

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, April 25

VEX World Robotics Competition at Louisville, KY

Thursday, April 26

VEX World Robotics Competition at Louisville, KY

7 p.m.: FCCLA Style Show

10 a.m.: Girls Golf at Milbank Area

Friday, April 27

VEX World Robotics Competition at Louisville, KY

FFA Banquet

3 p.m.: Track Meet at Sisseton

Saturday, April 28

VEX World Robotics Competition at Louisville, KY

JOHNSON AGENCY

Real Estate & Insurance

Jay Johnson, Broker

www.johnsonagencygroton.com

102 N Main St. Office: 605/397-2424
Groton, SD 57445 Home: 605/397-8565



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

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.

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Groton sirens to be tested today

South Dakota Severe Weather Awareness week is scheduled for April 23-27.

During the week Brown County will be testing our entire network of outdoor warning sirens across the county. This is scheduled to happen on Wednesday April 25, 2018.

- Test tornado watch will be issued at 10:00am CDT
- Test tornado warning will be issued at 10:15am CDT

The outdoor sirens will be activated during the 10:15 warning.

Please remember these are outdoor warning sirens and are only designed to alert those who are outside that something dangerous is happening in your area. Once you hear the siren activated you should go inside and turn to local media or NOAA weather radio to get more information.

If severe weather is in the area that day we will not be doing the test.

For more information or questions please call the Brown County Emergency Management office at 605-626-7122.

Stange is triple winner at Groton Kiwanis Track Meet

Jonathan Doeden has qualified twice for state in the 110m hurdles as he ran a state qualifying time of 15.56 at the Groton Kiwanis Track Meet held Tuesday. Jessica Bjerke also qualified for the state with a state qualifying throw of 113-10 in the discus. Bjerke was a double winner taking first in both the discus and shot put. Harleigh Stange ended up being a triple winner as she won the long jump, triple jump and was on the winning 800m relay team. Jonathan Doeden took first in the 110m hurdles.

100m Hurdles: 5, Payton Maine, 18.18.

300m Hurdles: 8, Payton Maine, 54.98

400m Relay: 4, 55.97.

800m Relay: 1, Groton (Stange, Maine, Wanner, Gengerke), 1:57.42.

Medley Relay: 5, Groton, 5:16.97.

1600m Relay: 8, Groton, 4:53.69.

3200m Relay: 8, Groton, 12:23.04.

Long Jump: 1, Harleigh Stange, 15 5 1/4; 8, Gia Gengerke, 13 11 1/4.

Triple Jump: 1, Harleigh Stange, 32-3.

High Jump: 5, Gia Gengerke, 4-4.

Shot Put: 1, Jessica Bjerke, 34-1/4; 2, Jennie Doeden, 33-8 3/4; 4, Taylor Holm, 30-9 1/2; 6, Kaycie Hawkins, 29-11 1/2.

Discus: 1, (SQ) Jessica Bjerke, 113-10; 2, Jennie Doeden, 95-6; 3, Kaycie Hawkins, 91-4.

Bjerke and Stange were awarded the Dick Donovan Top Field Event award.

110m Hurdles: 1, (SQ) Jonathan Doeden, 15.56.

300m Hurdles: 4, Thomas Cranford, 46.89.

Medley Relay: 7, Groton, 4:37.50.

3200m Relay: 6, Groton, 10:01.03.

Long Jump: 8, Jonathan Doeden, 17-4 1/4.

High Jump: Paxton Bonn, 5-4; 5, Austin Jones, 5-2.

Discus: 6, Luke Thorson, 116-7.

South Dakota Moves Out of Last Place for Average Teacher Salary 11.8 Percent Increase Boost State Average to 48 in Nation

Pierre – For the first time in over 30 years, South Dakota’s average teacher salary no longer ranks last in the nation according to a recently released report by the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA’s 2018 Rankings & Estimates publication shows South Dakota’s average teacher salary increased by 11.8 percent during the 2016-2017 school year. This is the largest increase by any state. The pay bump moved South Dakota up to 48th place overall in the nation followed by West Virginia, Oklahoma and Mississippi.

South Dakota Education Association (SDEA) President, Mary McCorkle, said the new data clearly reflects the work of Governor Dugaard’s Blue Ribbon Task Force and the impact of the half-penny increase of the state’s sales tax.

“SDEA welcomes the news this report brings for our teachers and students. The data is evidence the Blue-Ribbon Task Force accomplished one of its main goals, moving the state’s average teacher salary from the bottom of the list,” said McCorkle. “As a state, we were stuck at the bottom for far too long, so moving up means South Dakota is moving in the right direction for teachers and students.”

McCorkle does caution the report is just a snap-shot in time and without a continued effort to keep moving forward the state could find itself at the bottom once again.

“We took a big leap forward in 2016, but we can’t let 48th be the place we stop. We must keep moving forward,” said McCorkle. “As the state embarks on the three-year review of the new funding-formula adopted in 2016, I think we can say, based on this report, we did a lot. Now, we must ask what do we need to do to keep the momentum going. Standing still is not an option for our teachers, and it certainly is not an option for our students. We must keep focused on the future.”

The NEA report provides comparative state data and national averages on a host of important public education statistics, teacher salaries, student enrollment, and revenue and expenditures for the most recent school year. NEA has produced the Rankings and Estimates report for more than 70 years. The complete report can be found at <http://www.nea.org/home/73145.htm>.

SDEA is South Dakota’s largest education professionals’ organization, representing more than 6,000 elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers. SDEA is an affiliate of the NEA.

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Today in Weather History

1875 - New York City received three inches of snow, the latest measurable snow of record for that location. (David Ludlum)

1898 - The temperature at Volcano Springs CA hit 118 degrees to establish a U.S. record for the month of April. (The Weather Channel)

1910 - Chicago, IL, was blanketed with 2.5 inches of snow, and a total of 6.5 inches between the 22nd and the 26th. It was the latest significant snow of record for the city. (The Weather Channel)

1920 - Atlanta, GA, received 1.5 inches of snow, and experienced their latest freeze of record with a morning low of 32 degrees. The high of just 39 degrees was only their second daily high colder than 40 degrees in April. (The Weather Channel)

1984 - A late season snowstorm struck the Northern Rockies and the Northern Plains. The storm produced some unusually high snowfall totals. The town of Lead, located in the Black Hills of western South Dakota, was buried under 67 inches of snow. Red Lodge, located in the mountains of southern Montana, reported 72 inches of snow. Up to 60 inches blanketed the mountains of northern Wyoming. It was rated the worst late season storm of record for much of the affected area. (25th-28th) (Storm Data) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Low pressure off the coast of North Carolina produced heavy rain flooding creeks in the foothills and the piedmont area, before moving out to sea. The low pressure system also produced wind gusts to 50 mph in Virginia. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms racing at 65 mph produced large hail in Alabama and Georgia. Hail damage in Alabama was estimated at fifty million dollars, making it their worst weather disaster since Hurricane Frederick in 1979. Hail three inches in diameter accompanied a tornado near Valdosta GA. Hail four and a half inches in diameter was reported south of Atlanta GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing along a stationary front produced severe weather from North Carolina to Indiana and Ohio, with more than 70 reports of large hail and damaging winds. A strong (F-2) tornado hit Xenia OH injuring 16 persons and causing more than a million dollars damage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Texas to Nebraska. Thunderstorms spawned fifteen tornadoes, including a powerful (F-4) tornado near Weatherford TX. Between 3 PM and 8 PM, a storm complex tracking northeastward across central Kansas spawned four tornadoes along a 119-mile path from Ness to Smith Center, with the last tornado on the ground for 55 miles. Del Rio TX was raked with hail two inches in diameter, and wind gusts to 112 mph. Brown County and Commanche County in Texas were deluged with up to 18 inches of rain, and flooding caused more than 65 million dollars damage. Two dozen cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 87 degrees at Flint MI and 90 degrees at Alpena MI were records for April. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2008 - Anchorage, AK, receives a record 17.2 inches at the airport and 22 inches in northeast Anchorage from the 25th to 26th. The 15.5 inches on the 25th makes it the third most received on any one day in Anchorage.

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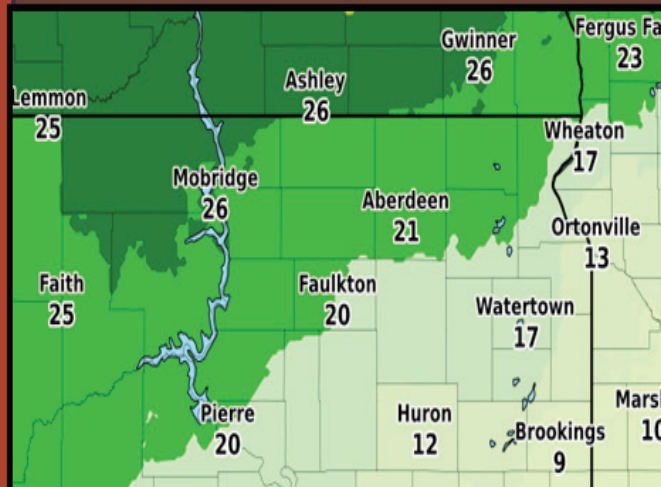
Wed Apr 25	Thu Apr 26	Fri Apr 27	Sat Apr 28	Sun Apr 29	Mon Apr 30	Tue May 1
67°F	59°F	69°F	70°F	77°F	77°F	70°F
40°F	35°F	39°F	47°F	54°F	46°F	49°F
S 15 MPH	N 23 MPH	W 13 MPH	E 11 MPH	SSE 21 MPH	S 16 MPH Precip 10%	SW 13 MPH Precip 20%

