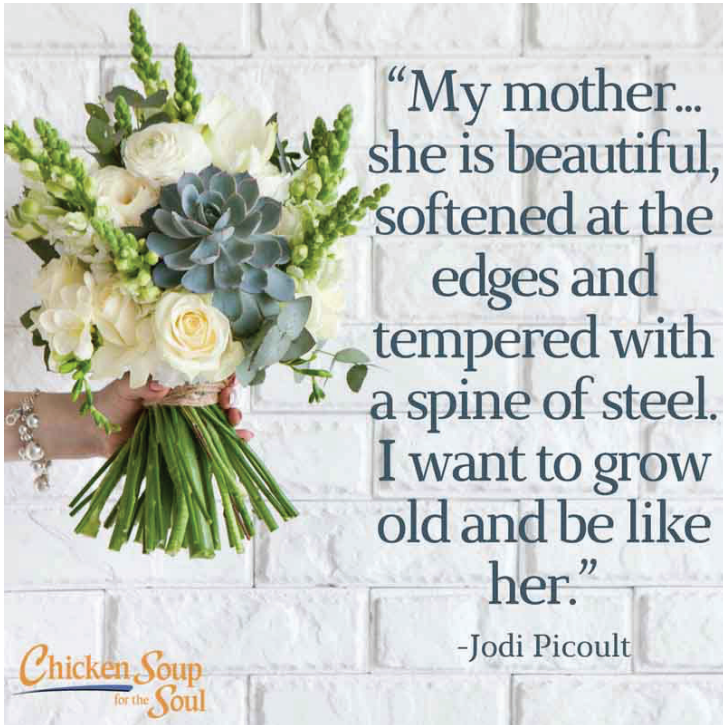


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HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

- 1- Schultz Construction Ad
- 1- Lewandowski Bridal Shower
- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 2- Obit: Orville Schaller
- 3- Rev. Snyder's Column
- 3- HS Booster PAC Thank You
- 5- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column
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Lewandowski Bridal Shower

Come and Go Bridal Shower honoring Bride to Be, Sarah Lewandowski, Saturday, June 2, 2018 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church – Groton. Lance Dennert and Sarah are registered at Bed, Bath and Beyond and Target.

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

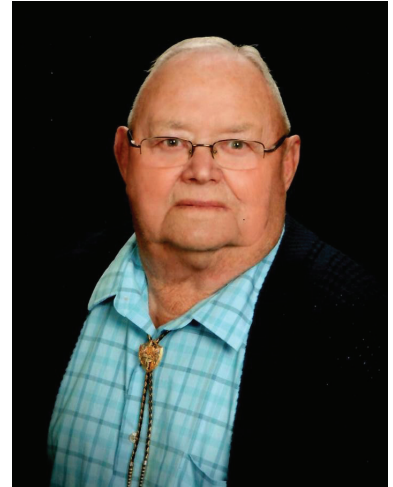
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The Life of Orville Schaller

Services for Orville Schaller, 89, of Groton will be 10:00 a.m., Monday, May 14th at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. Rev. Craig Grams will officiate. Burial will follow at Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the church on Sunday from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 6:00 p.m.



Orville passed away May 10, 2018 at Groton Care and Rehabilitation Center.

Orville Merle Schaller was born to William and Rachel (Knoll) Schaller on September 3, 1928 on the family farm near Groton. He attended country school through the 8th grade and graduated from Groton High School in 1946. During his high school days, he worked at the Ford agency as a "Grease Monkey." After graduation, he worked for George Stange and lived on his farm. On June 9, 1950, he married Jocelyn Ebert and together they were blessed with three children. In 1953, he began working for Groton Auto and Tractor Company as a salesman. Later, he and Chuck Porter bought the Agency and re-named it Trail Chevrolet and Olds. In 1968, Chuck sold his share to Orville and he owned it until 1986. He won many Chevrolet and Olds awards, including numerous trips. During this time, Orville bought and farmed his own land.

Orville belonged to the Groton Kiwanis Club for 50 years. He was also active in the Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Olive Grove Golf Course and St. John's Lutheran Church, all of which he served in many offices. Orville, along with Rocky Buntrock, organized Sunflower Days. He and Gene Abeln were instrumental in obtaining the US 12 four lane highway from Aberdeen to I-29. Orville loved to fly and purchased his own plane in mid-life after obtaining his pilot's license. He enjoyed flying with friends and his son, especially his fishing trips to Flin Flon, Canada.

Preceding him in death were his parents, his wife, Joyce of 67 years, his daughter, Sherry, an infant sister, Lois, infant brother, William, three brothers, Myron, Otho and Wally and sisters, Myla and Arlene.

Mourning his loss is his daughter, Sandra and son, Steven, grandchildren: Stephy (Tim) Hanigan, Arielle Cameron, Cheyenne, Jasmine and Hunter Schaller, great-grandsons, Colton and Kyler Hanigan, Kayson and Bronsen Cameron, Quincy Hunt. Orville is also survived by his sister, Bonnie Larson, brothers, Kenneth and Ben Schaller, and sister-in-law, Florence Schaller.

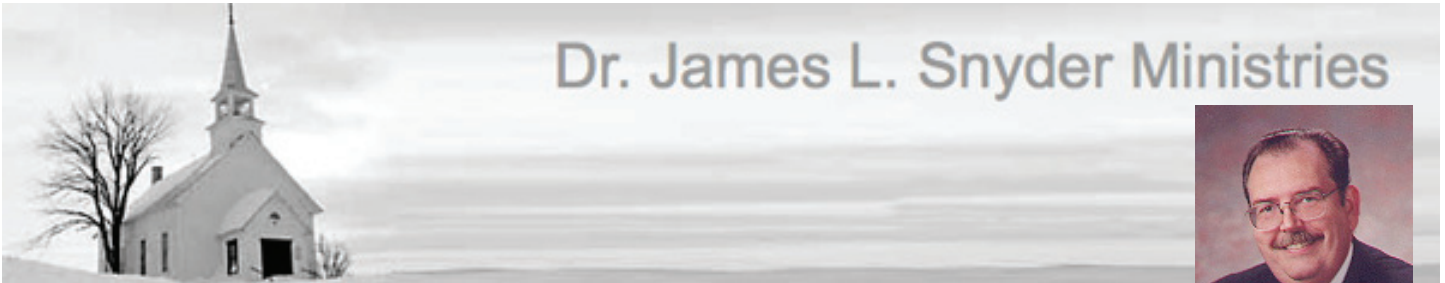
Casketbearers will be Rick Carlson, Casey Zoellner, Marc Hanson, Bob Walter, Brad Larson and Loren Schaller.

Honorary Casketbearers will be Larry Schelle, Chuck Raap, Curtis Sombke, Tony Goldade, Richard Krueger, Steve Giedt, and nephews, Tom Ebert, Tim Ebert, Dennis Schaller, Billy Schaller, Russ Schaller, Scott Schaller, Greg Peterson and Greg, Dean and Kevin Ebert.

www.paetznick-garness.com

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



A Life Altering Discovery: Mothers Are Not Fathers

Celebrating another "Mother's Day," gave opportunity to reflect on the influence and importance of mothers in our society today. I think for the most part mothers get a bad rap these days, or at least they don't get the kind of appreciation they truly deserve, and they sure don't get the pay-package they earn. Of course, if they did nobody could afford a mother.

Sometimes it's great to remember the personal influence a person's mother has had on them throughout the years. It was Abraham Lincoln who said, "All I am or ever hope to be I owe to my mother." Perhaps he said this in lieu of a Mother's Day card. Why didn't I think of that?

Because of the way God has designed things, a person's mother is the first relationship he or she has in life. If it is a good relationship, it will have a positive influence throughout a person's lifetime.

Of course, there are those who have never known their mother. Perhaps she died in childbirth or maybe a few days or months after giving birth. The cause is not important, the real importance is the fact that a person never really gets to know his or her mother.

Even for us who have had mothers in our lives, it is often difficult to say we knew our mothers. Because nothing in all of God's creation is quite like a mother. All I know is, they start out as women, which may explain a lot.

From my youth I recognized a big difference between my mother and my father. I could never really put my finger on it until years after I left home. Looking back over my life and appreciating some of her influences in my life, I began to understand some things about my mother.

The most astounding thing I discovered about my mother is that mothers are not fathers.

I know this may come as a shock to many people; it came as a terrific shock to me. I'm not sure I have gotten over it yet. I knew there was a difference somewhere, but I really could not put my finger on it until I made this awesome discovery.

Once the shock of this truth waned, I gave this some thought and came up with a few comparisons that helped me understand the difference.

For example, I remember my mother always having a funny smell about her not quite like the good earthy aroma my father had. My mother always went to great

The Groton HS Booster PAC Post-Prom Committee would like to thank the following businesses and organizations:

For donations of \$100 or more: Locke Electric, Groton American Legion Auxiliary, United Methodist Church Women, Groton Veterinary Clinic, James Valley Telecommunications, Roger and Darci Spanier, Poet Biorefining, Aberdeen Elks Lodge

For donations \$26-\$50: Kolker Law, Frost Construction, First State Bank, Diana Chapter OES No. 83, Groton Ford, Lori's Pharmacy, Milbrandt Enterprises, Wells Fargo, Harry Implement, Groton Chiropractic Clinic, Erickson Insurance Agency, Full Circle Ag, S & S Lumber, Marc and Franne Sippel, GDI News/Clean/Fit/Live.

For Donations of \$25: Columbia American Legion, Professional Management Services, Krueger Brothers Gravel & Dirt, Groton Kiwanis, Rix Farms.

For Donations of Supplies and/or Services: The Jungle, Circus Bar, Ken's Food Fair, Dollar General, A & S Hardware.

Without your generosity, this event would not happen.

Thank You!

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pains so she would smell "pretty." I never did like perfume. It made my nose burn. I remember liking the smell of my father. It was just more natural. And some days it was more natural than other days.

As I think of my mother, I remember she was highly allergic to dirt, while my father was quite at home with it. Whenever I would come into the house with dirt from head to toe, my mother would go into some kind of hysterical fit wanting me to take off all my clothes and get in the tub right away, and sometimes, it was not even Saturday night.

Father, on the other hand, seemed happier when he was the dirtiest. Dirt never seemed to bother him. Grease spots or grass stains never offended him at all. But all of this offended my mother.

With a "holier-than-thou" air she would always say, "Cleanliness is next to godliness."

I've often thought to myself, if God did not like dirt why did he make so much of it? And, why was it so much fun to play in?

Another thing I noticed about my mother was that she didn't know how to play catch in the backyard with her children. When she tried, she always threw like a girl. Father, on the other hand, caught everything, especially flak from mother. He caught everything she could throw, even a fit or two.

My mother was always laying down the law while father just lay down. I think my mother had some kind of nervous problem because she never could sit still long enough to really relax. Dad, could relax just about anywhere, and he did... often.

My mother and father made a good team, particularly in the building business. I can remember my mother always raised the roof while father enjoyed painting the town. My brother, sister and I enjoyed the painting exercises of my father, which may explain why his finances were always in the red.

