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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.

Thursday, May 17

- 10 a.m.: Girls Golf at Sisseton
- 12 p.m.: Region track at Webster

Friday, May 18

- 12:30 p.m.: Elementary Track and Field Day at Doney Field

Sunday, May 20

- 2 p.m.: Graduation

Dakota Outdoors

Erik Dean

402 N Main St
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605.229.0123

dakoutdoors@midconetwork.com

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

SDDOT Asks Motorists to "Move Over"

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Transportation is asking motorists to "Move Over" when they approach flashing amber or yellow lights on SDDOT maintenance vehicles that indicate workers are in the area and likely outside their vehicles.

Motorists are becoming accustomed to moving over for Highway Patrol, police and other emergency vehicles, but don't always offer the same courtesy to Department of Transportation vehicles displaying the flashing amber or yellow lights.

"Crews working alongside the roadway making pothole repairs, shoulder repairs, sign work or even litter pick-up are in a very dangerous situation," says Craig Smith, Mitchell region engineer. "There's not much to protect them from traffic speeding by."

The law requires drivers traveling on an interstate or highway with more than two lanes to move over to the farthest lane of traffic when they come upon any stopped vehicle with flashing lights. On two-lane highways, motorists must slow to a speed that is at least 20 miles-per-hour less than the posted speed limit, or slow to 5 miles-per-hour when the speed limit is posted at 20 miles-per-hour, unless otherwise directed. In all cases, motorists should proceed with caution, unless otherwise directed.

"This law is intended to protect vehicles stopped on the shoulder of roadway from being hit by passing vehicles," says Smith. "We are more concerned for the people in and outside of those vehicles doing work on or off the roadway to ensure they can safely do their job and go home at the end of the day."

This week, the Mitchell region office is installing additional Move Over – It's the Law signs on Interstate 90 and other highways. You will also see posts on the SDDOT Facebook and Twitter accounts reminding drivers of the law as well.

A violation of the Move Over Law is a Class 2 misdemeanor, which is punishable by a fine of \$200 and/or 60 days in jail.

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GFP Offers Free Park Entrance and Free Fishing May 18-20

PIERRE, S.D. –The unofficial kickoff to summer begins this weekend with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks' (GFP) annual Open House and Free Fishing Weekend May 18-20. The statewide event waives entrance fees and allows free fishing for residents and nonresidents.

All state park and recreation areas will be open for use without entrance fees during the three-day event. The event allows anglers to fish without a license statewide. Fishing regulations and limits as well as camping fees still apply. Parks will also be offering daily activities to celebrate the event.

Friday, May 18

Season Kick-Off, Custer State Park, Custer. Info: 605.255.4515

Saturday, May 19

Wall Lake Fishing Derby, Lake Louise Recreation Area, Miller. Info: 605.853.2533

Kids' Fishing Derby, Oakwood Lakes State Park, Bruce. Info: 605.627.5441

Spring Photo Scavenger Hunt, Good Earth State Park, Sioux Falls. Info: 605.213.1036

Fishing Fun, Chief White Crane, Yankton. Info: 605.668.2985

Fantastic Family Fishing, Palisades State Park, Garretson. Info: 605.594.3824

Donkey Dash 5k Fun Run, Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve, North Sioux City. Info: 605.232.0873

Custer State Park Seasonal Volksmarch, Custer. Info: 605.255.4515

Saturday, May 20

Statue Unveiling, Good Earth State Park, Sioux Falls. Info: 605.213.1036

Camping reservations at South Dakota State Parks can be made 24 hours a day. Make reservations online at campsd.com or by calling 1.800.710.2267.

Visit gfp.sd.gov for more information or to see a complete list of state parks and events.

-GFP-

Good Earth State Park to Unveil "Peace" Statue

PIERRE, S.D. – Good Earth State Park near Sioux Falls will unveil the statue "Peace" on Sunday, May 20, at 2 p.m. CT. The unveiling takes place one year after the opening of the Good Earth Visitor Center.

Sculptor Dan Jones will present his statue featuring a life-sized man and woman holding a pipe, which symbolizes peace. The statue stands ten feet tall.

Jones is the former chairman of the Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma and was appointed by Gov. Brad Henry of Oklahoma as Vice Chairman of the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission.

This weekend is South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks' Open House Weekend, which waives park entrance fees and allows free fishing for all.

For more information, contact Good Earth State Park at 605.213.1036.

-GFP-

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Today in Weather History

1883 - A three day flood in the Black Hills of western South Dakota resulted in a million dollars damage at Rapid City. (David Ludlum)

1979 - A reading of 12 degrees at Mauna Kea Observatory established an all-time record low for the state of Hawaii. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - A golfer playing the Fox Meadows Course in Memphis TN was struck by a bolt of lightning that went through his neck, down his spine, came out a pocket containing his keys, and went into a nearby tree. Miraculously, he survived! (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A summer-like weather pattern continued, with warm temperatures and scattered thunderstorms across much of the nation. A cold front in the north central U.S. produced a sharp contrast in the weather across the state of Minnesota during the afternoon. At the same time Duluth was 50 degrees with rain and fog, Mankato was 95 degrees with sunny skies. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds over the Carolinas during the afternoon and evening. A "thunderstorm of a lifetime" in northern Spartanburg County, SC, produced hail for forty-five minutes, leaving some places knee-deep in hail. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms ravaged the south central U.S. with severe weather for the third day in a row. Thunderstorms spawned another nineteen tornadoes, for a total of fifty tornadoes in three days. A strong (F-2) tornado injured 14 persons and caused two million dollars damage at Apple Springs TX. Baseball size hail was reported at Matador TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather in New York State during the late morning and afternoon. A tornado injured one person at Warren, and wind gusts to 80 mph were reported at Owego. Evening thunderstorms over southwest Texas produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Marfa, along with golf ball size hail which accumulated to a depth of ten inches. Late night thunderstorms over southwest Texas prouced up to seven inches of rain in western Crockett County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)



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

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

Part time Dietary Tech

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

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Thu May 17	Fri May 18	Sat May 19	Sun May 20	Mon May 21	Tue May 22	Wed May 23
85°F	75°F	60°F	69°F	73°F	77°F	78°F
64°F	47°F	42°F	45°F	52°F	55°F	65°F
SSE 18 MPH Precip 20%	SSE 14 MPH Precip 60%	NNE 18 MPH Precip 50%	NNE 11 MPH	NE 10 MPH	SSE 9 MPH Precip 20%	ESE 10 MPH Precip 20%

Severe Weather Threat

This Afternoon & Evening

Storms Mainly West
River This Afternoon

Initial Risk: Hail & Strong
Winds

As Storms Move East
This Evening

Severe Threat Diminishes

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
5/17/2018 4:59 AM

Severe Threat Friday

More Isolated/Lower Risk – Focus: Missouri and James Valleys

Published on: 05/17/2018 at 5:05AM

The risk for severe weather is focused mainly west river this afternoon with an environment that favors large hail and strong winds. As storms move east they will encounter a less favorable environment. The focus area shifts east for Friday, but the environment will be less favorable for severe weather although we can't rule out a few stronger storms. Today will be another warm one, with humidity that will be creeping upwards. High pressure from Canada will bring cooler and drier air to the region Saturday and this will dominate conditions into next week.

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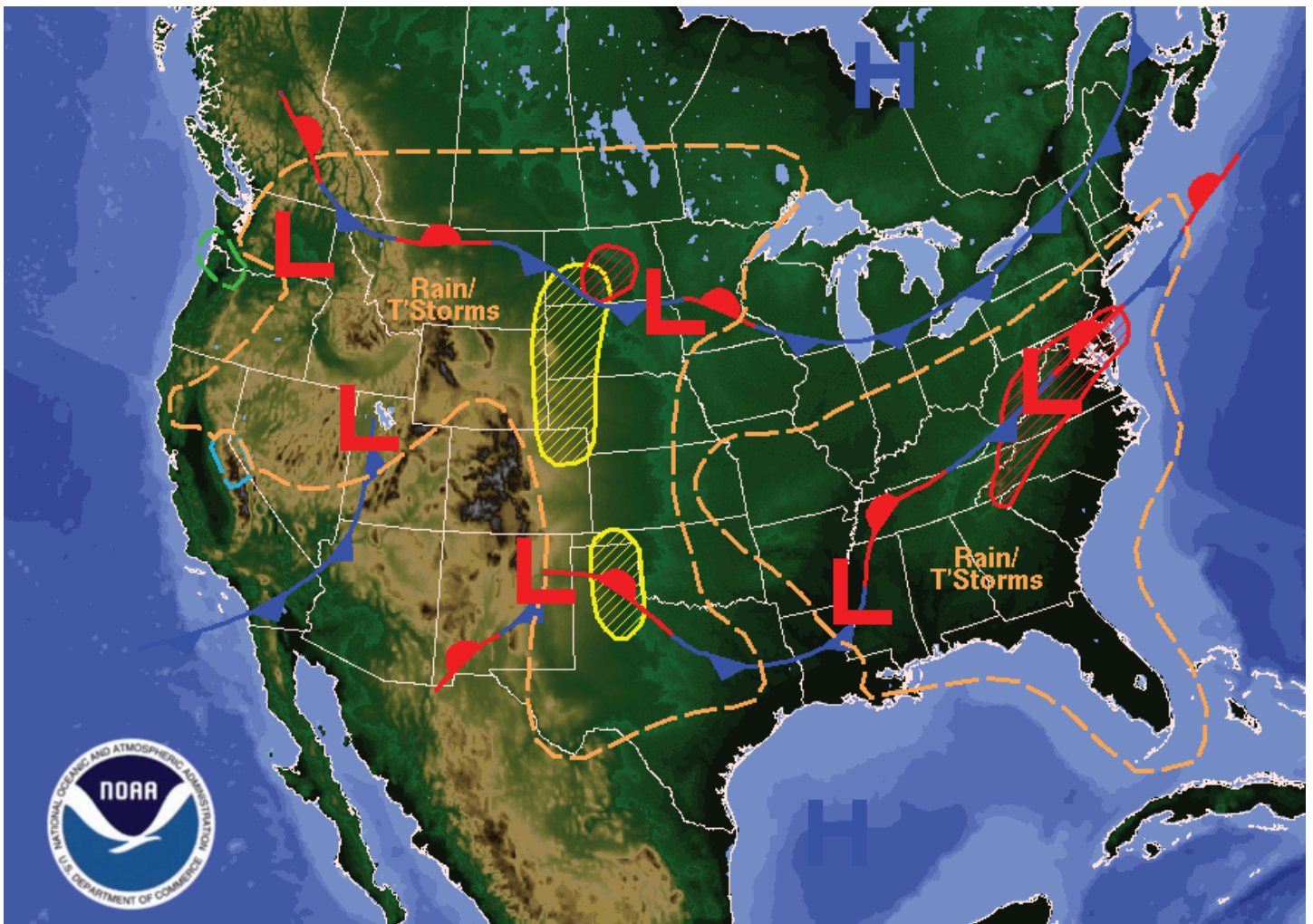
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 85.9 F at 5:55 PM
Low Outside Temp: 55.2 F at 4:14 AM
Wind Chill:
High Gust: 14.0 Mph at 12:28 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1934
Record Low: 27° in 2025
Average High: 69°F
Average Low: 45°F
Average Precip in May: 1.75
Precip to date in May: 1.31
Average Precip to date: 5.78
Precip Year to Date: 3.99
Sunset Tonight: 8:59 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:59 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Thu, May 17, 2018, issued 4:43 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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NEW BEGINNINGS

"There's nothing left for me. I've made such a mess out of my life that I have nothing to look forward to. And the tragedy of it all is that things looked great for so many years. Now, when I look into the future all I see is gloom and darkness. Where can I find anything to look forward to?" he asked.

"There is an answer - I can assure you of that," I said. Turning to Psalm 112:4, I read, "Even in darkness light dawns for the upright."

God will always provide His Light for those who seek it. No matter how far we have fallen or how little hope we may have, God can take the bitterness of defeat and despair and turn them in to stepping stones of success. When we willingly face and acknowledge our faults and shortcomings, ask for and accept His forgiveness and surrender our lives to Him, He will bring victory out of defeat.

Consider the story of Peter. When someone asked if He was a follower of Jesus, he lied, saying, "I am not!" A few moments before His denial he attempted to protect Jesus with His sword. And there was Mark - the author of the second book in the New Testament. He started as a strong believer with complete trust in the message of Jesus. Suddenly, things grew boring and the excitement evaporated. So, he gave up the "call" and quit.

But in spite of their failures He did not give up on them. And neither will He give up on us. He forgave them, as He will us, and bring His light back into our lives.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to understand that "failure is not final" because Your grace provides a new beginning. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm112:4 Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous.

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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

Pierre man accused of beating infant son of his girlfriend

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Pierre man is accused of beating the infant son of his girlfriend. A grand jury this week indicted 35-year-old Gary Martin on aggravated battery and child abuse charges. He's accused of beating the 2-month-old boy in January, possibly causing bleeding in the brain. A statement from the attorney general's office did not give an update on the boy's condition. Court documents don't list an attorney for Martin. The Capital Journal reports that he remains jailed awaiting an arraignment, during which he will enter a plea. He could face up to 25 years in prison if convicted of the most serious charge against him.

Information from: Pierre Capital Journal, <http://www.capjournal.com>

Fatal weekend crash near Yankton involved stolen vehicle

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — A weekend rollover crash north of Yankton that killed one person and injured another involved a stolen vehicle.

Yankton County Sheriff Jim Vlahakis and Yankton Police Chief Brian Paulsen confirmed to the Daily Press & Dakotan that the sport utility vehicle that crashed about 7 p.m. Sunday had been stolen from a residence in Yankton earlier that day.

The Highway Patrol says the SUV crossed the centerline on U.S. Highway 81, made minor contact with another vehicle and swerved out of control, eventually rolling in the ditch.

A 21-year-old female passenger was pronounced dead at a Sioux Falls hospital. The 23-year-old male driver was taken to a Yankton hospital with injuries the patrol says are serious but not life-threatening. Charges are pending against him. Neither person was immediately identified.

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Wednesday:

Dakota Cash
05-07-15-33-35
(five, seven, fifteen, thirty-three, thirty-five)
Estimated jackpot: \$25,000

Lotto America
24-25-29-38-50, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 3
(twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-nine, thirty-eight, fifty; Star Ball: nine; ASB: three)
Estimated jackpot: \$2.34 million

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$55 million

Powerball
17-19-21-22-51, Powerball: 19, Power Play: 2
(seventeen, nineteen, twenty-one, twenty-two, fifty-one; Powerball: nineteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$280 million

Train derailment closes part of road in NE South Dakota

BATH, S.D. (AP) — A train derailment will keep part of a county road closed in northeastern South Dakota for several days.

Brown County Emergency Management Director Scott Meints says a portion of County Highway 16 will be closed until Monday due to the derailment.

Meints says that will allow for railroad crews to remove overturned railcars that were loaded with corn. He says three cars were overturned and a couple of others are upright but off the track.

The Aberdeen American News reports the derailment was reported about 1 p.m. Wednesday about 4 miles north of Bath.

Meints said the county road was damaged and will need repairs. He says the cause of the derailment is not known.

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

CWD testing considered for deer killed in Custer State Park

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks department is proposing a rule to require deer killed by hunters in Custer State Park to be tested for a deadly brain disease.

The proposal introduced this month is aimed at determining the prevalence of chronic wasting disease in the park's deer population, the Rapid City Journal reported. It's similar to a current requirement for elk killed in the park.

"What we want to do is get a better handle on the prevalence rate of the disease in deer," said Tony Lief, the agency's state wildlife division director. "We took that step to require samples from all elk, but we are harvesting deer, and deer is susceptible to the same disease so we wanted to get samples from those animals as well."

Chronic wasting disease affects deer, elk and moose. Animals with the disease show symptoms of weight loss, behavioral changes, excessive salivation, increased drinking and urination, depression, muscle control loss and eventual death.

In South Dakota, the fatal disease has been detected in wildlife from Lawrence, Pennington, Custer and Fall River counties, along with Custer State Park and Wind Cave National Park.

Hunters should avoid eating meat from animals that appear to be sick or test positive for the disease in order to minimize risk of exposure. No link has been found between the animal's disease and any neurological disease in humans, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The deer proposal will be considered for adoption after a June 7 public hearing during the next Game, Fish and Parks Commission meeting in Aberdeen.

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

Corn Palace announces mural designs for 2019

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — The popular Corn Palace tourist attraction in Mitchell has unveiled a set of military-themed murals to be designed for next year's season at the landmark.

The Daily Republic reports it's the first year of a collaboration between the Corn Palace and Dakota Wesleyan University's digital media and design department to make the designs. The corn and grain designs will be installed over the summer and fall.

They include images of helicopters, Navy vessels, military jets over Mount Rushmore and the iconic flag raising at Iwo Jima. The murals also include an homage to Native American Code Talkers in World Wars I and II.

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Director Scott Schmidt says the Corn Palace is excited to see the first year of the mural partnership with the university come to fruition.

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

Authorities ID victim of deer-motorcycle crash near Sturgis

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a 39-year-old Piedmont man who died when the motorcycle he was driving collided with a deer in Meade County.

The Highway Patrol says Thomas Van Pelt was pronounced dead at the scene Sunday afternoon on state Highway 79, 8 miles northeast of Sturgis.

There were no passengers on the bike.

Police investigate armed robbery of Mitchell laundry

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Police are investigating an early morning armed robbery at a laundry business in Mitchell.

Authorities say a male with a handgun held up Plaza Cleaners at about 3:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Police say the suspect also tried to rob a person near another business as he fled the scene.

Sgt. Dean Knippling says no one was hurt in either incident.

Confirmation vote for CIA chief brings out Democratic rift

By LISA MASCARO, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The political schism in the Democratic Party is playing out in the confirmation vote for Gina Haspel as CIA director, as support from red-state senators facing re-election bumps up against a more liberal flank eyeing potential 2020 presidential bids and rejecting the nominee over the agency's clouded history of torture.

