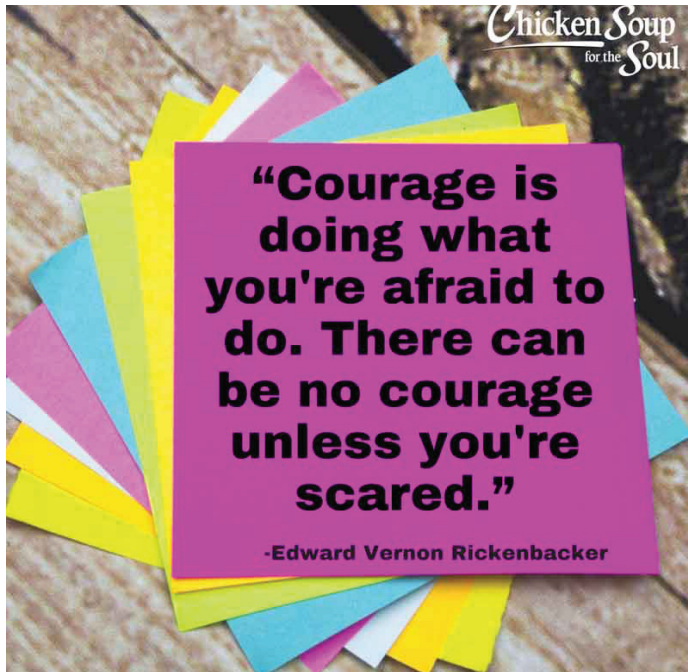


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- 1- Frost Construction Ad
- 1- Mail Highway Route Relief Driver
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 2- Dairy Queen \$5 Buck Lunch Ad
- 2- Special School Board Meeting Agenda
- 3- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column
- 4- Big Stone South to Ellendale Update
- 4- SunDial Manor Help Wanted Ad
- 5- 4 Common Retirement Mistakes
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Today's Forecast
- 8- Yesterday's Weather
- 8- National Weather map
- 8- Today's Weather Almanac
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 11- News from the Associated Press

Mail Highway Route Relief Driver

Position available for Highway Relief Driver
Must be over 21, have a good driving record
Able to lift 70 pounds.

Route is early mornings and late afternoons
Mainly Saturdays and some week days

Contact Dave Miller 605-397-8277 Leave Message

Friday, May 4, 2018

1:00pm: Track: Varsity Meet @ Sisseton High School (Meet is rescheduled with start time at 1pm....not 4pm.)



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

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

Special School Board Meeting May 8, 2018 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed.
- POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3
1. Executive session pursuant SDCL 1-25-2(4) for negotiations.
- ADJOURN

New \$5 Buck Lunches!

**Crispy Chicken
Salad
Lunch**



**KC BBQ Bacon
Cheeseburger
Lunch**



Available
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Grill & Chill

US 12, Groton

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Small Businesses are the Heartbeat of the American Economy

Each year during National Small Business Week, we celebrate the vital role of small businesses in American society today. Main street businesses are America's job creators. Over the past two decades, small businesses have generated 65 percent of all net new jobs. In fact, small businesses represent half of all jobs in the U.S., half the U.S. GDP and account for two out of every three new jobs created in the U.S. today.

I had the opportunity this year to nominate a South Dakota small business, Dairy Queen of Madison, to be recognized by the Senate Small Business Committee as the "Small Business of the Day." The restaurant has been in owner DeLon Mork's family since 1964. He and his family are passionate about providing excellent service to their customers and giving back to their community. For the past 11 years, DeLon's Dairy Queen has sold the most Blizzard treats of any Dairy Queen in North America to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network. In a town of about 7,000 people, he sells close to 50,000 Blizzards in one day, year after year. We're happy to be able to shine a light on his good work as a small business owner.

In Congress, we are working to enact pro-growth policies that will benefit small businesses like DeLon's. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was signed into law by President Trump late last year, has simplified the tax filing process and is allowing individuals and small businesses to keep more of their own money. With a lower tax rate, small businesses have additional resources available that they can use to grow and expand their operations. And with a significantly lower pass-through tax rate, small businesses are finally on a level playing field with the rest of the world, making them more competitive in the global marketplace. This is enhanced even further when coupled with the regulatory relief we've been working with the administration to achieve.

In addition to rolling back burdensome regulations administratively at federal agencies, Congress has been able to undo 16 major Obama-era rules under the Congressional Review Act. The Senate also recently passed a bipartisan bill to roll back burdensome regulations on our community banks and credit unions, which will help them be able to better serve local businesses and customers. By relieving businesses from time-consuming, outdated regulations, small businesses will no longer be bogged down by costly paperwork that has stifled innovation and slowed economic growth for far too long.

The National Federation of Independent Businesses is predicting that regulatory reform and the tax relief bill will result in "very strong growth, millions more jobs and higher pay for Americans." And we're already seeing that happen: Small business confidence has hit a record high, jobless claims are at record lows and the economy is growing faster than it has in a decade. We're glad to see our policies are already having a positive effect on our small businesses and look forward to continuing to seek ways to create a business-friendly environment for them.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the heartbeat of our communities. National Small Business Week is a time to highlight the significant contributions of small business owners across the country.



Our Crews are Back in the Field

Spring has finally arrived, and our crews are back in the field constructing the Big Stone South to Ellendale Transmission Line. We know this also is an important time for farmers, working long hours in preparation for spring planting.

Safety is our first priority. With our crews working on private property, we appreciate everyone's patience and coordination as we complete construction. Please maintain a safe distance outside of the construction work zones while we're in the area--to keep you and our crews safe. We'll do our best to move crews through your farming areas quickly and safely, so you can resume spring planting activities.

Now through early May, crews will continue to haul and set structures in Brown County. Starting in mid-May, crews will continue stringing wire in Day County. We use helicopters in these construction phases to transport material, set structures, and string wire. For the latest information about our construction progress, visit our website to view our interactive construction map.



**Sun Dial Manor in Bristol
is accepting applications for
full time and part time CNA's.
12 hr. shifts- days and nights
(SIGN ON BONUS OFFERED)**

**DIETARY OPENINGS
Full time cook, 8 hr. shifts
(WITH SIGN ON BONUS)**

Part time Dietary Tech

**For more information,
call 605-492-3615**

4 Common Retirement Mistakes And How To Avoid Them

Constructing a smart retirement income plan isn't easy. Throughout the working years there are many factors to consider, such as salary, expenses – monthly and unforeseen – debt and college for the kids, just to name a few.

All of those can affect a person's ability to, first, devise a consistent plan for their retirement goals, and secondly, accumulate the necessary capital to provide ample retirement income. Meanwhile, costly mistakes can be made that will have implications down the road.

"A retirement strategy has many moving parts, and each can have a significant impact on the others," says Jadon Newman, CEO of Noble Capital (www.noblecapital.com), a financial advisory firm. "Many people often make the same mistakes.

"There are ways to avoid them, and much of it is about knowledge. There's more you need to know about retirement today than you did 20 or 30 years ago. It starts with knowing what lifestyle you want to achieve in retirement and the options that will both protect you and enhance what should be the best years of your life."

Newman gives four common mistakes in retirement planning and how to avoid them:

- Investing like you're still young. Earlier in their working careers, people often have a higher risk tolerance. But approaching retirement, Newman says, your investment strategy should shift toward preserving capital. "Phase out those investments that are subject to wider fluctuations," Newman says. "The gradual move away from riskier investments should begin as you enter your mid- to late 40s."
- Leaving your nest egg vulnerable to big market drops. Putting your entire nest egg in one basket could be disastrous. "Having an excessive amount of market risk in your portfolio, you could find yourself suffering a loss that you won't have time to recover from before you retire," Newman says. "With stocks having surged for an extended period, beware the bear market. It would be wise to purge some risk from your portfolio in favor of more predictable methods of capital growth and income, such as annuities, life insurance policies, or alternative investments like private lending and real estate."
- Not satisfying basic income needs. It has become less realistic for a 401(k) coupled with Social Security to provide the regular income needed for retirement. It's important to estimate what yearly expenses will be in retirement and diversify accordingly. "Use your investments, insurance policies or retirement accounts to provide multiple income streams," Newman says. "This allows you to draw from them only what you need to meet your pre-determined budget. Be sure you calculate your Social Security payment and any required minimum distributions so you don't incur additional tax liability."
- Having the wrong kind of annuity. A crucial component of a comfortable retirement is reliable income, and a common way to achieve that is by using annuities. Unfortunately, some retirees find themselves with an annuity that doesn't fit their needs. A fixed annuity pays out a guaranteed rate of return, providing less risk compared to variable annuities, but the tradeoff is you get a more modest return. "Sometimes a fixed index annuity (FIA) is the best bet," Newman says. "These allow you to protect your principal by shifting the risk to the insurance company selling you the annuity. There are caps on your potential returns, but FIAs are more reliable because they mitigate risk."

"With retirement planning, the end goal should be not only to ensure you'll have enough income to satisfy your retirement budget, but also to provide you with enough to truly enjoy your retirement," Newman says. "Because life goals and the economic climate are subject to change, you need to consult with your financial adviser annually to optimize your strategy."

About Jadon Newman

Jadon Newman is the founder and CEO of Noble Capital (www.noblecapital.com). With more than 16 years of experience in the financial services industry, he specializes in retirement planning, real estate investment and asset management. Newman has earned a CCIM designation and CSA credential in addition to an insurance license in the state of Texas.

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Today in Weather History

May 4, 1964: A tornado touched down southwest of Kadoka causing \$25,000 in damage.

1774: Snow was reported in the Williamsburg Gazette to have fallen in Dumfries, Virginia. George Washington's weather diary logged at Mount Vernon that it was a cold day with spits of snow and a hard wind from the northwest. Thomas Jefferson near Charlottesville recorded that the Blue Ridge Mountains was covered with snow. The late snow and frost killed most of the fruit crop in the northern part of the state. It also snowed north across Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

1922: The first of two tornadoes that formed over Austin, Texas was called the "western cloud." It was more visible, but caused much less damage than the "eastern cloud."

2003: The week of May 4th through the 10th was one of the busiest weeks for tornadoes in U.S. history. On this date through the 5th, the deadliest outbreak of severe weather since May 1999 produced 84 tornadoes, large hail and damaging winds across eight states. Several thunderstorms became tornadic with a total of five distinct tornado touchdowns in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Two of the tornadoes received a rating of F4, two a rating of F2, and the last was rated an F1. Total damage exceeded 144 million dollars. Several of the tornadoes tracked long distances ranging from 15 to 80 miles. More than 3000 homes and businesses were destroyed. At least 38 people were killed in Kansas, Missouri, and Tennessee.

2007: A devastating EF5 twister demolishes nearly every structure in Greensburg around 9:30 pm (CDT) and kills ten. The mammoth wedge tornado cuts a swath 1.7 miles (2.7 km) wide and 22 miles (35 km) long across the Kansas landscape. It is the worst single tornado to touch down in the US in eight years.

1812 - A storm produced snow from Philadelphia to Maine. A foot of snow fell near Keene NH, and in Massachusetts, nine inches fell at Waltham, located near Boston. (David Ludlum)

1917 - A late season snowstorm in northwest Texas produced up to eight inches of snow in Potter County and Armstrong County. (David Ludlum)

1977 - A tornado 500 yards in width struck Pleasant Hill, MO, severely damaging the high school and grade school. Only minor injuries were reported among the more than 1000 teachers and students due to excellent warnings and prior tornado drills. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the southeastern U.S., with South Carolina hardest hit. Thunderstorm winds toppled trees seventy feet high in Spartanburg County SC, and knocked homes off their foundations near Bishopville SC. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail in North Carolina, but brought welcome rains to much of the rest of the eastern U.S. Residents of New England finally saw sunshine after about a week of clouds and rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region and the Lower Mississippi Valley. Thunderstorms spawned fifteen tornadoes, and there were 340 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Hail three inches in diameter, and 9.39 inches of rain, resulted in more than 130 million dollars damage at Monroe LA. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 100 mph at Epps LA and Fort Worth TX. A thunderstorm north of Mineral Wells TX produced high winds which unroofed a nightclub, turning it into a "topless club." (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Lower Ohio Valley to Virginia and the Carolinas. A tornado at Augusta Springs VA killed two people and injured ten others, and another tornado caused 1.7 million dollars damage at Colonial Heights VA. Temperatures soared into the 90s in northern California. The high of 98 degrees in downtown Sacramento was their hottest reading of record for so early in the season. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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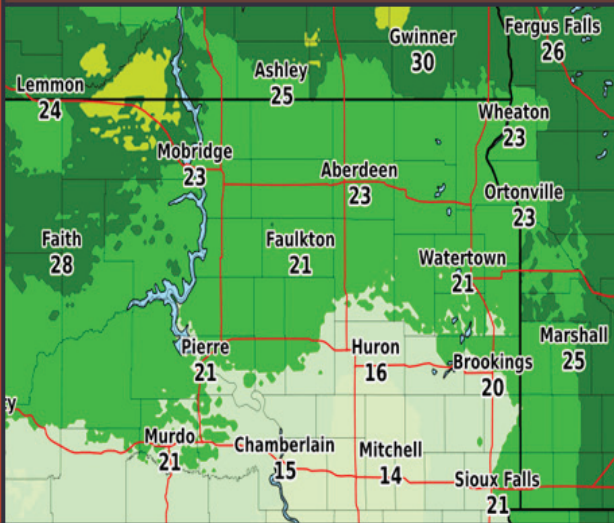
Fri May 4	Sat May 5	Sun May 6	Mon May 7	Tue May 8	Wed May 9	Thu May 10
81°F	79°F	72°F	75°F	71°F	69°F	66°F
47°F	45°F	46°F	51°F	50°F	45°F	40°F
W 16 MPH	SSW 11 MPH Precip 20%	NNE 8 MPH	S 14 MPH	SE 11 MPH Precip 30%	E 12 MPH Precip 30%	NNE 11 MPH

High to Very High Fire Danger This Afternoon

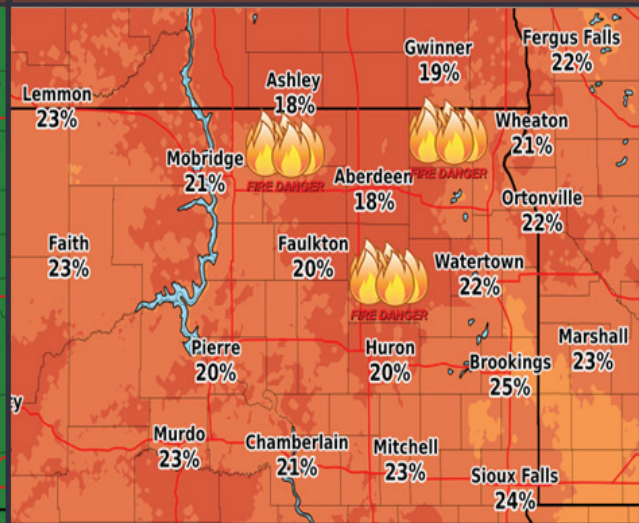
- Warm Temperatures (Upper 70s & Low 80s) & Low Humidity
- Breezy West Winds



Highest Forecast Afternoon Wind Gusts (mph)



Lowest Forecast Afternoon Humidity



weather.gov/Aberdeen National Weather Service Aberdeen @NWSAberdeen Updated: 5/4/2018 5:33 AM Central

Published on: 05/04/2018 at 5:36AM

Warmer and drier air will move into the region today. We will also see an increase in westerly breezes and afternoon humidity is forecast to bottom out in between 15 and 25 percent while temperatures rise into the upper 70s and low 80s. Fire danger will become high to very high this afternoon.

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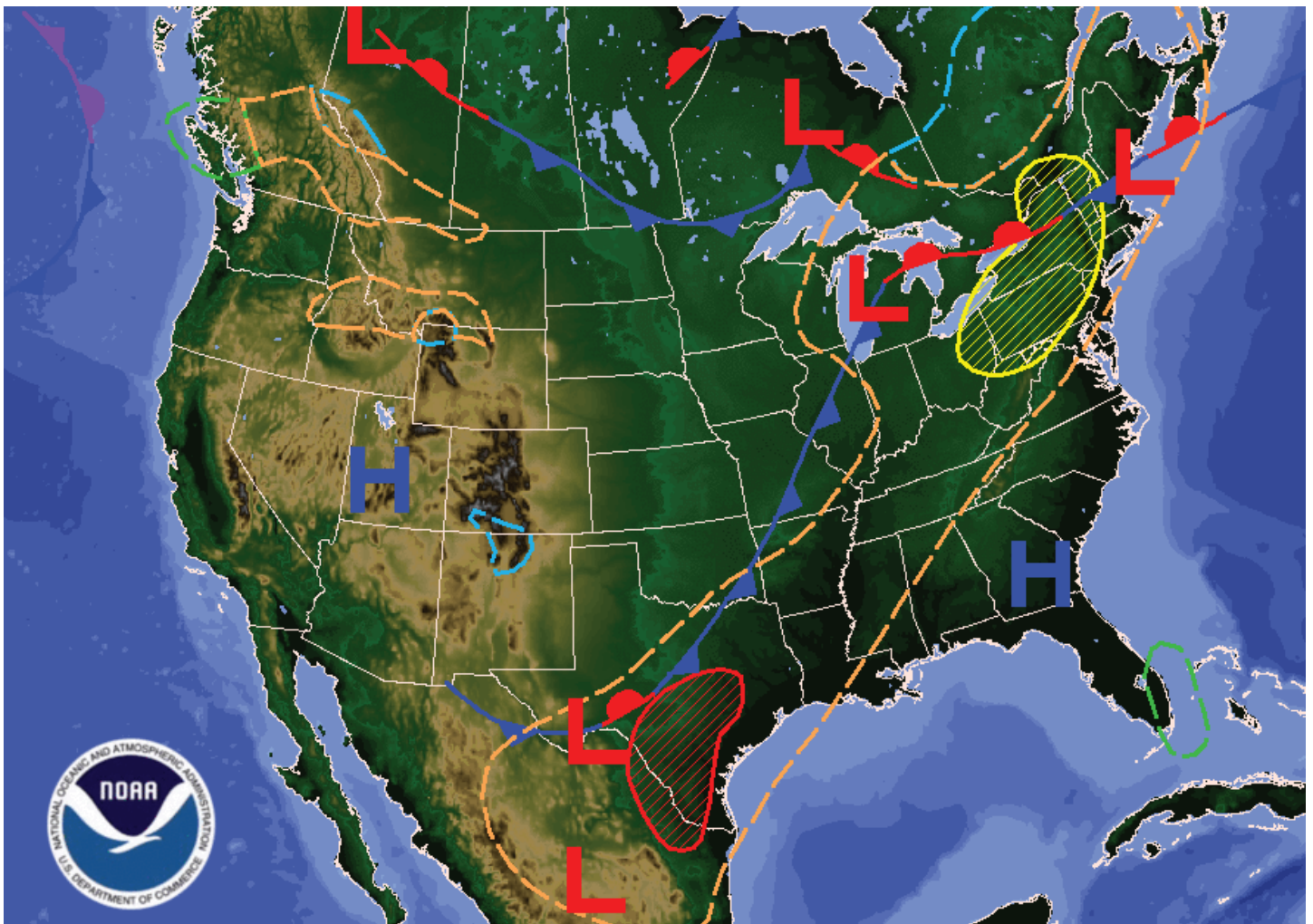
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 73.3 F at 6:35 PM
Low Outside Temp: 43.4 F at 6:10 AM
Wind Chill:
High Gust: 15.0 Mph at 1:28 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 98° in 1926
Record Low: 20° in 2005
Average High: 66°F
Average Low: 40°F
Average Precip in May: 0.41
Precip to date in May: 0.05
Average Precip to date: 4.44
Precip Year to Date: 2.73
Sunset Tonight: 8:44 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:16 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, May 04, 2018, issued 4:26 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

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

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FROM REBELLION TO RESTORATION

Going against God's will comes naturally. Our wants and God's needs seem to be at odds with one another. It's part of our sinful nature that needs our constant attention and never ending vigilance.

