



Groton Daily Independent

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“One of the most courageous things you can do is identify yourself, know who you are, what you believe in and where you want to go.”

-Sheila Murray Bethel



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


Harry Implement
"Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!"



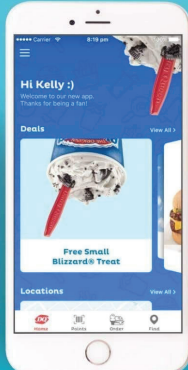
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Finding Enjoyable, Well-Paying Work

Work is an important part of personal fulfillment. True, most of us work because we must – to provide for ourselves and our families – but a job nevertheless gives us purpose. And when it's work we enjoy that pays enough, well, that's the goal.

Unfortunately, many young people are struggling to find enjoyable, well-paying work. Some lack a degree or formal training – perhaps they went straight into the workforce after high school or started a program they didn't finish. Even those who have degrees, though, often still have trouble finding meaningful work. For instance, of those who have a four-year degree, only 36 percent say their education prepared them for a job and more than half of recent graduates are unemployed or underemployed.

It's not for lack of jobs. According to U.S. Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta, we now have more job openings than job seekers in America. A number of these jobs are higher paying, higher-skill jobs in areas like health care, cybersecurity and manufacturing. Unfortunately those looking for work often do not have the skills needed for these good jobs.

The Western Governors' Association has spent the last year studying this "skills gap," holding webinars and workshops all across the West to identify solutions. This week as my term as chair of the Western Governors came to an end, I hosted my fellow governors in Rapid City where we released our report on workforce. The report lists ways states can enhance career opportunities for students, graduates and displaced workers.

The recommendations include integrating state efforts, increasing the availability of training, expanding broadband access in rural communities and connecting education to careers. We need to ensure a degree isn't the destination but a pathway to a job. That means providing students with better information and guidance so they can explore careers and make enlightened decisions about their futures. One way we're doing this in South Dakota is through a pilot program called Career Launch. This program involving ten school districts pools resources to provide more career counseling and give students hands-on experience.

For example, in Yankton, many high school seniors plan their schedules so that their traditional classes are compressed into half a day – morning or afternoon. During the other half of the day, the students work at a paid internship with a local employer. Each student receives high school credit, is paid at least \$11 an hour, gains exposure to a career field and learns foundational skills – like how to arrive on time, dress appropriately and interact with customers and coworkers.

During my first term, I would often say, "Workforce is a marathon, not a sprint." But now, as I'm nearing the end of my time as governor, I am realizing it's actually more like a relay race. Over the past seven years, we have initiated several strategies. Some have worked, some haven't and some remain to be seen.

Next year, when my time in office comes to an end, I will pass the baton, and hope our new leaders will continue the race.



Tax Reform: Six Months In

A little over six months ago, we finalized one of the largest tax cuts ever delivered to the American people. Families saw the Child Tax Credit double from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and the marriage penalty eliminated, while still being able to benefit from the Child Care Credit. For couples, the first \$24,000 they make every year is now tax free. Family farmers and ranchers can invest in their operations with greater confidence. And small businesses in every industry can take advantage of a new, never-before-given 20 percent tax deduction.

For some, it's all the little ways tax reform helps their family. I had a mom come up to me recently; she just wanted to say that because of the tax cuts, her son could get a new pair of basketball shoes. That extra money gave her family the peace of mind they needed.

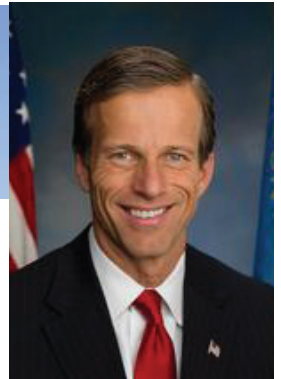
In total, the average South Dakota family of four will save \$2,400 on their taxes this year, but the direct savings are only part of the benefits people are experiencing. For instance, utility companies, like Black Hills Energy, are passing savings down to their customers, helping mitigate the cost of electricity.

Many families also received raises, bonuses and improved benefits. AaLadin Industries in Elk Point offered bonuses of up to \$1,000 to their employees, while announcing they'd be investing \$1-2 million back into the business to grow. Great Western Bank, meanwhile, announced they would increase their base wage to \$15/hour, offer a meaningful pay raise to 70 percent of their workforce, and put more money into community projects. Ryder in Sioux Falls and Rapid City offered bonuses too. And the list could go on.

Megacompanies made new investments in South Dakota families as well. Walmart expanded maternity and paternity leave, while offering \$2.1 million in cash bonuses to South Dakota employees. AT&T gave \$1,000 bonuses to nearly 200 people in the state. Lowe's, which employs hundreds of South Dakotans, awarded bonuses and added adoption assistance to their benefit package. Comcast gave bonuses. T.J.Maxx gave bonuses. Again, the list could go on.

Needless to say, for just over six months, we've seen tax reform work. Whether families started getting bigger paychecks, better benefits, lower utility bills, or more work opportunities, a positive economic shift was felt from the onset – a shift I'm optimistic we've only seen the beginning of.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



A Red, White, and Blue Kind of Day

Few, if any, other American holidays are celebrated or recognized quite like the Fourth of July. These community-by-community celebrations are as similar as they are unique – the very qualities that embody what it means to be a citizen of these United States. Our democracy – and the independence from which it was born – was established, refined, and defended by generations past and present, and it continues to set us apart from any other nation in the world.

Democracy isn't perfect, but it's that imperfection that has always allowed us to grow and become stronger. The burden is on all of us – young and old, Republicans and Democrats, East Coast to West Coast – to ensure that this enduring legacy lives on, and the Fourth of July is an important time to both reflect on where we've been as a country and celebrate the opportunities that lie ahead.

As I reflect on the past, I can't help but think of World War II veterans like my dad and the rest of America's Greatest Generation who answered the call to serve. The world had never met, nor will they meet again, a group of individuals so dedicated to the pursuit of freedom and democracy around the world.

I was humbled to have recently spent some time with several of these men who represent a group of heroes that's sadly getting smaller by the day. They trekked from South Dakota to Washington, D.C., to see firsthand the war memorials that were created for, and made possible by, the sacrifices they made in service to our nation. It's something I'll never forget, and it's something that I wish all Americans could have experienced with me.

As I look to the future, I'm nothing but optimistic. While it's easy to get bogged down by the day-to-day commotion that we've all grown accustomed to in today's 24-hour news cycle, there's plenty around us for which we can celebrate. For me, I have my family and my friends, including the hundreds of thousands of South Dakotans who constantly inspire me to do the best job that I can as their senator.

On the Fourth of July, parades often serve as the cornerstone of a community's celebration. This year, as the uniform-clad men and women who carry the stars and stripes and lead the way for the floats and marching bands that will follow, I urge you to take a closer look. In their solemn faces – eyes locked forward – you can get a tiny glimpse of the past, present, and future of America, all in one instant. When you see it, you'll know exactly what I mean.

I hope you have a safe and blessed day with your family, friends, and community. Happy Fourth of July!

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Wow! If this doesn't want to make you take cover, I'm not sure what will!

This photo was taken by James Smart at Black Hawk, SD Friday morning.

State Officials Urge Safety During July 4th Celebration

PIERRE, S.D. – No matter how they celebrate the Fourth of July this year, South Dakota Department of Public Safety officials encourage people to also remember to be safe.

As always, Highway Patrol troopers will have a visible presence on the roadways. Highway Patrol Superintendent Col. Craig Price says the goal is to keep people safe and help them safely arrive at their destination.

“Safe driving is important no matter what the day,” says Colonel Price. “We will continue to stress the same reminders we always do: Wear your seatbelt, follow speed limits, pay attention and use a designated driver if needed.”