Haspel's confirmation became all but certain with a favorable 10-5 vote Wednesday by the Senate Intelligence Committee. Yet the division in the Senate is set in large part by the election calendar, home-state geography and personal views — and it may define Democrats for years to come.

On one side is a growing list of a half-dozen Democrats whom many see as the future of the big-tent party. They are rural, noncoastal representatives of states won by President Donald Trump, places where some say the party needs to win back voters to grow beyond its urban core. Several of them have supported many of Trump's nominees.

On the other side are those living in the comfort of blue-state incumbency, including liberal leaders who may take on Trump with their own campaigns for the White House. Their opposition to Haspel fuels a fired-up base of voters who are pushing a more progressive, battle-tested party to resist the Trump agenda.

With the Senate possibly voting as soon as Thursday on the new CIA director, "this is a soul-searching, defining moment for the Democratic Party," said Elizabeth Beavers, the associate policy director at the liberal group Indivisible.

Beavers said senators are making a political miscalculation if they give their support to confirm a nominee "who has helped carry out torture." It's a vote, she said, "they're going to have to explain for a long time to come."

Haspel's nomination reopened debate about the CIA's now-defunct program of detaining terror suspects overseas at secret lock-ups and subjecting them to harsh interrogation techniques. Haspel supervised one of those detention sites in Thailand, but details of her work there have not been declassified.

Pressure on Democrats mounted late Wednesday after a third Republican, Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona, announced his opposition to Haspel. He joined Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky and fellow Arizona Sen. John McCain, whose long-distance rejection of Haspel as he battles brain cancer at home hit a political nerve. Considering the GOP's slim 51-49 majority, Democrats could easily block the nominee, a career intelligence

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officer who would make history as the first woman to lead the CIA.

But Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., did not take that tack. In fact, rather than forcing his caucus in line against Haspel, Schumer continued to keep his vote to himself, a gesture that allows senators to chart their own courses without the overhang of leadership.

Most in the Democratic caucus are expected to vote against Haspel — with Sen. Kamala Harris of California among those setting the progressive pace with her “no” vote Wednesday in the committee.

Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent who caucuses with the Democrats, already announced their opposition. Warren tweeted that Haspel’s involvement in the torture program “makes her unfit to lead the CIA.” Other potential 2020 contenders, including Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey and Kristen Gillibrand of New York, are also likely to vote against Haspel.

One red-state Democrat who has said he’ll oppose Haspel, Sen. Jon Tester of Montana, has already signaled his willingness to buck Trump. He drew the president’s Twitter ire after he publicly aired allegations against Veterans Affairs nominee Ronny Jackson, who later withdrew from consideration. It’s an election strategy that depends on keeping his state’s liberal base engaged as he fends off Trump’s attacks.

Those Democrats supporting Haspel did so with varying degrees of enthusiasm. West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, one of the most endangered incumbents in the fall election, has backed all but a few Trump nominees. In Haspel, he found “an unbelievable public servant” who is trying to keep the country safe. “I feel very comfortable and very good,” he said.

In a statement, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota acknowledged this was “was not an easy decision.” But she said she believes the president has the right to make his nominations, and as a senator she will “ensure Congress conducts robust oversight of the CIA under her leadership.”

The concerns raised by McCain ended up capturing the attention of more Democrats than Republicans, who largely shrugged off his advice. The 81-year-old was held captive and tortured during the Vietnam War and led efforts to ban the brutal post-9/11 interrogation techniques.

Sen. Angus King, the independent from Maine, also voted against Haspel at the committee, saying he felt she was not forthcoming about her role in the torture program. The decision became less defined by partisan lines, he said, and was instead left “for every member to decide.”

He sat between Democrats on the panel and, he noted, “we reached different conclusions.”

Associated Press writer Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

___ Follow Mascaro on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/LisaMascaro>

US has a daunting to-do list to get ready for NKorea summit

By CATHERINE LUCEY, ZEKE MILLER AND MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Who sits where? What’s on the agenda? Will they eat together? What’s the security plan?

President Donald Trump and his team have a daunting to-do list to work through as they prepare for next month’s expected summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Trump’s plan to meet with Kim may have come as a surprise decision, but his team hopes to leave nothing to chance when they come together in Singapore. They’re gaming out policy plans, negotiating tactics, even menu items.

With two unpredictable leaders, it’s hard to anticipate every possibility. But White House aides are expecting hard-ball negotiating tactics — already in evidence this week as the North Koreans cast fresh doubt on the sit-down.

Leader summits on this level are a massive undertaking. Much like icebergs, only a small fraction of the work is visible above the waterline. And when the meeting involves the heads of two technically still-warring states, the list of logistical concerns expands, including sensitive items like the number and deployment of security officers. Officials on both sides are still determining the format for the meeting or meetings, whether Trump and Kim will share a meal, and the extent of any one-on-one interactions.

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All of that comes as the U.S. formulates its strategies for the talks, including what the U.S. is prepared to give up and how precisely to define “denuclearization” on the Korean Peninsula — Trump’s stated goal.

“I would say there are hundreds if not thousands of hours put into summit preparations,” said Patrick McEachern, a public policy fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center and a former State Department official.

Scott Mulhauser, a former chief of staff at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, said that in the leadup to summit meetings, staffs try to anticipate the various negotiating positions their counterparts might take, adding that “if you’re not gaming that out, you’re not preparing adequately.”

Trump is relying heavily on his top diplomat, Mike Pompeo, in preparing for the summit. Pompeo has met with Kim twice in Pyongyang, once as secretary of state and once as CIA chief, and has spent more time with the reclusive leader than any other American official. The amount of face time Pompeo has had with Kim rivals even that of most Asian leaders, apart from the Chinese.

Pompeo assembled a working group to handle negotiations with North Korea led by a retired senior CIA official with deep experience in the region. That team, based at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, remains the center of the administration’s North Korea expertise.

Planning for the summit started quickly after Trump announced on Twitter his plans to meet with Kim, but kicked into higher gear after John Bolton became Trump’s national security adviser last month. In addition to Pompeo’s two trips to Pyongyang, U.S. officials have also been coordinating with the North Koreans through what’s known as the “New York channel” — North Korean diplomats posted to their country’s mission to the United Nations.

A key question is the format for the meeting if the two countries are able to proceed to full-fledged nuclear negotiations, U.S. officials have said. That includes decisions about whether to keep the talks limited to the U.S. and North Korea or whether to bring other governments into the process, such as South Korea, China, Russia and Japan. Also key is what the U.S. will negotiate away.

“One thing that is unclear to us is what the U.S. is willing to negotiate in exchange for North Korea’s promises on denuclearization,” said Jean Lee, director of the North Korea program at the Woodrow Wilson Center. “The North Koreans are going to be armed and very ready to negotiate. The Trump administration needs to be ready as well.”

One initial hurdle that Pompeo managed to clear during his second visit to Pyongyang was the venue for the summit. North Korea was adamant that Kim not be put in any kind of situation where his security could be at risk, U.S. officials said. North Korean officials pushed very hard for the meeting to be in Pyongyang, so Kim would not have to leave the country and they could have 100 percent control over access and communications, according to the officials.

When North Korea objected to Trump’s preferred choice of the demilitarized zone on the border between North and South Korea, the U.S. countered with Singapore. Some White House officials also opposed the DMZ choice, believing the optics on Korean rapprochement would distract from the focus on denuclearization.

U.S. officials said they believed one reason the North Koreans agreed to Singapore was that Kim had just returned from a successful trip to China the day before Pompeo arrived for his second visit. Many analysts, including U.S. officials, believe that Kim’s flight to the Chinese port of Dalian — the first trip abroad by aircraft by a North Korean leader in decades — was likely a test of the country’s ability to safely transport Kim by air. Kim’s previous trips to China had all been by train, as was the custom of his father.

The North formally signed off on Singapore while Pompeo was in Pyongyang. Even before Trump announced the summit site by tweet a day after Pompeo’s return, White House officials who traveled with Pompeo to Pyongyang were already on the ground in Singapore to begin working out summit logistics.

Very few people have had much direct contact with the North Koreans, so there are few people for the Trump administration to check with for guidance.

Bill Richardson, the former New Mexico governor and U.N. ambassador who has negotiated with the North Koreans, had one suggestion. He said that in the meeting setting, the North Koreans will be very formal, so building a rapport between the two will be vital.

His main advice: “Try to find some private time between President Trump and Kim Jong Un.”

Cannes doc: Whitney Houston was molested by Dee Dee Warwick

By JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

CANNES, France (AP) — Friends of Whitney Houston allege the singer was molested as a child by her cousin Dee Dee Warwick in a documentary that premiered Thursday at the Cannes Film Festival.

Houston's longtime assistant Mary Jones tells filmmaker Kevin Macdonald that the late singer told her that Warwick, the sister of Dionne Warwick, molested her at a young age. Houston's brother Gary Garland-Houston also says he was molested between the ages of seven and nine by a female family member, and says his sister was abused too.

Dee Dee Warwick, who was 18 years older than Houston, died in 2008.

The allegations were made in the documentary "Whitney," which was made with the cooperation of Houston's family. The revelations, which come about three quarters of the way into "Whitney," immediately cast a new light on the troubled life of Houston.

Jones claims that the experience made Houston question her own sexuality and contributed to her late-life drug problems. The singer died at the age of 48 in 2012 from what was ruled an accidental drowning in a bathtub. A coroner's report into her death cited heart disease and drug use as contributing factors. She never spoke publicly about her own alleged abuse.

"We always wanted our film to be a corrective to that tabloid story," said producer Simon Chinn. "These are specific revelations that I think will get people to a deeper understanding of who Whitney was and in many ways redeem her as a person."

Dee Dee Warwick was the niece of Houston's mother, Cissy Houston. The Warwick sisters sometimes sang in Cissy Houston's gospel group, the Drinkard Singers. Dee Dee Warwick, who was twice nominated for a Grammy Award, sang backup for Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin and others.

"Whitney," which is to be released in theaters July 7, suggests that the alleged incidents of abuse took place while Cissy Houston was touring. Houston, who had a daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown, with Bobby Brown, is said to have insisted on taking Bobbi on tour with her.

Bobbi Kristina died 2015. She was found unresponsive in a bathtub and died after being in a coma for six months.

Representatives for Dionne Warwick didn't immediately return messages Thursday.

AP Interview: Anwar wants Malaysia to scrap race policies

By EILEEN NG, Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Pardoned Malaysian politician Anwar Ibrahim said Thursday that decades-old affirmative action policies for the country's Malay majority must be discarded in favor of a new program to help the poor regardless of race.

In an interview with The Associated Press, the prime minister-in-waiting also said he plans to run in a by-election this year to become a member of Parliament but that he isn't in a rush to take over the top job.

Anwar, 70, was convicted of sodomy in 2015 in a case he said was politically motivated. His sentence expires June 8 but he was given a royal pardon on Wednesday and freed from custody after last week's stunning electoral victory by his alliance led by former foe Mahathir Mohamad.

Anwar said poor Malays will benefit more from merit-based policies that are transparent. He said the New Economic Policy, instituted in 1971 following bloody riots fueled by Malay discontent with the relative affluence of ethnic minority Chinese, has been abused to enrich the elites.

The program, which gives preference to Malays in government contracts, business, jobs, education and housing, is credited with lifting millions of Malays out of poverty and creating an urban Malay middle class. It is also blamed for a racial divide between Malays, who account for two-thirds of Malaysia's 31 million people, and minority Chinese and Indians who have long complained about government discrimination.

The policy is a sensitive issue, with many Malays fearing they will lose their privileges under a new government. Many ethnic minorities have left Malaysia in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

"I have said that the NEP should be dismantled but the affirmative action must be more effective. I

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believe that poor underprivileged Malays will benefit more through a transparent, effective affirmative action policy rather than the New Economic Policy which has been hijacked to enrich the few cronies," said Anwar, a Malay.

Anwar, who changed Malaysia's political landscape with his reform movement after he was sacked as deputy prime minister in 1998, said he had expected his alliance to win with a small margin but didn't expect the victory to be so complete.

He said defeated Prime Minister Najib Razak had been "self-indulgent" and underestimated public anger over the corruption scandal involving the 1MDB state fund that is being investigated abroad.

"He was full of himself, thinking he could succeed and even toying with the idea that he will regain a two-third majority (in parliament) which is clearly outrageous to most people but he is convinced," Anwar said. "He is just oblivious to the stark realities, he is in a cocoon."

Anwar said Najib called him on the night of the May 9 polls after it was clear that Najib's National Front coalition, which ruled Malaysia since independence from Britain in 1957, was losing. He said Najib appeared to be still in denial and that he advised Najib to concede defeat.

U.S. investigators say Najib's associates stole and laundered \$4.5 billion from the 1MDB fund. Najib denied any wrongdoing. The new government has barred Najib and his wife from leaving the country and police early Thursday raided Najib's house in search of evidence.

Anwar was once a high-flyer in the National Front but was convicted of homosexual sodomy and corruption after a power struggle in 1998 with Mahathir, who was prime minister for 22 years until 2003. He was freed in 2004 and convicted again in 2015 of sodomy, which he said was concocted to destroy his political career.

Anwar worked from his prison cell to forge a new opposition alliance by ending his two-decade feud with Mahathir, a gamble that paid off when the alliance won the polls. Mahathir, 92, has taken office as the world's oldest elected leader.

"It's a long wait ... the struggle is 20 years. There was continued humiliation, victimization but it's OK, we survived. There's no need to complain too much," Anwar said. "I think we should focus our attention now on how to alleviate the poor, how to reduce this inequality, how to stop these excesses and endemic corruption which is part of the culture now."

Anwar said forgiving Mahathir and rebuilding their friendship in the country's interest wasn't as difficult as he thought and that they can "emerge as two great friends again."

He played down concerns of possible tension with Mahathir, saying he would not hold any Cabinet post for now to give Mahathir "a free hand" in running the country. But Anwar said he plans to return as a lawmaker by running in a by-election this year as well as spend time with his family and travel abroad for speaking engagements.

He praised Mahathir as an "indefatigable fighter."

"He chose a good ending to this episode. I don't want to deny that we had serious disagreement on policies and excesses but now he said, 'Look, I owe it to this nation that I loved and I want to make amends and the corrective measures,'" Anwar said.

Anwar said the new government faces huge challenges in cleaning up the financial mess left by 1MDB and putting in effective policies, but he is confident Malaysia can emerge as a "beacon for democracy and justice in the region and more so in the Muslim world."

On eve of anniversary, Giuliani says time for probe to end

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's attorney Rudy Giuliani is urging special counsel Robert Mueller's team to wrap up its investigation on the eve of the probe's one-year anniversary.

Giuliani told Fox News Channel's Laura Ingraham on Wednesday that Mueller "has all the facts to make a decision" after 12 months investigating Russian meddling in the election and possible collusion with Trump's campaign.

"Mueller should now bring this to a close," said Giuliani, the former mayor of New York. "It's been a year.

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He's gotten 1.4 million documents, he's interviewed 28 witnesses. And he has nothing, which is why he wants to bring the president into an interview."

"It's about time to say enough. We've tortured this president enough," he added, describing the investigation as being "like a big weight" on the president's back.

Giuliani's team has been weighing whether to allow Trump to sit for an interview with Mueller. He told Ingraham he's been asking what Mueller expects to learn from Trump in an interview that he doesn't know already.

So far, the special counsel's office has charged 19 people — including four Trump campaign advisers — and three Russian companies. Trump's former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and his deputy campaign chairman, Rick Gates, have pleaded guilty and are now cooperating with the probe.

Trump, however, has panned it as a "witch hunt" intended to discredit his presidency and insisted that Russia had nothing to do with his winning 2016 campaign.

Giuliani, who is working for the president pro bono, said Wednesday that the probe "is not good for the American people, and the special counsel's office doesn't seem to have that sort of understanding that they're interfering with things that are much bigger than them."

He also said all campaigns look for dirt on their opponents, regardless of the source.

"And even if it comes from a Russian, or a German, or an American, it doesn't matter. And they never used it, is the main thing. They never used it. They rejected it. If there was collusion with the Russians, they would have used it," he said.

Seoul pushes for successful Trump-Kim talks as North warns

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea said Thursday it's pushing to reset high-level talks with North Korea and will communicate closely with Washington and Pyongyang to increase the chances of a successful summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on resolving the standoff over the North's nuclear weapons.

The announcement by Seoul's presidential National Security Council came a day after North Korea threatened to scrap next month's historic meeting between Trump and Kim, saying it has no interest in a "one-sided" affair meant to pressure the North to abandon its nukes. The North also broke off a high-level meeting with South Korea to protest the U.S.-South Korean military exercises the North has long claimed are an invasion rehearsal.

The North's surprise announcement seemed to cool what had been an unusual flurry of outreach from a country that last year conducted a provocative series of weapons tests that had many fearing the region was on the edge of war. Analysts said it's unlikely that North Korea intends to scuttle all diplomacy. More likely, they said, is that it wants to gain leverage ahead of the talks between Kim and Trump, scheduled for June 12 in Singapore.

South Korea, which brokered the talks between Kim and Trump, will "closely mediate using multiple communication channels with the United States and with North Korea so that the North Korea-U.S. summit can proceed successfully," said the NSC after a meeting chaired by Chung Eui-yong, the top security adviser of South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

The NSC also urged the North to faithfully abide by the agreements reached between Moon and Kim in their summit last month, where they issued a vague vow on the "complete denuclearization" of their peninsula and pledged permanent peace. Senior officials from the two Koreas were to sit down at a border village on Wednesday to discuss how to implement their leaders' agreements to reduce military tensions along their heavily fortified border and improve overall ties before the North canceled the meeting.

In Washington, Trump said the U.S. hasn't been notified about the North Korean threat to cancel the summit.