High to Very High Fire Danger This Afternoon

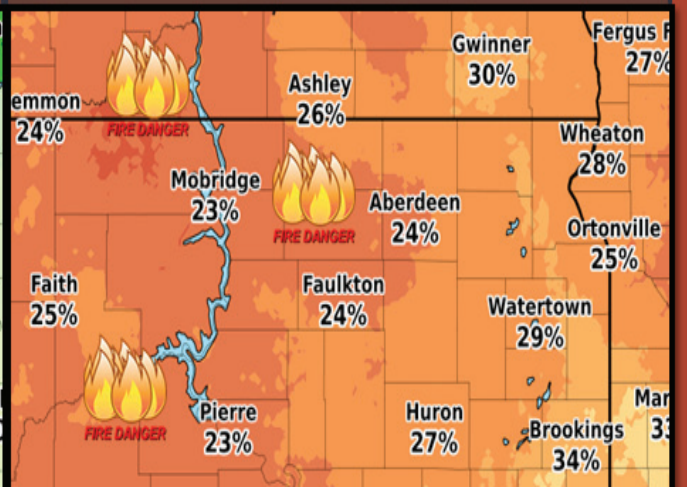
- Mild and dry air mass moving in – humidity dropping into the 20s.
- Breezy southwest winds developing this afternoon – mainly central SD



Highest Forecast Afternoon Wind Gusts (mph)



Lowest Forecast Afternoon Humidity



Warmer and drier air will move into the region today. We will also see an increase in southwest breezes this afternoon, more so over central South Dakota. Humidity is forecast to bottom out in the 20s across the area this afternoon as high temperatures rise into the 60s to around 70 degrees. Fire danger will become high to very high this afternoon.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 54.8 F at 12:00 AM

Low Outside Temp: 36.8 F at 5:23 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 26.0 Mph at 7:59 AM

Precip: 0.22

Today's Info

Record High: 97° in 1962

Record Low: 19° in 1958

Average High: 62°F

Average Low: 36°F

Average Precip in April: 1.42

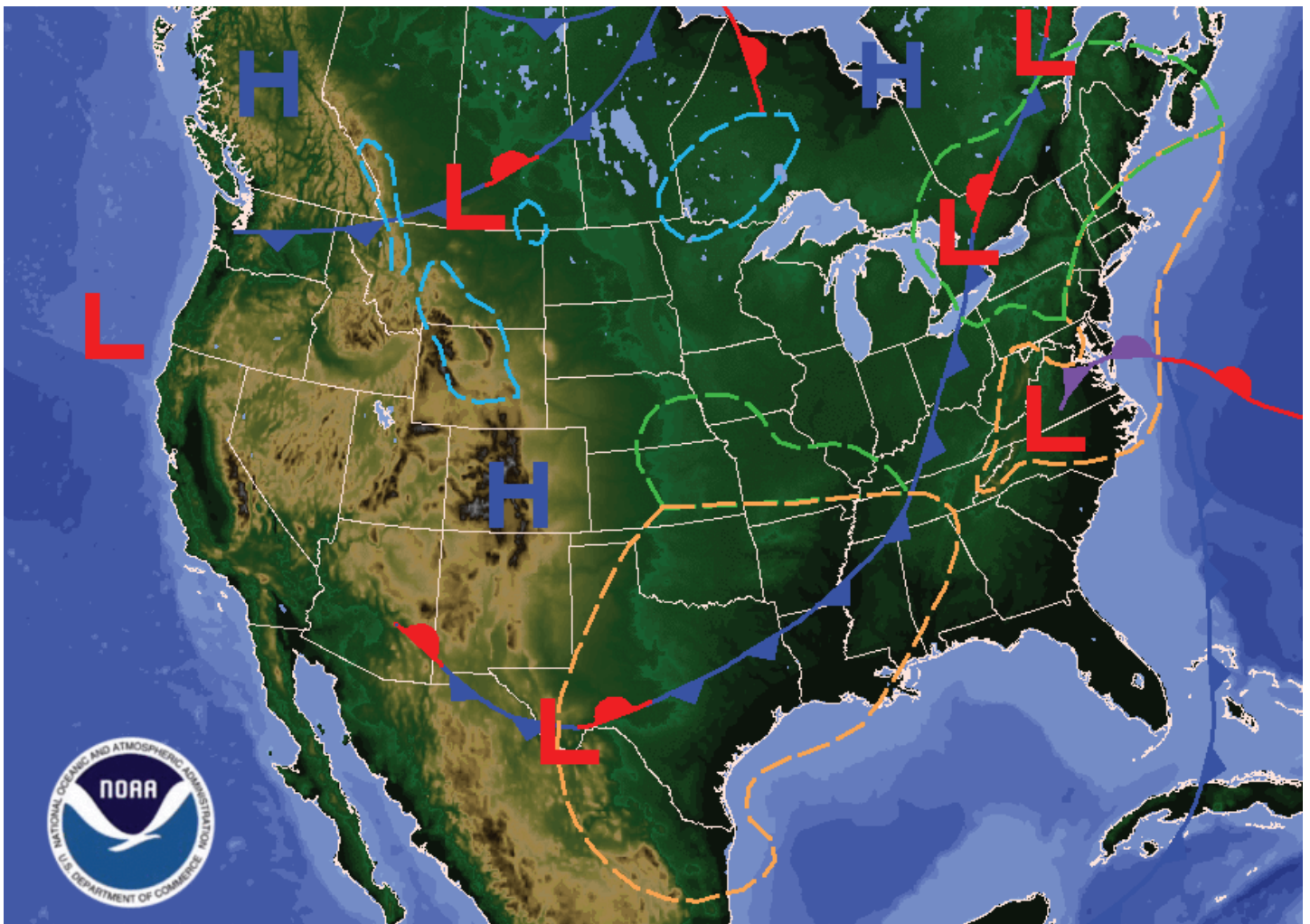
Precip to date in April: 0.83

Average Precip to date: 3.60

Precip Year to Date: 2.68

Sunset Tonight: 8:32 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:29 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Apr 25, 2018, issued 4:41 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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TREES OF THE LORD

William Jackson was a prominent figure in the American Revolution. But even more important was his role as the Secretary of the United States Constitutional Convention. Although we know much about him and his many accomplishments, there is one fact rarely mentioned when people speak of him: a fondness that he had for a large oak tree. Its great size and the strength that it represented gave him so much inspiration that he wrote a deed conveying it to the full possession of itself and the land that surrounded it so even its roots would be protected from harm.

Trees have a special significance in the Bible. The Psalmist wrote that "The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that He planted." Why was the cedar tree, of all trees singled out?

Cedars are trees whose branches reach high into the heavens. Their stateliness stands in stark contrast to other trees as they soar well over one hundred feet into the sky - as though they were reaching up for the God who created them. Certainly this represents a worthy characteristic for Christians to follow.

Cedars also are deep-rooted. They send their "anchors" deep into the earth as they reach up to their Creator. Many trees fall when they are "attracted" by storms. But not the cedar tree, It stands undisturbed no matter the fierceness of the winds and rains.

Cedars are broad-branched - it spreads its arms widely as it grows old. It appears as though it wants to "embrace" others and protect them from harm. So do we.

Prayer: Lord, make us like cedars: to reach up to be near to You, down to abide in You and out to help others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 104:16 The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

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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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

03-19-31-32-48, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 3

(three, nineteen, thirty-one, thirty-two, forty-eight; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$96 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$158 million

Louisiana lawmakers eye harsher penalties in pipeline damage

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE, Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A fight over a crude oil pipeline in southern Louisiana has spilled into the Legislature.

A proposal to stiffen penalties for damaging or trespassing around pipelines is nearing final passage after winning approval Tuesday from a Senate judicial committee.

Rep. Major Thibaut's bill would classify pipelines as critical infrastructure, lumping them in the same category as power plants and water treatment facilities.

If the Democrat's proposal becomes law, anyone who damages a pipeline could face up to 15 years in prison and someone who unlawfully enters pipeline land could get up to five years. The intention, he said, is to protect pipelines.

"This bill does nothing to impact the ability to peacefully protest. It only comes into play when there is damage to that critical infrastructure, so if you don't damage anything this law does not apply," Thibaut said.

His assertion was challenged by environmental activists, a crawfisherman and a professor. They argued that the bill will stifle free speech against protests, could wrongfully net anyone who accidentally enters pipeline land in a state interlaced with pipelines and noted that the bill included penalties for "unauthorized entry" to critical infrastructure.

"We do still think there's some question about the intentional nature of this singling out pipeline protests," said William P. Quigley, a law professor at Loyola University New Orleans.

The bill comes as construction of the Bayou Bridge pipeline in Louisiana's Cajun country has been marked by protests, a handful of arrests and legal fights.

Bayou Bridge Pipeline LLC is a joint venture of Energy Transfer Partners and Phillips 66. Energy Transfer Partners built the Dakota Access pipeline, a project that sparked a string of violent clashes between protesters and police in North Dakota in 2016 and 2017.

During debate, Thibaut's bill was championed by Tyler P. Gray, general counsel for Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, who fielded questions from lawmakers while sitting at Thibaut's side.

Gray said the law only applies in a "very narrow situation" involving critical infrastructure.

"It has to fall within the definition, there must be a damage for anything in this thing to be triggered," he added.

The original proposal called for up to five years in prison for anyone convicted of conspiracy to enter pipeline land without authorization and up to 15 years in prison sentence for conspiracy to damage the infrastructure. Lawmakers on the Senate panel removed those provisions before voting the bill out.

Sioux Falls mayoral candidate files hacking complaint

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls mayoral candidate said she's been the target of several hacking attempts on her campaign and personal email, bank accounts and social media.

Jolene Loetscher filed a formal complaint with the city's law enforcement last week. Her opponent, Paul TenHaken, denied any wrongdoing.

Loetscher said the attempted tampering started about two months after announcing her bid for mayor in South Dakota's largest city.

The hacking began with her Twitter and Instagram accounts, followed by her secured Wi-Fi accessed by someone without authorization. Loetscher was later locked out of her campaign bank account after the login was changed.

Loetscher said during a mayoral debate Monday that TenHaken once left her a voicemail alleging he had the tools to hack her campaign. TenHaken acknowledged he has the skills, but said he's against using a negative campaigning approach.