Psalm 107 describes the outcome when we become careless or lax or when we do not struggle to stay close to God. It presents a picture of those who have strayed from God as "sitting in darkness,"... "in the shadow of death" and being "bound in affliction and in irons." Here, this "darkness" is what life is like without the Light of God in a person's life. And we also know that when God is not present and active in our lives death looms large!

This struggle to be obedient and close to and with God is nothing new. Rebellion and self-centeredness began in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. They rejected God's requirement for them to be obedience and faithful. And when they disobeyed Him, the battle against sin and any desire that any one would ever have to do what right in the eyes of God began. But the battle to be righteous and the desire to please God are certainly possible.

Notice this reminder from the Psalmist: "They cried to the Lord in their trouble and He saved them from their distress." Any "trouble" we may have had, are having now or will have in the future is included when anyone at any time from anyplace cries out to God for His deliverance.

Our loving, gracious, merciful and faithful God will never desert us no matter how far we have strayed or how sinful our lives may be. "Call on me and I will answer!"

Prayer: Father, as we enter this year cleanse, forgive and deliver us from all of our sins and restore our joy. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 107:13 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

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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
- 4/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 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

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News from the Associated Press

South Dakota school district dropping 'Redmen' nickname

ESTELLINE, S.D. (AP) — The Estelline School District in eastern South Dakota is shedding its controversial Native American imagery by choosing a new team name and mascot.

The Watertown Public Opinion reports the six options to replace the "Redmen" nickname are Eagles, Express, Pioneers, Raptors, Red Hawks or Red Hornets.

Students, alumni and patrons are currently voting, and the winning name will be announced during a school ceremony on May 16.

School board officials say the name change discussion has been occurring for a couple of decades. It picked up momentum last fall when the state High School Activities Association recommended schools phase out Native American imagery.

Board member LeAnne Johnson says the district will continue to honor Estelline's athletic history under the Redmen name, including leaving state title banners with the name.

Information from: Watertown Public Opinion, <http://www.thepublicopinion.com>

Kansas, Oklahoma approve religious veto on LGBT adoptions

By MITCHELL WILLETTS, Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — State lawmakers in Kansas and Oklahoma have approved legislation to grant legal protections to faith-based adoption agencies that cite their religious beliefs for not placing children in LGBT homes.

Supporters of such measures argued that the core issue is protecting a group's right to live out its religious faith, while critics saw them as attacks on LGBT rights. Both Kansas and Oklahoma have GOP-controlled legislatures and governors, but in Kansas, the proposal split Republicans.

The Kansas Senate approved a bill early Friday morning, 24-15, that would prevent faith-based agencies from being barred from providing foster care or adoption services for the state if they refuse to place children in homes violating their "sincerely held" religious beliefs. The House had approved it late Thursday, 63-58.

The action in Kansas came after the Oklahoma House voted 56-21 for a similar measure, sending it to Gov. Mary Fallin, who has not said whether she would sign it. Kansas Gov. Jeff Colyer supported his state's legislation, with his administration arguing that it would encourage faith-based groups to place more abused and neglected children in state custody.

Backers of the Kansas bill acknowledged that faith-based agencies have been operating in Kansas for decades without issue. But they fear that lawsuits or turnover among state officials could result in an environment hostile to some religious groups' views. A few saw vocal opposition from LGBT-rights advocates as evidence that a shift could be coming.

"There is no homosexual agenda — I was told that, when people were saying that there was one, and now we find out, there is an agenda," said Kansas state Sen. Steve Fitzgerald, a conservative Leavenworth Republican. "What was once tolerated is now becoming dominant and is intolerant — totally intolerant."

LGBT-rights advocates argue that enacting such a law would sanction discrimination and support it with taxpayer dollars.

TechNet, representing some of the biggest names in tech, including Apple and Google, sent a letter to lawmakers in both states opposing their measures. Critics in Kansas worried that it would make the state look backward and even suggested it could hurt the economy.

"It's going to say, 'Well, there goes Kansas. They're going to do something regressive, something discriminatory,'" said Kansas state Sen. David Haley, a Kansas City Democrat. "Something like this is not healthy."

The Oklahoma bill cleared the GOP-controlled Legislature over the boisterous objections of Democrats.

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At one point, the chamber's presiding officer threatened to have a member forcibly removed.

Texas, Alabama, South Dakota, Virginia and Michigan already have such laws in place. Michigan's ACLU chapter took the state to court last year over its adoption law, and the case is still ongoing.

In 2011, Illinois declined to renew its state contract with Catholic Charities adoption services due to its policy of refusing child placement to same-sex couples. Catholic Charities has also stopped handling adoptions in Washington D.C., Massachusetts and San Francisco over concerns they would be required to act against their religious beliefs.

In Kansas, both sides of the debate agree that the state's foster care system is overloaded. The number of kids in need of homes has grown every year since 2008, from 5,711 to 7,540 as of March, according to the Department of Children and Families.

Supporters said that passing the measure could encourage groups providing limited services for the state or doing only private adoptions to work more with the state. Colyer's administration has said some out-of-state agencies could be attracted to Kansas.

In Oklahoma, sponsoring state Sen. Greg Treat, an Oklahoma City Republican, said he believes his measure will help get more children into loving homes.

"I believe this bill aids and gets more people involved in the system," he said.

But critics like Lori Ross, president of Foster Adopt Connect, a child placement agency operating in Kansas and Missouri, contend the real problem is a lack of available families.

Ross said for LGBT families looking to adopt, it isn't always obvious which agencies will work with them and which won't, she said. If they make that first phone call and get denied, they may never try and adopt again.

"If you're a single person, or a gay person, or a divorced person, or you're Jewish, then you better think twice before you call," Ross said.

Also contributing were Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City, and John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, May 3

Regional must move quickly on medical waste

It's difficult to understand why Rapid City Regional Hospital can't clean up its lingering medical waste problem in a more expeditious manner. It would seem that concerns raised months ago by the city and federal government would have been sufficient to resolve a public health issue.

On Sunday, the Journal reported that since October 2016 Regional Health has been mixing its medical waste in with trash destined for Rapid City's landfill where employees have the dubious task of plucking bags with blood, tissue, syringes, urine and other material from every single load, according to the city.

"We know that Regional's making efforts to correct this," Dale Tech, Rapid City's public works director, told the Journal. "However, what we've seen in their weekly trips to us, it really hasn't changed."

Despite Regional's repeated reassurances that it is diligently working to correct a problem that doesn't appear inherently complicated, it is making little headway. Furthermore, if the trash problem isn't cleaned up, the consequences could impact the entire community and region.

According to the hospital's compliance officer, the nonprofit could lose its certification to receive reimbursements from the Center for Medicaid Services, a significant source of income for Regional Health, which has clinics and hospitals in Sturgis, Spearfish, Deadwood, Belle Fourche, Hot Springs and Custer as well as Rapid City. In addition, the state could fine the city for violations if the landfill continues receiving medical waste.

It was the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services that brought the problem to light after receiving reports on safety violations from the states. According to the website SAT, which analyzed the data, Rapid City Regional Hospital ranked second in the nation among teaching hospitals with 44 safety violations

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from 2014-17.

After the Journal studied the report, reporter Christopher Vondracek contacted the South Dakota Department of Health and learned that its investigators cited Regional Health for six violations in 2017 for improper disposal of medical waste. When city officials were contacted, they said the landfill regularly receives medical waste even though they had been meeting for months with Regional.

"Mistakes can happen anywhere," the compliance officer told the Journal when explaining the challenges Regional faces with medical waste management.

While that may be the case at Regional, it isn't with other health care facilities, according to city and state officials. South Dakota's administrator for waste management said she was unaware of any other medical waste disposal problems in the state. The city said that was also the case in Rapid City.

Regional Health said it will continue to work to resolve the problem but offers no guarantees on when it will achieve what every other health care facility in the state has evidently accomplished — the safe and legal disposal of medical waste.

The city, which has taken a measured and certainly patient approach in this matter, should insist that Regional submit a plan and timeline to comply with city and state requirements. Regional, meanwhile, needs to assure the public that it has made the proper disposal of medical waste a priority and then demonstrate that in a public way.

It's time for Regional to clean up its processes and procedures. It's in the best interests of the community it serves as well as their own.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, May 1 **FDA info should be on fast track**

One of the essential components of our agricultural economy is maintaining consumer faith in the food that our farmers produce.

With that in mind, a report in the Guardian newspaper of London Monday may be particularly distressing to consumers and producers alike.

Internal documents from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) revealed residue of the herbicide glyphosate, which has been linked to cancer, has been found in a variety of common foods tested by the FDA. Glyphosate is the main ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup brand of herbicide.

In the documents obtained by the Guardian, one FDA chemist reported in an internal email that he found trace elements of the pesticide in foods ranging from wheat cracks to granola cereal.

In fact, the Guardian reported, FDA researchers had "trouble finding any food that does not carry traces of the pesticide." (For one researcher, a lone exception was, for whatever reason, broccoli.)

"That internal FDA email, dated January 2017, is part of a string of FDA communications that detail agency efforts to ascertain how much of the popular weedkiller is showing up in American food," the Guardian reported. "The tests mark the agency's first-ever such examination.

The documents were obtained through a Freedom of Information request. The FDA has been testing food samples for two years, but has yet to publicly release any official results.

Now, it's important for the FDA to expedite its report on its study as much as practically possible. It owes it both to the consumers and producers of America's food supply.

"People care about what contaminants are in their food. If there is scientific information about these residues in the food, the FDA should release it," Tracey Woodruff, a professor in the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine, told the Guardian. "It helps people make informed decisions. Taxpayers paid for the government to do this work, they should get to see the information."

This particular situation demands action because the FDA has only recently begun sampling and testing for glyphosate, which has been used in the food production process for more than four decades. (However, the chemical was declared a possible carcinogen in 2015.) American farmers use an average of 200 million pounds of Roundup on their fields each year. According to the Guardian, "The weedkiller is sprayed directly over some crops, including corn, soybeans, wheat and oats. Many farmers also use it on fields

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before the growing season .”

An official report is expected next year, but in the meantime, this information could generate a lot of doubt and a lot of damage for food producers.

Ultimately, of course, the real concern is the presence of a potential carcinogen in a wide range of food. That must be addressed for the good of everyone involved.

The information in these emails generates a lot of questions not only about our food supply but also how farmers produce that food. It can also generate a lot of doubts and, perhaps, unfounded fears.

For those reasons — as well as for peace of mind and economic stability — this study needs to be aired as soon as is practical. While it may still be a work in progress, the details that have already come to light need to be addressed in some capacity sooner rather than later.

American News, Aberdeen, May 2

No reason to change 4-H Rodeo for Title IX compliance

Nothing to see here.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has asked for changes in 4-H Rodeo event labels. In short, it wants to eliminate any separation in boys and girls categories. This ties back to Title IX, federal policy enacted in 1972 that, in part, forwarded the attempt to create equal opportunities in athletics for the genders.

We understand the ag department’s desire to be in compliance. Even so, there’s no reason to change the rodeo categories.

Here’s how the topic cropped up. As a U.S. Department of Agriculture program, 4-H Rodeo takes its direction from the agency, which until last year had been using a 1979 interpretation of the Title IX ruling. Now though, per the USDA, there can only be gender segregation in programs for contact sports such as wrestling, or if team selection is based on an unfair physical advantage and there’s a team for each gender, said John Keimig, South Dakota State University Extension youth safety field specialist.

Even now, 4-H Rodeo provides the same number of opportunities for boys and girls in our state. There are four events for junior 4-H boys and four for girls. And there are five each for the senior division, which includes ages 14 to 18.

South Dakota 4-H Rodeo media contact Casey Cowan said that aside from having the 4-H name attached to the program and receiving some technical assistance from SDSU Extension, 4-H rodeo is independently funded.

And 4-H Rodeo leaders say they have accommodated rare requests from girls to participate in boys events and vice versa.

So the spirit of Title IX is alive and well when it comes to 4-H Rodeo in South Dakota.

One of the valid reasons for an exemption to the new interpretation is that having boys and girls competing against each other would create an unfair competitive advantage.

Here’s what U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, R-S.D., had to say about that:

“Rodeo is a sport that contains diverse contests. The outcomes of these contests are heavily dependent both on the skill of the contestant and in many instances, the inherent differences between the sexes,” she wrote in a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue in November. She asked for a review of the USDA opinion about gender-separated events.

Perdue said there will be no changes this year while a review is underway.

That seems reasonable.

Especially concerning 4-H Rodeo in South Dakota is styled after collegiate rodeo. So boys and girls participate in events as youth that, if they are good enough, they could enter in college.

It seems foolish to change a system that helps kids when they get into college.

Wide-sweeping Title IX was a civil rights law passed as part of education amendments. It was needed in 1972 and is needed now to maintain fairness.

But 4-H Rodeo is already being fair. Four classes of competition divided by gender and age. The same number of events for boys and girls. A willingness to accommodate those who want to try other events.

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To our knowledge, there are no concerns among the more than 1,200 4-H rodeo participants in South Dakota. So this isn't a bottom-up issue.

4-H Rodeo in South Dakota is meeting a more-than-reasonable threshold.

We're just looking for a problem where there is none.

At least 5 candidates seeking attorney general's office

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Several current or former federal, state and tribal prosecutors are seeking to replace outgoing state Attorney General Marty Jackley as South Dakota's top law enforcement officer.

Former South Dakota U.S. Attorney Randy Seiler formally announced Thursday he would seek the office as a Democrat, setting up a contest for the party's nomination with Tatewin Means, a former Oglala Sioux Tribe attorney general.

Among Republicans, Lawrence County State's Attorney John Fitzgerald, Yankton lawyer Jason Ravensborg and state Sen. Lance Russell are seeking the office. Each party's candidate will be selected at conventions in June.

Here's a look at the candidates vying for the job:

JOHN FITZGERALD

Fitzgerald, the Lawrence County state's attorney since 1995, is campaigning on decades of experience as a prosecutor, saying that officials must be vigilant to keep South Dakota "safe and secure." The 62-year-old who lives near Spearfish noted methamphetamine as a key problem that must be addressed through education, rehabilitation and law enforcement.

"It's skill. It's understanding. It's insight. It's knowledge that comes with years of doing things," said Fitzgerald, who has also been Butte County state's attorney. "I've had in excess of 250 jury trials."

JASON RAVNSBORG

A deputy state's attorney for Union County and partner at a Yankton law firm, Ravensborg says he has a strong background to address the drug problem in South Dakota. Ravensborg would make changes to criminal and juvenile justice overhauls approved by lawmakers, including removing presumptive probation policies that currently apply to lower-level offenders to "give the power back to the judges."

He's also proposing to expand programs that allow lower-level prisoners to work while serving their sentences and establish a meth-specific prison and a mental health facility in western South Dakota. The 42-year-old Yankton resident ended 2017 with a campaign bank balance of nearly \$32,000 — significantly more than his two Republican opponents.

He is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

LANCE RUSSELL

Russell, a longtime Republican lawmaker and former state's attorney, says he's running for the attorney general post to address rising crime and improve government transparency. The 48-year-old lawyer from Hot Springs says South Dakota should have a broader public records law similar to the federal Freedom of Information Act. He says the aim is to stop problems like South Dakota's GEAR UP scandal involving embezzled funds and a dead family.

Russell is also pushing to reverse presumptive probation policies to give judges more discretion in sentencing. But there's one wrinkle in Russell's campaign: he's running to keep his state Senate seat in a primary election held just weeks before Republicans' state party convention to select their attorney general candidate.

TATEWIN MEANS

A former Oglala Sioux Tribe attorney general, Means declared her candidacy late last month in an open

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letter saying she would lead the state in a new direction. In her campaign biography, the Democratic candidate cites a dedication to reducing recidivism rates and says she would work to build a state where every child can thrive, every trauma survivor can find healing and people with mental health issues have enough support.

Means, now the chair of graduate studies at Oglala Lakota College, says in the letter her determination has grown through experiences as a lawyer, educator, mother and indigenous person. Means' campaign didn't immediately return a telephone message seeking comment from The Associated Press.