This year’s Fourth of July traffic reporting period is from 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 3, to midnight, Wednesday, July 4. Even with the holiday on a Wednesday, DPS officials still expect more vehicles on the roads, heightening the chance of more vehicle crashes. During last year’s 102-hour holiday reporting period, there were 198 motor vehicle traffic crashes that resulted in three fatalities and 70 others people being injured.

“Even more frustrating was that none of the three fatalities were wearing seatbelts and almost half of those injured also were not buckled up,” says Office of Highway Safety director Lee Axdahl. “No matter whether it is a holiday or any other day, it still comes down to common sense; of protecting yourself and others. That goes not only for those driving vehicles, but motorcycles as well. ”

Another big part of the celebration is fireworks. Fireworks went on sale this past Wednesday, June 27, and can be sold through Thursday, July 5. Fireworks can be legally discharged through Sunday, July 8.

“Fireworks are fun to watch, but they can also be dangerous,” says Fire Marshal Paul Merriam. “Always remember that if not used properly, fireworks can hurt someone, damage a building or start a fire. We encourage people to read the instructions and always have water on hand just in case.”

Since some individual cities may adopt fireworks limits that are stricter than state law, Merriman suggests that citizens also check local ordinances and regulations first.

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SD Retirement System Receives National Recognition

PIERRE, S.D. – The Society of Actuaries has selected the South Dakota Retirement System as a winning Retirement 20/20 Model, awarding the state with a \$10,000 prize. SDRS was one of four designs honored by the group for its ingenuity in handling risk, governance, and administration and for being a design that is understandable to its stakeholders.

“This recognition is well earned by the SDRS Board. The South Dakota Retirement System has been solidly funded for decades. We do not have unfunded liabilities and SDRS provides excellent benefits while operating with fixed funding at a low cost,” Gov. Dennis Daugaard said.

Retirement 20/20 is the Society of Actuaries’ ongoing initiative to align retirement systems with the economic and demographic needs of the 21st Century. As part of its initiative, the Society last fall called for models on governmental pension designs. The group chose South Dakota’s plan based on recently passed legislation, the fund’s financial condition and investment performance.

The Pew Charitable Trusts also recently recognized the state’s retirement system as one of two best-funded public

pension plans in the nation. SDRS funded 97 percent of the plan’s accrued liabilities in 2016 and 100 percent of liabilities in 2017.

Groton Property Manager Wanted

Real Estate Rental property manager wanted. Must live in or near Groton. Potential income of up to \$5,000 a month. Experience a plus. For details, call Lee at 605-824-4888.

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INDEPENDENCE DAY,
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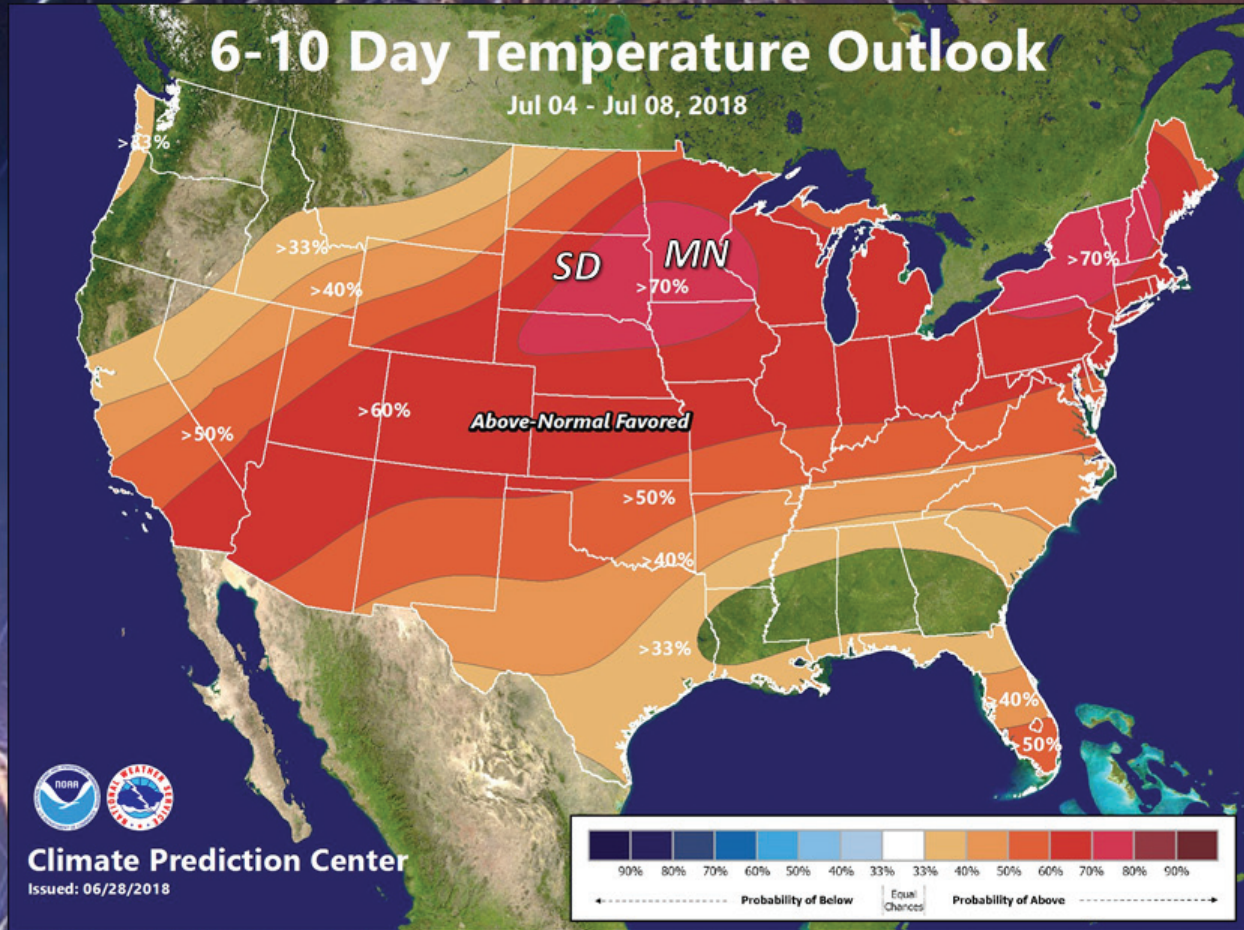
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Steamy 4th of July?

6-10 Day Temperature Outlook

Jul 04 - Jul 08, 2018



Published on: 06/29/2018 at 10:21AM

After a brief weekend "cool-down", temperatures ramp back up next week. Widespread highs in the 90s are possible on Wednesday, July 4th.

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Today in Weather History

June 30, 1991: Thunderstorms dropped over 2 inches of rain over Brown, Marshall, and Roberts County. The rain washed out many county roads and flooded low-lying areas. Several streets were impassable in Aberdeen. Officially, Aberdeen recorded 1.91 inches of rain.

June 30, 1992: An F2 tornado lifted a roof off a house 18 miles east of Pierre. A barn was destroyed, and power lines and trees were downed. Also, an estimated wind gust of 61 mph was observed 5 miles west of Miller in Hand County.

1792: The first recorded tornado in Canadian history struck the Niagara Peninsula between Foothill and Port Robinson, leveling some houses and uprooting trees between the communities.

1900: The combination of high winds and the presence of wooded fuel-filled cargo helped to spread fire on the Hoboken Docks in New Jersey. The fire began when cotton bales caught fire and spread to nearby volatile liquids. The fire killed at least 300 people and was seen in New York City.

1912: An estimated F4 tornado ripped through Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada on this day. The storm became the deadliest tornado in Canada's history as it killed 28 people along a rare, 18.5-mile track from south to north.