Another thing I observed about my mother and mothers in general for that matter. There are times when mothers will have a good bawl for no reason, while fathers just loved having a ball for no reason.

I'm sure there were other differences between my mother and my father. When I realized that mothers are not fathers, the whole world began to make more sense to me. A good father is a perfect balance between a mother and a boy.

The Bible encourages us to honor both our father and mother. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:" (Proverbs 6:20).

Perhaps wise Solomon had our generation in mind when he wrote, "There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother." (Proverbs 30:11).

Mothers may not be fathers but they are exactly what God ordered.



Opening New Markets for South Dakota Producers

Agriculture is the economic engine for many communities across the upper Great Plains. Farmers and ranchers play a critical role in feeding and fueling a growing global population, and also in our national security strategy. When we can produce affordable, nutritious food here at home, we don't have to rely on other countries to obtain it. However, ag income has been in decline over the past five years, in part due to low commodity prices. I recently introduced a bipartisan bill with Senator Angus King of Maine and Senator John Thune of South Dakota that would open up much-needed new markets for small producers and processors.

Our common sense legislation would allow meat and poultry products that have been inspected by a Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS)-approved state Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) program to be sold across state lines. Right now, there are 27 states with inspection programs certified by FSIS, which meet or exceed federal inspection standards. However, products processed at these FSIS-approved state MPI inspected facilities are not currently allowed to be sold across state lines.

Under federal regulations, state MPI standards must be "at least equal to" federal meat and poultry inspection programs. In South Dakota, state-inspected meat products such as beef and pork are limited to markets within South Dakota despite being subject to inspections equal to or exceeding federal inspection standards.

Our bill would level the playing field for meat and poultry products while maintaining the highest quality standards for consumers. Since the state inspection standards are required by law to be equal to or better than the federal inspection standards, it makes sense to allow products that pass state inspection protocols to be sold across state lines. This legislation will create new markets for producers and processors, give consumers more choices at the grocery store and continue to maintain the high quality and safety standards necessary to keep consumers healthy.

We're happy to have the support of prominent ag groups such as the United States Cattlemen's Association, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, the South Dakota Farm Bureau, the American Farm Bureau, the South Dakota Pork Producers, the South Dakota Stockgrowers and the South Dakota Meat Inspection Program Director. We also appreciate the support of Governor Dennis Daugaard.

South Dakota farmers and ranchers consistently produce among the highest quality products in the world. Our bill opens up new markets for small South Dakota producers and gives them the opportunity to compete in markets throughout the United States. As Congress continues its work on the upcoming farm bill, we will be seeking to get our commonsense legislation included in this important legislation.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



**Larry Zimmerman
Secretary**

It Can Be Done

When we hear the word "operation," we think hospital, emergency, illness, surgery, treatment, and procedure. However, with over 33 years in the military the word "operation" affords me a completely different meaning. For decades, the military has issued random code names for exercises, attack plans and other operations. Operations were used to resolve conflict, promote peace, and support civilian leaders in response to domestic crises.

In the 70's while on Army active duty training in Europe, there was Operation Reforger, and every year while at SDNG Golden Coyote training there were many different operations based on the humanitarian mission we were carrying out. My tour in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan had numerous humanitarian operations, including Operation Qala-i-Wali Air Assault.

I have lived with operations and missions throughout most of my life. Some were assigned to me as a part of a military mission, and some I developed to enhance information exchange and to increase outreach for the Department.

During my six years leading the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, I carried that operational mindset with me. A key part of building momentum is education, raising awareness, and inspiring action. Although much of the focus of our operations was on veterans, it also afforded us the opportunity to educate the masses that may not have served.

Our Department operations included Reaching All Veterans (RAV), Ketchup, Korean, Taiwan, Saigon, Whirlwind and Calling All Returning Servicemembers (CARS). Although each was conducted with its own mission and time frame, they all afforded us the opportunity to reach out to our veterans and to thank them for their service, educate them on the benefits, services and programs available to them. They also provided us a great opportunity to educate civilians on the important role these heroes played in protecting our freedoms.

Our veterans have shouldered the burden of our defense. They display extraordinary strength and resilience in the face of adversity to protect the freedoms we, as Americans, enjoy daily. They remain disciplined, dedicated, and trained Americans with a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience. When our men and women return home after years of war and sacrifice, we have the opportunity to show our gratitude by serving them.

I'm proud of the team that worked with us as we completed our operations. They met each mission with energy, passion and deep devotion to our veterans.

God bless our veterans, their families, and the United States of America.

Larry Zimmerman, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

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Tourism to Mount Rushmore Adds 177 Million to Local Economy

Keystone, South Dakota – In celebration of National Travel and Tourism Week Mount Rushmore National Memorial reveals data from a new National Park Service report which shows that over 2.4 million visitors to Mount Rushmore in 2017 spent an estimated \$139 million in local communities. Spending that supported 2,140 jobs in the area and had a cumulative benefit of \$177 million to the local economy.

“Doane Robinson to Gutzon Borglum to today Mount Rushmore National Memorial has long served as an active member in the tourism economy of our local communities,” stated Superintendent Cheryl Schreier. “National Park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy, returning \$10 for every \$1 invested in the National Park Service. We appreciate the partnership and support of our neighbors and are glad to be able to give back by helping to sustain local communities.”

The peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas of the U.S. Geological Survey and Lynne Koontz of the National Park Service. The report shows \$18.2 billion of direct spending by more than 330 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 306,000 jobs nationally; 255,900 of those jobs are found in these gateway communities. The cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy was \$35.8 billion.

The lodging sector received the highest direct contributions with \$5.5 billion in economic output to local gateway economies and 49,000 jobs. The restaurants sector received the next greatest direct contributions with \$3.7 billion in economic output to local gateway economies and 60,500 jobs.

According to the 2017 report, most park visitor spending was for lodging/camping (32.9 percent) followed by food and beverages (27.5 percent), gas and oil (12.1 percent), souvenirs and other expenses (10.1 percent), admissions and fees (10.0 percent), and local transportation (7.5 percent).

Report authors also produced an interactive tool that enables users to explore visitor spending, jobs, labor income, value added, and output effects by sector for national, state, and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend data. The interactive tool and report are available at the NPS Social Science Program webpage: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>. To learn more about national parks in South Dakota and how the National Park Service works with South Dakota communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to <https://www.nps.gov/state/sd>.

For additional park information, please visit Mount Rushmore National Memorial's official website at www.nps.gov/moru.

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Today in Weather History

May 13, 2005: Runoff from heavy rain resulted in minor flooding along the White River from south of Belvidere to Oacoma, affecting mainly agricultural land along the river. The river rose over its banks and flooded U.S. Highway 83 south of Murdo for a short time. No property damage was reported.

1980: An F3 tornado ripped directly through the center of Kalamazoo, Michigan, killing five people, injuring 79, leaving 1,200 homeless and causing \$50 million in damage. The tornado passed directly over the American Bank, where a barograph reported a pressure drop of 0.59 inches.

1995: This outbreak produced tornadoes extending from the Mississippi River near Burlington, Iowa, to the west of Bloomington, Illinois. Two violent tornadoes, each ranked at F4 intensity, were reported. The first tornado traveled 60 miles from near Fort Madison, Iowa, to the southeast of Galesburg, Illinois producing over \$10 million damage. The town of Raritan, Illinois was hit the hardest. The second violent tornado traveled 7 miles across Fulton County from Ipava to Lewistown, Illinois producing \$6 million damage. Another strong tornado took a 25-mile path across parts of Fulton, Mason, and Tazewell Counties. The storms also produced softball-size hail south and northwest of Macomb in Illinois. Five men were injured in Lawrence County, Indiana when lightning struck one of them and traveled to the other four. There were 184 reports of severe weather, including over three dozen tornadoes.

1930 - A man was killed when caught in an open field during a hailstorm northwest of Lubbock TX. It was the first, and perhaps the only, authentic death by hail in U.S. weather records. (David Ludlum)

1981 - A tornado 450 yards in width destroyed ninety percent of Emberson TX. People did not see a tornado, but rather a wall of debris. Homes were leveled, a man in a bathtub was hurled a quarter of a mile, and a 1500 pound recreational vehicle was hurled 500 yards. Miraculously no deaths occurred in the tornado. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front brought an end to the early season warm spell in the north central U.S., but not before the temperature at Sioux City IA soared to a record warm 95 degrees. Strong south-westerly winds ahead of the cold front gusted to 52 mph at Marais MI. Evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail at Rockford MN, and wind gusts to 75 mph at Belmond IA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Strong winds along a cold front ushering cold air into the northwestern U.S. gusted to 69 mph at Myton UT. Temperatures warmed into the 80s ahead of the cold front, as far north as Montana. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing along a warm front produced severe weather in the Southern Plains Region during the afternoon and night. A thunderstorm at Killeen TX produced wind gusts to 95 mph damaging 200 helicopters at Fort Hood causing nearly 500 million dollars damage. Another thunderstorm produced softball size hail at Hodges TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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(WITH SIGN ON BONUS)**

Part time Dietary Tech

**For more information,
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Sun May 13	Mon May 14	Tue May 15	Wed May 16	Thu May 17	Fri May 18	Sat May 19
						
71°F	77°F	80°F	82°F	78°F	68°F	66°F
50°F	48°F	53°F	56°F	53°F	47°F	49°F
SSW 9 MPH	W 6 MPH	E 7 MPH	S 8 MPH	SE 11 MPH Precip 20%	NE 16 MPH Precip 50%	NNE 13 MPH Precip 20%

Happy Mother's Day, South Dakota!

Mainly Dry And Progressively Warmer Through Mid Week



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

www.weather.gov/abr

Graphic created
5/13/2018 4:03 AM

Published on: 05/13/2018 at 4:07AM

Temperatures will continue to warm through mid-week! Can't rule out a couple of showers or perhaps a thunderstorm today across parts of central and south central South Dakota, and again during the day on Monday. But, by and large, the forecast is dry until late in the week.