"When I talk about tools in the toolbox, what I mean is negative campaign tools," he said. "I had dirt on every single candidate, all seven candidates. I don't do that."

TenHaken said the state Division of Criminal Investigation cleared him of any wrongdoing.

An investigation is underway, according to Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead.

He said the complaint was first brought to the attention of the Sioux Falls Police Department, and then passed on to the county sheriff's office and the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation.

The investigation could take weeks or longer, Milstead said.

The two candidates are in the final days of the mayoral race, and will face each other in a runoff election next week.

Sioux Falls police investigate baby death

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say they're investigating the death of a baby boy.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens says officers received a call Monday morning about a child who wasn't breathing. The 8-month-old baby was taken to the hospital and pronounced dead.

Clemens says the investigation into the death is ongoing. An autopsy could help determine what caused the child's death.

Ecolab sues former employee over non-compete agreement

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Minnesota company that provides commercial hygiene services is suing a South Dakota man it accuses of violating a non-compete agreement.

Ecolab Inc. says its former employee, Alejandro Moreno, started a competing business while he was still working for the St. Paul company. Ecolab says Moreno worked as a route sales manager and signed an agreement in 2010 that barred him from competing with the company for a year following his departure. The lawsuit says the Summerset man started a competing company known as Greenapsis.

The Argus Leader says Ecolab's business includes sales of cleaning supplies and equipment to restaurants, hotels, schools and other businesses.

The lawsuit says Moreno is costing Ecolab \$100,000 a year in lost revenue. No phone listing for Moreno or Greenapsis could be found.

Trial moved to July for Yankton man shot by state trooper

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Trial has been moved to this summer for a Yankton man who was shot by a state trooper following a December 2016 chase.

Curt Adams Sr. has pleaded not guilty to charges including attempted murder, aggravated assault of a police officer and aggravated eluding. He was to stand trial this month, but the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reports that the date has been moved to July 16.

The trial is expected to last a week. Defense attorneys had sought to move it out of Yankton, but Judge Cheryl Gering on Monday denied the request.

Adams is accused of shooting at the trooper, who returned fire. An investigation concluded the trooper was justified in shooting Adams, who recovered.

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Brookings fish food company expanding with \$60M Volga plant

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — A Brookings company that makes an ingredient used in fish food is expanding with a \$60 million production facility in nearby Volga.

Prairie AquaTech's new plant will be built along U.S. Highway 14 on land near the South Dakota Soybean Processors plant. A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled May 1, with completion expected in about a year.

The 30,000-square-foot facility will add about 35 employees to Prairie AquaTech's current staff of 30. The company's main office will remain in Brookings.

The company says the \$60 million raised for the project includes \$45 million for construction, \$10 million for operating capital and \$5 million to develop new products.

Prairie AquaTech's products have come out of research at South Dakota State University. The products are for fish raised commercially for human consumption.

APNewsBreak: Hoops panel says ban cheats, end 1-and-done

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — A panel tasked with reforming college basketball says the NCAA should work to end the one-and-done era and punish coaches and programs that cheat more harshly.

The Commission on College Basketball led by former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is calling for sweeping reforms that include banning cheating coaches for life and certifying agents who deal with players.

The independent commission released a detailed 60-page report Wednesday, seven months after the NCAA formed the group to respond to a federal corruption investigation that rocked college basketball.

Ten people, including some assistant coaches, have been charged in a bribery and kickback scheme, and high-profile programs such as Arizona, Louisville and Kansas have been tied to possible NCAA violations.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the report ahead of Rice presenting its findings to top NCAA officials.

The commission offered harsh assessments of NCAA enforcement. It says the environment surrounding college basketball encourages people to cheat.

Follow Ralph D. Russo at www.Twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP

More AP college basketball: <http://collegebasketball.ap.org> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_Top25

Mixed signals from Trump on VA nominee as allegations build

By HOPE YEN, ZEKE MILLER and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — His nomination in peril, Veterans Affairs nominee Ronny Jackson fought to convince lawmakers of his leadership abilities as more details of accusations against him emerged, ranging from

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repeated drunkenness to a toxic work environment as he served as a top White House doctor.

President Donald Trump sent mixed signals about his choice to lead the sprawling veterans' agency, suggesting during a White House news conference that Jackson may want to withdraw because of unfair scrutiny. But the president privately urged his nominee to keep fighting to win Senate confirmation, and Jackson showed few signs of backing down.

A watchdog report requested in 2012 and reviewed by The Associated Press found that Jackson and a rival physician exhibited "unprofessional behaviors" as they engaged in a power struggle over the White House medical unit. The six-page report by the Navy's Medical Inspector General found a lack of trust in the leadership and low morale among staff members, who described the working environment as "being caught between parents going through a bitter divorce."

"There is a severe and pervasive lack of trust in the leadership that has deteriorated to the point that staff walk on 'eggshells,'" the assessment found.

The inspector general report reviewed by The AP included no references to improper prescribing of drugs or the use of alcohol, separate allegations revealed by a Senate committee.

Jackson declined to answer reporters' questions about those allegations and gave no indication he would withdraw. The White House disputed that he had improperly administered medication, saying the medical unit passed regular audits by the Controlled Substance Inventory Board.

The audit appeared to contradict public statements from Jackson, who denied the existence of any inspector general report detailing troubling behavior.

Kansas Republican Sen. Jerry Moran, who met with Jackson Tuesday, said Jackson told him that there's another doctor who alternates with him on-duty caring for the president.

"He did tell me that any allegation related to alcohol, what his answer to me was, 'I have never had a drink while I'm on duty,'" Moran said in a telephone interview. Moran said Jackson told him when he's off duty, "he might have a beer with his steak" when he's out to dinner.

"But on the day on which he's on duty, he told me he had never had a drink," Moran said.

After the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee abruptly postponed his confirmation hearing, which had been set for Wednesday, Jackson visited lawmakers to assure them he was fit to lead the VA.

"I'm looking forward to getting it rescheduled and answering everybody's questions," he said in video captured by MSNBC, referring to his hearing.

During a White House news conference, Trump insisted he would stand behind Jackson, calling the White House doctor "one of the finest people that I have met." But he questioned why Jackson would want to put himself through the confirmation fight, which he characterized as unfair.

"I wouldn't do it," Trump said in the East Room, standing next to French President Emmanuel Macron.

"What does he need it for? What do you need this for? To be abused by a bunch of politicians that aren't thinking nicely about our country?" Trump asked.

Trump said Jackson, who has been a White House physician since 2006, would make a decision soon. Jackson met privately with Trump Tuesday afternoon in the Oval Office and the president urged him to keep fighting to win confirmation, according to a White House official briefed on the meeting. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions, said Jackson denied the allegations.

Digging in, the White House released handwritten reports from Trump and former President Barack Obama praising Jackson's leadership and medical care, and recommending him for promotion.

Obama wrote in one report, "Promote to Rear Admiral now." Trump wrote last year that Jackson is "A GREAT DOCTOR + LEADER - '2 STAR MATERIAL."

A doomed VA nomination would be a political blow to the White House, which has faced criticism for sloppy vetting of Cabinet nominees and tough confirmation battles in a Senate where Republicans hold a slim 51-49 majority.

Prior to Jackson's nomination, Trump had told aides and outside advisers that he was fond of Jackson personally and was said to be particularly impressed with Jackson's performance at the White House press room podium in January, when he offered a glowing report on the president's physical and mental well-being.

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Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said the American people were the losers in a shaky nomination effort. The Trump Cabinet, he said, "is turning into a sad game of musical chairs."

Trump tapped Jackson last month after firing former Obama administration official David Shulkin following an ethics scandal and mounting rebellion within the agency. But Jackson has faced numerous questions from Republican and Democratic lawmakers, as well as veterans groups, about whether he has the experience to manage the massive department of 360,000 employees serving 9 million veterans.

Allegations began surfacing late last week involving Jackson's workplace practices, including claims of inappropriate behavior and over-prescribing prescription drugs, according to two aides granted anonymity to discuss the situation. The complaints the White House heard include that he oversaw a poor work environment and that he had drunk alcohol on the job, according to an administration official who demanded anonymity to speak on a sensitive personnel matter.

The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee said it would postpone indefinitely Jackson's hearing to give it more time to sort through the allegations.

Detailing the allegations to NPR, Sen. Jon Tester of Montana, the committee's top Democrat, said more than 20 current and retired military personnel had made complaints to the committee about Jackson. They included claims that Jackson was "repeatedly drunk" while on travel with Obama and that on overseas trips he excessively handed out prescription drugs to help travelers sleep and wake up.

Tester later told CNN that Jackson was known inside the White House as "the candy man," because he would hand out prescription drugs "like candy."

Jackson is also accused of creating a "toxic work environment," Tester said on NPR.

"He is the physician for the president, and in the previous administration we were told the stories he was repeatedly drunk while on duty, where his main job was to take care of the most powerful man in the world. That's not acceptable," Tester said.

Asked if Jackson's nomination is still viable, the committee chairman, Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., responded, "We'll see."

The two lawmakers sent a letter to Trump on Tuesday requesting additional information about Jackson. It demands any communication between the Pentagon and the White House for the last 12 years regarding "allegations or incidents" involving him.

The 2012 assessment reviewed by the AP suggested the White House consider replacing Jackson or Dr. Jeffrey Kuhlman — or both. Kuhlman was the physician to Obama at the time, and had previously held the role occupied by Jackson: director of the White House medical unit.

According to the report, Jackson admitted he had failed to shield the White House medical unit from the leadership drama. He is quoted saying he was willing to do what was necessary to straighten out the command, even if it "meant finding a new position in Navy Medicine."

The report stated that the "vast majority" of those interviewed said Kuhlman had "irrevocably damaged his ability to effectively lead." It added that "many also believe that CAPT Jackson has exhibited poor leadership," but attributed those failures to the relationship with Kuhlman.

