

Groton Daily Independent

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“Gain control of your time, and you will gain control of your life.”

-John Landis Mason



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Midwest Masonry & concrete Pumping

Greg Heilman, owner

405 E 1st Ave., Groton

Greg: 253/929-9137

Mike: 605/492-7041

midwestmasonry1@yahoo.com



Lewandowski Bridal Shower

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

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

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Two records set, are we going for a third?!

The last two days have set record highs according to information from the National Weather Service in Aberdeen. On Friday, a new record high of 94 degrees was set, breaking a high of 93 degrees set in 1941. Saturday saw a record high of 97 degrees breaking a record high set in 1900 of 94 degrees. The record high for today is 98 degrees set in 1934. The forecast high is to hit the century mark.

Groton Pool opens today

The Groton Swimming Pool will be opening today, tomorrow and Tuesday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The pool will be closed on Wednesday for training purposes and will reopen Thursday at regular hours.

HOURS

Open Swim Daily: 1:00 - 4:50pm & 6:30 - 8:50pm

FUN Night is every Friday from 6:30-8:50pm - ALL pool toys are allowed at this time!

Adult Water Aerobics: Monday thru Thursday – 8:00am – 8:45am AND 5:30pm - 6:15pm

Adult Lap Swim: Monday thru Thursday - 7am - 8am & 4:50pm - 5:30pm

Friday 7am-8am & 4:50pm-6:30pm Saturday and Sunday – 4:50pm – 6:30pm

Robert Whitmyre

Democrat for District 1
House of Representatives



I would like to be a new voice in Pierre to work for our rural areas, the needs and rights of our citizens, and improve the opportunities for our young people that want to make South Dakota their home.

I ask for your vote in the June 5th primary.

- Lifelong Day County Ag Producer
- 30 Years in Manufacturing Industry
 - WEB Water Board of Directors
- National Farmers Union Policy Committee
 - Odin Lodge Sons of Norway President
 - Webster High School Graduate
- BS in Mechanical Engineering from SDSU

Authorized and Paid for by
Whitmyre for District 1 House Committee, |
David Sigdestad Treasurer - 42449 133rd St. -
Pierpont, SD 57468



**The Groton American Legion
will perform Military honors
as follows on Memorial Day:**

Huffton 7:30

James 8:15

Verdon 8:45

Bates-Scotland 9:15

Ferney 10:00

**Groton 11:00 (Lunch to follow
at Groton Post #39)**

Service Notice: Eunice Jensen

Dewey, Oklahoma: Eunice Mae Jensen, 92, formerly of Conde passed away Monday, May 21, 2018 in the Forest Manor Nursing Home, Dewey, Oklahoma.

Funeral Mass was recited on Thursday, May 24, 6:15 p.m. at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church of Pawhuska. Graveside services will be at the Conde Catholic Cemetery on Tuesday, May 29th at 11:00 a.m., with lunch to follow at the Community Center.

Service Notice: Leon Stange

Services for Leon Stange, 84, of Stratford will be 11:00 a.m., Friday, June 1st at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ferney. Rev. Craig Grams will officiate. Burial will follow in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

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

Leon passed away Friday, May 25, 2018 at Sanford Medical Center, Aberdeen.

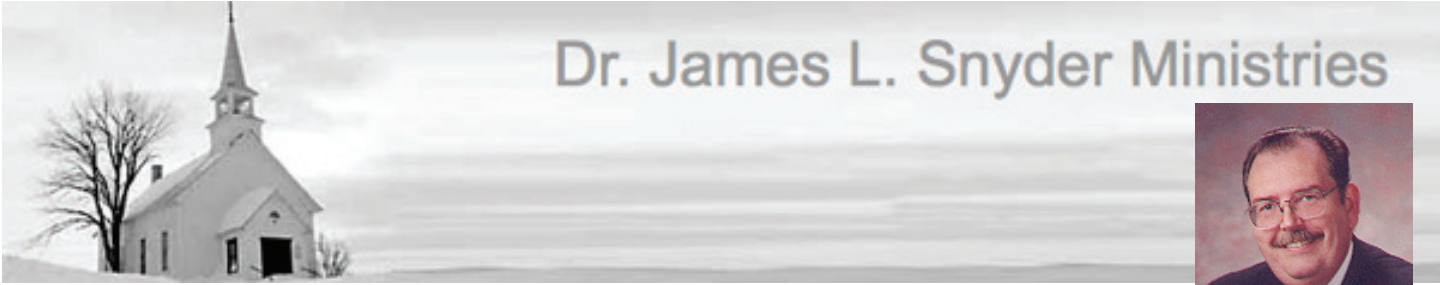


Gates to play Pump Organ at Trinity today

Sue Gates, Director of the Dacotah Prairie Museum, will play the original pump organ in Groton's Historic Trinity Church on Sunday, May 27, at 3 pm during the Groton Community Historical Society's noon to 5 pm open house, with a free lunch provided by Thrivent Financial. Goodwill donations will go toward re-roofing the church, which is located at 3rd Street and 3rd Avenue near downtown Groton.

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A Key On the Table Is Worth Many A Chuckle

When it comes to forgetting anything, I am king of the hill. My forgetting has nothing to do with age because I have been forgetting as long as I can remember.

Of course, with age comes an excuse for forgetting something. Don't let anybody know this, but sometimes I use my age to say I forgot something which in reality I had not forgotten. Sometimes forgetting something is the best expression of valor.

I can't remember all the things I have forgotten, however, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage remembers everything, even things I did not forget. Her memory is impeccable and I just have to live with it.

Often she will start a conversation with, "Do you remember...?"

Being married as long as I have, I always go with the affirmative nod, which I never forget to do.

When I was a young husband, I remember very distinctly correcting her about what I remembered about an incident she was talking about. I have remembered never to make that mistake again.

I am forgetting everything these days. It may be my keys. I get to the church office, check my pocket and realize I forgot my keys. Then I have to get on my cell phone (when I don't forget that) and call my wife explaining that I forgot my keys.

Once we went for supper with some friends, I was to pick up the tab, and when the tab came, I had forgotten to bring my wallet. I am definitely not going to do that again.

Once I went on a trip and forgot where I was going. Fortunately, I had the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage with me who is an expert in telling me where to go.

I can't tell you how many lectures she has given to Yours Truly in this area of forgetting. I think she should win some kind of a prize or a doctorate in this area. Maybe I should begin calling her, Dr. Never Forget.

I could not remember all of the things that I have forgotten. I could ask my wife, but that would take a day and a half for her to get them all on the table.

Our relationship is defined this way; I forget everything and she remembers everything. It can be good, but also it can have a negative impact upon a person's life, like mine.

I just thought I would have to live out the rest of my life under this cloud of forgetfulness.

Then the most incredible thing happened, something that has changed the rest of my life.

My wife left early to go to the office and I was about a half-hour getting ready to go and when I went to the door, I noticed on the table was a key ring with a bunch of keys on it. At first, I thought it must be my wife's and maybe I should pick it up and take it with me.

I realized one very important thing though. My wife never forgets anything. If I pick up these keys and take it to her, I am in more trouble than I could really handle at this stage of life. After all, if her keys are on the dining room table there is a pretty good purpose behind the whole thing. For me to sabotage that purpose would get me in a great deal of trouble, I can assure you.

I went out the door, got in my vehicle and started on my way to the office. As I was backing out of the driveway, my cell phone rang. I noticed it was my wife. I thought I was in trouble. What could I have done now or what didn't I do that I should have done?

When I answered the phone, I heard a meek voice say, "Did you see any keys on the dining room table?" I answered in the affirmative not really understanding the situation.

"Could you," she said most sweetly, "bring them over? I forgot them."

There was a dramatic pause on my side of the cell phone. It took a few moments for the situation to

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sink in.

As I went back into the house, I was chuckling all the way in and picked up the delinquent keys.

When I got to the office, I handed them to her with the biggest smile I've ever had on my face that I can remember. She looked at me and then said rather softly, "You're not laughing are you?"

I recognize I will forget a great deal of things in life. But this incident, I will never forget and it will always strike a chuckle cord in my heart.

Every once in a while, when nothing is going on, I will look at my wife and say, "Do you remember the keys?"

Glancing away from me she will say, "Don't you think it's time to forget that?"

Never in a million years!

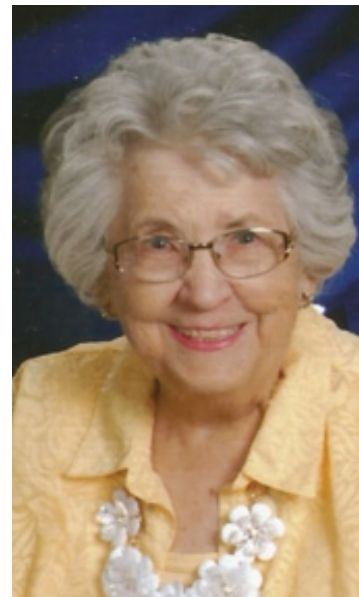
"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14).

Some things are worth forgetting as the apostle Paul points out here. The key to a happy life is knowing what to forget and what to remember.

**REMEMBERING THOSE
WHO SERVED,
FROM YOUR FRIENDS
AT AGTEGRA!**

AGTEGRA™
COOPERATIVE

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90th Birthday

LaVonne J. Helmer of Groton will be honored for her 90th birthday on May 27th from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Groton Community Center. Her family will host the event.

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Today in Weather History

May 27, 1942: A short estimated F2 touchdown uprooted 27 trees on the western edge of Bryant in Hamlin County. One barn was destroyed.

May 27, 1996: On May 26th, anywhere from 4 to 6 inches of rain fell in a 24 hour period over the lower Bad River Basin. Also, 3 to 5 inches of rain fell over much of Western South Dakota. This runoff caused the Bad River at Fort Pierre to crest at 26.25 feet or about 5 feet above flood stage late on the 27th before falling back below flood stage on the 30th. The entire length of the Bad River Road from U.S. Highway 83 near Fort Pierre to U.S. Highway 14 near Midland was closed to all except local traffic on the 27th. Twenty-five to 35 volunteers were filling sandbags all day on the 27th around two homes along the river. Most of the damage was associated with flooding of agricultural land and some county roads. One resident along the river said the river was the highest it has been in 32 years.

1771: In Virginia, a wall of water came roaring down the James River Valley following ten to twelve days of intense rain. As water swept through Richmond, buildings, boats, animals, and vegetation were lost. About one hundred fifty people were killed as the River reached a flood stage of forty-five feet above normal. A monument to the flood was inscribed by Ryland Randolph, of Curles, in 1771-72: " ... all the great rivers of this country were swept by inundations never before experienced which changed the face of nature and left traces of violence that will remain for ages."

1896: A massive tornado struck Saint Louis, Missouri killing 306 persons and causing thirteen million dollars damage. The tornado path was short but cut across a densely populated area. It touched down six miles west of Eads Bridge in Saint Louis and widened to a mile as it crossed into East Saint Louis. The tornado was the most destructive of record in the U.S. at that time. It pierced a five-eighths inch thick iron sheet with a two by four-inch pine plank. A brilliant display of lightning accompanied the storm.

1997: An F5 tornado killed 27 people in Jarrell, Texas. Although tornado warnings were issued 30 minutes in advance and local sirens were sounded, there were few places to go for safety. Most homes were on slabs, with no basements. Houses were swept clean off their foundations, with little debris left behind. Total damage was \$20 million. The same thunderstorm complex produced a wind gust to 122 mph at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio.

