

Groton Daily Independent

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

Groton Chiropractic Clinic

Carol McFarland-Kutter, D.C.
1205 N 1st St., Groton 397-8204

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South Dakota adding six-man football

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — Six-man football will be offered in South Dakota during the 2019-20 school year.

The action to add the new classification was taken Thursday by the South Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors.

High schools with a male average daily membership of 40 would be eligible to field a six-man team. For Avon Superintendent Tom Culver, that number was too high.

"A lot of people think that's way too high," said Culver, who suggested a better ADM would be 25 or 30.

According to SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand, "The whole point of 40 is to be as inclusive as possible."

Culver suggested that at 40, some schools with enough students to field a nine-man football team might opt for six-man to get a competitive advantage.

Krogstrand said he doubted that a coach would put three players on the bench for a season just to have a better shot at winning a football game.

Board member Brian Maher approved of the 40 number but granted that some coaches may use the rules to their advantage.

"We're trying to set up rules that allow fair play," Maher said. "We're going to have some of our colleagues who violate the intent of the rule."

Faced with a variety of questions about how the new classification will be implemented, some board members questioned the need to act before all the questions are answered.

"I'm not sure if we're ready to implement this now," said board member Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley.

Since the new classification won't be added until the 2019-20 school year, board member Steve Morford of Spearfish said the board might want to wait "instead of passing something and then have to fix it."

Krogstrand said many of the questions about the new classification would be answered during the regular vetting process that each football season goes through.

The board approved the new classification on a 6-1 vote. The dissenting vote was from Dave Planteen of Langford.

—30—

Activities board to consider

event costs

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The South Dakota High School Activities Association will seek information from member schools about the expenses they incur when hosting state events.

While the SDHSAA board was setting the fees paid to hosting schools for the next school year, Huron Activities Director Terry Rotert said that the management fees paid by the association don't come close to covering the school's expenses.

As an example, Rotert said when Huron hosts the state cross-country meet, it costs the school district \$8,000. The reimbursement from SDHSAA is \$3,000.

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

"I don't think schools should lose a bunch of money" hosting state events, said board member Steve Morford of Spearfish.

Rotert said he hasn't pointed out Huron's expenses because "we don't want another reason for state events not to come to our town."

Board member Brian Maher of Sioux Falls said Rotert's \$8,000 figure was probably low because it likely didn't include the cost of hiring substitutes for the teachers who were working at the cross-country meet.

Morford said school districts take on the cost of hosting state events because they want to help the local economy by attracting people to their towns.

The board approved next year's management fees unanimously with a request that hosting schools send the SDHSAA office a rundown of their expenses so there can be a true accounting of the cost of hosting state events.

Expenses of another sort were discussed when the board was approving the second reading of the sites for state events for the 2021-22 school year.

Avon Superintendent Tom Culver said his school district has paid unreasonably high motel bills at state tournament sites. In one case, Culver said, the school paid \$239 a night for seven rooms for two nights. At the state track meeting in Rapid City, Culver said the parents of athletes paid \$300 per night for motel rooms.

Culver said the activities association may have to get an agreement on motel room rates or move events to different sites.

"We have to take all things into consideration," said Culver, who promised to bring up the subject at the next meeting of the site selection committee.

"I'm not planning on letting this subject die," Culver said.

—30—

Medical timeouts considered for high school sports

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — In the future, the first timeout at a high school sporting event may be a medical timeout. The first reading of the plans for such a timeout were approved Thursday by the board of directors of the South Dakota High School Activities Association.

The recommendation from the association's Sports Medicine Advisory Council calls for a mandatory "pre-contest medical timeout" prior to each contest starting with the 2018-19 school year.

Officials at the game should ask the home team's head coach the following questions:

- Who is the game administrator for each team?
- Is there a qualified medical professional on site?
- Is there an Emergency Action Plan for this venue?
- Is there an AED available?

Failure to positively answer the questions would result in a report to the association office for the development of a corrective plan.

According to SDHSAA Assistant Executive Director John Krogstrand, a negative answer to any of the questions will not hold up the start of the contest.

Krogstrand said adoption of the rule would not require school districts to hire medical personnel for each game.

"It's an identification and awareness piece," Krogstrand said.

Another rule that was passed on a first reading required all coaches of fall sports to complete a "heat illness prevention course" each year prior to the start of the season.

—30—

Maher to chair activities association board

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — On Thursday Sioux Falls Superintendent Brian Maher was elected chairman of the South Dakota High School Activities Association Board of Directors. When he chairs his first meeting in August, his nine-member board will have five new members.

At the end of their terms on the board are Sandy Klatt of Brandon Valley and Bud Postma of Madison. They will be replaced on the board by Jerry Rasmussen of Dakota Valley and Paul Turman of Pierre.

The June meeting was also the last one for Steve Moore of Watertown. Moore has taken a new position as activities director at Sioux Falls Roosevelt. An election will be held for the final four years of Moore's term. The candidates are Randy Soma of Brookings and Moore's replacement Craig Boyens of Watertown.

A runoff election will be held to see who assumes to board position recently held by Jim Aisenbrey of Baltic who resigned from the board for health reasons. The top two finishers in a five-candidate race were Paul Nepodal of Deubrook Area with 45 votes and Craig Cassens of Faulkton Area with 44 votes.

At its meeting on Thursday, the board also appointed Crazy Horse Superintendent Silas Blaine to fill out the year remaining on the term of Roger Bordeaux of Tiospa Zina. Bordeaux can't serve because he is no longer a superintendent.

—30—

Carney joins activities foundation board

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

PIERRE — The former executive director of the South Dakota High School Activities Association will join the board of directors of the SDHSAA Foundation.

Wayne Carney will join the foundation board as a non-paid member according to Dave Stevens of Mitchell, a member of the foundation board who provided an update to the activities association's board of directors at their Thursday meeting.

Carney was instrumental in the formation of the foundation during his tenure as executive director.

"Quite frankly, the foundation has had a hard time getting started," Stevens said, adding that the organization would benefit from Carney's experience.

Stevens said the foundation has a balance of \$382,000 with \$10,300 available to distribute in grants.

According to Stevens, the foundation would like to form a distribution committee consisting of four foundation board members, three association board members and SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos as a non-voting member.

The appointment of the board members from the association will likely take place at the group's August meeting.

Late in Carney's tenure as executive director, the association's corporate sponsors asked that their donations be redirected to the foundation. While they all initially stayed with the association, First Premier Bank/Premier Bankcard has decided to take its yearly donation to the foundation.

At its Thursday meeting, the SDHSAA board welcomed a new banking sponsor, Dakotah Bank, which signed a five year agreement to make yearly donations of \$75,000 to the association. Corporate sponsors receive a variety of marketing benefits for their donations.

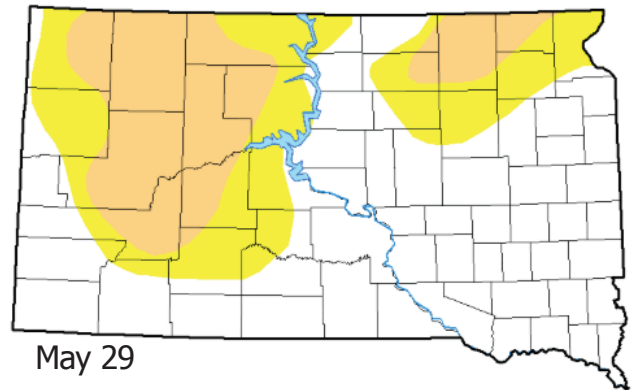
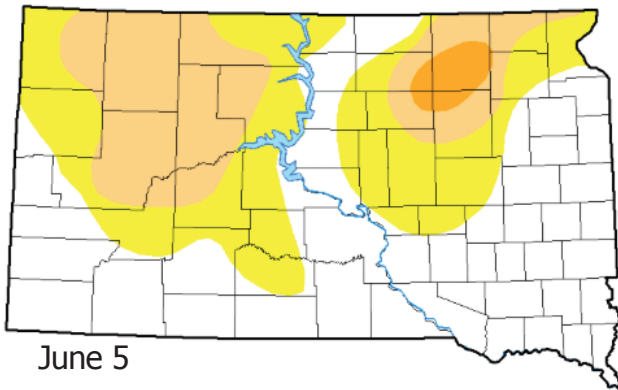
The association's other corporate sponsors are Sanford Health, Farmers Union Insurance, Billion Automotive and the South Dakota Army National Guard.

—30—

Drought Classification

None D0 (Abnormally Dry) D1 (Moderate Drought) D2 (Severe Drought) D3 (Extreme Drought) D4 (Exceptional Drought)

We are in a severe drought



Heavy rain (2-6 inches, locally greater) fell over portions of North Dakota this week, with the highest amounts over the northwest part of the state. Much of the heaviest rain actually fell north of the Canadian border in extreme southeastern Saskatchewan. Slight alterations (both improvement and deterioration) were rendered to the depiction in western, north-central, and southeastern North Dakota, based in part on the 1-month EDDI, which takes into account evaporative demand. Both improvements and degradations were also made to the South Dakota depiction, which received much less rain this week than its northern counterpart. For example, Aberdeen reported only 0.52-inch of rain in May (2.59 inches below normal), making it the seventh driest on record. An area of severe drought (D2) was introduced to northeastern South Dakota, based on 60-day precipitation deficits, 30-day and 60-day SPI, recent warm temperatures, and increased water demand through evapotranspiration. A spectacular dust storm, attended by 50-80 mph winds, blew through this region (Hand and Faulk Counties) on June 1st. In southeastern Colorado, a one-category degradation was made to the depiction in Kiowa County. Decent soil moisture from the wet summer and fall of 2017 is now gone, due to the recent hot, dry weather. This, in turn, has taken its toll on crops. Although welcome rains fell across eastern Nebraska this week, it was decided not to make any changes to the state depiction until more information is at hand next week.

**The Groton Community
is Invited to**

Rootbeer! Float

FREE



LIVE MUSIC

**Wednesday, June 13th
6:30 p.m.**

GROTON
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

1106 N. 2nd Street, Groton

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Today in Weather History

June 8, 2004: Over eight inches of rain fell near Okreek in rural Todd County causing nearly \$200,000 in damage to local roads. Lightning destroyed the Okreek Community Center.

1951: A tornado was captured on motion pictures for the first time in the USA.

1953 - The worst tornado of record for the state of Michigan killed 116 persons. Flint MI was hardest hit. The tornado, half a mile in width, destroyed 200 homes on Coldwater Road killing entire families. (The Weather Channel)

1966 - A tornado ripped right through the heart of the capitol city of Topeka KS killing sixteen persons and causing 100 million dollars damage. The tornado, which struck during the evening, cut a swath of near total destruction eight miles long and four blocks wide. It was the most destructive tornado of record up until that time. (David Ludlum)

1974 - Severe thunderstorms spawned at least twenty-three tornadoes in Oklahoma during the afternoon and evening hours. One of the tornadoes struck the town Drumright killing sixteen persons and injuring 150 others. A tornado struck the National Weather Service office in Oklahoma City, and two tornadoes hit the city of Tulsa. Thunderstorms in Tulsa also produced as much as ten inches of rain. Total damage from the storms was around thirty million dollars. It was the worst natural disaster of record for Tulsa. (Storm Data)

1987 - Thunderstorms in the northeastern U.S. produced large hail and damaging winds in Vermont injuring two persons. Thunderstorms in Ohio produced wind gusts to 75 mph near Akron, and deluged Pittsfield with two inches of rain in thirty minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

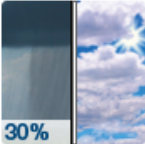

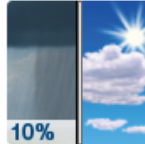




1988 - Overnight thunderstorms in Iowa produced 5.20 inches of rain at Coon Rapids. Thunderstorms in the Florida Keys drenched Tavernier with 7.16 inches of rain in 24 hours. Eleven cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. (The National Weather Summary)

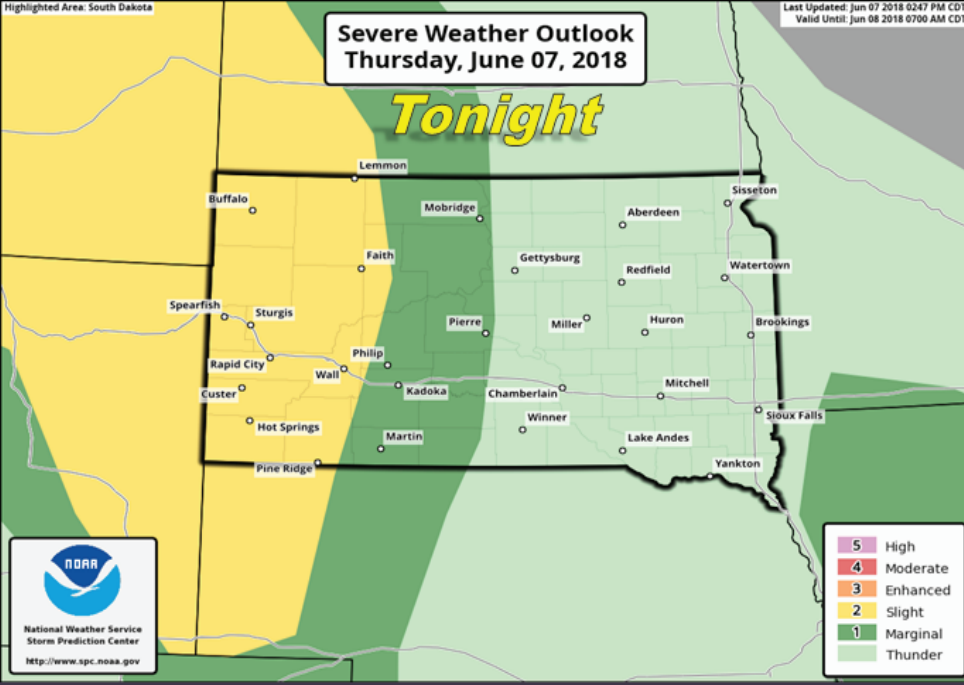
1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather over the Central Gulf Coast Region during the day and evening. Severe thunderstorms spawned 17 tornadoes, including one which injured ten persons and caused a million dollars damage at Orange Beach, AL. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 90 mph killed three persons and injured four others at Mobile AL. Thunderstorms also deluged Walnut Hill and Avalon Beach, FL, with eight inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2001: Tropical Storm Allison hits Houston, Texas, for the second time in three days. Louisiana and southern Texas were inundated with rain. Baton Rouge received 18 inches over just a couple of days. Some portions of Texas racked up 36 inches by June 11.

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Chance Showers then Partly Sunny	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance Showers then Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Hot	Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms
High: 87 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 88 °F	Low: 65 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 65 °F	High: 79 °F




Severe Weather Outlook
Thursday, June 07, 2018

Tonight


Highlighted Area: South Dakota

Last Updated: Jun 07 2018 0247 PM CDT
Valid Until: Jun 08 2018 0700 AM CDT

National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center
<http://www.spc.noaa.gov>



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
6/7/2018 4:10 PM






Tonight

Late-West

Low: 60-65°

Sct. Storms Late Tonight-Mainly West River

3 Day Forecast

<p>Friday</p>  <p>Early/Late</p> <p>80-90°</p>	<p>Saturday</p>  <p>Early/Late</p> <p>81-91°</p>	<p>Sunday</p>  <p>Early/Late</p> <p>82-92°</p>
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Published on: 06/07/2018 at 4:23PM

Another disturbance moving in from the west will create increased chances for thunderstorms late tonight into early Friday. These storms could be on the stronger to severe side, especially west of the Missouri River. Large hail and damaging winds will be the primary threats.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 77.9 F at 3:25 PM

Low Outside Temp: 57.3 F at 6:34 AM

Wind Chill:

High Gust: 22.0 Mph at 4:37 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 98° in 2000

Record Low: 32° in 1938

Average High: 75°F

Average Low: 51°F

Average Precip in June: 0.93

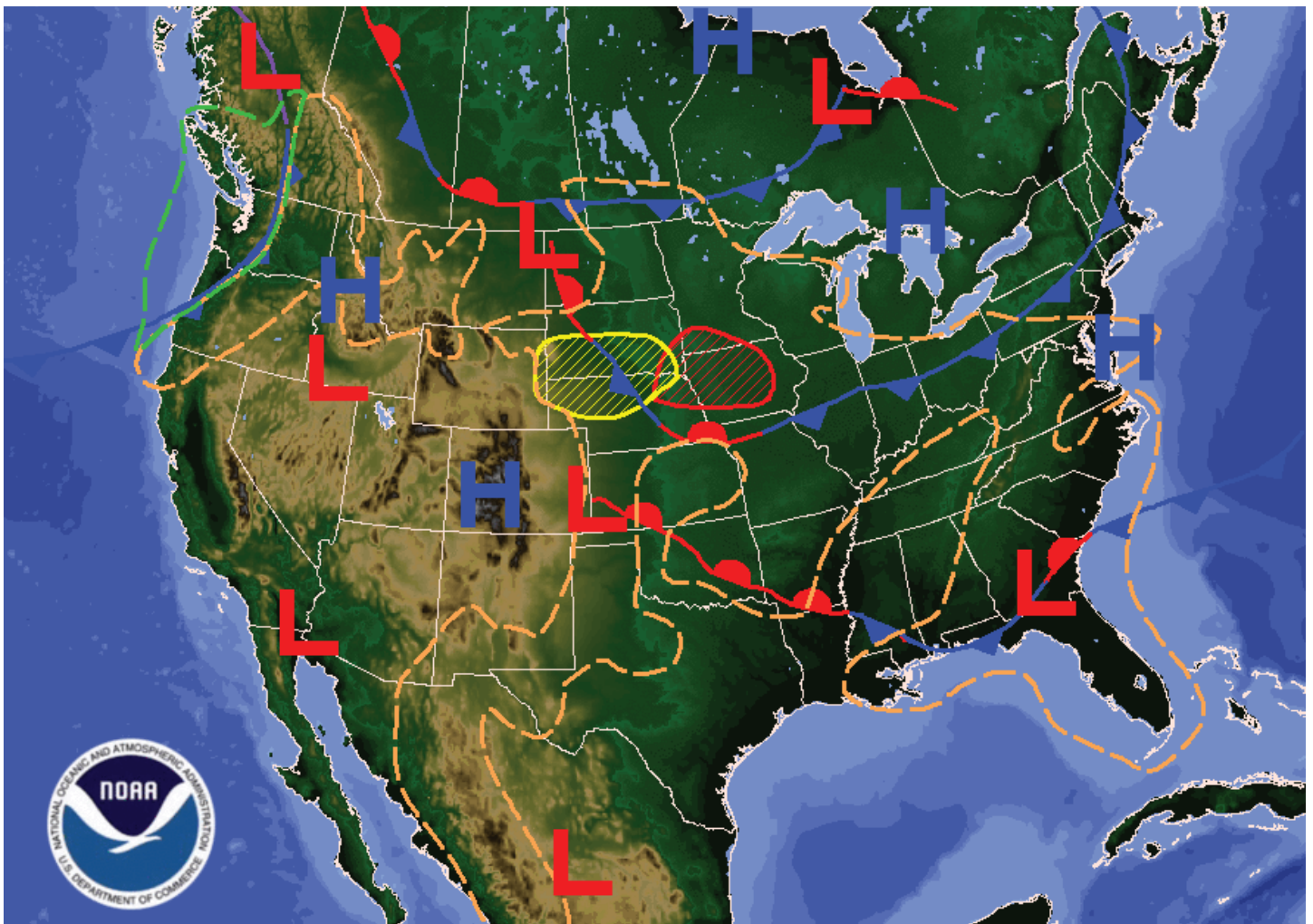
Precip to date in June: 0.29

Average Precip to date: 8.07

Precip Year to Date: 4.59

Sunset Tonight: 9:20 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Jun 08, 2018, issued 4:46 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Oravec 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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HERE'S HAPPINESS!

"You're the happiest person I know, Bill. Why are you not only happy, but happy all the time?" asked Marie.

"Well, I wasn't this like this all the time. In fact, I've even considered suicide very seriously a time or two, to be honest with you. But one day I decided to study happiness as a science and discovered how to be happy whether I'm actually happy or not. But, after all is said and done, it's a choice." Then after he thought for moment he added, "You know, Abe Lincoln had it right. He said, 'Most people are about as happy as they want to be.' So, I guess there must have been a day when I just decided to be happy."