1999: Mount Baker, Washington closed out a record snowfall season both for the United States and the verifiable world record as the seasonal total from July 1, 1998, to June 30, 1999, finished with 1,140 inches.

1886 - The second destructive hurricane in nine days hit the Apalachicola-Tallahassee area. (David Ludlum)

1942 - The temperature at Portland, OR, hit 102 degrees, an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1972 - The entire state of Pennsylvania was declared a disaster area as a result of the catastrophic flooding caused by Hurricane Agnes, which claimed 48 lives, and caused 2.1 billion dollars damage. (The Weather Channel)






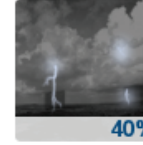
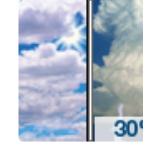
1987 - Hot weather prevailed in the Pacific Northwest, with readings above 100 degrees reported as far north as southern British Columbia. Yakima, WA, reported a record high of 100 degrees, while temperatures near the Washington coast hovered near 60 degrees all day. Thunderstorms prevailed from southwest Texas to New England. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 100 mph at Gettysburg, PA, killed one person. High winds and large hail caused more than five million dollars damage to property and crops in Lancaster County, PA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

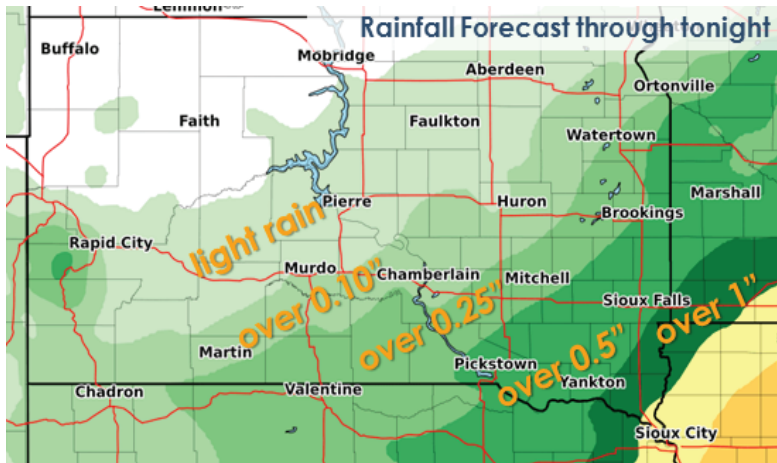
1988 - Thunderstorms in eastern Kansas drenched Worden with 12.21 inches of rain, and a wall of water two to four feet deep swept through Lone Star, KS, flooding every home in the town. Up to ten inches of rain was reported southeast of Callaway, NE. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 75 mph at Winfield, KS. Seventeen cities in the north central and northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Duluth, MN, with a reading of 36 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Winnfield, LA, reported 22.52 inches of rain in three days, and more than thirty inches for the month, a record for June. Shreveport LA received a record 17.11 inches in June, with a total for the first six months of the year of 45.55 inches. Thunderstorms also helped produce record rainfall totals for the month of June of 13.12 inches at Birmingham AL, 14.66 inches at Oklahoma City, OK, 17.41 inches at Tallahassee FL, 9.97 inches at Lynchburg, VA, and more than 10.25 inches at Pittsburgh, PA. Pittsburgh had also experienced a record wet month of May. (The National Weather Summary)

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
 20%	 20%			 20%	 40%	 30%
Slight Chance T-storms	Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Partly Sunny then Chance T-storms
High: 82 °F	Low: 60 °F	High: 86 °F	Low: 60 °F	High: 90 °F	Low: 68 °F	High: 91 °F



Showers & Storms
 mainly focused across
 ← **southeastern South Dakota** through tonight



Slightly Cooler this weekend, otherwise
Warming through mid Week.

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Published on: 06/30/2018 at 4:53AM

Updated: 6/30/2018 4:48 AM Central

While light rain will be possible across much of the area this morning, the focus most of the rain will be across southeastern South Dakota through tonight. Expect highs in the mid 70s and 80s through the weekend, before warming up again through mid week. Check out your local forecast for further details...
www.weather.gov/abr

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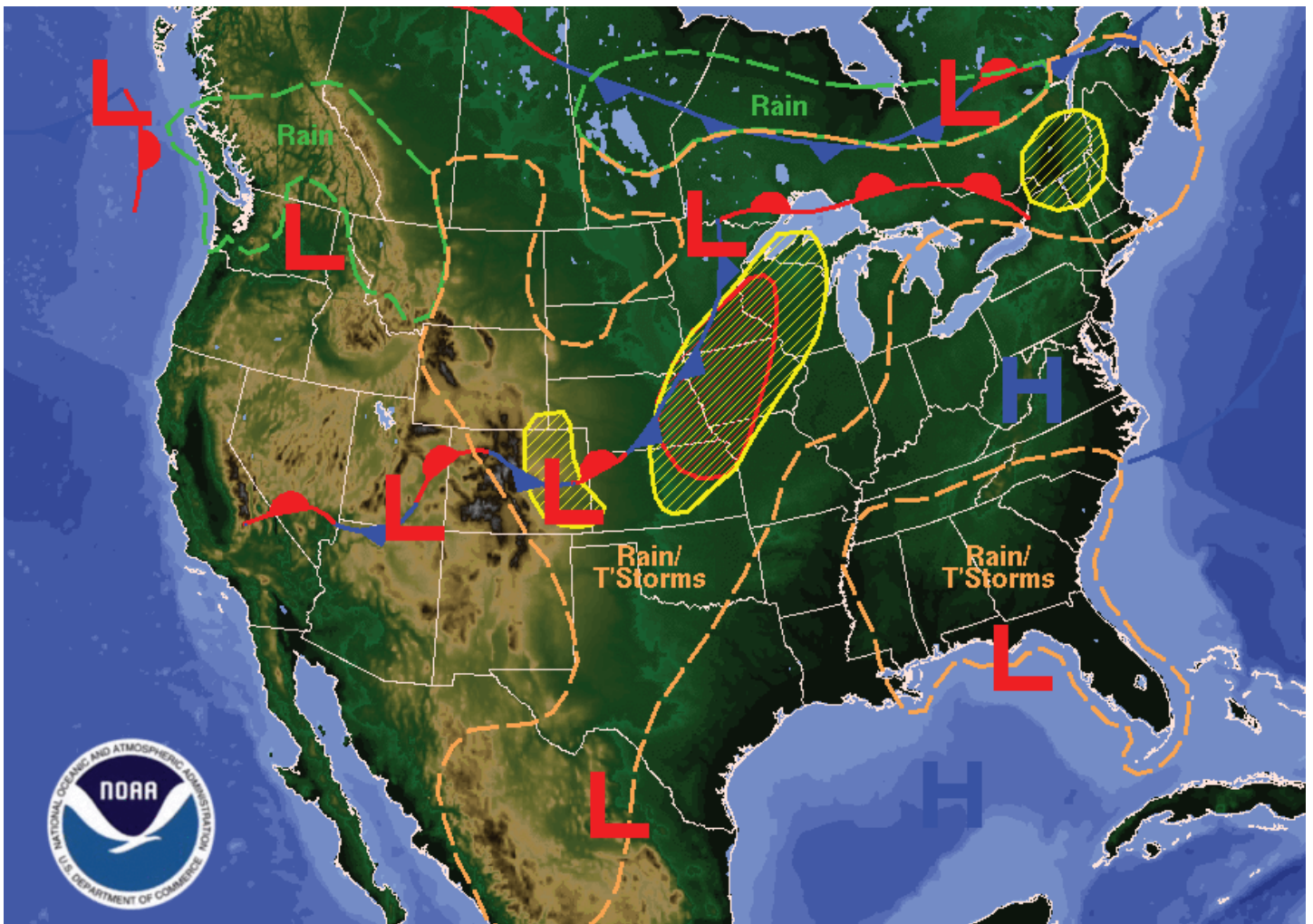
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 84.3 F at 11:18 AM
Low Outside Temp: 69.0 F at 6:04 AM
High Gust: 36.0 Mph at 4:15 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 104° in 1931
Record Low: 38° in 1918
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 57°F
Average Precip in June: 3.71
Precip to date in June: 1.52
Average Precip to date: 10.85
Precip Year to Date: 5.82
Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:49 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Jun 30, 2018, issued 4:02 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Hamrick 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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WHAT - NOT WHY

"I wouldn't go through my experience with cancer again for a million dollars," said a friend to me recently. "But then again, I wouldn't take some millions of dollars for it, either."