"We haven't seen anything. We haven't heard anything. We will see what happens," he said.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the administration is "still hopeful" that the

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summit will take place, and that threats from North Korea to scrap the meeting were "something that we fully expected."

She said Trump is "ready for very tough negotiations," adding that "if they want to meet, we'll be ready and if they don't that's OK." She said if there is no meeting, the U.S. would "continue with the campaign of maximum pressure" against the North.

North Korean first vice foreign minister Kim Kye Gwan said in a statement carried by state media that "we are no longer interested in a negotiation that will be all about driving us into a corner and making a one-sided demand for us to give up our nukes and this would force us to reconsider whether we would accept the North Korea-U.S. summit meeting."

He criticized recent comments by Trump's top security adviser, John Bolton, and other U.S. officials who have said the North should follow the "Libyan model" of nuclear disarmament and provide a "complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement." He also took issue with U.S. views that the North should fully relinquish its biological and chemical weapons.

Some analysts say bringing up Libya, which dismantled its rudimentary nuclear program in the 2000s in exchange for sanctions relief, jeopardizes progress in negotiations with the North. Kim Jong Un took power weeks after former Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's gruesome death at the hands of rebel forces amid a popular uprising in October 2011. The North has frequently used Gadhafi's death to justify its own nuclear development in the face of perceived U.S. threats.

Annual military drills between Washington and Seoul have long been a major source of contention between the Koreans, and analysts have wondered whether their continuation would hurt the detente that, since an outreach by Kim in January, has replaced the insults and threats of war. Much larger springtime drills took place last month without the North's typically fiery condemnation or accompanying weapons tests, though Washington and Seoul toned down those exercises.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said the U.S. aircraft mobilized for the drills include nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and stealth F-22 fighter jets, two of the U.S. military assets it has previously said are aimed at launching nuclear strikes on the North. The allies say the drills are defensive in nature.

Seoul's Defense Ministry said F-22s are involved in the drills, but not the B-52s. Ministry spokesman Lee Jin-woo said the B-52s had never been part of plans for this year's drills that are focused on pilot training, denying media speculation that Washington and Seoul withdrew the bombers in reaction to Pyongyang's announcement.

Kim told visiting South Korean officials in March that he "understands" the drills would take place and expressed hope that they'll be modified once the situation on the peninsula stabilizes, according to the South Korean government.

Despite Kim's outreach, some experts were skeptical about whether he would completely give up a nuclear program that he had pushed so hard to build. The North previously vowed to continue nuclear development unless the United States pulls its 28,500 troops out of South Korea and withdraws its so-called "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee to South Korea and Japan as a condition for its nuclear disarmament.

Wednesday's threat could also be targeted at showing a domestic audience that Kim is willing to stand up to Washington. Kim has repeatedly told his people that his nukes are a "powerful treasured sword" that can smash U.S. hostility.

Associated Press writers Hyung-jin Kim and Foster Klug contributed to this report.

Quakes damage roads as ash spews from Hawaii volcano

By SOPHIA YAN and AUDREY McAVOY, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Earthquakes were damaging roads and buildings on Hawaii's Big Island on Wednesday as ash emissions streamed from Kilauea volcano.

The strongest shaking was recorded around 8:30 a.m., measured as a 4.4-magnitude earthquake. The

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floor of the summit crater has also dropped about three feet (90 centimeters), as the threat of a strong, explosive eruption at the top of the volcano loomed. The ground was deflating as the crater's lava levels fell, causing stress faults around the crater to move, resulting in the earthquakes. More were expected.

Ash spewed from the summit at Hawaii's Kilauea volcano, though emissions decreased from Tuesday.

There were occasional bursts of ash coming from the crater causing ash to fall downwind to several communities, though there were only trace amounts, said the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory. Ash plumes on Tuesday had spouted as high as 12,000 feet (3,657 meters) into the air, scientists said.

These plumes are separate from the lava eruptions happening roughly 25 miles (40 kilometers) away from summit, where about 20 lava fissures have destroyed more than two dozen homes and forced the evacuation of about 2,000 residents.

Dense, large rocks roughly two feet in diameter (60 centimeters) were found in a parking lot a few hundred yards away from Kilauea's summit crater, which reflect the "most energetic explosions yet observed and could reflect the onset of steam-driven explosive activity," the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said in a statement, and continues to monitor activity.

Scientists say earthquakes may shake loose rocks underground and open up new tunnels for lava to flow.

Cracks formed on a highway near the entrance to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, said the Hawaii Police Department. Much of the park remains closed.

"We're all safe, and I wish they'd open the park back up, but they have to keep it safe for everybody," said Ken McGilvray, an area resident. "We live on a volcano!"

Hawaii Gov. David Ige said the state is forming a joint task force that could handle mass evacuations of the Big Island's Puna district if lava from Kilauea volcano covers major roads and isolates the area.

Hawaii Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Kenneth Hara, the task force commander, said he's anticipating potentially having to evacuate about 1,000 people, based on what he's been told by Hawaii County. But he said some people may choose to stay behind because they are self-sufficient.

Hara said there are currently about 1,200 soldiers and nine UH-60 helicopters currently training on the Big Island. He may also request forces from the U.S. Pacific Command if needed.

On Tuesday, the volcano discharged ash because of rocks falling into the summit, U.S. Geological Survey geophysicist Mike Poland said.

"There is very little wind at the summit," he said. "The plume, it's not near as ashy as it was yesterday, and it's rising more or less vertically over the summit region."

Because of the ash, USGS scientists operated from a backup command center at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

Poland did not have an immediate height on the plume Wednesday since scientists were not staffing the observatory at the summit. They will have to rely on remote observations, he said.

"Things seem to be progressing largely as they have been, except for a shift in wind and less ash," Poland said.

Scientists remained on alert for more violent activity. Geologists have warned that the summit could have a separate explosive steam eruption that would hurl huge rocks and ash miles into the sky. But it's not certain when or if that might happen.

For those on the ground near the lava vents, health warnings were issued because of dangerous volcanic gases.

An air-quality alert was in effect for an area near the Lanipuna Gardens subdivision. That area was evacuated shortly after the eruption began May 3. Most fissures are in that subdivision or the adjoining Leilani Estates neighborhood.

Several fissures remained active Wednesday, producing lava spatter. Lava from one fissure that had been clearing a path toward the ocean, about 2 miles (3 kilometers) away, had not advanced in the last 24 hours.

Associated Press writers Caleb Jones in Volcano, Hawaii, Jennifer Sinco Kelleher in Honolulu, and Mark Thiessen in Anchorage, Alaska, contributed to this report.

Las Vegas shooting witnesses describe chaos and compassion

By KEN RITTER, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Police documents about the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history included reports from at least two people who said a person they believed to be the gunman ranted in the days prior to last October's Las Vegas Strip attack about the federal government and gun control.

The claims by those people and others could not be verified because the names of all witnesses were blacked out in the 1,200 pages of police reports and accounts that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department made public Wednesday after losing court battles to keep them secret.

Police and the FBI have not determined a motive in the ongoing investigation. Authorities said they believe Stephen Paddock acted alone and the attack had no link to international terrorism. Law enforcement refused Wednesday to provide any additional information including refusing to say whether the reports were credible.

A jailed man whose gave a statement in November to police and the FBI recalled a man he believed to be Paddock telling him that Federal Emergency Management Agency "camps" set up after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 were "a dry run for law enforcement and military to start kickin' down doors and ... confiscating guns."

"Somebody has to wake up the American public and get them to arm themselves," the man said Paddock told him less than a month before the Oct. 1 shooting that killed 58 people and injured hundreds. "Sometimes sacrifices have to be made."

In a handwritten account, a woman said she overheard a man she later said was Paddock talking with another man at a Las Vegas restaurant just three days before the massacre. She told police that Paddock seemed angry about the 1990s standoffs at Waco, Texas, and Ruby Ridge in Idaho.

"At the time, I just thought 'strange guys' and I wanted to leave," said the woman.

The documents released Wednesday detailed terror, confusion and compassion among people helping the wounded after gunfire rained from a 32nd floor hotel room on a crowd of 22,000 people attending the Route 91 Harvest Festival concert on the Las Vegas Strip.

One woman told police she refused to leave her lifeless friend, whose eyes were still and lips turned blue, until a group of men picked her off the ground and guided her to a fence. One left a red bandanna on her friend's face.

A stagehand made a run for his pickup truck when he was suddenly surrounded by people begging for a ride away from the scene.

"I told them to get in however they could," he said.

A woman who fell wounded said another woman who pushed her was shot five times. She decided to play dead.

"A good guy just grabbed me and said, 'Love, you're gonna die here if I leave you here,'" she told police.

A housekeeper at the Mandalay Bay described her discomfort at Paddock sitting at a table eating soup and staring at her as she cleaned his hotel room four days before the shooting.

Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo said early this month the police investigation was not finished. He also apologized to the public for the release of information that he said would "further traumatize a wounded community."

Police and the FBI refused to answer questions from The Associated Press about the account from the man who said he met with Paddock outside a Las Vegas sporting goods store after posting an online ad to sell schematics to convert semi-automatic guns to fire automatically.

The man said Paddock became upset and launched into a tirade about gun control when the man rejected an offer of \$500 apiece to modify semi-automatic guns to fire automatically.

Clark County Commission Chairman Steve Sisolak, who shared the release of public information with Lombardo and FBI Special Agent in Charge Aaron Rouse after the shooting, told the AP on Wednesday he had been assured that no motive has been identified.

Sisolak said he hadn't heard of the jailhouse account and he could not say whether it was credible.

Las Vegas police two weeks ago made public video from two officers' body cameras showing police blasting through the door of the hotel suite where Paddock is seen motionless on his back with a pool of blood staining the carpet near his head and a cache of assault-style weapons strewn about.

Media outlets sued to obtain videos, 911 recordings, evidence logs and interview reports to shed light on the response by public agencies, emergency workers and hotel officials during and after the shooting. The department has not provided all the materials it collected.

Associated Press journalists Tom Tait and Regina Garcia Cano in Las Vegas, Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City, Astrid Galvan and Terry Tang in Phoenix, and Felicia Fonseca and Mary Hudetz in Albuquerque, New Mexico contributed to this report.

Ethics director questions Trump's reimbursement to lawyer

By **BERNARD CONDON** and **TAMI ABDOLLAH**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump revealed in his financial disclosure that he reimbursed personal attorney Michael Cohen as much as \$250,000 for unspecified "expenses," with no mention of a \$130,000 payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about a sexual tryst she said they had.

The head of the nation's ethics office on Wednesday questioned why Trump didn't include this in his previous year's sworn disclosure and passed along his concerns to federal prosecutors.

"I am providing both reports to you because you may find the disclosure relevant to any inquiry you may be pursuing," David Apol, acting director of the Office of Government Ethics, wrote to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

Apol wrote that he considers Trump's payment to Cohen to be a repayment on a loan and that it was required to be included in Trump's June 2017 disclosure.

But Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani told Fox News Channel's Laura Ingraham that he didn't think the repayment "had to be disclosed at all because I think it was an expenditure that he reimbursed."

He also the president was "fully aware" of his decision to reveal the fact that Trump had reimbursed Cohen in a previous Fox News appearance and "endorsed the strategy."

"We wouldn't do it without him," Giuliani said on "The Ingraham Angle." "He's the client, after all, and has tremendous judgment about things like this. And I think it — that the OGE, the Office of Government Ethics, basically agreed with us that it had been fully disclosed."

"The fact is that that president disclosed everything that he could disclose. He can't disclose more than he knows. And we're very comfortable with it," he added.

But ethics experts say that if that payment was knowingly and willfully left out, Trump could be in violation of federal ethics laws.

"This is a big deal and unprecedented. No president has been previously subject to any referral by (Office of Government Ethics) to DOJ as a result of having failed to report an item on their public financial disclosure report," said Virginia Canter, a former ethics official in the Clinton and Obama White Houses who is now with the watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

How Trump dealt with the Daniels hush money in his disclosure has been closely watched, particularly after Giuliani gave interviews earlier this month saying the president had reimbursed Cohen in a series of payments after the campaign was over. Trump and Giuliani have clashed over what the president knew and when he knew it.

In a footnote in tiny type on Page 45 of his 92-page disclosure, Trump said he reimbursed Cohen for "expenses" ranging from \$100,001 to \$250,000. The report said the president did not have to disclose the payment but was doing so "in the interest of transparency."

While the disclosure didn't specify the purpose of the payment, Cohen has said he paid \$130,000 to Daniels in the weeks before the 2016 presidential election to keep her from going public about her allegations that she had sex with the married Trump in 2006.

Daniels' lawyer, Michael Avenatti, tweeted, "Mr. Trump's disclosure today conclusively proves that the

American people were deceived.”

The tweet continued: “This was NOT an accident and it was not isolated. Cover-ups should always matter.”

The Trump Organization referred questions about the disclosure report to the president’s lawyer Sheri Dillon of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. Dillon didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Cohen footnote appears in a report giving the first extended look at Trump’s revenue from his properties since he became president. In all, Trump’s vast array of assets — hotels, resorts, books, licensing deals and other business ventures — generated revenue last year of at least \$453 million. The report estimated the holdings are worth at least \$1.4 billion.

His Washington, D.C., hotel near the Oval Office, a magnet for diplomats and lobbyists, took in \$40 million. His Doral golf course and resort in Miami took in \$75 million. His Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, received \$25 million, and his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey, generated \$15 million.

Some of the 12-month figures for his properties are down from his previous report, but that earlier report covered about 16 months and so it is not directly comparable.

The figures are before expenses and so give no indication of how much profit the president made off the properties.

Trump has at least \$315 million in debt, about the same as he reported a year ago. One of his biggest lenders is Ladder Capital, which has lent more than \$100 million. Trump owes Deutsch Bank as much as \$175 million.

The debt figures are given in broad ranges in the report and capped at \$50 million, so it’s unclear just how much Trump actually owes. The president’s tax returns would give a clear picture, but Trump has broken with tradition by refusing to make them public.

When Trump took office, he refused to fully divest from his global business, another break with presidential tradition. Instead, he put his assets in a trust controlled by his two adult sons and a senior executive. Trump can take back control of the trust at any time, and he’s allowed to withdraw cash from it as he pleases.

His report shows that Trump received \$64,840 from the Screen Actors Guild pension fund. Trump has appeared in several movies, including “Home Alone 2” and “Zoolander.”

For operating New York’s Wollman Rink in Central Park, the president took in \$9.3 million.

Though it was published three decades ago, Trump’s “The Art of The Deal” last year generated as much as \$1 million.

Abdollah and Associated Press writer Richard Lardner contributed from Washington.

Unapologetic Trump Jr.: Not troubled that I met with Russian

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — Questioned intently by a Senate committee, President Donald Trump’s son struck a firmly unapologetic tone, deflected many queries and said he didn’t think there was anything wrong with meeting a Russian lawyer at Trump Tower in hopes of election-season dirt on Hillary Clinton, according to transcripts released Wednesday.

Donald Trump Jr., speaking in a closed-door interview last year with the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he did not give much thought to the idea that the June 9, 2016 meeting was part of a Russian government effort to help his father in the presidential race.

“I don’t know that it alarmed me, but I like I said, I don’t know and I don’t know that I was all that focused on it at the time,” Trump Jr. said in response to a question about whether he was troubled by the prospect of Russian support, the transcripts show.

The committee on Wednesday released about 2,500 pages of interview transcripts and other documents tied to the New York meeting, which Trump Jr. attended with the expectation of receiving compromising information about his father’s Democratic opponent.

The transcripts reveal some new details about how the meeting — a key point of interest in special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign

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— came to be arranged and efforts afterward to mitigate the political damage arising from its disclosure. They also show the disappointment of Trump Jr. and other campaign figures, including brother-in-law Jared Kushner and campaign chairman Paul Manafort, when the meeting failed to yield the harmful Clinton information they thought they'd get — as well as the increasing panic of one of the meeting participants who feared his reputation would be ruined by his role in setting it up.

The transcripts also reflect an aggressive Russian outreach to Trump before and after the New York meeting, including an effort to arrange a follow-up get-together that November with a member of the transition team. The follow-up never happened.

Though Trump Jr. may have been dissatisfied with how the meeting turned out, the interview and his own emails make clear that he had high hopes going in. After music publicist Rob Goldstone promised him "very interesting" information from a well-connected Russian lawyer, including documents "that would incriminate Hillary," the president's oldest son responded via email, "if it's what you say I love it."

Throughout the private Senate interview, Trump Jr. appeared unapologetic about having taken the meeting, saying at one point, "I didn't think that listening to someone with information relevant to the fitness and character of a presidential candidate would be an issue, no."

Trump Jr. issued a statement Wednesday pronouncing himself candid and forthright with the committee, but the transcripts show that he responded time and again to questions by saying he could not recall or had no idea. He answered "No, I don't recall" when asked if he had spoken with his father about the Russia investigation. He also did not remember the attendance at the meeting of a Russian-American lobbyist who — in a quirky sartorial detail revealed in the transcripts — was wearing pink jeans and a pink T-shirt that day.

Trump Jr. spoke by phone several days before the meeting took place with a caller with a blocked number, but said he didn't recall who the person was and didn't know if his father used a blocked number. He told the committee that he didn't alert his father to the meeting beforehand.

Meanwhile on Wednesday, the Senate intelligence committee said it stands behind a 2017 assessment by U.S. intelligence agencies that Russia intervened in the election to hurt Clinton and help Trump. That conclusion differs from a House intelligence committee report released last month, which found no collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Both the House and Senate intelligence panels have produced reports on their own Russia investigations. But Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley announced in January that he wanted to release transcripts from his committee's interviews because people "deserve to have all the facts, not just one side of this story." Senate Judiciary Democrats said the transcripts are just "one piece of a much larger puzzle" and do not tell the entire story because some meeting participants were not interviewed or subpoenaed.

Besides Trump Jr., the committee interviewed several other people who attended the meeting: Goldstone; Rinat Akhmetshin, a prominent Russian-American lobbyist; Ike Kaveladze, a business associate of a Moscow-based developer, and a translator.