But the Bible has a different source for being happy. The Psalmist under the inspiration of God wrote, "Blessed - or happy - are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord." There it is: God's promise for our happiness! Simple, indeed. But it is not very easy!

In the center of the verse are the words, "whose ways" or more precisely, "who follow the instructions of the Lord."

"Following" the ways of the Lord is to come first in the life of anyone who wants to be blest or who wants true happiness. His ways are the ways to happiness!

Shortly after being discharged from the military a soldier was being interviewed for a job. "What did you do in the service?" asked the interviewer. With no hesitation he answered, "I did as I was told!" Can Christians do less?

Prayer: Lord, many of us seek happiness in ways that lead us from You rather than to You. May we turn to You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 119:1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the Lord!

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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)
- 5/4/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2019 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

Jury convicts Pierre man accused of assaulting law officers

FORT PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A jury has convicted a Pierre man accused of using a using a Stanley County deputy's stun gun against the deputy and a parole agent.

Jurors deliberated about 15 minutes before finding Beau Foote Sr. guilty Thursday of two counts of aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer and resisting arrest.

Foote was accused of taking the stun gun when it became dislodged from the deputy's belt while the deputy and parole agent were attempting to arrest Foote for a parole violation in Fort Pierre last September. Authorities alleged Foote deployed the gun, and the deputy was shocked.

KCCR radio reports that Foote asked to be sentenced immediately, but the judge said she wanted time to review a pre-sentence investigation. Sentencing is tentatively scheduled for July 17.

Information from: KCCR-AM, <http://www.todaykccr.com/>

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, June 7

Arena vote shows confidence in the city's future

Rapid City voters sent a clear message Tuesday when they overwhelmingly endorsed a plan to build a new arena at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center.

It's doubtful, however, that anyone expected the margin of victory — 64 percent, or 10,968 votes, for it versus 36 percent, or 6,066 votes, against it — would be so convincing. Once Mayor Steve Allender unveiled the plan to build the \$130 million arena without raising taxes, a campaign to defeat it was launched with vigor and rancor.

Whether it was the Citizens for Liberty misrepresenting project costs while collecting signatures to put the city council-approved project on the ballot, or four former mayors emerging from the shadows with an \$80 million proposal to repurpose the 41-year-old Barnett Arena, the city's plan was under a relentless attack from the start.

The mayor, who did around 60 public presentations on the plan and posted it on the city's website, was specifically targeted by some who claimed his sole motivation was to see his name on the new arena. It was part of a series of complaints and accusations launched to chip away at the plan and his credibility and character.

The most discouraging attempt to persuade others to reject the plan came from those who apparently have a dim view of Rapid City. They claimed the city couldn't afford a new arena, locals wouldn't be able to afford tickets to events there, and the city's economy was in a tailspin — complaints that amounted to a vote of no confidence in the community.

Fortunately, nearly 11,000 voters have a better view of Rapid City and at the same time understand that a city can't move forward unless it is willing to invest — or believe — in itself.

None of this would have happened, however, if it weren't for the leadership of Mayor Allender and his determination to fight for a new arena that can help this community grow and prosper. He took on his opponents, shook off the personal attacks, and explained over and over again the benefits of building a new arena instead of patching up an old one.

The linchpin of the plan is that it won't raise taxes or drain the Vision Fund while helping pump millions of dollars into the economy and making Rapid City more attractive to youth, visitors, industry and prospective new businesses. A modern venue that can accommodate big-name concerts and large trade shows and conventions will be a significant addition to a community with a vast parks system, is a neighbor to

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Black Hills National Forest and is just a short drive from Mount Rushmore.

It's comforting to know that so many Rapid City residents were not swayed by the arguments against a new arena when the benefits are many and the drawbacks nonexistent if one can take a step back and be objective.

As this project moves forward, the city will be working to solidify its status as a regional hub while capitalizing on its natural beauty and the grit and vision of those who understand the need to grow. Now is the time for everyone to set aside the differences the arena debate exposed and work together to see what we can do for our community — one that still has much potential to realize.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, Yankton, June 4

The rise of the independent voter

One of the curious developments within our entrenched and institutionalized two-party democratic process is the growth being seen outside of the two parties.

In South Dakota, at least, the growth has been substantial.

Reporter Bob Mercer offered his views on the matter in a column printed in Monday's Press & Dakotan. He noted that, in the past 10 years, Republican registration has grown while Democratic affiliation has shrunk, but the biggest growth has been seen in those filing independent. In 11 South Dakota counties, independents are now the No. 2 "party" in terms of registration.

This reflects a national trend that has been in place for a while now. It was notable again this past weekend when it was reported that registered independents now outnumber registered Republicans in California.

So, there is a dissatisfaction blooming, and it's not an isolated matter.

It could be argued that independents really want nothing to do with the two "mainstream" parties, although that may be overstating things. After all, a lot of these people will likely wind up voting for Republican or Democratic candidates in most cases, anyway.

A more likely argument might be that an increasing number of people aren't really thrilled with what they are seeing from the two parties in general and are preferring instead to keep their views open.

To be sure, as Mercer pointed out, the rise in negative political campaigns in recent years has turned off more voters, who are in turn removing themselves from defining party labels, perhaps as a show of passive-aggressive disapproval.

Another factor might be that the two parties are veering to even greater extremes in their ideologies. We have seen that for years with the Republican Party, which has lurched further right. Now, the progressive wing of the Democratic Party is gaining more muscle and becoming influential in guiding the party's philosophies. So, what's a centrist to do? Apparently, stake out the unaffiliated or independent middle ground between the two poles.

Still another factor might be the entrenched warring that now goes on between Republicans and Democrats, particularly at the national level. This us-versus-them mentality has generally paralyzed Washington. However, as much as we complain about this attitude, it does seem to reflect the mood in much of the country — a division spurred along by partisan media outlets and social media rantings.

No matter the reason, the fact is that a growing number of people aren't willing to affiliate themselves within the two-party system, and that figures to be a problem for those two major parties sooner or later.

How the two major parties respond to this situation — that is, if they're able to respond to it at all — will likely tell us if this is a short-term blip or the first step in a long-term political correction that will lead to the two parties becoming more responsive to a diverse cross-section of voters rather than to donors and lobbyists with specific agendas of their own.

More voters are making a statement by moving to an independent status. Let's see how well the two parties listen.

Madison Daily Leader, Madison, June 6

We're very concerned about plant expansion

A Lake Norden cheese manufacturer is expanding its operations and plans to dump two million gallons of wastewater per day into the Big Sioux River watershed. It could directly affect drinking water in Madison.

The expansion by Wisconsin-based Agropur would increase milk processing capacity by six million pounds per day. The on-site wastewater treatment facility is also being upgraded.

Supporters of the project cite positive economic impact for the region, including dairy farmers. Critics are mostly environmentalists and others who depend on the Big Sioux River.

Most of us aren't experts in the field of water quality, but all levels of government have established regulatory agencies that do employ experts. We need to rely on them, but citizens also should express concerns.

During the 30-day public comment period, which ended on May 11, Al Spangler, surface water discharge specialist with the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, told the Argus Leader his office received 14 letters opposed to Agropur's permit application, including all four rural water systems between Sioux Falls and Lake Norden.

One of those rural water systems is Big Sioux Rural Water, which draws water from the Big Sioux River. The system provides water to the city of Madison and nearby rural areas, including Lake Madison.

The city of Sioux Falls has made the health of the Big Sioux River a priority, not only from a water supply standpoint but also from a recreation and aesthetic point of view.

The biggest concern is what will be in the water discharged from the plant into the watershed. Critics have argued that it will be high in nitrates, which at certain levels are a pollutant. If true, that would be a dealbreaker in our mind.

It's possible that the discharged water would be clean and acceptable. We've read about municipal water systems that draw water from rivers, use it, clean it and return water that is actually cleaner than what they took out.

We aren't the experts. But we must ask those who are experts to use their judgment and political will to insist that any new discharge into South Dakota's lakes or rivers is free from any contaminants.

Deceased South Dakota lawmaker wins Tuesday primary election

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Republicans in western South Dakota are working to name a replacement after a dead state lawmaker won Tuesday's primary.

Deceased GOP Rep. Sean McPherson received the party's nomination in District 32, along with Scyller Borglum.

McPherson died in April after battling cancer. Petition signatures were submitted to put his name on the primary ballot before he died.

The Argus Leader reports Pennington County Republican Party officials were taking steps Thursday to find a replacement for McPherson on the ballot.

South Dakota Republican Party bylaws and state law dictate that the county's GOP Central Committee select a replacement to run in November. The candidate must be selected by Aug. 14.

A Republican candidate who lost to McPherson and Borglum in the primary, Ed Randazzo, has expressed interest in the nomination.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

South Dakota sheriff loses re-election, fires winning deputy

TYNDALL, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota sheriff waited a whole minute after polls closed to fire a deputy who undid his re-election bid this week.

Bon Homme County Sheriff Lenny Gramkow fired deputy sheriff Mark Maggs after Maggs defeated him by a vote of 878-331 in Tuesday's Republican primary election. Maggs posted his time-stamped termina-

tion notice signed by Gramkow on Facebook after polls closed.

"As of this moment you are no longer an employee of Bon Homme County," Gramkow wrote. He didn't give a reason for the firing. South Dakota is an employment-at-will state where employees can be fired without cause, with exceptions. The state's sheriffs also have the authority to hire and fire personnel.

Gramkow declined to comment about the firing.

No other candidates filed for the race, meaning that Maggs will assume office in January. But for now, the father of four is out of work. He planned to meet with the county commission on Thursday.

Some residents started an online petition to have Maggs reinstated as deputy sheriff, but he said that it's unnecessary.

"I trust our county commissioners heard your voices (Tuesday) night through the election results, and I also trust that they will stand with my family and I (in) the way you all have and ensure that my family will not be left hanging without an income or insurance," Maggs said.

Golfer bitten by rattlesnake at Black Hills golf course dies

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A golfer has died after he was bitten by a rattlesnake in South Dakota's Black Hills.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports the 70-year-old Illinois man was bitten Monday at Elkhorn Ridge Golf Course in Spearfish.

The course's golf pro, Mike Mendelson, says the man was looking for a ball in tall grass when he was bitten on the ankle. He was rushed back to the clubhouse in a cart where another employee performed CPR until an ambulance arrived, but was pronounced dead at Spearfish hospital.

Lawrence County Coroner Marty Goetsch identifies the golfer as Lawrence Walters of Geneseo, Illinois. Goetsch says the snakebite "started the events" that led to Walters' death.

The course plans to post more signs warning golfers of the potential danger of snakes lurking in tall grass.

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

Democrat Bjorkman expects 'vigorous exchange' in House race

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Democratic congressional candidate Tim Bjorkman says he's looking forward to a "vigorous exchange" with Republican Dusty Johnson and other candidates on the issues important to South Dakota residents.

Bjorkman, a former judge, said Thursday that he would fight for rebuilding infrastructure, affordable health coverage for all and rolling back the GOP's federal tax cuts. Bjorkman says he supports "responsible, revenue-neutral tax reform."

Republican voters chose Johnson as their U.S. House candidate in a primary election earlier this week.

Bjorkman says he aims to reform how Congress does business, calling Johnson a political insider. But Bjorkman acknowledged that Johnson will be a "very formidable opponent" in the November general election.

Bjorkman says Congress is controlled by "big money" and is pledging not to take donations from special interests, PACs and state and national political parties.

Trump nominating Rounds' general counsel to appeals court

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — President Donald Trump is nominating an attorney for South Dakota U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds to join the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The administration said Thursday that Jonathan Kobes, who now works as general counsel to Rounds, will serve as a circuit judge on the court if he's confirmed.

The Argus Leader reports the 43-year-old Kobes would replace Judge Roger Wollman, who said in February he planned to assume senior status at the end of 2018 or when a replacement had been confirmed.

Kobes joined Rounds' staff in 2014 after working for Raven Industries, DuPont Pioneer and POET. He

was a law clerk for Wollman after graduating from law school.

Rounds says Kobes is a "lifelong conservative" who views a judge's role as making decisions based on the law, not legislating from the bench.

Giant Sioux Falls house demolished after neighbors dispute

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A towering Sioux Falls house has been demolished after a long-running dispute with neighbors.

The home's owners, Josh and Sarah Sapienza, filed a demolition permit with the city earlier this week. The Argus Leader reports the house was torn down Thursday after a judge said it had to be removed by June 16.

Sarah Sapienza watched her home being torn down. She says the facts of the case had not been reported.

A neighboring couple contended the Sapienzas' new home — built a few feet from theirs — blocked out sunlight.

The Sapienzas moved out after the judge gave them 30 days to remove the house. Windows and other materials were donated to Habitat for Humanity.

According to the Minnehaha County Equalization Department, the home was valued at \$864,467.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>



A home at the center of a dispute in the McKennan Park area in Sioux Falls, S.D., is torn down Thursday, June 7, 2018. The demolition permit was filed Monday with the city of Sioux Falls. A judge last month gave Josh and Sarah Sapienza until June 16 to remove the house. The couple had lost a court fight with their neighbors, who contended the Sapienzas' towering new home blocked out sunlight.

(Briana Sanchez/The Argus Leader via AP)

Drug Enforcement Administration creates new Midwest office

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is establishing a new field division based in Omaha that will include Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

In a news conference Thursday in Omaha, DEA Acting Administrator Robert Patterson said the new division will open in July. It is the agency's 23rd division office in the United States.

Patterson says the move was prompted in part by the nation's growing opioid crisis. In April, authorities seized a record 118 pounds of the powerful synthetic opioid fentanyl during a traffic stop.

The Omaha division will be led by Matthew Barden, who previously served as the Associate Special Agent in Charge of the St. Louis Division.

Barden says the new division will "produce more effective investigations on methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl and prescription opioid trafficking."

Judge rules for North Dakota landowner in pipeline dispute

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A judge has dismissed Montana-Dakota Utilities' eminent domain lawsuit over a proposed half-mile natural gas pipeline in northern North Dakota, a decision hailed by landowner attorneys as a rare victory.

North Central District Judge Gary Lee ruled May 29 that harm to private landowner Lavern Behm outweighed any public benefits from the pipeline. Pipelines have become a contentious issue in North Dakota since the prolonged and sometimes violent protests against the \$3.8 billion, four-state Dakota Access oil pipeline in 2016 and 2017.

MDU sought an easement across Behm's property in Ward County to build a 3,000-foot-long (915-meter-long) pipeline to service a BNSF Railway facility west of Minot. The railroad maintains and operates a switch heated in the winter with propane tanks near the private property to keep it free of snow and ice. MDU proposed replacing the tanks with the underground pipeline, according to court records.

The utility that provides natural gas and electricity to more than 400,000 customers in a four-state area obtained the necessary permits and approvals from state and federal agencies but had to resort to eminent domain to cross the private land.

State law prohibits private property from being taken for ownership or use of any private individual or entity unless the land is necessary for conducting a carrier or utility business.

"While it is certainly not subject to dispute that maintaining railway switches is a necessity to the safe operations of the railroad, the construction of this pipeline is not necessary for this purpose," Lee wrote, noting that the propane tank option exists. He also said MDU didn't give enough consideration to other options.

MDU is still determining whether it will appeal to the state Supreme Court, spokesman Mark Hanson said Thursday.

The decision is a "huge case for property rights, and the little guy," said Behm's attorney, Lynn Boughey. "We are way too often allowing private entities to use government powers to take from private citizens."

Bismarck attorney Derrick Braaten has represented landowners in dozens of eminent domain cases. He said most landowner victories amount to increased compensation for the use of their land, and that it's rare for a judge to entirely bar the taking of private property.

Braaten said the Ward County case, though involving a small pipeline, touches on a larger issue.

"The big ones that are a question right now are these interstate pipelines," he said. "I think there is kind of a looming question out there, is that a public purpose?"

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

Authorities ID Tennessee man killed in South Dakota crash

PLANKINTON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Tennessee man who died in a one-vehicle crash in southeastern South Dakota.

The Highway Patrol says 52-year-old Andrew Perry, of Bristol, Tennessee, lost control of the sport utility vehicle he was driving on Interstate 90 on Monday afternoon. The SUV rolled across the median west of Plankinton.

Perry died at the scene. Five passengers in the vehicle suffered injuries that are not considered life-threatening.

The crash shut down the interstate's eastbound lanes for several hours, with traffic being rerouted. The cause of the crash is still being investigated.

Authorities ID victim in Union County motorcycle-deer crash

ELK POINT, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Sioux Falls motorcyclist who died after crashing into a deer in Union County.

The Highway Patrol says 64-year-old Alan Lindgren collided with the deer Sunday afternoon on a rural road northwest of Elk Point.

He was thrown from the bike and later died of his injuries.

Strong winds cause damage throughout northern South Dakota

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The National Weather Service says strong winds were the cause of storm damage in northern South Dakota.

Meteorologist James Telken tells the American News that included straight-line winds reaching 100 mph southeast of Lowry overnight Tuesday.

The winds knocked down power poles and a concrete silo near Onaka, caused tree damage in several communities and ripped off the side of a farm building in Faulk County.

There were no reports of injuries.

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

Colorado man sentenced for South Dakota reservation slaying

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Colorado man has been sentenced to 12 years in prison for killing a woman on South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation during an argument in September 2016.

Thirty-seven-year-old Orlando de Macias initially was charged with second-degree murder in the death of 34-year-old Annie Colhoff, who was shot in Pine Ridge village. He eventually pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of voluntary manslaughter.

The Rapid City Journal reports he was sentenced Tuesday. Prosecutors recommended a five-year prison sentence, citing victim misconduct because Colhoff had pursued de Macias and cut him in the leg with a knife.

Federal Judge Jeffrey Viken decided five years wasn't enough because he said de Macias had intended to kill Colhoff, not just defend himself.

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

Father, son convicted of manslaughter want to withdraw pleas

MARTIN, S.D. (AP) — A father and his adult son who pleaded guilty to fatally shooting a man in Martin in 2016 want to withdraw those pleas.

In a joint letter to the court, 58-year-old Daniel Cephlecha and 23-year-old Rangler Cephlecha say they were forced to plead guilty and were horribly misrepresented by counsel.

The Rapid City Journal reports the men say they are firing their court-appointed attorneys and are asking for new lawyers. Both father and son pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter in February in the death of Moses Red Bear.

Firefighters found Red Bear's body while extinguishing a grass fire in western Bennett County in November 2016. Earlier in the day police investigated a possible homicide at a residence in Martin, but didn't find a body.

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

Trump plays down need for preparation for Kim summit

By ZEKE MILLER, JILL COLVIN and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Heading into his North Korea summit with characteristic bravado, President Donald Trump says that “attitude” is more important than preparation as he looks to negotiate an accord with Kim Jong Un to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

He’s also rebuffing any advice from Democrats, alleging in a tweet Friday that they did “NOTHING” on North Korea while in charge. Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer has said he’s concerned that the president wants a deal so badly he might strike a bad one.

“Schumer failed with North Korea and Iran, we don’t need his advice!” Trump tweeted.

Preparing to depart Washington for next week’s meeting, Trump dangled before Kim visions of normalized relations with the United States, economic investment and even a White House visit. Characterizing the upcoming talks with the third-generation autocrat as a “friendly negotiation,” Trump said, “I really believe that Kim Jong Un wants to do something.”

Trump’s comments came as he looked to reassure allies that he won’t give away the store in pursuit of a legacy-defining deal with Kim, who has long sought to cast off his pariah status on the international stage. The North has faced crippling diplomatic and economic sanctions as it has advanced development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

“I don’t think I have to prepare very much,” Trump said. “It’s about attitude. It’s about willingness to get things done.”

Declaring the summit to be “much more than a photo-op,” he predicted “a terrific success or a modified success” when he meets with Kim next Tuesday in Singapore. He said the talks would start a process to bring about a resolution to the nuclear issue.

“I think it’s not a one-meeting deal,” he said. Asked how many days he’s willing to stay to talk with Kim, Trump said, “One, two three, depending on what happens.”

Still he predicted he’ll know very quickly whether Kim is serious about dealing with U.S. demands.

“They have to de-nuke,” Trump said. “If they don’t denuclearize, that will not be acceptable. And we cannot take sanctions off.”

Trump, who coined the term “maximum pressure” to describe U.S. sanctions against the North, said they would be an indicator for the success or failure of the talks.