Could it be that the most painful experiences in life are sometimes the most profitable? Is it not true that after we have struggled through one of the most difficult times in our lives we take a deep breath and say, "Thank You, Lord. That ended up as a great blessing! I sincerely appreciate Your presence and peace during the dark days and long nights. I would not have made it without You."

"It is good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn Your decrees!" said the Psalmist after his ordeal.

As he struggled and strained with deep fears and high anxieties, he did not ask, "Why are these things happening to me?" Instead he asked, "What can I learn from them?"

"Why" is often a useless word. Most of the problems we face or the difficult issues that challenge or confront us cannot be answered if we ask, "Why?" Asking a different question is usually more beneficial: "What, God, are You trying to teach me?" usually brings the best answers.

"A.J." was considered to be a very successful leader. Nearly everyone looked up to him. He had answers to questions and insight to issues that others overlooked. One day he was in an accident and lost his sight. He did not ask, "Why Lord?" After realizing that his condition was permanent, he asked, "What can I do for You now, Lord?"

Prayer: We pray, Lord, that we will learn to ask, "What can I do for You with the 'unusual gifts' You give me?" In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 119:71 It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

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

Former hospital CEO sentenced for failing to disclose gift

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A former Pine Ridge Indian Health Service administrator has been sentenced for failing to disclose a \$5,000 gift from a pediatrician.

The South Dakota U.S. attorney's office says 60-year-old Wehnona Stabler, of Nebraska, has been sentenced to 12 months of unsupervised probation. She was charged in June 2017.

Authorities say Stabler, while a Pine Ridge IHS employee, made a false statement in 2014 on a financial disclosure report about the payment from Dr. Stanley Patrick Weber.

Weber has been indicted for sex abuse of minors while he was a pediatrician at the Pine Ridge hospital.

South Dakota officials to study catfish in the James River

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's Game, Fish and Parks Department is studying catfish in the James River for the first time in about two decades to see if trophy catfish are being overharvested.

Officials will spend about 1,200 hours researching the fish over the next two years, The Daily Republic reported. The study began last month and is being conducted on roughly 40 miles (64 kilometers) of the James River.

Researchers will catch fish, document certain information, tag the animals and then release them back into the river. Researchers aim to catch and tag 300 flathead and 700 channel catfish annually.

So far, researchers are on target with the 150 flatheads they've caught, but have tagged fewer than 100 channels, said Dave Lucchesi, a fisheries biologist with the department and one of the study's lead investigators.

"We've really struggled on channels," he said. "We should have close to 300 by now based on the study design."

Catfish anglers are concerned about overharvesting and are pushing for more restrictive regulations, Lucchesi said.

Researchers will use trotlines, hoop nets and electrofishing to catch the fish.

"Hopefully next year we can recapture some of these fish that we put tags into," said B.J. Schall, one of the study's lead investigators. "Knowing the abundance of the population will help in how different regulations and harvest levels will impact that."

South Dakota anglers are limited to catching 10 catfish a day. The state doesn't have a size restriction for catfish that can be caught.

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

Census Bureau: North Dakota's median age has decreased

MINOT, N.D. (AP) — U.S. Census Bureau estimates show that North Dakota's median age has dropped in recent years, bucking a national trend.

The estimates indicate that North Dakota's median age dropped from 37 in 2010 to about 35 in 2017, the Minot Daily News reported.

The number of people younger than 18 grew by about 17 percent during that time period, while the number of residents aged 65 and older increased by 16 percent, the estimates found. The number of residents aged 15 to 44 years increased by almost 16 percent.

Williams County had the largest decrease in median age in the country, dropping 7 years between 2010 and 2017, according to Molly Cromwell, a demographer at the U.S. Census Bureau. The county's median age was about 32 years in 2017.

"Nationally, almost 17 percent of counties saw a decrease in median age from April 2010 to July 2017,"

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Cromwell said. "The majority of the counties getting younger were in the Midwest, and of these counties with 10,000 people or more in July 2017, some of the largest decreases were in North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska."

The Bureau said the U.S. overall saw its median age increase from about 37 years in 2010 to 38 years in 2017.

"Baby boomers, and millennials alike, are responsible for this trend in increased aging," Cromwell said. "Boomers continue to age and are slowly outnumbering children as the birth rate has declined steadily over the last decade."

Information from: Minot Daily News, <http://www.minotdailynews.com>

Data breach, ballot question and beer laws to take effect

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers passed a raft of new laws in the 2018 legislative session, and many go into effect Sunday, including measures on data breaches, ballot questions and craft beers.

Here's a look at some of them:

BREACHES

If your Social Security number is stolen from a company, you've likely got a better chance of being warned. A new law requires state residents be notified within 60 days of a data breach's discovery, with some exceptions. The law also requires companies to inform the attorney general if a breach affects over 250 residents.

BALLOT QUESTIONS

New rules for the people who come to your door with a petition to sign could make it harder to put initiatives before voters. One new law requires petitioners to give more information to the secretary of state, including their driver's license numbers and the length of time at their current and past two addresses. Would-be activists should also be ready to hand over other proof of residency like library cards or utility bills.

Supporters say it will make it easier for courts to determine whether circulators are South Dakota residents, a requirement in state law. Another new change will require circulators to provide petition signers their name, email and phone number.

BEERS

It's time for another beer: South Dakota craft breweries will be able to produce more suds each year without losing privileges such as being able to sell growlers. The new law created a microbrewery license allowing the businesses to produce 30,000 barrels of beer annually, up from 5,000 barrels.

It also permits craft brewers to bypass distributors to sell up to 1,500 barrels of their beer each year directly to bars. Gov. Dennis Daugaard has said the measure will help the state's homegrown microbreweries expand and thrive.

SERVICE ANIMALS

Lying about needing a service animal may now get renters kicked out. Landlords will be able to require supporting documentation for many tenants' need for service animals, and penalties for falsely claiming a disability to have one include eviction and a damage fee up to \$1,000.

DRUG PENALTIES

Drug dealers beware: tougher penalties for meth distribution and manufacturing are coming into place. Another set of new rules imposes stronger punishments for drug dealers whose product kills someone else.

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COMPASSIONATE PAROLE

South Dakota's new "compassionate parole" system for seriously ill and elderly inmates is taking effect. The new law makes high-cost, terminally ill inmates age 65 and over who have been imprisoned for at least a decade for a Class 3 felony or below eligible for compassionate parole consideration. Inmates 70 and above who have served at least 30 years of a non-death sentence are also eligible. The Board of Pardons and Paroles will decide whether to grant or deny compassionate parole. About 65 inmates met the eligibility criteria in March.

MARSY'S LAW

Changes voters approved in June to the "Marsy's Law" victims' bill of rights are coming to police stations and prosecutor's offices. The new constitutional provisions require victims to opt in to many of their rights and specifically allow authorities to share information with the public to help solve crimes. Officials proposed the changes because they say Marsy's Law has caused unintended consequences since it first passed in 2016, including causing problems for authorities and increasing costs for counties.