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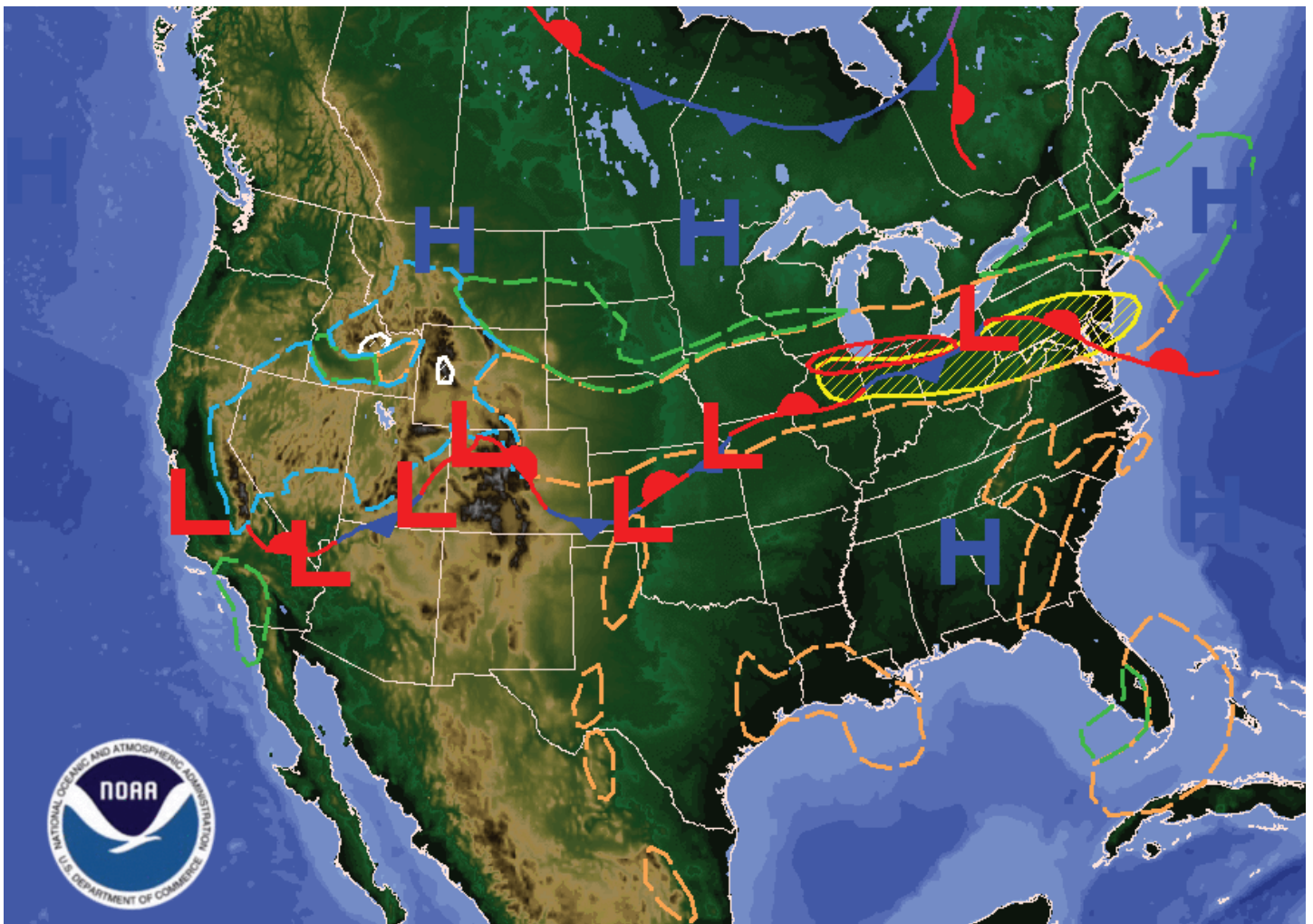
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 62.0 F at 6:22 PM
Low Outside Temp: 47.6 F at 6:49 AM
Wind Chill:
High Gust: 14.0 Mph at 2:49 PM
Precip: 0.01

Today's Info

Record High: 97° in 1932
Record Low: 24° in 1899
Average High: 68°F
Average Low: 43°F
Average Precip in May: 1.33
Precip to date in May: 0.72
Average Precip to date: 5.36
Precip Year to Date: 3.40
Sunset Tonight: 8:55 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:04 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, May 12, 2018, issued 4:35 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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DOES PRAYER HAVE LIMITS?

Reading the Psalms to discover their meaning takes time. Reading them rapidly often makes them sound repetitious or unintelligent. Take for example the words, "But You, O Sovereign Lord, deal well with me for Your name's sake; out of the goodness of Your love, deliver me."

In this brief, one sentence prayer David recognizes several critical elements of prayer. The first one is that our God is sovereign. As our "sovereign" He rules and reigns over our lives as the Ultimate Authority. He is the Guard and Guardian over anything and everything that pertains to us or may have power over us and thereby is our personal protector and provider. Whatever invades our lives is there because He allows it to be there - and if things were to be different from the way they are, they would be.

And if it is "in" our lives, it is "in" there for His "name's sake". In other words, it is consistent with His nature and character and wisdom. God knows what is best for us what is in keeping with the plan He has designed for us. So, we can be sure of His ways, knowing that what He is doing in us, with us and through us is in His best interests to shape us into the likeness of His Son, our Savior and Lord.

"Out of the goodness of Your love, deliver me" gives us the assurance that God will never abandon us but will ultimately deliver us from what we think will destroy us. Whenever we want to give up on God remember that He did not spare His Son from the cross, but was with Him and delivered Him through the pain into His presence.

Prayer: Lord, we accept all things in our lives as a gift from You as You shape us into the likeness of Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 109:21 But you, Sovereign Lord, help me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me.

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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

News from the Associated Press

Mormons end century-old relationship with Boy Scouts

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has long been the biggest sponsor of Boy Scout troops in the United States, with Mormons making up 18.5 percent of all Scouts. But the two organizations have diverged in recent years and the remaining 425,000 Mormon Scouts will be transferred into a church-sponsored program.

By Brady McCombs Associated Press, Salt Lake City

The Mormon church said Tuesday it will sever all ties with the Boy Scouts of America at the end of next year and place its remaining 425,000 boys into a gospel-focused youth program it is developing. The move ends a century-old relationship that was based on their shared values.

The announcement by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Boy Scouts didn't come as a complete surprise after the religion last year removed 185,000 boys between the ages of 14 and 18, signaling that an end to the long-time alliance was near.

Joining the Boy Scouts is practically automatic among Mormon boys, and the religion has long been the biggest sponsor of Boy Scout troops in the United States. The Mormon boys who will be leaving represent about 18.5 percent of the 2.3 million youth in the organization.

The Mormon church said in a statement that the move is about creating its own youth program that it can use for its increasingly global membership, but the two organizations' values clearly have been diverging in recent years.

The Boy Scouts decided in 2015 to allow gay troop leaders and announced last year it would allow girls in its ranks. Last week, the organization said it will change the name of its flagship program next year to Scouts BSA to account for the inclusion of girls.

Like other conservative faiths, the Mormon church opposes gay marriage and teaches that being in a homosexual relationship is a sin. The church initially said it was "deeply troubled" by the Boy Scouts' policy change on gays but stayed with the organization after receiving assurances it could appoint troop leaders according to its own religious and moral values.

The religion has also traditionally used separate youth programs for boys and girls.

The Mormon church said in a statement the new program that will start in 2020 will "help all girls and boys, young women and young men discover their eternal identity, build character and resilience, develop life skills and fulfill their divine roles as daughters and sons of God."

The still to be developed program that will likely include outdoor activities and character building similar to Boy Scouts, but it won't be modeled after Boy Scouts or use ranks. The 14-to-18-year-old boys that left the Boy Scouts already focus on church-related activities and community service.

More than half of the church's 16 million members live outside the US and Canada.

The Boy Scouts of America in a statement thanked the thousands of Mormons who have served as scout leaders and wished the religion well on its new program. The organization said individual Mormons who wish to stay in Boy Scouts would be integrated into other troops.

The Boy Scouts's move to allow girls, announced last October, marked the organization's latest momentous policy shift.

The organization already has started allowing girls into the Cub Scouts. So far, nearly 4,000 girls have joined roughly 170 Cub Scout packs participating in the first phase of the new policy, and the pace is expected to intensify this summer under a nationwide multimedia recruitment campaign titled "Scout Me In."

Though the flagship program's name is changing, the parent organization will remain the Boy Scouts of America, and the Cub Scouts – its program serving children from kindergarten through fifth grade – will keep its title, as well.

The Boy Scout movement had been entrenched in Mormon culture for as long as anyone can remember. In 2013, the church put on an extravagant theatrical production inside its 21,000-seat auditorium in Salt

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Lake City to commemorate the 100th anniversary of its alliance with the Boy Scouts.

A Boy Scout training complex in West Virginia is named after former Mormon church President Thomas S. Monson, a longtime member of the Boy Scouts's executive board and a major supporter who died earlier this year.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

14-15-23-29-34

(fourteen, fifteen, twenty-three, twenty-nine, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

08-09-10-21-33, Star Ball: 7, ASB: 3

(eight, nine, ten, twenty-one, thirty-three; Star Ball: seven; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.17 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

Powerball

22-42-45-55-56, Powerball: 14, Power Play: 3

(twenty-two, forty-two, forty-five, fifty-five, fifty-six; Powerball: fourteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$257 million

South Dakota works to open hunters' access to public land

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department is trying to improve hunter access to public land that is "landlocked" by private land.

The department is launching an effort to open or ease access to about 50,000 acres (20,235 hectares) of the 290,000 currently inaccessible acres (117,360 hectares), the Capital Journal reported.

Some of the landlocked pieces of land have been effectively closed to the public for decades.

Mike Cornelison works with the School and Public Lands' office, which manages about 197,000 acres of the state's inaccessible public land. He said section lines have been abandoned or weathered away, making it impossible to know the public right-of-way location. This has led to issues between landowners and hunters, he said.

The Game, Fish and Parks Department is negotiating with landowners to let hunters cross through their land.

"We've never really attempted to do something like this before," said Kevin Robling, special projects coordinator.

The department is first working through the frustrations that landowners may have with hunters near their property.

"You wouldn't believe how often landowners talk about gates left open, people driving on muddy roads and littering," Robling said.

Department officials then negotiate legal avenues for property owners to allow hunters access to the land, such as a walk-in program lease or an easement agreement.

Nathan Baker is leading the project in central South Dakota. No landowners have agreed to the department's offers yet, he said.

"I think it's something that may take some time," said Baker, noting that the project is just getting started. Robling agreed, saying that the work will take long-term relationship building.

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

Lead seeks ordinance change to allow dogs in city limits

LEAD, S.D. (AP) — City officials in western South Dakota are fixing an ordinance oversight that technically has made it illegal to own a dog within city limits for the past three years.

Lead Administrator Mike Stahl has proposed modifying the 2015 ordinance that rules it illegal to keep any wild and exotic animal within city limits, the Black Hills Pioneer reported. Domestic dogs are currently considered under the wild animal definition, along with coyotes, foxes and wolves.

"It was pointed out that in our ordinance we didn't clarify that when we excluded a family of animals that, that included actually domestic dogs," Stahlsaid.

The oversight occurred even though the ordinance excludes domestic cats from the definition.

The ordinance change would clarify an exclusion of domestic dogs from the wild and exotic animals list.

"We want to allow, of course, domestic dogs in the community," Stahl said. "It was an oversight on our part to not do that."

The wild animal ordinance was approved after a business, Fur-Ever Wild, opened in Deadwood three years ago. Lead and Deadwood residents pushed for the ordinance following allegations of animal mistreatment at the petting zoo business.

A second reading of the modified ordinance is scheduled for May 21.

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

Police find body in burned camper after fire extinguished

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a man was found dead inside a burned camper near downtown Rapid City after firefighters doused the blaze.

The Rapid City Journal reports officers responded to the scene early Friday afternoon after receiving a report of a suicidal person who may be armed. Police say the man had entered a nearby camper with a gas canister.

The camper caught fire, and some homes in the neighborhood were evacuated. The fire spread to an outbuilding and a two-story residence, and as the camper burned, ammunition inside it exploded. Because authorities feared the person inside the camper was armed, police drew their weapons and provided protection to firefighters battling the blaze.