The committee did not interview Natalia Veselnitskaya, the Russian lawyer at the center of the meeting. But the panel released her written responses to a letter the committee sent her.

Some of the questioning of Trump Jr. centered on a statement drafted just as news of the meeting was about to break. The White House has said the president was involved in its drafting.

That statement said the meeting primarily concerned a Russian adoption program, though Trump Jr. later released the emails showing he agreed to the sit-down after he was promised information on Clinton.

Asked in the interview if his father was involved in drafting the statement, Trump said: "I don't know. I never spoke to my father about it."

Besides providing a timeline of the days leading up to the meeting, the transcripts also reflect misgivings about its appropriateness.

Goldstone, who arranged the meeting at the request of Azerbaijani-Russian pop singer Emin Agalarov, said, "I believed it was a bad idea and that we shouldn't do it."

"I'm a music publicist. Politics, I knew nothing about," Goldstone said, adding that neither did Emin Agalarov nor Agalarov's father, Aras.

The Agalarovs had bonded with the Trumps during the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. Like Trump Jr. and Kushner, who released his own statement about the meeting last year, Goldstone considered the meeting disappointing. He said he complained about damage to his reputation and told Emin Agalarov that "this was the most embarrassing thing you've ever asked me to do."

Agalarov responded: "That should give you mega PR."

Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Jake Pearson and Anne Flaherty contributed to this report.

Trump disclosure of Cohen payment raises new legal questions

By **BERNARD CONDON** and **TAMI ABDOLLAH**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump revealed in his financial disclosure Wednesday that he reimbursed personal attorney Michael Cohen as much as \$250,000 for unspecified "expenses," with no mention of a \$130,000 payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about a sexual tryst she said they had.

The head of the nation's ethics office questioned why Trump didn't include this in his previous year's sworn disclosure and passed along his concerns to federal prosecutors.

"I am providing both reports to you because you may find the disclosure relevant to any inquiry you may be pursuing," David Apol, acting director of the Office of Government Ethics, wrote to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

Apol wrote that he considers Trump's payment to Cohen to be a repayment on a loan and that it was required to be included in Trump's June 2017 disclosure.

But Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani told Fox News Channel's Laura Ingraham that he didn't think the repayment "had to be disclosed at all because I think it was an expenditure that he reimbursed."

He also the president was "fully aware" of his decision to reveal the fact that Trump had reimbursed Cohen in a previous Fox News appearance and "endorsed the strategy."

"We wouldn't do it without him," Giuliani said on "The Ingraham Angle." "He's the client, after all, and has tremendous judgment about things like this. And I think it — that the OGE, the Office of Government Ethics, basically agreed with us that it had been fully disclosed."

"The fact is that the president disclosed everything that he could disclose. He can't disclose more than he knows. And we're very comfortable with it," he added.

But ethics experts say that if that payment was knowingly and willfully left out, Trump could be in violation of federal ethics laws.

"This is a big deal and unprecedented. No president has been previously subject to any referral by (Office of Government Ethics) to DOJ as a result of having failed to report an item on their public financial disclosure report," said Virginia Canter, a former ethics official in the Clinton and Obama White Houses who is now with the watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

How Trump dealt with the Daniels hush money in his disclosure has been closely watched, particularly after Giuliani gave interviews earlier this month saying the president had reimbursed Cohen in a series of payments after the campaign was over. Trump and Giuliani have clashed over what the president knew and when he knew it.

In a footnote in tiny type on Page 45 of his 92-page disclosure, Trump said he reimbursed Cohen for "expenses" ranging from \$100,001 to \$250,000. The report said the president did not have to disclose the payment but was doing so "in the interest of transparency."

While the disclosure didn't specify the purpose of the payment, Cohen has said he paid \$130,000 to Daniels in the weeks before the 2016 presidential election to keep her from going public about her allegations that she had sex with the married Trump in 2006.

Daniels' lawyer, Michael Avenatti, tweeted, "Mr. Trump's disclosure today conclusively proves that the American people were deceived."

The tweet continued: "This was NOT an accident and it was not isolated. Cover-ups should always matter."

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The Trump Organization referred questions about the disclosure report to the president's lawyer Sheri Dillon of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. Dillon didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Cohen footnote appears in a report giving the first extended look at Trump's revenue from his properties since he became president. In all, Trump's vast array of assets — hotels, resorts, books, licensing deals and other business ventures — generated revenue last year of at least \$453 million. The report estimated the holdings are worth at least \$1.4 billion.

His Washington, D.C., hotel near the Oval Office, a magnet for diplomats and lobbyists, took in \$40 million. His Doral golf course and resort in Miami took in \$75 million. His Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, received \$25 million, and his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey, generated \$15 million.

Some of the 12-month figures for his properties are down from his previous report, but that earlier report covered about 16 months and so it is not directly comparable.

The figures are before expenses and so give no indication of how much profit the president made off the properties.

Trump has at least \$315 million in debt, about the same as he reported a year ago. One of his biggest lenders is Ladder Capital, which has lent more than \$100 million. Trump owes Deutsch Bank as much as \$175 million.

The debt figures are given in broad ranges in the report and capped at \$50 million, so it's unclear just how much Trump actually owes. The president's tax returns would give a clear picture, but Trump has broken with tradition by refusing to make them public.

When Trump took office, he refused to fully divest from his global business, another break with presidential tradition. Instead, he put his assets in a trust controlled by his two adult sons and a senior executive. Trump can take back control of the trust at any time, and he's allowed to withdraw cash from it as he pleases.

His report shows that Trump received \$64,840 from the Screen Actors Guild pension fund. Trump has appeared in several movies, including "Home Alone 2" and "Zoolander."

For operating New York's Wollman Rink in Central Park, the president took in \$9.3 million.

Though it was published three decades ago, Trump's "The Art of The Deal" last year generated as much as \$1 million.

Abdollah and Associated Press writer Richard Lardner contributed from Washington.

Liberal tilt in some primaries a sign of Democratic fervor

By THOMAS BEAUMONT and MARC LEVY, Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Primary election season is still young, but the liberal wing of the Democratic Party is already celebrating.

Democratic voters have chosen decidedly liberal candidates in several closely watched congressional primary elections, a sign that the left is driving much of Democrats' enthusiasm and may be winning the tug of war with moderates over the direction of the party.

Primary voters' embrace of liberal candidates in Nebraska and Pennsylvania on Tuesday underscored the trend and demonstrated the risks.

In Omaha, Democrat Kara Eastman edged out moderate Brad Ashford by casting herself as a progressive in Nebraska's lone urban district, supporting single-payer, government-run health insurance and a ban on assault weapons.

But some Democrats argue candidates like Eastman are pulling the party too far to the left for a district that, except for Ashford's lone term two years ago, has been held for more than 20 years by Republicans in the heart of a conservative state. Eastman, whose victory surprised top Democratic leaders, argues otherwise.

"The Democratic base was looking for an actual Democrat who represents their values," Eastman told The Associated Press. "For years we've been running conservative Democrats and seeing them lose."

In Pennsylvania, Scott Wallace, a wealthy donor to liberal causes, beat out Rachel Reddick, a former

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Republican and Navy veteran, in a three-way race in suburban Bucks County, north of Philadelphia. Lesser-known environmentalist Steve Bacher finished a distant third.

Reddick stressed her conversion to the Democratic Party, while Wallace, a grandson of former Vice President Henry Wallace, stressed his long-standing loyalty to party ideals, including single-payer health care.

In Allentown, Pennsylvania, lawyer Susan Wild narrowly won in the crowded Democratic primary in the state's swing-voting 7th Congressional District.

Wild, who supports universal health care and an assault weapons ban, beat out moderate John Morganello, who holds more conservative views on abortion rights and immigration.

The results reflect voters' shifting thinking on ideas long considered too liberal to appeal to the middle. Promoting gun control, for instance, is not viewed as the deal breaker with moderates it might have been a decade ago, Democratic state Rep. Peter Schweyer of Allentown said.

"People are less afraid to be as vocal about it as they once were," said Schweyer, who backed Wild.

National liberal groups cheered Democratic Idaho gubernatorial candidate Paulette Jordan's win in Tuesday's primary. The 38-year-old state representative was endorsed by the liberal, anti-Trump group Indivisible.

Unlike the districts in Nebraska and Pennsylvania, Idaho is a Republican-heavy state where the GOP gubernatorial nominee, Brad Little, would be the heavy favorite to win in November.

The three House seats in Pennsylvania and Nebraska are seen as key to the roughly two dozen seats that Democrats must gain in November to claim a House majority.

Democrats are looking first to 25 districts where Republican Donald Trump fell short of Democrat Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, like the two Pennsylvania districts.

Several of those are open seats because of the dozens of Republican members choosing to retire rather than seeking re-election amid headwinds for the party.

As GOP retirements have mounted, Democrats have begun looking to a roughly 100 more districts, including the Nebraska district, where Trump narrowly won, demonstrating the potential breadth of the battleground this fall.

While Ashford had sought public office as a Republican and later a Democrat for more than 30 years, Eastman's profile as the head of a nonprofit group helped her connect with some voters on Omaha's African-American-heavy north side, said Precious McKesson, the coalitions director for the Nebraska Democratic Party.

"You had someone who had already been there before in Ashford," McKesson said. "But then you had someone in Kara who is a social worker, who has worked on causes behind the scenes, someone we could relate to. I think that's what made more people come out for her."

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the national House campaign arm of the Democratic National Committee, had backed Ashford and dispatched national figures such as California Rep. Adam Schiff to Omaha to raise money for him.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who raised \$16 million for House Democrats in the first quarter of 2018, had said as late as last week that she expected Ashford to win.

Some of Tuesday's results, at least in Nebraska, jolted House Democrats in Washington, who expressed surprise after huddling privately Wednesday.

They were seen as a gift to the Congressional Leadership Fund, a super PAC that supports Republican House members.

"In suburban districts you cannot have candidates who are to the left of Bernie Sanders," group spokeswoman Courtney Alexander said.

But even Alexander would not go so far as to say Eastman's win leaves the Republican incumbent, Rep. Don Bacon, in the clear.

Crystal Rhoades, Democratic Party chairwoman for Douglas County, Nebraska, said her party has assumed wrongly the way to win is by offering voters a conservative Democrat.

"There's been a fundamental misreading of this district for a long time," she said. "The answer is turnout, turnout, turnout."

Beaumont reported from Des Moines, Iowa. Associated Press writer Bill Barrow contributed to this report from Atlanta

Signs of bomb found at site of deadly California explosion

By **MICHAEL BALSAMO and AMANDA LEE MYERS, Associated Press**

ALISO VIEJO, Calif. (AP) — An explosion that ripped through a Southern California day spa killed the owner, and investigators Wednesday were looking into whether she was targeted in the crime.

Authorities declined to publicly say if they believed the spa owner was targeted, but one official briefed on the investigation told The Associated Press that she had been the intended recipient of an explosive package.

Remnants of an explosive device were found inside the badly damaged spa where the powerful explosion Tuesday afternoon shook the city of Aliso Viejo, about 50 miles (80.5 kilometers) south of Los Angeles, and tore a corner off the building that houses medical offices. Two patrons were seriously injured.

"We do not believe this was an accident," said Paul Delacourt, special agent in charge of the FBI's field office in Los Angeles. "Although the damage was extensive, there are some components that we have located at the scene of the explosion that are inconsistent with what one might expect to find at this business."

Investigators were working to determine a motive and figure out exactly how the device got to the spa, Delacourt said. No arrests were made.

The blast is believed to have been caused by a package sent to the spa, two officials told the AP. The spa owner was believed to be the target, one official said.

The officials were briefed on the investigation but not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to AP on condition of anonymity.

Formal identification of the body was continuing but authorities believe it was Ildiko Krajnyak (IL-di-koh KRY-nyak), a licensed cosmetologist, who owned the spa. Friends set up a fundraising campaign to cover her funeral costs and fly her son home from Seattle, where he attends college.

Krajnyak, 48, was originally from Hungary and had just visited there, according to her Facebook page and a neighbor. Her Facebook page showed photos from her home country, including a selfie outside the clinic where she trained to become an aesthetician 30 years ago.

Her Orange County business offered services such as facials, waxing and wrinkle treatments.

A voicemail recording at her business said the spa was closed through Monday and would reopen Tuesday, the day of the blast.

Irene White, a friend, read a statement Wednesday on behalf of Krajnyak's family, calling her death "a complete shock." The family asked for privacy as they mourn "a mother, a wife, a daughter and a friend." She said the family is cooperating with investigators.

The two customers injured underwent surgery Wednesday and were expected to survive. A third victim was treated for smoke inhalation.

Search warrants were served at the business and two other locations, including the Long Beach house of a man whose Facebook page features several photos with Krajnyak in Mexico, Canada and Portugal.

They also searched Krajnyak's house in Trabuco Canyon.

A neighbor there who would only give her first name as Tiffany said Krajnyak lived there with her estranged husband and mother, whom she cared for.

The couple, although separated, continued to live under the same roof, the neighbor said. Court records show they had filed jointly for bankruptcy in 2014 and the case was dismissed and closed Monday.

Attorney Andrew Bisom, who represented Krajnyak and Ronilo Vestil during the Chapter 13 bankruptcy proceedings, said they were far along on their mandated payment plan but hadn't completed it.

Bisom did not know them well and said there was nothing that stood out about them or their case.

The two-story building where the explosion had blown siding off the walls and shattered windows was closed Wednesday as bomb technicians and investigators from the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives sifted through debris.

Pieces of the explosive device recovered were sent to the FBI's laboratory in Quantico, Virginia, to be analyzed, Delacourt said.

Balsamo reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press journalists Amy Taxin in Orange, Brian Melley, Christopher Weber and John Antczak in Los Angeles and researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

Michigan State agrees to pay \$500M to settle Nassar claims

By DAVID EGGERT and ED WHITE, Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Michigan State University agreed to pay \$500 million to settle claims from more than 300 women and girls who said they were assaulted by sports doctor Larry Nassar in the worst sex-abuse case in sports history, officials announced Wednesday.

The deal surpasses the \$100 million-plus paid by Penn State University to settle claims by at least 35 people who accused assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky of sexual abuse, though the Nassar agreement involves far more victims.

Michigan State was accused of ignoring or dismissing complaints about Nassar, some as far back as the 1990s. The school had insisted that no one covered up assaults, although Nassar's boss was later charged with failing to properly supervise him and committing his own sexual misconduct.

"We are truly sorry to all the survivors and their families for what they have been through, and we admire the courage it has taken to tell their stories," said Brian Breslin, chairman of Michigan State's governing board. "We recognize the need for change on our campus and in our community around sexual assault awareness and prevention."

It is not clear how much each victim will receive, although the money will not be divided equally. It is also unclear where the money will come from. University spokeswoman Emily Guerrant said school leaders will now work on a way to pay the bill.

Rachael Denhollander of Louisville, Kentucky, who in 2016 was the first woman to publicly identify herself as a victim, said the agreement "reflects the incredible damage which took place on MSU's campus." But she said she still has not seen any "meaningful reform" at the university.

Nassar treated campus athletes and scores of young gymnasts at his Michigan State office, building an international reputation while working at the same time for USA Gymnastics, which trains Olympians.

The university and lawyers for 332 victims announced the deal after negotiating privately with the help of a mediator. Under the agreement, \$425 million will be paid to current claimants and \$75 million will be set aside for any future claims. Lawyers will also be compensated out of the \$500 million pool.

Nassar, 54, pleaded guilty to molesting women and girls under the guise of treatment and was caught with child pornography. He is serving three prison sentences that will likely keep him locked up for life.

More than 250 women and girls gave statements in court when Nassar was sentenced in January and February. Since that time, even more accusers have stepped forward, which accounts for the larger number of people covered by the Michigan State agreement.

Nassar's assaults were mostly committed in Michigan at his Lansing-area home, campus clinic and area gyms. But his accusers also said he molested them at a gymnastics-training ranch in Texas and at national and international competitions. Nassar's work far away from campus was spelled out in his employment contract with Michigan State.

During the sentencing hearings, many accusers described an ultra-competitive gymnastics culture in which authority figures could not be questioned and Nassar was free to abuse young patients year after year. They said they had little choice to see doctors other than Nassar, who was renowned throughout the sport.

He counted on his charm and reputation to deflect any questions. He was so brazen that he sometimes molested patients in front of their parents, shielding the young girls with his body or a sheet. His clinic was decorated with signed photos of Olympic stars, bolstering his credentials to star-struck athletes and

their families.

Olympic gold medalists Jordyn Wieber, Aly Raisman, Gabby Douglas and McKayla Maroney say they were among Nassar's victims.

Other cases involved participants in soccer, figure skating, rowing, softball, cheerleading, wrestling, diving, dance, and track and field.

"This historic settlement came about through the bravery of more than 300 women and girls who had the courage to stand up and refuse to be silenced," said John Manly, the lead attorney for the victims.

The scandal rocked Michigan State, leading to the resignation of President Lou Anna Simon on Jan. 24 and athletic director Mark Hollis two days later. The fallout has also pushed out many leaders at the top of competitive gymnastics.

The school has about 39,000 undergraduate students. Its general fund budget is \$1.36 billion. Roughly \$983 million comes from tuition and fees, and \$281 million is from the state.

The settlement applies only to Michigan State. Lawsuits are still pending against Indianapolis-based USA Gymnastics, the U.S. Olympic Committee and an elite gymnastics club in the Lansing-area.

Under the deal, the victims are required to withdraw their support for two bills passed by the state Senate. They would strip an immunity defense in sexual misconduct civil cases if public entities are negligent and waive minors from legal notice requirements in such lawsuits, Manly said.

Other measures that would retroactively extend the time limit to sue and expand and strengthen Michigan's mandatory reporter law remain alive in the House.

White reported from Detroit.