EAGLE FEATHERS

Students who want to wear eagle feathers or plumes at school graduations will have protections in state law. The tribal regalia measure requires state and local officials to let people wear eagle feathers and plumes at school honoring or graduation ceremonies. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operates the National Eagle Repository to provide Native Americans with eagle carcasses, parts and feathers.

South Dakota man conquers rock climb 4 years after falling

By **SETH TUPPER, Rapid City Journal**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — When the sun momentarily blinded Jimmy Burckhard as he strained to finish the last few feet of a 70-foot-tall rock climb on June 2, he was stricken by a thought.

"I'm gonna fall again."

But he continued to feel around blindly until he found a pocket in the limestone, which he used to complete his first successful ascent of the Black Hills climbing route known as Foot Fist Way.

It was not his first try.

Nearly four years ago, on Sept. 26, 2014, Burckhard climbed to the same spot near the top of the route before plummeting 70 feet to his near-death on the narrow floor of Victoria Canyon, just west of Rapid City.

The impact of the fall shattered his heels, fractured several of his vertebrae, and broke bones in a foot, a thumb and a wrist, the Rapid City Journal reported. He had to be carried out of the roadless, boulder-strewn canyon on a stretcher by rescuers on foot.

For several months afterward, he was an invalid at his home in Fort Collins, Colorado, where he required help with basic daily activities from a brother who temporarily moved in with him. Through multiple surgeries and dogged devotion to physical therapy, Burckhard gradually progressed from a wheelchair to walking boots and a walker.

All the while, he thought about climbing. He had built his whole life around it, and outside of his job as a commercial lender at a bank, all of his friends were climbers. It was all they did and all they talked about.

"I'm either going to have to change my whole life, and completely find a new set of friends," Burckhard said he realized, "or I'm going to overcome this and do everything I can to come back."

So, by February 2015, around the time he began walking and returned to work — and only about five months after the accident — he resumed climbing.

At first, he had to wear over-sized climbing shoes to accommodate the surgically inserted plates in his heels, which were removed later during another surgery. The months wore on, and eventually he was climbing so frequently and so well that he wanted another shot at Foot Fist Way.

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"It had been kind of looming in my brain, the thought of going back and taking care of unfinished business," he said.

He made a failed attempt to climb the route during the Memorial Day weekend of 2016, and another failed attempt during the same weekend this year.

The failures were not physical. Although the 35-year-old Burckhard said he will probably always have daily pain from the lingering effects of his injuries, his rehabilitation as a climber is so complete that he has climbed more difficult routes since the accident than he did before.

Yet, when he returned to Foot Fist Way, it was clear that his mental and emotional rehabilitation was incomplete. It was particularly jarring, he said, to see large rocks that had washed up near the base of Foot Fist Way, and to realize that if those rocks had been there on the day of his fall, he would have landed on them instead of bare dirt.

After the second of his failed redemption climbs, he grew obsessed with trying again.

"I went home, and all I could think of was that route, every hour of every day for the next few days," he said.

He planned another trip to Victoria Canyon for the weekend of June 2, and this time, the climbing partner who had been with Burckhard the day of the 2014 accident — Dan Yager, known to television viewers as a competitor on "American Ninja Warrior" — agreed to come along.

Their friendship had been temporarily strained by unanswered questions about the accident, but they had since mended their relationship and even resumed climbing together.

Yet questions about the cause of the accident have lingered, because the fall was not strictly accidental; in fact, Burckhard let go of the rock face intentionally, fully expecting his fall to be arrested.

It was part of a warm-up routine. Burckhard was harnessed to a climbing rope, which was strung through a series of carabiners attached to bolts in the rock face below him; the rope was also threaded through an apparatus known as a belay device, which was harnessed to Yager as he stood on the ground.

The belay device was supposed to exert enough friction on the rope to stop Burckhard's fall, so that he could descend, rest awhile, and then "send" the route — which is climbing lingo for ascending a route from bottom to top without any falls, planned or otherwise.

But the device did not arrest Burckhard's fall. To this day, Burckhard said, "I don't know if we'll ever know exactly what happened, because it happened so fast."

He suspects that the culprits were a faulty belay device, a too-thin rope and "maybe some distractions." He said the belay device model that he and Yager used during the accident has since been discontinued.

In a separate phone interview, Yager described the accident as "100 percent a belay device error."

Both said the accident revolutionized their approach to safety and their choice of equipment. With that renewed focus, they returned to Foot Fist Way earlier this month for Yager's first time back since the accident, and Burckhard's third. Yager's young son, who witnessed the accident as a 3-year-old, also came along to fill out the original trio.

Burckhard thinks fate may have intended for him to fail in his two attempts to climb the route without Yager.

"It was almost like it was meant to be for Dan and I to go back there," Burckhard said.

During the week prior, Burckhard visualized every move of the climb hundreds of times, by his estimation. The preparation made for a smooth ascent, until those final moments when the sun shone in Burckhard's eyes and his thoughts strayed toward falling.

After he pushed through that fleeting bout of fear and completed the route, Burckhard savored an emotional release.

"Let's just say I screamed pretty loud and just hung out up there for a couple of minutes and just kind of took it all in."

And then?

"I came down," he said, "and gave Dan a big hug."

South Dakota city sees big growth

By JEREMY J FUGLEBERG, Argus Leader

HARTFORD, S.D. (AP) — Jesse Fonkert steers his way around a Hartford amid a revolution.

Not the political kind. Gone is the very public, nasty spat between elected leaders and citizens over Fonkert's very job as chamber and economic development director, which he stepped into in 2016 after citizens voted to keep the position.

Now, Hartford is looking forward. The town is adding dozens upon dozens of homes across several developments, expanding the facilities at its sports complex and adding a brewery to its downtown — the first new building on Main Avenue in decades.

"It's a great place to live, because everything you need is in town," Fonkert told the Argus Leader .

The question now isn't if Hartford is going to grow. It's what the town will become. Is it now a bedroom community for Sioux Falls? Is that all Hartford is? If so, is that so bad? If so, must that be its future?

"I think 2019 could be a very pivotal year, from the growth side," said Justin Eich, a local businessman who is president of the Hartford Area Development Foundation.

It could also be the year Hartford cements its course into the future.

Hartford is only a few years removed from some fairly epic political battles.

In 2015, the city council voted to eliminate a position meant to spur Hartford's growth and development: the town's economic development director.

The backlash effectively toppled the city's leadership.

"I used to call it the G.O.B., the good old boy club," said Eich. "They didn't want change, they didn't want to spend money, they were set in their ways. But there's been enough of an influx of young families coming to town, so that it's overtaken the G.O.B. mentality."

The battle featured a special election, a rejected mayoral recall and a possibly falsified email. In a period of six months from 2015 to 2016, the mayor and several council members resigned.

It was over. Hiring Fonkert in 2016 was meant to turn the page.

"In the past we didn't know we had the environment created that was pro-business and pro-residential," said Mayor Jeremy Menning, a leading voice in the backlash against the effort to remove the economic development director position. "It was kind of, 'Take it like it comes, we'll see what happens' kind of approach.

"Over the last two years, we've tried to encourage creating an environment: Let's be ready."

New residents are shaping the town just by showing up. The town has added citizens at a steady pace. It's population stands at about 3,200 residents, nearly double the population size of about 20 years ago.

It's increasingly a young town. The median age is a touch over 30 years old. That bodes well in an era of rural population loss.

"There are young kids all over. That's wonderful," said Sheri Goebel, co-owner of the Sunshine Foods and president of the Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce.