Groton Job Opportunities C.N.A.s ~ Nurses Part-Time Cook








Contact Brynn Pickrel or Nellie Hatfield at 605-397-2365 or apply in person.
EOE/AA/M/F/V/D-Drug Free Workplace



1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton

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Sun May 27	Mon May 28	Tue May 29	Wed May 30	Thu May 31	Fri Jun 1	Sat Jun 2
						
100°F	92°F	84°F	84°F	87°F	87°F	81°F
67°F	67°F	62°F	59°F	63°F	63°F	56°F
SE 25 MPH	E 13 MPH	SSE 20 MPH Precip 40%	SW 11 MPH	N 7 MPH	ESE 14 MPH Precip 20%	ESE 15 MPH Precip 40%

Another Hot Day in Store

Highs...90s to around 100 degrees

Windy East of the Missouri River



It will be another hot day across the region with highs in the 90s to around 100 degrees. Windy conditions are also expected east of the Missouri River with south winds of 15 to 30 mph.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 95.2 F at 5:04 PM (RECORD HIGH)

Low Outside Temp: 56.7 F at 6:29 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 19.0 Mph at 5:10 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 98° in 1934

Record Low: 28° in 1907

Average High: 72°F

Average Low: 48°F

Average Precip in May: 2.71

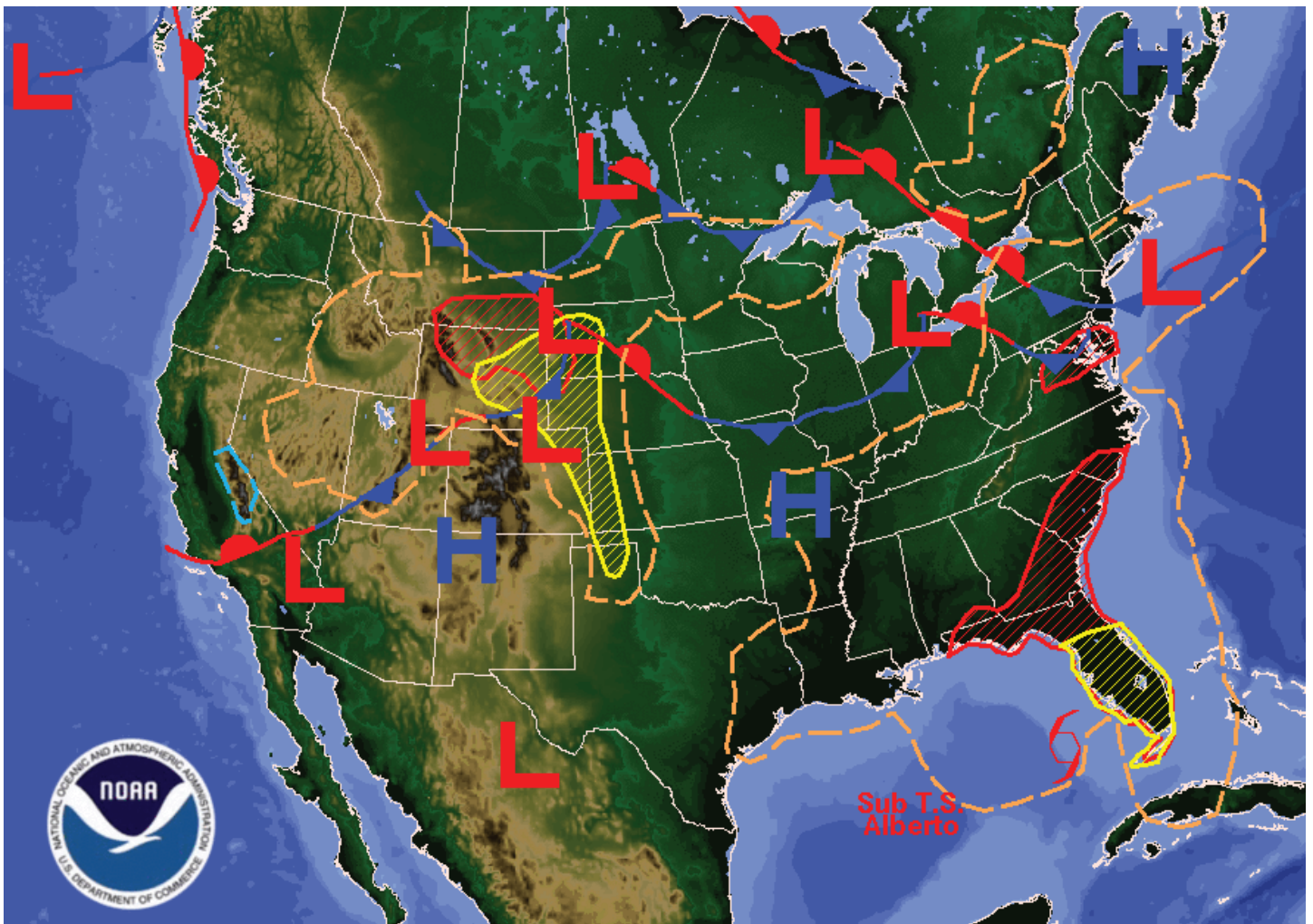
Precip to date in May: 1.55

Average Precip to date: 6.74

Precip Year to Date: 4.23

Sunset Tonight: 9:10 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:51 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, May 27, 2018, issued 3:53 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Roth with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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ANXIOUS AND AFRAID

Walk through the waiting area in any emergency room and the "face of anxiety" becomes real. From a minor cut to a major wound, fear is obvious and real. Even people with a deep faith in God are often grasping for a sign of hope or a word of comfort.

Our Psalmist was familiar with feelings of both peace and anxiety. He knew the comfort of God's grace and had experienced His peace. However, he had an illness that took him to the very door of death. And beginning in verse one he walks us through his ordeal expressing his love for God and the greatness of His grace. He also presented a beautiful picture of God: He is a God who listens to our cries, responds with help, is gracious and righteous, filled with compassion, protects even the "simple-hearted" folk who are in need and saves them. All of the characteristics that he uses to describe God, by the way, are ones that every Christian can develop and share with others.

At the end of his ordeal he seems to catch his breath and reminds himself to: "Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to you." It's as though he could not believe the goodness of God, His grace or His power.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians about this. "...My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in (your) weakness." God's power to put our minds and heart at peace is a theme that runs through Scripture.

God spoke of this in Genesis: "Do not be afraid for I am with you..." And before Jesus returned to be with His Father He promised that "I am with you always!"

Prayer: Lord, when we face situations that are beyond our control, assure us of Your presence, peace and power. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 116:7 Return to your rest, my soul, for the Lord has been good to you.

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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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash
01-14-15-19-30
(one, fourteen, fifteen, nineteen, thirty)
Estimated jackpot: \$39,000

Lotto America
23-30-31-38-39, Star Ball: 10, ASB: 3
(twenty-three, thirty, thirty-one, thirty-eight, thirty-nine; Star Ball: ten; ASB: three)
Estimated jackpot: \$2.9 million

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$84 million

Powerball
01-21-31-45-49, Powerball: 21, Power Play: 2
(one, twenty-one, thirty-one, forty-five, forty-nine; Powerball: twenty-one; Power Play: two)
Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

Rapid City school board considers new reading program

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City students aren't allowed to tweet or post on Facebook at school, but teachers could soon encourage students to send "blasts" through a new reading program.

The Rapid City school board is considering implementing StudySync, a reading program from McGraw-Hill, the Rapid City Journal reported. StudySync offers a class-wide forum where students can send short, anonymous "blast" responses to reading prompts from their school-issued laptop.

The new reading program proposed for next fall also includes a digital license for readings and videos as well as a textbook with fiction, nonfiction and grammar exercises.

The blasts are shared with students in a particular section and teachers monitor posts for inappropriate comments, said Valerie Seales, Rapid City Area Schools' director of teaching, learning and innovation.

Students respond to reading prompts in fewer than 280 characters and then rate each other's blasts based on spelling, complete thoughts and "careful" language.

"It mirrors real-life communication," said Robert Romano, founder and CEO of the StudySync.

Teachers can also play a moderating role by directing conversation and setting parameters, Seales said.

The city's reading instructors chose StudySync over a comparable reading product from another publisher after a trial-run with each curriculum. Rapid City middle school students enjoyed their interactions through the blast forum, teachers said.

"Cross communication between multiple participants is a 21st century skill," Seales said. "And to do that in a moderated setting, that's very beneficial."

If the board adopts StudySync, it'll mark the first time the city's schools have had a uniform reading curriculum.

Belle Fourche goes 2 years without a city engineer

BELLE FOURCHE, S.D. (AP) — This month marks the second full year a western South Dakota town has gone without a city engineer on staff.

The city of Belle Fourche hopes casting a wider net will improve the chances of acquiring more qualified candidates for the job, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

"For a while we were getting quite a few," said Mayor Gloria Landphere. "And then for a period of time, (the inflow of applicants) kind of fell off."

The city has received between eight and 10 applications for the vacant position after former engineer Ryan Kavan resigned in May 2016.

Steve Nafus has been serving as the city's interim engineer. He said the city has contracted third-party group to perform the engineering tasks at the city's landfill until officials hire an engineer.

"There's some really qualified people out there (who have applied) but they haven't worked with municipal government type of engineering," Nafus said.

Picking up the slack has been challenging for the city's engineering department, he said.

"It's overwhelming at times, especially when you've got a \$4 million project going on," Nafus said, referring to a sewer interceptor project. "It's frustrating when you can't get to the little things in the engineering (office) that you'd like to get done and are used to getting done. You've got to look at the bigger picture and some of the little stuff has to sit on the side burner."

The city has advertised the position online, as well as with the South Dakota Municipal League, the American Public Works Association's magazine, state universities and nearly 140 out-of-state schools.

"I'm very anxious to see, now that we've broadened the search, to see the response we get," Landphere said.

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

Pipeline pique complicates Heitkamp's 2nd term Senate hopes

By JAMES MacPHERSON, Associated Press

STANDING ROCK SIOUX RESERVATION, N.D. (AP) — Standing Rock Sioux tribal member Marlo Hunte-Beaubrun went door to door on North Dakota's largest American Indian reservations in 2012 turning out the tribal vote to help put Democrat Heidi Heitkamp in the U.S. Senate. Six years later, with Heitkamp fighting hard to win a second term, Hunte-Beaubrun is staying on the sidelines.

She is among Indian voters who say they've lost their zeal for Heitkamp over her perceived non-stance on the Dakota Access pipeline, which brought thousands of American Indians and others to the state in 2016 and 2017 to protest its construction under the Missouri River, just outside Standing Rock.

"It was really a kick in the stomach," Hunte-Beaubrun said. "We rallied so hard for her, but when her hand was forced she basically sold out to big oil."

Democrats' hopes to capture the Senate depend heavily on Heitkamp, who has trod a careful path on energy and other issues to win office and remain popular in a deeply conservative state. But she faces a stern test from the state's lone U.S. House member, Republican Kevin Cramer, in a race seen as a top pickup chance for Republicans.

Heitkamp's first victory came by fewer than 3,000 votes, and American Indians, who tend to vote Democratic, were a source of strength. Three counties with majority Indian populations — Sioux, Rolette and Benson — backed Heitkamp by a more than 4,000-vote margin over then-U.S. Rep. Rick Berg. In Sioux County, home to the Standing Rock reservation, Heitkamp took 83 percent of the vote.

Once in the Senate, Heitkamp earned respect from American Indians for her knowledge of issues important to them, such as domestic violence in Indian Country and the relationship between tribal governments and the federal government. The first bill she introduced established a commission to study the challenges facing Native American children, an issue she had pursued since the 1990s when she was North Dakota's attorney general.

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Then came the Dakota Access pipeline, a \$3.8 billion project by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners to move oil from North Dakota's rich Bakken fields to a shipping point in Illinois. The pipeline offered oil companies a cheaper way to get their product to market, was seen as safer than rail shipping and had the support of most state leaders.

The Standing Rock tribe opposed it as a threat to water. Their protest grew into a national event for environmental advocates, and pipeline opponents frequently clashed with police. In the ensuing months, Heitkamp's public statements didn't take a position on the pipeline, instead typically urging courts and federal officials to resolve uncertainty around the project while supporting protesters' right to demonstrate.

On Standing Rock, a 3,600-square-mile reservation that straddles the Dakotas border, there are few industries besides a casino. The reservation is home to about 10,000 people, and unemployment runs as high as 20 percent. In several interviews, some residents remained loyal to Heitkamp and said they would support her. Others said they were disappointed and would not.

"The majority of the people here feel the same way I do — she chose oil over Indians," said Joe Torras, a 57-year-old rancher and horse trainer at Standing Rock. "Once you damage that trust, we will never let it go. You only get one shot." Torras said he isn't planning to vote in November.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Heitkamp highlighted her work on Indian issues, saying no one in the delegation has been a "stronger advocate." Of the pipeline, she said: "My interest was keeping everybody safe."

"When you look at the choices you make in this job, not everybody always is going to agree with you," Heitkamp said. "I will continue to work on things we can all agree on."

Char White Mountain, a 67-year-old retired office administrator and great-grandmother, said she voted for Heitkamp previously but won't again. She would never vote for Cramer, who strongly supported the pipeline, and said she will probably just stay home on Election Day.

"We all thought a lot about Heidi, but I believe she betrayed our people," White Mountain said. "We really needed someone we could trust."

Mary Louise Defender Wilson, 87, a writer and retired educator, said Heitkamp was in a no-win situation on a pipeline protest that she said was hijacked by outsiders.