Police have not released the man's name and the cause of death remains under investigation.

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

Family of suicide bombers attack Indonesia churches; 13 dead

By TUJI MARTUJI, Associated Press

SURABAYA, Indonesia (AP) — Suicide bombers who carried out deadly attacks on three churches in Indonesia's second-largest city on Sunday were a family of six that included two young children, police said, as the world's most populous Muslim nation recoiled in horror at one of the worst attacks on its Christian minority.

At least 13 people, including all six family members, died in the attacks in Surabaya and at least 41 were injured, according to police, in acts that Indonesia's president condemned as "barbaric."

The bombings were the worst to target churches in Indonesia since a series of attacks on Christmas Eve in 2000 killed 15 people and wounded nearly 100. Religious minorities in Indonesia, especially Christians,

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have been repeatedly targeted by militants.

National police chief Tito Karnavian said that the father exploded a car bomb, two sons aged 18 and 16 used a motorcycle for their attack, and the mother was with daughters aged 12 and 9 for her attack.

Karnavian said the family had returned to Indonesia from Syria, where until recently the Islamic State group controlled significant territory.

The extremist group claimed responsibility for Sunday's attacks in a statement carried by its Aamaq news agency.

The first attack struck the Santa Maria Roman Catholic Church in Surabaya, police spokesman Frans Barung Mangera told reporters at the scene. That blast was followed by a second explosion minutes later at the Christian Church of Diponegoro and a third at the city's Pantekosta Church, Mangera said.

A witness described the woman's attack at the Diponegoro church, saying she was carrying two bags when she arrived.

"At first officers blocked them in front of the churchyard, but the woman ignored them and forced her way inside. Suddenly she hugged a civilian then (the bomb) exploded," said the witness, a security guard who identified himself as Antonius.

Mangera said three unexploded homemade bombs, two at the Pantekosta church and one at the Diponegoro church, were detonated by a bomb squad.

Shattered glass and chunks of concrete littered the entrance of the Santa Maria Church, which was sealed off by armed police. Rescue personnel treated victims at a nearby field while officers inspected wrecked motorcycles in the parking lot that had been burned in the explosion.

A street merchant outside the church said she was blown several meters (yards) by the blast.

"I saw two men riding a motorbike force their way into the churchyard. One was wearing black pants and one with a backpack," said the merchant, Samsia, who uses a single name. "Soon after that the explosion happened."

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo visited the scenes of the attacks and described them as "cowardly actions" that were "very barbaric and beyond the limit of humanity."

In Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, the Indonesian Church Association condemned the attacks.

"We are angry," said Gormar Gultom, an official with the association, but urged people to let the police investigation take its course.

Indonesia's two largest Muslim organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, also condemned the attacks.

Separately, national police spokesman Setyo Wasisto said police fatally shot four suspected militants and arrested two others early Sunday in West Java towns. It wasn't clear whether the shootings were connected to the church attacks.

"They have trained in order to attack police," Wasisto said, identifying the militants as members of Jemaah Anshorut Daulah, an Islamic State group-affiliated network of about two dozen extremist groups that has been implicated in a number of attacks in Indonesia over the past year.

Jakarta police placed the capital and surrounding areas on high alert, while the transportation ministry warned airports to be on guard.

The church attacks came days after police ended a hostage-taking ordeal by imprisoned Islamic militants at a detention center near Jakarta in which six officers and three inmates died. IS claimed responsibility.

Indonesia has carried out a sustained crackdown on militants since bombings by al-Qaida-affiliated radicals in Bali in 2002 killed 202 people. In recent years, the country has faced a new threat as the rise of IS in the Middle East invigorated local militant networks.

Christians, many of whom are from the ethnic Chinese minority, make up about 9 percent of Indonesia's 260 million people.

Associated Press writers Niniek Karmini and Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta, Indonesia, contributed to this report.

Paris attacker born in Chechnya, was on radicalism database

By ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The man behind a deadly knife attack in central Paris was born in Chechnya and had been on police radar for radicalism, and his parents have been detained for questioning, French authorities said Sunday.

Counterterrorism investigators are working to determine whether the man who stabbed five people in a busy neighborhood in the heart of the French capital Saturday night had any help. The attacker killed a 29-year-old man and wounded four others, before being shot by police.

Among the injured was a 34-year-old man from Luxembourg, the foreign ministry of the small country north of France said in a statement. After emergency treatment, he was out of danger.

Witnesses reported hearing the man shouting Allahu akbar, the Arabic phrase for God is great, during the attack. The Islamic State group claimed the attacker was one of its fighters, but provided no evidence or details about his identity.

The assailant had been on a nationwide database of thousands of people suspected of links to radicalism, according to a judicial official. Extremists behind multiple attacks in France in recent years were also on radical watch lists.

The official said the assailant, born in 1997, had French nationality but was born in the largely Muslim Russian republic of Chechnya, where extremism has long simmered. The official wasn't authorized to be publicly named speaking about an ongoing investigation.

The man had no record of arrests or criminal activity, and didn't know his victims, Interior Ministry spokesman Frederic de Lanouvelle told The Associated Press.

The attacker targeted five people and then fled, according to Paris police and a witness. When police officers arrived minutes later, he threatened them and was shot dead, according to police union official Yvan Assioma. Several witnesses said the attacker ran directly toward police.

Bar patrons and opera-goers described surprise and confusion, and being ordered to stay inside while the police operation was underway on rue Monsigny in the lively 2nd arrondissement, or district, of the French capital.

"I was working in the restaurant and suddenly I heard a woman screaming ... he came and attacked her," said Jonathan, a witness working nearby who wouldn't provide his last name. "That's when the panic started, everyone started screaming and trying to reach our restaurant. ... The attacker just kept walking around with his knife in his bloodied hands."

"Police were quickly on the scene, in less than five minutes. They encircled him and he tried to attack them with a knife but they shot him down," he told reporters.

A 23-year-old Brazilian tourist from Washington told The Associated Press that she and her aunt saw the fatally wounded victim on the ground, watched the ambulance arrive and rescue workers try to revive him.

"They kept doing CPR for what seemed to be a really long time and, in the end, he passed, and they put the sheet over him," said Carolina Melo. She said she and her aunt had been in their hotel, went out to investigate the noisy confusion nearby but retreated after hearing several shots of gunfire. The scene, she said, "was kind of a mess."

A police official said the assailant didn't have identity documents with him during Saturday's attack but was identified thanks to DNA.

The four people injured are out of life-threatening danger, Interior Minister Gerard Collomb said.

Collomb held a special security meeting Sunday to address the Paris attack, whose motive was unclear.

The Islamic State group's Amaq news agency said the assailant carried out the attack in response to the group's calls for supporters to target members of the U.S.-led anti-IS military coalition. France's military has been active in the coalition since 2014, and IS adherents have killed more than 200 people in France in recent years.

The Russian Embassy in France said that they have asked French authorities for more information on the attacker. Some refugees fleeing wars in Chechnya in the 1990s and early 2000s settled in France, but this

country has not seen a high-profile attack by Chechens in the past. Two Chechen brothers were behind the deadly bombing of the Boston Marathon in 2013.

Jeff Schaeffer and Milos Krivokapic in Paris, and Raf Casert in Brussels, contributed to this report.

Trump welcomes N. Korea plan to blow up nuke-site tunnels

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Saturday that it will dismantle its nuclear test site in less than two weeks, in a dramatic event that would set up leader Kim Jong Un's summit with President Donald Trump next month. Trump welcomed the "gracious gesture."

In a statement carried by state media, North Korea's Foreign Ministry said all of the tunnels at the country's northeastern testing ground will be destroyed by explosion, and observation and research facilities and ground-based guard units will also be removed.

Kim had already revealed plans to shut the test site by the end of May during his summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in last month. Analysts say that while the closure of the site is important, it doesn't represent a material step toward full denuclearization.

"A ceremony for dismantling the nuclear test ground is now scheduled between May 23 and 25," depending on weather, the Foreign Ministry's statement said, adding that journalists from the United States, South Korea, China, Russia and Britain will be invited to witness the dismantling.

The ministry said the North will continue to "promote close contacts and dialogue with the neighboring countries and the international society so as to safeguard peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and over the globe."

Trump, in a tweet Saturday, thanked North Korea for its plan to dismantle the nuclear test site, calling it "a very smart and gracious gesture!"

Following the Moon-Kim meeting, Moon's office said Kim was willing to disclose the process to international experts, but the North's statement Saturday didn't address allowing experts on the site.

South Korea had no immediate response to the statement.

The North's announcement comes days after Washington announced that the historic summit between Kim and Trump will be held June 12 in Singapore.

South Korea has said Kim has genuine interest in dealing away his nuclear weapons in return for economic benefits. However, there are lingering doubts about whether Kim would ever agree to fully relinquish the weapons he probably views as his only guarantee of survival.

During their meeting at a border truce village, Moon and Kim vaguely promised to work toward the "complete denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula, but made no references to verification or timetables.

North Korea for decades has been pushing a concept of "denuclearization" that bears no resemblance to the American definition. The North has been vowing to pursue nuclear development unless Washington removes its 28,500 troops from South Korea and the nuclear umbrella defending South Korea and Japan.

Some experts believe Kim may try to drag out the process or seek a deal in which he gives away his intercontinental ballistic missiles but retains some of his shorter-range arsenal in return for a reduced U.S. military presence in the South. This could satisfy Trump but undermine the alliance between Washington and Seoul.

Kim declared his nuclear force as complete in December, following North Korea's most powerful nuclear test to date in September and three flight tests of ICBMs designed to reach the U.S. mainland.

North Korea announced at a ruling party meeting last month that it was suspending all tests of nuclear devices and ICBMs, as well as the plan to close the nuclear testing ground.

Kim said during the meeting that the nuclear test site's mission had come "to an end" because the North had completed developing nuclear-capable intermediate-range missiles, ICBMs and other strike means.

The North also said for the first time at the meeting that it had been conducting "subcritical" nuclear tests. These refer to experiments involving a subcritical mass of nuclear materials that allow scientists to

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examine the performance and safety of weapons without triggering a nuclear chain reaction and explosion.

North Korea's reference to such activity is designed to communicate that even without underground testing, the country intends to maintain its nuclear arsenal and be a "responsible" steward of those weapons at the same time, said Andrea Berger, a senior analyst at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies.

Still, the closure of the underground testing site could be a useful precedent for Washington and Seoul as they proceed with the nuclear negotiations with Pyongyang, analysts say.

"Now that North Korea has accepted in principle that agreements should be verified, U.S. negotiators should hold them to this standard for any subsequent agreement," said Adam Mount, a senior defense analyst at the Federation of American Scientists. "It will make it more difficult for Kim Jong Un to deny inspections now that he has placed them on the table."

North Korea has invited the outside world to witness the dismantling of its nuclear facilities before. In June 2008, international broadcasters were allowed to show the demolishing of a cooling tower at the Nyongbyon reactor site, a year after the North reached an agreement with the U.S. and four other nations to disable its nuclear facilities in return for an aid package worth about \$400 million.