RANDY SEILER

Seiler served as South Dakota's U.S. attorney from 2015 through 2017. He says he would make fighting methamphetamine abuse his main priority if elected attorney general. The 71-year-old Seiler says there's "no better training ground" to become attorney general than his more than two decades of experience in the U.S. attorney's office. He touted that experience heavily in the announcement, also citing his work with Native American tribes in South Dakota.

Seiler says addressing the meth epidemic will require prosecution, prevention and treatment.

"I believe I have the experience, the leadership and the vision to serve as the state's top law enforcement officer and also to serve as the lawyer for the people of the state of South Dakota," Seiler said.

Construction worker dies in Sioux Falls trench collapse

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a construction worker is dead after the trench he was working in collapsed.

A police spokesman says two men were working in the trench when the sides of the trench began to collapse around 11 a.m. Thursday. One man was able to get out but a 34-year-old man was trapped.

Crews were able to remove the man from the trench. He was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Authorities did not immediately release the victim's name.

Former US Attorney Randy Seiler running for attorney general

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Former South Dakota U.S. Attorney Randy Seiler says he would make fighting methamphetamine abuse his main priority if elected state attorney general.

Seiler officially announced Thursday he would seek the office as a Democrat. The 71-year-old Seiler served as South Dakota's U.S. attorney from 2015 through 2017.

Seiler says there's "no better training ground" to become state attorney general than his experience in the U.S. attorney's office. He touted that experience heavily in the announcement, also citing his work with Native American tribes in South Dakota.

Tatewin Means, former Oglala Sioux Tribe attorney general, is running for the post as a Democrat. Among Republicans, Lawrence County State's Attorney John Fitzgerald, Yankton lawyer Jason Ravensborg and state Sen. Lance Russell are seeking the office.

Each party's candidate will be selected at conventions in June.

South Dakota county offers refunds to overtaxed landowners

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A northern South Dakota county is offering refunds to landowners who have been overtaxed on their properties in recent years.

Brown County commissioners approved more than \$510,000 on Tuesday for agriculture property owners who have overpaid taxes in 15 townships, the Aberdeen American News reported. The offer came after hundreds of landowners paid property taxes in protest when the state Revenue Department determined earlier this year the county was overvaluing land.

The average refund per acre is \$1.35. The offers are available to all affected agriculture landowners for 2017 property taxes payable this year.

Landowners must sign a release for settlement eligibility saying the county isn't obligated to repay any property taxes from previous years, said Chris White, a state's attorney. The release will be sent out within the next few months to eligible property owners.

There isn't a legal recourse for further refunds because there weren't property taxes paid under protest in past years, he said.

Once the release is signed and reviewed, the county will either issue a rebate check or abate the second half of property taxes due in October.

Retired farmer Carson Storm owns land near Bath. He believes overtaxed property owners should receive full refunds this year.

"I don't think it's right that people have to absorb this cost for this type of thing," Storm said.

Commission Chairman Doug Fjeldheim said the county doesn't feel legally obligated to refund property taxes, but it is doing so to take responsibility for the improper assessments.

County officials are planning to request the state share the settlement cost.

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

Army Corps meeting with tribes on Dakota Access oil pipeline

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Environmental study of the Dakota Access oil pipeline is likely to continue into the summer as federal officials meet with American Indian tribes who have raised concerns about being left out of the process.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to meet with all four tribes by the end of the month, Justice Department attorney Matthew Marinelli said in a status report to U.S. District Judge James Boasberg that was filed Wednesday.

Boasberg is overseeing a lawsuit filed in July 2016 by the Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Yankton and Oglala Sioux tribes, who hope to shut down the \$3.8 billion pipeline that began moving North Dakota oil to Illinois last summer. They fear environmental and cultural harm. Texas-based developer Energy Transfer Partners says the pipeline is safe.

Boasberg allowed oil to begin flowing last June despite lingering concerns about the pipeline's impact on tribal interests, including how a spill under the Missouri River in the Dakotas would impact tribal water supplies. He ordered more study on those topics.

The Standing Rock and Cheyenne River tribes earlier this year said they weren't being given a meaningful role in that process, and they asked Boasberg to order that they be given more involvement.

Boasberg last month rejected the request, saying the tribes can press their argument that the study is flawed when the work is completed and presented to him.

The Corps had anticipated an April 2 completion date, but that didn't materialize because of what the agency maintained was difficulties in obtaining needed information from the tribes.

Marinelli said the Corps received information from the Standing Rock Sioux in March and met with officials from that tribe late that month. The other three tribes all met an agency-set April 20 deadline for requested information, and the Corps is scheduled to meet with each tribe by June 1, he said.

Boasberg on Thursday gave the Corps until June 8 to set a date for completion of the work.

Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

SD man sentenced for drug, illegal sexual activity charges

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Federal authorities say a 49-year-old Rapid City man has been sentenced to five years in prison for methamphetamine distribution and transporting people with the intention of hiring them to be prostitutes.

Officials say Darryl Graham has been sentenced to five years in custody and then six years of supervised release for the drug distribution charge. He has also been sentenced to five years in prison and three years of supervised release for the illegal sexual activity charge.

The sentences are set to run concurrently. Graham was indicted in 2016 after officials say he transported people from Rapid City to Chicago with the intent of having them engage in prostitution.

47-year-old Mitchell man sentenced for raping teenage girl

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A 47-year-old Mitchell man has been sentenced to serve a decade in prison for raping a teenage girl early this year.

The Daily Republic reports that Steven Nichols took a plea deal in March to reduce a first-degree rape charge to fourth-degree rape.

Judge Chris Giles sentenced Nichols to 15 years in the state penitentiary but suspended five years and gave him credit for serving 100 days in jail since his arrest in January.

Nichols also must pay more than \$3,200 in fines, costs and restitution, along with repaying public defender fees.

Information from: The Daily Republic, <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com>

4 detained in death of girl who took her own life

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Police say four people have been detained in the death of a 17-year-old girl who took her own life in Yankton.

Authorities say the girl died early Wednesday of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. She was pronounced dead at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital.

Yankton Police Chief Brian Paulsen says another 17-year-old girl and four males, ages 18 to 20, are expected to face "ancillary charges" in connection with the shooting. Police provided no further details.

Idled grocery store in Tripp to reopen under new ownership

TRIPP, S.D. (AP) — Residents of Tripp are getting their grocery store back.

Mayor Vic Olson tells the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan that the owners of Ron's Market stores in Plankinton, Stickney and White Lake are buying the Tripp store that's been vacant for three months.

The former owner closed the store on Jan. 31 due to declining sales. The store is to reopen next week under the new ownership.

The Tripp Development Corp. had planned to buy the store and turn it into a community-owned business or a cooperative, but Olson says the Ron's Market owners stepped forward and the sale fell into place quickly.

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

After flirting with gun-control movement, Trump faces NRA

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Back for a return engagement, President Donald Trump's address to the National Rifle Association on Friday comes after he temporarily strayed from the group's strong opposition to tougher gun controls following the school shooting in Parkland, Florida — only to rapidly return to the fold.

For the fourth year in a row, Trump will speak to the group, which meets this year in Dallas. Last year, he became the first sitting president to appear in more than 30 years, declaring that the "assault" on the Second Amendment had ended. But this year's speech comes as the issue of gun violence takes on new urgency after one of the deadliest school shootings in U.S. history.

Student survivors of the Feb. 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that left 17 people

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dead are now leading a massive national gun control movement. While the shooting has not led to major changes from the White House or the Republican-led Congress, it did — at least briefly — prompt Trump to declare that he would stand up to the powerful gun lobby. He later backpedaled on that tough talk.

Trump's attendance at this year's NRA convention was announced just days ago and came after Vice President Mike Pence already was scheduled to appear. Asked why Trump was attending, given the current political tensions around gun violence, White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said this week that safety was a "big priority." But, she added, "We also support the Second Amendment, and strongly support it, and don't see there to be a problem with speaking at the National Rifle Association's meeting."

Trump has long enjoyed strong backing from the NRA, which spent about \$30 million in support of his presidential campaign. The NRA showcased its high-profile guests for the event, with NRA Executive Director Chris Cox saying on Twitter: "We are honored to celebrate American Freedom with @realDonaldTrump, @VP Mike Pence and others. #2A #watchtheleftmeltdown"

But one of the Parkland student survivors, David Hogg, was critical of Trump's planned attendance.

"It's kind of hypocritical of him to go there after saying so many politicians bow to the NRA and are owned by them," Hogg said. "It proves that his heart and his wallet are in the same place."

During a televised gun meeting with lawmakers in late February, Trump wagged his finger at a Republican senator and scolded him for being "afraid of the NRA," declaring that he would stand up to the group and finally get results in quelling gun violence.

He praised members of the gun lobby as "great patriots" but declared "that doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. It doesn't make sense that I have to wait until I'm 21 to get a handgun, but I can get this weapon at 18." He was referring to the AR-15 the Parkland shooting suspect is accused of using.

Those words rattled some Republicans in Congress and sparked hope among gun-control advocates that, unlike after previous mass shootings, tougher regulations would be enacted this time. But Trump later retreated on those words, expressing support for modest changes to the background check system, as well as arming teachers.

After expressing interest in increasing the minimum age to purchase a so-called assault weapon to 21, Trump later declared there was "not much political support" for the move. He then pushed off the issue of age restrictions by assigning the question to a commission.

Trump's moves have drawn concerns from both sides of the gun debate.

"He ran as supposedly the best friend of the Second Amendment and has become gun grabber in chief," said Michael Hammond, legislative counsel to the Gun Owners of America. Hammond said his members were upset Trump had approved a spending bill that included background check updates. "We're not confident at all. We are very disappointed."

Kristin Brown, of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, said Trump had offered mixed messages since the Parkland shooting.

"Which Donald Trump is going to show up?" she asked. "Will it be the one who sympathized with the Parkland students he brought to the White House, the one who met with members of the Senate ... or the one who had burgers" with NRA head Wayne LaPierre.

Several groups announced plans to protest over the weekend. The protesters will include parents of those killed in Parkland and in other shootings.

Sexism isn't just unfair; it makes women sick, study suggests

Catherine Harnois, Wake Forest University

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Catherine Harnois, Wake Forest University and Joao Luiz Bastos, Wake Forest University

(THE CONVERSATION) Recent social movements such as the Women's March, #MeToo, #TimesUp, #BalanceTonPorc (#OutYourPig), and #SayHerName draw attention to the broad spectrum gender-related

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violence that is pervasive in the United States and around the world.

Social science research takes a different form than protests, but paints a similar picture. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men in the U.S. experience contact sexual violence in their lifetime. Contact sexual violence is defined as being made to have sexual intercourse with someone else, being sexually coerced, or having unwanted sexual contact.

Other types of sexism, including gender discrimination and sexual harassment, are even more frequent. A 2016 report from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission estimates that between 25 percent to 85 percent of women in the U.S. experience workplace sexual harassment in their lifetimes.

We, a sociologist and a social epidemiologist, teamed up to find out the effects sexism has on people's health.

The big question: Does sexism hurt health? Our study, recently published in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, examined patterns of workplace discrimination and harassment in the U.S. and the consequences for physical and mental health. We sought, first, to determine how pervasive these types of mistreatment were for women, as well as for men.

Our second goal was to determine whether sexism, along with other forms of discrimination and harassment, contributed to health disparities between women and men.

Numerous studies show that women tend to report worse health compared to men, and we wanted to see if workplace discrimination and harassment might be contributing to this disparity.

We used statistical methods to analyze data from the U.S. General Social Survey, a national survey of English- and Spanish-speaking adults. The 2006, 2010 and 2014 surveys each contain a special section focusing on the quality of working life in the past year, including questions about discrimination in respondents' current job, as well as respondents' experiences with workplace sexual harassment and other forms of harassment.

A total of 3,724 out of 5,579 economically active respondents across the three survey years answered all of the questions we analyzed, and this group forms the basis of our research. We used weighting procedures (i.e., numerical adjustments applied to groups of respondents which were either under or over-represented in the sample, relative to their actual size in the population) in all our analyses, so that the GSS data would be reflective of the broader U.S. population.

As with other studies, our results showed that women report significantly worse mental and physical health compared to men. When asked, "Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good?" women reported an average of 3.6 days of poor mental health in the past 30 days. Men, in comparison, reported significantly less: an average of 2.8 days. When asked about their days of poor physical health in the past 30 days, women reported an average of 2.7 days, with men reporting an average of 2.2 days.

Gender discrimination four times more often Of the women surveyed, 8.4 percent reported experiencing gender discrimination in their current job, and 4.1 percent indicated they had experienced sexual harassment at work within the past 12 months. Some men reported workplace gender discrimination and sexual harassment too, but the percentage was significantly lower (2 percent and 1.3 percent respectively).

In addition to gender discrimination and sexual harassment, we also examined other forms of mistreatment in the workplace. We found that nearly a quarter of women, or 23 percent, indicated that they had either experienced some form of discrimination, based on race, age, or gender, or a combination, in their current job or they had experienced some type of harassment in the past year. The rate of perceived workplace mistreatment among men was significantly lower at 16.5 percent.

How harassment hurts One of the main goals of our study was to examine the relationship between workplace sexual harassment, gender discrimination and health outcomes. We used a range of sophisticated statistical techniques to assess these relationships, including multivariate regression models which estimated the effect of various forms of mistreatment on health outcomes, while accounting for other potential causes for ill health (age, low socioeconomic background, etc.).

We found that, among women, perceptions of gender discrimination are significantly associated with

worse self-reported mental health. Women who perceived sexual harassment also reported worse physical health. We did not find a significant association between gender discrimination and sexual harassment with health outcomes among men, but this may be a result of the small number of men reporting these forms of mistreatment.

We also examined the combined effects of reporting multiple forms of discrimination and harassment. Here we found that respondents who perceived multiple forms of mistreatment reported significantly worse mental health than those who perceived no mistreatment, or just one form of mistreatment. Among women, the combination of age and gender discrimination was particularly detrimental for mental health. Women who reported experiencing both age and gender discrimination had an average of 9 days of poor mental health in the past 30 days.

Big reason for health gender gap We wanted to know whether workplace mistreatment contributed to the gender gap in self-reported health. In other words, our statistical models were used to test whether sexism was a driver of the observed gender disparities in self-reported health.

Our results suggest that gender discrimination is responsible for around 9 to 10 percent of the gender gap in self-reported health. In other words, if we were to reduce the frequency of gender discrimination, we'd likely see a significant reduction in gender-based health inequality.

Overall, our results suggest that sexism takes a toll on women's health and well-being. The high frequency with which women experience sexism – at work and elsewhere – underscores the importance of viewing it not only as a social justice issue, but also a public health issue.

This article was originally published on The Conversation. Read the original article here: <http://theconversation.com/sexism-isnt-just-unfair-it-makes-women-sick-study-suggests-95689>.

Boycott China and avoid a trade war

Amitrajeet A. Batabyal, Rochester Institute of Technology

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Amitrajeet A. Batabyal, Rochester Institute of Technology

(THE CONVERSATION) The U.S. and China are locked in negotiations both sides say they hope will avert a painful trade war.

The Trump administration has threatened to impose a series of tariffs unless China agrees to limit what he calls "its illicit trade practices." The Chinese government, for its part, appears unwilling to accede to his demands and has offered some retaliatory trade sanctions of its own.

The ostensible reason President Donald Trump is willing to risk a trade war is because he argues – justifiably – that U.S. companies have been taken advantage of by their Chinese counterparts for decades, required to hand over lucrative intellectual property in exchange for access to China's growing middle class.

Tariffs, however, aren't the answer to that problem, as my research in international economics and the design of international environmental agreements shows. Rather, if Trump really wants to achieve his stated aims, he should put American businesses on the front lines of his strategy and call for a boycott of China.

Doing business in China If that sounds preposterous, consider the origins of this escalating conflict.

Its seeds can be traced back to the opening up of the Chinese economy as a result of reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978 and the zeal of American – and more generally Western – companies in taking full advantage of new business opportunities in this gigantic market.

However, in many instances in the past four decades, the presence of mandatory technology transfer policies and foreign ownership restrictions have meant that market access has been granted only to Western firms willing to play ball. In addition, there is now considerable evidence that Chinese businesses, often with the participation of government officials, have been conducting cyberattacks on American companies to steal their intellectual property.

The Trump administration estimated that this theft of American intellectual property costs US\$225 billion to \$600 billion annually.

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And since companies are already on the front lines of this fight, with the most to lose, it makes sense that they're the ones to lead the counter attack.

A boycott by firmsSo how would a boycott work? Importantly, the U.S. couldn't do it alone.

American companies, like everyone else, want to make money in the one billion person market that is China and hence it would not make sense for them to unilaterally withdraw. By doing so, they would be giving up valuable market share to their rivals. For example, if a top U.S. luxury car seller such as Cadillac were to unilaterally boycott the Chinese market, then it would be giving up valuable market share to other rivals.

The key point is that many of those rivals are in Europe and have also been used and abused by Chinese companies and hence have a similar interest in finding a way to prevent them from stealing any more of their intellectual property.

If all Western luxury car makers jointly boycotted China, then this would be equivalent to acting as if a Chinese market didn't exist. Clearly, profits would take a hit in the short run, but the long-term objective of ensuring that Western companies do business on a level playing field would be met.

Cars and chipsAlso, a boycott wouldn't have to involve more than a few industries to be effective. Specifically, the focus would need to be on industries that China, through its Made in China 2025 scheme, would like to dominate. Two strong examples are cars and computer chips.

China has been trying to develop a domestic automobile industry since the early 1980s, an effort that has largely failed. But now, under the Made in China initiative, it is seeking to become a leader in electric vehicles.

However, it needs Western automakers to continue to operate in China and conduct research on battery technology and on electric vehicles in order to achieve this goal.

Thus if Western car companies and particularly those actively conducting research in battery technology jointly agreed to stop competing in China, that would send a strong message to Beijing. Either China could try to go it alone with no Western collaboration or it'll have to realize that systematically strong-arming companies will not help it attain its goals.

A second example of an industry in which a Western boycott would be effective is microprocessor chips. This is because China is still significantly dependent on imports despite operating a few notable supercomputers that use solely home-made chips. Almost 90 percent of chips used in China are either imported or produced domestically by foreign companies, so a boycott would force the government to sit up and take notice.