"I think she was right not saying anything about that pipeline — there were some really bad things that happened there and it distracted from our real issues," Defender Wilson said. She campaigned for Heitkamp six years ago and will again, planning to hand out brochures and post yard signs at her home in Porcupine, a tiny community of fewer than 150 people on Standing Rock.

Former Standing Rock Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault, who was the face and voice of the fight against the Dakota Access oil pipeline, said he met with Heitkamp when the pipeline was first proposed and long before the protests "to let her know this was going to be an issue for us."

"I think she was caught in the middle. But when her hand was forced, she chose the pipeline," Archambault said. "She always said she supported Indian Country, but when all of Indian Country from across the nation was at Standing Rock — she didn't show up."

"She didn't truly listen to what Indian Country was saying," Archambault said. "Now she's in a bind."

S. Korea: Kim commits to summit with Trump, denuclearization

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM** and **FOSTER KLUG**, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Sunday that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un committed in their surprise meeting to sitting down with President Donald Trump and to a "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

The Korean leaders' second summit in a month saw bear hugs and broad smiles, but their quickly arranged meeting Saturday appears to highlight a sense of urgency on both sides of the world's most heavily armed border.

At the White House, Trump said negotiations over a potential June 12 summit with Kim that he had earlier canceled were "going along very well." Trump told reporters that they are still considering Singapore

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as the venue for their talks. He said there is a "lot of good will," and that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula would be "a great thing."

The Koreas' talks, which Moon said Kim requested, capped a whirlwind 24 hours of diplomatic back-and-forth. They allowed Moon to push for a U.S.-North Korean summit that he sees as the best way to ease animosity that had some fearing a war last year.

Kim may see the sit-down with Trump as necessary to easing pressure from crushing sanctions and to winning security assurances in a region surrounded by enemies.

Moon told reporters Sunday that Kim "again made clear his commitment to a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," and that he told the South Korean leader he's willing to cooperate to end confrontation and work toward peace for the sake of the successful North Korea-U.S. summit.

Moon said he told Kim that Trump has a "firm resolve" to end hostile relations with North Korea and initiate economic cooperation if Kim implements "complete denuclearization."

"What Kim is unclear about is that he has concerns about whether his country can surely trust the United States over its promise to end hostile relations (with North Korea) and provide a security guarantee if they do denuclearization," Moon said.

"During the South Korea-U.S. summit, President Trump said the U.S. is willing to clearly put an end to hostile relations (between the U.S. and North Korea) and help (the North) achieve economic prosperity if North Korea conducts denuclearization," he said.

Moon said North Korea and the United States will soon start working-level talks to prepare for the Kim-Trump summit. He said he expects the talks to go smoothly because Pyongyang and Washington both know what they want from each other.

Kim, in a telling line from a dispatch issued by the North's state-run news service earlier Sunday, "expressed his fixed will on the historic (North Korea)-U.S. summit talks." During Saturday's inter-Korean summit, the Korean leaders agreed to "positively cooperate with each other as ever to improve (North Korea)-U.S. relations and establish (a) mechanism for permanent and durable peace."

They agreed to have their top officials meet again June 1. Moon said military generals and Red Cross officials from the Koreas will also meet separately to discuss how to ease military tensions and resume reunions of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War.

Saturday's Korean summit came hours after South Korea expressed relief over revived talks for a Trump-Kim meeting.

Despite repeated references to "denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" by the North, it remains unclear whether Kim will ever agree to fully abandon his nuclear arsenal.

The North has previously used the term to demand the United States pull out its 28,500 troops in South Korea and withdraw its so-called "nuclear umbrella" security commitment to South Korea and Japan. The North hasn't openly repeated those same demands after Kim's sudden outreach to Seoul and Washington.

Moon has insisted Kim can be persuaded to abandon his nuclear facilities, materials and bombs in a verifiable and irreversible way in exchange for credible security and economic guarantees. Moon said Sunday that the North's disarmament could be still be a difficult process even if Pyongyang, Washington and Seoul don't differ over what "complete denuclearization" of the peninsula means.

Moon, who brokered the summit between Washington and Pyongyang, likely used Saturday's meeting to confirm Kim's willingness to enter nuclear negotiations with Trump and clarify what steps Kim has in mind in the process of denuclearization, said Hong Min, a senior analyst at Seoul's Korea Institute for National Unification.

"While Washington and Pyongyang have expressed their hopes for a summit through published statements, Moon has to step up as the mediator because the surest way to set the meeting in stone would be an official confirmation of intent between heads of states," Hong said.

Some U.S. officials have talked about a comprehensive one-shot deal in which North Korea fully eliminates its nukes first and receives rewards later. But Kim, through two summits with Chinese President Xi Jinping in March and May, has called for a phased and synchronized process in which every action he takes is met with a reciprocal reward from the United States.

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Before he canceled the summit, Trump did not rule out an incremental approach that would provide incentives along the way to the North.

Following an unusually provocative 2017 in which his engineers tested a purported thermonuclear warhead and three long-range missiles theoretically capable of striking mainland U.S. cities, Kim has engaged in a flurry of diplomatic activity in recent months. In addition to his summits with Moon and Xi, Kim also has had two meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Photos released by South Korea's presidential office showed Moon arriving at the North Korean side of the Panmunjom truce village on Saturday and shaking hands with Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, before sitting down with Kim for their summit.

Moon was accompanied by his spy chief, Suh Hoon, while Kim was joined by Kim Yong Chol, a former military intelligence chief who is now Kim's top official on inter-Korean relations. The two leaders embraced as Moon departed.

At their first meeting on April 27, Kim and Moon first announced "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" and permanent peace, which Seoul has tried to sell as a meaningful breakthrough to set up the summit with Trump.

Ahead of that summit, the Koreas established their first-ever leaders' hotline to enable Moon and Kim to engage in direct communication and defuse crises. But Moon said Sunday that he and Kim decided to meet again, rather than have a telephone conversation, as their aides suggested "candid" face-to-face talks between the leaders.

Relations between the two Koreas had chilled in recent weeks, with North Korea canceling a high-level meeting with Seoul over South Korea's participation in regular military exercises with the United States and insisting that it will not return to talks unless its grievances are resolved.

South Korea was caught off guard by Trump's abrupt cancellation of his summit with Kim, with the U.S. president citing hostility in recent North Korean comments. Moon said Trump's decision left him "perplexed" and was "very regrettable." He urged Washington and Pyongyang to resolve their differences through "more direct and closer dialogue between their leaders."

Saturday's summit marked the fourth meeting between the leaders of the two Koreas since they were divided at the end of the World War II in 1945.

Associated Press writer Kim Tong-hyung contributed to this report.

Budget battle brews as Trump threatens another shutdown

By **ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has warned Congress that he will never sign another foot-tall, \$1 trillion-plus government-wide spending bill like the one he did in March. His message to lawmakers in both parties: Get your act together before the next budget lands on my desk.

After a brief government shutdown earlier this year, Democrats and Republicans now agree on the need for budgeting day-to-day operations of government by the old-fashioned way. That means weeks of open debate and amendments that empower rank-and-file lawmakers, rather than concentrating power in the hands of a few leaders meeting in secret.

But Capitol Hill's dysfunction is so pervasive that even the most optimistic predictions are for only a handful of the 12 annual spending bills to make it into law by Oct. 1, the start of the new budget year. The rest may get bundled together into a single, massive measure yet again.

The worst-case scenario? A government shutdown just a month before Election Day, Nov. 6, as Republicans and Democrats fight for control of the House and possibly the Senate. Trump is agitating for more money for his long-promised border wall with Mexico. So far, he has been frustrated by limited success on that front.

"We need the wall. We're going to have it all. And again, that wall has started. We got \$1.6 billion. We come up again (in) September," Trump said in a campaign-style event in Michigan last month. "If we don't

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get border security, we'll have no choice. We'll close down the country because we need border security."

At stake is the funding for daily operations of government agencies. A budget deal this year reversed spending cuts that affected military readiness and put a crimp on domestic agencies. A \$1.3 trillion spending bill swept through Congress in March, though Trump entertained last-minute second thoughts about the measure and promised he would not sign a repeat.

The demise of the annual appropriations process took root after Republicans took over the House in 2011 and is part of a broader breakdown on Capitol Hill. The yearly bills need bipartisan support to advance, which has grated on tea party lawmakers. GOP leaders such as House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and his predecessor as speaker, Ohio Republican John Boehner, have preferred to focus on other priorities.

Ryan did throw his weight behind a two-year budget agreement this year that set an overall spending limit of \$1.3 trillion for both 2018 and 2019, citing a need to boost the Pentagon.

That, in theory, makes it easier to get the appropriations process back on track. But in the GOP-controlled House, where Democratic votes are generally needed to pass the bills, Democrats are complaining that Republicans have shortchanged domestic agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Environmental Protection Agency.

That's not the case in the Senate, where the new chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Alabama Republican Richard Shelby, is determined to get the system working again. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York is on board, as is Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., himself a decades-long veteran of that powerful committee.

"We want this to work," said Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., who criticized the GOP-controlled House for continuing to pack legislation with "poison pills."

Obstacles remain, however.

For starters, floor debates could lead to votes on contentious issues such as immigration, the border wall, gun control and others that some lawmakers might hope to avoid.

Democrats are wary of Republicans trying to jam through the Pentagon spending bill before dealing with some agencies.

And Trump could blow up the whole effort at any time.

Trump is prone to threatening government shutdowns on Twitter or when he riffs in public, and then backing off when bills are delivered to him.

In the House, a familiar problem awaits.

Many conservative Republicans won't vote for some bills because they think they spend too much money. That means Democratic votes are a must. But many Democrats are upset over unrelated policy add-ons pushed by the GOP, and they won't vote for the spending bills unless those provisions are removed, which usually doesn't happen until end-stage talks.

At the same time, House GOP leaders are distracted by disputes over immigration, and they haven't made the appropriations bills a priority.

An effort led by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., to cut or "rescind" \$15 billion in unspent money has run into greater opposition than anticipated. Meantime, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-N.J., is unpopular with some House conservatives, who cite his votes against a recent farm bill and against last year's tax cut measure, and that may hamper his effectiveness.

Some Irish Catholics worried, dismayed after abortion vote

By GREGORY KATZ, Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — Irish Catholics attending Sunday Mass were disappointed with the result of a referendum in which voters opted to legalize abortion and think it reflects the weakening of the Church — a situation that was unthinkable in Ireland a generation ago.

There was no mention of the referendum during the sermon at St. Mary's Pro Cathedral, but it was weighing heavily on the minds of some worshippers as they left the Mass in central Dublin.

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Ireland voted by a roughly two-to-one margin Friday to end a constitutional ban on abortion, and parliament is expected to approve a more liberal set of laws governing the termination of pregnancies.

Some worshippers said the overwhelming victory of abortion rights activists seeking the repeal of the Eighth Amendment of the constitution reflects a weakening of the Catholic Church's historic influence and fills them with dread for Ireland's future.

"I think the 'yes' vote was an anti-Church vote," said Annemarie McCarrick, referring to the "yes" vote in favor of ending the constitutional ban.

The 52-year-old lecturer said on the cathedral steps that a series of sex abuse scandals had undermined the influence of the Church in Ireland. She said the Church had in recent weeks taken a "quiet" stand against repeal, but hadn't been able to sway people.

"I am religious but the Church has definitely lost influence here because of the scandals," she said. "The people will not take direction from the Church anymore. It's hard for the Church to have credibility."

Recent census figures show a small decline in the number of Catholics in Ireland, but it remains by far the dominant religion.

Frank Gaynor, a 75-year-old retiree, said after the Mass that he never imagined the vote in favor of abortion rights would be so lopsided.

He said he was troubled by the way the "yes" campaign used the case of Savita Halappanavar, a 31-year-old dentist who died of sepsis during a prolonged miscarriage after being denied an abortion in Galway in 2012, to drum up support for repeal.

"I was disappointed to see the tragic death of Savita being shamelessly used as an excuse for introducing abortion into a country," he said. "That was a sepsis issue that was mishandled. Not an Eighth Amendment issue."

He felt alienated by the campaign: "It's extraordinary the way the campaign focused so much on 'me, me, me,' the rights of the mother, and very little mention of the unborn child. That was sidelined."

With the vote decided, attention is turning to Ireland's parliament, which will make new laws to govern abortions.

The referendum vote ended a harsh anti-abortion regime enacted in 1983 that required doctors to regard the rights of a fetus, from the moment of conception, as equal to the rights of the mother.

In practice, it meant Irish women had to travel abroad for terminations.

The nationwide rejection of the amendment represented a growing tolerance on social issues in the traditionally Roman Catholic country.