“We don’t use the term anymore because we’re going into a friendly negotiation,” Trump said. “Perhaps after that negotiation, I will be using it again. You’ll know how well we do in the negotiation. If you hear me saying, ‘We’re going to use maximum pressure,’ you’ll know the negotiation did not do well, frankly.”

At another point, he said it was “absolutely” possible he and Kim could sign a declaration to end the Korean War. The 1950-53 conflict ended with an armistice but not a formal peace treaty.

Trump spent Thursday morning firing off a dozen unrelated tweets — on the Russia investigation and other subjects — before meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to talk about summit preparations and strategy.

“I think I’ve been prepared for this summit for a long time, as has the other side,” he said. “I think they’ve been preparing for a long time also. So this isn’t a question of preparation, it’s a question of whether or not people want it to happen.”

Administration officials indicated that Trump actually was putting in preparation time. National Security Council spokesman Garrett Marquis noted the president met with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton Thursday afternoon “to continue their strategic discussions” ahead of the summit.

Pompeo said he was confident the president would be fully prepared and dismissed reports of division inside Trump’s foreign policy team over the decision to embrace the meeting with Kim.

In his previous role as CIA director, Pompeo told reporters Thursday, “there were few days that I left the Oval Office, after having briefed the president, that we didn’t talk about North Korea.”

Pompeo said Kim had “personally” given him assurances that he was willing to pursue denuclearization

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and said U.S. and North Korean negotiating teams had made unspecified progress toward bridging the gap over defining that term as part of a potential agreement. He would not say whether Trump would insist that the North put an end to its chemical, biological and ballistic missile programs.

Pompeo said Trump's approach is "fundamentally different" from prior administrations. "In the past, there'd been months and months of detailed negotiations and they got nowhere," he said. "This has already driven us to a place we'd not been able to achieve."

Since taking office, Trump has repeatedly accused his predecessors of failing to address the nuclear threat from a nation that launched its atomic program in the 1960s and began producing bomb fuel in the early 1990s. Past administrations have also used a combination of sanctions and diplomacy to seek denuclearization, but the results failed to endure.

Christopher Hill, the lead U.S. negotiator with North Korea during the George W. Bush administration, said a summit with the North had long been available to U.S. leaders.

"The fact was no U.S. president wanted to do this, and for good reason," he said. "It's a big coup for (the North Koreans), so the question is whether we can make them pay for it."

Before he sits down with Kim, Trump must first face wary U.S. allies who question his commitment to their own security and resent his quarrelling with them on sensitive trade matters. Trump on Friday departs for a 24-hour stop in Canada for a Group of Seven summit of leading industrial nations.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday that the international community supports Trump's efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, but "if he does succeed in his negotiations with North Korea, we want him also to remain credible on the nuclear situation in Iran." Trump pulled out of President Barack Obama's nuclear accord with Iran over the objections of European allies.

Abe, for his part, pushed Trump to raise with Kim the issue of Japanese abductees held in North Korea. The Japanese leader wanted to make sure that Trump's efforts to negotiate an agreement don't harm Japan's interests. Trump said Abe talked about the abductees "long and hard and passionately, and I will follow his wishes and we will be discussing that with North Korea absolutely."

U.S. allies in the region have expressed concern that Trump's push to denuclearize Korea could ignore the North's sophisticated ballistic missile and chemical weapons programs.

AP writers Matthew Pennington in Washington and Gillian Wong in Beijing contributed to this report.

Tentative GOP immigration deal for 'Dreamers' in the works

By ALAN FRAM and LISA MASCARO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A leader of House Republican moderates said Thursday that a tentative deal with conservatives was being discussed to help young "Dreamer" immigrants stay in the U.S. legally. Conservatives said later that no agreement has been reached, underscoring how elusive it has been for the GOP to resolve its long-running schism over the issue.

The proposal was described the same day that House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said leaders will craft an attempt at compromise on the issue that Republicans could embrace and vote on soon. Ryan is hoping an accord would derail threats by the GOP centrists to force a series of votes on immigration this month that leaders say would be divisive and damage the party's electoral prospects in November.

The flurry underscored the escalating pressure Republicans face to address immigration, an issue pitting centrists representing Hispanic and moderate voters against conservatives with deep-red constituents sympathetic to President Donald Trump's anti-immigrant outbursts. Painfully aware of those divisions, leaders had seemed happy to sidestep the issue until the moderates' rebellion forced their hand.

Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., said that under an offer from the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, young immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children could get a new visa that would let them stay in the country for eight years. He expressed uncertainty over what would happen after that, but said participants have characterized the proposal as a bridge to the legal immigration system — which suggests a pathway

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to remaining in the U.S. permanently.

"This was their offer to us and it's something we can agree to, but not until we see it on paper," Denham said.

Members of the Freedom Caucus distanced themselves from the moderates' assertions, though their descriptions varied.

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., leader of the Freedom Caucus, said no immigration agreement has been reached and said the question of granting citizenship to Dreamers "has been the thorniest issue from the start." Another member of that group, Rep. Dave Brat, R-Va., said a proposal has been discussed but cautioned that there are "tons of moving pieces to it." And in a tweet, the Caucus said it has "not made an offer on immigration" but said talks continued.

Conservatives have been adamant about not providing a "special" process carving out a unique way for Dreamers to gain legal status, and some of them bristled at Denham's narrower description. Rep. Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla., Denham's fellow moderate leader, said while talks have focused on providing legal status to Dreamers, the proposal "does not involve a special pathway nor a visa unique to any specific group."

Denham said that without a deal, the moderates' threat to force the House to consider four immigration bills remains in effect. He and Curbelo need two more GOP signatures on a petition that could force those votes, assuming all Democrats sign. If they get them by next Tuesday, the House would be on track to have those roll calls on June 25.

"We have a firm deadline of next Tuesday," Denham said. "We're prepared to have the final signatures if there's no agreement between now and then."

The moderates would force votes on bills ranging from liberal plans offering citizenship to Dreamers to a conservative proposal curbing legal immigration. GOP leaders and conservatives say the likely result would be left-leaning legislation that would never clear the Senate or get President Donald Trump's signature. They also say it would antagonize conservative voters, jeopardizing GOP turnout in November elections in which control of the House is at stake.

Denham said moderates would accept border security measures as part of the accord, including backing the full \$25 billion Trump wants to construct his proposed wall with Mexico. He also said the plan would apply to more than the nearly 700,000 people who have been protected by the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, that Trump has halted. Around another 1 million immigrants are thought to have qualified for that program but not applied, by some estimates.

Ryan described leaders' effort to find compromise after a meeting of all House GOP lawmakers that didn't resolve the party's divisions. He said leaders would work toward a draft that resembles Trump's demands on the issue.

"This effort to get our members to come to a common ground is the best chance at law," Ryan said.

In exchange for providing possible citizenship for Dreamers, Trump wants full financing for his wall with Mexico. He's also wanted to end a lottery that distributes about 50,000 visas annually to countries with few U.S. immigrants and to limit the relatives legal immigrants can bring to this country.

Democrats and many moderate Republicans have opposed curbs in legal immigration. Such a plan would seem to have no chance in the Senate, where Democrats have enough votes to block it.

Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C., said conservatives have discussed providing a pathway to citizenship to Dreamers in exchange for funding for the proposed border wall, ending the visa lottery and limiting the relatives immigrants can bring into the country. Walker said the more Dreamers given an opportunity for citizenship, the tighter curbs on family-based migration would be.

AP reporters Andrew Taylor, Kevin Freking and Padmananda Rama contributed.

Under fire over tariffs, Trump heads to G-7 summit in Canada

By CATHERINE LUCEY, ROB GILLIES and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

LA MALBAIE, Quebec (AP) — Solidifying his solo status on the world stage, President Donald Trump is lashing out at longtime allies over their critiques of his trade policies and plans an early exit from the annual Group of Seven meeting of industrialized nations.

Trump will descend Friday on the annual gathering, held this year at a Quebec resort, but will leave Saturday morning before the event is over, heading out to Singapore for his highly anticipated summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The White House announced his travel plans after French President Emmanuel Macron and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signaled they will use the event to take a stance against new U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum imports.

"Looking forward to straightening out unfair Trade Deals with the G-7 countries," Trump tweeted early Friday. "If it doesn't happen, we come out even better."

Trump also singled out tariffs on U.S. dairy products in yet another scathing tweet directed at Canada just before the summit begins.

At a joint press conference on Thursday, Macron stressed: "A trade war doesn't spare anyone. It will start first of all to hurt U.S. workers." Trudeau said: "We are going to defend our industries and our workers."

Trudeau, for his part, said Trump's action would hurt American workers as well as Canadians.

"If I can get the president to actually realize that what he's doing is counterproductive for his own goals as well, perhaps we can move forward in a smarter way," Trudeau said.

As tempers frayed, Trump had a ready retort, via tweet: "Please tell Prime Minister Trudeau and President Macron that they are charging the U.S. massive tariffs and create non-monetary barriers. The EU trade surplus with the U.S. is \$151 Billion, and Canada keeps our farmers and others out. Look forward to seeing them tomorrow."

Later Thursday, Trump tweeted: "Prime Minister Trudeau is being so indignant, bringing up the relationship that the U.S. and Canada had over the many years and all sorts of other things...but he doesn't bring up the fact that they charge us up to 300% on dairy — hurting our Farmers, killing our Agriculture!"

A few hours later, he added, "Take down your tariffs & barriers or we will more than match you!"

With a cool reception all but assured, Trump has complained to aides about even having to attend the meeting, especially since his summit with Kim is just days away. Late Thursday, the White House announced that Trump would be leaving the G-7 late Saturday morning to head to Singapore ahead of his summit with Kim, though the G-7 meeting was scheduled to last until later that day.

This marks Trump's second summit of the G-7, an informal gathering that meets every year under a rotating chairmanship. The member countries are Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, the United States and Britain. The European Union also attends. Trump is set to hold a series of group and one-on-one meetings, including with Trudeau and Macron.

Under Trump, the United States has abandoned its traditional role in the G-7. His predecessors pressed for freer global trade and championed a trading system that required countries to follow World Trade Organization rules. Trump's policies have been more protectionist and confrontational, driven by a perception that the U.S. has been the victim of poorly conceived trade deals.

Relations have hit such a low that a key question now is whether the seven countries can agree on a joint statement of priorities at the conclusion of the meeting. A gathering of G-7 finance ministers days earlier concluded last week with a message of "concern and disappointment" for Trump from the other six countries. France's finance minister described the group as "far more a G-6 plus one than a G-7."

Macron made clear Thursday that the other six countries wouldn't hesitate to go it alone. On Twitter, he said: "The American President may not mind being isolated, but neither do we mind signing a 6 country agreement if need be."

Trump's top economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, was vague Wednesday on the outcome of the summit, saying: "For these kind of decisions, let them meet first. Let them meet; let them discuss. And then we'll see what happens."

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Tension has been building over a year of policymaking that has distanced the U.S. from traditional allies, including by Trump's decisions to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate accord and the Iran nuclear agreement. The new tariffs— 25 percent on imported steel, 10 percent on aluminum from Canada, Mexico and the European Union — threaten to drive up prices for American consumers and companies and heighten uncertainty for businesses and investors around the globe.

Canada and other U.S. allies are retaliating with tariffs on U.S. exports. Canada is waiting until the end of the month to apply them with the hope the Trump administration will reconsider.

Meanwhile, talks to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement that eliminated most tariffs and duties between the U.S., Canada and Mexico appear to have ground to a halt. Trump injected further uncertainty recently when he floated the idea of replacing NAFTA with two separate trade deals, one with each country.

Critics argue that the growing U.S. isolation is risky at a time when Trump is making diplomatic overtures with North Korea and in the Middle East and could use the support of allies.

Sebastian Mallaby, a senior fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations, described the relationships between the U.S. and the rest of the G-7 as at a "new level of crisis," saying that it was not just about trade but "a general U.S. attitude toward the system."

Despite the conflict, Mallaby predicted that the countries would still seek to work with the U.S., calling it "the indispensable country."

Likewise, Macron described the moment as a period of "great challenges," but also defended his efforts to befriend the American president, saying the U.S. is a historical ally and "we need them."

Lukey and Miller reported from Washington.

Anti-Israel marches in Iraq, Iran to mark 'Jerusalem Day'

By FARES AKRAM, Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Thousands of Shiite Muslims marched in the capitals of Iran and Iraq on Friday to mark "Jerusalem Day," in an annual protest against Israeli rule over the holy city and show of support for the Palestinians. Some burned Israeli flags and effigies of President Donald Trump.

Later on Friday, thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip were to head to the perimeter fence with Israel to stage the latest in a series of mass protests against the blockade of their territory by Israel and Egypt.

Friday's protest was also being held to mark Jerusalem Day, instituted by Iran after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

A large turnout was expected in Gaza, raising concerns about renewed bloodshed. At least 115 Palestinian protesters have been killed and close to 3,800 have been wounded by Israeli army fire since the marches began in late March.

Earlier on Friday, organizers urged Gaza residents to head to the perimeter fence with Israel after Muslim noon prayers. The call was issued through mosques and loudspeakers mounted on cars that toured Gaza neighborhoods.

Previous border protests have drawn thousands of people, most gathering at sit-in tent camps several hundred meters (yards) from the fence. Smaller groups have approached the fence, throwing stones, burning tires or sending kites with incendiary materials attached toward Israel with the aim to set fields there on fire. Others have thrown fire bombs or tried to damage the fence. Israeli soldiers, including snipers perched behind earthen berms, have fired live bullets and tear gas.

On Friday morning, Israeli army drones dropped incendiary materials on piles of old tires to make them unusable for the later protests, Gaza organizers said.

Israel's use of potentially lethal force against the protesters, the vast majority of them unarmed, has drawn international criticism. Rights groups have said Israel's open-fire rules are unlawful.

Israel has accused Gaza's ruling group, the Islamic militant Hamas, of trying to carry out attacks and

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damage the fence under the guise of the protests. Hamas leaders have threatened possible mass border breaches, raising concerns in Israel that communities near Gaza might be at risk.

The Jerusalem Day protests are being held each year on the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. The day is known in Arabic as "Al Quds Day," a reference to the city's historic Arabic name.

Israel captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed it to its capital, a move not recognized by most of the international community. Israel's current government has said it will not accept a partition of the city as part of a peace deal with the Palestinians.

The eastern sector houses major shrines revered by Muslims, Christians and Jews. The Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in east Jerusalem, the third holiest site in Islam, is built on the spot where tradition says the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven. The compound sits on the ruins of biblical temples and is revered as the holiest site of Judaism.

In Iran's capital of Tehran, thousands joined a Jerusalem Day march on Friday, chanting "Death to Israel" and burning a Trump effigy.

Iran and Israel are implacable foes. Iran does not recognize Israel and supports militant groups, including Hamas, the smaller Palestinian group Islamic Jihad and the Lebanese Hezbollah militia.

In Iraq, thousands of Iran-backed Shiite militiamen in uniform marched through the streets of the capital of Baghdad on Friday, setting an Israeli flag on fire and carrying posters of the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and Supreme Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Associated Press writer Amir Vahdat in Tehran contributed reporting.

Airstrike on rebel-held northwestern Syrian village kills 35

BEIRUT (AP) — Warplanes attacked a rebel-held northwestern village in Syria, killing at least 35 people and wounding dozens more, including children, in one of the deadliest incidents in this part of the country this year, a Syrian war monitor and paramedics said Friday.

The opposition's Syrian Civil Defense, also known as White Helmets, said the airstrike Thursday night killed 35 and wounded 80 in the village of Zardana. It added that the dead included three of its members, who were killed as they evacuated the dead and wounded.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the strike killed 44, including six children and 11 women. It added that the attack occurred after Muslims broke their Ramadan holiday fast after sunset.

It is not uncommon to have conflicting figures in the aftermath of attacks in Syria.

The Observatory said the number could still rise as some of the victims were still under the rubble and some wounded were in critical condition.

The Observatory said the airstrike was carried out by Russian warplanes and is so far the deadliest in Idlib province this year.

Such airstrikes have been relatively uncommon in recent months in the rebel-held province, which is part of a de-escalation zone agreed on last year by Russia, Turkey and Iran.

Tens of thousands of Syrians displaced from other parts of the country have settled in Idlib province over the past two years.

Ex-Senate aide charged with lying about reporter contacts

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former employee of the Senate intelligence committee has been arrested on charges of lying to the FBI about contacts he had with multiple reporters, federal prosecutors said Thursday.

James A. Wolfe, the longtime director of security for the committee — one of multiple congressional panels investigating potential ties between Russia and the Trump campaign — was indicted on three false statement counts after prosecutors say he misled agents about his relationships with reporters.

Though Wolfe is not charged with disclosing classified information, prosecutors say he was in regular

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contact with multiple journalists who covered the committee, including meeting them at restaurants, in bars, private residences and in a Senate office building. He also maintained a yearslong personal relationship with one reporter, which prosecutors say he lied about until being confronted with a photograph of him and the journalist.

Wolfe, 58, of Ellicott City, Maryland, is due in court Friday. It wasn't immediately clear if he had a lawyer.

Each false statement count is punishable by up to five years in prison, though if convicted, Wolfe would almost certainly face only a fraction of that time.

The criminal case arises from a December 2017 FBI interview with Wolfe in which he denied having relationships with journalists or discussing committee business with them. At one point, he was presented with a news article containing classified information and was asked, in a written questionnaire, if he had had contact with any of the piece's three authors. He checked "no" even though records obtained by the government show that he had been in communication with one of them.

In a separate instance, after one journalist published a story about a witness who'd been subpoenaed to appear before the committee, Wolfe wrote to say, "Good job!" and "I'm glad you got the scoop"

The indictment was announced soon after The New York Times revealed that the Justice Department had secretly seized the phone records and emails of one of its journalists, Ali Watkins, as part of the same leak investigation involving Wolfe. The newspaper said Watkins was approached by the FBI about a three-year relationship she had had with Wolfe when she worked at other publications. The newspaper also said that Watkins said that Wolfe was not a source of classified information for her during their relationship.

In a statement Thursday night, Watkins' attorney, Mark MacDougall, said: "It's always disconcerting when a journalist's telephone records are obtained by the Justice Department — through a grand jury subpoena or other legal process. Whether it was really necessary here will depend on the nature of the investigation and the scope of any charges."

The prosecution comes amid a Trump administration crackdown on leaks of classified information. President Donald Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions have decried such disclosures, with Sessions saying in August that the number of leak of criminal leak probes had more than tripled in the early months of the Trump administration.

"The Attorney General has stated that investigations and prosecutions of unauthorized disclosure of controlled information are a priority of the Department of Justice. The allegations in this indictment are doubly troubling as the false statements concern the unauthorized disclosure of sensitive and confidential information," Assistant Attorney General John Demers, the Justice Department's top national security official, said in a statement.

The Obama administration had its own repeated tangles with journalists, including secretly subpoenaing phone records of Associated Press reporters and editors during a 2012 leak investigation into a story about a bomb plot. The Justice Department amended its media guidelines in 2015 to make it more difficult for prosecutors to subpoena journalists for their sources, though officials in the last year have said they are reviewing those policies.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr and the top Democrat on the committee, Sen. Mark Warner, said in a joint statement that they were troubled by the charges. Wolfe had worked for the committee for roughly 30 years, and his position as security director meant that he had access to classified information provided to the panel by the executive branch.

"While the charges do not appear to include anything related to the mishandling of classified information, the committee takes this matter extremely seriously," the senators said. "We were made aware of the investigation late last year, and have fully cooperated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice since then."

Associated Press writers Chad Day and Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

Detention centers fill up; border detainees sent to prisons

By GENE JOHNSON, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — More than 1,600 people arrested at the U.S.-Mexico border, including parents who have been separated from their children, are being transferred to federal prisons, U.S. immigration authorities confirmed Thursday. They said they're running out of room at their own facilities amid President Donald Trump's crackdown on illegal immigration.

The move drew condemnation from activists who said the detainees may have legitimate claims to asylum and don't deserve to be held in federal prisons.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee and Attorney General Bob Ferguson issued a letter Thursday night seeking more information from the Justice Department and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement after learning that ICE had transferred dozens of mothers who had been separated from their children to the Federal Detention Center at SeaTac.

