely pessimistic about the state of the country generally. Sixty percent think the U.S. is headed in the wrong direction, though a majority of Republicans — 67 percent — think it's headed the right way.

The AP-NORC poll of 1,140 adults was conducted April 11-16 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4.0 percentage points.

Respondents were first selected randomly using address-based sampling methods, and later interviewed online or by phone.

Online:

AP-NORC Center: <http://www.apnorc.org/>

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 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

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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 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.

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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.

Associated Press writer Ben Fox contributed to this report.

After Facebook scrutiny, is Google next?

By RYAN NAKASHIMA and MATT O'BRIEN, Technology Writers

MENLO PARK, Calif. (AP) — Facebook has taken the lion's share of scrutiny from Congress and the media for its data-handling practices that allow savvy marketers and political agents to target specific audiences, but it's far from alone.

YouTube, Google and Twitter also have giant platforms awash in more videos, posts and pages than any set of human eyes could ever check. Their methods of serving ads against this sea of content may come under the microscope next.

Advertising and privacy experts say a backlash is inevitable against a "Wild West" internet that has escaped scrutiny before. There continues to be a steady barrage of new examples where unsuspecting advertisers had their brands associated with extremist content on major platforms.

In the latest discovery, CNN reported that it found more than 300 retail brands, government agencies and technology companies had their ads run on YouTube channels that promoted white nationalists, Nazis, conspiracy theories and North Korean propaganda.

Child advocates have also raised alarms about the ease with which smartphone-equipped children are exposed to inappropriate videos and deceptive advertising.

"I absolutely think that Google is next and long overdue," said Josh Golin, director of the Boston-based Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, which asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate Google-owned YouTube's advertising and data-collection practices earlier this month.

YouTube has repeatedly outlined the ways it attempts to flag and delete hateful, violent, sexually explicit or harmful videos, but its screening efforts have often missed the mark.

It also allows advertisers to avoid running ads on sensitive content — like news or politics — that don't violate YouTube guidelines but don't fit with a company's brand. Those methods appear to have failed.

"YouTube has once again failed to correctly filter channels out of our marketing buys," said a statement

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Friday from 20th Century Fox Film, which learned that its ads were running on videos posted by a self-described Nazi. YouTube has since deleted the offending channel, but the Hollywood studio says it has unanswered questions about how it happened in the first place.

"All of our filters were in place in order to ensure that this did not happen," Fox said, adding it has asked for a refund of any money shared with the "abhorrent channel."

YouTube said Friday that it has made "significant changes to how we approach monetization," citing "stricter policies, better controls and greater transparency." It noted it allows advertisers to exclude certain channels from ads. It also removes ads when it's notified they are running beside content that doesn't comply with its policies.

"We are committed to working with our advertisers and getting this right," YouTube said.

So far, just one major advertiser — Baltimore-based sports apparel company Under Armour — had said it had withdrawn its advertising in the wake of the CNN report, though the lull lasted only a few days last week when it was first notified of the problem. After its shoe commercial turned up on a channel known for espousing white nationalist beliefs, Under Armour worked with YouTube to expand its filters to exclude certain topics and keywords.

On the other hand, Procter & Gamble, which had kept its ads off of YouTube since March 2017, said it had come back to the platform but drastically pared back the channels it would advertise on to under 10,000. It has worked on its own, with third parties, and with YouTube to create its restrictive list.

That's just a fraction of the some 3 million YouTube channels in the U.S. that accept ads, and is even more stringent than YouTube's "Google Preferred" lineup that focuses on the most-popular 5 percent of videos.

The CNN report was "an illustration of exactly why we needed to go above and beyond just what YouTube's plans were and why we needed to take more control of where our ads were showing up," said P&G spokeswoman Tressie Rose.

The big problem, experts say, is that advertisers lured by the reach and targeting capability of online platforms can mistakenly expect that the same standards for decency on network TV will apply online. In the same way, broadcast TV rules that require transparency about political ad buyers are absent on the web.

"There have always been regulations regarding appropriate conduct in content," says Robert Passikoff, president of Brand Keys Inc., a New York customer research firm. Regulating content on the internet is one area "that has gotten away from everyone."

Also absent from the internet are many of the rules that govern children's programming on television sets. TV networks, for instance, are allowed to air commercial breaks but cannot use kid-oriented characters to advertise products. Such "host-selling" runs rampant on internet services such as YouTube.