For a boycott of this sort to work, it is important that American officials not attempt to go it alone, making it seem like a purely China versus U.S. spat. Successful boycotts follow a "strength in numbers" logic.

And this is where the Trump administration enters the fray. It could use its diplomatic muscle to enlist the governments of like-minded allies – particularly the European Union – to get their companies in key industries to join the American-led boycott. This could be part of a wider effort to credibly and collaboratively communicate to China that it needs to play fairly. As New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman recently noted, the "last thing Beijing wants is a U.S.-E.U. united front demanding it play fair."

Not only would this selective boycott make it harder for the Chinese government to achieve its Made in China 2025 dreams, it would also anger consumers, who are increasingly hungry for Western goods – something the leadership is well aware of.

And in contrast to tariffs, such a campaign would likely have no adverse impact on American consumers.

One important caveat: This course of action, like imposing tariffs, would probably do little to reduce the threat of intellectual property theft by Chinese hackers.

Would a boycott work?When we think of a boycott, we usually imagine consumers avoiding a particular product. Such boycotts have had varying levels of success.

A corporate boycott of a nation is much less common. To the best of my knowledge, a corporate boycott of a nation along the lines suggested here has not been attempted before. Historically, boycotts against a nation have typically been designed to persuade consumers to not purchase products from a nation, such as the anti-apartheid movement or the more controversial boycott of Israel.

What I am proposing is a country boycott by companies located in multiple nations and hence it is not possible to directly gauge the likelihood of success based on past actions

That being said, vigorous diplomacy by like-minded nations sharing a common objective has yielded positive outcomes in as diverse and difficult cases as the 1987 Montreal protocol to reduce ozone-depleting substances and the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Similarly, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries cartel has demonstrated how businesses across nations can take joint action to achieve a common objective, with mixed success.

Might China retaliate? Perhaps, but the costs would be high if the U.S. were to successfully organize a boycott involving companies in several dozen countries. More likely, it would find accommodation a much more palatable option in the face of a united front.

The recent tariffs aside, Western businesses and nations need to stop treating China with kid gloves, which I believe they have been doing for years. A boycott would be a good start – and wouldn't risk a trade war.

This article was originally published on The Conversation. Read the original article here: <http://theconversation.com/boycott-china-and-avoid-a-trade-war-95736>.

The world's nuclear energy watchdogs: 4 questions answered

Scott L. Montgomery, University of Washington

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Scott L. Montgomery, University of Washington

(THE CONVERSATION) North Korea has promised to get rid of its nuclear weapons, but how will the world know if it actually follows through?

There is only one international agency in the world that could verify their compliance, the International Atomic Energy Agency. However, North Korea canceled its membership to the organization in 1994. When the IAEA demanded to inspect certain facilities in North Korea, they backed out and eventually expelled all nuclear inspectors in 2009.

Since then, North Korea has remained outside the IAEA's jurisdiction. While it isn't clear whether the agency will be called upon if a deal on denuclearization is reached, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano has said the agency is prepared to send a team of inspectors should a diplomatic agreement be reached.

So, with that possibility in mind, let's look at how the agency operates and all the other nuclear energy challenges it faces beyond North Korea.

1. What is the International Atomic Energy Agency? The IAEA was founded in 1957, inspired by U.S. President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. From the beginning, its task has been to spread and monitor the application of nuclear technology for non-military uses and make sure that such technology is not diverted to build weapons.

Its creators had a mixture of pragmatic resignation and long-term hope about nuclear technology. They recognized that the Cold War meant that nuclear weapons would continue to exist. Yet the thinking was that their existence might be significantly curtailed if nations were drawn to other applications of the technology like medicine, agriculture, industry and power generation.

Headquartered in Vienna, Austria, the agency is a membership organization that reports annually to the United Nations, but is independent of it. Member nations must obey its rules and requirements in order to receive the knowledge and technology it provides.

Currently, 169 countries are members.

2. What are the agency's main responsibilities? The agency is best known for its work in two areas. The first is nuclear safety: protecting people and the environment from harmful radiation. The second is nuclear security, which focuses on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, including threats of nuclear terrorism.

This watchdog role requires determining whether any member country might be developing nuclear weapons – specifically nations that have signed international treaties. For example, the Treaty on the Non-

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Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the world's most important legally binding agreement for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. At present, a total of 191 states have joined the treaty. Three nuclear weapons states – Israel, India and Pakistan – have not signed and North Korea withdrew from it in 2003.

The IAEA evaluates compliance with other treaties including those governing nuclear free zones and important safeguard agreements with as many as 181 nations.

In the past, some states like West Germany and Italy, and more recently Iran, have viewed the agency's authority as unfairly restricting their sovereignty over their nuclear facilities. Yet support for the agency's authority has grown strongly with time, due to its key role in difficult cases, like that of Iran itself.

3. How does the agency verify how nuclear material is being used? Among the more than 2,500 people who staff the IAEA, only about 385 are inspectors. They come from 80 nations and mainly hold backgrounds in physics, chemistry and engineering.

Routine inspections involve verifying whether a member's report about its nuclear facilities and material is accurate. Depending on the size of the facility, this might take a few hours for one or two people or two weeks for 10 inspectors. They do this in a number of ways, including the collecting of samples of nuclear material, measuring levels of radioactivity, checking plans and blueprints against actual construction, and interviewing officials, engineers and others involved in nuclear work.

Over time, the agency has had to make changes in its inspection processes. For example, before 1997, inspectors were limited to examining only facilities that member states had declared. After discovering that Iraq had lied about the true extent of its nuclear program, the IAEA board of governors approved a protocol to allow inspectors to access undeclared sites that might be involved in nuclear work.

Inspectors have also found themselves in the line of political fire. For example, between 2002 and 2003, the Bush administration wanted evidence that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had an active nuclear weapons program. U.S. attempts to pressure the agency did not alter IAEA findings that such evidence could not be found.

Similarly, the agency has stood its ground in favor of the Iran nuclear deal and Iran's compliance in the face of President Trump's continued criticism of the agreement.

4. What are the main challenges facing the agency? There are myriad challenges facing the IAEA.

Expanding demands on the agency have come from developing nations with growing economies such as Thailand and Chile that want to use nuclear science in medicine, agriculture and industry. Growth of nuclear power into new areas of the world is bringing concern about the development of weapons and terrorist groups acquiring nuclear material.

North Korea, whose weapons program may or may not be halted by talks with the U.S., has plutonium and uranium that could be sold without international approval or safeguards.

Then there is the Trump administration's threat to abandon the Iran nuclear deal, a move that would dismiss years of effort by the IAEA to head off an arms race in the region. At the same time, any future need to verify that Iran is not building a weapon would almost certainly rely on IAEA inspectors. Similarly, it seems likely that a deal between the U.S. and North Korea would require the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to rejoin the agency and have any denuclearization efforts confirmed by it as well.

Such realities only heighten the importance of the IAEA. No other organization exists to do its essential work. One of its most successful and farsighted efforts has been to work with nations individually in creating blueprints for safe nuclear science and nuclear power programs.

The most enduring difficulty facing the IAEA, however, lies with the U.S. and Russia. Despite reducing their nuclear arsenals hugely since the Cold War, both still possess around 7,000 weapons, immense numbers considering each one's destructive power. Both nations, moreover, have recently and openly declared a new era of modernization and diversification for these arsenals.

In their very existence, these weapons are a rationale for other countries to want them. How else will they deter aggression from either nation? It remains a stark truth, a difficult one for the IAEA, that while it works to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, the U.S. and Russia forge a path for weapons states in exactly the opposite direction.

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versation.com/the-worlds-nuclear-energy-watchdogs-4-questions-answered-93690.

Unearthed mummy recalls an Iran before the ayatollahs

David J. Wasserstein, Vanderbilt University

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

David J. Wasserstein, Vanderbilt University

(THE CONVERSATION) As a historian, I well know that the past has a habit of coming back. And, sometimes, it wreaks havoc on the present.

That's the situation now confronting Iran after a mummy was discovered during construction on a building in Tehran.

Everything old is new again Iran's 1979 Revolution brought into power a conservative Islamic regime.

When that happened, some Western scholars – myself included – feared that the new ayatollahs would visit destruction on anything non- or pre-Islamic. I was part of a group of academics who created a new association of Iranologists in Europe to ensure continued study of Iran's past.

To our relief, the new government admirably continued scholarly research on the past, both Islamic and pre-Islamic, maintaining archaeological excavations and publishing the results.

But the revolutionary Islamic government did seek to erase one inconvenient part of Iran's past. After the last Iranian monarch, or shah, fled the country in early 1979, a group of Revolutionary Guards demolished the mausoleum of his father, Reza Shah.

Reza Shah, the founder of Iran's Pahlavi dynasty, died in exile in South Africa in 1944, after being deposed by the British during World War II. His body was brought to Cairo, where it was mummified in order to preserve it.

It remained there until his son, Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi – who had succeeded him on the Iranian throne – brought it to Tehran and interred it in a specially built mausoleum.

When the mausoleum was destroyed in 1979 during Iran's revolution, Reza Shah's mummy disappeared in the rubble. Nothing was known of its fate.

Unearthing the shah's dynasty Now, construction at a shrine on the site of what used to be the mausoleum has turned up a mummified body. Since mummification is extremely rare in Islam, most observers believe that it is the late shah.

I agree. Judging by the pictures I've seen online, the dead man was a person of some significance, with a military bearing. The mummy's well-preserved face even bears a certain eerie resemblance to Reza Shah's son, the Shah Muhammad.

This mummy is attracting global attention – and not just for its archaeological interest. It is also politically charged.

Politics in Iran today are fluid and volatile. The ruling Islamic regime is split, as is often the case, between leaders who seek more positive engagement with the West and those who maintain an anti-American foreign posture.

As President Donald Trump contemplates scrapping the Iran nuclear deal, Iranians are now hotly debating how the country should react if the agreement is indeed undone. These discussions exacerbate existing divisions within the government.

Meanwhile Iran's economy is weak and its currency in free fall. Nationwide protests erupted in cities across the country in early 2018, with crowds shouting anti-regime slogans – some of them praising the last shah or expressing nostalgia for his reign.

For some demonstrators in Iran and in exile, the mummy of a once-powerful shah appears to hold promise. It is a symbol of a different era – a reminder that Iran hasn't always been an Islamic Republic.

A crown prince in exile For those in power, however, the return of a dead shah represents a threat.

The ayatollahs are not, I think, worried about a return of the Pahlavi dynasty. They know very well that most supporters of Iran's former monarchy are in comfortable exile in Los Angeles and Europe.

And though opposition to Iran's current regime has spiked in recent months, domestic support for a return of the Pahlavis is negligible.

But the shah's mummy still has galvanizing power among those opposed to Iran's hard-line current regime because it symbolizes a government not built on religion.

The Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, son of Iran's last shah, lives in exile in the United States. He has called on the government in Tehran to treat his grandfather's body respectfully, in accordance with the requirements of the Quran.

But, in this context, demanding respect for the dead is also a political calculation. Calling the Iranian people "the true guardians of Reza Shah's legacy" on Twitter, the crown prince has asked citizens to support his family.

By this, it's fairly clear he means not only his mummified grandfather but also his own claim to the throne. In interviews from Los Angeles, the exiled crown prince is increasingly open about wanting to see Iran's monarchy restored.

Meanwhile the government has taken the mummy into custody while DNA tests are done to confirm its identity. But, conveniently for the regime, that process could take weeks or months – long enough for the protesting crowds to lose interest.

As a catalyst for those hostile to Iran's Islamic regime, the dead shah's body may work for a while. But if Iran's fragmented opposition is to get rid of the powerful ayatollahs, they'll need more than a mummy.

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Highrise fire in Brazil spotlights city's housing crisis and the squatter movement it spawned

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(THE CONVERSATION) A massive fire in historic downtown São Paulo, Brazil, on May 1 has left one person dead. One neighboring building was also destroyed, and several others, including a church, were scorched or evacuated.

The 25-story building that caught fire and later collapsed was a vacant former police headquarters now occupied by squatters. All but one of the several hundred homeless people living there appear to have escaped, though they lost everything – including pets – to the blaze.

The tragedy has shined a light on the homelessness crisis underway in this South American country of 200 million and exposed a powerful social movement I study as an urban planning professor: Brazil's homeless workers' movement.

Concentrated land ownershipBrazil's squatter movement reflects the country's severe urban housing crisis. Brazil's housing deficit is estimated at 6 million units, according to the national census.

Urban homelessness has risen quickly in recent years. From 2013 to 2016, the homeless population of Rio de Janeiro tripled, from 5,000 to 15,000.

In São Paulo, Brazil's biggest city, an estimated 25,000 people live on the street. Many more live in informal settlements and slums. According to the city's 2016 housing plan, São Paulo would need to build 368,731 new housing units to house all households currently living in risky situations.

The roots of Brazil's housing shortage go back to slavery. By the time Brazil formally abolished slavery in 1888, there were some 1.5 million freed people of African descent – but none were given financial compensation, land or housing to help them start their lives anew.

Portuguese rule left Brazil with a royal land grant system that enabled the wealthiest individuals claim massive amounts of land as their own in the post-colonial period, while millions of poor farmers and formerly enslaved people were left landless. Today, 1 percent of Brazilians still own half of all the land in the country.

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This inequality has given rise to numerous rural land reform efforts. The well-known Rural Landless Workers Movement has 2 million members nationwide and has settled approximately 350,000 families on small plots since its founding in 1994.

Its strategy: occupying unused land in the country's sparsely populated interior and then working with policymakers to establish legal rights.

Housing crisisThe urban homeless movement grew out of this successful agrarian reform movement.

Squatters began organizing in São Paulo in the 1980s. Today at least 14 major Brazilian cities have homeless organizations that systematically occupy vacant buildings as a way to provide housing for members and advocate for more democratic, inclusive and affordable cities.

The biggest of these groups, the Roofless Workers Movement, recently gained international attention when several dozen members occupied a vacant beachfront apartment allegedly gifted to former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva as a bribe.

The triplex was used as evidence in the controversial April 2018 corruption conviction that has now Lula serving a 12-year jail sentence. However, no property deed was ever found and Lula denies that he owns the apartment.

After Lula was taken into police custody in early April, outraged supporters from the Roofless Workers Movement staged a high-profile squat in the beachfront apartment, unfurling a banner that read, "If it's Lula's, then it's ours. And if it's not his, why was he arrested?"

In the 1980s and 1990s, Brazilian cities – like those in Latin America and the United States – saw inner-city populations decline. As residents fled for the suburbs, downtowns across the country were left littered with abandoned buildings.

In 2000, an estimated 38,000 apartments and office spaces in downtown São Paulo sat empty. By the late 1990s, São Paulo's homeless movements had identified these vacant structures as an opportunity.

Previously, housing advocates had been pushing the mayor's office to build new apartment buildings in the sprawling city's outskirts, where land is more affordable. But living far from downtown has some major disadvantages. One 2017 survey found that the average São Paulo resident's commute was 2 hours and 53 minutes.

So, with the support of housing advocates and researchers, São Paulo's homeless community began pressuring local government to buy up abandoned downtown buildings – conveniently located near transit and jobs – and transform them into affordable housing.

Then, citing a Brazilian constitutional right to housing, some shantytown residents took their advocacy to the next level. In 1997, they occupied an abandoned building.

São Paulo's squattersSão Paulo Mayor Marta Suplicy felt enough pressure that in 2001 her administration launched "Live Downtown," a program intended to resettle homeless people and slum dwellers into affordable permanent housing.

The city planned to buy up or seize some 3,600 abandoned structures, make them livable and then rent them, subsidized, to poor families. Suplicy also created "social interest" zones to stimulate affordable housing development in certain areas of the city, including downtown.

However, the "social housing" units that have emerged from this program have tended to be priced for working and middle-class families. And Suplicy's downtown repopulation program did not outlast her term, which ended in 2004.

Throughout these failed official efforts, the squatters have continued occupying empty buildings. Most of the time, the owners quickly obtain a judicial order to have police evict the squatters. They then take up residence in another abandoned building, starting the cycle over again.

According to my interviews with homeless activists, the squatters choose buildings that have laid empty for many years and whose owners owe significant back fines. That makes it more likely the city can seize the property.

They also targeted empty government buildings – especially those owned by the federal government – because they find that it makes negotiations easier.

Occasionally, squatters manage to stay put. The film "Leva" tells the history of the Mauá squat, one of

São Paulo's rare long-standing occupations.

Currently, an average of 70 buildings in downtown São Paulo are occupied on any given day, though reliable data is scarce. The Roofless Workers Movement reports that 40,000 families in six states are currently on its waiting list.

A 2008 documentary paints a lovely portrait of the homeless movement, focusing on four female squatters about to move into their new temporary home. It's called "Dia de Festa" – "party day." That's what squatters call it every time they annex and occupy a new building.

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Russians hack home internet connections – here's how to protect yourself

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(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

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(THE CONVERSATION) In late April, the top federal cybersecurity agency, US-CERT, announced that Russian hackers had attacked internet-connected devices throughout the U.S., including network routers in private homes. Most people set them up – or had their internet service provider set them up – and haven't thought much about them since. But it's the gateway to the internet for every device on your home network, including Wi-Fi connected ones. That makes it a potential target for anyone who wants to attack you, or, more likely, use your internet connection to attack someone else.

As graduate students and faculty doing research in cybersecurity, we know that hackers can take control of many routers, because manufacturers haven't set them up securely. Router administrative passwords often are preset at the factory to default values that are widely known, like "admin" or "password." By scanning the internet for older routers and guessing their passwords with specialized software, hackers can take control of routers and other devices. Then they can install malicious programs or modify the existing software running the device.

Once an attacker takes control There's a wide range of damage that a hacker can do once your router has been hijacked. Even though most people browse the web using securely encrypted communications, the directions themselves that let one computer connect to another are often not secure. When you want to connect to, say, theconversation.com, your computer sends a request to a domain name server – a sort of internet traffic director – for instructions on how to connect to that website. That request goes to the router, which either responds directly or passes it to another domain name server outside your home. That request, and the response, are not usually encrypted.