The report quoted unnamed members of the White House medical unit who, while participating in a focus group, used phrases like "Worst command ever," "No one trusts anyone" and "The leaders are child-like." Jackson was named physician to the President in 2013, after Kuhlman left the unit entirely.

Still, a follow-up assessment was done in 2013, and found that the climate in the office had improved a great deal, according to an official familiar with the report. At that point, Jackson was still in the office, but Kuhlman had left.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro, Catherine Lucey, Lolita Baldor, Alan Fram and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Korean leaders seek to control optics at historic summit

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Kim Jong Un will be in uncharted territory when the third-generation autocrat crosses over to the southern half of the Demilitarized Zone separating the rival Koreas on Friday, possibly on foot, and greets South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

Cameras wielded by one of the most aggressive media contingents on the planet will fire live images of a man used to controlling every aspect of his public persona into the homes and onto the phones of millions of people around the world — though it's not yet clear if it will be seen instantly in North Korea.

But as Kim navigates this minefield (figuratively; he's not passing through that part of the DMZ) at the third-ever leadership summit between the rivals, he may actually have an ally of sorts in Moon.

Despite an announcement that some bits of the summit will be shown live, and the possibility of a joint news conference, Moon seems intent on keeping the North Korean leader at ease, and an aggressive local media at bay, while engineering a summit meant to move the Koreas from what seemed like the brink of war last year to the engagement that the liberal Moon has always dreamed of.

This mindset could make it hard for Moon — keen on creating a legacy-defining moment that will set up Kim's summit with President Donald Trump in the coming weeks — to resist whatever media controls the North demands.

"The South Korean government is so anxious and invested to ensure the Kim-Trump summit happens, and isn't a failure, that acceding to media choreography is a very small price to pay when Kim and Moon meet," Vipin Narang, a Korea specialist at MIT, said by email. "If Kim asks for it, I don't see the South Koreans pushing back too hard."

At home, thousands of people work to craft Kim's image. Even when Kim traveled to China earlier this month, the self-censoring Chinese media and the autocratic government in Beijing helped cloak the trip in secrecy; the North then later packaged a sanitized video presentation of the visit for state-controlled TV.

While Kim may not be able to control every aspect of what happens on the South Korean side of the DMZ, Seoul seems eager to make sure things go smoothly, even preparing a banquet that includes dishes from Switzerland, where Kim studied during his teens.

Seoul also planned three days of extensive, closed-door dress rehearsals, one of them involving North Korean officials, leading up to the summit Friday. The information the world receives will likely be closely controlled: Except for a group of pool reporters at the summit, whose access may be extremely limited, journalists will be sequestered at a media center well away from heavily guarded Panmunjom, the border village where the summit will take place.

"I'm sure part of the ground rules for the North-South meeting will be tight controls on the South Korean press," Ralph Cossa, president of Pacific Forum CSIS and a longtime Korea expert, said in an email. "Besides that, Pyongyang will have total control over how the meeting is portrayed in the North so the risk is minimal. Kim Jong Un seems to exude great self-confidence so he may think he is prepared to take on the South Korean press, but I assume he and his handlers will be very cautious on this point."

Moon, ahead of the summit, has faced media reports that his government allegedly pressured prominent defectors and conservative analysts to stay out of the press, presumably because they might anger the North, which keeps a close eye on such things — accusations the government in Seoul has strongly denied.

South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-hwa seemed to indicate that Seoul won't raise at the summit what the U.N. says is Kim's pattern of starving and abusing his people, despite being pressed by activists to do so, when she told reporters that to "include the (human rights) issue in the inter-Korean dialogue now is something that will require more preparation."

And in what critics took as an attempt to muzzle dissent, Moon this week asked "that our political circles halt their political warfare at least during the summit."

"It is understandable that Seoul wants to avoid annoying Pyongyang ahead of the April 27 inter-Korean summit. But in order for its policy to work, the government must open its ears to various voices on North Korea," the conservative Korea JoongAng Daily recently wrote. "The president cannot push ahead with (his) rapprochement policy if (he) does not gain support from the people. Many conservatives believe the

government is too soft toward Pyongyang.”

Foster Klug, the AP's bureau chief for South Korea, has covered the Koreas since 2005. Follow at www.twitter.com/apklug

Waffle House suspect's ex-bosses asked FBI to keep, help him

By SHEILA BURKE and JONATHAN MATTISE, Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The co-owner of a Colorado crane company where the suspect in a deadly weekend shooting at a Nashville restaurant once worked said she had urged federal officials to keep him in custody after he was arrested at the White House last year.

Travis Reinking, 29, is accused of opening fire Sunday outside a Waffle House with an AR-15 rifle and then storming the restaurant, wearing only a green jacket. Four people were killed and four others were wounded in the shooting.

But Reinking had exhibited erratic behavior for years before the shooting. Darlene Sustrich, who co-owns a Colorado crane company where Reinking once worked, said they got a call from the FBI after he allegedly tried to jump the White House fence last July.

“We told them, ‘Hang onto him if you can. Help him if you can,’” Sustrich said.

Federal officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Reinking has been charged with four counts of criminal homicide. And a tweet from the Metro Nashville Police Department said he also faces four counts of attempted murder and one count of unlawful possession in the commission of a violent felony.

Davidson County Sheriff Daron Hall said Tuesday that Reinking has been “compliant” and “cooperative” since he was transferred to the jail late Monday after he was captured near the apartment where he lived. Reinking is wearing a vest known informally as a “suicide smock” and will remain under close observation at a maximum-security facility in Nashville.

An attorney listed as Reinking's lawyer did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Meanwhile, the man who snatched the rifle away from the gunman during the shooting told Tennessee lawmakers Tuesday he faced “the true test of a man,” drawing a standing ovation during his brief address. As the state House hailed him as a hero, James Shaw Jr. said he acted to save his own life early Sunday and saved others in the process.

“I never thought I'd be in a room with all the eyes on me, but you know, I'm very grateful to be here,” Shaw told House members. Shaw said he has gone to see some of the shooting victims in the hospital and they all remembered him. He apologized to the people whose loved ones died in the attack.

The state Senate also honored Shaw on Tuesday.

After the shooting, authorities say Reinking escaped on foot from the restaurant and shed his only item of clothing. By the time he was captured in the woods nearby, police had searched his apartment and found the key fob to a stolen BMW they had recovered in the parking lot days earlier. The BMW theft had not initially been tied to Reinking.

Police seized multiple items from his apartment including: a Remington rifle with a magazine, cartridges for different calibers of guns, two rifle scopes and gun cleaning equipment. Police also found three books on patents in the apartment, along with a sketchbook, two iPhones and a number of pieces of computer equipment, court records show.

Nashville Police Department Lt. Carlos Lara told reporters Reinking was arrested Monday after detectives were tipped to the suspect's presence by some construction workers. He carried a black backpack with a silver semi-automatic weapon and .45-caliber ammunition.

The arrest ended a 24-hour manhunt involving more than 160 law enforcement officers, but it left troubling unanswered questions about official responses to months of bizarre behavior before the restaurant attack, including encounters with police in Illinois and Colorado and an arrest at the White House that raised red flags.

Sustrich, Reinking's former boss, described him as appearing paranoid and delusional at times. A former co-worker told a Salida, Colorado, police detective Reinking was infatuated with singer Taylor Swift and claimed to be a sovereign citizen.

Last July, Reinking was arrested by the U.S. Secret Service after he entered a restricted area near the White House and refused to leave, saying he wanted to meet President Donald Trump. The suspect told Washington, D.C., police he was a sovereign citizen and had a right to inspect the grounds, according to an incident report.

Reinking was not armed at the time, but at the FBI's request, Illinois police revoked his state firearms card. Four guns, including the AR-15 used in the shootings, were transferred to his father, a procedure allowed under Illinois law.

Tazewell County Sheriff Robert Huston said Jeffrey Reinking pledged he would "keep the weapons secure and out of the possession of Travis." Don Aaron, a Nashville Police spokesman, said Reinking's father "has now acknowledged giving them back" to his son.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives special Agent Marcus Watson said Monday that his father's action is "potentially a violation of federal law."

Phone calls to a number listed for the father went unanswered.

Associated Press writers John Raby in Charleston, West Virginia; Ed White in Detroit; Michael Kunzelman in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Kathleen Foody in Denver, Colorado; and Justin Pritchard in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Lax vetting on Trump nominees begins to frustrate senators

By LISA MASCARO, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump's pick to lead Veterans Affairs skids to a halt, senators from both parties are voicing frustration that the White House is skipping crucial vetting of nominees and leaving lawmakers to clean up the mess.

That sentiment was evident Tuesday on Capitol Hill after senators delayed hearings for White House physician Ronny Jackson, Trump's surprise pick to head the VA. Jackson is facing questions about improper workplace behavior, and even Trump himself acknowledged that there were concerns about his nominee's experience.

"The White House still seems to be feeling its way on the nomination process," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, "and does not fully appreciate how important it is to do a thorough vetting and FBI background check on nominees."

Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., said that while lawmakers want to be "deferential as much as we can" to the president's preferences for his Cabinet, "it would be nice to know some of the issues that come up after the fact before the fact."

Trump, who promised to fill his administration with the "best people," often gravitates toward advisers he has a personal connection with or who look the part, drawing on the approach he took as a business executive. But as president, the result is a growing list of Cabinet secretaries and other officials who do not appear to undergo the rigorous scrutiny typically expected for White House hires.

Andy Puzder, Trump's initial choice to lead the Labor Department, stepped aside before his confirmation hearings, in part over taxes he belatedly paid on a former housekeeper not authorized to work in the United States. Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price won confirmation, but ultimately resigned amid disclosures about his expensive travel habits.

Others are fighting similar charges, most notably Scott Pruitt, the embattled head of Environmental Protection Agency. Pruitt faces multiple allegations of improper housing, expensing and other practices, prompting several lawmakers to call for him to step down.