Action to remove ads from inappropriate content is mostly reactive because of lack of upfront control of what gets uploaded, and it generally takes the mass threat of boycott to get advertisers to demand changes, according to BrandSimple consultant Allen Adamson.

"The social media backlash is what you're worried about," he said.

At the same time, politicians are having trouble keeping up with the changing landscape, evident by how ill-informed many members of Congress appeared during questioning of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg earlier this month.

"We're in the early stages of trying to figure out what kind of regulation makes sense here," said Larry Chiagouris, professor of marketing at Pace University in New York. "It's going to take quite some time to sort that out."

O'Brien reported from Brookline, Massachusetts.

Science Says: Amount of straws, plastic pollution is huge

By SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Cities and nations are looking at banning plastic straws and stirrers in hopes of addressing the world's plastic pollution problem. The problem is so large, though, that scientists say that's not nearly enough.

Australian scientists Denise Hardesty and Chris Wilcox estimate, using trash collected on U.S. coastlines during cleanups over five years, that there are nearly 7.5 million plastic straws lying around America's shorelines. They figure that means 437 million to 8.3 billion plastic straws are on the entire world's coastlines.

But that huge number suddenly seems small when you look at all the plastic trash bobbing around oceans. University of Georgia environmental engineering professor Jenna Jambeck calculates that nearly 9 million tons (8 million metric tons) end up in the world's oceans and coastlines each year, as of 2010, according to her 2015 study in the journal *Science*.

That's just in and near oceans. Each year more than 35 million tons (31.9 million metric tons) of plastic pollution are produced around Earth and about a quarter of that ends up around the water.

"For every pound of tuna we're taking out of the ocean, we're putting two pounds of plastic in the ocean," says ocean scientist Sherry Lippiatt, California regional coordinator for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's marine debris program.

Seabirds can ingest as much as 8 percent of their body weight in plastic, which for humans "is equivalent to the average woman having the weight of two babies in her stomach," says Hardesty of Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.

Organizers of Earth Day, which is Sunday, have proclaimed ending plastics pollution this year's theme. And following in the footsteps of several U.S. cities such as Seattle and Miami Beach, British Prime Minister Theresa May in April called on the nations of the British commonwealth to consider banning plastic straws, coffee stirrers and plastic swabs with cotton on the end.

McDonald's will test paper straws in some U.K. locations next month and keep all straws behind the counter, so customers have to ask for them. "Together with our customers we can do our bit for the environment and use fewer straws," says Paul Pomroy, who runs the fast-food company's U.K. business.

The issue of straws and marine animals got more heated after a 2015 viral video showing rescuers removing a straw from a sea turtle's nose in graphic and bloody detail.

But a ban may be a bit of a straw man in the discussions about plastics pollution. Straws make up about 4 percent of the plastic trash by piece, but far less by weight.

Straws on average weigh so little — about one sixty-seventh of an ounce or .42 grams — that all those billions of straws add up to only about 2,000 tons of the nearly 9 million tons of plastic waste that yearly hits the waters.

"Bans can play a role," says oceanographer Kara Lavendar Law, a co-author with Jambeck of the 2015 *Science* study. "We are not going to solve the problem by banning straws."

Scientists say that unless you are disabled or a small child, plastic straws are generally unnecessary and a ban is start and good symbol. These items that people use for a few minutes but "are sticking round for our lifetime and longer," Lippiatt says.

Marcus Eriksen, an environmental scientist who co-founded the advocacy group 5 Gyres, says working on bans of straws and plastic bags would bring noticeable change. He calls plastic bags, cups and straws that break down in smaller but still harmful pieces the "smog of microplastics."

"Our cities are horizontal smokestacks pumping out this smog into the seas," Eriksen says. "One goal for advocacy organizations is to make that single-use culture taboo, the same way smoking in public is taboo."

Steve Russell, vice president of plastics for the American Chemistry Council, said people can reduce waste by not taking straws, but "in many cases these plastics provide sanitary conditions for food, beverages and personal care."

The key to solving marine litter, Russell says, is "in investing in systems to capture land-based waste and investing in infrastructure to convert used plastics into valuable products."

Even though Jambeck spends her life measuring and working on the growing problem of waste pollution, she's optimistic.