Trump rails against California for its immigration policies

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Wednesday hammered California for its so-called sanctuary immigration policies, in what appeared to be his latest push to embolden his base leading into the midterm elections.

As the debate over immigration heats up on Capitol Hill, Trump surrounded himself with mayors, sheriffs and other local leaders from California who oppose the state's immigration policies and who applauded his administration's hard-line efforts.

"This is your Republican resistance right here against what they're doing in California," said California Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez, coopting a term used by Democrats opposed to Trump's presidency. She, like others, said the president and his policies were far more popular in the state than people realize.

"It's a crisis," Melendez said of the situation.

They were responding to legislation signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown last year that bars police from asking people about their immigration status or helping federal agents with immigration enforcement. Jail officials can transfer inmates to federal immigration authorities if they have been convicted of one of about 800 crimes, mostly felonies, but not for minor offenses.

Brown insists the legislation, which took effect Jan. 1, doesn't prevent federal immigration officials from doing their jobs. But the Trump administration has sued to reverse it, calling the policies unconstitutional and dangerous. Some counties, including San Diego and Orange, have voted to support the lawsuit or passed their own anti-sanctuary resolutions.

Republicans see backlash to the law as a potentially galvanizing issue during the midterm elections, especially with Trump's anti-immigrant base. And Trump has held numerous events in recent months during which he's drawn attention to California's policies.

During Wednesday's session, Trump thanked the officials, saying they had "bravely resisted California's deadly and unconstitutional sanctuary state laws." He claimed those laws are forcing "the release of illegal immigrant criminals, drug dealers, gang members and violent predators into your communities" and

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providing "safe harbor to some of the most vicious and violent offenders on earth."

Trump also claimed opposition to the policies was growing, insisting, "There's a revolution going on in California." He referred to some who cross the border illegally as "animals," not people.

Brown responded on Twitter, writing that Trump "is lying on immigration, lying about crime and lying about the laws of CA."

The Democratic governor added: "Flying in a dozen Republican politicians to flatter him and praise his reckless policies changes nothing. We, the citizens of the fifth largest economy in the world, are not impressed."

The event came as top House Republicans worked to head off an attempt by party moderates to force roll calls on four immigration bills. Republican leaders privately warned GOP lawmakers Wednesday that such a drive could damage the party's prospects in the fall's congressional elections by dispiriting conservative voters, according to people at the closed-door meeting.

The House leaders fear the winning legislation would be a compromise bill backed solidly by Democrats but opposed by most Republicans, an outcome that could anger conservatives, according to Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., a leader of the effort to force the immigration votes.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., issued the warning, said a second person who was in the room and spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the private conversation.

Asked about his remarks, McCarthy said his objection to the procedure was that it would in effect "turn the floor over" to Democrats.

House Speaker Paul Ryan said the petition would be "a big mistake" that would "disunify our majority." He said the leaders were "working with the administration."

The moderates said later Wednesday that House leaders were trying to end the immigration standoff and that they could soon see a specific proposal on how to do that.

"We're willing to see what this looks like," said Rep. Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla., a leader of the lawmakers trying to force the House to address the issue. Conservatives had their own session with party leaders and also suggested there had been movement, but offered no specifics.

Many of the legislators demanding action face potentially competitive re-election races in congressional districts with large numbers of Hispanic, suburban or agriculture-industry voters with pro-immigration views.

Earlier this year, competing bills aimed at protecting young immigrants and toughening border security — including one backed by Trump — collapsed in the Senate. The measures never received House votes.

The discussion also comes as the Trump administration is under fire for a new policy that is expected to increase the number of children separated from their parents when families cross the border illegally.

Trump, in his remarks, wrongly blamed Democrats for forcing his administration's hand.

"I know what you're going through right now with families is very tough," he told Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, "but those are the bad laws that the Democrats gave us. We have to break up families ... because of the Democrats. It's terrible."

But no law "the Democrats gave us" mandates the separation of children from their parents at the border. The administration is using protocols described in a 2008 law designed to combat child trafficking that gave special protections to Central American children at the border. While the bill was authored by Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein, it unanimously passed both houses of Congress and was signed by Republican President George W. Bush as one of his last acts in office.

Nielsen on Tuesday defended the practice, telling a Senate committee that removing children from parents facing criminal charges happens "in the United States every day."

Trump also told Nielsen that she was "doing a good job," one week after berating her during a cabinet meeting for failing to halt border crossings.

Feinstein issued a statement accusing the Trump administration of "once again attempting to divide Californians and all Americans with today's White House meeting."

"Their decision to convene this meeting is about fueling fear of immigrants and scapegoating entire communities," she said.

Associated Press writers Alan Fram in Washington, Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

DA: Children in California home were strangled, waterboarded

By JONATHAN J. COOPER and JANIE HAR, Associated Press

FAIRFIELD, Calif. (AP) — Prosecutors allege in court documents filed Wednesday that the 10 children rescued from a Northern California home were punched, kicked, strangled, shot with a BB gun and subjected to waterboarding by their father and their mother did nothing to stop it.

The details of the alleged abuse were included in a motion to increase the bail of Ina Rogers, 31, who was charged with nine counts of felony child abuse Wednesday in Solano Superior Court. Rogers did not enter a plea, but has previously denied allegations her children were harmed. She also faces 1 count of child neglect involving all 10 children.

"On a continuous basis the children were getting punched, strangled, bitten, shot with weapons such as crossbows and bb guns, hit with weapons such as sticks and bats, subjected to 'waterboarding' and having scalding water poured on them," Solano County Deputy District Attorney Veronica Juarez wrote in the bail request.

Since announcing Monday that they had removed the children from the home where they say torture was carried out "for sadistic purposes," prosecutors have refused to discuss further details of the allegations against Rogers and her husband Jonathan Allen, 29. He has pleaded not guilty to nine counts of felony child abuse and seven counts of felony torture. He is being held on \$5.2 million bail.

Records show the 10 children removed from the house March 31 are 6 months to 12 years old, but the documents do not specify which child suffered which injuries.

The motion states that when Fairfield Police arrived at the two-story house in a suburb 46 miles (74 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco on March 31, they found the children "huddled together on the living room floor" in a home littered with feces and trash.

"The children appeared to be skittish and spoke with speech impediments," she wrote.

Juarez alleges Rogers assisted in the abuse and "dissuaded the children" from reporting their injuries, which included broken arms.

On Wednesday, Judge William J. Pendergast set bail at \$495,000 for Rogers, saying she "may not be a danger to the public at large, but these charges make clear she is a danger to the children."

It's unclear whether any California government agencies had an opportunity to intervene sooner or knew of turmoil in the household.

Solano County court records show that Allen was charged with four felonies in 2011, including corporal injury, assault with a firearm and criminal threats in a case involving his wife, identified by her initials, I.R.

Prosecutors alleged Allen used a .22 caliber revolver in some of the crimes.

He pleaded no contest to corporal injury as part of a deal with prosecutors. He was sentenced to 180 days and three years of probation. Prosecutors dropped the other charges.

Rogers told reporters that she had one prior interaction with child welfare officials when her mother "had mentioned something" that prompted a home visit. Officials took pictures of the children and interviewed them individually, she said.

"Nothing was founded, my kids were placed back with me," she said.

Solano County's Child Welfare Services department officials did not immediately provide information on details about the visit or other interactions they may have had with members of the household.

Rogers says she home-schooled the children, but the Fairfield, California, home was not registered as a private school and neither were three prior addresses where the family lived in Fairfield and Vallejo, according to the California Department of Education.

California law requires children to be enrolled in public school unless they meet specific exemptions, such as documented attendance at a private school. Parents who teach their own children are required to register with the state, but the state does not approve, monitor or inspect them.

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The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District had no record that the students attended any school in the district, said Tim Goree, a district spokesman.

Police responding to a missing juvenile report found a home filled with rotted food and human and animal waste, Fairfield Lt. Greg Hurlbut said. Police removed the children and arrested Rogers on suspicion of neglect. She was released after posting \$10,000 bail.

Stories about alleged abuse dating back years came out gradually in interviews with the children over the past six weeks, authorities said.

Rogers was taken into custody after the hearing. Her court-appointed attorney, Barry Newman, declined comment.

Har reported from San Francisco.

AP analysis shows how Bill Gates influences education policy

By SALLY HO, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates saw an opportunity with a new federal education law that has widespread repercussions for American classrooms.

His nonprofit Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has given about \$44 million to outside groups over the past two years to help shape new state education plans required under the 2015 law, according to an Associated Press analysis of its grants. The spending paid for research aligned with Gates' interests, led to friendly media coverage and had a role in helping write one state's new education system framework.

The grants illustrate how strategic and immersive the Microsoft founder can be in pursuit of his education reform agenda, quietly wielding national influence over how schools operate. Gates' carefully curated web of influence is often invisible but allows his foundation to drive the conversation in support of its vision on how to reshape America's struggling school systems.

Critics call it meddling by a foundation with vast wealth and resources. The Gates Foundation says it's simply helping states navigate a "tectonic" shift in responsibility for education — from the federal government to more local control.

"For 50 states with varying sets of capacities and capabilities and readiness, it was both an opportunity and also a concern that states and partners in those states needed support," said Allan Golston, president of the Gates Foundation's U.S. work.

The Gates Foundation spent about \$44 million focused on the 2015 federal education law called the Every Student Succeeds Act. The law gives states flexibility to create their own education system framework defining what a "good school" is — and in turn states get federal dollars for complying with their own rules.

The law requires academic standards, which means that the backbone for most state education systems is Common Core — a symbol for many critics during the Obama years of federal overreach in schools. Gates was influential in supporting the Common Core academic standards, and now is doing the same as states sort out the best ways to implement their education policies under the 2015 law.

And that is how the world's largest philanthropy works: funding everything from policy work on the ground to broader research and analysis, as well as national advocacy groups, community leaders and media coverage both mainstream and niche.

In Tennessee, a Gates-funded advocacy group had a say in the state's new education plan, with its leader sitting on an important advising committee. A media outlet given money by Gates to cover the new law then published a story about research funded by Gates. And many Gates-funded groups have become the de facto experts who lead the conversation in local communities. Gates also dedicated millions of dollars to protect Common Core as the new law unfolded.

Some Common Core and Gates critics said they weren't aware of the foundation's interest in the education law or the millions of dollars it has continued to pour into supporting the standards. "They're doing it in a quiet way because they don't want the general public to know they're still meddling in education policy," said Carol Burris of the Network for Public Education.

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And long before thousands of fed-up teachers walked off the job in four unprecedented statewide strikes this year over pay and school conditions, education union officials had sounded alarm about Gates' influence. The American Federation of Teachers in 2014 broke ties with Gates over Common Core after initially supporting the standards.

To be sure, the Seattle-based foundation's education spending is just a small fraction of its philanthropy, which is primarily focused on global health and development. Still, in terms of dollars, it is the top funder of school reform in the United States. The foundation since 2001 has contributed more than \$6 billion toward reshaping American schools, including nearly \$300 million on Common Core by some estimates.

The groups receiving the recent education grants said the money from Gates and other like-minded philanthropies — such as the Carnegie Corporation of New York and William and Flora Hewlett foundations — was used to develop expertise in the education law so that they could be a resource to states. Most of those same groups have been funded by Gates in other initiatives, including prominent Washington-based policy players who developed Common Core in 2009.

Achieve, Inc., collaborated with local leaders to compile information about new state education plans. Mike Cohen, Achieve's president who helped write Common Core, also had more notable roles in states such as Tennessee and New York.

"Our focus has always been about standards, about helping states set the right expectations for students in terms of what they need to know so that they're prepared for success after high school," said Cohen, who was a member of a local stakeholders group in Tennessee focused on standards and assessments. He also gave a presentation to New York's Board of Regents urging the state to adopt high standards as part of its new education plan.

Tennessee said Cohen had a seat at the table because it sought national experts in addition to state officials, community advocacy groups and traditional and charter schools. Eve Carney, who led the plan's development for the Tennessee Department of Education, said it was impossible to quantify the specific impact of each of the 67 stakeholders across six working groups.

"It's important to have diversity in voice and different points of view, however, the influence of one over the other is not there," Carney said.

Another example of Gates' reach can be found in The 74 Media, Inc., which last year published an exclusive story featuring the analysis of state plans done by the Collaborative for Student Success and quoting an expert voice from the Council of Chief State School Officers. Gates gave all three groups money to work on Every Student Succeeds Act.

The publication said Gates doesn't influence the direction of its coverage and that the money funded its broader operation. After the AP's inquiry, the education news outlet acknowledged an oversight by updating the nearly year-old story to add a Gates funding disclosure.

Golston said it's necessary to take a multidimensional approach to play at the system-wide level.

"We're thoughtful about the programmatic dimensions and advocacy and communications dimensions. That's just the nature of being in education and we've learned over time that you have to be thoughtful," Golston said.

Associated Press journalist Larry Fenn contributed from New York.

Follow Sally Ho at https://twitter.com/_sallyho .

Senate backs effort to restore 'net neutrality' rules

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Democrats, joined by three Republicans, pushed through a measure Wednesday intended to revive Obama-era internet rules that ensured equal treatment for all web traffic, though opposition in the House and the White House seems insurmountable.

Republicans on the short end of the 52-47 vote described the effort to reinstate "net neutrality" rules as

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"political theater" because the GOP-controlled House is not expected to take up the issue and the Senate's margin could not overcome a presidential veto.

Democrats, however, were undeterred, saying their push would energize young voters who are tech savvy and value unfettered access to the internet. "This is a defining vote. The most important vote we're going to have in this generation on the internet," said Democratic Sen. Edward Markey of Massachusetts, who sponsored the measure.

At issue are rules that the Federal Communications Commission repealed in December that prevented providers such as AT&T, Comcast and Verizon from interfering with internet traffic and favoring their own sites and apps. Critics, including the Trump administration, said overregulation was stifling innovation, and they backed the FCC's move, which is still set to take effect next month.

Markey said net neutrality has worked for the smallest voices and the largest, but he said internet service providers are trying to change the rules to benefit their interests.

Republicans said they were willing to work with Democrats on enshrining the principle of net neutrality in legislation. But they wanted to also ensure that regulatory efforts didn't get in the way of innovation and quickly evolving internet services.

Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., said the internet thrived long before the Obama administration stepped in with rules in 2015, and he predicted that when the FCC repeal is in place, consumers won't notice a change in their service.

"That's what we're going back to: rules that were in place for two decades under a light-touch regulatory approach that allowed the internet to explode and prosper and grow," Thune said.

But the FCC's move has stirred fears among consumer advocates that cable and phone giants will be free to block access to services they don't like or set up "fast lanes" for preferred services — in turn, relegating everyone else to "slow lanes."

Tech companies have been signaling that the repeal of net neutrality could lead to significant financial consequences.

In its annual report filed in January, Netflix said the repeal of net neutrality, and the possibility that other "favorable laws" may change, could result in "discriminatory or anti-competitive practices that could impede our growth, cause us to incur additional expense or otherwise negatively affect our business."

Other businesses have echoed this statement. In Spotify's pre-IPO filing in February, the company said laws limiting "internet neutrality" could "decrease user demand for our service and increase our cost of doing business."

Similarly, Snapchat parent Snap said in February that adopting laws that "adversely affect the growth, popularity, or use of the internet, including laws governing internet neutrality, could decrease the demand for our products and increase our cost of doing business."

A consortium of tech companies from Etsy to IAC, which operates Tinder and OKCupid, have banded together to create a campaign called "Red Alert," which supports the congressional vote and other efforts to preserve net neutrality.

Joining all Democratic senators in voting to reverse the FCC's action were GOP Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, John Kennedy of Louisiana and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.

In recent months, Republicans have used the tools made available in the Congressional Review Act to overturn several environmental, health and safety rules put into place in the final months of the Obama administration. This time, however, it was Democrats who led the effort to kill a rule supported by the Trump administration.

"This is our chance, our best chance to make sure the internet stays accessible and affordable to all Americans," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

"Net neutrality is what allows the internet to be a tool for free speech, permissionless innovation and diverse voices on an infinite number of websites," said Chris Lewis, vice president at the advocacy group Public Knowledge.

But the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a think tank, said Congress was taking the wrong tack. Instead of blocking the FCC's rule repeal, it suggested that policymakers work toward "bipar-

tisan compromise legislation that will stand the test of time.”

AP Writer Mae Anderson in New York contributed to this report.

North Carolina teachers demand better funding in large march

By EMERY P. DALESIO and GARY D. ROBERTSON, Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Thousands of teachers filled the main street of North Carolina’s capital Wednesday demanding better pay and more funding for public schools, hoping to achieve what other educators around the country accomplished by pressuring lawmakers for change.

City blocks turned red, the color of shirts worn by marchers chanting “We care! We vote!” and “This is What Democracy Looks Like!” An estimated 19,000 people joined the march, according to the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, which based its number in part on aerial photos.

“I feel the current politicians in charge of the state are anti-public education,” Raleigh high school teacher Bill Notarnicola said as he prepared a time-lapse photo of the march. “The funds are not keeping up with the growth. We are seeing cutback, after cutback, after cutback.”

Many teachers entered the Legislative Building, continuing to chant as the Republican-controlled legislature held short floor meetings to start its annual work session. Most teachers quieted down when asked, but a woman who yelled, “Education is a Right: That is why we have to fight,” was among four escorted from the Senate gallery. No arrests were made.

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper spoke at a rally across the street, promoting his proposal to pay for higher salaries by blocking tax cuts that Republicans decided to give corporations and high-income households next January. GOP leaders have flatly rejected his idea.

Cooper, who is working to eliminate the GOP’s veto-proof majorities in fall elections, urged teachers to ask lawmakers, “are you going to support even more tax cuts for corporations and the very wealthy, or are you going to support much better teacher pay and investment in our public schools?”

Previous strikes, walkouts and protests in West Virginia, Arizona, Kentucky, Colorado and Oklahoma led legislators in each state to improve pay, benefits or overall school funding. Wednesday’s march in North Carolina prompted more than three-dozen school districts that educate more than two-thirds of the state’s 1.5 million public school students to cancel class.