"The Trump Administration's new family separation policy is inflicting intentional, gratuitous, and permanent trauma on young children who have done nothing wrong and on parents who often have valid claims for refugee or asylum status," they wrote.

Historically, immigrants without serious criminal records were released from custody while they pursued asylum or refugee status. The Trump administration has ended that policy.

In an emailed statement, ICE spokeswoman Carissa Cutrell said that due to a surge in illegal border crossings and the Justice Department's "zero-tolerance" policy — designed to discourage illegal border crossings — the agency needed to acquire access to more than 1,600 beds in Bureau of Prisons Facilities. The agency said those include 1,000 beds in Victorville, California; 209 beds in SeaTac; 230 beds in La Tuna, Texas; 230 beds in Sheridan, Oregon; and 102 beds in Phoenix.

"The use of BOP facilities is intended to be a temporary measure until ICE can obtain additional long-term contracts for new detention facilities or until the surge in illegal border crossings subsides," the statement said.

The letter from Inslee and Ferguson followed a report from the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project earlier Thursday that as many as 120 asylum seekers had been transferred to the Federal Detention Center at SeaTac.

The organization said that on Wednesday it spoke with two of the women, who arrived at the southern border with their young daughters in mid-May seeking asylum. Both were separated from their children shortly after they were apprehended by Border Patrol. Instead of being returned to their children after being sentenced to time served for the misdemeanor of unlawful entry, they were transferred to Washington state while they seek asylum, the organization said.

"There is simply no moral or legal justification for separating children from their parents in this draconian effort seeking to deter other immigrants," Matt Adams, legal director of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, said in a written statement. "This is not only unlawful, but also contrary to basic human decency."

Inslee and Ferguson said they wanted more information about when the women would be released and when they can expect to see their children again, as well as where the children are and who is caring for them.

The American Civil Liberties Union is seeking a court injunction to stop immigration authorities from separating parents from their young children.

On Wednesday, a federal judge in California ruled that a case involving two mothers could go forward, saying that if the policy was being carried out as described in the lawsuit, it is "brutal, offensive, and fails to comport with traditional notions of fair play and decency." The judge said he would issue a separate ruling on whether to expand the lawsuit to apply to all parents and children who are split up by border authorities.

Giuliani trying to influence perception of Mueller probe

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A series of seemingly authoritative assertions in recent weeks about the shape and scope of special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into Russian election interference has helped define it in the public eye, generating countless headlines and cable chyrons about the ongoing saga that has shadowed President Donald Trump's White House.

But none of those pronouncements about Mueller's probe were made by Mueller.

They were made by Rudy Giuliani, the president's attorney, who has used a media blitz to frequently set — and later move — the goalposts of the investigation, making public declarations about the probe to color its perception among voters and lawmakers, all while confident that Mueller will never speak up to correct him.

"Our strategy is: When we weren't talking, we were losing," Giuliani told The Associated Press on Thursday from Israel. "Normally in a criminal or civil investigation, the audience would not be the public. But in this one, it is."

Among Giuliani's declarations in the last month: that Mueller's probe will end by Sept. 1 so as not to affect the midterm elections; that an interview with Trump will be limited and take place only under certain conditions; that prosecutors have ruled out indicting a sitting president.

On Thursday, he shifted expectations yet again, suggesting that Trump would not sit for an interview with investigators unless his legal team gets a firsthand look at the documents generated by an FBI informant who had contacts with the celebrity businessman's Republican presidential campaign in 2016. Previously, Giuliani had said a briefing on the information would suffice.

The special counsel has not responded to any of those claims. Indeed, Mueller has shown no interest in combating the White House on cable or in print; seemingly, the most consistent line in a story about the probe is "A spokesman for the special counsel declined to comment for this article."

A spokesman for the special counsel declined to comment for this article.

Some of Giuliani's statements have been outlandish, and some have arguably been damaging to the president's cause. But nearly all have been intended to set the public discourse, whether to defend Trump or discredit those investigating him. Giuliani argued that, as much as the White House was trying to preserve Trump's presidency by fighting on legal terms, the public relations battleground was just as vital.

The former New York City mayor has repeatedly stated that Mueller won't criminally charge the president — again, a claim made without rebuttal from the special counsel — and believes that, therefore, the probe will conclude when Mueller delivers a report to the Justice Department, which, in turn, may release it to Congress, whose members could be susceptible to public pressure while debating possible impeachment.

"They have the capacity to report and so do we. We're reporting in real time as we go," Giuliani said. "So whose report will the public accept? Who do they believe? We're looking to win that argument."

Mueller's investigation has operated largely in secrecy, with the public getting only glimpses into its operation through witnesses who are questioned or when indictments and guilty pleas are unsealed. There is no evidence that Giuliani's rhetoric has influenced the special counsel, and Mueller's silence may be the right approach, according to some experts.

"You never want to wrestle in the mud, and engaging publicly would mean wrestling with Trump and Rudy," said Tobe Berkovitz, a longtime political media consultant who is now a professor of communications at Boston University. "He shouldn't respond. There are lawmakers and pundits who will do so on his behalf. And it's not like he is going to listen to Rudy anyway."

Giuliani's outspokenness, when taken in tandem with the president's powerful Twitter feed, has tried to undercut the credibility of the investigation and muddy the waters, turning the perception of those involved into political actors rather than above-the-fray investigators. He has painted former FBI Director James Comey, a key witness for Mueller, as untrustworthy and has derided the informant as "a spy," pressuring Republican lawmakers to hold unprecedented briefings on the asset's classified findings.

The attacks appear to have pushed public opinion on the special counsel. While the majority of Ameri-

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cans believe Trump should cooperate with the probe, recent polling suggests that an increasing number of people have begun to view the investigation as politically motivated.

One of Giuliani's recent talking points was that Mueller's team indicated to him that the probe would conclude by the end of the summer in order to not overshadow the midterms, a claim that has echoed across cable. But, when pressed, Giuliani acknowledged that Mueller's team did not make that commitment and any sort of timeline would depend on whether Trump sat for an interview, something his legal team has discouraged.

"He is setting expectations from the White House's point of view," said Ari Fleischer, former press secretary for President George W. Bush. "And the primary audience of people who will listen to him are those who could influence Congress."

Giuliani has known Trump for decades — his bomb-throwing rhetorical style can at times mirror that of the president — and he became an aggressive surrogate for Trump from the early days of his insurgent presidential campaign. Although passed over for secretary of state, his preferred Cabinet position, he joined the legal team in April.

His in-your-face strategy has yielded some missteps.

He drew the president's ire when he contradicted Trump's earlier statements by claiming the president knew about hush money payments from his personal attorney Michael Cohen to porn actress Stormy Daniels, who has said she had sex with a married Trump in 2006. Giuliani received a torrent of criticism for suggesting this week that he doesn't respect Daniels "the way I respect a career woman or a woman of substance or a woman who isn't going to sell her body for sexual exploitation."

On Thursday, first lady Melania Trump's spokeswoman upbraided the attorney for recently invoking her name while discussing Daniels, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stressed that Giuliani does not speak for the administration on foreign policy matters after the former mayor weighed in on the upcoming North Korea summit.

Trump has told allies that, despite some mistakes, he is glad to have Giuliani onboard as an attack dog and dominating news coverage. Giuliani did not apologize Thursday for the inflammatory remarks.

"We need to drive the story," Giuliani said. "You have to go on and be willing to take the arrows, especially if you're going to deliver more arrows."

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Reality check on optimism swirling around Trump-Kim summit

By FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — It may be the strangest feeling in decades to descend on the Korean Peninsula — a wave of optimism, and not always of the cautious variety, when it comes to North Korea and its nuclear bombs.

Ahead of a planned summit Tuesday in Singapore between President Donald Trump and North Korean autocrat Kim Jong Un, there has been talk of complete denuclearization, North Korea has shut down (for now) its nuclear test site, and senior U.S. and North Korean officials have shuttled between Pyongyang and Washington for meetings with Kim and Trump. The top U.S. diplomat declared that "Chairman Kim shares the objectives with the American people" amid talk of a grand bargain that could see North Korean disarmament met with a massive influx of outside aid.

Skeptics, however — and that's usually the default mindset for many Korea watchers — say there are still plenty of ways that diplomacy can implode. For decades, if a potential deal with North Korea looked too good to be true, it almost certainly was. And wasn't it just months ago that North Korean test-missiles filled the air and Trump and Kim were slinging threats and insults at each other?

So who's right?

There are clues that something unprecedented is indeed happening — no U.S. president has met with a North Korea leader, after all. But there's also a recognition that optimism at what might be a once-in-a-

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generation chance for peace must be tempered with a clear-eyed acknowledgement of what North Korea is aiming to get out of its turn from provocation to diplomacy.

Here's a closer look:

THE OPTIMISTS

Very senior officials from the United States and South Korea have set the tone here, with a huge though indirect assist from Kim Jong Un himself.

Seoul quoted the North Korean leader as saying during his recent summit with his South Korean counterpart, "If we maintain frequent meetings and build trust with the United States and receive promises for an end to the war and a non-aggression treaty, then why would we need to live in difficulty by keeping our nuclear weapons?"

Trump and his lieutenants — with his hawkish national security adviser, John Bolton, a notable exception — have jumped on comments like this to frame the summit and used them to bolster their own direct, and extensive, private talks with senior North Koreans.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in, a longtime dove who has met twice with Kim in recent weeks, "is putting tremendous faith in a sudden conversion of Kim Jong Un to better behavior," according to Robert Kelly, a political science professor at Pusan National University in Busan.

This has led to "remarkable optimism" in the South, Kelly writes. "Again and again when I speak on panels in South Korea now, I am the lone hawk or skeptic."

The optimists argue that since North Korea has declared itself capable of accurately targeting the entire United States with nuclear-tipped missiles — something many analysts think is still not quite possible — it's now ready to turn to Kim's other overwhelming concern: Bringing economic security to his impoverished nation of 25 million.

To do that, Kim needs to ease crushing sanctions and somehow encourage investment. If outsiders provide enough money and security guarantees, the argument goes, the North will begin to ease its grip on its nukes.

A recent analysis by Stratfor, a geopolitical analytical group, based on talks with North Korean contacts found that "Pyongyang is genuinely serious about this dialogue. They see this as a unique opportunity in dealing with an unconventional president like Trump." The North, according to the analysis, wants U.S. mining, mineral, IT and other investments.

Kim's age also resonates with optimists. He's only 34 and may see diplomacy as the best way to stay in power long after Moon and Trump are gone from the scene.

THE PESSIMISTS

In a way, these folks have it easy. Calling themselves "realists," they simply need to point to all the so-called past breakthroughs that have crashed on the rocks of mistrust and acrimony.

Joseph Yun, the top U.S. diplomat on North Korea policy until March, recently outlined how far apart the two sides are.

Trump wants "immediate CVID (complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization), a difficult-to-grasp phrase that would elicit eye rolls from my North Korean counterparts whenever it was mentioned during our encounters." Kim, meanwhile, "is focused on the survival of his regime, beginning with the recognition of his country as a legitimate state, followed by an easing of economic sanctions," Yun wrote.

"This mismatch between U.S. and North Korean goals has remained more or less consistent over the decades and has so far stymied all agreements that have emerged between the two sides since the first round of bilateral denuclearization negotiations in the early 1990s."

Thae Yong Ho, a former senior North Korean diplomat who defected to the South in 2016, said recently that the idea that the North will completely denuclearize is a "fantasy." Kim Jong Un "will never accept a process of discarding nuclear weapons that would lead to the collapse of his absolute rule over North Korea."

Skeptics also warn about the dangers of ridiculously high expectations surrounding the summit.

Jeffrey Lewis, a U.S. arms control expert at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey,

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recently titled an analysis: "Optimism About Korea Will Kill Us All: The first step toward peace is lowering your expectations."

"North Korea has famously broken its previous pledges," writes Bruce Klingner, an analyst with the conservative Heritage Foundation think tank and former Korea specialist at the CIA. "Seoul and Washington must maintain sanctions against the North, and military deterrence, until Pyongyang proves it has truly altered its modus operandi. When you're approaching the altar with a serial philanderer, it's best to keep the divorce lawyer on speed dial."

Pessimists note that North Korea has always balked at outside nuclear inspections, at demands from outsiders to close what the U.N. calls a massive system of prison camps where dissidents are tortured and killed, and at angering a powerful military that thrives on anti-U.S. and anti-South Korean sentiment.

THE MIDDLE GROUND?

There could be some, if Trump and Kim can compromise.

Yun, the former U.S. nuclear negotiator, laid out some "easy, immediate deliverables," including opening North Korea's main nuclear facility to inspections and monitoring by U.N. officials. A much more difficult, but crucial, "get" would be a full "declaration and accounting of all North Korean nuclear sites and fissile material."

Trump and Kim can also silence skeptics in Washington, Seoul and Tokyo, Yun wrote, by producing "a clear timeline for the ultimate goal: the disablement and dismantlement of all North Korean nuclear and ICBM facilities, material and devices."

Another, more limited result could be a North Korean agreement to freeze its missile and nuclear tests in return for U.S. sanctions relief and security assurance.

In the end, some argue that this spate of unusual diplomacy should be judged less on whatever documents are signed than on the relationships that are forged.

"Summits are when leaders size each other up, for better or for worse," writes Robert Carlin, a frequent visitor to North Korea, both as a U.S. official and outside analyst. "They are when every nerve strains to absorb, to calculate, to weigh. They are when leaders smile and sniff the air, when, over a glass of champagne, they gain their own impressions more vivid, more real than all the briefing papers, than all the intelligence, than all the murmurings of advisers."

Foster Klug is AP's bureau chief in South Korea and has covered the Koreas since 2005. Follow him at www.twitter.com/apklug

Caps on top! Washington wins Stanley Cup, beats Vegas 4-3

By GREG BEACHAM, AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Alex Ovechkin put both hands to his head and screamed while he left the bench and skated into the thick of the Washington Capitals' joyous celebration.

And right before Ovechkin hoisted the Stanley Cup, the Washington captain put both hands on his head again in a gesture of disbelieving ecstasy.

You can believe it, Ovi. So can the Washington fans whose championship drought is finally over.

After striving through 13 of his franchise's 43 seasons, the Russian superstar and the long-suffering Capitals are sitting on top of hockey for the very first time.

"It doesn't matter what happened before," Ovechkin said through his gap-toothed grin. "We just won it."

Lars Eller scored the tiebreaking goal with 7:37 to play, and the Capitals claimed their first NHL title with a 4-3 victory over the Vegas Golden Knights on Thursday night in Game 5 of the Stanley Cup Final.

Ovechkin capped his playoff MVP campaign with an early power-play goal, and Devante Smith-Pelly tied it with a full-stretch goal midway through the final period of the Capitals' fourth consecutive victory over the Golden Knights.

"We did it," said Ovechkin, whose 15 playoff goals set a franchise record. "That's all that matters. Look

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at the smiles on my teammates. This is something you'll never forget. This moment, I'll remember for the rest of my life. I'm so happy. It's unbelievable."

Vegas' incredible expansion season finally ended, and so did the Capitals' wait for a title since their debut in 1974. But after so many years of crushing disappointment for a team with a lengthy history of postseason failure, these Caps confidently won their fourth consecutive closeout game with a tenacious third-period comeback in Vegas.

Ovechkin and his teammates are Washington's first championship hockey team — and their city's first champion in a major pro sport since the Redskins won the Super Bowl in early 1992.

"It doesn't come easy," said goalie Braden Holtby, who made 28 saves while outplaying three-time Stanley Cup champion Marc-Andre Fleury in the opposite net one final time. "It took years. Years of heartbreak. Years of breaking things down and trying again, breaking things down and trying again, and this group never gave up. And we finally did it."

After Ovechkin accepted the Conn Smythe Trophy, he received the Cup from NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman. Ovechkin shouted "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!" before skating away and hoisting the prize over his head for a victory lap in front of thousands of red-clad fans.

When a succession of teammates finally got the Cup back to Ovi, he handed it to Ted Leonsis, the Caps' owner since 1999.

"I'm so happy for the group that has gone through the misery," said Washington coach Barry Trotz, a first-time champ in his 19th season behind an NHL bench and a potential free agent without a contract for next season.

The Caps couldn't win a Cup without a little late weirdness, however: The game clock stopped working on the T-Mobile Arena scoreboards during the final minutes, and the Capitals angrily protested while they played on. Vegas never got close to a tying goal despite both teams getting an extra chance to rest while the officials checked on the timing. The clock finally hit zeros, allowing the Caps to storm the ice behind their net for a frenzied celebration.

Reilly Smith scored a go-ahead goal late in the second period for the Golden Knights, who won seven of their first eight home playoff games before dropping the last two.

"When you get this close to the Cup, it's hard," Fleury said. "Doesn't happen too often. It's very disappointing."

The defeat ended the storybook inaugural season of the Golden Knights, who became the NHL's 31st franchise last fall and immediately launched into arguably the greatest debut in modern pro sports history. Few expected the division title they delivered, and fewer still thought Vegas could challenge for a championship.

Nate Schmidt and David Perron also scored deflection goals for Vegas in the second period, but Fleury's 29 saves included a stopped puck that dropped underneath him where Eller could sweep it home for the Cup-winning goal.

"It means everything," Eller said. "You couldn't write the story better. If you're going to win on the road, I couldn't imagine a better place to do it."

Forward T.J. Oshie spent a moment in the celebration looking up for his father, Tim, who he said was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

"He doesn't remember a lot of stuff, but he's going to remember this," Oshie said. "I've never seen a team come together like we did here. I've never seen the commitment from start to finish like we had here."

Washington's win was its 10th on the road in this postseason, tying the NHL playoff record and illustrating the superior toughness of this team. While past editions of the Caps created their team's reputation for postseason flops in part by losing five playoff series in which they had won three of the first four games, Ovechkin's latest group promptly closed out all four of its series this year on the very first try.

The Caps also came back from series deficits in all four rounds and clinched all four series on the road.

The remarkable Golden Knights hadn't lost four consecutive games in their entire inaugural season before the Caps rolled them.

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"It's going to be a tough couple days," Vegas defenseman Deryk Engelland said. "You never want it to end like this."

The Capitals had thousands of fans in the Vegas crowd and a building full of supporters watching back home along with countless thousands outside in the crowded D.C. streets. They got a barn-burner of a finale befitting this thrilling series, with wild shifts of momentum before that bizarre clock incident that didn't appear to affect the outcome much.

The Capitals' triumph also adds another chapter to a stretch of sweet relief for long-suffering, loyal sports fans across North America. The NFL's Philadelphia Eagles won their first Super Bowl in February, and baseball's Houston Astros won their first World Series last November.

First-time titles are all the rage, and Ovechkin and the Caps have paid their dues for this one.

Ovechkin, who turns 33 later this year, has been among the most exciting and productive players in his sport since joining the Caps in 2005. Yet for all of his goal-scoring prowess and athletic swagger, the Great Eight had never won an Olympic gold medal or a Stanley Cup title.

But after becoming the fifth player in the last quarter-century to score at least 15 goals in a postseason, Ovechkin is a champion at last. He also became the first Russian captain to raise the Cup in NHL history.

The title is also validation for Holtby, who has spent his entire NHL career in Washington. After several seasons of being measured unfavorably against Fleury and other goaltending greats despite his 2016 Vezina Trophy, the Saskatchewan native also has his long-sought ring — and his unbelievable stick save on Alex Tuch in Game 2 will ring forever in Caps history.

Ovechkin put the Caps up 2-1 in the crazy second period of Game 5 when he set up in his customary spot in the left faceoff circle and put Nicklas Backstrom's cross-ice pass into a sliver of open net. But after Perron tied it with a deflection goal while falling into Holtby's net, Smith scored into an open net after Ovechkin went to the penalty box for tripping.

Washington pressed early in the third, but didn't connect until Brooks Orpik flung the puck at the net against the run of play. Smith-Pelly barely controlled the puck and stretched out to fling it toward the net while falling face-forward, and it slipped inside Fleury's post for the veteran forward's seventh goal of the postseason — matching his total from the entire regular season.

"I've been dreaming about it since I was a little kid," Smith-Pelly said. "The team, with so much change, you didn't know what to expect. We knew we could do something special, and we did."

Moments later, the Knights struggled to keep up with the Caps' puck movement and left Brett Connolly open for a shot. Fleury stopped it, but the puck fell to the ice underneath him — and Eller fought off Luca Sbisa and slapped the puck into the net for the game winner.