The Senate has increasingly become a partisan battleground for nomination fights, a war that escalated when President Barack Obama was in the White House and Senate Democrats, who had majority control,

changed the rules to allow majority vote for confirming most nominees — the so-called nuclear option — to get around GOP filibusters.

Republicans returned the favor once Trump was in the White House, and they had the Senate majority, deploying the tactic to seat Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court.

Some GOP senators argue that Democrats are slow-walking even those Trump nominees with a solid track record, including Mike Pompeo, who got votes from 14 Democrats and one aligned independent last year during his confirmation for CIA director. Pompeo is now in line to run the State Department, but has faced stiff opposition from some of the same Democrats who backed him a year ago.

The Democratic opponents are going to “embarrass themselves,” said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas. Thune called it “really a new low.”

But questions about the White House’s vetting standards have no doubt given Democrats fresh ammunition to challenge Trump’s Cabinet picks.

“Our Republican colleagues bemoan the pace of the nominations,” said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. But he said because of the administration’s “quick, sloppy vetting process,” the Senate job of vetting nominees “is more important than ever before.”

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., said senators don’t have to agree with a nominee’s position on the issue, but the Senate has a historic role — to advise and consent — that the president’s picks are up to the job.

“We’re not going to allow nominees to be jammed through without proper scrutiny and debate,” Murray said. “Now hopefully, the events of the last 24 hours have made it very clear why this is so important.”

Asked about the adequacy of vetting process Tuesday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said that such questions are better raised with the White House.

“Look,” McConnell said, “it’s up to the administration to do the vetting.”

Associated Press writers Alan Fram and Andrew Taylor in Washington contributed to this report.

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Trump travel ban is focus of Supreme Court’s last arguments

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is saving one of its biggest cases for last. The justices are hearing arguments Wednesday over President Donald Trump’s ban on travelers from several mostly Muslim countries.

It’s the last case the justices will hear until October.

The Trump administration is asking the court to reverse lower court rulings striking down the ban. The policy has been fully in effect since December, but this is the first time the justices are considering whether it violates immigration law or the Constitution.

The court will consider whether the president can indefinitely keep people out of the country based on nationality. It will also look at whether the policy is aimed at excluding Muslims from the United States.

People have been waiting in line for a seat for days. In another sign of heightened public interest, the court is taking the rare step of making an audio recording of the proceedings available just hours after the arguments end. The last time was the gay marriage arguments in 2015.

The travel ban is the first Trump policy to undergo a full-blown Supreme Court review. The justices are looking at the third version of a policy that Trump first rolled out a week after taking office, triggering chaos and protests across the U.S. as travelers were stopped from boarding international flights and detained at airports for hours. The first version was blocked by courts and withdrawn. Its replacement was allowed to take partial effect, but expired in September.

The current version is indefinite and now applies to travelers from five countries with overwhelmingly Muslim populations — Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. It also affects two non-Muslim countries:

blocking travelers from North Korea and some Venezuelan government officials and their families. A sixth majority Muslim country, Chad, was removed from the list this month after improving "its identity-management and information sharing practices," Trump said in a proclamation.

Trump's campaign pledge to shut down Muslim entry into the U.S., his presidential tweets about the travel ban and last fall's retweets of inflammatory videos that stoked anti-Islam sentiment all could feature in the justices' questioning of Solicitor General Noel Francisco, defending the ban, and Neal Katyal, the former acting solicitor general under President Barack Obama. Katyal is representing the challengers.

The administration has argued that courts have no role to play because the president has broad powers over immigration and national security, and foreigners have no right to enter the country. Francisco also has said in written arguments that Trump's September proclamation laying out the current policy comports with immigration law and does not violate the Constitution because it does not single out Muslims.

The challengers, backed by a diverse array of supporting legal briefs, have said that Trump is flouting immigration law by trying to keep more than 150 million people, the vast majority of them Muslim, from entering the country. They also argue that it amounts to the Muslim ban that Trump called for as a candidate, violating the Constitution's prohibition against religious bias.

A decision in *Trump v. Hawaii*, 17-965, is expected by late June.

GOP unsettled by narrow win in US House race in Arizona

By BOB CHRISTIE and ANITA SNOW, Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — It took a big money push from the Republican Party, tweets by the president and the support of the state's current and former governors, but the GOP held onto an Arizona U.S. House seat they would have never considered endangered in any other year.

Tuesday's narrow victory by Republican Debbie Lesko over a Democratic political newcomer sends a big message to Republicans nationwide: Even the reddest of districts in a red state can be in play this year. Early returns show Lesko winning by about 5 percentage points in Arizona's 8th Congressional District where Donald Trump won by 21 percentage points.

The former state senator defeated Hiral Tipirneni, a former emergency room physician who had hoped to replicate surprising Democratic wins in Pennsylvania, Alabama and other states in a year where opposition to President Trump's policies have boosted the party's chances in Republican strongholds.

Republican political consultant Chuck Coughlin called Tuesday's special election margin "not good" for national Republicans looking at their chances in November.

"They should clean house in this election," said Coughlin, longtime adviser to former Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer. "There's a drag on the midterms for Republican candidates that's being created by the national narrative. And it would be very hard to buck that trend if you're in swing districts, much less close districts, if you can't change that narrative between now and November."

Lesko replaces former Rep. Trent Franks, a Republican who resigned in December amid sexual misconduct allegations. A former aide told The Associated Press that he pressed her to carry his child as a surrogate and offered her \$5 million.

The district sprawls across western Phoenix suburbs, covering some of the most conservative areas of the red state, including the retirement community of Sun City.

At a victory party in her Glendale neighborhood, Lesko greeted supporters and looked back in wonder.

"I've really come a long way and this is really quite overwhelming, it's very surreal," she said. "Twenty-five years ago I left an abusive husband and I sure as heck never would have dreamt in a million years that I would be running for Congress to be a congresswoman."

Brewer, who backed Lesko and was at her victory party, also warned that Republicans need to make changes if they want to hold the district and other seats in November elections.

"I think all Republicans need to wake up and listen to what the public wants," she said. "Before November, we're going to have to work very hard. We're going to have to listen to our constituents."

Tipirneni worked the district hard, making inroads rarely seen in an area that hadn't elected a Democrat

since the early 1980s. She was seen as a fresh Democratic face with relatively moderate views that could get support in the district. Making a push for older voters, she had said Lesko would vote to go after entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicaid to pay for tax cuts that mainly benefit the wealthy. She's pushed a plan to allow some people to buy into Medicare.

Tipirneni said she plans to run in November's general election and told supporters not to give up the cause. She said that despite the big Republican advantage in the district, the results show people were ready for a change.

"We have a very short amount of time, and clearly Ms. Lesko she had the registration numbers a little bit in her favor and she also had the name recognition," Tipirneni said. "But given more time I know we can get more folks on our side."

The Associated Press called the race for Lesko after state officials released tallies of more than 155,000 mail-in ballots, which represent about 75 percent of the votes expected.

National Republican groups spent big to back Lesko, pouring in more than \$500,000 in the suburban Phoenix district for television and mail ads and phone calls to voters. On Election Day, Trump and current Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey urged Republicans to go to the polls and vote for Lesko. National Democratic groups, meanwhile, didn't commit money to the race, a sign they didn't believe the seat was in play.

Several Republican voters who spoke with AP said they backed Lesko primarily because she supported Trump's border security plans.

David Hunt, a 64-year-old retired construction and warehouse worker from Glendale, said he cast his vote Tuesday for Lesko because he believed that immigrants in the country illegally are creating unfair competition for jobs for recent high school students in Arizona.

"She's the best candidate to deal with the porous border," Hunt said.

His views were echoed by Larry Bettis, a retiree from Glendale.

"Immigration - the fence," Bettis said. "That's all I really care about."

Democrats said they wanted to send a message to Trump and supported Democratic health care plans.

"I don't like the president and felt it was time to take a stand," said Nikole Allen, a 45-year-old medical assistant from New York now living in Glendale. "It's time for us to vote the Republicans out."

Toronto van attack suspect may have felt anger against women

By CHARMAINE NORONHA and DAVID CRARY, Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — A chilling Facebook message posted before a van plowed onto a crowded Toronto sidewalk has raised the possibility the suspect in the attack nursed grudges against women and it is bringing back memories of a 1989 massacre of 14 women that remains one of Canada's most traumatic acts of violence.

A crowd gathered late Tuesday in Toronto's North York community to pay their respects to the van victims at a makeshift memorial of roses, candles and messages of condolence.

"I needed to come here to show that I'm not afraid of this city," said Meena Chowdry, wiping away tears. "That one man's actions cannot taint an otherwise beautiful, welcoming city."

Earlier in the day, the 25-year-old suspect, Alek Minassian, was charged with first degree murder in the deaths of 10 pedestrians mowed down by a rented van that he sent careening along a mile of a busy walkway. Fourteen others were injured.

Toronto Police Services Det. Sgt. Graham Gibson said at a news conference that those killed and injured were "predominantly" women, though he declined to discuss a possible motive.

"All the lanes are open with this investigation," said Police Chief Mark Saunders.

Authorities had yet to release a list of victims. Those known to have been killed include a 30-year-old woman from Toronto, Anne Marie D'Amico, who was active in volunteer work, as well as a female student at Seneca College, which Minassian attended. A Jordanian citizen and two South Koreans were also among those killed.

The gender issue arose because of what police called a "cryptic" Facebook message posted by Minassian

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just before the incident that suggested he was part of an online community angry over their inability to form relationships with women.

The now-deleted post saluted Elliot Rodger, a community college student who killed six people and wounded 13 in shooting and stabbing attacks near the University of California, Santa Barbara, in 2014.

Calling Rodger "the Supreme Gentleman," the Facebook post declared: "The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys!"

Rodger had used the term "incel" — for involuntarily celibate — in online posts raging at women for rejecting him romantically. Like-minded people in internet forums sometimes use "Chad" and "Stacy" as dismissive slang for men and women with more robust sex lives.