Young families are moving to Hartford, drawn by relatively low housing prices, the small-town environment and a well-regarded, well-supported West Central School District. The town overwhelmingly voted this year to support boosting property taxes to increase spending for its schools.

"That's our market," said Fonkert, who himself is in his mid-20s. "We want the young families."

Another daycare is planned to open, meaning Hartford will have about 10 daycares. Fonkert drives by the Hartford pool, which is increasingly at capacity. Competition for its use is so fierce, a schedule was hammered out to give all the daycares their time at the pool.

"The next update for the pool is to build another pool," Eich deadpans. "They've done about all they can there."

Open Hartford's 31-page community guide. Just inside the front cover you'll find a welcoming column from Menning.

"A bedroom community we are not!" Menning writes, as he extols Hartford's business-friendly attitude and mix of local shopping and entertainment options (as any good mayor would).

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But stand along Highway 38 out of Hartford at about 7:30 a.m., and you'll experience the closest thing the town gets to rush hour.

"It's almost like a mass exit in the morning and coming in and night," Goebel said. The town doesn't have exact numbers on how many of its residents work in Sioux Falls, about a 10-20 minute drive away, but the traffic tells the tale. It's a lot.

Hartford and Sioux Falls are stretching their borders toward each other, pulled together by shared economic interests and seemingly inexorable growth.

"People used to think Hartford is so far from Sioux Falls. Obviously as Sioux Falls pushes further to the west, that gap gets closer," said Eich. "That's kind of the picture that was painted the last few years: 'Oh, that's quite a ways out there.'"

The town's proximity to the region's largest job market in a growing Sioux Falls is a major selling point for Hartford, but so is its long-time status as its own place — a small town and proud of it.

Still, Sioux Falls is a giant magnet for workers from the area, who might be looking for a smaller-town lifestyle outside their work hours.

"A lot of people in this part of the state grew up in smaller towns and are used to that and want that for their kids," said Menning. "That's been huge, to have a place you can call home and it feels different. You're not in a major metro, you know exactly who is next door, all of that."

Hartford is seeking to strike a delicate balance. It wants to keep attracting young families, many who work in Sioux Falls, with its small-town environment that includes a wide range of shopping and dining options and is replete with community features such as a bike/walking trail, recreational complex and a pool.

At the same time, it hopes to pull in, say, a manufacturer or two that would employ several hundred workers to hike its tax base and diversify its local economy.

Hartford's relatively steady pace of growth has helped, giving the town time to build out infrastructure and deliberate over what it wants to become, instead of being overwhelmed by growth.

That choice is becoming clear.

'If we're going to be a 'bedroom community,' we're going to be the best bedroom community there is," said Menning. "But we know we have a lot more to offer than that."

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

02-32-47-49-68, Mega Ball: 23, Megaplier: 4

(two, thirty-two, forty-seven, forty-nine, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: twenty-three; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$232 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$60 million

Jury clears South Dakota woman accused in embezzlement case

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota jury on Friday cleared a woman accused of aiding an embezzlement scheme that exploded into public view after a man killed his family and then himself.

Stephanie Hubers was found not guilty of grand theft, grand theft by deception and alternative receiving stolen property charges. Defense attorney Clint Sargent said after the verdict that prosecutors didn't have any evidence she knew about the scheme.

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Hubers was an assistant business manager at Mid-Central Educational Cooperative when prosecutors said she got about \$55,000 to keep quiet about embezzlement by business manager Scott Westerhuis and his wife.

Westerhuis killed his wife and their four children in 2015 before setting their home ablaze and killing himself. Investigators believe Scott and Nicole Westerhuis stole more than \$1 million before their deaths.

Hubers told jurors she didn't know the couple was stealing, testifying: "I still don't believe it." Sargent successfully contended that Hubers "didn't steal a thing," saying jurors had to clear her because the state didn't prove she had specific intent to steal, defraud or receive property knowing it was stolen.

"We all know now that Scott Westerhuis was the worst kind of monster. He was a control freak who marketed himself as a savior — but he was a destroyer," Sargent said in his closing argument. "He didn't have accomplices. He just had victims, especially those closest to him."

Hubers testified that Scott Westerhuis portrayed the extra payments to her as a raise for her work at Mid-Central, and she reported the income for tax purposes. Educational cooperatives provide services to member school districts in areas such as special education.

Hubers faced a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and fines for each count in a case decided on her 46th birthday. She and others went into a room outside the court chamber after the verdict, cheering and hugging.

She left without speaking to reporters, but Sargent said she wanted him to thank her family, friends, the judge and the jury.

"They obviously listened and most importantly, they followed the law," Sargent said of the jury, which deliberated for nearly six hours before returning the verdict.

Attorney General Marty Jackley, who prosecuted the case, gave his appreciation to jurors and said he respects their verdict. Jackley had argued Hubers knew about the couple's scheme to steal money, actively participated in the theft and did it for personal gain. Jackley said during the trial that Hubers stole the \$55,000 by submitting false invoices for work she didn't perform.

He argued that if jurors didn't convict her for grand theft, they should find her guilty of receiving stolen property for taking the \$55,000, which she knew was stolen or probably stolen by Scott Westerhuis.

"She knew dang well that Scott Westerhuis was stealing that money," Jackley said in his closing argument. "She knew dang well that she wasn't entitled to that \$55,000."

He emphasized Hubers' close relationship to the Westerhuis family — going boating and spending time at their home, and that she got the money for doing "nothing other than cashing a check."

Hubers' trial came more than two years after authorities launched a financial investigation because of the deaths. The investigation spurred the felony charges in 2016 against Hubers and two others who allegedly helped in the couple's embezzlement scheme.

The two others charged in the case, former Mid-Central Director Dan Guericke and consultant Stacy Phelps, are to face trial later.

Republicans propose using sales tax money for new tax cuts

By DAVID A. LIEB, Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — A U.S. Supreme Court ruling making it easier to collect online sales taxes could yield billions of dollars for state and local governments — if they decide to keep it.

Rather than spend the windfall on schools, prisons or other government services, some Republican governors and lawmakers are proposing to give it away in the form of tax cuts.

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, running for re-election this year, has suggested the extra revenue could be used to expand tax breaks for seniors or households with children. Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, also on the November ballot, wants to put it toward property tax relief.

Some Kansas lawmakers are eyeing a reduction in the food sales tax; the Tennessee House speaker wants to lower the state's 7 percent sales tax rate; and a Missouri lawmaker plans to sponsor an individual income tax reduction to negate the sales tax expansion.

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"To just take that revenue would be a tax increase," said Missouri Sen. Andrew Koenig, echoing the reasoning of many tax-adverse Republicans leery of simply spending or saving the expected influx.

The court ruled June 21 that South Dakota could enforce a law compelling many out-of-state businesses to collect taxes on sales made to its residents. The ruling overturned a decades-old precedent stating that businesses without a physical presence in a state — like a store, office or warehouse — didn't have to collect sales taxes on behalf of the state. In such cases, customers technically were responsible for paying the tax, but most didn't.

As online commerce has grown, some large retailers such as Amazon already had begun collecting sales taxes for all 45 states that charge them. But others with a physical presence in only a few places haven't been doing so.

How quickly that will change could vary by state. In the past two years, 15 states have enacted laws attempting to require out-of-state companies to collect sales taxes, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Many other states may have to wait until legislatures reconvene in 2019 to set specific requirements for out-of-state sellers. Most states already have set their budgets for the 2019 fiscal year.

State and local governments stand to gain \$8 billion to \$13 billion annually by collecting taxes from all remote sellers, according to a report issued last fall by the Government Accountability Office. Other estimates have been even higher.

Most states will see revenue gains equaling 1 percent to 2 percent of their total state tax collections, though states that rely more on sales taxes instead of income taxes could gain more, said Moody's Investors Service.