But in September 2008, the North declared that it would resume reprocessing plutonium, complaining that Washington wasn't fulfilling its promise to remove the country from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism.

The administration of George W. Bush removed North Korea from the list in October 2008 after the country agreed to continue disabling its nuclear plant. However, a final attempt by Bush to complete an agreement to fully dismantle North Korea's nuclear weapons program collapsed that December when the North refused to accept U.S.-proposed verification methods.

The North went on to conduct its second nuclear test in May 2009.

Paris stabbings investigated as terror attack, claimed by IS

By ELAINE GANLEY and ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — A knife-wielding assailant killed a 29-year-old man and injured four others in a lively neighborhood near Paris' famed Opera Garnier before he was killed by police Saturday night. The Islamic State group claimed the attacker as one of its "soldiers."

Counterterrorism authorities took charge of the investigation, and President Emmanuel Macron vowed that France would not bow to extremists despite being the target of multiple deadly attacks in recent years.

Paris police officers evacuated people from some buildings in the Right Bank neighborhood after the attack, which happened on rue Monsigny at about 9 p.m. (1900 GMT.) Bar patrons and opera-goers described surprise and confusion in the immediate area.

Beyond the police cordon, however, crowds still filled nearby cafes and the city's night life resumed its normal pace soon after the attack.

The unidentified attacker targeted five people and then fled, according to Paris police and a witness. A 29-year-old man was killed, and four others were injured. When police officers arrived minutes later, he threatened them and was shot to death, according to police union official Yvan Assioma.

Authorities are working to identify the assailant and anyone who might have helped him, Interior Minister Gerard Collomb told reporters Sunday.

Prosecutor Francois Molins said counterterrorism authorities are leading the investigation on potential charges of murder and attempted murder in connection with terrorist motives.

"At this stage, based on the one hand on the account of witnesses who said the attacker cried 'Allahu akbar' (God is great in Arabic) while attacking passersby with a knife, and given the modus operandi, we have turned this over to the counterterrorist section of the Paris prosecutor's office," Molins told reporters from the scene.

The Islamic State group's Aamaq news agency said in a statement early Sunday that the assailant carried out the attack in response to the group's calls for supporters to target members of the U.S.-led military coalition squeezing the extremists out of Iraq and Syria.

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The Aamaq statement did not provide evidence for its claim or details on the assailant's identity. France's military has been active in the coalition since 2014, and Islamic State adherents have killed more than 200 people in France in recent years, including the 130 who died in the coordinated November 2015 attacks in Paris.

President Emmanuel Macron tweeted his praise for police who "neutralized the terrorist" and said "France is once again paying the price of blood but will not cede an inch to enemies of freedom."

Saturday's attack occurred near many bars and theaters, as well as the opera.

France's BFM television interviewed an unnamed witness in a restaurant who said a young woman was at the entrance when "a man arrived and attacked her with a knife." A friend came to her aid and the attacker left, "hitting on all the doors, all the shops," the witness told BFM. He turned onto another street, and everyone scattered, the witness said.

"I was having a drink with friends and we heard a boom," a witness named Gloria, who had been in a nearby bar, recounted on Saturday night. She said she went outside to see what happened and "I saw a guy lying on the ground."

Another witness described leaving the opera house and being told to go back inside because of the attack.

The interior minister said the lives of the four injured people are no longer in danger.

Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said it took police less than nine minutes to subdue the attacker from the moment they were alerted. "This speed, calm and effectiveness allowed them to avoid ... a much heavier toll," he told reporters.

French police have been criticized in the past for failing to prevent attacks.

Paris authorities called for calm and understanding.

"Whatever the motivations of this odious act, let us remain united and standing," deputy mayor Bruno Julliard tweeted.

Jeff Schaeffer and Thibault Camus in Paris contributed.

A surprising bullying battleground: Senior centers

By MATT SEDENSKY, AP National Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The unwanted were turned away from cafeteria tables. Fistfights broke out at karaoke. Dances became breeding grounds for gossip and cruelty.

It became clear this place had a bullying problem on its hands. What many found surprising was that the perpetrators and victims alike were all senior citizens.

Nursing homes, senior centers and housing complexes for the elderly have introduced programs, training and policies aimed at curbing spates of bullying, an issue once thought the exclusive domain of the young.

"There's the clique system just like everywhere else," said Betsy Gran, who until recently was assistant director at San Francisco's 30th Street Senior Center. "It's like 'Mean Girls,' but everyone is 80."

After the cafeteria exiles and karaoke brouhahas, the 30th Street Center teamed up with a local non-profit, the Institute on Aging, to develop an anti-bullying program. All staff members received 18 hours of training that included lessons on what constitutes bullying, causes of the problem and how to manage such conflicts. Seniors were then invited to similar classes, held in English and Spanish, teaching them to alert staff or intervene themselves if they witness bullying. Signs and even place mats around the center now declare it a "Bully Free Zone."

"I think in the past I would have just stayed out of it," said Mary Murphy, 86, a retired real estate agent who took the classes. "Now I might be inclined to help."

Robin Bonifas, a social work professor at Arizona State University and author of the book "Bullying Among Older Adults: How to Recognize and Address an Unseen Epidemic," said existing studies suggest about 1 in 5 seniors encounters bullying. She sees it as an outgrowth of frustrations characteristic in communal settings, as well a reflection of issues unique to getting older. Many elderly see their independence and sense of control disappear and, for some, becoming a bully can feel like regaining some of that lost power.

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"It makes them feel very out of control," Bonifas said, "and the way they sort of get on top of things and make their name in this new world is intimidating, picking on people, gossiping."

There is far less recognition of bullying as a problem among seniors compared with young people. Even among those who have been called bullies, many are unaware how problematic their behavior is until it's labeled. Campaigns around the country have sought to spread the word, including a booklet circulated last year by the National Center for Assisted Living.

"In the life cycle, it doesn't go away," said Katherine Arnold, a member of the city Human Rights Commission in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, which created a public service announcement on its community-access station that included a portrayal of a man who was excluded from a card game and became the subject of gossip by other seniors. "There's really not a lot of escape."

Most senior bullying isn't physical but rather involves name-calling, rumors and exclusion, said Pamela Countouris, a longtime schoolteacher who now runs a Pittsburgh-based consultancy that offers training on bullying. Women constitute the bulk of the bullies Countouris encounters among seniors, a reflection of lifespan disparities and the gender makeup of those who live at or participate in programs at senior facilities.

Countouris' business began with a focus on school bullying but now centers exclusively on seniors. In the next month alone, she has more than a dozen training sessions planned.

After four years immersed in the wrath of older bullies, Countouris has heard all manner of stories. At a senior high-rise, a woman who saw herself as the queen of the parking garage would key the cars of those who crossed her. Elsewhere, laundry rooms became vicious places where the bullied had their detergent stolen and their clothes thrown on the floor. Bingo rooms so often devolved into battlefields — with lucky newcomers badgered and accused of cheating by veteran players — she came to call it "the devil's game."

"I didn't realize it was an underground society where people could be mean to each other," Countouris said.

In the worst cases, bullying goes far beyond bingo squabbles. Marsha Wetzel moved into a senior apartment complex in Niles, Illinois, after her partner of 30 years died and her partner's family evicted her from the home the couple shared. At Glen St. Andrew Living Community, she said she was met with relentless bullying by residents mostly focused on her being a lesbian.

One man hit Wetzel's scooter with his walker and unleashed a barrage of homophobic slurs. A woman rammed her wheelchair into Wetzel's table in the dining room and knocked it over, warning "homosexuals will burn in hell." In the mailroom, someone knocked her in the head, and in an elevator, she was spit on.

"I'd just go in my room and barricade my door and just pray," said Wetzel, now 70 and living at a senior complex in Chicago. "I just felt like a slug, like I was nothing, like I wasn't even human."

Lambda Legal, which defends LGBTQ rights, took on Wetzel's case and sued Glen St. Andrew, claiming Fair Housing Act violations. A federal judge dismissed the suit last year. An appeals court decision is pending.

Wetzel had seen such bullying throughout her life. She dropped out of high school when she became a punching bag for the girls who learned she was a lesbian. As a senior, she said, it felt even more traumatic — and the bullies even more vicious. She had a view of a cemetery from her window and would stare at it, thinking maybe only when she arrived there would she find peace.

"I felt like a person in a pool of piranhas," she said.

Sedensky can be reached at msedensky@ap.org or <https://twitter.com/sedensky>

Hawaii volcano raises concerns of eruptions along West Coast

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS, Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — The eruption of a Hawaii volcano in the Pacific "Ring of Fire" has experts warily eyeing volcanic peaks on America's West Coast that are also part of the geologically active region.

The West Coast is home to an 800-mile (1,300-kilometer) chain of 13 volcanoes, from Washington

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state's Mount Baker to California's Lassen Peak. They include Mount St. Helens, whose spectacular 1980 eruption in the Pacific Northwest killed dozens of people and sent volcanic ash across the country, and massive Mount Rainier, which towers above the Seattle metro area.

"There's lots of anxiety out there," said Liz Westby, geologist at the U.S. Geological Survey Cascades Volcano Observatory in Vancouver, Washington, in the shadow of Mount St. Helens. "They see destruction, and people get nervous."

Kilauea, on Hawaii's Big Island, is threatening to blow its top in coming days or weeks after sputtering lava for a week, forcing about 2,000 people to evacuate, destroying two dozen homes and threatening a geothermal plant. Experts fear the volcano could hurl ash and boulders the size of refrigerators miles into the air.

Here are some key things to know:

WHAT IS THE RING OF FIRE?

Roughly 450 volcanoes make up this horseshoe-shaped belt with Kilauea situated in the middle. The belt follows the coasts of South America, North America, eastern Asia, Australia and New Zealand. It's known for frequent volcanic and seismic activity caused by the colliding of crustal plates.

America's most dangerous volcanoes are all part of the Ring of Fire, and most are on the West Coast, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Besides Kilauea, they include: Mount St. Helens and Mount Rainier in Washington; Mount Hood and South Sister in Oregon; and Mount Shasta and Lassen Volcanic Center in California.

Images of lava flowing from the ground and homes going up in flames in Hawaii have stoked unease among residents elsewhere along the Ring of Fire. But experts say an eruption on one section of the arc doesn't necessarily signal danger in other parts.

"These are isolated systems," Westby said.

WHEN WILL THE WEST COAST VOLCANOES ERUPT?

No eruption seems imminent, experts say.

The Cascades Volcano Observatory monitors volcanoes in the Pacific Northwest and posts weekly status reports. All currently register "normal."

But the situation can change fast.

"All our mountains are considered active and, geologically speaking, things seem to happen in the Northwest about every 100 years," said John Ufford, preparedness manager for the Washington Emergency Management Division. "It's an inexact timeline."

Some geologists believe Mount St. Helens is the most likely to erupt.

But six other Cascade volcanoes have been active in the past 300 years, including steam eruptions at Mount Rainier and Glacier Peak and a 1915 blast at Lassen Peak that destroyed nearby ranches.

WHAT KIND OF DAMAGE COULD THEY DO?