A hacker could take advantage of that and intercept your computer's request, to track the sites you visit. An attacker could also attempt to alter the reply, redirecting your computer to a fake website designed to steal your login information or even gain access to your financial data, online photos, videos, chats and browsing history.

In addition, a hacker can use your router and other internet devices in your home to send out large amounts of nuisance internet traffic as part of what are called distributed denial of service attacks, like the October 2016 attack that affected major internet sites like Quora, Twitter, Netflix and Visa.

Has your router been hacked? An expert with complex technical tools may be able to discover whether your router has been hacked, but it's not something a regular person is likely to be able to figure out. Fortunately, you don't need to know that to kick out unauthorized users and make your network safe.

The first step is to try to connect to your home router. If you bought the router, check the manual for the web address to enter into your browser and the default login and password information. If your internet

provider supplied the router, contact their support department to find out what to do.

If you're not able to login, then consider resetting your router – though be sure to check with your internet provider to find out any settings you'll need to configure to reconnect after you reset it. When your reset router restarts, connect to it and set a strong administrative password. The next step US-CERT suggests is to disable older types of internet communications, protocols like telnet, SNMP, TFTP and SMI that are often unencrypted or have other security flaws. Your router's manual or online instructions should detail how to do that.

After securing your router, it's important to keep it protected. Hackers are very persistent and are always looking to find more flaws in routers and other systems. Hardware manufacturers know this and regularly issue updates to plug security holes. So you should check regularly and install any updates that come out. Some manufacturers have smartphone apps that can manage their routers, which can make updating easier, or even automate the process.

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Are North Korean media outlets signaling that the regime is getting serious about diplomacy?

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(THE CONVERSATION) North Korea's domestic news media remains carefully choreographed and managed by the ruling Korean Workers' Party.

Nonetheless, in the wake of major events, a judicious reading of their content can sometimes offer insights into the reclusive state's priorities and resolve. As a political scientist and longtime observer of North Korean media, I followed this past week's coverage of the inter-Korean summit with great interest.

The most striking aspect was how complete and unreserved it seemed compared with coverage of the previous summits in 2000 and 2007. Unusually prompt, detailed and thorough, it showed the two leaders interacting on an equal footing – which may signal that the country is serious about cooperation.

Less scripted, more openThis most recent summit represents the third time that the two Koreas' top leaders have met.

The previous two summits were held on the North Korean side, and the coverage seemed meticulously scripted. It was likely written well in advance.

In the years after the first inter-Korean summit in 2000, the joint declaration that emerged from that meeting – known as the June 15 Declaration – came to have almost talismanic power in North Korean media. It expressed a broad commitment to continued dialogue, economic cooperation and family reunions. Whenever the South levied sanctions or criticism in response to provocations, North Korea would counter that the South was failing to uphold the declaration.

The subsequent October 4 Declaration of the second inter-Korean summit in 2007 has been similarly brandished. That declaration added a commitment to "terminate military hostilities, ease tension and ensure peace."

After the collapse of the so-called "Sunshine" Policy – the pro-engagement policy South Korea pursued from 1998 to 2008 – the North frequently cited both declarations as symbols of South Korean perfidy.

This latest summit – the first to be hosted by the South Korean side – represented the first opportunity to observe North Korean media reacting in near-real time to a ceremonial event that they had not choreographed themselves. Indeed, this is the first time we have seen North Korean cameramen scrambling and maneuvering for shots alongside their southern counterparts.

We can expect that the newest declaration – the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and

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Unification of the Korean Peninsula – will carry similar weight in the country's political discourse.

The main party mouthpiece, Rodong Shinmun, published the full text of the Panmunjom Declaration. There were no edits or omissions except for some minor stylistic differences (e.g. "North and South Korea" where the South Korean version read "South and North Korea"). In addition, North Korea's most famous news anchor, the long-serving Ri Chun-hee, read out the entire text during the Saturday afternoon newscast.

The inclusion of "complete denuclearization" as a goal raised a lot of eyebrows, and several observers have interpreted it as a signal of North Korea's commitment to serious negotiations. Previously, North Korean domestic media had only used this term in the context of declaring the matter non-negotiable.

But as other analysts have noted, denuclearization for the North Korean side implies the withdrawal of the U.S. military presence from the South.

Highlighting a common 'Koreanness' Aside from reporting on the political developments, the news coverage focused on the pomp and circumstance of the summit, paying close attention to South Korea's accouterments of traditional culture.

"The leaders of North and South proceeded toward the ceremonial dais escorted by a traditional honor guard," the Rodong Shinmun reported. At the forefront, a band "enlivened the mood with lively traditional music." The coverage also mentioned the "shared bonds of blood" between the two sides.

The glowing praise for the South Korean cultural displays somewhat contrasts with the North's habitual depictions of South Korea as culturally defunct and excessively Westernized. As renowned North Korea analyst Andrei Lankov has observed, "With all its wealth, South Korea is represented [in the North] as basically a very unhappy place. The reason for this unhappiness is that South Koreans' national identity, their precious 'Koreanness,' has been spoilt and compromised by the domination of American imperialists who propagate their degrading and corrosive 'culture.'"

Articles also detailed the banquet dinner, which featured "various dishes with special meaning from the South" and "Okrugwan cold noodles from our side." An evocative moment came when the two leaders sliced into a cake bearing the legend "Springtime of the Nation." Seasonal metaphors have long-standing significance in Korean culture on both sides, and North Korean media have repeatedly turned to theme of "springtime" when depicting their young leader's ascent to power.

Altogether, it's a heartening sign that North Korea may be willing to recognize that its southern neighbor has not completely abandoned its roots.

Looking ahead While coverage of previous inter-Korean summits mainly featured posed photos and handshakes, this time North Koreans were exposed to colorful action photos and footage of the two leaders.

The day after the summit, Chosun Central TV aired complete footage of the event, from the moment Kim's limousine rolled into Panmunjom, through the handshakes, procession, conference, ceremonial tree planting and banquet.

The anchor's narration opened on a euphoric note: "At this historic moment in Panmunjom, a symbol of the long years of strife, suffering, conflict and enmity, all the bitter pain of past confrontations has wafted away on the April breeze."

Later, over footage of the first ladies conversing, he added that "the banquet proceeded amid an atmosphere overflowing with familial affection."

In the coming weeks and months, it will bear watching how positively President Moon will be depicted in North Korean media. As the first pro-engagement leader in 10 years, he will likely escape the vitriol that the previous two conservative presidents were subjected to. But the true test will be whether North Korea goes beyond the usual muted depiction it has used for past liberal presidents.

Although North Korean state media have never overtly praised a sitting South Korean president, previous presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun were treated with careful neutrality following their Pyongyang summits in 2000 and 2007, respectively. In subsequent years, portrayals of these two presidents have grown significantly fonder, especially since they passed away and their pro-engagement policies were dismantled by the succeeding conservative administrations. And literary fiction propagandists warmly de-

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picted the character of Kim Dae-jung's widow, Lee Hui-ho, in a 2013 short story titled "Him in December" as a resolute patriot struggling against the hawkish instincts of the post-Sunshine era.

North Korean media have yet to make any mention of Kim's future summit with U.S. President Donald Trump, probably because the date and location haven't been agreed upon. They have been similarly mum on last month's meeting with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. North Korean media outlets are generally cautious about announcing and discussing events that haven't been finalized. Notably, Rodong Shinmun did refer to Trump as the "American ruler" ("chibgwŏnja") in a March 13 article on steel tariffs – a noticeable departure from its earlier epithets.

All eyes will now be on the anticipated Trump-Kim summit. It remains to be seen how North Korean media will tackle the historically unprecedented sight of their leader hobnobbing with a sitting U.S. president. But the exceptionally glowing coverage of last week's summit could be a precursor.

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That distinctive springtime smell: Asparagus pee

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(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

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(THE CONVERSATION) Along with many other delights, springtime brings the beginning of the asparagus growing season. Regardless of whether you prefer the green, purple or white variety, asparagus provides a rich source of vitamins and minerals, and its consumption as part of a healthy diet may reduce risk of cancer and cardiovascular-related diseases.

Despite the nutritional benefits of asparagus, many are opposed to eating the vegetable due to its pungent aftereffects. As Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1781, "A few stems of asparagus eaten, shall give our urine a disagreeable odour." This odor has become so well known that post-consumption urine is now often referred to as "asparagus pee."

Scientists believe the odor in question is due to two chemicals: methanethiol and S-methyl thioester. When enzymes in the human digestive tract break down the asparagusic acid that's naturally present in the vegetable, these volatile compounds are created. When voided from the body, they become foul-smelling gas, wafting up from your asparagus pee.

And just because you don't smell it doesn't mean you're not making it. Two studies have shown that people who are unable to smell the odor in their own urine also don't detect it in the urine of known producers. Yes, volunteers sniffed samples of other people's asparagus pee. Though most everyone probably produces the scent to some degree, it seems not everyone's noses pick up on it.

In fact, a study my colleagues and I conducted last year found that only 40 percent of those surveyed reported detecting the odor in their urine. A lower proportion of women were able to detect the odor, compared to men, despite women being thought to have a more keen sense of smell.

We asked almost 7,000 participants from two large cohort studies to respond to the prompt "After eating asparagus, you notice a strong characteristic odor in your urine." By linking the questionnaire data with genetic data, we were able to show that the ability to smell or not to smell depends on a person's genetic makeup. Hundreds of variants in the DNA sequence across multiple genes involved in sense of smell are strongly associated with the ability to detect asparagus metabolites in urine.

Asparagus isn't the only food that has genetically linked controversial smell or taste effects. Some people avoid eating cilantro because they claim it has a "soapy" aftertaste. A study using data from almost 30,000 users of 23andMe found genetic variants in olfactory receptors linked to people's perception of this adverse taste.

Maybe you can conduct your own survey at the next family meal that includes a platter of asparagus

– or soon after.

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Dead zones are a global water pollution challenge – but with sustained effort they can come back to life

Donald Scavia, University of Michigan

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Donald Scavia, University of Michigan

(THE CONVERSATION) Scientists have identified a dead zone as large as Florida in the Gulf of Oman, which connects the Arabian Sea to the Persian Gulf. Around the world there are more than 400 current dead zones in oceans and lakes, where water contains so little oxygen that aquatic life can't survive.

Dead zones form when aquatic organisms consume dissolved oxygen faster than it can be supplied. This typically happens when warmer water sits on top of colder water, or freshwater sits on top of saltier water - for example, where a river meets the sea. In either case the water on top is less dense and floats. The layers don't mix much, so very little oxygen from the atmosphere reaches the lower layers.

The next ingredient is organic matter in the water. It can come from untreated sewage, or from blooms of algae, along with dead plankton and fish. This material eventually sinks into the bottom layer, where bacteria decompose it, using oxygen as fuel. This process can consume most or all of the oxygen from the water.

Temperature is also a factor. Higher temperatures promote faster algae growth, enhance formation of layers in the water, and reduce the amount of dissolved oxygen that the water can hold. Climate change is tending to increase temperatures and make dead zones worse.

But the biggest driver is nutrient pollution – excess inputs of nitrogen and phosphorus. These nutrients stimulate algae growth. They come from municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants, and increasingly from fertilizer runoff from industrial-scale agriculture.

A recent global-scale analysis shows that oxygen-depleted zones in the open ocean have expanded by several million square kilometers since the mid-20th century, and oxygen concentrations at hundreds of coastal sites like the Gulf of Mexico are now low enough to limit the distribution and abundance of fish. These impacts are also being felt in estuaries and the Great Lakes.

As my research has shown, large-scale dead zones are resistant to change. But nutrient reductions in the Chesapeake Bay are starting to improve conditions there. Communities around Lake Erie dramatically reduced its dead zone and toxic algae blooms in the 1970s by reducing phosphorus inputs. Now, however, these issues are resurfacing there – evidence that this problem is an ongoing challenge.

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Michigan says Flint water is safe to drink, but residents' trust in government has corroded

Cedric Taylor, Central Michigan University

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

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(THE CONVERSATION) On April 6, 2018, with little warning, the state of Michigan closed water point of distribution (POD) centers that have provided residents in Flint for the past three years with bottled water to drink, cook and bathe. This move was based on analysis showing that the city's water quality had tested

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below action levels defined in federal drinking water regulations for nearly two years.

The state's decision to close the PODs signals that with respect to water quality, Flint's water crisis is over. But for thousands of Flint residents, the trauma it inflicted persists.

The actions that lead up to the Flint water crisis did not occur in a vacuum. As a sociologist based in Michigan, whose research focuses on social inequality, racism and racial health disparities, I was driven to explore the context behind one of the most significant public health crises in modern history. Because film can be a powerful medium for conveying inequalities, I chose to direct and produce a documentary on the crisis.

My documentary, "Nor Any Drop to Drink: The Flint Water Crisis," is scheduled for streaming and video-on-demand release in August 2018. From meeting Flint residents and talking to them about their water problems, I can see that more than pipes have been corroded. State and federal mishandling of the city's water crisis has all but destroyed trust in government agencies among Flint's residents.

"We are an invisible people" Flint's water crisis is a story of bad decisions by government officials. In 2014, under a state-appointed emergency manager, Flint's drinking water source was switched from the Detroit water system to the Flint River, even though this move relied on a hastily refurbished and understaffed treatment plant. The state carried out inadequate and improper sampling of the water distribution system, in violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Michigan officials disregarded and attempted to cover up compelling evidence of water quality problems and associated health effects. A spokesman for the Department of Environmental Quality stated in 2015 that Flint residents "can relax," despite their expressed concerns.

These repeated assurances exposed thousands to contaminated water. In the documentary, Nakiyah Wakes, a Flint mother who blames her miscarriages and adverse behavioral changes in her children on the water, exclaims:

"I do not trust the water and ... I probably will never trust the water again. I've lost all trust in our government – federal, state, I have lost trust in everyone!"

Lendra Brown, a senior citizen living in Northwest Flint who also accepted the state's assurances, lost 2 feet of her hair and still has rashes along her neck, jawline and legs. In one of the most poignant moments in the documentary, Brown states: "They are killing us ... they killed us. We are an invisible people ... and we don't matter."

Test results aren't enough Michigan officials ended the bottled water program after testing mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule showed that 90 percent of water samples collected in Flint this year contained an average of four parts per billion of lead – well below the 15 parts per billion federal threshold. According to the state, "Flint's water is testing the same or better than similar cities across the state and country."

However, this provides little reassurance to the community given the state's record, as well as concerns about the pace of pipe replacement and the scope of water testing to date.

Flint's FAST Start program, funded by state and federal agencies, has set a goal of replacing lead service lines that connect water mains to homes across the city by 2020. As of December 2017, over 6,000 pipes had been replaced, but approximately 12,000 lead service lines were still in place. Residents who were filmed, and who I still speak with regularly, worry that replacing lines may disrupt and release lead flakes into the water system. Further, pipes and fixtures inside many homes and businesses are old and corroded and could still leach lead.

Lead is not the only issue The state's rationale for ending the bottled water program is based on testing for lead, but for residents this has never been the only concern. In late 2014, there were reports of elevated levels of total trihalomethanes (TTHM), a group of water disinfection byproducts, some of which

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are classified as possible or probable carcinogens. And between June 2014 and November 2015, 87 cases of Legionnaires' disease, a waterborne illness, were reported in surrounding Genesee County, resulting in 12 deaths. In February 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced evidence of a connection between city water and patients diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease.

Governor Rick Snyder's office has said that water filters and replacement cartridges will remain available for people who are concerned about the process of service line replacements, or who "would feel more comfortable using a filter until their confidence in the water quality can be reestablished." This approach puts much responsibility on residents, who risk further problems from contaminated water if they do not properly install or maintain the filters. Further, according to the Genesee County Medical Society, the filters reduce but do not eliminate lead and other contaminants, such as bacteria.

Buying bottled water is not an option for many of the 45 percent of Flint residents who live below the poverty line. Therefore, families who have children or members with compromised immune systems – two groups who are especially vulnerable to water contamination – now may have no choice but to take a chance on the city's water.

Who matters? "Nor Any Drop to Drink" is ultimately a story about power, and about who really matters. Michigan has had to commit more than US\$350 million to Flint to fund water quality improvements, pipe replacements, health care and educational resources. The free bottled water program was costing the state an estimated \$653,075 per month on average. Participants in the documentary say they believe their government's decisions have prioritized controlling costs, not their health and well-being. Ending the bottled water program is consistent with that philosophy.

From the start of this crisis, state officials have controlled much of the narrative about drinking water safety. What residents knew didn't matter for many months, and they suffered as a result. From the community's standpoint, stopping the bottled water program looks like an effort to close the book on this issue. Flint residents fear that Michigan may shirk its responsibility to make long-term, expensive fixes, and that the world now has permission to stop paying attention to their ongoing water problems.

This article was originally published on The Conversation. Read the original article here: <http://theconversation.com/michigan-says-flint-water-is-safe-to-drink-but-residents-trust-in-government-has-corroded-95358>.

Pope extends mandate of Malta envoy, sidelining critic

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis has extended the mandate of his envoy to the Knights of Malta lay religious order to oversee reforms, further sidelining Francis' conservative critic, Cardinal Raymond Burke.

The Vatican on Friday released Francis' letter to Monsignor Angelo Becciu asking him to remain his delegate and "exclusive" spokesman for Knights issues. Francis penned it May 2 after the lay religious order elected Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre as its 80th grand master, a life term.

Francis had named Becciu to oversee the Knights after a governance crisis sparked by a condom distribution scandal erupted in late 2016. The previous grand master, Fra Matthew Festing, was forced to resign.

Burke, whom Francis named his envoy to the Knights in 2014, had been an ally of Festing but was sidelined during the crisis.

Waste landslide at Myanmar jade mining site kills 14

BANGKOK (AP) — A landslide of a mound of mining waste killed at least 14 people Friday morning in northern Myanmar's jade mining region, a local official said.

The accident near the Waikha mine also left six people injured and an unknown number believed missing, based on what local villagers reported, said Tu Mai, the administrator of Seng Tawng village in Kachin state's Hpakant township. A search for them was continuing.