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar hailed the vote as bringing a new era to Ireland.

He said it will be remembered as "the day Ireland stepped out from under the last of our shadows and into the light. The day we came of age as a country. The day we took our place among the nations of the world."

His government will propose that abortions be permissible in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

It isn't yet clear what strategy abortion opponents will use in parliament in light of the unexpectedly large vote in favor of repeal. Some opposition figures have indicated they won't block legislation because they must respect the public will.

The decisive outcome of the landmark referendum was cast as a historic victory for women's rights. Exit polls indicated that the repeal was endorsed in urban and rural areas alike, with strong support from both men and women.

Backing for repeal was highest among young voters, including many who returned from jobs or universities in continental Europe to vote, but was also high among every age group except those 65 or older.

Since 1983, the Eighth Amendment had forced women seeking to terminate pregnancies to go abroad for abortions, bear children conceived through rape or incest, or take risky illegal measures at home.

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US Gulf Coast prepares as Alberto brings wind, rain north

By TAMARA LUSH, Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Florida, Alabama and Mississippi launched emergency preparations ahead of the arrival of Subtropical Storm Alberto, a slow-moving system expected to cause wet misery across the eastern U.S. Gulf Coast over the holiday weekend.

Heavy downpours were expected to begin lashing parts of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama on Sunday. The National Hurricane Center in Miami issued tropical storm warnings for parts of Florida and Alabama, saying tropical storm conditions are possible there by Sunday night. The governors of Florida, Alabama and Mississippi all declared states of emergency ahead of the storm.

About 5 to 10 inches (13 to 25 centimeters) of rain are possible along affected areas in eastern Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, western Tennessee and the western Florida Panhandle. Isolated areas could see as much as 15 inches (38 centimeters).

Under overcast skies and occasional drizzle, several Gulfport, Mississippi, residents lined up to fill 10- and 20-pound (5- and 9-kilogram) bags with sand they will use to block any encroaching floodwater expected as a result of Alberto.

Tommy Whitlock said sandbagging has become a usual event in his life since he lives next to a creek.

"I'm doing this because every time we have a hard rain, it floods at my house," Whitlock said. "We get water from other neighborhoods, and water can get up to a foot deep in some places."

Eddy Warner, a retired consultant for a construction company, filled bags while waiting for his nephew to come help transport them home to protect his garage.

"I'm 65 years old and too old to be doing this," he said, laughing.

Alberto — the first named storm of the 2018 hurricane season that officially starts June 1 — is expected to strengthen until it reaches the northern Gulf Coast, likely on Monday night.

The NWS said waves as high as 18 feet (5.5 meters) could pound the popular Gulf beaches in Baldwin County, Alabama, and northwestern Florida on Monday. A high surf warning was in effect through 7 p.m. Tuesday local time.

At 5 a.m. EDT Sunday, the National Hurricane Center in Miami said Alberto was about 330 miles (530 kilometers) south of Apalachicola, Florida, and moving north-northeast at 13 mph (20 kph). The storm had top sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph).

A subtropical storm like Alberto has a less defined and cooler center than a tropical storm, and its strongest winds are found farther from its center. Subtropical storms can develop into tropical storms, which in turn can strengthen into hurricanes.

A tropical storm warning expired for Cuba's western Pinar del Rio province, where heavy rains could trigger flash floods and mudslides, the National Hurricane Center said.

The downpours could dampen Memorial Day, the unofficial start of the summer tourist season along Gulf beaches. Along with heavy rains and high winds come rough seas and a threat of rip currents from Florida to Louisiana that can sweep swimmers out to sea.

Tracey Gasper and her 6-year-old son, Chase, traveled to Biloxi Beach from Donaldsonville, Louisiana, for a day of fun in the sun with a group of friends from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The weather had scared off the usual crowds expected for the holiday weekend.

"It was a 50-50 chance of whether to come down and we decided to chance it," Gasper said.

Man jailed in Venezuela for 2 years returns to US

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joshua Holt, who traveled to Venezuela from Utah in 2016 to marry a Spanish-speaking Mormon woman but soon found himself jailed and later branded the CIA's top spy in Latin America, has been set free by the anti-American Maduro government.

He says he was "overwhelmed with gratitude."

Holt and his wife, Thamara Caleno, arrived Saturday evening at Washington Dulles International Airport

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for a tearful reunion with his parents, Laurie and Jason Holt. A few hours later President Donald Trump welcomed them to the White House.

"Those two years, they were a said an emotional Holt, sitting next to Trump in the Oval Office. "Not really the great vacation that I was looking for ... I'm just so grateful for what you guys have done."

To Holt, Trump said: "You've gone through a lot. More than most people could endure."

The Utah man's mother, Laurie Holt, thanked Trump and the lawmakers for her son's safe return, adding: "I also want to say thank you to President Maduro for releasing Josh and letting him to come home."

Their release came one day after Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., held a surprise meeting in Caracas with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, who the Trump administration says runs a "dictatorship" and just won re-election in a "sham" vote.

Trump, in a tweet, described Holt as a "hostage." The U.S. contended Holt was held on trumped up charges.

Months of secret, backchannel talks between an aide to Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and close allies of Maduro preceded their return. Yet Holt's release had seemed unlikely even a week ago.

Joining Trump in the Oval Officer were Corker, Utah Sens. Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee and Utah Rep. Mia Love. The lawmakers thanked Trump for his support.

The White House learned from Corker on Friday of Holt's impending release, according to a U.S. official who has closely followed Holt's plight and spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the private talks.

Holt and his wife were reunited at the Caracas airport with her daughter from a previous relationship, and all three boarded a chartered flight to Washington. "We are on our way home," Corker tweeted.

When he departed the Caracas airport earlier, Holt told The Associated Press that the ordeal had left him "exhausted."

Venezuela's communications minister, Jorge Rodriguez, said their release was a goodwill gesture that followed months of dialogue between the Maduro government and U.S. lawmakers.

"We're praying that this type of gesture ... will allow us to strengthen what we've always sought: dialogue, harmony, respect for our independence and respect for our sovereignty," he said.

Holt, now 26, set out for the South American country in June 2016 to marry a woman he met online while looking for Spanish-speaking Mormons who could help him improve his Spanish. He had planned to spend several months in Caracas that summer with his new wife and her two daughters, to secure their visas so they could move with him to the U.S.

Instead, the couple was arrested that June 30 at her family's apartment in a government housing complex on the outskirts of Caracas. Authorities accused him of stockpiling an assault rifle and grenades, and suggested that his case was linked to other unspecified U.S. attempts to undermine Maduro's rule amid deep economic and political turbulence.

They were held in a notorious Caracas prison, run by the secret police, that also is home to dozens of top Maduro opponents jailed during the past few years of political unrest in the country. Their trial was set to begin this month after repeated delays that led the Trump administration to question the motives for his detention.

Until Trump's tweet on Saturday, the U.S. had stopped short of publicly calling Holt a "hostage."

Holt's release looked unlikely a week ago, when he appeared in a clandestinely shot video railing against the Maduro government and saying his life was threatened in a prison riot. In retaliation, socialist party boss Diosdado Cabello, a powerful Maduro ally, said on state television that Holt was the CIA's top spy in Latin America.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., spoke to Trump at length Friday night and later said the couple's release "will in no way change U.S. policy toward the dictatorship in Venezuela."

The White House press secretary issued a statement to that point Saturday night, saying policy was not changing even while thanking the government for releasing the Holts. The statement also called the recent elections "illegitimate" and urged the release of all political prisoners.

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The Trump administration has threatened crippling oil sanctions on Venezuela for Maduro's decision to go forward with the presidential election last week.

The U.S. government at first avoided ratcheting up public pressure on Venezuela in light of their already strained relations, but eventually raised Holt's case with the highest levels of the Venezuelan government and decried his treatment in prison.

Corker was seen live on state TV on Friday shaking hands with Maduro and being greeted by first lady Cilia Flores as he entered the presidential palace. Corker left an hour later; neither the senator nor the president made any statements.

Laurie Holt worked feverishly to bring attention to her son's incarceration, hosting rallies, fundraisers and doing media interviews. She said her son has suffered numerous health problems in jail, including kidney stones and respiratory problems. He was depressed and at one point lost so much weight that he dropped several pant sizes, she said.

In their statement, the Holt family said, "We thank you for your collaboration during this time of anguish. We ask that you allow us to meet with our son and his wife before giving any interviews and statements. We are grateful to all who participated in this miracle."

Goodman reported from Bogota, Colombia. Associated Press writers Scott Smith in Caracas, Venezuela, and Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City contributed to this report.

More LGBT issues loom as justices near wedding cake decision

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A flood of lawsuits over LGBT rights is making its way through courts and will continue, no matter the outcome in the Supreme Court's highly anticipated decision in the case of a Colorado baker who would not create a wedding cake for a same-sex couple.

Courts are engaged in two broad types of cases on this issue, weighing whether sex discrimination laws apply to LGBT people and also whether businesses can assert religious objections to avoid complying with anti-discrimination measures in serving customers, hiring and firing employees, providing health care and placing children with foster or adoptive parents.

The outcome of baker Jack Phillips' fight at the Supreme Court could indicate how willing the justices are to carve out exceptions to anti-discrimination laws; that's something the court has refused to do in the areas of race and sex.

The result was hard to predict based on arguments in December. But however the justices rule, it won't be their last word on the topic.

Religious conservatives have gotten a big boost from the Trump administration, which has taken a more restrictive view of LGBT rights and intervened on their side in several cases, including Phillips'.

"There is a constellation of hugely significant cases that are likely to be heard by the court in the near future and those are going to significantly shape the legal landscape going forward," said Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

Several legal disputes are pending over wedding services, similar to the Phillips case. Video producers, graphic artists and florists are among business owners who say they oppose same-sex marriage on religious grounds and don't want to participate in same-sex weddings. They live in the 21 states that have anti-discrimination laws that specifically include gay and lesbian people.

In California and Texas, courts are dealing with lawsuits over the refusal of hospitals, citing religious beliefs, to perform hysterectomies on people transitioning from female to male. In Michigan, the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit against the state's practice of allowing faith-based child placement agencies to reject same-sex couples.

Advocates of both sides see the essence of these cases in starkly different terms.

"What the religious right is asking for is a new rule specific to same-sex couples that would not only affect same-sex couples but also carve a hole in nondiscrimination laws that could affect all communi-

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ties," said Camilla Taylor, director of constitutional litigation at Lambda Legal, which supports civil rights for LGBT people.

Jim Campbell of the Christian public interest law firm Alliance Defending Freedom said the cases will determine whether "people like Jack Phillips who believe marriage is the union of a man and a woman, that they too have a legitimate place in public life. Or does he have to hide or ignore those beliefs when he's participating in the public square?" ADF represents Phillips at the Supreme Court.

The other category of cases concerns protections for LGBT people under civil rights law. One case expected to reach the court this summer involves a Michigan funeral home that fired an employee who disclosed that she was transitioning from male to female and dressed as a woman.

The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the firing constituted sex discrimination under federal civil rights law. That court is one of several that have applied anti-sex discrimination provisions to transgender people, but the Supreme Court has yet to take up a case.

The funeral home argues in part that Congress was not thinking about transgender people when it included sex discrimination in Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. A trial judge had ruled for the funeral home, saying it was entitled to a religious exemption from the civil rights law.

"Congress has not weighed in to say sex includes gender identity. We should certainly make sure that's a conscious choice of Congress and not just the overexpansion of the law by courts," Campbell said. ADF also represents the funeral home.

In just the past week, two federal courts ruled in favor of transgender students who want to use school facilities that correspond to their sexual identity. Those cases turn on whether the prohibition on sex discrimination in education applies to transgender people. Appeals in both cases are possible.

In the past 13 months, federal appeals courts in Chicago and New York also have ruled that gay and lesbian employees are entitled to protection from discrimination under Title VII. Those courts overruled earlier decisions. Title VII does not specifically mention sexual orientation, but the courts said it was covered under the ban on sex bias.

The Obama administration had supported treating LGBT discrimination claims as sex discrimination, but the Trump administration has changed course. In the New York case, for instance, the Trump administration filed a legal brief arguing that Title VII was not intended to provide protections to gay workers. It also withdrew Obama-era guidance to educators to treat claims of transgender students as sex discrimination.

There is no appeal pending or expected on the sexual orientation issue, and there is no guarantee that the court will take up the funeral home's appeal over transgender discrimination.