The Big Island scenes of rivers of lava snaking through neighborhoods and sprouting fountains are unlikely in the Pacific Northwest.

"Lava is not the hazard, per se, like in Hawaii," said Ian Lange, a retired University of Montana geology professor. Cascade volcanoes produce a thicker, more viscous type of lava than Hawaiian volcanoes, so it doesn't run as far, Lange said.

The Cascade volcanoes can produce huge clouds of choking ash and send deadly mudslides into rivers and streams. Two of the most potentially destructive are Mount St. Helens, north of the Portland, Oregon, metro area, and 14,000-foot (4,270-meter) Mount Rainier, which is visible from the cities of Seattle and Tacoma.

Mount Rainier eruptions in the distant past have caused destruction as far west as Puget Sound, some 50 miles (80 kilometers) away.

The volcano hasn't produced a significant eruption in the past 500 years. But it remains dangerous because of its great height, frequent earthquakes, active hydrothermal system, and 26 glaciers, experts said.

An eruption on Mount Rainier could rapidly melt glaciers, triggering huge mudflows — called lahars — that could reach the densely populated surrounding lowlands, Westby said.

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Another major danger from a Cascade volcano eruption would be large amounts of ash thrown into the air, where it could foul aircraft engines.

WHAT ARE COMMUNITIES DOING TO PREPARE?

The closest settlement to a West Coast volcano may be Government Camp, on Oregon's Mount Hood. Lava could conceivably reach the town, but the greater threat is an eruption triggering a so-called pyroclastic flow, which is a fast-moving cloud of hot ash and gas, experts said.

But Lange believes California's Mount Shasta is the most dangerous, in part because it is surrounded by towns.

The town of Mt. Shasta has numerous response plans for emergencies, including a volcano eruption, Police Chief Parish Cross said. But the plan for a volcano is pretty fluid, he said.

"We don't know the size or scope of the event," Cross said, including which direction the eruption would occur.

This is not an issue in Orting, Washington, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) west of Mount Rainier. Orting would be directly in the path of a lahar, and local officials each year conduct drills in which children move from school to higher ground to escape the flow.

Students usually take about 45 minutes to walk the 2 miles (3 kilometers) to higher ground, which should be fast enough to escape, officials said.

"Our concern is ice and snow melting rapidly on Mount Rainier," said Chuck Morrison, a resident of the town of 7,600 who has long been involved in evacuation planning. "We need a quick way off the valley floor."

Orting is the town most vulnerable to lahar damage from Mount Rainier, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Scientists say that in the worst case, a 30-foot-high (9-meter-high) lahar with the consistency of wet concrete could rumble through Orting at 50 mph (80 kph) if volcanic activity suddenly melted snow and ice on Rainier.

Hawaii volcano spawns new fissure near geothermal plant

By AUDREY McAVOY and JAE C. HONG, Associated Press

VOLCANO, Hawaii (AP) — Hawaii's Kilauea volcano spawned a new lava fissure Saturday, emitting minor lava spatter less than a mile from a geothermal energy plant.

The U.S. Geological Survey said 16 fissures have now opened up on the Big Island. The latest arose around 6:45 a.m. about 1 mile (1.6 kilometer) northeast of the last fissure in the Leilani Estates neighborhood.

Scientists said the lava flow forming in the crack has been minor, but that could always change.

"The fissure itself is small," said USGS scientist Janet Babb. "As it was described to me, it is so small it could hardly be called a fissure."

Babb said the fissure is about eight-tenths of a mile east of the Puna Geothermal Venture plant.

As a precaution, plant workers this week removed 50,000 gallons of pentane stored at the site.

Geologists warn that Kilauea could shoot out large boulders and ash out of its summit crater. But scientists concurred that Hawaii is safe for visitors.

Hawaii tourism officials are hoping Kilauea's eruption won't deter travelers from visiting the state's largest island, even as geologists warn the volcano could soon shoot large boulders out of its summit.

Travel industry executives note most of the Big Island is free of eruption threats from Kilauea, which began spurting lava into a residential neighborhood last week.

President Donald Trump on Friday declared a major disaster exists on the Big Island. The move will make federal financial assistance available to state and local governments as they repair roads, public parks, schools and water pipes damaged by the eruption.

Record low turnout in first Iraq elections since IS defeat

By PHILIP ISSA and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq saw a record low turnout on Saturday in its first elections since the collapse of the Islamic State group, pointing to widespread dissatisfaction with the direction of the country under Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi and presaging a long period of deal-making as politicians squabble over posts in a new government.

There were no bombings at any polling stations — a first since the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003.

Al-Abadi called it a “historic day, spent peacefully by all Iraqis.”

Riyadh al-Badran, a member on Iraq’s national elections commission, said turnout was 44 percent. No election since 2003 saw turnout below 60 percent. More than ten million Iraqis voted.

With no clear front-runner, it could take months for a new Parliament to form a government name a prime minister seen as suitable to the country’s rival Shiite political currents, who have adopted diverging positions on Iran.

The low turnout could open the door to Sunni-led and Kurdish electoral lists to play an outsized role in the negotiations, as well. Iraq’s population is predominantly Shiite.

Results are expected within 48 hours according to the electoral commission.

Despite presiding over Iraq’s war on the Islamic State group, al-Abadi was opposed by other Shiite leaders who eclipsed him in charisma and popularity. In his first term, Al-Abadi courted both U.S. and Iranian support in the war on IS.

His chief rivals were former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Hadi al-Amiri, who heads the powerful, Iran-backed Badr Organization militia, which participated in the war on IS. Al-Abadi was also opposed by the influential cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, a staunch nationalist who has railed against U.S. and Iranian influence in Iraqi politics.

Iraq is beset by chronic corruption, a sputtering economy, and failing public services.

“The candidates have not done anything for the people,” said Ramadan Mohsen, 50, who said he cast a blank vote in Baghdad’s distressed Sadr City slums.

Millions of others decided to abstain altogether.

“I am certain these elections are a failure,” said Abdelghani Awni, who was at a central Baghdad polling station as an observer. He did not vote. “Forget about change, from the perspective of the economy, of services - forget about it.”

Iraq’s most senior Shiite cleric spoke out on the issue of voter participation Saturday afternoon, encouraging Iraqis to vote “to prevent the arrival of a corrupt parliament.”

“The lack of participation will give the opportunity for others to reach parliament and they will be very far from the aspirations of the people,” said Sheikh Abdul-Mahdi al-Karbalai, the representative of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, on local Iraqi television from Karbala. Sistani has encouraged Iraqis to vote into power Saturday a new political class to combat corruption.

For those who did attempt to vote, some in Baghdad complained of voting irregularities at polling stations linked to a new electronic voting system implemented for the first time this year in an effort to reduce fraud.

Former Prime Minister al-Maliki said he was aware of “violations” at some polling stations in Iraq and complained the process lacked proper oversight.

“We are not reassured,” al-Maliki told the Associated Press in a phone interview.

Thamer Aref, 45, along with his wife and daughter were turned away from a polling station north of central Baghdad.

Aref had turned in his old voter ID card months ago for the biometric identification card required by the new system. However, Aref’s biometric card wasn’t ready ahead of Saturday and, with neither card, the polling station did not allow him to cast a ballot.

“I lost my right to vote,” he said.

Associated Press journalists documented several similar cases at a number of different polling stations

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across Baghdad Saturday morning.

Amira Muhammed, the supervisor of a polling station in Azamiyah, Baghdad, said some people couldn't vote because they did not pick up their new biometric ID cards in time.

"The problem is not with us," she said.

A member of Iraq's electoral commission deflected blame for Saturday's reported irregularities.

"There were some problems with the electronic equipment due to misuse by some employees," Hazem al-Ridini told the AP.

In central Baghdad, voters supporting al-Abadi said they are doing so because they give him credit for Iraq's military victory over IS.

Al-Abadi "took revenge" for civilians killed in insurgent attacks in Iraq "with the victory over Daesh," said 71-year-old Felihah Hassan, using the Arabic acronym for IS.

After IS overran nearly a third of Iraq in the summer of 2014, the group launched waves of suicide bombings targeting civilians in Baghdad and other pockets of government-controlled territory.

With support from the U.S.-led coalition and Iran, al-Abadi oversaw a grueling war against the extremists and declared victory over the group in December.

Despite al-Abadi's military achievements, Iraq continues to struggle with an economic downturn sparked in part by a drop in global oil prices, entrenched corruption and years of political gridlock.

In addition to al-Maliki, al-Abadi's most powerful competition is from an alliance of candidates with close ties to the country's powerful, mostly Shiite paramilitary forces, and an alliance led by influential Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Jassim Mohsen, 58, who fought against IS with the paramilitary forces, said he was casting his vote for al-Amiri's list, citing the sacrifices of the country's predominantly Shiite militias in the war on IS.

"I elected the Fatah list because they are the only ones who fought Daesh and gave blood," he said.

Some Sunnis voting Saturday said they are hopeful this election will help Iraq move beyond sectarian politics and become more inclusive.

Marginalization of Iraq's Sunnis under al-Maliki is seen as a factor that allowed IS to rise in power in Iraq. Al-Abadi has led a more cross-sectarian government marked by his ability to balance the interests of his two allies often at odds: the U.S. and Iran.

The war left more than 2 million Iraqis, mostly Sunnis, displaced from their homes, with cities, towns and villages suffering heavy destruction. Repairing infrastructure across Anbar and Nineveh provinces, both majority Sunni areas, will cost tens of billions of dollars.

Abdulrazaq Kubi and his wife Suheila Mahdi, both Sunnis from Baghdad, said they would not be voting for al-Abadi, casting their votes instead for a Sunni-led political alliance.

"The victory is not 100 percent, there is still Daesh here," said Mahdi. The government "is neglecting the refugees because they are Sunni. They left them in the camps, in the winter it floods, in the summers, they go hungry," she added.

There were 329 parliament seats at stake, with nearly 7,000 candidates from dozens of political alliances.

Iraq's constitution allows lawmakers more than three months after the ratification of the election results to form a government. But many expect the process to drag on for much longer if there is no clear winner, as dozens of political parties attempt to cobble together a political bloc large enough to hold a majority of seats in parliament.

Associated Press writers Balint Szlanko and Salar Salim in Mosul, Iraq, contributed to this report.

Dinner diplomacy: Netanyahu's unusual run-in with UAE envoy

By JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Officially, their governments don't speak. The United Arab Emirates doesn't even formally recognize that Israel exists.

But an impromptu bit of dinner diplomacy between Israel's prime minister and a prominent Emirati

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ambassador sheds light on one of the worst kept secrets in the Arab world: the quiet ties between Israel and some of its Arab neighbors that are increasingly coming out in the open as they find common cause against mutual foe Iran.

The venue back in March was Cafe Milano, the upscale Georgetown restaurant often frequented by powerful Washingtonians, from Barack Obama to Trump Cabinet members. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in town for an annual pro-Israel policy conference, was midway through dinner with his wife, Sara, when an unexpected request came his way.