But these Republican leaders appear determined not to change course under pressure, and North Carolina educators aren’t unionized, so they have fewer options for organized protest than teachers in some of these other states. Some, in fact, had to seek personal days off Wednesday and pay \$50 for a substitute before districts canceled class.

The demands of their main advocacy group, the North Carolina Association of Educators, include raising per-pupil spending and pay for teachers and support staff to the national average, and increasing school construction to match the state’s population growth.

North Carolina teachers earn about \$50,000 on average, ranking 39th in the country last year, the National Education Association reported last month. Their pay increased by 4.2 percent over the previous year — the second-biggest increase in the country — and was estimated to rise an average 1.8 percent this year, but that still represents a 9.4 percent slide in real income since 2009 due to inflation, the NEA said.

State Senate leader Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore, both Republicans, have made clear they have no plans to funnel more money to classrooms by postponing January’s planned tax cuts, as Cooper has proposed.

And Republican Sen. Bill Cook said he thinks Wednesday’s march was mostly about supporting the Democratic Party in a political season.

Republican legislators have focused on increasing pay based on merit, rather than treating all teachers as if they were equally productive, he said.

“A lot of people want to throw money at a problem, and that’s helpful some times. But you’ve got to be smart about what you’re doing with your money. What we’ve tried to do is put it into pay in such a way

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that we reward people for doing a good job," Cook said.

But Rachel Holdridge, a special education teacher at Wilmington's Alderman Elementary School, said lawmakers have let teachers down by failing to equip them properly to do their jobs. Despite 22 years' experience, she said she drives for Uber to make ends meet.

"They keep giving tiny raises and taking so much away from the kids," Holdridge said outside the Legislative Building. She takes a sober view of how much the march will accomplish, but said: "You've got to start somewhere."

Barbara Faulkner, a 38-year-old English teacher at South Granville High School who makes \$53,000 per year, said her house went into foreclosure because she had planned for a seniority-based raise plan that was stopped a decade ago.

But she's also concerned about basic school needs going unfunded.

"We have a library but no librarian. You can't check out books," she said. "The collection hasn't been updated. The library is for storage and meetings. The books are on the floor."

Associated Press writers Allen G. Breed and Jonathan Drew contributed to this report.

Follow Emery P. Dalesio on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/emerydalesio> . His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/emery%20dalesio>

Trump: US hasn't been notified about threat to cancel summit

By **ZEKE MILLER** and **CATHERINE LUCEY**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Amid fresh uncertainty over his planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he is committed to pressing for the country to abandon its nuclear program as part of any meeting.

North Korea threatened earlier in the day to scrap the historic summit between Trump and Kim, saying it has no interest in a "one-sided" affair meant to pressure the North to abandon its nuclear weapons. But Trump appeared to shrug off the warning saying the U.S. hadn't been notified.

"We haven't seen anything, we haven't heard anything," Trump said as he welcomed the president of Uzbekistan to the White House. "We will see what happens."

The warning from North Korea's first vice foreign minister came after the country abruptly canceled a high-level meeting with South Korea to protest U.S.-South Korean military exercises that the North has long claimed are an invasion rehearsal.

Behind the scenes, White House aides tried to soothe South Korean frustrations over the canceled meeting with the North as they continue to plan for the summit, set for June 12 in Singapore, as if nothing had changed. U.S. officials compared the threat to Trump's own warning that he might walk away from the summit if he determines Kim is not serious about abandoning his nuclear program.

The direction from the Oval Office to White House aides and other U.S. national security agencies Wednesday was to downplay the North Korean threats and not "take the bait" by overreacting to the provocation, said a senior U.S. official. The official wasn't authorized to discuss internal conversation publicly and requested anonymity.

National Security Adviser John Bolton told Fox News Radio Wednesday that "we are trying to be both optimistic and realistic at the same time."

Bolton, who was called out by name by the North for saying that the U.S. is seeking an outcome similar to Libya's unilateral nuclear disarmament, said the personal attack raised the question of "whether this really is a sign that that they're not taking our objective of denuclearization seriously."

North Korean first vice foreign minister Kim Kye Gwan said in a statement carried by state media that "we are no longer interested in a negotiation that will be all about driving us into a corner and making a one-sided demand for us to give up our nukes and this would force us to reconsider whether we would accept the North Korea-U.S. summit meeting."

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In its commentaries published through the state-run news agency, North Korea steered clear of criticizing Trump himself and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who last week met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for the second time in little more than one month and brought home three American prisoners. That suggested it still wants the summit to go ahead.

But it also took the opportunity to air its own negotiating position and take aim at Bolton, who has suggested that negotiations in 2004 that led to the shipping of nuclear components to the U.S. from Libya under Moammar Gadhafi would be a good model for North Korea as well — although Gadhafi was deposed seven years later following a NATO-led military campaign. The North on Wednesday described that proposal as a “sinister move” to bring about its own collapse.

North Korea may have also been responding to aims for the summit aired by Bolton and Pompeo in Sunday morning talk shows last weekend.

Bolton told ABC that denuclearization means getting rid of all the North’s nuclear weapons, dismantling them and taking them to Oakridge, Tennessee, where the U.S. developed its atomic bomb during World War II and retains a nuclear and high-technology research laboratory. Bolton added that North Korea would have to get rid of its uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing facilities, reveal their weapons sites and allow open inspections.

The toughest of North Korea’s statements was issued in the name of Kim Kye Gwan, who was a leading negotiator of an aid-for-disarmament deal that collapsed under the G. W. Bush administration at a time when Bolton was serving as undersecretary of state for arms control and North Korea was suspected of secretly seeking to enrich uranium.

The State Department emphasized that North Korea’s leader had previously indicated he understood the need and purpose of the U.S. continuing its long-planned exercises with South Korea. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said the U.S. had not heard anything directly from North or South Korea that would change that.

“We will continue to go ahead and plan the meeting between President Trump and Kim Jong Un,” Nauert said.

Press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said earlier Wednesday that preparations for the summit were ongoing despite the cancellation threat and that Trump is hopeful the meeting will still take place.

“If it doesn’t, we’ll continue the maximum pressure campaign that’s been ongoing,” she told Fox & Friends.

Oregon Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden said he is concerned that talks are “really being oversimplified” by the White House.

“This is not a like condo deal where two people sit down and hash out a number of outstanding issues and then they say ‘Well, some lawyers can write it up,’” he said.

Associated Press writers Matthew Pennington, Jill Colvin, Josh Lederman, and Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

Lawyer says Rapper T.I. ‘wrongfully arrested’ near his home

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr., Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The rapper T.I. was arrested early Wednesday as he tried to enter his gated community outside Atlanta and was charged with disorderly conduct, public drunkenness and simple assault — but the artist’s lawyer called it a wrongful arrest.

T.I. is one of the biggest names in hip-hop, with multiple platinum-selling albums and singles, production credits and roles in films like “ATL” and “American Gangster.”

Henry County Deputy Police Chief Mike Ireland said the rapper was arrested around 4:30 a.m. after he got into an argument with a security guard. Media reports say the Grammy-winning artist, whose real name is Clifford Harris, had lost his key and the guard wouldn’t let him into the community.

Ireland said T.I. and a friend were arrested. The rapper has been released on bail.

His attorney, Steve Sadow, said in a statement Wednesday that the rapper was “wrongfully arrested.”

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He said the guard was asleep when his client arrived at the guardhouse and it took "some time to wake up the sleeping guard."

Sadow said T.I. identified himself and sought entry, but the guard refused. The rapper contacted his wife Tameka "Tiny" Cottle, who confirmed that her husband should be allowed inside the community.

"The guard continued to refuse entry without justification," Sadow said in a statement, referring to T.I. as Tip. "Words were exchanged and apparently the guard and/or a supervisor called the police. When the police arrived, they were not interested in hearing Tip's side of the story and wrongfully chose to end the situation by arresting Tip."

The rapper served about seven months in prison in 2009 after his arrest on federal gun charges.

He also spent about 10 months in federal prison on a probation violation in 2010 after he was arrested on drug charges in Los Angeles. The drug arrest violated his probation — he had been ordered not to commit a crime and not to illegally possess any controlled substances — and led to an 11-month prison sentence at an Arkansas prison.

Despite T.I.'s arrest Wednesday, the rapper has stayed out of trouble for the past several years. He's been active in the community, focusing on youth programs for boys and girls, and has said he feels his role continues to grow in helping those that need assistance the most. He also is one of 38 advisers for new Atlanta mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms' first 100 days in office.

Last month, T.I. was among thousands who marched in a rally on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The rapper also has taken part in a past march in Atlanta against police-involved shooting deaths of African-Americans. He has said he intends to focus on doing things that "affect our communities in a positive light."

A year ago, the rapper said he only planned to release about two or three more albums, telling The Associated Press in an interview that it was "definitely time to transition."

T.I.'s hits include "What You Know," "Whatever You Like" and "Live Your Life." In 2016, he released the politically charged projects "Us or Else" and "Us or Else: Letter to the System." They served as inspiration for his short film, "Us or Else," which subsequently debuted on BET.

With little to lose, Gaza's men drawn to border protests

By FARES AKRAM, Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Marwan Shtewi is poor, unemployed and at the age of 32 has never even left the Gaza Strip.

With few prospects and little to fear, Shtewi is among the crowds of young men who put themselves on the front lines of violent protests along the border with Israel, risking their lives in a weekly showdown meant to draw attention to the dire conditions of Gaza.

While protest organizers voice slogans of defending Jerusalem and returning to the lost homes of their forefathers in Israel, it is the desperation among young men like Shtewi that has been the driving force in the demonstrations. Recovering from a gunshot wound to his arm that sent shrapnel into his abdomen, Shtewi says his protest days are now behind him and he only dreams of finally finding a job.

"I want to see peace and hope and prosperity spread in Gaza when I get out of the hospital," he said from his hospital bed.

The Hamas-led organizers of what they called the Great March of Return initially billed the six-week protests as a call to break through the border fence and return to homes that were lost 70 years ago during the war surrounding Israel's creation. Two-thirds of Gaza's 2 million people are descendants of refugees who either fled or were forced from their homes.

But most protesters say they are simply driven by desperation caused by a decade-long blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt after the Islamic militants seized power from the internationally backed Palestinian Authority in 2007.

Israel says the blockade is needed to prevent Hamas, which seeks Israel's destruction, from building up its military capabilities.

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The blockade has largely sealed Gaza's borders, greatly limiting the movement of people and goods in and out of the territory. The rival Palestinian Authority, based in the West Bank, has added to the pressure by cutting salaries to its former workforce and limiting electricity transmission.

The results are staggering. Gazans receive only several hours of electricity a day, unable to predict when power will come on. Tap water is undrinkable, and the Mediterranean beachfront smells from the tons of untreated sewage dumped into it each day. Unemployment is over 40 percent, and among young men like Shtewi, joblessness is even higher, at nearly two-thirds.

The difficult conditions have created a seemingly endless pool of disaffected youth ready to square off against the Israeli snipers over the border.

Tens of thousands of people have joined the gatherings each week. Most keep a safe distance from the border fence, but small groups of young men have pushed to the front lines to snip off pieces of the structure with wire cutters, or hurl flaming tires, firebombs and stones toward the Israeli troops.

Shtewi said he "sometimes" throws stones or sets tires on fire, but most of the time he just stands there to kill time. "The protests are a new way to break the boredom," he said.

He said it's easy to get caught up in the excitement and try to damage the fence. But, he added, "sometimes fear overwhelms me, and I hide behind people because I'm afraid of being shot."

Israeli gunfire has killed more than 110 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more since the protests began on March 30. On Monday, 59 people were killed in the deadliest day of cross-border violence since a 2014 war between Israel and Hamas. Shtewi was among some 1,300 others wounded by live fire.

With his left arm and abdomen covered in bandages, he struggled to remember what happened when he was shot.

"I went with the youths and was almost at the fence. There was random shooting and tear gas," he said. "A jeep came and fired tear gas. I was hit. I don't know how and when I ended up here."

The high casualty count has drawn international condemnations against Israel and accusations that it is using disproportionate force. Just one soldier has been wounded.

Israel accuses Hamas of exploiting civilians and putting them in harm's way by encouraging them to rush the fence. It also says the militants are using the large crowds and thick black smoke as cover to plant bombs, fire at troops and try to break through the border to carry out attacks.

Shtewi said he does not belong to Hamas and has not received a cent from the militant group, though other activists say they have received food or small sums of money to gather tires.

He also said that he went to the protests without telling his parents or fiancée because they would object.

"If I knew, I would have barred him," said his mother, Fatma. "I lost my mind and ran out of the house when I learned about his injury because I thought he was martyred."

Shtewi grew up in Zeitoun, a hardscrabble neighborhood on the southern outskirts of Gaza City. Like many Gazans, Shtewi has never set foot outside the 25-mile-long (40-kilometer-long) strip of land. He was just 21 when Hamas seized power, and under the blockade, both Israel and Egypt tightly restrict travel through their borders.

Shtewi scrapes by with occasional work as a porter or day laborer. He said his dream is to immigrate to the United Arab Emirates, where his family once lived. He said he hears "there are good job opportunities there."

But for now, he said he just wants to find a job that will provide him enough money to get married. He still lives in his childhood home with his parents and five siblings. Some of his brothers are married and also live in the home with their children, each family in its own bedroom.

Like most Gaza residents, Shtewi directs his anger at Israel. In December, he participated in protests when President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Last summer, he was wounded in the leg by Israeli gunfire during Gaza protests against Israel's installation of metal detectors at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, in response to the killings of two police officers.

This week's shooting was far more serious. As he spoke, he pointed to IV tubes attached to his arm and asked his older brother, Fathi, when he would be released.

"Soon, God willing," his brother responded. Later, the brother whispered to their mother that an X-ray showed severe chest inflammation and it is unclear when he can be discharged.

Leaning against the wall, the older Shtewi said the solution is clear. People need work.

"When there is work, people will keep themselves busy and we will not see all of this anymore," he said.

Hamas says most slain Gaza protesters were its members

By TIA GOLDENBERG and FARES AKRAM, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Most of the protesters killed this week by Israeli fire along the border with the Gaza Strip were members of Hamas, the militant group said Wednesday, an assertion that deepens the starkly different narratives on both sides over the deaths.

Israel, which has faced blistering international criticism over its response, is likely to latch on to the remarks to bolster its claims that Hamas has used the weekly border protests as cover to stage attacks.

But human rights groups say the identity of slain protesters, including a possible affiliation to a militant group, is irrelevant if they were unarmed and did not pose an immediate threat to the lives of soldiers when they were shot.

In an interview with Baladna TV, a private Palestinian news outlet that broadcasts via Facebook, senior Hamas official Salah Bardawil said 50 out of the nearly 60 protesters killed Monday were Hamas members, with the others being "from the people."

Bardawil did not elaborate on the nature of their membership in the group and his claim could not be independently verified. It was unclear if the protesters he was referring to were militants or civilian supporters of the Islamic group, which rules Gaza and opposes Israel's existence.

The affiliation may matter little to those who have deemed Israel's response to the protests to be heavy-handed.

For Israel, it was enough to cement its narrative.

"It was clear to Israel and now it is clear to the whole world that there was no popular protest. This was an organized mob of terrorists organized by Hamas," said Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel had tallied similar numbers to Hamas and "won't let those who call for our destruction to breach our borders and to threaten our communities."

In response to the uproar over his remarks, Bardawil later said in a statement that Israel was "legitimizing the killing of Palestinians just because they are Palestinians or just because they are Hamas, even if they were unarmed and defending their dignity and rights."

Organizers say the wave of border protests is meant in large part to break a decade-old blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt and pressure Israel to ease its restrictions. Since the Hamas-led protests began March 30, more than 110 Palestinians have been killed and more than 2,500 wounded by live fire, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Palestinian officials say the vast majority of the casualties have been unarmed protesters. One Israeli soldier has been wounded.

The weekly protests peaked on Monday when about 40,000 Gaza residents descended on the border area. As in previous demonstrations, smaller groups of protesters broke away and moved closer to the border fence, burning tires, throwing stones or hurling firebombs. Some tried to attack the border fence.

Israeli snipers, perched behind sand berms, opened fire from the other side of the fence, killing 59 Palestinians and wounding hundreds.

Images of the protesters being whisked away in stretchers amid the tear gas contrasted sharply Monday with jubilant scenes of the opening of the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem by a high-powered American delegation and Israeli leaders. Hardly a mention was made of the border violence, only about an hour's drive away.

The Israeli army has defended its actions. It points to the violent history of Hamas, says there have been shootings and bombing attacks against its forces, and fears a mass border breach.

On Tuesday, the army released a video that appeared to show protesters detonating several explosions

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near the border. It also said its forces had killed a squad of Hamas gunmen who opened fire at troops.

Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, a military spokesman, said 14 of those killed Monday were actively involved in carrying out attacks.

Omar Shakir, the local director for Human Rights Watch, said that under international law, Israel cannot use lethal force against unarmed protesters, regardless of their identity or possible affiliation with a militant group.

"These individuals that were killed, regardless of their affiliation or membership, were engaged in a demonstration in which they did not pose an immediate threat to life and were gunned down, and that's what's relevant," Shakir said.

Israel says it uses live fire only as a last resort. Snipers are supposed to aim at protesters' legs and can shoot only with approval from a commander.

However, some protesters were shot while standing dozens of meters (yards) from the border fence or, in one case, while running away, according to video and witness accounts. At least nine of those killed were minors, including a 14-year-old boy who was taking cover from tear gas when he was shot last month.

Hamas' statement comes at a moment when Israel finds itself largely isolated over its response to the protests.

Countries have summoned and recalled ambassadors, the U.N. has issued condemnations and some have called for an investigation of Israel's actions. The Palestinians held a one-day general strike and called for three days of mourning for the victims.