NOTES: Washington is the 19th active franchise to win the Stanley Cup. The Caps were tied for the fifth-longest active Cup drought with Philadelphia, which won it in 1974. ... Ovechkin has 26 points in 26 potential series-clinching games in his career. ... The Knights made two lineup changes from Game 4, inserting Perron and William Carrier while scratching Ryan Reaves and Ryan Carpenter. Carrier hadn't played since the second round against San Jose, while Perron was a healthy scratch for only one game. ... The Knights scored eight goals in their four consecutive losses.

More Stanley Cup coverage: <https://apnews.com/tag/StanleyCupFinals>

Justice Department says heart of health law unconstitutional

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration said in a court filing late Thursday that it will no longer defend key parts of the Affordable Care Act, including the requirement that people have health insurance and provisions that guarantee access to health insurance regardless of any medical conditions.

The decision, announced in a filing in a federal court in Texas, is a rare departure from the Justice Department's practice of defending federal laws in court. Texas and other Republican-led states are suing to strike down the entire law because Congress recently repealed a provision that people without health

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insurance must pay a fine. The repeal takes effect next year.

Texas says that without the fine in place the requirement to have health insurance is unconstitutional and that the entire law should be struck down as a result.

The administration said it agrees with Texas that the so-called individual mandate will be unconstitutional without the fine. It also said that provisions shielding people with medical conditions from being denied coverage or charged higher premiums and limiting how much insurers can charge older Americans should fall as well.

But it said the rest of the law, including Medicaid expansion, can remain in place.

In many ways, the lawsuit, filed in February, is a replay of the politically divided litigation that ended with the Supreme Court upholding the health care overhaul in 2012. In the new suit, California is leading a group of Democrat-led states in defending the law.

The major difference is that the Justice Department under President Donald Trump has largely switched sides.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions said in a letter to Congress on Thursday that Trump, who campaigned on repealing the law and nearly did so his first year in office, approved the legal strategy.

Donald Verrilli Jr., President Barack Obama's top Supreme Court lawyer who defended the law, called the decision "a sad moment."

"I find it impossible to believe that the many talented lawyers at the department could not come up with any arguments to defend the ACA's insurance market reforms, which have made such a difference to millions of Americans," Verrilli said.

Shortly before the government's court filing, three career lawyers at the Justice Department withdrew from the case and were replaced by two political appointees, according to court filings.

Timothy Jost, law professor emeritus at Washington and Lee University in Virginia said the Trump administration is trying to persuade the court to do what it was unable to achieve in Congress last year — essentially, repeal key parts of the Obama health law.

Jost said it's telling that three career Justice Department lawyers refused to support the administration's position.

"It's just one more part of the story of trying to politicize the Justice Department," said Jost, a supporter of the health law.

Despite the Justice Department position, the Health and Human Services Department has continued to apply the health law. Indeed, sign-up season for 2018 under the Trump administration resulted in only a slight enrollment drop-off from Obama's last year.

Insurers are now finalizing their premium requests for 2019, and Jost said the Justice Department filing may prompt jittery carriers to seek higher rates.

"The question is, what does this do to insurance markets now?" said Jost.

Associated Press writer Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar contributed to this report.

GOP moderate: Tentative immigration deal with conservatives

By ALAN FRAM and LISA MASCARO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A leader of House Republican moderates said Thursday that a tentative deal with conservatives was being discussed to help young "Dreamer" immigrants stay in the U.S. legally. Conservatives said later that no agreement has been reached, underscoring how elusive it has been for the GOP to resolve its long-running schism over the issue.

The proposal was described the same day that House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said leaders will craft an attempt at compromise on the issue that Republicans could embrace and vote on soon. Ryan is hoping an accord would derail threats by the GOP centrists to force a series of votes on immigration this month that leaders say would be divisive and damage the party's electoral prospects in November.

The flurry underscored the escalating pressure Republicans face to address immigration, an issue pitting

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centrists representing Hispanic and moderate voters against conservatives with deep-red constituents sympathetic to President Donald Trump's anti-immigrant outbursts. Painfully aware of those divisions, leaders had seemed happy to sidestep the issue until the moderates' rebellion forced their hand.

Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., said that under an offer from the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, young immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children could get a new visa that would let them stay in the country for eight years. He expressed uncertainty over what would happen after that, but said participants have characterized the proposal as a bridge to the legal immigration system — which suggests a pathway to remaining in the U.S. permanently.

"This was their offer to us and it's something we can agree to, but not until we see it on paper," Denham said.

Members of the Freedom Caucus distanced themselves from the moderates' assertions, though their descriptions varied.

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., leader of the Freedom Caucus, said no immigration agreement has been reached and said the question of granting citizenship to Dreamers "has been the thorniest issue from the start." Another member of that group, Rep. Dave Brat, R-Va., said a proposal has been discussed but cautioned that there are "tons of moving pieces to it." And in a tweet, the Caucus said it has "not made an offer on immigration" but said talks continued.

Conservatives have been adamant about not providing a "special" process carving out a unique way for Dreamers to gain legal status, and some of them bristled at Denham's narrower description. Rep. Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla., Denham's fellow moderate leader, said that while talks have focused on providing legal status to Dreamers, the proposal "does not involve a special pathway nor a visa unique to any specific group."

Denham said that without a deal, the moderates' threat to force the House to consider four immigration bills remains in effect. He and Curbelo need two more GOP signatures on a petition that could force those votes, assuming all Democrats sign. If they get them by next Tuesday, the House would be on track to have those roll calls on June 25.

"We have a firm deadline of next Tuesday," Denham said. "We're prepared to have the final signatures if there's no agreement between now and then."

The moderates would force votes on bills ranging from liberal plans offering citizenship to Dreamers to a conservative proposal curbing legal immigration. GOP leaders and conservatives say the likely result would be left-leaning legislation that would never clear the Senate or get President Donald Trump's signature. They also say it would antagonize conservative voters, jeopardizing GOP turnout in November elections in which control of the House is at stake.

Denham said moderates would accept border security measures as part of the accord, including backing the full \$25 billion Trump wants to construct his proposed wall with Mexico. He also said the plan would apply to more than the nearly 700,000 people who have been protected by the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, that Trump has halted. Around another 1 million immigrants are thought to have qualified for that program but not applied, by some estimates.

Ryan described leaders' effort to find compromise after a meeting of all House GOP lawmakers that didn't resolve the party's divisions. He said leaders would work toward a draft that resembles Trump's demands on the issue.

"This effort to get our members to come to a common ground is the best chance at law," Ryan said.

In exchange for providing possible citizenship for Dreamers, Trump wants full financing for his wall with Mexico. He's also wanted to end a lottery that distributes about 50,000 visas annually to countries with few U.S. immigrants and to limit the relatives legal immigrants can bring to this country.

Democrats and many moderate Republicans have opposed curbs in legal immigration. Such a plan would seem to have no chance in the Senate, where Democrats have enough votes to block it.

Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C., said conservatives have discussed providing a pathway to citizenship to Dreamers in exchange for funding for the proposed border wall, ending the visa lottery and limiting the relatives immigrants can bring into the country. Walker said the more Dreamers given an opportunity for citizenship,

the tighter curbs on family-based migration would be.

AP reporters Andrew Taylor, Kevin Freking and Padmananda Rama contributed.

Stormy Daniels' former attorney countersues porn actress

By MICHAEL BALSAMO, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A day after Stormy Daniels accused her former lawyer of being a “puppet” for President Donald Trump, the attorney countersued the porn star and her new attorney for defamation and accused Trump’s personal attorney of illegally recording their telephone calls.

The countersuit was filed Thursday in federal court in Los Angeles — hours after Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani claimed Daniels isn’t credible and has “no reputation” because she’s a porn actress.

The comment drew a fiery response from Daniels’ current lawyer, Michael Avenatti, who called Giuliani a “pig.”

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, has said she had sex with Trump in 2006 when he was married. Trump has denied it.

She is fighting to invalidate a nondisclosure agreement she signed days before the 2016 election.

The countersuit by Davidson came a day after Daniels filed a lawsuit accusing him of being a “puppet” for Trump and secretly working with Cohen to have her appear on Fox News and falsely deny having sex with Trump. The interview never took place.

Davidson denied those claims and says Daniels wanted to appear on the show to bolster her popularity.

Davidson’s lawsuit alleges that Daniels and Avenatti defamed him when Avenatti tweeted that Davidson “should have been charged after his arrest for extortion not long ago.”

Davidson says in his lawsuit that he was never arrested for extortion and the tweet was “false” and meant to hurt his reputation.

The statement was “negligently, recklessly and intentionally published in a manner equaling malice,” the lawsuit said.

Davidson alleges Cohen illegally recorded their telephone calls when Davidson represented Daniels.

The suit provides no proof to substantiate the claims and no details on exactly when the calls were recorded.

Davidson denies that he did anything improper while representing Daniels and said in his countersuit that she told him she wanted to appear on Sean Hannity’s show on Fox News to boost her public image and would do anything to make sure she could keep the \$130,000 she was paid as part of the confidentiality agreement.

In a statement, Avenatti said Davidson is “a proven liar and his conduct is abhorrent.”

“He is an embarrassment to the profession and seems to have forgotten what the attorney-client privilege is all about,” Avenatti said. “His allegations are false and we look forward to having his frivolous claims thrown out of court.”

People in the adult film industry also took Giuliani to task Thursday for his comments about Daniels, saying they demean women in general and were aimed solely at discrediting Daniels because of how she makes a living and not based on the facts of the case.

“I’m sorry I don’t respect a porn star the way I respect a career woman or a woman of substance or a woman who isn’t going to sell her body for sexual exploitation,” Giuliani said Wednesday at a conference in Tel Aviv.

Daniels’ work as an adult film actress “entitles you to no degree of giving your credibility any weight,” he said, adding that people could “just look” at her to know she wasn’t believable.

Adult film actress Kimberly Kane, who has appeared in hundreds of films, said the statement is “dangerous and dehumanizing to sex workers.”

“We are already an extremely marginalized group made up mostly of women, people of color, trans and the disabled, people who are trying to make a living like everyone else,” Kane said.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York, Darlene Superville in Washington, Alexandra Villarreal in Philadelphia and John Rogers in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Aid freeze, politics push Gaza's people deeper into poverty

By FARES AKRAM and MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH, Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Samia Hassan used to have enough money to feed her two dozen children and grandchildren. Now she spends much of her time worrying about food, scouring Gaza's vegetable markets for end-of-day discounts or walking miles for a pot of free gruel from a soup kitchen.

Large numbers of Gaza families have been pushed deeper into poverty in recent months by Palestinian political infighting and the freezing of U.S. aid. Life is tougher than ever for most of the 2 million Palestinians locked into tiny, blockaded Gaza, where electricity is off most hours of the day, unemployment approaches 50 percent and the Islamic militant group Hamas rules with a tight grip.

"It's a perfect storm," said Hilary DuBose of the Catholic Relief Services, which has had to forego emergency food distributions because the Trump administration is withholding funds. "At the same time that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is worsening, humanitarian aid is disappearing."

Growing despair in Gaza has helped drive recent Hamas-led protests against the border blockade by Israel and Egypt. The closure was imposed after Hamas, branded a terrorist group by Israel and the West, seized Gaza in 2007, driving out forces loyal to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The escalating crisis also spotlights the lack of a coherent Gaza policy by the external players trying to shape its future. Israel and Egypt say they need the blockade to contain Hamas, but have not offered a viable plan for Gaza. The international community wants the blockade lifted, but hasn't said how it would deal with Hamas, which refuses to disarm or renounce violence.

Hassan — who shares her unfinished cinderblock home with seven of her 12 adult children, three daughters-in-law and 16 grandchildren — said she joined the border protests repeatedly, intentionally getting close to the fence in hopes of getting shot and killed by Israeli troops.

"Death is better than this life," she said to her sons' astonishment as the family gathered for the meal breaking the dawn-to-dusk fast of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Hassan said she only pulled back because she realized she could end up crippled rather than dead and become a burden. In the past two months, more than 115 Palestinians have been killed and close to 3,800 wounded by Israeli fire in near-weekly border protests, with some facing lifelong disabilities.

Hassan, who wears the black robe and full face veil of ultra-conservative Muslim women, is angry at Hamas, which has fought three cross-border wars with Israel.

"It's because of them," she said of her family's hard times.

In the last war in 2014, the family taxi, an important source of income, was destroyed in an Israeli airstrike on a neighbor's house. After the war's devastation, her sons only found work sporadically and one — a father of six — is now in jail for being unable to pay his debts.

The family suffered a new blow after Abbas ordered his West Bank autonomy government to curtail its regular support payments to Gaza, in hopes of pressing Hamas to hand over authority.

The Hassans used to get \$500 every three months from Abbas' Palestinian Authority, but haven't been paid since the beginning of the year, along with tens of thousands of Gaza welfare recipients, said Social Affairs Ministry official Khaled Barghouti.

Meanwhile, some 60,000 former civil servants, paid by Abbas since 2007 to ensure their loyalty, have received only a fraction of their salaries since March.

With barely any money coming in, the Hassans increasingly rely on charity.

During Ramadan, Samia Hassan often walks five kilometers (three miles) to another Gaza City neighborhood to line up for wheat gruel cooked in a large cauldron over an open fire.

Hassan said her sons won't make the trip, embarrassed to be seen asking for handouts, but that she doesn't mind because her face is veiled.

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On a recent afternoon, dozens of people jostled, pushing their aluminum or plastic food containers to be filled. The huge pot was empty within 10 minutes.

"The situation is difficult for everyone," said Walid Hattab, 50, who owns a small coffee-and-spice store and cooks the free meals as Ramadan charity. Demand is up from last year, he said, noting that merchants have stopped selling on credit.

Along with the Palestinian Authority, the U.N. has been instrumental in propping up Gaza's fragile economy. About two-thirds of Gaza's residents are eligible for health, education or welfare services from UNRWA, the agency that aids descendants of Palestinian refugees from the 1948 war over Israel's creation.

Need has grown exponentially, with some 1 million people in Gaza now receiving U.N. food aid, compared to 80,000 two decades ago, said agency spokesman Chris Gunness.

At the same time, the Trump administration has blown a \$305 million hole into the agency's annual \$1.2 billion budget — the result of a decision earlier this year to suspend most aid to the Palestinians until further notice. Washington has said it's linking future funding to UNRWA reforms.

UNRWA has raised more than \$200 million from other donors, but is still struggling. Money for Gaza food distributions could run out in a couple of months, Gunness said.

With the exception of the funds already spent this year, all U.S. assistance to the Palestinians is under review. This includes projects funded by USAID and the State Department, including health, education, good governance and security cooperation programs.

There is no indication the review will be completed any time soon, if ever, and it appears to be driven in part by Abbas' decision to boycott Washington's Mideast peace efforts as well as Palestinian moves to assert themselves at the United Nations.

Charities such as Catholic Relief Services rely heavily on U.S. support. In Gaza, its operations have been underwritten by a five-year, \$50 million USAID grant. This year, the charity should have received about \$10 million, but hasn't gotten any money so far, said DuBose.

As a result, 20,000 Gaza families aren't receiving food vouchers and about 2,200 people eligible for job-creation programs are staying home, she said.

Muslim countries such as Qatar, Iran, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates have stepped up aid during Ramadan. Qatar is distributing 1 million meals for the month and Iran 11,000 per day.

But it's not clear if such aid will be sustained after the holy month.

On a recent evening, Samia Hassan and two dozen family members sat on the straw mat-covered floor of their home. Salad and leftover gruel from the day before had been laid out. Just before iftar, volunteers from a nearby mosque sent over a tray of rice with one chicken.

"It came at the right time," said daughter-in-law Samah, holding a toddler in her lap.

Such uncertainty is tough for Samia. "Our situation has never been like this," she said.

Daraghmeh reported from Ramallah, West Bank. Associated Press writer Karin Laub in Berlin contributed reporting.

At Guatemala volcano, search halted as death toll hits 109

By SONIA PEREZ D. and MARK STEVENSON, Associated Press

SAN MIGUEL LOS LOTES, Guatemala (AP) — Rescuers suspended search and recovery efforts Thursday at villages devastated by the eruption of Guatemala's Volcano of Fire, leaving people with missing loved ones distraught and prompting some to do the risky work themselves with rudimentary tools.

Conred, the national disaster agency, said climatic conditions and still-hot volcanic material were making it dangerous for rescuers, and it was also taking into account the fact that 72 hours had passed since Sunday's eruption.

That's the window beyond which officials earlier said it would be extremely unlikely to find any survivors amid the ash, mud and other debris that buried homes up to their rooftops.

"It rained very hard yesterday. ... The soil is unstable," said Pablo Castillo, a spokesman for national police.

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Guatemalan prosecutors ordered an investigation into whether emergency protocols were followed properly, as many residents were caught with little or no time to evacuate.

Troublesome downpours and more volcanic activity had been hindering searches, but when teams have been able to work in the hardest hit areas, the death toll has continued to tick upward. The official number of confirmed dead was raised by 10 to 109 in the early evening, with about 200 more believed to be missing.

Oscar Chavez trekked over a mountain with his father and younger brother to search for his brother Edgar, sister-in-law Sandra and 4-year-old nephew Josue in the hamlet of San Miguel Los Lotes, which was almost entirely wiped out by the volcanic flows. They have not been heard from since the eruption.

"We looked for them in shelters, hospitals, everywhere, but we did not find them," said Chavez, 34, wiping a tear from his eye as the others used sticks and bits of broken boards to dig at the collapsed, ash-filled home. "So, better for us to come here."

A group of police officers saw what the family was doing and came to lend shovels and help with the digging.

A dozen other families also arrived to search the homes. Before Thursday they had been unable to access the area while rescuers were working.

Chavez's younger brother was angry that there were no longer any disaster workers at the scene while a little way downhill heavy machinery was being used to clear a road blocked by ash. And he directed his ire at President Jimmy Morales.

"They are cleaning the highway — the president has commitments to businesspeople. ... But here, since the people have nothing to offer him, he leaves this part as a burial ground," said William Chavez, a 29-year-old accounting student.

At a shelter set up in a school in the nearby city of Escuintla, workers fastened colorful ID bracelets on the wrists of people who are among several thousand displaced by the eruption.

Nohemi Ascon, 41, is the aunt of six children between the ages of 1 and 8 who died in Los Lotes. A photograph taken shortly after the disaster showed their bodies huddled together on a bed in the corner of a room, covered in white ash and blood.

Ascon said other family members were still unaccounted for.

"My father, my mother, my sisters are there," she said, upset over rescuers' decision to suspend their search. "It is their job. It is not right that they leave them there. They should get them out so we can take them to the cemetery."

The United States announced it was sending emergency aid, including financial resources, to help meet food, water and sanitation needs.

Washington also dispatched aircraft to help transport burn victims to Florida and Texas. Late Wednesday a U.S. Air Force C-17 carried six Guatemalan children who were badly burned for treatment at the Shriners' Hospital in Galveston, Texas.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders offered "deepest condolences" to victims and said the aid was being provided at the request of the government of Guatemala.

At a cemetery in Escuintla, relatives of Sandra Orizabal, 37, buried her in a white coffin next to the grave of her husband, who was interred the previous day.

All told, 18 members of the family died or disappeared in the disaster. Orizabal was just the fifth to be found and laid to rest.

"I am burying my daughter with great pain," said Pedro Orizabal, her father. "May God bless all the family that is still standing."

Sandra Orizabal was buried hurriedly and without the usual wake on the order of health authorities.

Workers have already dug a row of additional graves at the lush green cemetery, ready and waiting for whoever comes next.

Perez D. reported from Escuintla and Stevenson reported from San Miguel Los Lotes. Associated Press photojournalist Moises Castillo contributed from San Miguel Los Lotes.

This story corrects attribution to William Chavez in paragraph 12.

South Koreans feel hope and doubt ahead of Trump-Kim summit

By JUNG-YOON KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The on-again, off-again meeting between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been an emotional roller coaster for South Koreans, who now await Tuesday's historic summit with both hope and doubt.

The hope is that improved relations between Washington and Pyongyang will ease tensions and dispel the threat of war, which has hung over the region for more than a half-century.

But having seen North Korea go back on its word in the past, such as when it broke a previous nuclear pact in 2002, South Koreans remain cautious about the sudden breeze of peace blowing across their divided peninsula.