By coincidence, the Emirati ambassador to the U.S., Yousef al-Otaiba, was at the restaurant hosting Brian Hook, the State Department's policy planning chief, and a group of U.S. journalists, along with Bahrain's ambassador, Sheikh Abdullah bin Rashed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

The Americans dining with Otaiba got wind that Netanyahu was nearby. Word was sent to see if the Israeli would mind making an appearance at their dinner. That request first passed through the restaurant's owner, then one of the journalists, who had walked by Netanyahu's table while on the way to the restroom.

It wasn't long before Netanyahu and his wife came over to say hello on their way out. They lingered, answering a few questions from the group about Iran and other issues. There were smiles, a few laughs about the oddity of the situation, and Netanyahu shook hands with the two ambassadors before leaving the restaurant.

Neither the Israelis nor the Emiratis publicly disclosed the encounter, but it was described to The Associated Press by six people who either attended the dinner or were briefed on it. The individuals who attended spoke on condition of anonymity because the dinner's ground rules were that it be considered off the record. The AP did not attend the dinner.

The Israeli and Emirati embassies in Washington declined to comment.

In and of itself, the interaction does not signal any historic establishment of ties between Israel and the UAE or any other country. Yet it casts light on how friendly cooperation between the Jewish state and the Arab Gulf nations, until recently kept behind the scenes, are creeping into public view.

"It's become an open secret, even not a secret at all, demonstrated in public ways that are taboo-breaking and important in beginning a process of preparing Arab publics to share the Arab leadership's view that Israel is a strategic partner," said Dan Shapiro, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel. "But there is a danger in irrational exuberance. This is a very fragile process."

Driving the shift — until recently unimaginable in the Arab world — is a growing alignment between Israel and the Sunni Arab nations against Iran, the Shiite-led nation that Israel considers an existential threat. Saudi Arabia and its allies in the region, including the UAE, share a view that Iran now presents more of a threat to the region than Israel, whose thriving economy and prosperous tech sector have become attractive models for other Middle East nations to try to replicate.

Yet there are risks for the Arab nations in moving too fast. After all, Arab leaders have spent much of the past 70 years teaching their populations that Israel must not be allowed to exist and championing the cause of the Palestinians.

Those leaders may have some common ground with the Israelis, but the Palestinian issue remains a deeply emotional cause throughout the Arab world and would constrain them from going too far in their relations with Israel unless there is a resolution. While Israel and the U.S. have sidelined the Palestinian issue, these behind-the-scenes ties are likely to continue, and may be enough for Israel's own strategic needs.

Netanyahu frequently boasts of growing, discreet cooperation with moderate Arab countries. Though he doesn't identify them by name, they've long believed to be Sunni Gulf countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The Saudis, for instance, recently broke a decades-old practice and agreed to allow Indian flights to Israel to pass through Saudi airspace, cutting the trip by several hours. The Saudi crown prince, Mohammad Bin Salman, even met with pro-Israel Jewish American leaders during his recent high-profile trip to the U.S., during which he was quoted as criticizing the Palestinians.

Israeli businessmen quietly operate in the UAE. The Emirati Embassy in Washington is planning an

interfaith Iftar — the meal eaten by Muslims to break the Ramadan fast — that will include a U.S. rabbi. Qatar allows an ambassador to stay in Israel and to work with Israeli military officials while overseeing Qatari-funded construction projects in Gaza. The tiny, wealthy nation also recently hosted prominent Jewish-American leaders for a visit to Doha where they met with the country's ruling emir.

Bahrain late last year sent an interfaith delegation including Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Jews to Israel, in what was perceived as testing the waters for what might happen if the nation were to recognize Israel. And its foreign minister, Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, stunned Israelis and Arabs this past week when he tweeted support for Israel's self-defense after Israel retaliated for an Iranian rocket barrage by attacking suspected Iranian targets in Syria,

"As long as Iran has breached the status quo in the region and has evacuated its troops and missiles, any state in the region, including Israel, is entitled to defend itself by destroying the sources of danger," the foreign minister wrote.

Associated Press writer Josef Federman in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

Reach Josh Lederman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joshledermanAP>

R. Kelly stages racy performance amid protest, allegations

By TOM FOREMAN Jr., Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) — With demonstrators standing outside his concert protesting his presence, R. Kelly summoned his passionate fans to carry him through what has been a difficult week.

Interspersing references to God with his suggestive lyrics and salty language, Kelly stirred up a crowd inside the Greensboro Coliseum on Friday to buoy him as he encountered longstanding allegations of mistreatment of women and an effort to get coliseum officials to cancel the concert.

"Sometimes, some storms ain't gonna stop," Kelly told the audience during his nearly one-hour performance. "As long as my fans are calling for me, I'm gonna be on that stage, singing these songs."

Well after his performance, however, the storms that started before he arrived continued to roil.

Women's groups had urged the Greensboro Coliseum to cancel, days after Kelly was disinvited from a concert in Chicago. Spotify announced it would no longer stream his music in its curated playlists.

Although it didn't announce the move, Apple's music-streaming service also has stopped promoting Kelly's music on some of the featured playlists that it shows its 40 million subscribers. Like Spotify, Apple Music still carries an extensive selection of Kelly's songs in its library.

Apple declined to further comment Saturday.

Pandora also declined to discuss how it is now treating Kelly's music in its curated playlists, but said it has decided not to promote "artists with certain demonstrable behavioral, ethical or criminal issues. We approach each of these scenarios on a case-by-case basis."

But before the latest moves, Kelly took the stage, inviting some audience members to join him. Stage hands also passed out t-shirts that read "Turn Up R. Kelly."

"I've been through a lot of (expletive)" this week, he said. He thanked his fans, "for y'all to fight for me all these years."

Kelly said he was approached backstage to tone down his songs and language because there were families in attendance.

"Let me ask y'all something," he said to the crowd. "Can I do my show tonight?"

Kelly then launched into his sexually suggestive repertoire. At one point, he rubbed a fan's cell phone between his legs. He persuaded another to wipe his face, tongue and crotch with a towel.

Kelly denies abusing anyone and faces no current criminal charges, and his fans weren't giving up on their R&B superstar.

"Everybody has some skeletons in the closet. I'm not going to tear him down, every good thing he does, because of something negative in his life," said Clarissa Kelley of Lancaster, South Carolina.

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The Greensboro concert was among the R&B singer's first performances since the #MuteRKelly movement accelerated boycott efforts in recent weeks, with help from the Time's Up campaign against sexual harassment and assault.

Protesters stood on the sidewalk outside the Greensboro Coliseum and criticized arena officials for declining to meet with a coalition of women's groups that signed a letter citing a "long term history of sexual misconduct" by Kelly.

"It's important for the black community to stand up and hold him accountable for his actions," said Omisade Burney-Scott, with the Sistersong, a reproductive rights group.

R. Kelly is one of pop music's best-selling artists, with hits including "Ignition," "I Believe I Can Fly," "Step in the Name of Love," "Same Girl" and "Bump N' Grind." He's also written hits for Celene Dion, Michael Jackson and Lady Gaga.

He's written classic love songs and even gospel music, but he's defined by sexually explicit songs such as "Feelin' on Yo Booty," "Your Body's Calling Me," and "Sex Me."

He was acquitted in 2008 of child pornography after a video circulated appearing to show him having sex with a teenage girl. But as he continued to score hits and sell out stadiums, more women have come forward in recent years accusing him of sexual misconduct.

Kelly had been scheduled to be among the performers at a May 5 concert in Chicago, but was dropped as efforts by organizers of #MuteRKelly gained attention with support from Hollywood's Time's Up campaign.

Spotify, citing its new policy against hateful content and conduct, announced Thursday that Kelly's music is no longer available on the service's owned and operated playlists and algorithmic recommendations. His music can still be found by those who search for it, but Spotify will not promote it.

Kelly's management protested the move in a statement to The Associated Press.

"R. Kelly never has been accused of hate, and the lyrics he writes express love and desire," the statement read. "Mr. Kelly for 30 years has sung songs about his love and passion for women. He is innocent of the false and hurtful accusations in the ongoing smear campaign against him, waged by enemies seeking a payoff. He never has been convicted of a crime, nor does he have any pending criminal charges against him."

AP reporter Michael Liedtke contributed from San Francisco.

Decorated graduation caps reflect joy, angst of students

By REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The black letters contrast sharply with the graduation cap's red fabric. They spell: "Vuela tan alto como puedas sin olvidar de donde vienes."

"Fly as high as you can without forgetting where you come from."

That's the message that Brenda Romero, who crossed the border from Mexico with her mother when she was 2, wants to spread as she graduates Saturday from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Her decorated mortarboard is part of an emerging trend in which students are pushing against the formality of graduation ceremonies and choosing to stand out in a sea of monochromatic caps and gowns by expressing joy, angst or, increasingly, political opinions.

Photos shared on social media show mortarboards adorned with expressions of gratitude toward family members and hope for the future, with phrases like "The best is yet to come" and "On to my new dream."

Plenty also highlight the cost of higher education. "This hat was \$95,990," one cap reads. Another states: "Game of Loans. Interest is coming."

And caps proclaiming that "Nevertheless, she persisted" abound.

The informal practice, which is not necessarily encouraged by institutions, has been around for years and is used by students to express their individuality. But over the past couple of years, it has taken a more political tone, said Sheila Bock, a folklorist and professor at UNLV.

"That desire of wanting to make aspects of one's self visible that are otherwise invisible has always been

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there," said Bock, who is researching how and why students decorate their mortarboards.

"But within the last couple of years, those types of assertions — particularly as they relate to citizenship, places of origin, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation — have taken more significance as they move into this mode of public display."

Bock has been tracking what students put on their caps through social media posts, as well as by attending commencements, photographing mortarboards and interviewing dozens of students.

Romero, who is earning a degree in human services, has been shielded from deportation and granted a work permit through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. She was able to attend community college and later UNLV because the federal program was authorized shortly after she graduated from high school, allowing her to work sometimes up to three jobs to pay portions of tuition and fees not covered by scholarships.

She said she looked up quotes to put on her cap for about a semester. She chose to also include marigolds — the flowers used to decorate altars for the Day of the Dead — to honor her grandfather, who died last year.

"This quote really resonated with me just because of my parents' struggles and everything that they had to overcome so that I could graduate," said Romero, who now works at a law firm and plans to apply to law school. "It pays tribute not just to what I'm doing, but to where I come from and everything that has made me who I am."

Previous UNLV ceremonies have featured caps with messages like "Si Se Puede, Here To Stay" and "1 ex, 2 kids, 9 jobs, 1 husband, 1 addiction, 13 years, 127 credits, 66K loans = 1 college grad!!!" Last May, a student placed a photo of President Donald Trump next to the question "What does my political science degree mean now?"

Some students leave politics and finances aside, and instead include Bible verses or show their love for each other.

Anna Gingrich and Anthony Bardis will tie the knot a week after graduation. So, she decorated their caps with bridal embellishments. She covered the mortarboards with gold paper that matches the color of her wedding shoes. Hers features a wedding dress and the word "bride," while his has a tuxedo and "groom."