Hpakant, 950 kilometers (600 miles) north of Myanmar's biggest city, Yangon, is the epicenter of the world's biggest and most lucrative jade mining industry. Jade is normally mined by heavy equipment that generates huge mounds of waste soil, which easily causes landslides.

The industry generated about \$31 billion in 2014 with most of the wealth going to individuals and com-

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panies tied to Myanmar's former military rulers, according to Global Witness, a London-based group that investigate misuse of revenues from natural resources.

People often settle near the mounds to scavenge for jade in the precariously high piles of waste. Fatal accidents are not rare and more than 100 people were killed in a single landslide in November 2015.

Local activists said the profitability of jade mining industry led businesses and the government to neglect enforcing already very weak regulations in the industry.

"The government's plans to tackle the problem in the jade mining region are not practical," said Tsa Ji, a researcher and member of a local activist organization, the Kachin Development Networking Group. "The authorities have passed the laws without really understanding how the mining companies are destroying the environment on a large scale."

Hpakant, the heart of the jade mining region, is also enmeshed in the armed conflict between the government and the ethnic rebels of the Kachin Independence Army, in which the military has been launching offensives against local armed groups to control territory holding the jade mines.

Researchers said the civilian government led by leader Aung San Suu Kyi has done little or nothing to find a practical solution to the problems, which include environment degradation as well as safety.

"Many jade mining companies do not follow rules and regulations on where or how to dump waste pile," said Maw Htun Awng, a mining governance researcher. "Then there are no actual mechanisms to watch if these companies are following these rules and that's why this is part of the cumulative impacts."

With Taj Mahal turning a bit green, Indian court gets mad

NEW DELHI (AP) — The Taj Mahal, that shining white monument to love, is turning a little ... green. And yellow. And black.

And India's Supreme Court is not pleased.

"You all appear to be helpless," a Supreme Court judge told government officials earlier this week, after an environmental lawyer argued that pollution and insect dung were discoloring the 17th-century building.

"Money should not be the consideration. We might order you to hire experts from within India or abroad. We need to save it," the judge said, according to numerous Indian media reports. The reports did not give the judge's name.

The officials, representing the central government and Uttar Pradesh state, where the Taj is located, were given until Wednesday to come up with a plan and report back to the court.

Built by Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan for his favorite wife in the north Indian city of Agra, the monument has been losing its sheen for years. The Archaeological Survey of India, the agency responsible for preserving the country's monuments, has been coating portions of the Taj with a special clay that, when it is removed, also takes away most discolorations.

But M.C. Mehta, the lawyer who brought the case to the court, said not enough is being done.

"The white sheen is disappearing and instead of that if the green color, the brown color, the other colors ... are visible, then what is the reason? The reason is that the pollution has become alarming," he said in an interview after the hearing.

One of the world's most famous tourist attractions, the Taj Mahal includes a mosque and the graves of the emperor and his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Agra is a major north Indian industrial center, and the city is often covered with a fog of pollution. Experts say air pollution and swarms of breeding insects are threatening the Taj by leaving green, yellow and black patches.

Mehta said authorities have not complied with earlier Supreme Court orders to protect the Taj by shutting down area factories.

'Were you lying?' Sanders faces new credibility questions

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders is facing a barrage of questions about whether she purposely misled the American people amid fallout over Rudy Giuliani's stunning revelation about hush money paid by President Donald Trump's lawyer to a porn star who alleges a tryst with Trump.

"Again, I gave you the best information that I had," Sanders said over and over again Thursday in response to questions about why the White House failed to disclose that Trump had reimbursed his longtime lawyer, Michael Cohen, for the \$130,000 payment to keep Stormy Daniels quiet.

"Were you lying to us at the time? Or were you in the dark?" one reporter asked.

It was an awkward position for Sanders, who is tasked with speaking on behalf of the American president. It also highlighted the difficulty the White House communications office has had in navigating an unpredictable and free-wheeling president.

"As a very active President with lots of things happening, it is not possible for my surrogates to stand at podium with perfect accuracy!" Trump tweeted last year.

Sanders on Thursday had to acknowledge that Giuliani hadn't given her a heads-up that he would reveal that Trump had reimbursed Cohen. She said she didn't know about the reimbursement at all until Giuliani's interview Wednesday night.

"I'm not part of the legal team and wouldn't be part of those discussions," she said when asked whether she'd been caught off guard.

It was an omission by design.

"They were (caught off guard). There was no way they wouldn't be," Giuliani told CNN on Thursday in reference to White House staffers. "The President is my client. I don't talk to them."

Jason Miller, who has worked for both Trump and Giuliani and remains in close touch with both teams, said White House staffers shouldn't have to deal with issues like Cohen and the special counsel's investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

"Finally, for the first time there's now an external operation that's handling such matters," he said, describing the model as similar to the one developed during the Clinton administration as he faced impeachment hearings over his cover-up of an affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. During that time, the Clinton administration developed a crisis communications team to respond to reporters' inquiries about the scandal so that regular press staffers could focus on business as usual.

But, according to former Clinton staffers, their model was very different from the one on display this week with Trump.

Joe Lockhart, White House press secretary from 1998 to 2000, said the separation proved effective, but only because both sides were in constant communication.

"It was actually very hugely coordinated," he said, recalling that he spent almost as much time meeting with members of the legal team as he did political aides.

"It really was the only way you could effectively communicate, when you knew what everyone was doing," he said. "There wasn't a communication strategy and a lawyers' strategy. There was one strategy: a political strategy."

Michael McCurry, who was press secretary from 1994 to 1998, said that while there were significant disagreements between lawyers and communication and political staffers who came to the table with different priorities and concerns, the group was committed to working as a team.

"I think it was very critical to helping President Clinton get through a difficult period," he said. "It was a very, very delicate balance" that requires "a lot of goodwill and camaraderie."

Sanders, meanwhile, was forced to defend her credibility, a week after comedian Michelle Wolf created an uproar at the annual White House Correspondents' Dinner with jokes about the press secretary, including one quip that she "burns facts" and "uses that ash to create a perfect smoky eye."

"Like maybe she's born with it, maybe it's lies," Wolf cracked. "It's probably lies."

Many who saw the routine felt Wolf went too far.

On Thursday, Sanders took issue with a reporter's characterization that she had felt blindsided by Giuliani's interview.

"With all due respect, you actually don't know much about me in terms of what I feel and what I don't," she said.

Lockhart, meanwhile, said that often the hardest part of the job is "standing up there and looking like you don't know what you're doing, but understanding that just getting through the day and getting through the week is the best thing you can do."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

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Trump's new 'Stormy' story stuns many in West Wing

By CATHERINE LUCEY, JILL COLVIN AND JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump insisted Thursday his reimbursement of a 2016 hush payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels had nothing to do with his election campaign. But the surprise revelation of the president's payment clashed with his past statements, created new legal headaches and stunned many in the West Wing.

White House aides were blindsided when Trump's recently added attorney, Rudy Giuliani, said Wednesday night that the president had repaid Michael Cohen for \$130,000 that was given to Daniels to keep her quiet before the 2016 election about her allegations of an affair with Trump. Giuliani's revelation, which seemed to contradict Trump's past statements, came as the president's newly configured outside legal team pursued his defense, apparently with zero coordination with the West Wing.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said she first learned that Trump had repaid the hush money from Giuliani's interview on Fox News Channel's "Hannity." Staffers' phones began to buzz within moments. Deputy press secretary Hogan Gidley, who had pre-taped an interview with Fox News earlier Wednesday evening, was suddenly summoned to return for a live interview.

While Giuliani said the payment to Daniels was "going to turn out to be perfectly legal," legal experts said the new information raised a number of questions, including whether the money represented repayment of an undisclosed loan or could be seen as reimbursement for a campaign expenditure. Either could be legally problematic.

Giuliani insisted Trump didn't know the specifics of Cohen's arrangement with Daniels until recently, telling "Fox & Friends" on Thursday that the president didn't know all the details until "maybe 10 days ago." Giuliani told The New York Times that Trump had repaid Cohen \$35,000 a month "out of his personal family account" after the campaign was over. He said Cohen received \$460,000 or \$470,000 in all for expenses related to Trump.

But no debt to Cohen was listed on Trump's personal financial disclosure form, which was certified on June 16, 2017. Asked if Trump had filed a fraudulent form, Sanders said: "I don't know."

Giuliani said the payment was not a campaign finance violation, but also acknowledged that Daniels' hushed-up allegations could have affected the campaign, saying: "Imagine if that came out on October 15, 2016, in the middle of the last debate with Hillary Clinton."

Questions remain about just what Trump knew and when.

Daniels, whose legal name is Stephanie Clifford, is seeking to be released from a non-disclosure deal she signed in the days before the 2016 election to keep her from talking about a 2006 sexual encounter she said she had with Trump. She has also filed defamation suits against Cohen and Trump.

Speaking to reporters on Air Force One several weeks ago, Trump said he did not know about the payment or where the money came from. In a phone interview with "Fox and Friends" last week, however, he appeared to muddy the waters, saying that Cohen represented him in the "crazy Stormy Daniels deal."

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Sanders said Thursday that Trump "eventually learned" about the payment, but she did not offer details. For all the controversy Giuliani stirred up, some Trump supporters said it was wise to get the payment acknowledgement out in the open.

Said former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie: "You know, there's an old saying in the law, 'Hang a lantern on your problems.' ... So the fact is that Rudy has to go out there now and clean it up. That's what lawyers get hired to do."

Daniels herself weighed in via Twitter, saying: "I don't think Cohen is qualified to 'clean up' my horse's manure. Too soon?"

Her attorney, Michael Avenatti, who engaged in his own press tour Thursday, slammed both Trump and Giuliani.

"The admissions by Mr. Giuliani as to Mr. Trump's conduct and the acts of Mr. Cohen are directly contrary to the lies previously told to the American people," he said. "There will ultimately be severe consequences."

Trump is facing mounting legal threats from the Cohen-Daniels situation and the special counsel's investigation of Russian meddling in the election and possible coordination with the Trump campaign.

Cohen is facing a criminal investigation in New York, and FBI agents raided his home and office several weeks ago seeking records about the Daniels nondisclosure agreement. Giuliani has warned Trump that he fears Cohen, the president's longtime personal attorney, will "flip," bending in the face of a potential prison sentence, and he has urged Trump to cut off communications with him, according to a person close to Giuliani.

The president's self-proclaimed legal fixer has been surprised and concerned by Trump's recent stance toward him, according to a Cohen confidant. Cohen was dismayed to hear Trump marginalize his role during an interview last week with "Fox & Friends" and interpreted a recent negative National Enquirer cover story as a warning shot from a publication that has long been cozy with Trump, said the person who was not authorized to talk about private conversations and spoke only on condition of anonymity. Cohen also had not indicated to friends that Trump's legal team was going to contradict his original claim that he was not reimbursed for the payment to Daniels.

Giuliani, a former New York City mayor and U.S. attorney, joined Trump's legal team last month. He told CNN on Thursday that the announcement of Trump's repayment of the hush money was a planned strategy, saying: "You won't see daylight between me and the president." He was quickly backed up by Trump, who said on Twitter that he had repaid Cohen.

Trump himself was happy with Giuliani's performance, according to a person familiar with his views but not authorized to speak about them publicly. And Giuliani told The Washington Post the president was "very pleased."

Jason Miller, who worked on both Trump's and Giuliani's presidential campaigns and remains close with both, said the fact the White House was caught off-guard was by design. He said the outside legal team was supposed to work independently of the White House, modeled on the team that defended President Bill Clinton during the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

"This is not the White House's job. This is not what they're supposed to be worried about," he said. "So it's good that they're not worried about this."

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

Why Venezuelans are some of the unhappiest people in the world

Miguel Angel Latouche, Universidad Central de Venezuela

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

Miguel Angel Latouche, Universidad Central de Venezuela

(THE CONVERSATION) Venezuelans used to be among the happiest people on the planet.

In 2012, they voted themselves into fifth place in a global Gallup survey on happiness. In 2013, this

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South American country ranked 20th out of the 156 countries included in the United Nations' annual World Happiness Report, which assesses well-being worldwide based on measures like wealth, life expectancy and corruption.

My home country used to be a prosperous, cheerful place. People were proud to be from Venezuela – a place known for its friendly citizens and beauty queens: Venezuela has produced six Miss Worlds and seven Miss Universes.

Not anymore. This year, Venezuela plunged to 102nd place of 156 countries in the World Happiness Report. By comparison, Denmark topped the list and the United States came in 18th.

What happened?

Terrible leadership Venezuela has changed dramatically in recent years.

President Nicolás Maduro – who was elected to succeed the popular late leader Hugo Chávez in 2013 – has turned out to be a kind of King Midas in reverse. Everything he touches seemingly turns to garbage.

Venezuela's economy was already going south in Chavez's last years. But under Maduro it has collapsed. Venezuela is drowning in debt, with annual inflation of 15,565 percent.

Once poor people are now starving. On average, Venezuelans have lost 24 pounds each since food shortages began in 2015.

Meanwhile, the middle class is disappearing. According to the labor union UNETE, 75 percent of Venezuelan workers no longer earn enough to support their families.

Maduro's government censors crime data, but citizen groups estimate that 28,479 Venezuelans were killed in 2016, up from 16,549 in 2014. Those are conflict zone-level casualties.

Fleeing these unbearable living conditions, thousands of Venezuelans have begun pouring across the border into neighboring Colombia and Brazil every day.

Rigged elections Amid all this, Venezuelans must choose their next president on May 20 in an election that international democracy monitors consider a farce.

Maduro has systematically persecuted his opponents, sending them to jail or into exile. The regime has also used the state apparatus to boost its electoral prospects, trading food for votes, suppressing turnout in dissident districts and crushing anti-regime protests.

As a result, this wildly unpopular president is running for reelection without meaningful opposition and is likely to win.

Despair Venezuelans live in terror. People fear falling ill, because medicine is scarce. They fear being murdered. They fear political repression.

It's hard to be happy under a dictatorship.

Many Venezuelans have lost any hope of political change. Maduro has crippled Venezuela's independent institutions, stacking the Supreme Court with loyalists and stripping the National Assembly of its legislative powers. Freedom of speech is long gone.

And if all that's not bad enough, the 2018 Miss Venezuela pageant has been suspended after allegations of prostitution among its contestants.

This article was originally published on The Conversation. Read the original article here: <http://theconversation.com/why-venezuelans-are-some-of-the-unhappiest-people-in-the-world-95579>.

Hawaii volcano forces 1,500 from homes as lava bubbles up

By CALEB JONES, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Nearly 1,500 residents were ordered to evacuate from their volcano-side homes after Hawaii's Kilauea Volcano erupted, sending molten lava to chew its way through forest land and bubble up on paved streets.

Volcano officials couldn't predict how long Thursday's eruption may last, prompting Hawaii's governor to activate the National Guard to help with evacuations and provide security to about 770 structures left empty when residents sought shelter.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

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Hawaii County officials said steam and lava poured out of a crack in Leilani Estates, which is near the town of Pahoa on the Big Island.

Footage shown on local television showed lava spurting into the sky from a crack in a road. Aerial drone footage showed a line of lava snaking through a forest.

Resident Jeremiah Osuna captured drone footage of the lava burning through the trees, a scene he described as a "curtain of fire."

"It sounded like if you were to put a bunch of rocks into a dryer and turn it on as high as you could. You could just smell sulfur and burning trees and underbrush and stuff," he told Honolulu television station KHON.

Asta Miklius, a geophysicist with the USGS Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, told The Associated Press in a phone interview that there is no way to know exactly how long the eruption will continue.

"One of the parameters is going to be whether the summit magma reservoir starts to drain in response to this event, and that has not happened yet," Miklius said. "There is quite a bit of magma in the system. . It won't be just an hours-long eruption probably, but how long it will last will depend on whether the summit magma reservoir gets involved. And so we are watching that very, very closely."

County, state and federal officials had been warning residents all week that they should be prepared to evacuate, as an eruption would give little warning. Officials at the U.S. Geological Survey on Thursday raised the volcano's alert level to warning status, the highest possible, meaning a hazardous eruption is imminent, underway or suspected.

Nearby community centers have opened for shelter.

Ranson Yoneda, the recreation director for a Pahoa community center, was readying the gymnasium for evacuees after it was selected as a Red Cross evacuation center.

He said the people who arrived first were hungry for information.

"They just want to know what's going on because they were told it's a mandatory evacuation," he said by telephone.

The U.S. Geological Survey said new ground cracks were reported Thursday afternoon. Hot vapor emerged from a crack and spattering lava began to erupt.

Scientists said areas downslope of the erupting vent were at risk of being covered by lava. Leilani Estates appeared to be at greatest risk, but scientists said new vents and outbreaks could occur and it's not possible to say where.

The eruption comes after days of earthquakes rattled the area's Puna district. A nearby school was closed due to the ongoing seismic activity and several roadways cracked under the strain of the constant temblors. A magnitude 5.0 earthquake was recorded hours before the eruption began Thursday.

The Puu Oo crater floor began to collapse Monday, triggering a series of earthquakes and pushing the lava into new underground chambers.

The collapse caused magma to push more than 10 miles (16 kilometers) downslope toward the populated southeast coastline of the island.

USGS geologist Janet Babb said the magma crossed under Highway 130, which leads to a popular volcano access point, on Tuesday night.

Hawaii County Civil Defense Agency closed the area to visitors on Tuesday and ordered private tour companies to stop taking people into the region.

Most of Kilauea's activity has been nonexplosive, but a 1924 eruption spewed ash and 10-ton (9-metric ton) rocks into the sky, leaving one man dead.

Puu Oo's 1983 eruption resulted in lava fountains soaring over 1,500 feet (457 meters) high. In the decades since, the lava flow has buried dozens of square miles of land and destroyed many homes.

Associated Press journalists Audrey McAvoy in Honolulu and Mark Thiessen in Anchorage, Alaska, contributed to this report.

Scientists say Chinese-backed dam risks orangutan habitat

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Scientists are calling for cancellation of a Chinese-backed hydroelectric dam in Indonesia that threatens the habitat of a newly discovered orangutan species numbering only 800 animals.