The anti-women sentiment also recalled Canada's 1989 massacre at the Ecole Polytechnique, an engineering college in Montreal, when 25-year-old Marc Lepine entered a classroom, separated the men from the women, told the men to leave and opened fire, killing 14 women before killing himself. In a suicide note, he blamed feminists for ruining his life.

Since then, there have been sporadic mass shootings in Canada, but none with a higher death toll — reinforcing the view among many Canadians that their country is less violent than the United States.

Wendy Cukier, a professor in the business school at Toronto's Ryerson University and president of Canada's Coalition for Gun Control, said Canada may avoid some types of violence because its social programs are stronger than those in many U.S. states and there is less income inequality. But the main difference, she contends, is tighter gun regulations in Canada.

"If you take guns out of the mix, Canada and the U.S. are identical," she said, citing statistics indicating the two countries have similar rates of non-firearm homicides.

Although police said Monday's rampage did not appear linked to international terrorism, the use of a vehicle to kill mirrored tactics used by terrorists in France, Germany, Spain, New York City and elsewhere.

Since 2014, there have been at least two terror-related cases in Canada of vehicles being used as weapons — they caused several injuries and one death. But overall, Canada has been spared high-casualty terror attacks.

Its most striking incidents of violence over the past 50 years have varied widely in nature.

In 2014 a Canadian Muslim fatally shot a member of the honor guard at Ottawa's national war memorial, then stormed Parliament, where he was shot to death by a sergeant-at arms. Last year, a French-Canadian man fatally shot six Muslim men during evening prayers at a mosque in Quebec City. Back in 1972, 37 people died in a Montreal cafe deliberately set on fire by three men who had been refused entry.

Canadian rapper Maestro Fresh Wes returned to the scene of the van rampage Tuesday, pausing by a newly erected memorial. Wes, who lives nearby, was strolling down Yonge Street to get a haircut when he saw a body bag on the ground.

"Yesterday was the most beautiful day of the year and then look what happened," he said. "Toronto is a safe city but things could happen anywhere. When these things happen, you have to reflect."

Also revisiting the site was Saman Tabasinejad, a New Democrat Party politician who was canvassing in the area when the attack occurred.

"I saw shattered glass everywhere, a fire hydrant knocked over and then five body bags," she said. "People were holding others and I saw solidarity all over, people trying to help others."

"When something like this happens, you think people are going to run away from the tragedy, but people didn't — they ran toward it to try to help others," she added. "It shows that something like this could happen at the hands of one person, but so many more stand against it and show their humanity."

Associated Press writer Charmaine Noronha reported this story in Toronto and AP writer David Crary reported from New York. AP writer Ben Fox in Miami contributed to this report.

Judge deals big setback to Trump on 'Dreamers' program

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A federal judge ruled that the Trump administration must resume a program that has shielded hundreds of thousands of young immigrants from deportation but gave it 90 days to restate its arguments before his order takes effect.

The ruling by U.S. District Judge John D. Bates in Washington, if it survives the 90-day reprieve, would be a new setback for the administration because it would require the administration to accept requests from first-time applicants for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Two nationwide injunctions earlier this year applied only to renewal requests.

Bates said the administration's decision to end DACA, announced in September, relied on "meager legal reasoning." He invited the Department of Homeland Security to try again, "this time providing a fuller explanation for the determination that the program lacks statutory and constitutional authority."

The judge, ruling in favor of Princeton University and the NAACP, wrote Tuesday that the administration's explanation was "particularly egregious" because it didn't mention that many of the hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries had obtained jobs and pursued education based on the assumption that they would be allowed to renew.

The Homeland Security Department didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. The administration said in September that it would phase out DACA over six months, calling the program started in 2012 under President Barack Obama an abuse of executive power. It said it was forced to act because Texas and other states threatened to sue, raising the prospect of a chaotic end to the program.

Princeton President Christopher L. Eisgruber said he was "delighted."

"While the decision does not fully resolve the uncertainty facing DACA beneficiaries, it unequivocally rejects the rationale the government has offered for ending the program and makes clear that the (Department of Homeland Security) acted arbitrarily and capriciously," he said.

In January, U.S. District Judge William Alsup in San Francisco ruled that the administration failed to justify ending the program and his nationwide injunction forced the administration to resume accepting renewal requests within a week. U.S. District Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis in New York issued a similar ruling in February.

The U.S. Supreme Court denied the administration's unusual request to leapfrog appeals courts on Alsup's injunction in February, ensuring that DACA would stay for at least several months and perhaps until well after midterm elections in November. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals put its review of Alsup's decision on fast track, but legal experts don't expect a decision until June at the earliest. From there, it is expected to go to the Supreme Court.

A federal judge in Maryland has ruled in the administration's favor.

Nearly 690,000 people were enrolled when the Trump administration said in September that it was ending the program, eight out of 10 from Mexico. To qualify, they needed to have arrived before their 16th birthday, been under 31 in June 2012, completed high school or served in the military, and have clean criminal records. The two-year-permits are subject to renewal.

AP Exclusive: '93 Amtrak crash survivor relives each new one

By JAY REEVES, Associated Press

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — In the dark of night, three travelers advanced inexorably toward tragedy.

Accompanied by her parents on her first train trip, 11-year-old Andrea Chancey couldn't sleep despite the steady rocking of the Amtrak coach. Aboard the same train after missing a flight, Ken Ivory lounged nearby. Miles away, Willie C. Odom steered a towboat as it pushed barges up a river that was getting foggier by the mile.

A bump. A whoosh. A ball of fire.

Suddenly, those three and more than 200 other people were caught up in what remains the deadliest accident in Amtrak history, the derailment of the Los Angeles-to-Miami Sunset Limited in a south Alabama

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bayou in 1993. Forty-seven people died and more than 100 others were hurt.

Nearly 25 years later, the survivors remember that night vividly: "I smell the oil. I see the fire. I hear the screaming," said Chancey, now 36.

But many others forgot about the disaster as other tragedies occurred, one after the other, through the years.

Once survivors and victims were plucked out of a river delta so remote it's called "America's Amazon," the National Transportation Safety Board opened an investigation. The agency held a public hearing in Mobile, just miles from the bayou, made multiple recommendations to improve safety, and the world moved on.

The same will no doubt happen in the aftermath of a recent string of three Amtrak accidents that killed a total of six people and injured about 170 others in Washington, Virginia and South Carolina.

But for those who witnessed the horror of people drowning in rail cars at Big Bayou Canot, everything comes rushing back with every Amtrak disaster. It's particularly true for Chancey, whose parents both died in the crash.

Chancey sometimes wonders why she lived when so many others died. Did one of her parents lift her out of the bayou waters before drowning, as news reports at the time said, or did God save her for something special? Or was it simply luck?

Ivory, a Texas oil industry worker who helped save Chancey all those years ago, has a theory.

"She was the chosen one," said Ivory of Houston.

Retired Marine Lt. Col. Geary L. Chancey, a pilot and Vietnam veteran, and wife Mary Jane Chancey, a schoolteacher, adopted Andrea when she was only a few weeks old. Born with severe cerebral palsy, their girl would need assistance the rest of her life; she still uses a wheelchair and has home health-care aides who cook and clean for her.

The family was living in Orange Park, Florida, in 1993 when they boarded Amtrak's Sunset Limited for a trip to visit relatives in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Andrea's wheelchair made boarding more difficult than for other passengers, but she was thrilled about her first train ride.

"I thought it was the coolest thing," said Chancey, speaking with The Associated Press in her first interview since the accident.

Their visit to the Gulf Coast done, the Chanceys board the eastbound Sunset Limited toward home at Biloxi, Mississippi, the night of Sept. 21, 1993. The train was running about 30 minutes late because of an air conditioning problem that was repaired in New Orleans.

Around the same time, Willie Odom was piloting the towboat Mauvilla as it pushed six barges away from a wharf in Mobile and up the winding Mobile River. The journey would take the boat northward into the Mobile-Tensaw Delta.

With the landscape shrouded in fog, a confused Odom unknowingly turned off the river into Big Bayou Canot, a narrow, non-navigable waterway that snakes through the delta and is crossed by a railroad bridge that lacked lights. As Odom tried to find a tree to tie up until the fog lifted, records show, a barge struck a bridge support, bending the rail tracks more than one yard out of line just eight minutes before the Amtrak train arrived.

On board the Sunset Limited, Andrea Chancey was trying to doze off as the train click-clacked through the night.

"My dad was sitting in front of my mom and I was sitting next to my mom, and for some reason I couldn't sleep," said Chancey. "I had my head on her belly and she was rubbing me."

Traveling at 72 mph (116 kph), the lead locomotive reached the bridge and jumped the track at the spot where the rails were bent by the barge collision. The 3,000-horsepower, 240-ton engine flew across the bayou, embedding in about 46 feet of mud on the opposite bank. Two other locomotives followed it into the water, along with a baggage car, a crew dorm car and two passenger coaches.

Chancey remembers tumbling as her double-decker coach, Car No. 34083, sailed off the end of the bridge and into the bayou.

Her mother "pushed me and I fell and I saw my dad fall and when the water came in it was like, 'Wow,'"

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she said. "And everything went black."

Chancey doesn't recall seeing either of her parents again, possibly because of water rushing into the car and inky darkness — the only light came from burning diesel fuel that spilled from the locomotives. But she does remember a few people who got her out of the wreckage, including Ivory, who had decided to take the train to North Carolina to see his wife only after missing a commercial flight.

Ivory said he was on the upper level of the train getting people out of the bottom level when someone thrust the child above the water that was filling the coach. It was pitch black, the only light coming from burning diesel fuel just yards away.

"Whoever it was was being consumed by the water at that time," he recalled. "I didn't ever get to see who handed her up, but I assumed it was her parents."

After the crash, Andrea was hospitalized with injuries that included oil inhalation. It was left to relatives to tell her that her parents had died.

The "miracle child," as the media called her, went to live with the family of her mother's older sister in Lancaster, Ohio, until she was 18. Her upkeep was funded partly by a trust fund set up by Amtrak and CSX, which owned the bridge.