"We can do this," Jambeck says. "I have faith in humans."

AP Retail Writer Joseph Pisani contributed from New York.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears . His work can be found here .

This Associated Press series was produced in partnership with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Slumping tech companies weigh on US stocks

By ALEX VEIGA, AP Business Writer

A steep slide in technology companies weighed on U.S. stocks Friday, pulling the market lower for the second day in a row.

Losses among retailers, packaged food and beverage makers and other consumer goods companies also helped weigh down the market. Banks rose as bond yields continued to climb, reflecting increasing investor concerns of higher inflation in the wake of rising oil and other commodity prices.

"Higher commodity prices, a little bit more inflation pressure and higher interest rates, that sort of takes some wind out of the sails for equity markets, at least short-term," said Edward Campbell, senior portfolio manager at QMA, a business unit of PGIM.

The S&P 500 index fell 22.99 points, or 0.9 percent, to 2,670.14. The Dow Jones industrial average slid 201.95 points, or 0.8 percent, to 24,462.94. The Nasdaq composite lost 91.93 points, or 1.3 percent, to 7,146.13. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks gave up 9.69 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,564.12.

For every stock that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, two declined. Still, the indexes finished the week with a gain.

"This is just the market taking a breather here in an up month," Campbell said.

Bond prices continued to slide as bond yields rose. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.96 percent. That's up from 2.91 percent late Thursday and the highest level since January 2014.

The pickup in bond yields helped drive bank shares higher. When bond yields rise, they drive up interest rates on mortgages and other loans, which can translate into bigger profits for banks. Regions Financial gained 4.1 percent to \$18.89.

Technology stocks were the biggest contributor to the market decline, adding to the sector's losses for the week. It's still up 4.4 percent this year. Apple led the sector slide, finishing lower for the third day in a row. The stock lost 4.1 percent to \$165.72.

Mattel was one of the biggest decliners among consumer-focused companies. The struggling toy maker slid 3.6 percent to \$12.96 after announcing that CEO Margo Georgiadis is stepping down and is being succeeded by a company director and former studio executive.

Investors continued to weigh company earnings. While the busiest stretch of the current earnings reporting season begins next week, most of the S&P 500 companies that have reported results or outlooks so far have exceeded Wall Street's projections.

There have also been some big disappointments.

On Friday, Stanley Black & Decker slid 6.7 percent to \$144.21 after the tool company said commodities costs rose in the first quarter and sales of outdoor products got off to a slow start.

Skechers USA also tumbled, sinking 27 percent to \$30.70 after the footwear company issued a second-quarter forecast that was far weaker than analysts had expected.

Investors welcomed General Electric's latest results, which topped analysts' forecasts. Shares in the conglomerate climbed 3.9 percent to \$14.54.

Crude oil prices reversed an early slide triggered by news that representatives from OPEC nations and

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allied oil ministers were meeting in Saudi Arabia to discuss their agreement to maintain cuts to production in a bid to keep prices up. Benchmark U.S. crude gained 9 cents to settle at \$68.38 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 28 cents to \$74.06 per barrel in London.

"With commodity prices being up, that's just more signs of inflation pressure and something for the markets to worry about a little bit more," Campbell said.

The dollar rose to 107.60 yen from 107.41 yen on Thursday. The euro fell to \$1.2283 from \$1.2337. The pound weakened to \$1.4023 from \$1.4078 after the Bank of England's governor cast some doubts about the possibility of a rate increase next month.

Gold fell \$10.50 to \$1,338.30 an ounce. Silver dropped 8 cents to \$17.16 an ounce. Copper was little changed at \$3.14 a pound.

In other energy futures trading, heating oil rose a penny to \$2.12 a gallon. Wholesale gasoline picked up 2 cents to \$2.10 a gallon. Natural gas gained 8 cents to \$2.74 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Major stock indexes in Europe closed mostly higher. Germany's DAX slipped 0.3 percent, while France's CAC 40 gained 0.2 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.4 percent.

Asian stock indexes finished lower. Japan's Nikkei 225 slipped 0.1 percent. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.4 percent, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index fell 0.9 percent.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, April 21, the 111th day of 2018. There are 254 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 21, 1918, Manfred von Richthofen, 25, the German ace known as the "Red Baron" who was believed to have downed 80 enemy aircraft during World War I, was himself shot down and killed while in action over France.