In Tennessee, which ranks high in sales tax reliance, Republican legislative leaders already are discussing ways to offset the anticipated surge in revenue with a new tax reduction.

"I think it's an opportunity for us to do something that I've wanted to do for some time now, which is lower our sales tax" rate, House Speaker Beth Harwell, who is running for governor, said during a recent candidate debate.

Tennessee's Democratic gubernatorial candidates suggested the money could go toward higher pay for public school teachers.

How states decide to use sales tax revenue may depend on their overall financial situation and could be complicated by varying estimates of how much to expect, said Howard Gleckman, a senior fellow at the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center.

"The amount of money is uncertain, and that would suggest states would want to be a little careful before they go and spend it," he said.

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant, a Republican, has said he will ask lawmakers to earmark the extra revenue for transportation.

In Kansas, lawmakers also may face pressure to use at least part of the money to comply with a court order to boost school funding, said House Taxation Committee Chairman Rep. Steven Johnson, a Republican.

In neighboring Missouri, however, the Supreme Court ruling could provide justification to continue a tax-cutting spree. A corporate income tax cut was signed into law in June. Legislation deepening an already planned individual income tax cut is pending before the governor. And Koenig said he will sponsor a bill during the 2019 session to use the online sales tax collections to offset yet another proposed cut to the individual income tax rate.

In some states, the ruling could lead to automatic tax cuts.

A 2016 South Dakota law raising the sales tax rate from 4 percent to 4.5 percent requires it to be scaled back by one-tenth of a percent for every additional \$20 million the state reaps, if it's able to collect from out-of-state online retailers. The rollback is likely to be a top issue next legislative session. Though a Democratic senator wants to use the money to reduce food sales taxes, Republican Sen. Jeff Partridge, who sponsored the provision, said his goal remains to "give the money back to the people."

A 2013 Wisconsin law mandates an equal cut in state income taxes if federal law requires the collection of online sales tax. Walker said his administration is examining whether the Supreme court ruling triggers

that provision.

"One way or the other," Walker said, "we'd want to get that back to the hardworking taxpayers."

Associated Press writers Geoff Mulvihill in Cherry Hill, New Jersey; Jonathan Mattise in Nashville, Tennessee; and James Nord in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, contributed to this report.

Wells Fargo requests foreclosure on Rapid City mall

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Wells Fargo Bank is seeking to foreclose on a Rapid City mall to speed up the shopping center's payment of \$100 million in unpaid loans.

The bank filed its request last week for a judge to foreclose on Rushmore Mall, the Rapid City Journal reported.

A court filing shows the mall's owner SM Rushmore Mall LLC defaulted on its payments in May. The 13-acre (5-hectare) property incorporating the mall and adjacent real estate will now go into receivership.

The sprawling mall has been a shopping hub for western South Dakota since opening in 1979, but it has struggled in the last decade with the loss of some tenants. Rushmore Mall lost its anchor tenants Herberger's and Sears last year. Restaurant chain Fuddrucker's also joined the department stores in leaving the shopping mall.

If Judge Jane Wipf Pfeifle of the 7th Circuit approves the foreclosure request, Wells Fargo will collect rent from the mall's more than 100 listed tenants until a new owner is found. The bank took over the property's mortgage in 2014 when the mall refinanced its loans with U.S. Bank, according to legal filings.

Attorneys for Wells Fargo and SM Rushmore declined the newspaper's request for comment.

The mall will continue operating as usual and customers shouldn't expect to notice any differences, said Kimberly Green, a spokeswoman for Washington Prime Group, SM Rushmore Mall's parent company.

A hearing is scheduled for July 26.

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

Woman accused of having drugs near children sentenced

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. (AP) — A Chamberlain woman accused of endangering two young children by having opioids easily accessible in her home has been sentenced to 74 days in jail and three years of probation.

The Daily Republic reports that 26-year-old Talyn Douville recently pleaded guilty to felony drug possession, and prosecutors dropped six other charges including child abuse.

The charges stemmed from a January search of her home.

The 74-day jail sentence includes a stipulation under which Douville can petition the court after serving 14 days to suspend the other 60, as long as she complies with the terms of her probation.

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

Whitewood man gets prison time for identity theft, forgery

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — A Whitewood man who committed identity theft and forgery at several businesses has been sentenced to serve three years in prison and ordered to pay a total of nearly \$5,000 in restitution.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports that 22-year-old David Baer was accused of passing bad checks and making charges on stolen credit cards last year. He initially faced 21 counts of forgery and 14 counts of identity theft.

He pleaded guilty in May to a total of six counts and a failure-to-appear charge, and prosecutors dismissed the other counts.

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

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, June 28

Put new online sales tax in separate fund

South Dakota had a problem.

More and more people were buying their clothes, electronics and even groceries online.

Because some of those companies didn't have a physical location in our state, taxes weren't being collected on those goods and state government's coffers were getting squeezed.

But it was that same state government that came up with a grand solution to fight back — ultimately all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court — against some big and powerful names.

The Supreme Court ruled in favor of South Dakota last week, saying it can force companies to collect and remit sales tax for customers in South Dakota even if that company doesn't have a physical location in our state.

Let that sink in. Something that started in our tiny state legislature and was fought for by our Attorney General Marty Jackley will soon change the way everyone in America shops. Though Wayfair was on all of the court documents, it was online retailers as a whole who fought the state and this change to the law.

If this doesn't help restore some faith that government can actually accomplish things, we're not sure what will.

What's better, the Supreme Court showed this wasn't a liberal or conservative issue. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg — who is part of the court's liberal wing — joined four of the more conservative justices in the affirmation while Chief Justice John Roberts — a conservative — joined the more liberal judges in the dissenting opinion. It's a refreshing reprieve in these ultra-polarized times.

Before the Supreme Court ruling, South Dakota estimated that it was missing out on roughly \$50 million a year in sales tax on internet purchases.

That's a lot of dough, but who's going to pay this new tax? The consumers. (All of us for those of you following along at home.)

Companies will simply need to collect the tax from you, the consumer, during your online checkout and then send that money to the state. While some consumers may view this as major downer, we see it as an opportunity for our state.

As a good faith gesture to the consumers of South Dakota, we ask that the state legislature look at creating a fund where these new online sales tax dollars can flow into.

Send a message to every South Dakota consumer that this new money, or at least part of it, will be put to a very specific good use. Show us that not only can little old South Dakota change something on a national scale, but we also know how to handle that success.

There is a litany of pressing issues facing our state and that new money could make a huge dent in some of them. By setting aside these tax dollars, the people of South Dakota could take solace in the fact that — what is ostensibly a new tax for most — will be used for an important South Dakota issue.

That new T-shirt can help pay for a mental health facility. Those new shoes can lower the cost of college for our children. A bright blue new sofa from Wayfair could give critical job training to someone in need.

We ask this of our state government. Pick a topic of need to focus on, set the money aside, and let's solve another problem in South Dakota.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, Yankton, June 26

Fireworks season: Where do you go?

The Fourth of July is just a week away, which means a beloved, spectacular and noisy ritual of America's celebration of independence — the use of fireworks — is again at hand, with sales to in-state residents

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beginning today (Wednesday).

But in Yankton, there's a problem with this tradition.

As discussed in a Press & Dakotan story Tuesday, there are actually very few places where a child (or a child at heart) can ignite fireworks in this vicinity.

Do you want to shoot some Roman candles or firecrackers in town? That can't happen legally unless you have written clearance beforehand from the city to do it.

Do you want to head out to Gavins Point Dam to shoot fireworks? That's the way a lot of people here used to enjoy their holiday fireworks. But no more: Fireworks are now prohibited in the state park, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers no longer allows the shooting of fireworks from the dam.