The trend in the lower courts has been in favor of extending civil rights protections to LGBT employees and students. Their prospects at the Supreme Court may be harder to discern, not least because it's unclear whether the court's composition will change soon.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, 81, has been the subject of retirement speculation, though he has not indicated he is planning to retire. When Justice Stephen Breyer turns 80 in August, he will join Kennedy and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 85, as octogenarians on the bench.

If President Donald Trump were to replace any of those justices, the court probably would be much less receptive to LGBT rights. Even the landmark gay marriage ruling in 2015 that Kennedy wrote was a 5-4 decision.

"We're very concerned about the composition of the federal bench. Under the Trump administration, we've seen a number of federal nominees who have been ideologues, who have taken positions about the very right to exist of LGBT people that is simply inconsistent with fitness to serve as a federal judge," Taylor of Lambda Legal said.

The ADF's Campbell said even with the current justices, he holds out some hope that the court would not extend anti-discrimination protections. "Justice Kennedy has undoubtedly been the person who has decided the major LGBT cases, but to my knowledge he hasn't weighed in some of these other issues," he said.

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Backchannel, 'Dracula' help free Utah man in Venezuela

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A secret backchannel led by a veteran Republican Senate staffer and a flamboyant Venezuelan official nicknamed "Dracula" broke through hostile relations between the two governments to secure the release of American prisoner Joshua Holt, who traveled to the South American country for love and ended up in jail, without a trial, for two years.

A week ago the chances of Holt's long ordeal ending any time soon looked slim.

On the eve of Venezuela's May 20 presidential election, the Utah native appeared in a clandestinely shot video from jail railing against Nicolas Maduro's government, saying his life had been threatened in a prison riot. In retaliation, he was branded the CIA's spy boss in Latin America by the head of the ruling socialist party. Hours earlier Maduro expelled the top American diplomat over the refusal of the U.S. to recognize his re-election.

But the arrival in Caracas on Friday of Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, led to a surprise breakthrough. Maduro handed over Holt and his wife, Thamara Caleno, to Corker in what his government said was a goodwill gesture to promote dialogue and mutual respect between the two antagonistic governments.

Holt, 26, traveled to Caracas in June 2016 to marry a fellow Mormon he had met online while looking to improve his Spanish. The couple was waiting for Caleno's U.S. visa when they were arrested at her family's apartment in a government housing complex for what the U.S. considered trumped-up charges of stockpiling an assault rifle and grenades.

Although Corker sealed the deal in a few tense hours in Venezuela's collapsing, crime-filled capital, the push to secure Holt's release began months earlier by Corker's top Latin American policy aide, Caleb McCarry, who both Corker and Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, credited with leading the painstaking, behind-the-scenes negotiations.

McCarry leveraged a 15-year-old relationship with Maduro from their time together in the Boston Group, an informal gathering from across the political spectrum — Democrats, Republicans, socialists and capitalists — from both countries that worked discreetly to repair relations between the two countries following a coup in 2002 against then-President Hugo Chavez.

Relationships formed in the now-defunct group were also instrumental in securing the release of another American accused of spying, documentary filmmaker Tim Tracy, who spent a month in a Venezuelan jail in 2013.

McCarry secretly traveled to Venezuela in February to discuss Holt's imprisonment with Maduro and first lady Cilia Flores. The U.S. Embassy was kept at an arm's length, for fear of derailing the talks, although the initiative was backed by Undersecretary of State Thomas Shannon, who also knew Maduro from his days as political officer in Caracas at the outset of Hugo Chavez's revolution in the 1990s, several senior U.S. officials said.

Holding McCarry's hand throughout the delicate talks was "Dracula" — Rafael Lacava, the governor of central Carabobo state and a trusted ally of Maduro who also was close to the Boston Group members.

Shortly after McCarry's visit, Lacava traveled to Washington in March to speak with several lawmakers including Hatch, Corker, Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., and Rep. Ed Royce, R-Calif., according to several senior U.S. officials. All the officials agreed to discuss details of the negotiations only on condition of anonymity.

However, after word of Lacava's visit was leaked by Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., who has Trump's ear on policy toward Venezuela, the administration refused to meet with Maduro's envoy. Rubio warned that Lacava, who embraces the nickname Dracula for his habits of tweeting and patrolling around his state late at night in a Batmobile-like vehicle, was reportedly involved in money laundering, making him too toxic for a White House bent on punishing such criminal activity.

When The Associated Press reported on the politically fraught backchannel in March, few imagined it would succeed.

Speculation swirled that the government was demanding an all-but-impossible prisoner exchange for

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Flores' two nephews, who in 2016 were convicted in New York of drug trafficking, after it was learned that a government-connected Venezuelan tycoon was paying Holt's legal fees as well as those of the men branded the "narco-nephews."

At the same time, the Trump administration was intensifying a campaign to isolate Venezuela's government, sanctioning dozens of officials — including Maduro and Flores — for human rights abuses and drug trafficking while threatening a more crippling ban on oil shipments.

An official with the National Security Council stressed that nothing had been offered to secure Holt's release. President Donald Trump found out Friday that Holt would be released, said the official, who was not authorized to speak publicly and requested anonymity.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, while welcoming Holt's release, stressed that "U.S. policy toward Venezuela remains unchanged."

"The United States stands steadfast in support of the Venezuelan people and their efforts to return to democracy," he said in a statement.

Alfredo Romero, a lawyer who defends some of the opposition activists who were held alongside Holt, said that Maduro may be looking to win over some political sectors in the U.S. to temper Trump's hardline approach toward Venezuela.

"Holt's continued imprisonment was a thorn in the side," he said.

The talks were encouraged by Pompeo, who met privately with Corker on Thursday morning and finalized details of the senator's trip ahead of testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the State Department budget. "We're doing all the right things. We have an American there that we desperately want to get back, Joshua Holt. And so know that we are engaged," Pompeo told lawmakers at the hearing.

The government of Cuba was also helpful in pressuring Maduro as well as former Spanish President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, one official said. Zapatero has been leading a three-year push to bring the government and opposition together to help resolve Venezuela's economic and political crisis.

Still, when Corker left for Caracas on Friday it was still unclear if Maduro would follow through on his pledge to release Holt, the officials said.

On Saturday, a beaming Lacava could be seen in a video boarding the Venezuelan government plane that transported Holt to Washington wearing aviator glasses and a dark suit. He walked by the camera shouting "Dracula on the attack!" and flashing a "V for Victory" sign.

In a photograph taken at the airport in Caracas, Holt can be seen standing alongside Lacava holding a Venezuela national soccer team jersey emblazoned with the governor's name.

There was one last-minute scare. Taxiing down the runway, the plane suddenly slowed and its pilot turned back the craft to look into an instrument failure. When the once-unimaginable voyage resumed Holt had a big smile on his face, Corker told Trump in an Oval Office meeting Saturday night surrounded by the Utah man and his family.

"Probably the only time anybody was ever happy that there was a bad instrument on an airplane," said Trump.

Goodman reported from Bogota, Colombia. Associated Press writer Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

Freed after 2 years, man jailed in Venezuela returns to US

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joshua Holt, who traveled to Venezuela from Utah in 2016 to marry a Spanish-speaking Mormon woman but soon found himself jailed and later branded the CIA's top spy in Latin America, was set free by the anti-American Maduro government on Saturday, saying he was "overwhelmed with gratitude."

Holt and his wife, Thamara Caleno, arrived Saturday evening at Washington Dulles International Airport for a tearful reunion with his parents, Laurie and Jason Holt. A few hours later President Donald Trump

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welcomed them to the White House.

"Those two years, they were a very, very, very difficult two years," said an emotional Holt, sitting next to Trump in the Oval Office. "Not really the great vacation that I was looking for ... I'm just so grateful for what you guys have done."

To Holt, Trump said: "You've gone through a lot. More than most people could endure."

The Utah man's mother, Laurie Holt, thanked Trump and the lawmakers for her son's safe return, adding: "I also want to say thank you to President Maduro for releasing Josh and letting him to come home."

Their release came one day after Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., held a surprise meeting in Caracas with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, who the Trump administration says runs a "dictatorship" and just won re-election in a "sham" vote.

Trump, in a tweet, described Holt as a "hostage." The U.S. contended Holt was held on trumped up charges.

Months of secret, backchannel talks between an aide to Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and close allies of Maduro preceded their return. Yet Holt's release had seemed unlikely even a week ago.

Joining Trump in the Oval Office were Corker, Utah Sens. Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee and Utah Rep. Mia Love. The lawmakers thanked Trump for his support.

The White House learned from Corker on Friday of Holt's impending release, according to a U.S. official who has closely followed Holt's plight and spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the private talks.

Holt and his wife were reunited at the Caracas airport with her daughter from a previous relationship, and all three boarded a chartered flight to Washington. "We are on our way home," Corker tweeted.

When he departed the Caracas airport earlier, Holt told The Associated Press that the ordeal had left him "exhausted."

Venezuela's communications minister, Jorge Rodriguez, said their release was a goodwill gesture that followed months of dialogue between the Maduro government and U.S. lawmakers.

"We're praying that this type of gesture ... will allow us to strengthen what we've always sought: dialogue, harmony, respect for our independence and respect for our sovereignty," he said.

Holt, now 26, set out for the South American country in June 2016 to marry a woman he met online while looking for Spanish-speaking Mormons who could help him improve his Spanish. He had planned to spend several months in Caracas that summer with his new wife and her two daughters, to secure their visas so they could move with him to the U.S.

Instead, the couple was arrested that June 30 at her family's apartment in a government housing complex on the outskirts of Caracas. Authorities accused him of stockpiling an assault rifle and grenades, and suggested that his case was linked to other unspecified U.S. attempts to undermine Maduro's rule amid deep economic and political turbulence.

They were held in a notorious Caracas prison, run by the secret police, that also is home to dozens of top Maduro opponents jailed during the past few years of political unrest in the country. Their trial was set to begin this month after repeated delays that led the Trump administration to question the motives for his detention.

Until Trump's tweet on Saturday, the U.S. had stopped short of publicly calling Holt a "hostage."

Holt's release looked unlikely a week ago, when he appeared in a clandestinely shot video railing against the Maduro government and saying his life was threatened in a prison riot. In retaliation, socialist party boss Diosdado Cabello, a powerful Maduro ally, said on state television that Holt was the CIA's top spy in Latin America.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., spoke to Trump at length Friday night and later said the couple's release "will in no way change U.S. policy toward the dictatorship in Venezuela."

The White House press secretary issued a statement to that point Saturday night, saying policy was not changing even while thanking the government for releasing the Holts. The statement also called the recent elections "illegitimate" and urged the release of all political prisoners.

The Trump administration has threatened crippling oil sanctions on Venezuela for Maduro's decision to

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go forward with the presidential election last week.

The U.S. government at first avoided ratcheting up public pressure on Venezuela in light of their already strained relations, but eventually raised Holt's case with the highest levels of the Venezuelan government and decried his treatment in prison.

Corker was seen live on state TV on Friday shaking hands with Maduro and being greeted by first lady Cilia Flores as he entered the presidential palace. Corker left an hour later; neither the senator nor the president made any statements.

Laurie Holt worked feverishly to bring attention to her son's incarceration, hosting rallies, fundraisers and doing media interviews. She said her son has suffered numerous health problems in jail, including kidney stones and respiratory problems. He was depressed and at one point lost so much weight that he dropped several pant sizes, she said.

In their statement, the Holt family said, "We thank you for your collaboration during this time of anguish. We ask that you allow us to meet with our son and his wife before giving any interviews and statements. We are grateful to all who participated in this miracle."

Goodman reported from Bogota, Colombia. Associated Press writers Scott Smith in Caracas, Venezuela, and Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City contributed to this report.

Wonder-goal, gaffes, injuries as Madrid seals CL three-peat

By **ROB HARRIS, AP Global Soccer Writer**

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — With his back to goal but eyes on the incoming cross, Gareth Bale connected with the ball while leaping in the air and sent a scissor-kick arcing into the top of the net.

Fusing athleticism and technique, it was a mesmerizing sight to behold from the Real Madrid forward.

Rarely has there been a finer goal in a European final and Bale followed it up with another to seal Madrid's third successive Champions League title in a 3-1 victory over Liverpool on Saturday. Yet with blunders, injuries and intrigue unfolding throughout the night in Kiev's Olympic Stadium, the wonder-goal just enriched this engrossing climax to the European club season and set the tone for weeks of uncertainty.

A weeping Mohamed Salah was forced off in the first half with a shoulder injury that foiled Liverpool's quest for a first continental success in 13 years and left the World Cup hopes of the "Egyptian King" in jeopardy.

Tears also streamed down Loris Karius' face after the Liverpool goalkeeper's mistakes gifted two goals in the biggest match of his career. It might also be his last for Liverpool, which was denied a sixth European title by the aristocrats of the continent.