In the journal *Current Biology*, the experts say the 510-megawatt dam in Sumatra will flood or otherwise alter part of the habitat and likely make it impossible to take a crucial step toward ensuring the species survives — reconnecting fragmented forests the primates are spread across.

China's state-owned Sinohydro is building the dam, which is reportedly financed by Chinese loans. Critics of the project say it's part of China's "Belt and Road" plans to carpet Asia with Chinese-financed infrastructure and extend its economic and political influence.

Scientists announced the discovery of the third orangutan species, *Pongo tapanuliensis*, in November. The population, with frizzier hair and distinctively long calls for the males, was previously believed to be Sumatran orangutans. Without special protection, it's in danger of rapid extinction, scientists say.

"It's appalling to think that within our lifetimes, a new great ape species could be both discovered and driven to extinction," said Serge Wich, a professor at Liverpool John Moores University, who was involved in identifying the new orangutan species.

The scientists also urged that the remaining habitat in the Batang Toru forest of northern Sumatra be given strict conservation protection and that forest corridors be created to link separated populations. One way to do that, they said, is to close a section of the road between two main forest fragments.

The Batang Toru orangutan was the first great ape species to be proposed by scientists in nearly 90 years. Previously, science has recognized six great ape species: Sumatran and Bornean orangutans, eastern and western gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature classified Bornean orangutans as critically endangered in 2016 due to a precipitous population decline caused by destruction of their forest habitat for palm oil and pulp wood plantations. Sumatran orangutans have been classified as critically endangered since 2008.

The scientists writing in *Current Biology* said orangutan subpopulations need to number at least 200 to have a chance of surviving a century and more than 500 for longer-term survival.

China wants premier's Japan trip to return ties to normal

BEIJING (AP) — China said Friday it hopes a visit by Premier Li Keqiang to Japan next week will help get ties back to normal following years of tensions over territorial claims and other sensitive issues.

Li will travel to Japan on Tuesday for a four-day visit, including a meeting with his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Moon Jae-in in Tokyo on Wednesday, Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuan you told reporters.

Apart from the trilateral meeting, Li will hold talks with Abe, meet with Emperor Akihito and visit the northern island of Hokkaido, Kong said.

Li on Sunday and Monday will first visit Indonesia, a close economic partner where China in 2015 won a contract to build a \$5.2 billion high-speed rail line from the capital, Jakarta, to the city of Bandung. That project is now stalled and Kong said Li would seek to help resolve some of the problems surrounding it.

Despite close economic ties, many Chinese resent Japan over its invasion of their country last century. Relations nosedived in 2012 after Japan nationalized a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea claimed by China, setting off violent protests in China.

Ties have since been gradually improving and Kong said the sides would focus on expanding person-to-person exchanges.

"Thanks to the joint efforts, the bilateral relationship has seen steady improvement with progress across-the-board," Kong said. Li's visit is "important to bringing China-Japan ties back to the normal track and to plan for the future development of bilateral ties."

The trilateral meeting is expected to focus on cooperation between the countries rather than the issue of North Korea, although Kong said China applauded the "positive momentum of developments" on the Korean Peninsula.

China, whose troops fought on the North's side during the 1950-53 Korean War, was a party to the armistice that halted the fighting without a peace treaty. Talk of a formal peace agreement has revived since last week's breakthrough summit between Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, China stands ready to communicate with the U.S., South Korea and others on the matter, Kong said.

Kong also recognized Japan's own agenda with the North, whom it accuses of kidnapping a number of its citizens over past decades.

"Japan ... has its own concerns about the peninsular situation. We understand that," he said.

"Ultimately, to maintain the peaceful and stable order on the Korean Peninsula and even the whole of northeast Asia, Japan is an indispensable part," Kong said.

Deadly unrest at Gaza border mirrors Israeli author's novel

By JOSEF FEDERMAN, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — For Israeli author Mishka Ben-David, the deadly scenes that have been playing out every Friday for weeks along Gaza's border, with thousands of Palestinian protesters marching and threatening to storm the security fence and Israeli troops opening fire, are eerily familiar.

They have already taken place — on the pages of his best-selling thriller last year, "The Shark."

The novel begins with a cross-border tunnel attack by Hamas militants, followed by a mass march by thousands of Gaza Palestinians into southern Israel. As the story unfolds, Israel's adversaries — Iran, the militant Lebanese Hezbollah group and Syria — enter the fray, backed by Russia.

Events escalate into a region-wide war, with mayhem and death at every turn.

Hamas missiles topple one of Tel Aviv's Azrieli towers and in the book's climax, (SPOILER ALERT) an Israeli submarine fires off nuclear missiles in a desperate attempt to save the country. The book's title, "The Shark," is the name of the submarine at the center of the action.

While such a scenario may seem far-fetched, the novel contains more than a few elements that mirror reality as Israel braces for a volatile May, with tensions rising on its northern and southern fronts.

"Unfortunately, quite a few things seem realistic now, more than they seemed before," Ben-David told The Associated Press.

The ongoing weekly border protests in Gaza present the most immediate challenge.

The Hamas-led demonstrations, in which nearly 40 protesters have been killed by Israeli live fire, are meant to draw attention to a crippling decade-long blockade imposed by Israel after the Islamic militant group seized power in the coastal strip.

But Hamas, which is sworn to Israel's destruction, has also said the protests are aimed at promoting the "right of return" of refugees to properties inside what is now Israel. Some two-thirds of Gaza's 2 million people are descendants of Palestinian refugees who either fled or were expelled during the war surrounding Israel's creation in 1948.

The protests have grown increasingly intense.

Last Friday, hundreds broke away from a crowd and attacked the border fence, trying to rip away barbed wire and setting sections of it on fire with burning tires. Organizers have signaled they may call for a mass border breach on May 15, the anniversary of Israel's creation — similar to the scenario in Ben-David's novel.

Israel accuses Hamas of exploiting civilians and has vowed to defend its border, raising the likelihood of further bloodshed, particularly if Hamas follows through on threats to send large crowds into Israel.

Ben-David, a retired former agent in the Mossad spy service who turned to fiction writing, said envisioning such a scene did not require much imagination.

For years, Hamas has been digging attack tunnels along the border, managing to capture an Israeli soldier in 2006 and briefly infiltrating Israel during a 2014 war. Adding an above-ground component of unarmed civilians, as Hamas has done, was a logical extension, Ben-David said.

"It's the only scenario that we don't have a military response to," he said. "Israel is not equipped morally or internationally to deal with such a situation."

Israel has already come under heavy criticism from the European Union, United Nations and human

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rights groups for shooting at the protesters. A heavy civilian death toll, even in the case of a border breach, would risk triggering further international condemnations and scrutiny in the International Criminal Court.

The Trump administration's decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, scheduled for May 14 and bitterly opposed by the Palestinians, has added an extra element of volatility to the mix.

In Ben-David's book, Israel's harsh response to the Gaza crossing sparks unrest with the Palestinians and Israel's own Arab minority. Neighboring Egypt comes to the Palestinians' defense, while Hezbollah takes advantage and carries out missile attacks and an infiltration across Israel's northern border. It doesn't take long before other regional players get involved.

Even if the real-life situation is nowhere close to that, Israel is nervously bracing for the possibility of violence in the north.

Israel's arch-enemy Iran has sent forces to assist Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's civil war. Israel, which has repeatedly warned it will not allow the Iranians to establish a permanent military presence at its doorstep, is suspected in a pair of deadly airstrikes on Iranian targets in Syria in recent weeks, and Iran is vowing revenge.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's presentation this week of what he said were tens of thousands of illicitly obtained Iranian nuclear documents has only added to the tensions.

An Israeli confrontation with Iran in Syria could easily drag in the Iranian proxy Hezbollah and other Shiite militias active there, and even risk clashes with Russia, which has forces also backing Assad.

Ben-David is a prolific author, with 15 books to his name, including works such as "Duet in Beirut" and "Final Stop, Algiers" that have been translated into English. "The Shark," after months as a local best-seller, is now in its fifth printing, he said, and the latest Gaza unrest has also attracted interest from Hollywood producers.

Ben-David spent 12 years in the Mossad, playing a role in the failed assassination attempt of Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal in Jordan in 1997. Ben-David said he was not involved in the operation itself, but was responsible for delivering the antidote used to save Mashaal's life after agents poisoned him in Amman.

While real-life Mideast dramas may be good for fiction-writing, Ben-David is pessimistic about the region, fearing an "inevitable" Israel-Iran conflict and confrontation between Israel and Russia in Syria, despite their back-channel communications.

And if Iran develops an atomic bomb in the coming years, even nuclear war is "not far-fetched at all," he said.

Ironically, the spark that sets in motion the tragic sequence in "The Shark" is a peace initiative — Hamas sets out on its fateful mission to derail the signing of a historic agreement.

In real life, Ben-David believes peace is badly needed.

"Without an overall peace initiative," he said, "we are not far from the situation I described."

Giuliani becomes aggressive new face of Trump legal team

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rudy Giuliani, once known as "America's Mayor" and hailed for helping unite a wounded city after Sept. 11, has become the aggressive face of President Donald Trump's forceful new legal team.

Giuliani, who is bonded with the president by a particular brand of New York bravado, has escalated Trump's attacks on the Department of Justice, pushed for strict limits on special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe and upended White House legal strategy. Giuliani and Trump cut out senior West Wing aides this week as they hashed out plans to combat what they see as an existential threat to the presidency.

Giuliani's bold offensive — on display in a series of cable news appearances in which he unleashed broadsides on the very law enforcement officers with whom he once worked — underscored the thoroughness of his transformation from moderate Republican mayor of a liberal city to fiery conservative hero.

"Russian collusion is total fake news," Giuliani, a former U.S. attorney, told Fox News. "Unfortunately, it has become the basis of the investigation. And Mueller owes us a report saying that Russia collusion means nothing, it didn't happen. That means the whole investigation was totally unnecessary."

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Giuliani has quickly become the dominant figure on the president's reshuffled legal team as Trump stocks his political inner circle with familiar, TV-ready faces. The two have had several private conversations in recent days in which Giuliani fanned Trump's anger with Mueller's probe, according to two people familiar with their conversations who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to publicly discuss them. Giuliani has warned Trump against sitting down for an interview with Mueller and has suggested that, at a minimum, the president place limits on his level of cooperation.

Giuliani has warned Trump that he fears that the president's longtime personal attorney, Michael Cohen, may flip on him. He has urged Trump to cut off communications with Cohen, according to a person close to Giuliani but not authorized to discuss the talks publicly. After an FBI raid on Cohen's office and home, Giuliani also indicated that he wanted to change the discussion surrounding the \$130,000 payment that Cohen made to porn actress Stormy Daniels to buy her silence about a sexual tryst with Trump. Giuliani did so with a jaw-dropping interview with Sean Hannity on Wednesday.

Giuliani's remarks — that Trump knew about the payment and had repaid Cohen for it — seemed to contradict Trump's past statements. But he argued that it removed legal peril over a possible campaign finance violation, a claim some legal experts have questioned. Trump was pleased with Giuliani's performance, according to a person familiar with his views but not authorized to speak publicly about private conversations.

Over a pair of Fox News interviews, Giuliani also unleashed a series of provocative broadsides. He said Trump had fired James Comey last year because the FBI director wouldn't publicly clear the president of wrongdoing in the Russia probe, a different explanation than the White House offered. He said he would defend the president's daughter Ivanka Trump but suggested that her husband, Jared Kushner, was "disposable." And he derided the agents who raided Cohen's office as "stormtroopers," a charge that attracted particular attention because it appeared to evoke Nazi soldiers in the context of the Manhattan U.S. attorney's office, which had approved the raids and which Giuliani had once led.

"It's a different Rudy. He's always been tough, but he changed when he started to have national ambitions," said George Arzt, former press secretary to Democrat Ed Koch, one of Giuliani's predecessors as New York City mayor. "And after he wedded himself to Trump, his popularity in his hometown disappeared completely."

Giuliani was elected mayor in 1993 on a pledge to slash the city's sky-high crime rate. That year, 1,946 people were killed in the city. By 2001, Giuliani's final year in office, the number had shrunk to 649.

Giuliani was largely praised for the drop in crime but remained a polarizing figure. His no-holds-barred defense of the New York Police Department, often at the expense of minority communities, drew sharp criticism. A possible Senate run was abandoned after a cancer diagnosis. And after years of public battles and a very messy public separation from his second wife — which resulted in him moving out of Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence — his poll numbers sank and many New Yorkers were eager for a change at City Hall.

But then, one clear September day just a few months before he was to leave office, two planes flew into the World Trade Center.

In the hours after the attacks, Giuliani became the face of the nation's grief. His leadership — both inspiring and compassionate — over the following weeks earned him the nickname of "America's Mayor."

But his relationship with the city would soon change again.

Giuliani played a key role in the 2004 Republican National Convention that re-nominated President George W. Bush, a deeply unpopular figure in New York. And Giuliani shifted right on a number of issues — including gun control and public funding of abortions — during his failed presidential run four years later.

Although his future electoral prospects vanished, Giuliani remained a conservative darling, a frequent guest on Fox News and a sought-after member of the political speaking circuit. He has known Trump for decades — his bomb-throwing rhetorical style can at times mirror that of the president — and he became an aggressive surrogate for the celebrity businessman from the early days of his insurgent presidential campaign.

Giuliani had been widely expected to join Trump's administration but was passed over for secretary of

state, the position he badly wanted, and eventually was left without a Cabinet post.

But the president kept in touch with Giuliani, sometimes calling to ask for advice, and frequently asked for the ex-mayor's take on developments in the special counsel's probe, according to three people familiar with the conversations but not authorized to publicly discuss private talks.

In the weeks before he hired Giuliani last month, Trump had grown increasingly frustrated with the cable news chatter that he couldn't hire a big-name attorney for his legal team. But, according to one person familiar with his conversations, he later boasted to a confidant that he had struck a deal that he believed would silence those critics: He was hiring "America's F---ing Mayor."

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Officer allegedly hid camera at New Zealand Embassy in US

By NICK PERRY, Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — A high-ranking New Zealand military officer has been accused of hiding a camera in a bathroom at the nation's embassy in Washington in a case that has raised unusual jurisdictional questions.

Alfred Keating was a navy commodore and the embassy's senior defense attache at the time of the incident last July. He would have been eligible to claim diplomatic immunity from being prosecuted by U.S. authorities. But the case was handled by New Zealand police, who traveled to Washington to investigate.

A New Zealand judge on Friday dismissed an appeal by Keating to have his name and other personal details suppressed.

Keating, who has returned to New Zealand, has been charged with attempting to make an intimate visual recording. If convicted, he faces a maximum 18 months in prison.

Court documents say a camera was found in a unisex bathroom that was available for use by the 60 or so people who worked at the embassy.

"It had been purposely mounted inside a heating duct unit in the bathroom, at a height and direction that captured recordings from people who arrived and used the toilet," the documents say.

The camera was discovered after it fell on the floor. It had likely been in place for many months, according to the documents. It had been activated the morning it was found and had 19 images of people from that day, the documents say.

Prosecutors say they didn't find any indecent images when they searched Keating's computer but they did find that he had installed the driver software for the camera.

Bill Hodge, a teaching fellow at the University of Auckland's Law School, said the case had parallels with that of Julian Assange, the Wikileaks founder who has been cooped up in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London since 2012, where he remains beyond the reach of British authorities.

Hodge said that although Keating might be beyond the reach of American law, he could still be charged under New Zealand law. He said there were precedents, including cases for crimes at sea that took place outside New Zealand's territorial waters.

A pre-trial hearing has been scheduled for July.

Missouri governor faces multiple investigations

By The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens has faced multiple investigations on a variety of issues, including allegations of sexual misconduct, misusing charity resources for political purposes and ignoring open-records requirements.

The first-term Republican governor has acknowledged having an extramarital affair but denied criminal wrongdoing and harshly criticized those pursuing the investigations against him. The Legislature on Thursday called itself into a special session that will take place later this month to consider impeaching Greitens.

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Here's a look at some of the allegations against Greitens:

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Greitens is to go to trial May 14 in St. Louis on a felony indictment alleging he took a nonconsensual photo of an at least partially nude woman in March 2015 and transmitted it in a way that could be accessed by a computer. The woman, who is Greitens' former hairdresser, has said Greitens bound her hands to exercise rings, blindfolded her and removed her clothing before taking the picture and threatening to disclose it if she ever spoke of the incident.

Greitens has acknowledged having a consensual affair with the woman but has not directly answered questions about whether he took a photo of her in a compromising position.

The incident was first publicly reported on Jan. 10 by St. Louis television station KMOV, which aired portions of an audio recording secretly made by the woman's ex-husband in which she told him about her interaction with Greitens.

Following Greitens' indictment Feb. 22, the House created a special investigatory committee to look into allegations against the governor. It released a report April 11 containing testimony from the woman alleging that Greitens may have coerced her into oral sex after taking the unwanted photo and had forcefully slapped and shoved her during subsequent sexual encounters.

The House committee is to recommend whether to initiate impeachment proceedings to try to remove Greitens from office.

VETERANS' CHARITY

No trial date is set yet on a second felony charge in St. Louis accusing Greitens of tampering with computer data for allegedly disclosing to his political fundraiser a list of top donors to The Mission Continues without the permission of the veterans' charity he founded. The charge says the incident occurred in April 2015 as Greitens was raising money for his campaign.

The Associated Press first reported in October 2016 — a month before Greitens' election — that his campaign had accessed a list containing the names, emails and phone numbers of individuals, corporations and other nonprofit organizations who gave at least \$1,000 to The Mission Continues. Its properties showed it was created by a Mission Continues employee in 2014, shortly before Greitens stepped down as CEO of the St. Louis-based charity, and saved by a consultant for his political committee in early 2015.

The AP reported that Greitens' campaign had raised nearly \$2 million from those who had previously given significant amounts to the veterans' charity. Greitens initially denied that his campaign worked off a Mission Continues donor list.

But in April 2017, Greitens acknowledged in a settlement with the Missouri Ethics Commission that his campaign had in fact received the charity's donor list. He amended his campaign finance reports to show the list as an in-kind donation valued at \$600 received in March 2015 from Danny Laub, who was his campaign manager at the time.