"North Korea's willingness for talks seems clear now. The problem is that we are not so sure what they ultimately want," said graduate student Kim Jae-hak.

For him, the ideal outcome would be a formal declaration to the end the Korean War, followed by the complete denuclearization of North Korea. He warned, however, that high expectations can bring great disappointment, so Koreans should watch how things unfold.

South Korea's government has been careful to avoid rash comments or hasty interpretations of the see-saw developments in the lead-up to the summit in Singapore. Still, South Korean President Moon Jae-in has made negotiations with North Korea a centerpiece of his administration and has a lot riding on next week's events.

Moon took office in May 2017 with a pledge to seek improved relations and ultimately peace with North Korea. In April, he met the North's leader, Kim Jong Un, for talks at the Demilitarized Zone dividing their countries and the two set foot in one another's countries, if only for a moment.

Moon's patient, yet determined diplomacy has been key to setting up the Trump and Kim meeting. He presented Trump with the initial offer of a summit with Kim. After Trump accepted and then canceled, Moon worked to get it back on track by meeting with Kim a second time.

"It is critically important for President Moon Jae-in that the Trump-Moon summit goes well," said John Delury, associate professor of East Asian studies at Yonsei University in Seoul. Moon has "staked a lot of political capital in getting the U.S. and North Korea to move together in a positive way just like the two Koreas have done."

The Singapore meeting would only be the start of a long process, Delury stressed. Reducing the threat of conflict is the initial goal, he said, which would be followed by cultural, humanitarian and economic steps.

"A successful Singapore (meeting) gives more room for President Moon and Chairman Kim Jong Un to move forward in terms of inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation," he said.

For now, Moon seems to have public backing, with a Gallup Korea survey last week measuring his approval rating at 75 percent.

Office worker Kim Jung-eun said the atmosphere of dialogue was welcome after North Korea's provocative run of weapons tests in 2017 pushed animosity to new heights.

"I never truly thought we were headed for another war, but there was always a lingering fear in the back of my head," she said. "Thinking about where we were then, I am really thankful about the current atmosphere of peace. I hope that the process results in lasting peace in the Korean Peninsula."

The Trump-Kim summit has fueled hopes in South Korea that the two leaders may weigh a formal declaration to end the Korean War. The 1950-53 conflict ended with an armistice, but not a formal peace treaty.

Some, though, think that such talk should wait. The first priority should be getting North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons, said Im Yang-bin, a professor.

"If the issue of denuclearization becomes resolved through talks a declaration ending the war will naturally follow," Im said.

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

Facebook says privacy-setting bug affected as many as 14M

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY, AP Technology Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Facebook said a software bug led some users to post publicly by default regardless of their previous settings. The bug affected as many as 14 million users over several days in May.

The problem, which Facebook said it has fixed, is the latest privacy scandal for the world's largest social media company.

It said the bug automatically suggested that users make new posts public, even if they had previously restricted posts to "friends only" or another private setting. If users did not notice the new default suggestion, they unwittingly sent their post to a broader audience than they had intended.

Erin Egan, Facebook's chief privacy officer, said the bug did not affect past posts. Facebook is notifying users who were affected and posted publicly during the time the bug was active, advising them to review their posts.

The news follows recent furor over Facebook's sharing of user data with device makers, including China's Huawei. The company is also still recovering from the Cambridge Analytica scandal, in which a Trump-affiliated data-mining firm got access to the personal data of as many as 87 million Facebook users.

Jonathan Mayer, a professor of computer science and public affairs at Princeton University, said on Twitter that this latest privacy gaffe "looks like a viable Federal Trade Commission/state attorney general deception case." That's because the company had promised that the setting users set in their most recent privacy preferences would be maintained for future posts. In this case, this did not happen for several days.

Facebook's 2011 consent decree with the FTC calls for the company to get "express consent" from users before sharing their information beyond what they established in their privacy settings. Even if the bug was an accident on Facebook's part, Mayer said in an email that the FTC can bring enforcement action for privacy mistakes.

Facebook, which has 2.2 billion users, says the bug was active from May 18 until May 27. While the company says it stopped the error on May 22, it was not able to change all the posts back to their original privacy parameters until later.

The mistake happened when the company built a new way for people to share "featured items" on their profiles. These items, which include posts and photo albums, are automatically public. In the process of creating this feature, Facebook said it accidentally made the suggested audience for all new posts public.

When people post to Facebook, the service suggests a default distribution for their posts based on past privacy settings. If someone made all posts "friends only" in the past, it will set their next post to "friends only" as well. People can still manually change the privacy level of the posts — anywhere from "public" to "only me" — and this was the case while the bug was active as well.

This article has been corrected to clarify that the bug led some users to inadvertently post publicly regardless of their earlier settings.

Bryan Colangelo resigns as 76ers president

By **ROB MAADDI, AP Sports Writer**

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Bryan Colangelo may not have authored any of the tweets himself, but he seemed to provide private information that went into them.

And when his wife used those details to criticize his own players or rival colleagues, Colangelo and the Philadelphia 76ers knew he could no longer remain their top basketball executive.

Colangelo resigned Thursday as president of basketball operations for the 76ers in the wake of what an investigation found was "careless and in some instances reckless" sharing of sensitive team information.

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The independent review by a law firm did not determine that Colangelo operated or was even aware of Twitter accounts that anonymously trashed some of his own players and fellow executives, and defended him against criticism from fans and the sports media.

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP said evidence supported the conclusion that Colangelo's wife, Barbara Bottini, operated the four accounts it investigated, and she admitted to doing so — though also said she deleted contents of her iPhone with a factory reset of the device prior to surrendering it for forensic review, limiting the investigation.

"Our investigation revealed substantial evidence that Mr. Colangelo was the source of sensitive, non-public, club-related information contained in certain posts to the Twitter accounts," the report said. "We believe that Mr. Colangelo was careless and in some instances reckless in failing to properly safeguard sensitive, non-public, club-related information in communications with individuals outside the 76ers organization."

As for Colangelo, there was no evidence he knew of the accounts before a May 22 inquiry from the sports website The Ringer for a story it reported linking him to five Twitter accounts that took aim at Philadelphia players Joel Embiid and Markelle Fultz, former Sixers general manager Sam Hinkie, Toronto Raptors executive Masai Ujiri and former Sixers players Jahlil Okafor and Nerlens Noel.

Colangelo released a statement disputing that his conduct was reckless.

"At no point did I ever purposefully or directly share any sensitive, non-public, club-related information with her," he said.

"Her actions were a seriously misguided effort to publicly defend and support me, and while I recognize how inappropriate these actions were, she acted independently and without my knowledge or consent. Further, the content she shared was filled with inaccuracies and conjecture which in no way represent my own views or opinions."

Evidence found that Bottini established and operated four of the accounts — Eric jr, Still Balling, Enoughknowsources, and HonestAbe — but it seemed some of the information being posted, such as details of trade discussions or medical reports, was coming from Colangelo himself.

As such, the team said it had "become clear Bryan's relationship with our team and his ability to lead the 76ers moving forward has been compromised" and that it had accepted his resignation.

"We find the situation to be disappointing for our entire organization," 76ers managing partner Josh Harris said. "We are determined to continue the tremendous progress we have made over the last two seasons in our quest to win an NBA championship."

It's a stunning fall for Colangelo, a former two-time Executive of the Year who was expected to lead the improving 76ers into an important summer when they are hoping to pursue LeBron James or another All-Star player to add to a young core that includes Embiid and Ben Simmons.

Instead that role will be led for now by coach Brett Brown. The 76ers said he would oversee basketball operations on an interim basis and that the search for a new general manager would begin immediately.

"You never want to see someone's job end through an unfortunate circumstance like this. I certainly understand from the 76ers' standpoint that that bond has been broken," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. "It's not even necessary to assign fault, just the reality of where they all find themselves. I think Bryan recognizes like that as well, that these teams are like families and it can get to a point where it becomes dysfunctional and I think that's where they found themselves right now."

Colangelo, the son of longtime sports executive Jerry Colangelo, was hired as president of basketball operations in 2016 after Hinkie abruptly resigned. Hinkie was the architect behind what has been called "The Process" — the long-term tearing down and rebuilding of the Sixers.

Colangelo previously served as Raptors general manager, adding the 2007 Executive of the Year award to the one he won two years earlier in Phoenix. But he lost his job there after Toronto missed the playoffs for the fifth consecutive season, and Ujiri took over basketball operations.

"Over the last two years, I have worked hard to help build a foundation for what I hope will soon be many championship seasons for the 76ers," Colangelo said. "I am grateful to team owners Josh Harris and David Blitzer for the opportunity they gave me to be part of such a great organization. I am saddened to

have to leave under these circumstances.”

AP Basketball Writer Tim Reynolds in Cleveland contributed to this report.

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/tag/NBAbasketball>

Chicago officer fatally shoots armed black man running away

CHICAGO (AP) — A Chicago police officer fatally shot a 24-year-old black man who authorities said pulled a gun while running away, prompting questions from the man’s family about why the encounter turned deadly.

Sgt. Rocco Alioto said the “armed confrontation” Wednesday evening on the city’s South Side happened as officers conducted a narcotics investigation. He said the suspect fled on foot when officers approached. Alioto said in a statement that officers told the man to stop and he “produced a weapon,” so the officer shot him.

The man, later identified as Maurice Granton Jr., died of a gunshot wound to the back, the Cook County Medical Examiner’s office said Thursday. The Civilian Office of Police Accountability, which is investigating the shooting, said late Thursday that preliminary evidence shows there were three shots discharged from the officer’s firearm.

Police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said that officers involved in a narcotics investigation were watching the area Wednesday evening through one of a number of surveillance cameras mounted on poles throughout the city. They saw Granton taking part in what appeared to be an illegal drug transaction and dispatched officers to the scene.

Guglielmi posted on Twitter a photograph of what he said was Granton’s weapon found at the scene. He said that there is physical evidence that the gun had been fired. No officer was shot although a sergeant may have suffered a broken ankle during the confrontation.

The police department has not released the name or race of the officer involved in Wednesday night’s shooting. Alioto said the officer has been placed on 30-day administrative leave in line with department policy.

The shooting of Granton comes as police have faced intense scrutiny over allegations of excessive force involving black suspects. White officer Jason Van Dyke has been charged with first-degree murder in the 2014 shooting of black teenager Laquan McDonald. He has pleaded not guilty. Release of a video of the shooting of McDonald a year after it happened prompted outrage and calls for Mayor Rahm Emanuel to resign.

Chicago police released more details of the Wednesday shooting after Granton’s sister, Joanna Varnado, suggested that the officer had used excessive force.

“Since when does running validate somebody getting shot?” she asked. The Chicago Tribune reported that Granton’s family expressed doubts that the gun belonged to Granton, the father of two young daughters.

“I just want to know what the real story is,” Varnado said. “If it was misconduct, I want justice. My brother was 24 years old. He loved his girls. That’s all he lived for, was his kids.”

Yellowstone boss says Trump administration forcing him out

By **MATTHEW BROWN**, Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Yellowstone National Park’s superintendent said Thursday that he’s being forced out in an apparent “punitive action” following disagreements with the Trump administration over how many bison the park can sustain, a longstanding source of conflict between park officials and ranchers in neighboring Montana.

Superintendent Dan Wenk announced last week that he intended to retire March 30, 2019, after being offered a transfer he didn’t want. He said he was informed this week by National Park Service Acting Di-

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rector Paul "Dan" Smith that a new superintendent will be in place in August and that Wenk will be gone by then.

"I feel this is a punitive action, but I don't know for sure. They never gave me a reason why," Wenk said. The only dispute he's had with U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who oversees the park service, was whether the park has too many bison, Wenk said.

Ranchers in neighboring Montana have long sought reductions in Yellowstone's bison numbers because of worries that they could spread the disease brucellosis to cattle and compete with livestock for grazing space outside the park. Brucellosis causes animals to prematurely abort their young and can be transmitted through birthing material. It also can infect people.

Park biologists contend the population of more than 4,000 bison is sustainable. But Zinke and his staff have said the number is too high, Wenk said, and raised concerns that Yellowstone's scenic Lamar Valley is being damaged by overgrazing.

Zinke, a former Montana congressman, has paid close attention to projects back home, including proposing a new national monument near Glacier National Park even as he pushed reductions to monuments elsewhere in the U.S. That's stirred speculation he has future political ambitions in the state.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift declined to comment directly on Wenk's assertions or the issue of bison management. She referred The Associated Press to a previously issued statement saying President Donald Trump had ordered a reorganization of the federal government and that Zinke "has been absolutely out front on that issue."

Wenk said he had multiple conversations with Zinke and his staff about bison, most recently this week.

"We're not a livestock operation. We're managing a national park with natural systems," he said. "We do not believe the bison population level is too high or that any scientific studies would substantiate that."

The livestock industry wants Yellowstone's bison herds reduced to 3,000 animals, a population target specified in a 2000 agreement between Montana and the federal government. Montana Stockgrowers Association interim vice president Jay Bodner said Zinke "understands the issues around bison, not only in the park but how that impacts the livestock issue."

Wildlife advocates who want changes to the 2000 agreement expressed dismay at Wenk's ouster.

Thousands of park bison were shipped to slaughter during his tenure to keep the population in check. Wenk sought to curtail the killings with fledgling efforts to transfer surplus bison to American Indian tribes and expanding where the animals are tolerated in Montana.

"We'd hate to set the rug get pulled out from under that with a change in leadership," said Caroline Byrd with the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

Wenk has spent more than four decades with the National Park Service and seven years in Yellowstone. When he initially announced his retirement, he said he didn't view his proposed transfer to the Washington, D.C., area as political.

A recent investigation into 35 personnel reassignments proposed in the Interior Department under Zinke revealed that 16 senior employees viewed their moves as political retribution or punishment for their work on climate change, energy or conservation. However, the Interior Department inspector general was not able to determine if anything illegal occurred because agency leaders did not document their rationale for the moves.

Yellowstone straddles the borders of Montana, Wyoming and Idaho and was established in the 1872 as the first national park. Under Wenk, it has struggled with a sexual harassment scandal that echoed problems in other national parks and prompted personnel changes in some instances.

Members of Yellowstone's maintenance department were disciplined last year after an investigation found female employees faced sexual harassment and other problems.

Wenk said those problems never were brought up in the discussions about his possible transfer or retirement.

National Park Service Midwest Region director Cam Sholly will be installed as the new superintendent, Wenk said. Sholly is a Gulf War veteran and former member of the California Highway Patrol who previ-

ously served as chief ranger of Yosemite National Park.

Jonathan Jarvis, head of the park service under President Barack Obama, described Sholly as a strong leader and good choice to replace Wenk. But Jarvis said Zinke and his team would have an expectation of loyalty from Sholly that they could not get from someone such as Wenk, who already had the post when Trump took office.

Follow Matthew Brown on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MatthewBrownAP> .

Trump says Kim summit all about attitude, not preparation

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — Heading into his North Korea summit with characteristic bravado, President Donald Trump said Thursday that “attitude” is more important than preparation as he looks to negotiate an accord with Kim Jong Un to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

Preparing to depart Washington for next week’s meeting, Trump dangled before Kim visions of normalized relations with the United States, economic investment and even a White House visit. Characterizing the upcoming talks with the third-generation autocrat as a “friendly negotiation,” Trump said, “I really believe that Kim Jong Un wants to do something.”

Trump’s comments came as he looked to reassure allies that he won’t give away the store in pursuit of a legacy-defining deal with Kim, who has long sought to cast off his pariah status on the international stage. The North has faced crippling diplomatic and economic sanctions as it has advanced development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

“I don’t think I have to prepare very much,” Trump said. “It’s about attitude. It’s about willingness to get things done.”

Declaring the summit to be “much more than a photo-op,” he predicted “a terrific success or a modified success” when he meets with Kim next Tuesday in Singapore. He said the talks would start a process to bring about a resolution to the nuclear issue.

“I think it’s not a one-meeting deal,” he said. Asked how many days he’s willing to stay to talk with Kim, Trump said, “One, two three, depending on what happens.”

Still he predicted he’ll know very quickly whether Kim is serious about dealing with U.S. demands.

“They have to de-nuke,” Trump said. “If they don’t denuclearize, that will not be acceptable. And we cannot take sanctions off.”

Trump, who coined the term “maximum pressure” to describe U.S. sanctions against the North, said they would be an indicator for the success or failure of the talks.

“We don’t use the term anymore because we’re going into a friendly negotiation,” Trump said. “Perhaps after that negotiation, I will be using it again. You’ll know how well we do in the negotiation. If you hear me saying, ‘We’re going to use maximum pressure,’ you’ll know the negotiation did not do well, frankly.”

At another point, he said it was “absolutely” possible he and Kim could sign a declaration to end the Korean War. The 1950-53 conflict ended with an armistice but not a formal peace treaty.

Trump spent Thursday morning firing off a dozen unrelated tweets — on the Russia investigation and other subjects — before meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to talk about summit preparations and strategy.

“I think I’ve been prepared for this summit for a long time, as has the other side,” he said. “II think they’ve been preparing for a long time also. So this isn’t a question of preparation, it’s a question of whether or not people want it to happen.”

Administration officials indicated that Trump actually was putting in preparation time. National Security Council spokesman Garrett Marquis noted the president met with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton Thursday afternoon “to continue their strategic discussions” ahead of the summit.

Pompeo said he was confident the president would be fully prepared and dismissed reports of division

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inside Trump's foreign policy team over the decision to embrace the meeting with Kim.

In his previous role as CIA director, Pompeo told reporters Thursday, "there were few days that I left the Oval Office, after having briefed the president, that we didn't talk about North Korea."

Pompeo said Kim had "personally" given him assurances that he was willing to pursue denuclearization and said U.S. and North Korean negotiating teams had made unspecified progress toward bridging the gap over defining that term as part of a potential agreement. He would not say whether Trump would insist that the North put an end to its chemical, biological and ballistic missile programs.

Pompeo said Trump's approach is "fundamentally different" from prior administrations. "In the past, there'd been months and months of detailed negotiations and they got nowhere," he said. "This has already driven us to a place we'd not been able to achieve."

Since taking office, Trump has repeatedly accused his predecessors of failing to address the nuclear threat from a nation that launched its atomic program in the 1960s and began producing bomb fuel in the early 1990s. Past administrations have also used a combination of sanctions and diplomacy to seek denuclearization, but the results failed to endure.

Christopher Hill, the lead U.S. negotiator with North Korea during the George W. Bush administration, said a summit with the North had long been available to U.S. leaders.

"The fact was no U.S. president wanted to do this, and for good reason," he said. "It's a big coup for (the North Koreans), so the question is whether we can make them pay for it."

Before he sits down with Kim, Trump must first face wary U.S. allies who question his commitment to their own security and resent his quarrelling with them on sensitive trade matters. Trump on Friday departs for a 24-hour stop in Canada for a Group of Seven summit of leading industrial nations.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday that the international community supports Trump's efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, but "if he does succeed in his negotiations with North Korea, we want him also to remain credible on the nuclear situation in Iran." Trump pulled out of President Barack Obama's nuclear accord with Iran over the objections of European allies.

Abe, for his part, pushed Trump to raise with Kim the issue of Japanese abductees held in North Korea. The Japanese leader wanted to make sure that Trump's efforts to negotiate an agreement don't harm Japan's interests. Trump said Abe talked about the abductees "long and hard and passionately, and I will follow his wishes and we will be discussing that with North Korea absolutely."

U.S. allies in the region have expressed concern that Trump's push to denuclearize Korea could ignore the North's sophisticated ballistic missile and chemical weapons programs.

AP writers Matthew Pennington in Washington and Gillian Wong in Beijing contributed.

Military base calls immigration agents on pizza delivery man

By **CLAUDIA TORRENS**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — He went from delivering pizza to being detained by immigration officers.

An Ecuadorean restaurant worker making a delivery to an Army garrison in Brooklyn wound up being detained June 1 after a routine background check at the gate revealed there was a warrant for his arrest for immigration law violations, officials said.

Now, Pablo Villavicencio is in Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody pending removal from the country, ICE spokeswoman Rachael Yong Yow said.

Villavicencio's wife, Sandra Chica, said he went to deliver pizza to Fort Hamilton last week and was asked for identification by the guard who received him.

Villavicencio, who worked at Nonna Delia's pizzeria, an hour away by car in Queens, produced a city identification card, but the official told him he wanted to see a state driver's license, Chica said.