When all they should have been thinking about is celebrating, both Bale and teammate Cristiano Ronaldo also cast doubts on their Madrid careers.

But while Zinedine Zidane was adamant about the need to keep hold of five-time world player of the year Ronaldo, the Madrid coach seemed far less concerned about the future of the player whose two goals just delivered the club's record-extending 13th European title.

Bale only came on in the second half. The impact was explosive, scoring the bicycle kick in the 64th minute. Five years into his Madrid career, the 28-year-old Bale wants to be more than a super-sub.

"I need to be playing week in, week out and that hasn't happened this season for one reason or another," Bale said after lifting the European Cup for a fourth time with Madrid. "I need to sit down in the summer and discuss it with my agent."

Will Bale get assurances over a place in the starting XI?

"It might be complicated," Zidane said. "But everybody looks out for themselves and takes care of their own thing, and I understand that."

Zidane doesn't understand why Ronaldo raised fresh doubts over his commitment to the club.

"He must stay," Zidane said. "He will stay with us."

While Ronaldo became the first five-time winner in the post-1993 Champions League era, this was a

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comparatively muted performance in a final for a player who has contributed decisive goals in the three finals Madrid had contested in the previous four seasons.

In the tunnel before kickoff there was a furtive glance across to Salah, who has also scored 44 goals this season. But the showdown between the world player of the year and a contender for his throne never materialized.

Blame Sergio Ramos for that, although the foul that ended Salah's final was not the Madrid captain at his most cynical. Salah landed heavily on his left shoulder in a twisting fall after 25 minutes. Ramos stepped away from the scene unpunished and Salah soon managed to step up after overcoming the initial pain.

Not for long. Salah's final was over after 30 minutes.

Lying on his back, hands covering his face, Salah rose only to leave the field. An incredible debut season at Liverpool came to a crying end.

Four minutes later, the tears were flowing down the face of Dani Carvajal after the Madrid right back appeared to injure a hamstring while attempting a back-heel. Face-down on the field, Carvajal knew his final was over in the first half for the second successive season.

"Of course it was a little shock to the team," Klopp said.

There were bigger shocks to come, from Liverpool's goalkeeping blunders.

After collecting a shot six minutes into the second half, Karius rolled the ball out too casually, neglecting the presence of Benzema who stuck out his right foot and dispatched the ball into an empty net.

The immediate impact of Karius' blunder was offset by Mane's equalizer in the 55th. Dejan Lovren rose above Ramos and headed into the path of Mane, who turned the ball into the net.

But then Bale, so determined to prove Zidane wrong, entered this meeting of the Premier League's fourth-place team and Spain's third-place finisher.

"I was very disappointed not to start the game," he said. "I felt like I deserved it. The best I can do is to come on and make an impact."

That was achieved with the goal three minutes after replacing Isco and he netted again in the 83rd thanks to Karius' second gaffe. The German allowed Bale's shot to squirm through his hands into the net in the 83rd.

"I just feel sorry for my team," Karius said. "I know I let them down today."

It left Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp reeling from a sixth successive loss in a final, including a 2013 Champions League defeat to Bayern Munich while Borussia Dortmund coach.

For Zidane, victory in Ukraine puts the former France great in an elite field alongside Carlo Ancelotti and Bob Paisley as a three-time European Cup winner. But no one has achieved the feat faster, with each of his three seasons in charge ending by winning the game's biggest club prize.

"I'm still only starting out as a coach," the 45-year-old Zidane said. "You've got to seize the moment and that's what I'm doing."

More AP Champions League coverage: www.apnews.com/tag/ChampionsLeague

Rob Harris is at www.twitter.com/RobHarris and www.facebook.com/RobHarrisReports

With US talks in limbo, Korean leaders hold surprise summit

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in met Saturday for the second time in a month, exchanging a huge bear hug and broad smiles in a surprise summit at a border village to discuss Kim's potential meeting with President Donald Trump and ways to follow through on the peace initiatives of the rivals' earlier summit.

Following a whirlwind 24 hours that saw Trump cancel the highly anticipated June 12 meeting with Kim before saying it's potentially back on, the Korean leaders took matters into their own hands.

Their quickly arranged meeting Saturday appears to highlight a sense of urgency on both sides of the world's most heavily armed border: Moon wants to secure a summit that he sees as the best way to ease

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animosity that had some fearing a war last year; Kim may see the sit-down with Trump as necessary to easing pressure from crushing sanctions and to winning security assurances in a region surrounded by enemies.

Kim, in a telling line from a dispatch issued by the North's state-run news service on Sunday, "expressed his fixed will on the historic (North Korea)-U.S. summit talks." The two Korean leaders agreed to "positively cooperate with each other as ever to improve (North Korea)-U.S. relations and establish (a) mechanism for permanent and durable peace."

They agreed to have their top officials meet again June 1 and to set up separate talks between their top generals.

The meeting came hours after South Korea expressed relief over revived talks for a summit between Trump and Kim.

It remains unclear whether Kim will ever agree to fully abandon his nuclear arsenal in return, despite Moon's insistence that Kim can be persuaded to abandon his nuclear facilities, materials and bombs in a verifiable and irreversible way in exchange for credible security and economic guarantees.

Moon, who brokered the summit between Washington and Pyongyang, likely used Saturday's meeting to confirm Kim's willingness to enter nuclear negotiations with Trump and clarify what steps Kim has in mind in the process of denuclearization, said Hong Min, a senior analyst at Seoul's Korea Institute for National Unification.

"While Washington and Pyongyang have expressed their hopes for a summit through published statements, Moon has to step up as the mediator because the surest way to set the meeting in stone would be an official confirmation of intent between heads of states," Hong said.

South Korean presidential spokesman Yoon Young-chan said Moon will reveal details of his meeting with Kim on Sunday.

U.S. officials have talked about a comprehensive one-shot deal in which North Korea fully eliminates its nukes first and receives rewards later. But Kim, through two summits with Chinese President Xi Jinping in March and May, has called for a phased and synchronized process in which every action he takes is met with a reciprocal reward from the United States.

Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University and a policy adviser to Moon, said the South Korean president wants Kim to accept an alternative approach advocated by Seoul, in which the North's comprehensive commitment and credible actions toward denuclearization are followed by a phased but compressed process of declaration, inspection and verifiable dismantling.

Before he canceled the summit, Trump this past week did not rule out an incremental approach that would provide incentives along the way to the North.

Trump tweeted earlier Saturday that a summit with Kim, if it does happen, will likely take place on June 12 in Singapore as originally planned.

Following an unusually provocative 2017 in which his engineers tested a purported thermonuclear warhead and three long-range missiles theoretically capable of striking mainland U.S. cities, Kim has engaged in a flurry of diplomatic activity in recent months. In addition to his summits with Moon and Xi, Kim also has had two meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

It wasn't immediately clear how the rival Koreas organized what appeared to be an emergency summit. Ahead of their first meeting last month, Kim and Moon established a hotline that they said would enable direct communication between the leaders and would be valuable to defuse crises, but it was unclear whether it was used to set up the latest meeting.

Photos released by South Korea's presidential office showed Moon arriving at the North Korean side of the Panmunjom truce village and shaking hands with Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, before sitting down with Kim for their summit.

Moon was accompanied by his spy chief, Suh Hoon, while Kim was joined by Kim Yong Chol, a former military intelligence chief who is now a vice chairman of the North Korean ruling party's Central Committee tasked with inter-Korean relations.

The two leaders embraced as Moon departed.

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Moon's office said that during their two-hour meeting, the two leaders also discussed carrying out the peace commitments they agreed to at their first summit, held at the South Korean side of Panmunjom on April 27, but didn't elaborate.

At their first meeting, Kim and Moon announced vague aspirations for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and permanent peace, which Seoul has tried to sell as a meaningful breakthrough to set up the summit with Trump.

But relations between the two Koreas chilled in recent weeks, with North Korea canceling a high-level meeting with Seoul over South Korea's participation in regular military exercises with the United States and insisting that it will not return to talks unless its grievances are resolved.

South Korea was caught off guard by Trump's abrupt cancellation of his summit with Kim, with the U.S. president citing hostility in recent North Korean comments. Moon said Trump's decision left him "perplexed" and was "very regrettable." He urged Washington and Pyongyang to resolve their differences through "more direct and closer dialogue between their leaders."

Associated Press writer Foster Klug contributed to this report.

'Quiet revolution' leads to abortion rights win in Ireland

By GREGORY KATZ, RENATA BRITO and LEO ENRIGHT, Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — In the end, it wasn't even close.

Irish voters — young and old, male and female, farming types and city-bred folk — endorsed expunging an abortion ban from their largely Catholic country's constitution by a two-to-one margin, referendum results compiled Saturday showed.

The decisive outcome of the landmark referendum held Friday exceeded expectations and was cast as a historic victory for women's rights. Polls had given the pro-repeal "yes" side a small lead, but suggested the contest would be close.

Since 1983, the now-repealed Eighth Amendment had forced women seeking to terminate pregnancies to go abroad for abortions, bear children conceived through rape or incest or take illegal measures at home.

As the final tally was announced showing over 66 percent of voters supported lifting the ban, crowds in the ancient courtyard of Dublin Castle began chanting "Savita! Savita!" in honor of Savita Halappanavar, a 31-year-old dentist who died of sepsis during a protracted miscarriage after being denied an abortion at a Galway hospital in 2012.

With exit polls showing a win for abortion rights campaigners, Prime Minister Leo Varadkar called the apparent victory the "culmination of a quiet revolution." Later, he hailed the momentous outcome as a victory for Ireland's future.

"I said in recent days that this was a once in a generation vote. Today I believe we have voted for the next generation," said Varadkar, who is Ireland's first openly gay leader as well as its first prime minister from an ethnic minority group.

The next battleground is likely to be Ireland's parliament, where the government led by Varadkar hopes to capitalize on the fresh momentum and enact legislation spelling out the conditions under which abortions will be legal for the first time by the end of this year.

The plan is to allow abortions during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and in special cases after the first trimester, likely ending the trail of Irish women who go elsewhere mostly to neighboring Britain — by the thousands each year for abortions they can't get at home.

"Under the Eighth Amendment, the only thing we could say to women in this country was 'Take a flight or take a boat,'" Health Minister Simon Harris told Irish broadcaster RTE. "And now the country is saying, 'No, take our hands, we want to support you.'"

Some called for the new abortion legislation to be named, "Savita's law." Her father, Andanappa Yalagi, said he has "no words" to express his gratitude for Ireland's "yes" vote.

"We've got justice for Savita," he told the Hindustan Times. "What happened to her will not happen to

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any other family.”

It is not yet clear how hard the soundly defeated “no” forces will fight for restrictive laws in parliament in light of the overwhelming appetite for reform.

Opponents of the repeal movement conceded defeat Saturday morning after exit polls from the night before suggested they had no hope of victory.

John McGuirk, spokesman for the Save the 8th group, told RTE that many Irish citizens would not recognize the country in which they were waking up. The group said on its website that the referendum was a “tragedy of historic proportions,” but McGuirk said the vote must still be respected.

“You can still passionately believe that the decision of the people is wrong, as I happen to do, and accept it,” he said.

The final tally showed that just over 66 percent of voters who cast valid ballots wanted the Eighth Amendment abolished. Exit polls indicated that both men and women strongly opposed the abortion ban, and that opposition to it was strong in rural areas, not just cosmopolitan Dublin.

The support for lifting the ban highlights the liberalization of traditionally Catholic Ireland, marking the diminishing influence of the Church hierarchy and a desire to align Irish secular laws with the other countries of Europe.

First it was same-sex marriage, approved here in 2015, and now it will be the consignment to history of the Eighth Amendment, which banned nearly all abortions and turned women seeking them into pariahs.

“This is a monumental day for women in Ireland,” Orla O’Connor, co-director of the Together for Yes group, said. “This is about women taking their rightful place in Irish society, finally.”

The vote is a “rejection of an Ireland that treated women as second-class citizens,” she said, adding: “This is about women’s equality and this day brings massive change, monumental change for women in Ireland, and there is no going back.”

The mood was jubilant at Dublin’s Intercontinental Hotel, where supporters of the Together For Yes group spent hours watching the vote tally come in from the country’s 40 districts. In the end, 39 voted for repeal.

Some supporters had tears of joy running down their cheeks, and many women hugged each other. Cheers erupted every time partial results were shown on two big screens transmitting the latest television news.

When the final count was announced at Dublin Castle, more than 1,000 people were gathered outside singing, chanting and toasting each other with champagne despite an intermittent light rain.