After briefly attending Wright State University and a failed marriage, Chancey wound up back on the Mississippi coast in Biloxi, where she lives today in an apartment with an assistance dog. Still in a wheelchair, she has help during daylight hours from home health aides.

Chancey gets news alerts on her phone, and she's always shaken when another passenger train crashes.

"Whenever I see Amtrak has another accident, I call my aunt and I say, 'They did it again. They did it again,'" she said.

Ivory, who was honored by the Coast Guard with another passenger, Michael Dopheide, for his life-saving efforts that night, also struggled with the aftermath. He wondered both why he survived and why he couldn't save more people. For a while, the smell of diesel fuel took him back to the scene of the crash; he figures his work in oil fields where diesel is abundant helped him tamp down the response.

Odom, the towboat pilot, was named as a defendant in more than 90 lawsuits after the crash but never faced criminal charges. He told investigators he felt a "bump" as he was pushing the barges that night but didn't realize what had happened until he heard a "whoosh" and saw the glow of fire through the fog. Still near the crash site, the Mauvilla and its crew helped pull people from the water.

Odom did not respond to an interview request. He hasn't worked in the river industry since and has struggled for more than two decades with the guilt and pain of what happened, said brother Morsco Odom — though over time, his anguish has eased a bit.

"The nightmares aren't as bad," he said.

Andrea Chancey didn't attend a memorial service held in 2016 to honor victims of the crash, and she's never seen a monument erected at the site of the repaired bridge recalling the disaster.

Despite worsening health problems linked in part to cerebral palsy, Chancey expresses less concern about herself than for Odom, who she doesn't blame for the loss of her parents.

The bayou bridge should have been in better shape to begin with, she said, and Amtrak has had too many accidents in the years since. Willie Odom has suffered enough, Chancey said, particularly considering he helped save 17 people after the crash — including her — using the same towboat that hit the bridge.

"I don't blame him one bit," Chancey said.

Ivory, too, holds nothing against Odom. Too much time has passed, he said.

But ever since the crash, Ivory said, he has always checked on airline flights well in advance.

"I haven't taken another train since then," said Ivory.

EPA security chief also worked for owner of tabloid company

By MICHAEL BIESECKER and JEFF HORWITZ, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The security chief for the head of the Environmental Protection Agency worked on the side as a private investigator for the owner of a tabloid news company with close ties to President Donald Trump.

EPA special agent Pasquale "Nino" Perrotta performed regular work for National Enquirer publisher American Media Inc. during the 2016 election, according to person with knowledge of the company's internal workings.

But unlike another private investigator hired by the Enquirer, Perrotta didn't work on such newsroom projects as tracking down sources. Instead, the person told The Associated Press on Tuesday, Perrotta was engaged to discretely handle investigative work at the direction of AMI chairman and CEO David Pecker.

The person was not authorized to speak publicly about the company's operations and spoke on condition of anonymity. The New York Times first reported Perrotta's link to AMI.

In addition to his job at EPA, Perrotta is the top executive at Sequoia Security Group, a Maryland-based security firm. The person with knowledge of the situation did not know whether Perrotta was paid for his work for AMI and Pecker through Sequoia or another business entity.

A former Secret Service agent, Perrotta has worked at EPA for more than a decade. He was tapped by EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt last year to lead his 20-member, full-time personal protective detail.

Perrotta's predecessor as Pruitt's security chief was reassigned for refusing to acquiesce to the administrator's demands for VIP treatment, including using the emergency lights on a government vehicle to speed through Washington traffic to make airline flights and dinner reservations.

Perrotta did not respond late Tuesday to messages seeking comment. EPA's press office also did not respond to messages seeking comment about the security chief's side business.

AP reported earlier this month that Perrotta oversaw a rapid expansion of Pruitt's security team and the taxpayer-funded precautions used to ensure his personal safety, including the use of first-class airline seats after a fellow traveler cursed at the EPA chief in an airport.

Perrotta also spearheaded the purchase of a \$43,000 soundproof booth for Pruitt's office to help ensure his telephone calls could not be overheard by others. The Government Accountability Office found earlier this month that the spending on the pricey privacy booth violated federal purchasing laws.

Democratic lawmakers on Tuesday issued a letter questioning whether Perrotta was improperly operating an outside consulting firm without proper approval from EPA ethics officials.

Under Pecker, American Media became one of the earliest and most fervent backers of Trump's political career, providing breathless coverage as far back as 2011 to Trump's promotion of the false theory that President Barack Obama might not be a U.S. citizen.

During the 2016 campaign, Pecker's flagship National Enquirer was in close contact with Trump's personal attorney Michael Cohen while it attacked Trump's Republican opponents from its perch in supermarket checkout aisles, printing thin allegations about Sen. Ted Cruz's personal life and alleging Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton was in declining physical and mental health.

AMI also helped Trump in a far less public fashion. The company paid \$150,000 to a former Playboy Playmate for the rights to her story about an alleged affair with Trump during his marriage to Melania, and another \$30,000 to a former Trump doorman peddling another story about Trump.

AMI has denied the payments were hush money, though Pecker himself noted in a New Yorker interview last year that the contract with Playmate Karen McDougal prevented her from "bashing Trump."

Records show Perrotta received clearance in March 2013 for limited nongovernment consulting work but was required to get updated approval if his job duties changed. Perrotta received a significant promotion and pay raise last year.

According to the letter approving his work outside the agency, Perrotta told EPA ethics officials he expected to be "self-employed" to provide consulting to two to three clients for approximately three to six hours per week on issues related to cybersecurity and "denial of service insurance."

The 2013 approval, which was in effect for a five-year period that expired last month, also barred Per-

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rotta from using his government position to advance his personal interests.

AP reported in December that EPA paid \$3,000 to contractor Edwin Steinmetz Associates last year to search Pruitt's office for secret listening devices. Steinmetz is also listed as a vice president at Perrotta's security firm.

Emails obtained by congressional Democrats showed that Perrotta played a role in the decision to conduct the bug sweep, the contract for which the lawmakers allege he improperly steered to Steinmetz.

Tuesday's letter was signed by Democratic Sens. Tom Carper of Delaware and Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island, who serve on a committee with oversight of EPA. They ask an agency ethics official to re-examine whether Perrotta's outside employment violates agency rules.

Follow Associated Press investigative reporters Michael Biesecker at <http://twitter.com/mbieseck> and Jeff Horwitz at <http://twitter.com/JeffHorwitz>

Trump calls Kim open, honorable as summit planning goes on

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Kim Jong Un wants a historic, high-stakes meeting as soon as possible and suggested the North Korean dictator has been "very open" and "very honorable," a sharply different assessment of a leader he once denounced as "Little Rocket Man."

The United States and North Korea have been negotiating a summit between Trump and Kim to be held in May or June to broker a deal on Pyongyang's nuclear program. Trump, who has struck a decidedly optimistic tone on the situation in recent days, said Tuesday that the United States and North Korea were having "good discussions."

"We have been told directly that they would like to have the meeting as soon as possible. We think that's a great thing for the world," Trump said Tuesday at the White House alongside French President Emmanuel Macron. "Kim Jong Un, he really has been very open and I think very honorable from everything we're seeing."

Trump cautioned that North Korea had not followed through on previous promises, but credited tough steps from his administration — including sanctions and organizing pressure from international allies — for having forced Pyongyang to hold talks. And he again suggested that he would "leave the table" if the negotiations were not productive or if North Korea was not operating in good faith.

"We'll see where that all goes," the president said. "Maybe it will be wonderful or maybe it won't."

Trump's comments came days after a flurry of moves from North Korea that the White House was anxious to promote as signs that its coercion campaign was working. On Saturday, North Korea announced it will close its nuclear testing facility and suspend nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests — a move welcomed by Trump as "big progress."

However, the North stopped short of suggesting it will give up its nuclear weapons — as Trump suggested in a weekend tweet — or scale back its production of missiles and their related components. When pressed Tuesday on what he meant by the goal of "denuclearization," Trump said, "It means they get rid of their nukes. Very simple."

"It would be easy for me to make a simple deal and declare victory. I don't want to do that," the president said.

This week, U.S.-allied South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Kim will hold a summit in the Demilitarized Zone between the Koreas that could lay the ground for Trump's planned meeting with the North Korean dictator. The leaders of the U.S. and North Korea have never met during six decades of hostility since the Korean War.

The exact date and location of the possible summit has not been determined.

As diplomacy gathered pace, White House officials and congressional aides said the Trump administration was considering nominating Adm. Harry Harris, the commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, as ambassador to South Korea. That key position has been vacant since Trump took office 15 months ago.

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It would entail a shuffle in the administration's plans for key diplomatic assignments. Harris has already been nominated to be ambassador to Australia. His Senate confirmation hearing for the Australia position had been due to take place Tuesday but was postponed.

One of the congressional aides said both the State Department and governments in both Australia and South Korea were informed that the administration is looking at a switch of postings for Harris, although nothing has been made official yet. The aide and other officials requested anonymity to discuss the plans as they were not authorized to discuss them.

In Canberra, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said she had been told by U.S. Acting Secretary of State John Sullivan that Harris would become South Korea's ambassador and that a new appointment to the post in Australia would be a priority for the next U.S. secretary of state.

CIA Director Mike Pompeo, who is Trump's choice for secretary of state, told his own confirmation hearing this month that the vacancy in Seoul needed "immediate attention." The man earlier tipped for the post, Korea expert Victor Cha, was passed over in January. He later voiced concern the administration was considering military action against North Korea.

Harris has spent nearly 40 years in uniform and has a reputation as a straight talker. In testimony last month before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Harris said that the U.S. could not be "overly optimistic" about outcomes for the planned Trump-Kim summit. "We have to go into this, eyes wide open," he told lawmakers.