An Army spokeswoman told The New York Times that if visitors don't have a military identification card, they have to get a pass that requires a background check. The check on Villavicencio showed there was an active ICE warrant on file, at which point he was detained by military police, said Fort Hamilton spokes-

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woman Catherine SantoPietro.

"This is unhuman," Chica said during a phone interview. "He was not committing any crime. He is a father who is working for his daughters. Every day our daughters ask me why their dad is not coming home."

Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Thursday said he spoke with Chica to express his "deep frustration with the federal government's assault on New York's immigrant families."

Cuomo, a Democrat, also told her that a state-provided attorney has talked with Villavicencio, who is being held at a New Jersey facility.

"Sandra spoke to me as a mother of their two daughters — worried for her husband and her children," he said in a statement. "As a father of three daughters, I can't imagine the fear she and Pablo are feeling right now."

Cuomo offered Villavicencio free legal representation and services through the Liberty Defense Project, a state-led project to assist immigrants.

Chica, who was born in Colombia and moved to the U.S. a decade ago, said she is a U.S. citizen. She and Villavicencio have two daughters, who are 3 and 2 years old and were born in the U.S.

Chica and the two girls attended a news conference in front of the army base Wednesday along with Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and City Councilman Justin Brannan. Both politicians said they were seeking answers from Fort Hamilton.

"Is our city, state and nation any safer today because they took a pizza delivery guy off the streets?" asked Brannan.

Yong Yow, the ICE spokeswoman, said that in March 2010 Villavicencio was granted voluntary departure by an immigration judge but failed to depart by July, as ordered.

"As such, his voluntary departure order became a final order of removal," she said.

Chica said this was not the first time Villavicencio delivered pizza at the base.

"What prompted them to call ICE?" she asked. "They only care about statistics, one more deported man. They don't care about the impact this will have on us."

Immigrant family advocacy groups like Make the Road New York have called for an investigation. Steven Choi, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition, said in a press release "it's absolutely disgusting when the strongest military in the world punches down by going after pizza delivery men."

Undeterred by Trump, asylum-seekers line up at the border

By ELLIOT SPAGAT and NOMAAN MERCHANT, Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — Undaunted by President Donald Trump's tough talk on immigration, asylum-seekers are forming unusually long lines at the Mexican border, with parents and children sleeping on cardboard in the sweltering heat and waiting for days or even weeks to present themselves to U.S. inspectors.

Wait times of a few hours or longer are not uncommon at the border. But the backlogs that have developed over the past several weeks at crossings in California, Arizona and Texas — and people sleeping out in the open for days at a time — are rare.

Telma Ramirez made the trip from El Salvador to seek asylum in the U.S. She arrived at the border in Tijuana with her 5-year-old son and year-old daughter, only to find a crush of others ahead of her.

The 27-year-old mother kept checking in at the border crossing to see if civilian volunteers were close to calling their numbers, in a scene that resembled the host station at a crowded restaurant.

Finally, on the 20th day, Ramirez made it to the front of the line.

"You must come every day to see if it's your turn. If you don't come, you'll lose your place in line," Ramirez said.

The exact reasons for the bottleneck are unclear. But the U.S. has been seeing a surge in requests for asylum over the past few years.

A top Homeland Security Department official told lawmakers last month that new asylum filings tripled between 2014 and 2017 to nearly 142,000, the highest level in more than 20 years.

The official, Francis Cissna, director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, said the asylum backlog

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stood at 318,000 cases.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection said in a statement that any waits in Mexico are expected to be temporary. It said the number of people the agency can take depends on such factors as detention space, complexity of cases, translation requirements, medical needs and traffic at the crossing.

Some advocates insist the administration has enough resources to avoid the delays and is dragging its feet to discourage people from trying to come across.

The Trump administration has declared a new "zero-tolerance" policy of prosecuting every immigrant arrested for illegal entry, a practice that is separating parents from their children. Asylum-seekers who turn themselves in to border inspectors usually do not face such a fate.

At the Hidalgo, Texas, border crossing, parents and children sleep on cardboard on a bridge separating the two countries, waiting for U.S. authorities to signal their time has come, according to volunteers bringing them food and water.

Lawyers said asylum-seekers at the Nogales, Arizona, crossing are camping out for up for five days to make a claim.

Across from San Diego, more than 100 asylum-seekers gathered Monday in a large plaza at the Tijuana side of the nation's busiest border crossing, alongside pushcart vendors selling oatmeal, tamales, burritos and smoothies. Families whose numbers aren't called return to Tijuana migrant shelters to pass the time.

Volunteer Carlos Salio told them the wait is about three weeks.

Salio consulted his tattered notebook of people who left their names with him, calling them out when their turn came.

When U.S. authorities said 50 would be allowed to claim asylum that day, Salio encouraged people to go back to their shelters.

"Everyone knows that when your number is close, you better be here," he told the crowd, many of them women with young children.

Separately, in another indication that Trump's hardline actions and rhetoric have had limited effect, the administration said Wednesday that border arrests topped 50,000 for a third straight month in May.

That is roughly three times what they were a year earlier and higher than the levels seen during much of the Obama administration.

It is not uncommon for asylum-seekers to have to wait. A caravan of Central Americans who provoked Trump's anger earlier this spring waited nearly a week.

The recent waits have not reached levels seen in 2016, when thousands of Haitians overwhelmed border inspectors in San Diego and had to bide their time for up to five weeks.

Under federal law and international treaties, people can obtain asylum in the U.S. if they have a well-grounded fear of persecution back home. Trump administration officials and their allies have charged that the system is rife with fraud and groundless claims and have demanded stricter standards.

Senior White House aide Stephen Miller said last month that the integrity of the immigration system is "completely shattered" and legitimate asylum cases have become "a needle in a haystack."

About 8 of every 10 asylum-seekers pass an initial screening and are then either held in an immigration detention center or released on bond into the U.S. while their cases wind through immigration courts, which can take years. Many asylum claims are eventually denied.

In Texas' Rio Grande Valley, people have been seen waiting on the bridge at Hidalgo for at least two weeks, according to witnesses and news reports.

One volunteer, Esperanza Chandler, said Friday that families have been told by U.S. authorities that there's no room to process them.

"Where they are, the sun hits them all day long," Chandler said. "They're under a little bit of covering, but the concrete and that whole area is very, very hot."

Volunteers brought umbrellas to provide some shade.

To keep order in Tijuana, activists created a system in which asylum-seekers give their names and are then issued numbers, ensuring that people who arrive after them won't jump ahead.

Mexicans dominated the list of asylum-seekers waiting to cross in San Diego. There were also large

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numbers of Central Americans.

Blanca Estela Garcia, 31, said she fled the violent Mexican state of Michoacan because a neighbor had been kidnapped and she received a death threat. She didn't know where she would go with her husband and children ages 14, 8 and 1 if they were allowed into the U.S.

"The important thing is not to go back," she said.

After spending her first night in Tijuana on the concrete outside the border crossing, she was given a number and planned to look for shelter for the next few weeks.

Merchant reported from Houston.

New Mars discoveries advance case for possible life

By MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — New Mars discoveries are advancing the case for possible life on the red planet, past or even present.

Scientists reported Thursday that NASA's Curiosity rover has found potential building blocks of life in an ancient Martian lakebed. Hints have been found before, but this is the best evidence yet.

The organic molecules preserved in 3.5 billion-year-old bedrock in Gale Crater — believed to once contain a shallow lake the size of Florida's Lake Okeechobee — suggest conditions back then may have been conducive to life. That leaves open the possibility that microorganisms once populated our planetary neighbor and might still exist there.

"The chances of being able to find signs of ancient life with future missions, if life ever was present, just went up," said Curiosity's project scientist, Ashwin Vasavada of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Curiosity also has confirmed sharp seasonal increases of methane in the Martian atmosphere. Researchers said they can't rule out a biological source. Most of Earth's atmospheric methane comes from animal and plant life, and the environment itself.

The two studies appear in the journal *Science*. In a companion article, an outside expert describes the findings as "breakthroughs in astrobiology."

"The question of whether life might have originated or existed on Mars is a lot more opportune now that we know that organic molecules were present on its surface at the time," wrote Utrecht University astrobiologist Inge Loes ten Kate of the Netherlands.

Kirsten Siebach, a Rice University geologist who also was not involved in the studies, is equally excited. She said the discoveries break down some of the strongest arguments put forward by life-on-Mars skeptics, herself included.

"The big takeaway is that we can find evidence. We can find organic matter preserved in mudstones that are more than 3 billion years old," Siebach said. "And we see releases of gas today that could be related to life in the subsurface or at the very least are probably related to warm water or environments where Earth life would be happy living."

The methane observations provide "one of the most compelling" cases for present-day life, she said.

Scientists agree more powerful spacecraft — and, ideally, rocks returned to Earth from Mars — are needed to prove whether tiny organisms like bacteria ever existed on the red planet.

Curiosity's methane measurements occurred over 4 ½ Earth years, covering parts of three Martian years. Seasonal peaks were detected in late summer in the northern hemisphere and late winter in the southern hemisphere.

JPL's Christopher Webster, lead author on the study, said it's the first time Martian methane has shown a repeated pattern. The magnitude of these seasonal peaks — by a factor of three — was far more than scientists expected. "We were just blown away," he said. "It's tripling ... that's a huge, huge difference."

Webster theorizes the methane created either now or long ago is seeping from deep underground reservoirs up through cracks and fissures in the crust. Once at the surface, the methane sticks to dirt and

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rocks, with more released into the atmosphere when it's hotter.

"We have no proof that the methane is formed biologically, but we cannot rule it out, even with this new data set," Webster said.

Scientists have been seeking organic molecules on Mars ever since the 1976 Viking landers. The twin Vikings came up pretty much empty.

Arriving at Mars in 2012 with a drill and its own onboard labs, Curiosity confirmed the presence of organics in rocks in 2013, but the molecules weren't exactly what scientists expected. So they looked elsewhere. The key samples in the latest findings came from a spot 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) away.

As with methane, there could well be non-biological explanations for the presence of carbon-containing molecules on Mars, such as geologic processes or impacts by asteroids, comet, meteors and interplanetary dust.

Jennifer Eigenbrode, an astrobiologist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland who led the organics study, said she's intrigued by the possibility that life might have existed and adapted on Mars.

"I'm equally as fascinated by the idea that life never got started on Mars in the first place. That's a harder question to address scientifically, but I think that we need to give the search for life on Mars due diligence. We need to go to places that we think are the most likely places to find it."

The Associated Press Health & Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Afghan president announces holiday cease-fire with Taliban

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday announced a weeklong cease-fire with the Taliban to coincide with the holiday marking the end of Ramadan next week.

A statement sent from the president's office on Thursday says the cease-fire will begin on 27 Ramadan, or June 12 on the Western calendar, and last through the Eid al-Fitr holiday, until around June 19. It says the cease-fire does not include al-Qaida or the Islamic State group.

There was no immediate comment from the Taliban, who have steadily expanded their presence in recent years, capturing a number of districts across the country and carrying out near-daily attacks, mainly targeting Afghan security forces.

Gen. Mohammad Sharif Yaftali, the army chief of staff, told reporters that Afghan forces would be on standby throughout the cease-fire and respond to any attacks. He also said the army would continue to battle "international terrorists," apparently referring to al-Qaida and IS.

Ghani's statement referred to a gathering of Afghanistan's top clerics on Monday in which they issued a decree against suicide attacks and called for peace talks. A suicide bomber struck just outside the gathering as it was dispersing, killing at least seven people and wounding 20 in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

The Taliban had denounced the gathering, insisting that its jihad, or holy war, against foreign invaders was justified. It instead urged the clerics to side with it against the "occupation."

The U.S. and NATO formally concluded their combat mission in Afghanistan in 2014, but the U.S. still has thousands of forces based there in a support and counterterrorism role. The Trump administration has sent additional troops to try to change the course of America's longest war.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement that the U.S. welcomed the cease-fire and that it indicates the Afghan government's commitment to try to end the conflict.

"The United States and our international partners look to the Taliban to honor the ceasefire and demonstrate their respect for the people of Afghanistan who have long called for a reprieve to the Taliban's campaign of violence," he said.

In a statement, the U.S. forces said that they too would observe the ceasefire with the Taliban, but that it would not affect their counterterrorism efforts against terrorist groups like Islamic State and al-Qaida.

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"We will adhere to the wishes of Afghanistan for the country to enjoy a peaceful end to the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, and support the search for an end to the conflict," said Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan and head of the NATO-led Resolute Support training mission.

"President Ghani's peace offer was universally supported by the international community and the cease-fire represents another bold initiative for peace and is for the benefit of all Afghans," Nicholson added.

The U.S. has said it is open to an Afghan-led peace process. Nicholson said last month that some elements of the Taliban are showing interest in peace talks.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the announcement and urged the Taliban to reciprocate the temporary cease-fire and accept Ghani's peace offer "to commence direct talks to bring an end to the long suffering of the Afghan people," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

At NATO headquarters in Brussels, Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed the move and called on the Taliban to lay down their arms.

"The Taliban will not win on the battlefield," he told reporters at a meeting of defense ministers. "The only way for them to achieve a solution is to sit down at the negotiating table."

NATO has led international security efforts in Afghanistan since 2003. It wound down its combat mission in 2014 but its Resolute Support mission comprises almost 16,000 troops from around 40 countries. The conflict has been at a stalemate for several years, and NATO's best chances of leaving lie in the Taliban agreeing to peace talks and eventually joining the government.

In the meantime, the insurgents have continued to carry out attacks. On Wednesday, the Taliban attacked a police post in the eastern Ghazni province, killing three police and wounding five others, according to Ramadan Ali Mosseny, the province's deputy police chief.

In the eastern Khost province, a drive-by shooting at a mosque on Wednesday killed four people and wounded 15, said Talib Mangal, spokesman for the provincial governor. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the shooting, and it was not clear who the target was.

Woman thanks Trump for 'mercy' in commuting her sentence

By **ADRIAN SAINZ** and **JILL COLVIN**, Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A woman whose life sentence was commuted by President Donald Trump thanked him on Thursday for "having mercy" and said reality TV star Kim Kardashian West saved her life.

After flexing his clemency powers once again, Trump tweeted: "Good luck to Alice Johnson. Have a wonderful life!"

And "BEST NEWS EVER!!!!" was the exuberant Twitter response from Kardashian West, who visited the White House last week to press the case.

Johnson, 63, spent more than two decades serving life without parole. She was released hours after the White House announced that Trump had commuted her sentence, running to greet her family with her arms opened wide for a group hug outside the federal prison in Aliceville, Alabama.

On Thursday morning, she saw her first sunrise in years at home in Memphis, Tennessee.

"I'd like to say, President Trump, thank you for having mercy upon me. Thank you for taking the time to look at my case, and feel like I deserve a second chance in life. I promise I will not let you down," Johnson said in an Associated Press interview.

As for Kardashian West, Johnson said, "Kim, I love you. Thank you. You have literally saved my life. I'll never forget what you have done, not only for me, but for my family."

Johnson has a job lined up as an administrative assistant in a dental office, but she said she'll keep pushing for sentencing reform for nonviolent first-time offenders who don't pose a threat to their communities.

Unlike a pardon, the commutation will not erase Johnson's conviction, only end her sentence.

Trump's decision, his latest inspired by a celebrity champion, comes amid a flurry of recent pardons he's issued. He says he's considering a long list of other clemency actions, including former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who is serving 14 years in prison for corruption, and celebrity homemaker Martha Stewart, who served about five months on charges connected to an insider trading case.

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Working outside the pardon process usually overseen by the Justice Department, Trump has appeared to favor cases championed by friends, celebrities or conservative media, or involve people he sees as rivals. Trump also has been drawn to cases in which he believes prosecutors may have been motivated by politics — situations that may remind him of his own predicament at the center of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian election meddling.

Trump recently pardoned conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza, who was convicted of a campaign finance violation. And he granted a posthumous pardon to boxing's first black heavyweight champion, a case championed by actor Sylvester Stallone. The federal prosecutor who oversaw Stewart's case in New York was James Comey, one of Trump's principal antagonists, and the man he fired as FBI director last year.

Some have seen the pardons as sending a message to former campaign aides now ensnared in the Mueller probe or other legal inquiries, including Trump's longtime lawyer and legal "fixer" Michael Cohen, whose finances are under federal investigation.

Indeed, the wife of former Trump campaign aide George Papadopoulos, who pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his Russia contacts, appeared on Fox News this week to lobby her husband's case.

"I trust and hope and ask to President Trump to pardon him," Simona Mangiante Papadopoulos told Trump's favorite network.

Trump is looking at cases where he can bring "relief to folks who he feels have been 'treated unfairly,' a term the president uses frequently to describe many different situations," top Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway said Wednesday.

Shawn Holley, Kardashian West's attorney who accompanied her to the White House, said the reality star broke the good news Wednesday in "the most wonderful, emotional and amazing phone call with Alice, Kim and Alice's lawyers."

"Once Alice's family joined the call, the tears never stopped flowing," Holley said in a statement.

Kardashian West, on Twitter, said "Telling her for the first time and hearing her screams while crying together is a moment I will never forget."

A White House statement said Johnson "has accepted responsibility for her past behavior" and had been a model prisoner, working hard to rehabilitate herself and serve as a mentor to fellow inmates.

Johnson was convicted in 1996 on eight criminal counts related to a Memphis-based cocaine trafficking operation involving more than a dozen people. The 1994 indictment describes dozens of deliveries and drug transactions, many involving Johnson.

Federal courts, including the Supreme Court, rejected her appeals. Prosecutors opposed a pending reduction in her sentence, citing federal guidelines based on the large quantity of drugs involved.

Colvin reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Anthony McCartney in Los Angeles, Darlene Superville in Washington and Jonathan Lemire in New York contributed to this report.

Scientists reap data from Hawaii's rumbling Kilauea volcano

By SOPHIA YAN and MALCOLM RITTER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Hawaii's Kilauea volcano may be disrupting life in paradise with its bursts of ash and bright-orange lava, but it also has scientists wide-eyed, eager to advance what's known about volcanoes.

The good news is: Volcanoes reveal secrets when they're rumbling, which means Kilauea is producing a bonanza of information.

While scientists monitored Big Island lava flows in 1955 and 1960, equipment then was far less sophisticated. Given new technology, they can now gather and study an unprecedented volume of data.

"Geophysical monitoring techniques that have come online in the last 20 years have now been deployed at Kilauea," said George Bergantz, professor of earth and space sciences at the University of Washington. "We have this remarkable opportunity ... to see many more scales of behavior both preceding and during this current volcanic crisis."

Starting May 3, Kilauea has fountained lava and flung ash and rocks from its summit, destroying hundreds

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of homes, closing key highways and prompting health warnings. Kilauea is one of five volcanos that form the Big Island, and is a "shield" volcano — built up over time as lava flows layer on top of layer.

Technically speaking, it has been continuously erupting since 1983. But the recent combination of earthquakes shaking the ground, steam-driven explosions at the top, and lava creeping into a new area some 12 miles (20 kilometers) from the summit represents a departure from its behavior over the past 35 years, said Erik Klemetti, a volcanologist at Ohio's Denison University.

What's happening now is a bit more like the Kilauea of nearly a century ago. In 1924, steam explosions at the summit lasted for more than two weeks.

Scientists are looking into what caused the change and whether this shift in the volcano's magma plumbing system will become the new normal.

Radar allows researchers to measure the height of ash plumes shooting from the summit, even when they occur at night. Plume heights are an effect of how much heat energy is released and the explosion's intensity.

"It's one of the key factors that dictates how far ash will be dispersed," said Charles Mandeville, volcano hazards coordinator for the U.S. Geological Survey. The other is where the winds are blowing. Such knowledge is useful in alerting the public.

Scientists can also monitor where gas is emerging, as well as determine its composition and volume. They can even measure the subtle rise and fall of the ground over a broad area and time — down to seconds — which suggests when and where magma is pooling underground.

Discovering variations or correlations between past and present activity provides more clues on what's happening. It also helps scientists understand past lava flows, anticipate what could occur next, and pinpoint signs or patterns before an eruption.

"You're sort of zeroing in on finer and finer levels of detail into how the volcano works," said Michael Poland, a U.S. Geological Survey volcanologist. "The more stuff you put on the volcano to make measurements, the more you realize there's stuff going on that you never knew."