They cheered when leaders of the “yes” campaign surfaced and they cheered for the prime minister when he arrived. For many, the victory was vindication after years of opposing the abortion ban, which required Irish authorities to defend the lives of a woman and a fetus as equals under the law from the moment of conception.

In practical terms, the amendment outlawed all abortions until 2014, when terminations in rare cases when a woman’s life was at risk started being allowed.

Irish Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Katherine Zappone said she was deeply moved by the vote.

“I’m especially grateful to the women of Ireland who came forward to provide their personal testimony about the hard times that they endured, the stress and the trauma that they experienced because of the Eighth Amendment,” she said.

The vote in the Republic of Ireland may increase pressure on Northern Ireland to follow suit. When abortion becomes legal in the Republic of Ireland, it will become the only part of Britain and Ireland to ban the procedure.

There were roars of approval Saturday when two women leaders of the Sinn Fein party raised a sign that read, “The North is next.”

Abortions approved by doctors are allowed in the rest of Britain until the 24th week of pregnancy, but not in Northern Ireland, where the procedure is limited to cases when a woman’s life is at risk.

Ireland’s prime minister noted that Saturday’s win for legalizing abortion could not right past wrongs, but could prevent future ones.

“The wrenching pain of decades of mistreatment of Irish women cannot be un-lived,” Varadkar, who backed repeal, said. “However, today we have ensured that it does not have to be lived again.”

Legal hurdles may make Weinstein's prosecution an exception

By **ANDREW DALTON**, AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Harvey Weinstein's arrest in New York Friday is a landmark moment in the #MeToo movement.

Yet as authorities work through dozens of cases against famous figures in entertainment and other industries brought on by the Weinstein-inspired wave that began in October, legal hurdles may make such prosecutions the exception.

While men including Kevin Spacey and Mario Batali remain under investigation, the next round of charges could well be against Weinstein again, who also is facing scrutiny from authorities in Los Angeles and London.

One expert said prosecutors in those jurisdictions are unlikely to stand down or shift priorities knowing that Weinstein is now charged with rape and another felony sexual assault in New York, where he pleaded not guilty Friday.

"You never know what's going to happen with the case there," said Stacey Honowitz, a longtime prosecutor of sex crimes in Broward County, Florida. "We don't go easy. Nobody's going to drop the ball and let New York do it."

She said it is more likely that authorities in other cities will be energized, and able to build off the charges.

"There's always strength in numbers," Honowitz said.

Stanley Goldman, a professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, said last month's conviction of Bill Cosby's for sexual assault dating to 2004 has likely been propelling prosecutors forward in other places.

"I think perhaps the Bill Cosby conviction really gave them hope that the atmosphere may have changed, in the older cases where this has been hard to prove, that maybe they've got more of a chance now," Goldman said Friday.

Yet finding prosecutable #MeToo cases has proven difficult.

Los Angeles police said in December that they were investigating 27 entertainment figures, but none have yet resulted in arrests. And LA County prosecutors launched a task force in November to evaluate cases, but so far it has brought no charges.

The biggest obstacles by far are statutes of limitations, which have had special prominence amid the #MeToo and Time's Up movements because so many of the incidents involve women working up the courage to come forward after years of silence.

Hundreds of women have alleged varying degrees of sexual misconduct from Oscar-nominated writer and director James Toback, yet prosecutors declined in April to bring criminal charges against him in the five cases they reviewed, citing expired statutes of limitations in every case.

California, joining other states, recently eliminated its statute of limitations for rape, making the law a closer match for the #MeToo era, but most cases from before the changes are unaffected.

Goldman said in the past the principle has been that it's disruptive and unbalancing to society to go back and prosecute older crimes.

"If you're dealing with Kevin Spacey," Goldman said, describing the thinking, "it's disruptive to pull somebody like that out of society after all these many years where people have worked for them, and are supported by them."

That has been the case so far with several high profile cases presented to prosecutors, all of which emerged after Weinstein's downfall.

Prosecutors declined to file charges against Roman Polanski over allegations by a woman who reported in October that the Oscar-winning director molested her when she was 10 years old in 1975. Polanski's attorney has denied the allegations. Los Angeles prosecutors cited the statute of limitations, but still want Polanski to return to the United States to face sentencing in a case in which he sexually assaulted a 13-year-old girl in 1977.

A case against Hollywood agent Adam Venit, who actor Terry Crews alleged groped him at a party in February 2016, was also rejected. Crews did not report the incident until November 2017, and prosecutors

said that was too late.

Earlier this week, prosecutors rejected charges in four cases it reviewed against talent agent Tyler Grasham, who has been accused of the sexual assault of men and boys as young as 15 in the film industry. Prosecutors cited the statute of limitation in two of the cases, a lack of evidence in one, and referred the fourth for possible misdemeanor prosecution.

Goldman said however the thinking around sexual crimes appears to be changing, and they are now being grouped with more serious crimes like murder.

In addition to Weinstein, there are several high-profile open cases that could still lead to criminal charges.

Authorities are still reviewing sexual assault allegations against Spacey, Los Angeles County district attorney's spokesman Greg Risling said Friday. Sheriff's investigators say the case dates to 1992, which could make prosecution difficult. London police reportedly were investigating two sexual assaults there. His former publicist has said Spacey is seeking unspecified treatment.

New York police are investigating Batali after a woman told "60 Minutes" that he drugged and sexually assaulted her in 2005. The celebrity chef denies assaulting the woman, but he is already facing business ramifications — three of his Las Vegas restaurants will close in July and his business partners have said they are actively negotiating to buy him out.

Steven Seagal also remains under investigation after a woman said the action star sexually assaulted her at a casting session at a Beverly Hills hotel room in 2002, when she was 17 years old. The actor's attorney says he adamantly denies the allegations.

Follow Andrew Dalton on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/andyjamesdalton> .

Emails show cooperation among EPA, climate-change deniers

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Newly released emails show senior Environmental Protection Agency officials working closely with a conservative group that dismisses climate change to rally like-minded people for public hearings on science and global warming, counter negative news coverage and promote Administrator Scott Pruitt's stewardship of the agency.

John Konkus, EPA's deputy associate administrator for public affairs, repeatedly reached out to senior staffers at the Heartland Institute, according to the emails.

"If you send a list, we will make sure an invitation is sent," Konkus wrote to then-Heartland president Joseph Bast in May 2017, seeking suggestions on scientists and economists the EPA could invite to an annual EPA public hearing on the agency's science standards.

Follow-up emails show Konkus and the Heartland Institute mustering scores of potential invitees known for rejecting scientific warnings of man-made climate-change, including from groups like Plants Need CO₂, The Right Climate Stuff, and Junk Science.

The emails underscore how Pruitt and senior agency officials have sought to surround themselves with people who share their vision of curbing environmental regulation and enforcement, leading to complaints from environmentalists that he is ignoring the conclusions of the majority of scientists in and out of his agency especially when it comes to climate-changing carbon emissions.

They were obtained by the Environmental Defense Fund and the Southern Environmental Law Center, which sued to enforce a Freedom of Information request and provided them to The Associated Press.

The EPA maintains close working relationships with a broad range of public and private groups, and Heartland is just one of many the agency engages with "to ensure the public is informed," said EPA spokesman Lincoln Ferguson.

"It demonstrates the agency's dedication to advancing President Trump's agenda of environmental stewardship and regulatory certainty," he said.

The public hearing referred to in the May 2017 email ultimately was canceled when the EPA official who runs it fell ill, the EPA said.

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But Bast contended in an email sent to EPA staffers and others that the official called off the hearing after learning that climate-change "skeptics planned to attend."

The Heartland Institute calls itself a leading free-market think-tank. It rejects decades of science saying fossil-fuel emissions are altering the climate and says on its website that curbing use of petroleum and coal to fight climate change would "squander one of America's greatest comparative advantages among the world's nations."

"Of course The Heartland Institute has been working with EPA on policy and personnel decisions," Tim Huelskamp, a former Republican congressman from Kansas who now leads the group, said in a statement to the AP.

"They recognized us as the pre-eminent organization opposing the radical climate alarmism agenda and instead promoting sound science and policy," Huelskamp wrote.

He said Heartland would continue to help Pruitt and his staff.

Ferguson said Pruitt and his top officials have also met with groups known for their campaigns against climate-changing emissions and pollutants from fossil fuels, including the Moms Clean Air Force, the American Lung Association, and others.

But Ben Levitan of the Environmental Defense Fund said mainstream climate-change groups have received nothing like the outreach and invitations that Heartland and other hard-right groups have been getting.

Certainly, "in some ways this is normal and in the course of business that ebbs and flows with the ideology of the administration in power," said Meredith McGehee, executive director of Issue One, a non-profit promoting ethical government and bipartisan political reform.

Heartland is not registered as a lobbying group. Spokesman Jim Lakely said the group has logged its contacts with EPA and that they fall below the level required for disclosing as lobbying.

An email last February shows Bast forwarded to followers an email with the line "From the White House," rallying activists to public hearings the EPA was then holding around the country on repealing an Obama-era power plan meant to curb fossil-fuel emissions.

The email is signed by a Pruitt political appointee and gives the name of another EPA official for activists to call. It's not clear from the email, however, who initiated the attempt to rally conservatives for the public hearing.

Konkus was a Republican political consultant when Pruitt named him to the agency. His duties include reviewing awards of hundreds of millions of dollars in federal grants. The Washington Post reported in September that Konkus had been scrutinizing grant applications for mentions of climate change, which he reportedly calls "the double C-word."

Emails show he and former EPA spokeswoman, Liz Bowman, repeatedly reached out to Heartland to talk over critical coverage by the Post.

Lakely, the Heartland spokesman, responds he's shared the article with colleagues, "asking them to jump to your aide (sic) and defend this position."

Konkus also contacted Heartland and other conservative groups asking for what he calls "echo" amplifying word of Pruitt's regulation-cutting efforts, according to the emails.

And an email from Bast, shared with EPA staffers and others, shows the then-Heartland president celebrating news that a reporter, Justin Gillis, was leaving The New York Times.

"Ding Dong, the Witch is Dead. Still waiting for Chris Mooney and Juliet Eilperin at the WaPo and Seth Borenstein at AP to flame out," Bast writes.

Spokespeople for the AP, The Washington Post and The New York Times declined comment.

No rain in sight: Fire fears force land closures in Arizona

By FELICIA FONSECA, Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — Dry pine needles and dead wood snapped under fire prevention officer Matt Engbring's boots as he hiked a half-mile into the woods in search of a makeshift campsite that had served as one man's home until this week when the area was closed because of the escalating threat of massive

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wildfires.

Engbring walked past small ravines where wind quickly could carry embers and by the charred remains of a campfire, finally reaching the spot where John Dobson had been living among ponderosa pines in Arizona's Coconino National Forest.

He spotted Dobson earlier as he was leaving the forest with his bicycle and issued a warning that he'll likely repeat over the busy Memorial Day weekend as tourists flock to Arizona's cooler mountainous areas to hike, bike, camp and fish.

"The area is closed now, and I can't allow you to go back in," he said.

Many parts of the West are dealing with drought, but nowhere else has more state and federal land been closed to recreation than in Arizona where conditions are ripe for large-scale wildfires. Portions of the Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Kaibab and Tonto national forests are closed because the dry vegetation quickly can go up in flames, firefighters would have a hard time stopping it, and homes and water resources are at risk.

In neighboring New Mexico, fire restrictions are in place, but no forests have closed. Forest officials in the western part of that state have suspended woodcutting permits, including ceremonial wood gathering by Native American tribes. They've also warned the public to look out for hungry bears.

Forests in southern Colorado and southern Utah are open but officials are limiting campfires to developed areas.

"A lot of our rural, small communities depend on recreation and access to public land, so it's on the table but really an option of last resort," said Holly Krake, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Forest Service region that includes Colorado.

Weather over the next six weeks is expected to be in line with the typical onset of fire season: increasingly hot, breezy and dry. Then the monsoonal system that carries heavy rain should kick in.

"The bottom line is it's going to get worse before it gets better," said Rich Naden, fire weather meteorologist with the Southwest Coordination Center. "But this time of year is always like that. It's almost like clockwork."

Widespread forest closures in Arizona are rare. The 1.8 million-acre Coconino National Forest shut down completely because of fire danger in 2006 for nine days. A 2002 shutdown lasted nine weeks, encompassing the Memorial Day and July 4 holidays. Other national forests had closures in 2002 as well.

The current closures are affecting a small percentage of national forests in Arizona, and the general guidance for tourists is to check ahead of time to see what's open and whether campfires are allowed.