Last year, the U.S. spearheaded through the U.N. Security Council the toughest international sanctions yet against North Korea in response to three long-range missile launches and its most powerful nuclear test explosion yet. The Trump administration supplemented those restrictions with unilateral U.S. sanctions against firms that had conducted illicit trade with the North.

This year, Kim has pivoted from confrontation to diplomacy and, according to South Korea and China, has expressed a commitment to denuclearization. There is still uncertainty about what he seeks in return.

Trump's praise for Kim on Tuesday stood in stark contrast to his previous bellicose rhetoric toward the North Korean leader. Beyond dubbing him "Little Rocket Man" from the rostrum of the United Nations last fall, Trump has threatened to deliver "fire and fury" upon North Korea and taunted Kim on Twitter that his own nuclear "button" was larger than the one in Pyongyang.

Later Tuesday, Trump sidestepped a question as to why he would use the word "honorable" to describe Kim, who has been accused of starving his own people, executing his political opponents and ordering the killing of a member of his own family.

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Ken Thomas and Matthew Lee in Washington and Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, contributed to this report.

Handshakes and kisses aside, some issues split Trump, Macron

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With exaggerated handshakes and a pair of kisses, President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron professed a sunny, best-friends relationship, even as the two allies strained to bridge differences over the Iran nuclear agreement, Syria and more.

Hosting Macron for the first state visit of his administration, culminating in a lavish dinner Tuesday night, Trump remained firm in his criticism of past and enduring American undertakings in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East. But he appeared open to the French president's pleas to maintain U.S. involvement in Syria — and expressed openness to negotiating a new agreement with Iran.

As Trump weighs withdrawing the U.S. from the Iran nuclear accord, he issued a warning to Iran against restarting its nuclear program, saying, "They will have bigger problems than they've ever had before."

At a joint White House news conference, he appeared to be more in line with Macron's push for a longer-term U.S. presence in Syria. Trump, who announced weeks ago that he would withdraw American troops, said Macron reinforced the idea of a potential Iranian takeover of territory liberated from the Islamic State

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group.

"We'll be coming home," Trump said, "but we want to leave a strong and lasting footprint."

Macron told Trump that together the U.S. and France would defeat terrorism, curtail weapons of mass destruction in North Korea and Iran, and act together on behalf of the planet. That last point was a reference to Macron's work to revive the U.S. role in the Paris climate accord to fight global warming, another international agreement Trump has spurned.

Differences aside, Trump and Macron lavished praise — and even a pair of kisses — on each other Tuesday.

"It's an honor to call you my friend," Trump said, after predicting Macron would be a historic leader of France.

In one light moment, Trump sought to demonstrate some of the personal chemistry he claimed. The U.S. president brushed something off Macron's suit jacket, saying, "We have a very special relationship; in fact, I'll get that little piece of dandruff off. We have to make him perfect — he is perfect."

The meetings followed a pomp-filled welcome ceremony on the South Lawn. Highlights included a 21-gun salute and Melania Trump's wide-brim white hat, which drew more comments than all the rest of the pageantry.

Trump said before an audience of U.S. soldiers and members of his Cabinet that the relationship he forged with Macron at the start of his presidency was a testament to the "enduring friendship that binds our two nations." He thanked the French leader for his "steadfast partnership" in the recent missile strike in response to the chemical attack in Syria.

Macron said, "History is calling us. It is urging our people to find the fortitude that has guided us in the most difficult of times. France and with it, Europe, and the United States have an appointment with history." Later he placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.

The social highlight of Macron's visit was Tuesday night's formal state dinner at the White House. More than 130 guests dined on rack of lamb and nectarine tart and enjoyed an after-dinner performance by the Washington National Opera. The previous evening, the leaders and their wives took a helicopter tour of Washington landmarks and had dinner at the Potomac River home of George Washington in Mount Vernon, Virginia.

As he gave a toast at the dinner, Trump hailed the bonds between the U.S. and France, saying, "May our friendship grow even deeper, may our kinship grow even stronger and may our sacred liberty never die."

As for substantive issues, one of Macron's main objectives during his three-day visit to Washington was to persuade Trump to stay in the Iran accord, which is aimed at restricting Iran's development of nuclear weapons. Trump is skeptical of the pact's effectiveness — "it's insane, it's ridiculous," he said Tuesday — but he declined to say whether he would withdraw the U.S. by the May 12 deadline he has set.

He reminded his French counterpart of what he sees as flaws in the agreement, which he said fails to address ballistic missiles or Iran's activities in Yemen or Syria.

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned that pulling out would undermine America's upcoming nuclear talks with North Korea by proving the U.S. reneges on its promises.

He told The Associated Press in an interview in New York that if Trump withdraws, Iran would "most likely" abandon the deal as well and would no longer be bound by its international obligations. That would free Iran to resume enrichment activity beyond the limits imposed by the 2015 accord.

Macron told reporters that he and Trump would look at the Iran deal "in a wider regional context," taking into account the situation in Syria. "We have a common objective, we want to make sure there's no escalation and no nuclear proliferation in the region. We now need to find the right path forward," Macron said.

Trump suggested he was open to "doing something" beyond the current Iran agreement as long as it was done "strongly."

On North Korea, Trump told Macron that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un wanted to meet "as soon as possible." The president, who once derided Kim as "Little Rocket Man," said he has been "very open" and "very honorable" so far.

Macron, who calls Trump often, has emerged as something of a "Trump whisperer" at a time when the American president's relationships with other European leaders are more strained. Trump, who attaches

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great importance to the optics of pageantry and ceremony, chose to honor Macron with the first state visit of his administration as he woos the French president.

Trump ended his first year in office without receiving a foreign leader on a state visit, the first president in nearly 100 years to fail to do so. He was Macron's guest last July at the annual Bastille Day military parade in Paris. Macron and his wife, Brigitte, also took Trump and his wife on a tour of Napoleon's tomb and whisked them up in the Eiffel Tower for dinner overlooking the City of Light.

Associated Press writers Ken Thomas and Jonathan Lemire contributed to this report.

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

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, April 25, the 115th day of 2018. There are 250 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 25, 1898, the United States Congress declared war on Spain; the 10-week conflict resulted in an American victory.

On this date:

In 404 B.C., the Peloponnesian War ended as Athens surrendered to Sparta.

In 1507, a world map produced by German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller contained the first recorded use of the term "America," in honor of Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci (vehs-POO'-chee).

In 1792, French highwayman Nicolas Jacques Pelletier became the first person to be executed by the guillotine.

In 1915, during World War I, Allied soldiers invaded the Gallipoli (guh-LIHP'-uh-lee) Peninsula in an unsuccessful attempt to take the Ottoman Empire out of the war.

In 1945, during World War II, U.S. and Soviet forces linked up on the Elbe (EL'-beh) River, a meeting that dramatized the collapse of Nazi Germany's defenses. Delegates from some 50 countries gathered in San Francisco to organize the United Nations.

In 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway opened to shipping.

In 1964, vandals sawed off the head of the "Little Mermaid" statue in Copenhagen, Denmark.

In 1974, the "Carnation Revolution" took place in Portugal as a bloodless military coup toppled the Estado Novo regime.

In 1983, 10-year-old Samantha Smith of Manchester, Maine, received a reply from Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov to a letter she'd written expressing her concerns about nuclear war; Andropov gave assurances that the Soviet Union did not want war, and invited Samantha to visit his country, a trip she made in July.

In 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope was deployed in orbit from the space shuttle Discovery. (It was later discovered that the telescope's primary mirror was flawed, requiring the installation of corrective components to achieve optimal focus.)

In 1993, hundreds of thousands of gay rights activists and their supporters marched in Washington, D.C., demanding equal rights and freedom from discrimination.

In 2002, Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes of the Grammy-winning trio TLC died in an SUV crash in Honduras; she was 30.

Ten years ago: Three New York police detectives were acquitted in the 50-shot killing of Sean Bell, an unarmed black man, on his wedding day; as news of the verdict spread, many in a crowd outside the courthouse began weeping, while others were enraged, swearing and screaming "Murderers! Murderers!" or "KKK!"

Five years ago: President Barack Obama consoled a rural Texas community rocked by a deadly fertilizer plant explosion that killed 15 people, telling mourners during a memorial service at Baylor University

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they were not alone in their grief. President Barack Obama joined his four living predecessors to dedicate the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas. Reggaeton star Don Omar was the top winner of the Billboard Latin Music Awards in Coral Gables, Florida, taking home 10 prizes.

One year ago: A federal judge blocked President Donald Trump's attempt to withhold funding from "sanctuary cities" that did not cooperate with U.S. immigration officials, saying the president had no authority to attach new conditions to federal spending. Ivanka Trump drew groans and hisses from an audience in Berlin while defending her father's attitude toward women, but brushed the negative reaction aside as "politics" during her first overseas trip as a White House adviser.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Al Pacino is 78. Ballroom dance judge Len Goodman (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 74. Rock musician Stu Cook (Creedence Clearwater Revival) is 73. Singer Bjorn Ulvaeus (BYORN ul-VAY'-us) (ABBA) is 73. Actress Talia Shire is 73. Actor Jeffrey DeMunn is 71. Rock musician Steve Ferrone (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers) is 68. Country singer-songwriter Rob Crosby is 64. Actor Hank Azaria is 54. Rock singer Andy Bell (Erasure) is 54. Rock musician Eric Avery is 53. Country musician Rory Feek (Joey + Rory) is 53. TV personality Jane Clayson is 51. Actress Renee Zellweger is 49. Actress Gina Torres is 49. Actor Jason Lee is 48. Actor Jason Wiles is 48. Actress Emily Bergl is 43. Actor Jonathan Angel is 41. Actress Marguerite Moreau is 41. Singer Jacob Underwood is 38. Actress Melonie Diaz is 34. Actress Sara Paxton is 30. Actress Allisyn Ashley Arm is 22.

Thought for Today: "There is nothing in the universe that I fear but that I shall not know all my duty, or shall fail to do it." — Mary Lyon, American educator (1797-1849).