The U.S. was among the few countries that came to Israel's defense, backing its right to protect its border on the same day that it countered international disapproval of moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Palestinians, who seek east Jerusalem as capital of their hoped-for state and vehemently oppose the U.S. move, recalled their ambassadors to four European countries that had supported it.

On Wednesday, Guatemala followed the U.S. lead, festively opening its new Jerusalem mission with Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales saying his country was bringing a message of "love, peace and fraternity" to Israel. Paraguay said it also will move its embassy to Jerusalem. Romania, the Czech Republic and Honduras have said they are considering doing the same.

Akram reported from Gaza City, Gaza Strip.

Emergency 911 technology struggles to keep up with the times

By LISA MARIE PANE, Associated Press

ROSWELL, Ga. (AP) — High school students hiding from the gunman in Parkland, Florida, were forced to whisper in calls to 911 for fear of tipping off their location. Others texted friends and family who then relayed information to emergency dispatchers over the phone.

A few months later, a woman in Michigan was able to send off short text messages to 911 dispatchers as her homicidal husband held their daughter hostage. She was able to convey enough information to help officers get to the scene and formulate a plan to stop the man without the family being harmed.

The two cases show how that in this era of active shooters, police shootings and global terrorism, a patchwork of technology around the country can make the experience of calling 911 vastly different depending on where you live. More cities have begun to accept text messages recently, but the system that Americans rely on during their most vulnerable moments still hinges largely on landline telephones, exposing a weak link that jeopardizes the ability of law enforcement to respond in an emergency.

"Most of the technology that's in the nation's 911 centers today is technology of last century. It's voice-centric communications," said Brian Fontes, chief executive officer of the National Emergency Number Association.

Nearly 80 percent of the nation's 911 calls come from cellphones. Yet the dispatchers on the other end are hampered by outdated technology that in most cases doesn't allow them to accept text messages, receive a live-streaming video or sometimes even easily detect where the caller is. It's a striking contrast

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at a time when text messaging is ubiquitous, video chats with friends and family on the other side of the world are common, and Uber and Lyft drivers can pinpoint precise locations of riders.

The issue received new attention this week after the results of a police investigation in Cincinnati revealed numerous breakdowns in the response to a teenager who got trapped under the backseat of his minivan and died despite voice-dialing 911.

Experts worry that the nation isn't focused enough on improving the system and it is causing delays in getting emergency responders to the scene as fast as possible.

One obstacle is that there's no federal mandate or standards for call centers, with each one managed by state and local governments. That means there's a wide range of standards, equipment and training. And a recent report by the Federal Communications Commission found that a surcharge paid by phone customers that is supposed to be directed to 911 is diverted by some states to other needs, to the tune of about \$128 million.

It would cost considerably more than that to upgrade every call center in the United States. But David Turetsky, former chief of the public safety and homeland security bureau at the FCC, said there could be ways to reduce those costs by ensuring the system is more interconnected and working together, rather than separately.

"This underinvestment is a choice and it costs lives and health and the thing about the 911 system is that none of us should be too confident that it might not be our own life or that of a loved one or a friend," he said.

Rep. Anna Eshoo, a Democrat who represents California's Silicon Valley, has been on a mission to modernize call centers since seeing one up close during an earthquake when she was on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. Her worries only grew after the 9/11 attacks.

She's visited all the call centers in her district and, she said, "the smaller ones, especially rural areas, you walk in and it looks like 1952 because they're not funded the way they should be. They need to be upgraded."

In December, she submitted legislation that would direct federal funds to state and local governments to allow them to upgrade their systems to "Next Generation 911."

It was Feb. 16, 1968, when the very first 911 call was placed — a test call made by a state senator in Alabama — and the system was born. It is now embedded in Americans at a young age to dial those three digits in an emergency. An estimated 270 million such calls are made each year in the United States.

Until recent years, dispatch centers might receive a handful of calls at most during an emergency. A witness to a car accident, for example, would have to get to a landline to alert authorities. And each landline phone is tied to a specific address, giving 911 operators instant access to their location.

But now in emergencies — whether it's a routine traffic accident or a fast-moving crisis like a mass shooting — 911 operators get inundated with dozens of calls. If the person is using a cellphone to call from inside a building, the location may not be immediately known. And if they're inside a high-rise, it's even more of a guessing game.

"That call could be on the 90th floor, it could be on the 40th floor, it could be on the second floor," said Rick Myers, executive director of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. "That's pretty damned important information for the responding officers to know."

There are scores of stories offering warning signs about the system's lapses — from a man who died last year after getting lost just seven miles from Bethel, Alaska, after rescuers weren't able to find him because his cell signal wouldn't pinpoint his location. A woman in metro Atlanta several years ago used her cellphone to call 911 after her SUV plunged into water. The cell call went to nearest cell tower, which was in a neighboring county — and that county wasn't familiar with the address she provided.

The biggest step many local governments have made with 911 is accepting text messages, including cities such as Phoenix, Arizona, but the vast majority still do not.

Melissa Alterio, the director of the 911 communications center in Roswell, Georgia, oversees a dispatch center that is among those accepting text messages.

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Roswell, a suburb about 20 miles north of Atlanta, sees between 400 and 600 calls every day. It got its first text 911 message shortly after beginning to accept them this spring, someone worried about a possibly suicidal friend.

At some point soon, dispatchers might be able to view video streaming, just like anyone checking out Facebook. She worries about when that happens, knowing the emotional toll it could have on dispatchers who already struggle with what they hear on the other end of the line.

"We have to do something to prepare them for what they will see," she said. "God forbid a situation like a Parkland happens. It's tough enough that they hear it. Seeing it as it happens is just another stressor."

Follow Lisa Marie Pane on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/lisamariepane>

Audio clip spurs social media debate over yanny or laurel

By SHAWN MARSH, Associated Press

Do you hear what I hear?

That was the question Wednesday as a short audio clip sparked a social media debate about whether the word being heard is "yanny" or "laurel." How one hears it is similar to how people viewed a dress on the internet three years ago and raised questions of whether the mind and ear can be out of sync.

The scientific explanation centers more on the quality of the recording and the resonance of speech sounds.

"This is a relatively low quality signal that is played over a variety of devices and the sound was developed to be on a perceptual border," said Todd Ricketts of Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Hearing and Speech Sciences Department.

"For example, with a full-range higher quality speaker, I clearly only hear laurel, but over my computer speakers, I clearly only hear yanny," Ricketts said.

Alicia Spoor, president of the Academy of Doctors of Audiology, agreed the quality was not good. She said the complicated answer has to do with "resonance of the speech sounds."

"When you say the word "yanny" and "laurel," the waveform looks very similar for the first band of energy resonance. However, there is a significant difference in the second and third resonances of the two words, which is how humans interpret the words," she said.

The debate began on Reddit and expanded throughout social media. Ellen DeGeneres tweeted that everything at her show stopped to see what people heard. She said she heard laurel. But New Age musician Yanni was in the yanny camp. Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan said he'd like "to declare something that is just so obvious: It is laurel and not yanny."

Some speculated online that the age of the listener might determine what was heard, while others changed the pitch to alter results.

"Age can play a role, as well as expectations, Spoor said. However, she still heard "laurel" when she changed the pitch.

For an analogy, she cited the 1969 Creedence Clearwater Revival song "Bad Moon Rising:" "There's a bad moon on the rise" versus "there's a bathroom on the right."

As for the dress that caused an earlier commotion, some people said it was white and gold, while others saw blue and black.

North Korea threatens to cancel Trump-Kim summit over drills

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea on Wednesday threatened to scrap a historic summit next month between its leader, Kim Jong Un, and U.S. President Donald Trump, saying it has no interest in a "one-sided" affair meant to pressure the North to abandon its nuclear weapons.

The warning by North Korea's first vice foreign minister came hours after the country abruptly canceled

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a high-level meeting with South Korea to protest U.S.-South Korean military exercises that the North has long claimed are an invasion rehearsal.

The surprise moves appear to cool what had been an unusual flurry of outreach from a country that last year conducted a provocative series of weapons tests that had many fearing the region was on the edge of war. Analysts said it's unlikely that North Korea intends to scuttle all diplomacy. More likely, they said, is that it wants to gain leverage ahead of the talks between Kim and Trump, scheduled for June 12 in Singapore.

In Washington, Trump said the U.S. hasn't been notified about the North Korean threat.

"We haven't seen anything. We haven't heard anything. We will see what happens," he said as he welcomed the president of Uzbekistan to the White House.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the administration is "still hopeful" that the summit will take place, and that threats from North Korea to scrap the meeting were "something that we fully expected."

She said Trump is "ready for very tough negotiations," adding that "if they want to meet, we'll be ready and if they don't that's OK." She said if there is no meeting, the U.S. would "continue with the campaign of maximum pressure" against the North.

North Korean first vice foreign minister Kim Kye Gwan said in a statement carried by state media that "we are no longer interested in a negotiation that will be all about driving us into a corner and making a one-sided demand for us to give up our nukes and this would force us to reconsider whether we would accept the North Korea-U.S. summit meeting."

He criticized recent comments by Trump's top security adviser, John Bolton, and other U.S. officials who have said the North should follow the "Libyan model" of nuclear disarmament and provide a "complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement." He also took issue with U.S. views that the North should fully relinquish its biological and chemical weapons.

Some analysts say bringing up Libya, which dismantled its rudimentary nuclear program in the 2000s in exchange for sanctions relief, jeopardizes progress in negotiations with the North. Kim Jong Un took power weeks after former Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's gruesome death at the hands of rebel forces amid a popular uprising in October 2011. The North has frequently used Gadhafi's death to justify its own nuclear development in the face of perceived U.S. threats.

The North's warning Wednesday fits a past North Korean pattern of raising tensions to bolster its positions ahead of negotiations with Washington and Seoul. But the country also has a long history of scrapping deals with its rivals at the last minute.

In 2013, North Korea abruptly canceled reunions for families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War just days before they were scheduled to begin to protest what it called rising animosities ahead of joint drills between Seoul and Washington. In 2012, the North conducted a prohibited long-range rocket launch weeks after it agreed to suspend weapons tests in return for food assistance.

On Wednesday, senior officials from the two Koreas were to sit down at a border village to discuss how to implement their leaders' recent agreements to reduce military tensions along their heavily fortified border and improve overall ties. But hours before the meeting was to start, the North informed the South that it would "indefinitely suspend" the talks, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

In a pre-dawn dispatch, the North's official Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, called the two-week Max Thunder drills, which began Monday and reportedly include about 100 aircraft, an "intended military provocation" and an "apparent challenge" to last month's summit between Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, when the leaders met at the border in their countries' third summit talks since their formal division in 1948.

"The United States must carefully contemplate the fate of the planned North Korea-U.S. summit amid the provocative military ruckus that it's causing with South Korean authorities," the North said. "We'll keenly monitor how the United States and South Korean authorities will react."

Kim Dong-yub, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, said the North isn't

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trying to undermine the Trump-Kim talks. The North's reaction is more like a "complaint over Trump's way of playing the good cop and bad cop game with (Secretary of State Mike) Pompeo and Bolton," he said.

Seoul's Unification Ministry, which is responsible for inter-Korean affairs, called North Korea's move "regrettable" and urged a quick return to talks. The Defense Ministry said the drills with the United States would go on as planned.

Annual military drills between Washington and Seoul have long been a major source of contention between the Koreas, and analysts have wondered whether their continuation would hurt the detente that, since an outreach by Kim in January, has replaced the insults and threats of war. Much larger springtime drills took place last month without the North's typically fiery condemnation or accompanying weapons tests, though Washington and Seoul toned down those exercises.

The KCNA dispatch said the U.S. aircraft mobilized for the drills include nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and stealth F-22 fighter jets, two of the U.S. military assets it has previously said are aimed at launching nuclear strikes on the North. Seoul has said F-22s are involved in the drills, but has not confirmed whether B-52s are taking part.

In Washington, the U.S. State Department emphasized that Kim had previously indicated he understood the need and purpose of the U.S. continuing its long-planned exercises with South Korea. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said the U.S. had not heard anything directly from North or South Korea that would change that.

"We will continue to go ahead and plan the meeting between President Trump and Kim Jong Un," Nauert said.

U.S. Army Col. Rob Manning said the current exercise is part of the U.S. and South Korea's "routine, annual training program to maintain a foundation of military readiness." Manning, a Pentagon spokesman, said the purpose of Max Thunder and exercise Foal Eagle — another training event — is to enhance the two nations' abilities to operate together to defend South Korea.

"The defensive nature of these combined exercises has been clear for many decades and has not changed," Manning said.

Washington and Seoul delayed the earlier round of springtime drills because of the North-South diplomacy surrounding February's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in the South, which saw Kim send his sister to the opening ceremonies.

Kim told visiting South Korean officials in March that he "understands" the drills would take place and expressed hope that they'll be modified once the situation on the peninsula stabilizes, according to the South Korean government.

Despite Kim's outreach, some experts were skeptical about whether he would completely give up a nuclear program that he had pushed so hard to build. The North previously vowed to continue nuclear development unless the United States pulls its 28,500 troops out of South Korea and withdraws its so-called "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee to South Korea and Japan as a condition for its nuclear disarmament.

Wednesday's threat could also be targeted at showing a domestic audience that Kim is willing to stand up to Washington. Kim has repeatedly told his people that his nukes are a "powerful treasured sword" that can smash U.S. hostility.

On Tuesday, South Korea's military said North Korea was moving ahead with plans to close its nuclear test site next week, an assessment backed by U.S. researchers who say satellite images show the North has begun dismantling facilities at the site.

The site's closure was set to come before the Kim-Trump summit, which had been shaping up as a crucial moment in the decades-long push to resolve the nuclear standoff with the North, which is closing in on the ability to viably target the mainland United States with its long-range nuclear-armed missiles.

The U.N. ambassador from the Netherlands, which currently chairs the Security Council's North Korea sanctions committee, said he remained hopeful.

"Anyone who has had anything to do with DPRK in the past 20, 30, 40 years has seen that engaging in political contact with DPRK is complex," Ambassador Karel van Oosterom told reporters at the U.N., using the initials of North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "To say it very simply,

the road ahead will have bumps, and I think we are hitting one of the bumps at the moment. I think we are hopeful that the road will lead to the solution we all hope for.”

Associated Press writers Kim Tong-hyung in Seoul, Lolita Baldor, Josh Lederman and Catherine Lucey in Washington, and Jennifer Peltz at the United Nations contributed to this report.

German museum returns looted art to indigenous Alaskans

By DAVID RISING, Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A Berlin museum has returned ancient wooden masks, an idol and other spiritually significant artifacts plundered from graves by an explorer to indigenous Alaskans, ending an odyssey in which many of the items were thought forever lost.

The masks, carved from spruce or hemlock, are daubed with red pigment — a traditional tincture made of seal oil, human blood and powder from a stone that indicate they were used in burial ceremonies by tribes in the Chugach area of Alaska.

One mask comes to a sharp point at the top, symbolizing the deceased’s transition to the spirit world. Another shows a face with one eye open and the other closed.

Their exact age hasn’t been determined, but they’re thought to be up to 1,000 years old. They were taken from graves in caves on Chenega Island in Alaska’s Prince William Sound and a place known as Sanradna, whose exact location is no longer known, said John Johnson, a representative of the Chugach Alaska Corporation. The group today represents the region’s indigenous people.

“They’re a connection between the dead and the living, the future and the past,” he said Wednesday. “If you look, one eye open, one eye shut, it’s like traveling between two worlds.”

The nine artifacts were among some 200 Chugach items collected for Germany’s Royal Museum of Ethnology by Norwegian adventurer Johan Adrian Jacobsen between 1882 and 1884.

Several were thought lost at the end of World War II after being looted from the museum by Soviet Red Army troops, but they resurfaced in St. Petersburg, Russia. They were then given to a museum in Leipzig in communist East Germany in the 1970s.

Berlin’s Ethnological Museum only learned in the 1980s that they had survived and eventually secured their return.

Johnson learned of their existence from Jacobsen’s journals, where the explorer detailed how he had found them in caves and taken them. He traced them to the Ethnological Museum.

He led a delegation to Berlin in 2015 and has been working since then with the museum and the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, which oversees Berlin’s museums, to establish their provenance and organize restitution.

Other items collected by Jacobsen were determined to have been fairly obtained through purchase or trade.

Elsewhere, Denmark has already returned human remains that were taken from the Chugach area. Johnson said much work remains researching the provenance of other artifacts scattered in museums around the U.S. and the world, including Britain, Russia and Finland.

“Sometimes museums feel that this is the end, that it’s a sad day, but this is really a new beginning,” he said. “The more you work together, the more you understand and enjoy the significance of these artifacts.”

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation President Hermann Parzinger carefully handed one of the masks to Johnson at a ceremony Wednesday, saying he hoped they could work together on future historical and cultural projects.

Work is underway on an exhibition on Jacobsen, who brought thousands of items to Germany from settlements on the northwest coast of Canada and Alaska. It will offer what Parzinger said will be a “critical examination of the history of the collection from today’s perspective.”

The self-proclaimed captain’s accounts are more adventure than anthropological, Parzinger said.

“Johan Adrian Jacobsen was no academic, he was a sailor,” he said.

Ideally the artifacts returned Wednesday would go back into the caves from which they were taken, Johnson said, but since that's impossible to do without risking their destruction, the hope is that they will be put on public display in a regional museum.

"They say a picture's worth 1,000 words, but when you have the object it could be a million," he said. "You learn so much when you see them up close."

Walmart beats all around, with e-commerce sales rebounding

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO, AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Walmart is reporting better-than-expected profit and revenue for the first quarter with rebounding e-commerce sales.

Revenue at Walmart stores opened at least a year rose 2.1 percent, the company said Thursday, also surprising Wall Street.

It's an encouraging report from Walmart, which like other retailers is looking at new ways to compete in light of swiftly changing shopping habits and intense competition from Amazon.

Walmart, while spending more on its workers to improve service, is building fewer big stores, and its focus is solidly online.