In Flagstaff, Los Angeles residents Pauline and John Barba had hoped to barbeque this week while staying at a commercial campground, but charcoal grills were wrapped in yellow caution tape.

Nearby, a bright yellow sign on the barbed wire fence warned that no one is allowed in the forest.

"We love the outdoors and the pine trees and everything," she said. "It's just a shame people are destructive and not careful."

Beyond inconveniencing campers and hikers, the drought's effects and forest closures are being felt by ranchers who can't graze cattle in the forest and researchers who can't conduct studies. Forest thinning projects also are delayed.

At a ski resort outside of Flagstaff, 50 people are out of work, and hundreds of tickets for pre-booked activities have been canceled. The Arizona Snowbowl, which operates under a special permit in a closed forest area, had hoped to run its scenic chair lift and debut family activities this weekend.

Those who left camping trailers in now-closed areas of the Coconino National Forest to stake out a spot for the busy holiday weekend will have to call forest officials to unlock the gate to let them out. Others have tried avoiding officials patrolling the forest or sneaking in when no one is looking.

The biggest fear is that a campfire sparks a wildfire. The Coconino National Forest recorded 700 abandoned campfires last year, and 121 built illegally during fire restrictions, setting a record. Target shooting, drones, cigarettes and sparks from vehicle exhausts also are concerns.

At his campsite, Dobson said he used a butane stove to cook rather than light campfires. He heard about

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the closure a few days earlier at a local food bank, saying he was in a tough spot with nowhere to take his dishes, books and clothing.

Engbring called for help from his colleagues to haul Dobson's belongings out of the forest. After loading up Dobson's bike in the back of a pickup truck, they headed for the food bank.

Associated Press writer Susan Montoya Bryan in Albuquerque, New Mexico, contributed to this report.

Giuliani says White House wants briefing on classified info

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's legal team wants a briefing on the classified information shared with lawmakers about the origins of the FBI investigation into Russia's meddling in the 2016 presidential election. And they may take it to the Justice Department as part of an effort to scuttle the ongoing special counsel probe.

Rudy Giuliani, one of Trump's attorneys, told The Associated Press on Friday that the White House hopes to get a readout of the information next week, particularly about the use of a longtime government informant who approached members of Trump's campaign in a possible bid to glean intelligence on Russian efforts to sway the election.

Trump has made unproven claims of FBI misconduct and political bias and has denounced the asset as "a spy."

Boston bound: LeBron pushes Cavs to Game 7 vs. Celtics

By TOM WITHERS, AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — LeBron James chose Boston as the place he'll play next.

Game 7 is on. And any talk about James' future is on hold.

Delivering another performance for the ages, James scored 46 points and preserved his reign atop the Eastern Conference for at least one more game as the Cleveland Cavaliers shook off losing All-Star Kevin Love with a head injury and beat the Celtics 109-99 on Friday night to force a decisive climax to this back-and-forth series.

James, playing in perhaps his final game for the Cavs in Cleveland, added 11 rebounds and nine assists while playing all but two minutes — to avoid elimination and delay any decisions about where he'll continue his remarkable career next season.

"Greatness," Cavs coach Tyronn Lue said. "Championship pedigree. Giving it his all. We needed that, especially when Kevin went down. We had to play 'Bron as many minutes as he had to. He delivered. He was up for the challenge. He carried us home as usual."

The king is not dead, and he still has a chance to make his eighth straight NBA Finals.

This series, in which home court has meant everything, will have a fitting conclusion Sunday at TD Garden, where the Celtics are 10-0 this postseason.

"It's a Game 7," James said. "It's something that you wish you had when you're done playing, but more than that, it's just basketball for me. I know what I'm capable of doing, and I'm going to trust everything I put into it."

George Hill added 20 points, and Jeff Green 14 for the Cavs, who lost Love in the first quarter after he banged heads with Boston rookie Jayson Tatum.

Terry Rozier paced the Celtics — now 1-6 on the road — with 28 points, and Jaylen Brown had 27.

The Celtics were still within seven in the final three minutes before James made consecutive 3-pointers, punctuating the second by pounding his chest with both fists and screaming along with 20,562 others.

"The love of the game," James said, explaining his reaction. "It's a feeling you can't explain."

Just for good measure, he added a three-point play and then was taken out of the game to a rousing ovation and chants of "Cavs in 7!"

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Boston's improbable run through the postseason without injured stars Kyrie Irving and Gordon Hayward will now take the Celtics back home, where they play with more intensity, togetherness and before fans hungry to see an 18th title banner raised to their arena's rafters.

"It's not going to be pretty," Celtics guard Marcus Smart said. "We've got to come out ready to get our nose bloody and our mouth bloody. We've got to come out ready to fight. You've got to find a way, whatever it takes."

Love went out with a head injury in the first quarter, forcing Lue to juggle his rotations and keep James on the floor longer than he wanted to. The three-time champion played the first 35 minutes without a break and then endured the final eight while nursing a right leg.

James didn't know until after the game that teammate Larry Nance Jr. had banged into him.

"I felt some pain throughout my entire right side of my ankle into my leg," he said. "I was just hoping for the best, obviously, because I've seen so many different injuries, and watching basketball with that type of injury, someone fall into one's leg standing straight up. Luckily, I was able to finish the game."

Hill, who came over in a deadline trade, has been awed by what James has done in this postseason.

"I've been in the league for some years and ran across him on the other side and really hated his guts," said Hill, who was on Indiana teams eliminated by James. "But to have him on our side, it kind of lets me take a deep breath of fresh air. It's just something that you really can't explain what he's doing night in, night out. It's just something special."

"I thought the best was when he always put us out. But to actually see it when he's on your team, I can't even put it into words."

The real possibility that James was playing his last game in Cleveland hung over the game — and this city — in the hours leading to tip-off. Everyone had an opinion on what James will do next and that discussion filled the sports talk radio airwaves, bars and barber shops.

The 33-year-old has said several times since coming home in 2014 that he wants to retire with the Cavaliers, but fans are uneasy because he can opt out of his \$35.6 million contract this summer and test free agency.

And, of course, he left in 2010.

James has said he'll sit down after the season ends to decide next move, and he's already being courted in Philadelphia, Los Angeles and New York where fans can only dream of him joining their rosters.

For now, he's only going to Boston.

NO LOVE

The game began ominously for the Cavs as Love was forced to leave following his violent collision with Tatum.

Love and Tatum were away from the ball and didn't see each other until it was too late. They banged heads and both immediately dropped to the floor with Love raising his left arm as if to signal he needed help.

As Love stayed down, the Cavs huddled around him. He was helped off and walked to the bench unsteadily before heading to the locker room for further treatment and evaluation.

His status for Game 7 is uncertain.

THE OTHER SIDE

Tatum stayed in following his nasty collision with Love. The rookie passed the concussion testing that he was given on the bench.

"I didn't see him coming, it was bad," Tatum said. "I have a knot on the back of my head and he didn't return. I wish the best for Kevin Love because he's a great player and it's been a long season."

PREGAME MEAL

Hill said he's played well after eating has tacos with barbacoa and guacamole before games.

"I'm for sure going to find a Chipotle in Boston, I'll tell you that," he said.

TIP-INS

Celtics: Own a 37-0 record when leading a series 2-0. ... Dropped to 1-4 in Game 6s over the last four postseasons. ... Coach Brad Stevens praised James for his consistency, and ability to exceed expecta-

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tions. "Nobody else has what he has on his shoulders playing the game," he said. "I think that the way in which he's done that and all of the years now that he's made The Finals and gone deep into the playoffs, it's unbelievable."

Cavaliers: Improved to 6-2 in elimination game since 2015. James has scored at least 40 in five of those wins. ... James' teams are 5-2 in Game 7s. ... This was the seventh 40-point game for James this postseason. Michael Jordan also had seven, one off Jerry West's record set in 1965. ... James passed Karl Malone (2,062) for sixth place on the career postseason rebounds list.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, May 27, the 147th day of 2018. There are 218 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 27, 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *United States v. O'Brien*, upheld the conviction of David O'Brien for destroying his draft card outside a Boston courthouse, ruling that the act was not protected by freedom of speech.

On this date:

In 1199, King John of England was crowned in Westminster Abbey nearly two months after the death of his brother, Richard I ("The Lion-Hearted").

In 1818, American reformer Amelia Jenks Bloomer, who popularized the garment that bears her name — "bloomers" — was born in Homer, New York.

In 1933, the Chicago World's Fair, celebrating "A Century of Progress," officially opened. Walt Disney's Academy Award-winning animated short "The Three Little Pigs" was first released.

In 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States*, unanimously struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act, a key component of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" legislative program.

In 1937, the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge connecting San Francisco and Marin County, California, was opened to pedestrian traffic (vehicles began crossing the next day).

In 1941, the British Royal Navy sank the German battleship *Bismarck* off France with a loss of some 2,000 lives, three days after the *Bismarck* sank the HMS *Hood* with the loss of more than 1,400 lives. Amid rising world tensions, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed an "unlimited national emergency" during a radio address from the White House.

In 1942, Doris "Dorie" Miller, a cook aboard the USS *West Virginia*, became the first African-American to receive the Navy Cross for displaying "extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety" during Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1957, the single "That'll Be the Day" by Buddy Holly's group The Crickets was released by Brunswick Records.

In 1962, a dump fire in Centralia, Pennsylvania, ignited a blaze in underground coal deposits that continues to burn to this day.

In 1977, the punk rock single "God Save the Queen," the Sex Pistols' sardonic salute to Queen Elizabeth II, was released by Virgin Records.

In 1985, in Beijing, representatives of Britain and China exchanged instruments of ratification for an accord returning Hong Kong to Chinese control in 1997.

In 1998, Michael Fortier (FOR'-tee-ur), the government's star witness in the Oklahoma City bombing case, was sentenced to 12 years in prison after apologizing for not warning anyone about the deadly plot. (Fortier was freed in January 2006.)

Ten years ago: Myanmar's military government renewed pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's (ahng sahn soo cheez) detention for one year; the move came as officials said that international aid workers had finally begun entering Myanmar's cyclone-devastated delta area after being blocked for more than three

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weeks by the junta.

Five years ago: The European Union decided to lift an arms embargo on the Syrian opposition while maintaining all other sanctions against President Bashar Assad's regime. U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a proponent of arming Syrian rebels, quietly slipped into Syria for a meeting with anti-government fighters. A coordinated wave of car bombings tore through mostly Shiite areas of Baghdad, killing dozens.

One year ago: British Airways canceled all flights from London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports as a global IT failure upended the travel plans of tens of thousands of people on a busy U.K. holiday weekend. Music legend Gregg Allman, whose bluesy vocals and soulful touch on the Hammond B-3 organ helped propel The Allman Brothers Band to superstardom and spawn Southern rock, died at his home near Savannah, Georgia; he was 69.

Today's Birthdays: Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Herman Wouk (wohk) is 103. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is 95. Former FBI Director William Sessions is 88. Author John Barth is 88. Actress Lee Meriwether is 83. Musician Ramsey Lewis is 83. Actor Louis Gossett Jr. is 82. Rhythm and blues singer Raymond Sanders (The Persuasions) is 79. Actor Bruce Weitz is 75. Former Motion Picture Association of America Chairman Christopher Dodd is 74. Singer Bruce Cockburn (KOH'-burn) is 73. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster is 71. Singer-actress Dee Dee Bridgewater is 68. Actor Richard Schiff is 63. Singer Siouxsie Sioux (The Creatures, Siouxsie and the Banshees) is 61. Rock singer-musician Neil Finn (The Finn Brothers) is 60. Actress Peri Gilpin is 57. Actress Cathy Silvers is 57. Comedian Adam Carolla is 54. Actor Todd Bridges is 53. Rock musician Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains) is 52. Actor Dondre Whitfield is 49. Actor Paul Bettany is 47. Rock singer-musician Brian Desveaux (Nine Days) is 47. Country singer Jace Everett is 46. Actor Jack McBrayer is 45. Rapper Andre 3000 (Outkast) is 43. Rapper Jadakiss is 43. TV chef Jamie Oliver is 43. Alt-country singer-songwriter Shane Nicholson is 42. Actor Ben Feldman is 38. Actor Michael Steger is 38. Actor Darin Brooks is 34. Actor-singer Chris Colfer is 28. Actor Ethan Dampf is 24. Actress Desiree Ross (TV: "Greenleaf") is 19.

Thought for Today: "Sixty years ago I knew everything; now I know nothing; education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance." — Will Durant, American historian (1885-1981).