On this date:

In 1509, England's King Henry VII died; he was succeeded by his 17-year-old son, Henry VIII.

In 1649, the Maryland Toleration Act, providing for freedom of worship for all Christians, was passed by the Maryland assembly.

In 1789, John Adams was sworn in as the first vice president of the United States.

In 1836, an army of Texans led by Sam Houston defeated the Mexicans at San Jacinto, assuring Texas independence.

In 1910, author Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, died in Redding, Connecticut, at age 74.

In 1930, fire broke out inside the overcrowded Ohio Penitentiary in Columbus, killing 332 inmates.

In 1942, the first edition of "The Stranger" (L'Etranger), Albert Camus' (al-BEHR' kah-MOOZ') highly influential absurdist novel, was published in Nazi-occupied Paris by Gallimard.

In 1955, the Jerome Lawrence-Robert Lee play "Inherit the Wind," inspired by the Scopes trial of 1925, opened at the National Theatre in New York.

In 1962, the Century 21 Exposition, also known as the Seattle World's Fair, began a six-month run.

In 1977, the musical play "Annie," based on the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip, opened on Broadway, beginning a run of 2,377 performances.

In 1986, a rediscovered vault in Chicago's Lexington Hotel that was linked to Al Capone was opened during a widely watched live TV special hosted by Geraldo Rivera; aside from a few bottles and a sign, the vault turned out to be empty.

In 1998, astronomers announced in Washington that they had discovered possible signs of a new family of planets orbiting a star 220 light-years away, the clearest evidence to date of worlds forming beyond our solar system.

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Ten years ago: President George W. Bush opened a two-day summit in New Orleans with Mexican President Felipe Calderon (fay-LEE'-pay kahl-duh-ROHN') and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Robert Cheruiyot (CHEHR'-ee-aht) of Kenya won the Boston Marathon in 2:07:46 to become the fourth man to win the race four times; Dire Tune of Ethiopia won the women's race in 2:25:25. 1970s soul singer Al Wilson died in Fontana, California, at age 68.

Five years ago: On the first Sunday since the deadly Boston Marathon bombing, churches paused to mourn the dead and console the survivors while in West, Texas, residents prayed for comfort four days after a fertilizer plant explosion killed 15 people. In Britain, the London Marathon sent out a powerful message of solidarity with Boston and its victims as runners crossed the line in front of Buckingham Palace with black ribbons on their chests (Tsegaye Kebede of Ethiopia won the men's race). Joe Scarborough, a 50-year-old self-employed electrical contractor, rolled the first 900 series in Professional Bowlers Association history — three straight perfect games.

One year ago: A San Francisco power outage blamed on the massive failure of a circuit breaker that sparked a fire at a power substation stranded people in elevators and left tens of thousands in the dark. Prince fans marked the first anniversary of his sudden death by gathering at Minnesota sites made famous by the "Purple Rain" superstar.

Today's Birthdays: Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is 92. Actress-comedian-writer Elaine May is 86. Actor Charles Grodin is 83. Actor Reni Santoni (REH'-nee san-TOH'-nee) is 80. Anti-death penalty activist Sister Helen Prejean is 79. Singer-musician Iggy Pop is 71. Actress Patti LuPone is 69. Actor Tony Danza is 67. Actor James Morrison is 64. Actress Andie MacDowell is 60. Rock singer Robert Smith (The Cure) is 59. Rock musician Michael Timmins (Cowboy Junkies) is 59. Actor-director John Cameron Mitchell is 55. Rapper Michael Franti (Spearhead) is 52. Actor Toby Stephens is 49. Rock singer-musician Glen Hansard (The Frames) is 48. Actor Rob Riggle is 48. Comedian Nicole Sullivan is 48. Football player-turned-actor Brian White is 45. Olympic gold medal pairs figure skater Jamie Sale (sah-LAY') is 41. Rock musician David Brenner (Theory of a Deadman) is 40. Actor James McAvoy is 39. Former NFL quarterback Tony Romo is 38. Actor Terrence J is 36. Actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw is 35. Actor Christoph (cq) Sanders is 30. Actor Frank Dillane is 27. Rock singer Sydney Sierota (Echosmith) is 21.

Thought for Today: "Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please." — Mark Twain (1835-1910).