Greitens was charged April 20 after Republican Attorney General Josh Hawley, who had been investigating The Mission Continues, referred information about Greitens' political use of the donor list to St. Louis prosecutors.

The House investigatory committee on Wednesday released a report on the issue and transcripts of an aide's testimony that indicate Greitens' campaign lied when it settled the ethics commission complaint. Testimony released with the report also says a former campaign aide said he was duped into taking the fall when the governor's campaign was trying to explain how it had gotten the donor list.

TEXT MESSAGES

An ongoing civil lawsuit against Greitens alleges he violated the state Sunshine Law while using a cell-phone app that automatically deletes messages after they are read. The Confide app prevents recipients from saving, forwarding, printing or taking screenshots of messages.

A Cole County judge ruled April 30 that that lawsuit can go forward on several counts alleging violations of the Sunshine Law, which requires government entities to make most records available to the public. The judge dismissed several additional counts alleging violations of a state law setting forth how long records must be retained.

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Hawley also launched an investigation last year after The Kansas City Star reported Greitens and some of his staff had Confide accounts. Hawley's report, released March 1, said it didn't appear Greitens' staff violated records laws. The report said the only government-related business reported by staff related to logistics and scheduling, and state law doesn't require those types of messages to be retained.

Hawley said he lacked authority to issue subpoena-like demands compelling people to provide documents or information while investigating alleged violations of the state Sunshine Law or record-retention law. Hawley has said he would reopen the investigation if granted such authority. A bill to do so is pending in the Legislature.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Hawley's office confirmed in April that it also is reviewing Greitens' compliance with state open-records laws in his use of social media.

Greitens established personal Facebook and Twitter accounts before he took office but has continued to post statements on those sites pertaining to public policies and actions he takes as governor.

An earlier review by Hawley's office concluded Greitens did not have to publicly release records related to his personal Twitter and Facebook accounts. But the attorney general's office says it has reopened the inquiry based on emails obtained by St. Louis Public Radio that appear to show a governor's office employee helping to write a Facebook post for the governor.

Film Academy expels Bill Cosby and Roman Polanski

By LINDSEY BAHR, AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The organization that bestows the Academy Awards said Thursday that it has expelled two prominent members convicted of sexual offenses, Bill Cosby and Roman Polanski, from its membership.

It's the first major decision since the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences implemented revised standards of conduct for its over 8,400 members following its expulsion of disgraced mogul Harvey Weinstein in October. In Polanski's case, the expulsion comes more than 40 years after he was accused of raping a 13-year-old girl he plied with champagne and Quaaludes during a photo shoot, and 15 years after he won a best director Oscar.

Polanski's attorney Harland Braun said Thursday the decision "blindsided" the director, who learned of his expulsion from media reports.

Braun accused the academy of failing to follow its rules and give Polanski's team a chance to respond to efforts to expel him. He said he and Polanski's agent will ask for the director to be reinstated next week and they want a hearing before a new vote on his membership is taken.

The academy wrote in a statement that its board of governors met Tuesday night and voted on Polanski and Cosby's status in accordance with the new standards. Polanski's membership dates back to 1969, and Cosby's to 1996.

The organization's rules state that its board of governors is entitled to enforce its standards of conduct, and "any member of the Academy may be suspended or expelled for cause." Suspension or expulsion requires two-thirds approval of the 55-member board.

Polanski, who won a best director Oscar for 2002's "The Pianist," remains a fugitive after pleading guilty to unlawful sex with a minor in 1977 and fleeing the United States the following year. Cosby was convicted last week of sexual assault in Pennsylvania, for drugging and molesting Temple University employee Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia mansion 14 years ago.

A spokesman for Cosby did not return a message seeking comment Thursday.

In its statement, the film academy said its board "continues to encourage ethical standards that require members to uphold the Academy's values of respect for human dignity."

Adopted in December, the code of conduct stipulates that the academy is no place for "people who abuse their status, power or influence in a manner that violates standards of decency."

The academy's board may now suspend or expel those who violate the code of conduct or who "com-

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promise the integrity" of the academy.

Before Weinstein, only one person is thought to have been expelled from the academy: Carmine Caridi, a character actor who had his membership revoked in 2004 for lending DVD screeners of films in contention for Oscars that ended up online.

The film academy came under intense scrutiny following Weinstein's expulsion and the rise of the #MeToo movement for some of its active members, like Cosby, Polanski and Mel Gibson. And since then, many others have faced new allegations like Kevin Spacey, Brett Ratner, John Lasseter and Paul Haggis. It even became late-night fodder for people like John Oliver.

Because its members are not made public, occasionally incorrect assumptions are made about who are part of the organization. Woody Allen, for one, is not.

Polanski has been one of the more divisive members of the organization for years. At the 2003 ceremony, Polanski's win — his first — received a standing ovation. He was not in attendance. He'd previously been nominated for writing his adaptation of "Rosemary's Baby," and directing "Chinatown" and "Tess."

Prominent actors like Kate Winslet, Jodie Foster and John C. Reilly continued to work with him, and in 2009, when Polanski was arrested in Zurich and U.S. authorities attempted to extradite him, more than 100 celebrities signed a petition for his release, including Allen, Weinstein, Martin Scorsese, Darren Aronofsky, David Lynch, Penelope Cruz and Tilda Swinton.

Natalie Portman recently told BuzzFeed that she regretted signing the petition.

"We lived in a different world, and that doesn't excuse anything. But you can have your eyes opened and completely change the way you want to live," Portman said. "My eyes were not open."

The film academy has faced a number of challenges in the Time's Up era, including the question of whether or not Casey Affleck would present the best actress Oscar this past March in accordance with tradition. Affleck, who settled a pair of civil lawsuits accusing him of sexual harassment in 2010 during the production of the mockumentary "I'm Still Here," bowed out of the task himself early in the year. Jodie Foster and Jennifer Lawrence ended up presenting the award instead.

While this year's Oscars ceremony and host Jimmy Kimmel did not shy away from addressing the movement, it also awarded former Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who in 2003 was accused of raping a 19-year-old hotel employee in Colorado, with an Academy Award for the animated short "Dear Basketball." He admitted to a sexual encounter with the woman, but denied the assault allegation and criminal case was dropped after Bryant's accuser refused to testify. She later filed a civil suit against him, which was settled out of court and included Bryant's public apology to her, although he admitted no guilt.

Its president John Bailey also recently faced an allegation of sexual misconduct, but was cleared after a committee and an outside law firm investigated the claim and unanimously voted that no other action was required and that Bailey would remain in his position.

Mounting economic chaos leaves many Venezuelans in the dark

By SCOTT SMITH, Associated Press

MARACAIBO, Venezuela (AP) — A month-long blackout in Jennifer Naranjo's neighborhood in the Venezuelan port city of Maracaibo leaves her anxious. She's eight months pregnant and passes hot, sleepless nights with no air conditioning, swatting away mosquitoes, worried about her unborn daughter's future.

"I dream about getting ahead for my baby," said Naranjo, whose husband left in January to find work in Chile. "In Venezuela, the situation gets worse every day."

Blackouts are nothing new under two decades of socialist rule in Venezuela. But they've grown more frequent, and are lasting longer, as the OPEC nation's economy hits a breaking point with hyperinflation making increasingly scarce food and medicine unaffordable for many.

Naranjo's La Chinita neighborhood has gone without power since late March, when a transformer exploded. Officials repeatedly promised the parts needed to repair it would arrive the next day. So far they haven't come.

The four-block area is a small symptom of a vastly more widespread problem that is generating unrest

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across much of Venezuela, including Maracaibo, a city of 1.5 million people that has long exported energy in the form of oil across the world.

Venezuela's government doesn't publish figures charting power outages, but the human rights organization Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict reports that blackouts prompted 325 street protests across Venezuela in the first three months of 2018.

Maracaibo witnessed the greatest number of protests, said organization director Marco Ponce, including one where residents blocked a busy street and a 15-year-old boy was shot dead by a passing motorist.

A massive blackout put most of Maracaibo in the dark for Christmas Eve, and since then officials have rationed power across the sprawling city. Scheduled blackouts eat up at least 11 hours a day, not counting unplanned failures.

With air conditioners idle and daytime April temperatures often nearing 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius), families throw open their doors and windows to allow in any hint of a breeze — along with mosquitoes. Naranjo, 20, fears a bite could infect her and her daughter, Pamela, with the Zika virus, which has stricken about 70 of Maracaibo's infants with microcephaly, according to the local charity My Miracle Foundation, which supports children with the illness.

With failing light switches and wall plugs, residents also can't charge phones or run television sets, so they often pass time chatting with neighbors in the street. They have to cook and eat by candles, which are costly.

"We can't wait any longer," said homemaker Elsa de Suarez, 58, who says her lifeless refrigerator doesn't allow her to keep food from spoiling. "It's an emergency."

Venezuela's status as home to the world's largest fossil fuel reserves should have made it immune to an energy crisis. It also has the Guri Dam, one of the world's largest hydro-electric projects and the cornerstone of an electrical grid once the envy of Latin America that has now fallen into disrepair.

Experts say only two or three of Maracaibo's 24 fuel-powered turbines still run after years of neglect, eking out just 10 percent of their previous output. Other power comes from the dilapidated national grid.

Maj. Gen. Luis Motta, Maduro's minister of electrical power, blamed a series of recent outages in Maracaibo on saboteurs attempting to undermine the government. They attacked power substations using Molotov cocktails, he said on state TV, without providing evidence. He didn't respond to a request from The Associated Press for comment.

However, experts say the power crisis is the government's own making. Powerful officials have been accused in U.S. court proceedings of looting investments earmarked for the electrical system and the country has kept home power bills among the cheapest in the world, around 1 cent a month, meaning the grid depends heavily on subsidies from a government with increasing financial problems.

The shortages are adding to the misery of a Venezuelan economic collapse on the scale of the Great Depression of the 1930s and as production in the oil industry — the largest consumer of power — has fallen to the lowest levels in decades.

Winston Cabas, president of the Association of Electrical Engineers of Venezuela, estimates that it would take an infusion of \$50 billion over a decade to restore the country's electrical system, which he said is as precarious as Haiti's after the 2010 earthquake.

"The problem is not sabotage or terrorism," said Cabas. "The problem is corruption."

Venezuelans just want their lights on.

In downtown Maracaibo, more than 100 senior citizens recently grew frustrated standing in line for hours outside a bank waiting for the power to come so they could cash their monthly pension checks to buy food.

Across the bay, a group of fisherman mending shrimping nets paused when they heard the hum of their refrigerator die from another outage. They worried this was the one that would finally fry the refrigerator where they store their catches.

La Chinita residents show visitors the charred transformer box hanging on a pole. Then they roll up a sleeve to reveal fresh mosquito bites from the night before.

Many gather each evening on a corner in front of a mustard-colored flat-roofed home as dusk turns to dark. Bug repellent is too expensive, so one man burns a cardboard egg carton, which smolders slowly

and helps keep the mosquitoes away.

A woman flips through the pages on a clipboard detailing the blackout's impact on La Chinita's 135 residents, including 29 young children and at least three bedridden elderly neighbors. She shows the record to officials urging their help.

Naranjo, pregnant, eats by the light of a shrinking candle stub. Unable to charge her phone at home, she can only talk to her husband in Chile once every three or four days. They often talk about her following him abroad.

For now, Naranjo remains fixated on finding money to deliver her baby in a good clinic and on buying her own mosquito net. She feels guilty asking relatives for too much help.

"Everything is so expensive," she says.

The candle flickers from a breeze and she stops eating to cup her hand behind the flame to shield it from blowing out and leaving her in the dark.

Follow Scott Smith on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ScottSmithAP>

Asia follows US markets lower as investors watch trade talks

By **YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets were lower on Friday after Wall Street finished with losses overnight as investors watched the outcome of trade talks between the United States and China.

KEEPING SCORE: South Korea's Kospi fell 0.7 percent to 2,470.24 while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index lost 0.7 percent to 30,111.88. Shanghai Composite Index retreated 0.3 percent to 3,092.27. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dropped 0.5 percent to 6,068.60. Japan was closed for a public holiday. Stocks in Taiwan, Singapore and Indonesia were lower.

TRADE TALKS: U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the U.S. is having good discussions in trade talks in China ahead of a second day of meeting aimed at easing tensions. The dispute has deepened as China has stepped up efforts to overtake Western industry leaders in advanced technologies, especially for semiconductors. Analysts say chances for a breakthrough from the two-day meeting appear slim given the two sides' intensifying rivalry in strategic technologies, where China lags behind the U.S.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "The U.S.-China trade meeting, which remains underway, would be another item packing risks ahead," said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore.

WALL STREET: U.S. stocks finished lower on Thursday. The S&P 500 index slid 0.2 percent to 2,629.73. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 5.17 points, or less than 0.1 percent, to 23,390.15. The Nasdaq composite lost 0.2 percent to 7,088.15. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks fell 0.5 percent to 1,546.56.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude lost 1 cent to \$68.42 per barrel on New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 0.7 percent to \$68.43 barrel in the previous session. Brent crude, the international standard, dipped 2 cents to \$73.60 per barrel in London. On Thursday, it rose 0.4 percent to \$73.62 a barrel.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 108.96 yen from 109.21 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1993 from \$1.1989.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, May 4, the 124th day of 2018. There are 241 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 4, 1968, the Oroville Dam in Northern California was dedicated by Gov. Ronald Reagan; the 770-foot-tall earth-filled structure, a pet project of Reagan's predecessor, Pat Brown, remains the tallest dam in the United States, but was also the scene of a near disaster in February 2017 when two spillways collapsed, threatening for a time to flood parts of three counties in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

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On this date:

In 1626, Dutch explorer Peter Minuit landed on present-day Manhattan Island.

In 1776, Rhode Island declared its freedom from England, two months before the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

In 1830, the Edward Bulwer-Lytton novel "Paul Clifford," with its famous opening, "It was a dark and stormy night..." was first published in London.

In 1886, at Haymarket Square in Chicago, a labor demonstration for an 8-hour work day turned into a deadly riot when a bomb exploded.

In 1919, the comic strip character Harold Teen made his debut in the Sunday edition of the Chicago Tribune in "The Love Life of Harold Teen" by Carl Ed (eed).

In 1932, mobster Al Capone, convicted of income-tax evasion, entered the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. (Capone was later transferred to Alcatraz Island.)

In 1942, the Battle of the Coral Sea, the first naval clash fought entirely with carrier aircraft, began in the Pacific during World War II. (The outcome was considered a tactical victory for Japan, but ultimately a strategic one for the Allies.)

In 1959, the first Grammy Awards ceremony was held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Domenico Modugno won Record of the Year and Song of the Year for "Nel Blu Dipinto Di Blu (Volare)"; Henry Mancini won Album of the Year for "The Music from Peter Gunn."

In 1961, the first group of "Freedom Riders" left Washington, D.C. to challenge racial segregation on interstate buses and in bus terminals.

In 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen opened fire during an anti-war protest at Kent State University, killing four students and wounding nine others.

In 1980, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, president of Yugoslavia, died three days before his 88th birthday.

In 1998, Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski (kah-ZIHN'-skee) was given four life sentences plus 30 years by a federal judge in Sacramento, California, under a plea agreement that spared him the death penalty.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush visited Greensburg, Kansas, where he hailed the resilience of the town and its tiny high school graduating class, one year after a tornado barreled through with astonishing fury. A river boat sank in a remote Amazon region in northern Brazil, killing at least 48 people. Iraq's first lady (Hiro Ibrahim Ahmed) escaped unharmed from a bomb attack in downtown Baghdad that struck her motorcade.

Five years ago: National Rifle Association leaders told members during a meeting in Houston that the fight against gun control legislation was far from over, and vowed that none in the organization would ever have to surrender their weapons. A limousine taking nine women to a bachelorette party erupted in flames on the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge over San Francisco Bay, killing five of the passengers, including the bride-to-be. Orb powered to a 2 1/2-length victory on a sloppy track to win the Kentucky Derby. Floyd Mayweather came back from a year's absence to win a unanimous 12-round decision over Robert Guerrero in their welterweight title fight in Las Vegas.

One year ago: President Donald Trump met with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull aboard the USS Intrepid, a decommissioned aircraft carrier in New York, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the World War II Battle of the Coral Sea, which reinforced the ties between the U.S. and Australia. A U.S. service member was killed in Somalia during an operation against the extremist group al-Shabab, the first American combat death there in more than two decades. Buckingham Palace announced that Queen Elizabeth II's 95-year-old husband, Prince Philip, was retiring from royal duties.

Today's Birthdays: The former president of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, is 90. Katherine Jackson, matriarch of the Jackson musical family, is 88. Jazz musician Ron Carter is 81. Rock musician Dick Dale is 81. Pulitzer Prize-winning political commentator George Will is 77. Pop singer Peggy Santiglia Davison (The Angels) is 74. Actor Richard Jenkins is 71. Country singer Stella Parton is 69. Actor-turned-clergyman Hilly Hicks is 68. Irish musician Darryl Hunt (The Pogues) is 68. Singer Jackie Jackson (The Jacksons) is 67. Singer-actress Pia Zadora is 66. Rhythm-and-blues singer Oleta Adams is 65. Sen. Doug Jones, D-Ala., is 64. Violinist

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Soozie Tyrell (Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band) is 61. Country singer Randy Travis is 59. Actress Mary McDonough is 57. Comedian Ana Gasteyer is 51. Actor Will Arnett is 48. Rock musician Mike Dirnt (Green Day) is 46. Contemporary Christian singer Chris Tomlin is 46. TV personality and fashion designer Kimora Lee Simmons is 43. Rock musician Jose Castellanos is 41. Sports reporter Erin Andrews is 40. Singer Lance Bass ('N Sync) is 39. Actress Ruth Negga is 37. Rapper/singer Jidenna is 33. Actor Alexander Gould is 24. Country singer Raelynn is 24. Actress Amara (uh-MAH'-ruh) Miller is 18. Actress Brooklyn Prince (Film: "The Florida Project") is eight.

Thought for Today: "The greater the number of laws and enactments, the more thieves and robbers there will be." — Lao-tzu (low dzu), Chinese philosopher (c.604-531 B.C.).