"It's kind of just like professing to the world that graduation isn't the end for us — we are about to start our lives, and that's a big deal," said Gingrich, who is getting a degree in nutrition science and dietetics. "When somebody sees his, I want them to look for mine, and when someone sees mine, I want them to look for his."

Follow Regina Garcia Cano on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/reginagarciakNO>

Bloomberg warns of 'epidemic of dishonesty'

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans are facing an "epidemic of dishonesty" in Washington that's more dangerous than terrorism or communism.

That's according to former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who warned in a commencement speech on Saturday at Texas' Rice University that "an endless barrage of lies" and a trend toward "alternate realities" in national politics pose a dire threat to U.S. democracy.

The 76-year-old billionaire, who flirted with an independent presidential run in 2016, did not call out any politicians by name.

Although he derided Donald Trump as "a con" and a "dangerous demagogue" before his election, in an interview before the speech Bloomberg refused to comment specifically on the Republican president's troubled history with the truth. Fact checkers have determined that Trump has made hundreds of false and misleading statements since entering the Oval Office.

"This is bigger than any one person. It's bigger than any one party," he said in the interview.

In the speech, Bloomberg evoked the legend of the nation's first president, George Washington, who as

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a boy said he could not tell a lie when asked if he cut down a cherry tree.

"How did we go from a president who could not tell a lie to politicians who cannot tell the truth?" Bloomberg asked Rice graduates and their families gathered in Houston.

He blamed "extreme partisanship" for an unprecedented tolerance of dishonesty in U.S. politics. People are committed more to their political tribes than the truth, he said, suggesting that the nation is more divided than any time since the Civil War.

"There is now more tolerance for dishonesty in politics than I have seen in my lifetime," Bloomberg said. "The only thing more dangerous than dishonest politicians who have no respect for the law is a chorus of enablers who defend their every lie."

For example, he noted that Democrats spent much of the 1990s defending President Bill Clinton against charges of lying and personal immorality just as Republicans attacked the lack of ethics and honesty in the White House. Just the reverse is happening today, he said.

In one jab at Trump, he noted that the vast majority of scientists agree that climate change is real. Trump and his Republican allies have repeatedly called climate change a hoax promoted by America's adversaries.

"If 99 percent of scientists whose research has been peer-reviewed reach the same general conclusion about a theory, then we ought to accept it as the best available information — even if it's not a 100 percent certainty," Bloomberg said. He added: "That, graduates, is not a Chinese hoax."

He warned that such deep levels of dishonesty could enable what he called "criminality." Asked what specifically he was talking about, Bloomberg noted "lots of investigations" going on, but he declined to be more specific.

Several Trump associates are facing criminal charges as part of a federal probe into Russia's meddling in the 2016 election. Three have already pleaded guilty to making false statements to the FBI. Federal investigators want to interview Trump himself, although the president's legal team has resisted so far.

"When elected officials speak as though they are above the truth, they will act as though they are above the law," Bloomberg told Rice graduates. "And when we tolerate dishonesty, we get criminality. Sometimes, it's in the form of corruption. Sometimes, it's abuse of power. And sometimes, it's both."

"The greatest threat to American democracy isn't communism, jihadism, or any other external force or foreign power," he continued. "It's our own willingness to tolerate dishonesty in service of party, and in pursuit of power."

Malaysia bars scandal-ridden ex-leader from leaving country

By EILEEN NG, Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia's new leader, Mahathir Mohamad, said Saturday that defeated scandal-tainted Prime Minister Najib Razak and his wife have been barred from leaving the country to prevent them from fleeing from possible prosecution over a massive corruption scandal.

A leaked flight manifesto showed that Najib and his wife, Rosmah Mansor, were due to leave on a private jet on Saturday to Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, fueling rumors that he was bolting the country after a shocking electoral defeat earlier in the week that ended his coalition's 60-year grip on power.

Najib had said in a statement on social media on Saturday that he was planning to take a short vacation to spend time with his family. The immigration department, which initially said there was no travel ban, later issued a statement to say Najib and his wife had been blacklisted from leaving the country.

Mahathir confirmed that he prevented Najib from leaving. He said there was sufficient evidence for an investigation into Najib, in reference to the massive corruption scandal involving the 1MDB state fund that Najib set up and is being investigated in the United States and other countries.

U.S. investigators say Najib's associates stole and looted \$4.5 billion from the fund, with some \$700 million landing in Najib's bank account and around \$30 million used to buy jewelry for his wife. Najib has denied any wrongdoing.

"There are a lot of complaints against him, all of which have to be investigated," Mahathir told a news conference. "We have to act quickly because we don't want to be saddled with extradition from other

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countries.”

Mahathir said the investigations would take some time because investigators need to contact authorities in other countries and gather evidence. He has said Najib will have to face a court if any wrongdoing is found.

Najib responded swiftly, saying he respects the immigration department’s ruling and will remain in the country with his family. He also said he was committed to “facilitating a smooth transfer of power.”

Later Saturday, Najib said at a news conference that he was stepping down as president of the United Malays National Organization and as chairman of the National Front coalition to take responsibility for Wednesday’s election defeat. The announcement came after strong calls emerged from the UMNO, the linchpin of the coalition, for Najib to resign.

The National Front, which has ruled Malaysia since independence from Britain, won only 79 of the 222 parliamentary seats, losing power to Mahathir’s four-party alliance amid public anger over the 1MDB scandal and a rising cost of living.

It was a remarkable comeback for the 92-year-old Mahathir, who was prime minister for 22 years until his retirement in 2003.

Najib, 64, said his deputy, Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, would take over as UMNO president.

“We accept the people’s verdict with an open heart,” Najib said. “Maybe this will be an opportunity for us to fix our weaknesses and shortcomings, although these are more a matter of perception than reality. God willing, UMNO will continue to live.”

Amid the 1MDB scandal, Najib sacked critics in his government, including an attorney general and a deputy prime minister, and muzzled the media. The subsequent attorney general, Mohamed Apandi Ali, cleared Najib in 2016, saying that the money was a donation from the Saudi royal family and that most of it was returned.

Mahathir has indicated that Mohamad Apandi could be dismissed for hiding evidence of wrongdoing.

Also Saturday, Mahathir appointed Lim Guan Eng, an ethnic Chinese, as finance minister, the first ethnic minority to be appointed to the powerful post in 44 years. He also named former Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin as home affairs minister and Mohamad Sabu as defense minister. The three are party leaders in his alliance.

Mahathir said he would name the rest of his 25-member Cabinet this coming week.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, May 13, the 133rd day of 2018. There are 232 days left in the year. This is Mother’s Day.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On May 13, 1918, the first U.S. airmail stamp, costing 24 cents and featuring a picture of a Curtiss JN-4 biplane, was publicly issued. (On some of the stamps, the “Jenny” was printed upside-down, making them collector’s items.)

On this date:

In 1568, forces loyal to Mary, Queen of Scots were defeated by troops under her half-brother and Regent of Scotland, the Earl of Moray, in the Battle of Langside, thwarting Mary’s attempt to regain power almost a year after she was forced to abdicate.

In 1607, English colonists arrived by ship at the site of what became the Jamestown settlement in Virginia (the colonists went ashore the next day).

In 1846, the United States declared that a state of war already existed with Mexico.

In 1917, three shepherd children reported seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary near Fatima, Portugal; it was the first of six such apparitions that the children claimed to have witnessed.

In 1935, T.E. Lawrence (also known as Lawrence of Arabia) was critically injured in a motorcycle accident in Dorset, England; he died six days later.

In 1940, in his first speech as British prime minister, Winston Churchill told Parliament, “I have nothing

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to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.”

In 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon and his wife, Pat, were spat upon and their limousine battered by rocks thrown by anti-U.S. demonstrators in Caracas, Venezuela.

In 1968, a one-day general strike took place in France in support of student protesters.

In 1973, in tennis' first so-called "Battle of the Sexes," Bobby Riggs defeated Margaret Court 6-2, 6-1 in Ramona, California. (Billie Jean King soundly defeated Riggs at the Houston Astrodome in September.)

In 1981, Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded in St. Peter's Square by Turkish assailant Mehmet Ali Agca (MEH'-met AH'-lee AH'-juh).

In 1985, a confrontation between Philadelphia authorities and the radical group MOVE ended as police dropped a bomb onto the group's row house, igniting a fire that killed 11 people and destroyed 61 homes.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton nominated federal appeals Judge Stephen G. Breyer to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace retiring Justice Harry A. Blackmun; Breyer went on to win Senate confirmation.

Ten years ago: An embattled Hillary Rodham Clinton trounced Barack Obama in the West Virginia Democratic primary. Eighty people were killed in coordinated bomb attacks on crowded markets and streets outside Hindu temples in Jaipur, India. LPGA great Annika Sorenstam announced she would retire at the end of the season. Actor John Phillip Law died in Los Angeles at age 70.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama tried to swat down a pair of brewing controversies, denouncing as "outrageous" the targeting of conservative political groups by the IRS but angrily denying any administration cover-up after the deadly attacks in Benghazi, Libya, in September 2012. Philadelphia abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell was convicted of first-degree murder in the deaths of three babies who were delivered alive and then killed with scissors at his clinic (Gosnell is serving a life sentence). The Associated Press sent a letter of protest to Attorney General Eric Holder after the Justice Department told the news agency it had secretly obtained two months of telephone records of AP reporters and editors. Psychologist Joyce Brothers, 85, died in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

One year ago: Donald Trump used his first commencement address as president to urge graduates of Liberty University, a Christian school in Lynchburg, Virginia, to follow their convictions, prepare to face criticism and relish the opportunity to be an "outsider," saying, "It's the outsiders who change the world." Pope Francis, during a Mass in Fatima, Portugal, added two shepherd children to the roster of Catholic saints, honoring siblings Francisco and Jacinta Marto, who reported visions of the Virgin Mary 100 years earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Buck Taylor is 80. Actor Harvey Keitel is 79. Author Charles Baxter is 71. Actress Zoe Wanamaker is 70. Actor Franklyn Ajaye is 69. Singer Stevie Wonder is 68. Ohio Gov. John Kasich (KAY'-sikh) is 66. Actress Leslie Winston is 62. Producer-writer Alan Ball is 61. Basketball Hall of Famer Dennis Rodman is 57. "Late Show" host Stephen Colbert (kohl-BEHR') is 54. Rock musician John Richardson (The Gin Blossoms) is 54. Actor Tom Verica is 54. Singer Darius Rucker (Hootie and the Blowfish) is 52. Actress Susan Floyd is 50. Contemporary Christian musician Andy Williams (Casting Crowns) is 46. Actress Samantha Morton is 41. Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., is 41. Former NBA player Mike Bibby is 40. Former MLB player Barry Zito is 40. Rock musician Mickey Madden (Maroon 5) is 39. Actor Iwan Rheon is 33. Actress-writer-director Lena Dunham is 32. Actor Robert Pattinson is 32. Actress Candice Accola King is 31. Actor Hunter Parrish is 31. Folk-rock musician Wylie Gelber (Dawes) is 30. Actress Debby Ryan is 25.

Thought for Today: "It is not until you become a mother that your judgment slowly turns to compassion and understanding." — Erma Bombeck, American humorist (1927-1996).