Since buying Jet.com for more than \$3 billion nearly two years ago, Walmart has buttressed its presence online, acquired brands like Bonobos and ModCloth, and vastly expanded the number of goods it sells from its site.

It's also strengthening delivery to make shopping at Walmart even easier. In March, Walmart began expanding its same-day delivery service to more than 40 percent of U.S. households, or 100 metro areas by year end.

Walmart is reworking its website with a focus on fashion and home furnishings. It has teamed up with Lord & Taylor to create dedicated space on its site, which will be launched in the next few weeks.

Online sales rose 33 percent in the first quarter, a strong showing following a disappointing 23 percent increase in the final quarter of last year. Wall Street punished the company for the end-of-year e-commerce performance, sending company shares plunging more than 10 percent. It was the biggest single-day percentage drop in 30 years.

Still, digital sales are below the 40 percent growth that Walmart is expecting for this year.

Walmart has a long way to get even close to Amazon's online dominance. Amazon.com Inc. has leveraged its Prime membership program into intense loyalty from customers. Amazon recently raised its annual fee for membership to \$119, from \$99. And it's stepped into Walmart's turf, no longer content with only online sales.

After spending \$14 billion to acquire Whole Foods last summer, Amazon announced two-hour delivery from the grocery chain for its members. It also said that Prime members will get an additional 10 percent on sale items and exclusive deals on certain groceries at Whole Food stores. Those expanded benefits go nationwide this summer.

While it fights off rivals at home, the world's largest retailer is expanding elsewhere, with new moves into India and China.

This month, it acquired a controlling stake in Flipkart, India's largest online retailer. The \$16 billion deal is Walmart's biggest acquisition yet. It is selling its British unit, Asda, which has been struggling with intense competition from German no-frills discounters Aldi and Lidl.

Walmart posted a first-quarter profit of \$2.13 billion on Thursday, or 72 cents per share. Earnings, adjusted for non-recurring costs, were \$1.14 per share, which is 2 cents better than industry analysts were expecting, according to a survey by Zacks Investment Research.

That compares with \$3.04 billion, or \$1 per share, in the year ago quarter

The Bentonville, Arkansas, company's revenue rose 4.4 percent to \$122.69 billion, beating projections for \$120.08 billion.

Shares of Walmart Inc. rose almost 3 percent before the opening bell.

Elements of this story were generated by Automated Insights (<http://automatedinsights.com/ap>) using data from Zacks Investment Research. Access a Zacks stock report on WMT at <https://www.zacks.com/ap/WMT>

Vatican denounces offshore tax havens as harming the poor

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican is denouncing offshore tax havens and financial instruments such as derivatives and credit default swaps as gravely immoral and unjust, calling them “ticking time bombs” that hurt the world’s poor the most.

In a new document released Thursday, the Vatican’s doctrine office teamed up with its social justice department to give a more solid moral foundation to the Holy See’s oft-repeated call for a more ethical global financial system.

The document, approved by Pope Francis, calls for banks to create internal ethical committees to ensure decisions work for the common good and not just the “myopic egoism” of individual corporate bottom lines. It urged better regulation of financial products and for universities to educate the next generation of business leaders about ethics, not just profits.

“The recent financial crisis could have been the occasion to develop a new economy, more attentive to ethical principles, and a new regulation of financial activities neutralizing the predatory and speculative dimensions,” it said.

Instead, the global financial players have returned to the “heights of myopic egoism” that excludes any consideration of the common good or the need to spread wealth and heal economic inequality, it said.

Notably missing from the document was a call for a global political authority to regulate markets and tax financial transactions. The Vatican’s social justice office, which co-authored the new document, had recommended such an authority in a 2011 document that was widely dismissed even within the Vatican.

Francis and popes before him have frequently denounced the growing income inequality and profit-at-all-cost mentality that drives global capitalism, including in encyclicals and other authoritative teaching documents.

Officials told a news conference Thursday that they thought it was worth articulating considerations about specific aspects of the current economic-financial system for officials who work in the field.

The effort marks something of a shift in attention for the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which under the past two popes has focused on issues of doctrinal orthodoxy and sexual morality, not social justice and the poor.

History’s first Latin American pope, however, has made those issues the priority of his pontificate, and the document’s publication suggests the Vatican bureaucracy is getting the message.

Study says China-backed dam would destroy Mekong

By STEPHEN WRIGHT, Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A Chinese-backed plan for Cambodia to build the Mekong River’s biggest dam would destroy fisheries that feed millions and worsen tensions with Vietnam, the downstream country with most to lose from dams on the waterway, according to a three-year study commissioned by the Cambodian government.

The report, posted this month on the website of the U.S.-based organization that conducted the study, said the Sambor dam would “generate large power benefits to Cambodia, but at the probable cost of the destruction of the Mekong fishery, and the certain enmity of Vietnam.”

It said the dam designed by China Southern Power Grid Co. would have a 620 square kilometer (239 square mile) reservoir and dwarf the biggest dam currently being built on the Mekong, the Xayaburi dam in Laos, which was bitterly opposed by environmentalists for years.

The experts at the Natural Heritage Institute who authored the report, submitted to the Cambodian government late last year, recommended it defer the project while studying “better” alternatives such as using solar power to augment existing hydroelectric dams.

Alternative sites upstream where the Mekong separates into several channels are possible but either financially unfeasible or only marginally less destructive than the site currently envisaged for the 2,600 megawatt dam, the study said. Possible mitigation measures are either unproven or have a poor track record, it said.

The dam would block fish migration from the giant Tonle Sap lake in Cambodia which is crucial for reproduction and replenishing what scientists say is the world’s most productive fresh-water fishery. It would also prevent riverbed sediment that fertilizes the Mekong Delta rice bowl from moving down river, a particular problem for Vietnam where delta farmlands are being destroyed by saltwater incursion from the sea.

“The dam and the reservoir would create a barrier that would be devastating for the migratory fish stocks,” the study said.

It also warned that a population of about 80 critically endangered Irrawaddy river dolphins would likely be wiped out because the deep river pools they use as a dry season refuge would become filled with sediment blocked by the dam.

Cambodia’s government, closely allied with China, its northern neighbor, and the recipient of substantial Chinese aid and investment, has not publicly commented on the report.

Seven dams that China built on the Mekong headwaters in its territory are already a headache for Southeast Asian countries, reducing the amount of sediment floating downstream by as much as half, according to researchers.

The Chinese dams were blamed for exacerbating a Southeast Asian drought in 2016, but countries in the region are pressing ahead with plans for Chinese companies to build a slew of other Mekong dams to meet growing demand for energy. Laos, one of the poorest countries in Asia, is pinning development hopes on becoming a source of power for its neighbors.

Natural Heritage Institute report: <https://tinyurl.com/y8szg39h>

Alaska dive fishermen plead for relief from sea otters

By DAN JOLING, Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Northern sea otters, once hunted to the brink of extinction along Alaska’s Panhandle, have made a spectacular comeback by gobbling some of the state’s finest seafood — and fishermen are not happy about the competition.

Sea otters dive for red sea urchins, geoduck clams, sea cucumbers — delicacies in Asia markets — plus prized Dungeness crab. They then carry their meals to the surface and float on their backs as they eat, sometimes using rocks to crack open clams and crab. The furry marine mammals, which grow as large as 100 pounds (45 kilograms), eat the equivalent of a quarter of their weight each day.

Phil Doherty, head of the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association, is working to save the livelihood of 200 southeast Alaska fishermen and a \$10 million industry but faces an uphill struggle against an opponent that looks like a cuddly plush toy.

Fishermen have watched their harvest shrink as sea otters spread and colonize, Doherty said. Divers once annually harvested 6 million pounds (2.7 million kilograms) of red sea urchins. The recent quota has been less than 1 million pounds (454,000 kilograms).

“We’ve seen a multimillion-dollar fishery in sea urchins pretty much go away,” he said.

Jeremy Leighton of Ketchikan dives for sea urchins from his boat. He looks for plump specimens 3.5 to 4.5 inches (9-11.4 centimeters) in diameter, making sure they’re not too big.

“If it’s like a cow tongue, it just doesn’t fit on a sushi roll,” Leighton said. In a bed holding 50,000 pounds (22,680 kilograms) of the spiny shellfish, he might harvest 10 percent.

Sea otters are not as discriminating. If sea otters have discovered the bed, Leighton finds broken shells

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on the ocean floor and a handful of sea urchins hidden in rock crannies.

"That's when you know you're in trouble," he said.

Patrick Lemons, Alaska chief of marine mammals management for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the federal Marine Mammal Protection Act limits the agency's response. Sea otters in southeast Alaska are not listed as threatened or endangered, but the agency cannot intervene to protect commercial fisheries until a species is at "optimum sustainable population."

"Sea otters are still colonizing southeast (Alaska) and are significantly below 'carrying capacity' down there," Lemons said. Carrying capacity is the number of animals a region can support without environmental degradation.

The agency could develop local management plans within the region with Alaska Natives to protect the catch of subsistence shellfish, which traditionally has included crab, clams, abalone and other species.

Sea otters are the largest members of the weasel family. To stay warm, they rely on the densest fur on the planet.

Their luxurious pelts made them a target for hunters, starting with Vitus Bering as he explored the North Pacific in the 1700s. Russian and U.S. hunters over 150 years virtually wiped out sea otters until the signing of an international treaty to protect northern fur seals and sea otters in 1911.

In the 1960s, Alaska's wildlife agency moved more than 400 sea otters from the Aleutian Islands to southeast Alaska to reintroduce them to their historic range. A count in 2000 estimated 12,000 animals. The last count in 2012 estimated 27,500 animals, a growth rate of 12 to 14 percent annually. Fishermen fear the population will double again in six years.

Hunting is one of the only checks on sea otters, but under federal law, only coastal Alaska Natives can kill them. There's no season or bag limit, but federal rules severely restrict how pelts may be used.

Sea otter hunters can sell whole pelts only to other Alaska Natives. They can only sell sea otter parts to non-natives if the pelts have been "significantly altered into an authentic Native handicraft by an Alaska Native person."

There's not much incentive now to hunt sea otters.

But at the urging of fishermen, Alaska's state Senate recently passed a resolution asking Congress to amend federal law to allow sale of pelts without restriction.

Native artisans and hunters have a financial interest in maintaining a robust sea otter population, Lemons said. What's more, he said, sea otters help the ecosystem by eliminating predators that eat kelp and sea grass, which provide habitat for finfish such as herring.

But Doherty of the dive fishing association says the industry and otters can't co-exist, given their current growth trajectory.

"You can't do it at a level where sea otters increase 13 percent every given year," he said.

Asian stocks mixed as investors digest US, Japan data

By YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stocks were mixed on Thursday after strong factory data from the U.S. helped spur gains overnight on Wall Street.

KEEPING SCORE: Investors shrugged off a report Thursday of weak machinery orders in Japan a day after growth data came in lower than expected, with the Nikkei 225 index jumping 0.7 percent by midday to 22,868.77. Hong Kong's Hang Seng was almost unchanged at 31,097.96 and the Kospi in South Korea was flat, at 2,458.90. Australia's S&P ASX 200 dipped 0.3 percent to 6,088.40 and the Shanghai Composite index fell 0.2 percent to 3,162.23. Shares were mixed in Southeast Asia.

MIXED ECONOMIC REPORTS: The Federal Reserve said factory output rose 0.5 percent in April after a flat reading in March while a broader measure of industrial production, which includes mining and utilities, rose 0.7 percent. The figures suggest that business spending may be picking up after lagging earlier this year. It suggested an improvement in the U.S. economy a day after Japan said its economy shrank 0.6 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier. Investors shrugged off data showing Japan's machinery

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orders fell nearly 4 percent in March from the month before, as analysts said demand for equipment remains strong due to worsening shortages in factory capacity.

ANALYST VIEWPOINT: "A modestly positive pulse in overnight trading should see Asia Pacific markets marking time today," Michael McCarthy of CMC Markets said in a commentary. He said investors were taking higher Treasury bond yields in stride, even after 10 year benchmark closed just below 3.1 percent.

WALL STREET: U.S. stock markets finished higher on Wednesday, led by tech and health care stocks. The S&P 500 index rose 0.4 percent to 2,722.46. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 0.3 percent to 24,768.93. The Nasdaq composite added 0.6 percent to 7,398.30. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks finished 1 percent higher at 1,616.37.

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude oil added 26 cents to \$71.75 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Wednesday, it finished at \$71.49 a barrel, up 18 cents. Brent crude, used to price international oil, gained 8 cents to \$79.36 per barrel in London. It rose 85 cents to close at \$79.28 a barrel in the previous session.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 110.18 yen from 110.39 yen while the euro strengthened to \$1.1827 from \$1.1809.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, May 17, the 137th day of 2018. There are 228 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 17, 1968, nine men and women, including brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan, entered the Selective Service office in Catonsville, Maryland, seized several hundred draft files and burned them outside to protest the Vietnam War before being arrested. (The "Catonsville Nine," as they came to be known, received federal prison sentences ranging from 24 to 42 months.)

On this date:

In 1536, Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer declared the marriage of England's King Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn invalid after she failed to produce a male heir; Boleyn, already condemned for high treason, was executed two days later.

In 1792, the New York Stock Exchange had its beginnings as a group of brokers met under a tree on Wall Street and signed the Buttonwood Agreement.

In 1875, the first Kentucky Derby was run; the winner was Aristides, ridden by Oliver Lewis.

In 1938, Congress passed the Second Vinson Act, providing for a strengthened U.S. Navy. The radio quiz show "Information, Please!" made its debut on the NBC Blue Network.

In 1948, the Soviet Union recognized the new state of Israel.

In 1954, a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court handed down its Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka decision which held that racially segregated public schools were inherently unequal, and therefore unconstitutional.

In 1973, a special committee convened by the U.S. Senate began its televised hearings into the Water-gate scandal.

In 1978, women were included in the White House honor guard for the first time as President Jimmy Carter welcomed Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda (kah-OON'-dah).

In 1980, rioting that claimed 18 lives erupted in Miami's Liberty City after an all-white jury in Tampa acquitted four former Miami police officers of fatally beating black insurance executive Arthur McDuffie.

In 1987, 37 American sailors were killed when an Iraqi warplane attacked the U.S. Navy frigate Stark in the Persian Gulf. (Iraq apologized for the attack, calling it a mistake, and paid more than \$27 million in compensation.)

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed a measure requiring neighborhood notification when sex offenders move in. ("Megan's Law," as it's known, was named for Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old New Jersey girl who was raped and murdered in 1994.)

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In 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to allow same-sex marriages.

Ten years ago: Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., was flown to a Boston hospital after suffering a seizure at his Cape Cod home (he was later diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor, and died in August 2009). Nearing the end of his five-day Mideast trip, President George W. Bush held a rapid-fire series of diplomatic meetings at the Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheik in Egypt. Kentucky Derby winner Big Brown ran away with the Preakness; the horse's Triple Crown quest ended three weeks later when he finished last in the Belmont Stakes.

Five years ago: The ousted head of the Internal Revenue Service, Steven Miller, faced hours of intense grilling before Congress; both defiant and apologetic, Miller acknowledged agency mistakes in targeting tea party groups for special scrutiny when they applied for tax-exempt status, but insisted that agents broke no laws and that there was no effort to cover up their actions. Jorge Rafael Videla (HOHR'-hay rah-fay-EHL' vih-DEH'-lah), 87, the former dictator who took power in Argentina in a 1976 coup and led a military junta that killed thousands during a "dirty war" against alleged subversives, died in Buenos Aires while serving life in prison for crimes against humanity.

One year ago: The Justice Department appointed former FBI Director Robert Mueller as a special counsel to oversee a federal investigation into potential coordination between Russia and Donald Trump's campaign during the 2016 presidential election. Pvt. Chelsea Manning, the soldier who was sentenced to 35 years in a military prison for giving classified materials to WikiLeaks, walked free after serving seven years behind bars, her sentence having been commuted by President Barack Obama. Chris Cornell, one of the most lauded contemporary lead singers in rock music with his bands Soundgarden and Audioslave, committed suicide in a Detroit hotel room; he was 52.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Gerety is 78. Singer Taj Mahal is 76. Rock musician Bill Bruford is 69. Singer-musician George Johnson (The Brothers Johnson) is 65. TV personality Kathleen Sullivan is 65. Boxing Hall of Famer Sugar Ray Leonard is 62. Actor-comedian Bob Saget is 62. Sports announcer Jim Nantz is 59. Producer Simon Fuller (TV: "American Idol") is 58. Singer Enya is 57. Actor-comedian Craig Ferguson is 56. Rock singer-musician Page McConnell is 55. Actor David Eigenberg is 54. Singer-musician Trent Reznor (Nine Inch Nails) is 53. Actress Paige Turco is 53. Rhythm-and-blues musician O'Dell (Mint Condition) is 53. Actor Hill Harper is 52. TV personality/interior designer Thom Filicia is 49. Singer Jordan Knight is 48. Rhythm-and-blues singer Darnell Van Rensalier (Shai) is 48. Actress Sasha Alexander is 45. Rock singer-musician Josh Homme (HAHM'-ee) is 45. Rock singer Andrea Corr (The Corrs) is 44. Actor Sendhil Ramamurthy (SEN'-dul rah-mah-MURTH'-ee) is 44. Actress Rochelle Aytes is 42. Singer Kandi Burruss is 42. Actress Kat Foster is 40. Actress Ayda Field is 39. Actress Ginger Gonzaga is 35. Folk-rock singer/songwriter Passenger is 34. Dancer-choreographer Derek Hough (huhf) is 33. Actor Tahj Mowry is 32. Actress Nikki Reed is 30. Singer Kree Harrison (TV: "American Idol") is 28. Actress Leven Rambin is 28. Actress Samantha Browne-Walters is 27. Actor Justin Martin is 24.

Thought for Today: "A burning purpose attracts others who are drawn along with it and help fulfill it." — Margaret Bourke-White, American photojournalist (1904-1971).