Better technology has also meant U.S. Geological Survey scientists have been able to accurately forecast Kilauea's behavior as it sputters over Puna, the island's most affected district.

"They've been spot on," said Janine Krippner, a volcanologist at Concord University in West Virginia. "It's incredible — they're looking at things happening below the surface, using the monitoring equipment that they have, the knowledge they have of past eruptions, and have been able to get people to not be in a deadly area."

This is unfortunately not always possible, as nature can be unpredictable. On June 3, Guatemala's Volcano of Fire sent a mixture of hot gas, rock and other material racing down its slopes and inundating the valley, killing nearly 100 people.

Krippner compared the Guatemala eruption to opening a can of soda after shaking it vigorously. Volcanic gas underneath created bubbles that expanded, increasing pressure that blew magma apart when it reached the surface, spewing cooled lava rocks ranging from the size of sand grains to boulders.

Explosions can be bigger, or occur differently, than expected, and that presents a learning opportunity for scientists, who work on computer models to map out areas that may be at higher risk in the future. "Looking at the footage afterward, we can start to tease out how these things actually work," Krippner said, as it's often too dangerous for experts to physically get close to an eruption.

Volcanic eruptions happen fairly regularly — as many as 60 occur worldwide each year — but many are in isolated areas, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

After Kilauea's 1924 summit explosions, the volcano entered a decade of piddly rumblings, followed by 18 years of silence. Experts say Kilauea may be heading toward years — even decades — of little or no activity.

For now, volcanologists feel a "tremendous amount of responsibility" to learn as much as possible from the volcano, Poland said. Its latest activity has destroyed about 400 homes — including about 280 over the last several days — and displaced thousands of residents. Lava from Kilauea has also downed power

lines and knifed across highways.

"It's coming at a great cost in terms of impact on the lives and livelihoods of so many people — we owe it to the people of Puna to make sure that we learn the lessons the volcano is teaching us," Poland said.

Ritter reported from New York.

Follow AP's complete coverage of the Hawaii volcano here: <https://apnews.com/tag/Kilauea>

Commerce Secretary: US reaches deal with China's ZTE

By PAUL WISEMAN, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and China have reached a deal that allows the Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE Corp. to stay in business in exchange for paying an additional \$1 billion in fines and agreeing to let U.S. regulators monitor its operations.

The fine announced Thursday comes on top of \$892 million ZTE has already paid for breaking U.S. sanctions by selling equipment to North Korea and Iran. The Commerce Department said that ZTE must also put \$400 million in escrow — a sum that it would forfeit if it violated Thursday's agreement.

In addition, a compliance team chosen by the United States will be embedded at ZTE and the Chinese company must change its board and executive team.

President Donald Trump has drawn fire from Congress for intervening in the case to rescue a Chinese company that had violated U.S. sanctions against two rogue nations that have been pursuing nuclear weapons programs.

"ZTE is essentially on probation," said Amanda DeBusk, chair of the international trade and government regulation practice at Dechert LLP and a former Commerce official. "It's unprecedented to have U.S. agents as monitors ... It's certainly a good precedent for this situation. ZTE is a repeat offender."

In April, the Commerce Department barred ZTE from importing American components for seven years, having concluded that it deceived U.S. regulators after it settled charges last year of sanctions violations: Instead of disciplining all employees involved, Commerce said, ZTE had paid some of them full bonuses and then lied about it.

The decision amounted to a death sentence to ZTE, which relies on U.S. parts and which announced that it was halting operations. The ban also hurt American companies that supply ZTE.

Trump barged into the ZTE case last month by tweeting that he was working with President Xi Jinping to put ZTE "back in business, fast" and save tens of thousands of Chinese jobs. He later tweeted that the ZTE talks were "part of a larger trade deal" being negotiated with China.

Trump has drawn criticism from members of Congress for going easy on the Chinese company. Democratic Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York immediately responded to Thursday's announcement: "Despite his tough talk, this deal with ZTE proves the president just shoots blanks."

Still, the resolution of the ZTE case may clear the way for the United States to make progress in its trade talks with China. The two countries have threatened to impose tariffs on up to \$200 billion worth of each other's products in a dispute over China's tactics to supplant U.S. technological supremacy, including demands that U.S. companies hand over trade secrets in exchange for access to the Chinese market.

Thursday's agreement was "a prerequisite for making broader progress," DeBusk said. "The ZTE case was a thorn in the side for China ... For the U.S. to shut down one of China's largest companies is a very dramatic type of move. It certainly got their attention."

US screens more staff in China over mystery health issues

By KELVIN CHAN and DAKE KANG, Associated Press

GUANGZHOU, China (AP) — A U.S. medical team was screening more Americans who work at the consulate in southern China as the State Department confirmed evacuating a number of government employees who experienced unexplained health issues like those that have hurt U.S. personnel in Cuba and China.

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The evacuations of workers in Guangzhou followed medical testing that revealed they might have been affected. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said "a number of individuals" had been brought to the U.S. but didn't say how many were affected or evacuated. A previous case in Guangzhou, disclosed last month, prompted the tests.

Nauert also said that remaining U.S. government personnel and their families in Guangzhou would also be able to request testing if they "noted concerning symptoms or wanted baseline screening."

The incidents have raised fears the unexplained issues that started in Cuba in 2016 have expanded. The U.S. government has deemed those incidents "specific attacks" on American workers but hasn't publicly identified a cause or culprit. Most of the incidents were accompanied by bizarre, unexplained sounds that initially led U.S. investigators to suspect a sonic attack.

Symptoms have included dizziness, headaches and an inability to concentrate. The American government worker who previously was removed from China reported "subtle and vague, but abnormal, sensations of sound and pressure," the Guangzhou consulate reported last month.

Security guards outside the Guangzhou consulate on Thursday told reporters to leave the area and not attempt to talk to consulate staff.

Asked about the latest incidents, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the U.S. had not formally raised the matter with Beijing.

"If the U.S. makes formal contact with us, China will continue necessary investigations in an earnest and responsible manner and maintain close communication and cooperation with the U.S.," Hua said at a regularly scheduled news conference.

China earlier said it had looked into the case announced last month but came up with no clues about the cause of the symptoms.

The New York Times identified the latest American employee evacuated as Mark A. Lenzi, a security engineering officer at the consulate who left Wednesday night with his wife and two children.

Lenzi told the Times he resided in the same apartment tower as the officer evacuated in April and suffered in recent months from what he called "neurological symptoms."

Lenzi's apartment was in one of several high-rise buildings in The Canton Place featuring restaurants and galleries spaced around a central plaza. Another diplomat who reported symptoms was at a different upscale building near the consulate, the paper said.

A U.S. official, who wasn't authorized to discuss the situation publicly and requested anonymity, said the evacuated American government workers were being brought from China for testing to the University of Pennsylvania. That's where doctors have been treating and studying patients previously evacuated from the U.S. Embassy in Havana.

The preliminary findings of the medical reports on the 24 personnel affected in Cuba showed they had sensory and memory problems similar to the brain dysfunction seen with concussions.

The Penn team said the patients from Cuba experienced persistent disability though rehabilitation therapy customized for them seemed to help.

Canada in April also ordered families of diplomatic staff in Cuba to return home after mysterious health symptoms were detected in 10 Canadians stationed on the island. Canada said the 10 continued to show unexplained brain symptoms and that "medical information raised concerns for a new type of a possible acquired brain injury."

In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last month about the first case in China, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said China had "said all the right things and have demonstrated their willingness to help us identify the vector which led to this medical incident."

The China incidents affect one of the most important of the seven U.S. diplomatic outposts in the country. The Guangzhou consulate opened months after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Washington in 1979 and moved to its new purpose-built facility in 2013.

It serves four southern provinces with a combined population of more than 204 million and processes more than 1 million visa applications of all types annually. It is also the only U.S. diplomatic installation in

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China authorized to process immigrant visas and handle adoptions.

People working in The Canton Place complex, a few kilometers (miles) from the consulate, said they were just hearing about the incidents, reflecting a lack of coverage in China's entirely state-controlled media.

Aled Williams, a British teacher at a kindergarten said Thursday that the reports sounded "sci-fi-ish."

"Hard to get my head around how it works," he said. "Better watch myself."

Linda Chen, who runs a coffee shop in the area, said she was mystified as to why only certain people seemed to have been affected in an area known for its comfort and safety.

"For me I feel it's very strange. But I don't feel that there's something to be very afraid of because it's probably a very special case," Chen said.

Associated Press writer Josh Lederman in Washington, D.C. contributed to this report.

E-cigarette sellers turn to scholarships to promote brands

By COLLIN BINKLEY, Associated Press

A growing number of e-cigarette and vaporizer sellers have started offering college scholarships as a way to get their brands listed on university websites and to get students to write essays about the potential benefits of vaping.

The tactic is taken from a method that was once believed to improve a site's ranking in search results, and it has successfully landed vaping brands on the sites of some of the nation's best-known universities, including Harvard. It also has drawn criticism that the scholarships are a thinly disguised ploy to attract young customers.

The scholarships, ranging from \$250 to \$5,000, mostly involve essay contests that ask students to write about the dangers of tobacco or whether vaping could be a safer alternative. At least one company asks applicants to write about different types of e-cigarettes and which one they recommend. Some seek papers in support of medical marijuana.

Over the last two years, the grants have been posted online by e-cigarette retailers and review websites such as Slick Vapes, SmokeTastic and DaVinci Vaporizer.

Robert Pagano, owner of the Las Vegas-based review site Vapor Vanity, said he was offering new scholarships of up to \$1,500 this year. He acknowledged it's partly a marketing tool, but he also says many in the industry are former smokers and want to help teens avoid tobacco.

"It's a little bit of being genuine, a little bit of self-interest," said Pagano, whose company does not sell vaping products. "This is probably the best way to get people to actually focus on the issues that we're trying to write about."

Days after Pagano was interviewed by The Associated Press, the scholarships were removed from his site without explanation. He did not return calls or emails seeking further comment.

The grants have emerged as high schools struggle to rein in booming teen use of the devices, sometimes threatening students with suspensions or installing alarms that can detect the devices' discreet vapor. Federal agencies have attempted to crack down on underage sales and are investigating marketing efforts by the brand Juul, which has become especially popular among teens.

Although some of the scholarships are limited to students 18 and older — the nation's legal age to buy vaping products — many are open to younger teens or have no age limit.

Most companies behind the essay contests did not return calls or declined interview requests. But the American Vaping Association trade group defended the practice, saying it allows companies to boost their brand while offering college students a helping hand.

The head of the association, Gregory Conley, compared it with scholarship programs that have long been offered by alcohol makers like Anheuser-Busch, which distributes tens of thousands of dollars each year for minority students.

Some anti-tobacco groups were unaware of the scholarships until asked about them by the AP, but they sharply criticized efforts to get teens writing in favor of vaping.

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"They're trying to use youth as their marketing surrogates," said Gregg Haifley, director of federal relations for the American Cancer Society's lobbying arm in Washington. "They can gussy it up any way they want, try to put lipstick on that pig, but this is about marketing."

Opponents said the scholarships could test federal rules forbidding tobacco and e-cigarette companies from marketing to minors. The Food and Drug Administration, which oversees regulation of e-cigarettes, declined to comment on the question and referred a reporter to the Federal Trade Commission. An FTC spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

Most medical experts agree that vaping is safer than smoking traditional cigarettes, but little is known about its long-term health effects.

Manufacturers often say vaping products are meant only for adults trying to quit smoking, and some of the essay contests note that they aren't meant to promote vaping. But some anti-tobacco groups say there's no other reason the companies would reach out to young people.

"Most of these kids are not smokers," said Robin Koval, president of the Truth Initiative, a Washington-based nonprofit that opposes the tobacco and vaping industries. "What they're saying and what they're doing don't seem to agree here. But that's not surprising."

It's unclear how many — if any — of the scholarships have been awarded. Several websites promise to publicize winners and their essays, but it doesn't appear any have done so. None of the 15 companies contacted by the AP would disclose winners, and only one agreed to an interview.

Marketing experts say the vaping industry isn't the first to use college scholarships as a form of cheap advertising. The internet is teeming with similar offers from websites that sell weight-loss pills and protein powders, as well as payday lenders and companies that pay cash for gold.

The tactic was created years ago, at a time when websites thought getting their link on a college or government site would boost their rankings in Google search results. Some created scholarships purely to get their links on university financial-aid pages.

"This is almost a backdoor way to get your name on a university website, and from the point of view of the student, it would look like the university is supporting this effort," said Ron Berman, who teaches marketing at the University of Pennsylvania's business school.

The tactic worked. Vaping scholarships have ended up on financial-aid directories compiled by Harvard, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Pittsburgh and others, including institutions that have taken a stance against e-cigarettes.

Harvard and California State University at Long Beach immediately removed the listings after being asked about them by the AP, saying they had been posted inadvertently.

"We're not interested in being a platform for tobacco or vaping," said Jeff Bliss, a spokesman for CSU Long Beach.

Some marketing firms advise against the strategy, calling it outdated. Google has updated its algorithm to defeat similar tactics, and it penalizes sites that try to manipulate search rankings.

Wil Reynolds, founder of the Philadelphia-based marketing agency Seer Interactive, said his company employed the strategy years ago for clients connected to the education world, but he abandoned it after other industries started exploiting it.

"It is a shady practice when you really can't back it up with a legitimate reason," he said.

Collin Binkley can be reached on Twitter at www.twitter.com/cbinkley .

Asian shares fall ahead of G7 summit, central bank meetings

By YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were moderately lower Friday, as investors awaited the Group of Seven leaders' meeting, continuing into the weekend, and for European Central Bank and Federal Reserve meetings next week.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 shed less than 0.1 percent to 22,813.58 in early trading. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 inched down less than 0.1 percent to 6,056.00. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.4 per-

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cent to 2,460.14. Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 0.9 percent at 31,229.01, while the Shanghai Composite index shed nearly 0.8 percent to 3,085.80.

WALL STREET: The S&P 500 index lost 1.98 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,770.37. The Dow Jones industrial average picked up 95.02 points, or 0.4 percent, to 25,241.41, helped by big gains for McDonald's and Chevron. The Nasdaq composite slumped 54.17 points, or 0.7 percent, to 7,635.07. The Russell 2000 index of small-company stocks slid 8.17 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,667.77. Both of those indexes set all-time highs the last few days.

GROUP OF SEVEN: Leaders from the Group of Seven wealthy industrialized nations are meeting in Canada, where President Donald Trump's new tariffs are expected to be a major focus. The White House is expecting a chilly reception from Canada and western European countries.

RATE WATCH: The Federal Reserve is expected to raise interest rates. That would be the second increase in rates this year, and the Fed has said it expects to raise rates three times in 2018.

THE QUOTE: "There's a high level of circumspection associated with this weekend's G7 meeting as President Trump prepares to enter the G7 lion's den," says Stephen Innes, head of trading at Oanda. "Then there's that small matter of the European Central Bank and Federal Reserve Board meetings, which could be very crucial for the markets next tack."

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude rose 7 cents to \$66.02 a barrel. It rose 1.9 percent to \$65.95 per barrel in New York Thursday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 7 cents to \$77.25 per barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 109.71 yen from 109.97 yen late Thursday in Asia. The euro slipped to \$1.1804 from \$1.1817.

Follow Yuri Kageyama on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

Her work can be found at <https://www.apnews.com/search/yuri%20kageyama>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, June 8, the 159th day of 2018. There are 206 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 8, 1968, authorities announced the capture in London of James Earl Ray, the suspected assassin of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

On this date:

In A.D. 632, the prophet Muhammad died in Medina.

In 1042, Edward the Confessor became King of England, beginning a reign of 23 1/2 years.

In 1845, Andrew Jackson, seventh president of the United States, died in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 1917, during World War I, Maj. Gen. John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, arrived in Liverpool, England, while en route to France; also, the 1st Expeditionary Division (later the 1st Infantry Division) was organized at Fort Jay in New York.

In 1920, the Republican National Convention opened in Chicago; its delegates ended up nominating Warren G. Harding for president.

In 1939, Britain's King George VI and his consort, Queen Elizabeth, arrived in Washington, D.C., where they were received at the White House by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1948, the "Texaco Star Theater" made its debut on NBC-TV with Milton Berle guest-hosting the first program. (Berle was later named the show's permanent host.)

In 1953, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that restaurants in the District of Columbia could not refuse to serve blacks. Eight tornadoes struck Michigan's Lower Peninsula, killing 126 people.

In 1967, during the six-day Middle East war, 34 American servicemen were killed when Israel attacked the USS Liberty, a Navy intelligence-gathering ship in the Mediterranean Sea. (Israel later said the Liberty had been mistaken for an Egyptian vessel.)

In 1978, a jury in Clark County, Nevada, ruled the so-called "Mormon will," purportedly written by the

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late billionaire Howard Hughes, was a forgery.

In 1987, Fawn Hall began testifying at the Iran-Contra hearings, describing how, as secretary to National Security aide Oliver L. North, she had helped shred some documents and spirit away others.

In 1998, the National Rifle Association elected actor Charlton Heston to be its president.

Ten years ago: A suicide truck bomber struck a U.S. patrol base Sunday in northern Iraq, killing one U.S. soldier. A man went on a knifing rampage in Tokyo, killing seven people. Rafael Nadal won his fourth consecutive French Open title in a rout, 6-1, 6-3, 6-0, again spoiling Roger Federer's bid to complete a career Grand Slam. Yani Tseng of Taiwan became the first rookie in 10 years to win a major, beating Maria Hjorth on the fourth hole of a playoff with a 5-foot birdie on the 18th hole to win the LPGA Championship in Maryland.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama and Chinese leader Xi Jinping (shee jihn-peeng) concluded a two-day summit in the California desert that ended with few policy breakthroughs but the prospect of closer personal ties. Serena Williams won her 16th Grand Slam title and her first French Open championship since 2002, beating Maria Sharapova 6-4, 6-4. Palace Malice took charge on the turn for home and won the Belmont Stakes, holding off Preakness winner Oxbow and Kentucky Derby winner Orb.

One year ago: Former FBI Director James Comey, testifying before Congress, asserted that President Donald Trump fired him to interfere with his investigation of Russia's ties to the Trump campaign. British Prime Minister Theresa May's strategy of calling an early election backfired as her Conservatives lost their majority in Parliament. Actress Glenna Headly died in Santa Monica, California, at age 62. Jelena Ostapenko became the first unseeded women's finalist at the French Open in more than 30 years by beating Timea Bacsinszky, 7-6 (4), 3-6, 6-3. (Ostapenko went on to win the title.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor-comedian Jerry Stiller is 91. Actress Millicent Martin is 84. Actor James Darren is 82. Singer Nancy Sinatra is 78. Singer Chuck Negron is 76. Musician Boz Scaggs is 74. Author Sara Paretsky is 71. Actress Sonia Braga is 68. Actress Kathy Baker is 68. Country musician Tony Rice is 67. Rock singer Bonnie Tyler is 67. Actor Griffin Dunne is 63. "Dilbert" creator Scott Adams is 61. Actor-director Keenen Ivory Wayans is 60. Singer Mick Hucknall (Simply Red) is 58. Musician Nick Rhodes (Duran Duran) is 56. Rhythm-and-blues singer Doris Pearson (Five Star) is 52. Actress Julianna Margulies is 51. Actor Dan Futterman is 51. Actor David Sutcliffe is 49. Actor Kent Faulcon is 48. Rhythm-and-blues singer Nicci Gilbert is 48. Actress Kelli Williams is 48. Former U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., is 48. Actor Mark Feuerstein is 47. Contemporary Christian musician Mike Scheuchzer (MercyMe) is 43. Actor Eion Bailey is 42. Tennis player Lindsay Davenport is 42. Rapper Kanye (KAHN'-yay) West is 41. TV personality-actress Maria Menounos is 40. Country singer-songwriter Sturgill Simpson is 40. Blues-rock musician Derek Trucks (The Derek Trucks Band) is 39. Rock singer Alex Band (The Calling) is 37. Folk-bluegrass singer-musician Sara Watkins (Nickel Creek) is 37. Tennis player Kim Clijsters is 35. Actress Torrey DeVitto is 34. Tennis player Jelena Ostapenko is 21.

Thought for Today: "It is not the man who has too little, but the man who craves more, that is poor."
— Seneca the Younger, Roman statesman (circa 5 B.C.-A.D. 65).