Do you head outside the city limits and discharge your fireworks in the country? That's a tricky business, it turns out, as there are numerous limitations. You can't simply shoot them on the road or from a remote area. Also, you can't shoot them on private property unless the property owner gives you permission.

And there are always the sandbars on the river — if you can get to them, that is .

Thus, the thrill of fireworks season, which was something kids once looked forward to with glee, has been curbed considerably by laws and other rules that bar or limit the discharge of such items. While it's true that many communities offer public displays on or near July 4 for entertainment, the art of enjoying privately purchased fireworks has been diminished.

Still, fireworks are sold in and around Yankton, although the number of vendors has dwindled dramatically in recent years.

There has also been a two-pronged effort to both demonize and defang fireworks. A lot of the pieces can still produce injuries, and there are (rightfully) warnings galore to treat the items with the utmost care. Meanwhile, a number of fireworks have seen their pop reduced to a fizzle in order to minimize any dangers they impose.

Ultimately, those wishing to discharge their own fireworks may be more apt to do it illegally, simply because there are so few other options.

An alternative might be for the city or county to set aside a place for the discharging of fireworks — just like the Corps used to do by allowing a night for fireworks to be shot off the dam. But such a move could also generate serious liability questions.

Or Yankton could change its rules. Communities like Norfolk, Nebraska, permit fireworks to be discharged within the city limits and under certain conditions (such as hours allowed), so there are municipal templates available that could be studied.

As this new holiday season dawns, we wish there were clear answers to this, because shooting fireworks was once one of the great joys of summer for kids. And since there are still retailers selling the items, there is still a demand.

All we can do today is ask people to use the fireworks safely and under adult supervision when they can find a place to fire them. Hopefully, you and/or your child have a place to shoot them. And hopefully, you can still enjoy this explosive piece of Americana as we celebrate our nation's birthday.

Madison Daily Leader, Madison, June 27

Jackley is right: Trial won't bring closure

Jury selection begins today (Monday) in the trial of Stephanie Hubers, a former business employee at a Platte-based educational cooperative.

The cooperative, known as Mid-Central Educational Cooperative, was thrust into the news after business manager Scott Westerhuis murdered his family and killed himself in 2015. Westerhuis is widely considered to have stolen more than \$1 million through a complex scheme which involved, among others, a program called GEAR UP.

Hubers is accused of getting more than \$50,000 to keep quiet about the embezzlement.

The entire scandal has shaken South Dakotans. The murder of innocent children, the financial fleecing of a program to help Native American youth, and the oversight of all the above is so disturbing. Of course,

we aren't able to bring Westerhuis, the apparent ringleader, to justice.

Political parties got into the act, with Democrats saying the state Republican administration didn't provide appropriate oversight to prevent at least part of the tragedy.

Most observers are eager to get to the bottom of the situation, bring those responsible to justice, fix the broken program and set up prevention methods for the future.

Regrettably, we may not be able to do so.

Attorney General Marty Jackley, whose team is prosecuting the case against Hubers (and later against two others) said "I'm not sure that a jury trial or verdict can bring closure to a tragedy such as this."

That doesn't mean we shouldn't do the best we can. While the trials won't heal the wounds caused by Westerhuis and others, we still have the responsibility to prosecute fully, and fix as much as possible. Perhaps the most important part will be the work to prevent future scandals with sound oversight and rigorous auditing.

Man charged in toddler's death doesn't want his attorneys

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A man charged with murder and manslaughter in the death of a baby in Minnehaha County wants new lawyers or a chance to represent himself.

Thirty-eight-year-old Keith Cornett told judge at a motions hearing Thursday that he feels his attorneys are unprofessional and are trying to manipulate him into taking a plea deal. The Argus Leader reports Cornett says he wants to go to trial on the charges against him, which include first-degree murder, second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter and child abuse in the death of his 18-month-old stepson.

Authorities were called to a Dell Rapids home in December 2016 where they found Hayden Wigton unresponsive with traumatic injuries. The toddler could not be revived. An autopsy found six blows to the child's head and bite marks.

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

Suspect in custody in slaying on Pine Ridge Reservation

KYLE, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have a suspect in custody in the fatal shooting of a man in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation community of Kyle.

The Oglala Sioux Department of Public Safety says officers responded to reports of gunshots in a housing area Wednesday night and found a man dead next to a home.

The Rapid City Journal reports officers arrested the suspect on Thursday morning without incident.

Authorities did not immediately release the name of either man.

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

Mitchell man sentenced for theft from mother with dementia

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — A Mitchell man has been sentenced to five years of probation for stealing from his mother, who has dementia.

Sixty-six-year-old Melford Range was convicted of using \$13,000 of his mother's money to pay his bills rather than hers.

The Daily Republic reports he reached a deal with prosecutors that reduced the seriousness of the felony grand theft charge against him, and then pleaded guilty.

Judge Chris Giles also ordered Range to repay the money.

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

Spanish boat saves 60 migrants but Italy locks its ports

By **RENATA BRITO** and **FRANCES D'EMILIO**, Associated Press

ABOARD THE OPEN ARMS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (AP) — A Spanish rescue boat plucked 60 migrants Saturday from a patched-up rubber dinghy in the Mediterranean Sea near Libya, igniting another political row between Italy and Malta over who should let the aid boat dock.

The vessel, Open Arms, run by Spanish aid group Proactiva Open Arms, said it rescued the migrants — including five women, a nine-year-old child and three teenagers — after it spotted a rubber boat patched with duct tape floating in the sea. All the migrants appeared in good health.

Italy's right-wing Interior Minister Matteo Salvini quickly declared that the rescue boat "can forget about arriving in an Italian port" and claimed the boat should go to Malta, the nearest port.

But Malta swiftly pushed back, with its interior minister contending that the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa, south of Sicily, was closer to the boat.

The Open Arms is the third rescue ship operated by humanitarian groups in the central Mediterranean to come into the crosshairs of Salvini's crackdown in the last three weeks.

Even though the number of migrants arriving in Europe is sharply down this year from 2017, the topic of migration has deepened political divisions in the European Union, fueled in part by the demands of anti-migrant nationalist parties.

Salvini has vowed that no more humanitarian groups' rescue boats will dock in Italy, where in recent years, private rescue vessels have brought many of the hundreds of thousands of migrants saved from smugglers' boats.

But cracks have started showing between the two parties in Italy's new populist coalition government over Salvini's hard-line approach.

Roberto Fico, president of Parliament's lower chamber and a leading figure in the 5-Star Movement, the ruling coalition's senior partner, told reporters after inspecting a migrant reception center in a Sicilian port town that "I wouldn't close the ports."

Fico told reporters that Libya now "isn't a place with security" and its coast guard "needs the support of the Italian navy and coast guard and also from some NGO boats." He urged more solidarity toward the migrants, who he said have "dramatic stories that touch the heart."

Salvini contended Saturday on Twitter that the Open Arms had taken on the migrants before a Libyan boat in Libya's search-and-rescue zone could intervene.

But the Open Arms' captain, Marco Martinez, said he told the Rome-based Maritime Rescue Coordination Center about the migrants and was instructed to call Libyan maritime authorities, who didn't answer either by phone or by radio. The captain said officials in Rome then told him it was up to him to decide whether to carry out the rescue.

An Associated Press journalist aboard a nearby rescue vessel, the Astral, when the dinghy was spotted reported that a Libya coast guard vessel approached the Open Arms, but just as it neared the rescue, it made a U-turn and left, ordering the Open Arms to return to Spain.

Malta's interior minister, Michael Farrugia, tweeted a sharp retort to Salvini.

"Quit spreading incorrect news, dragging Malta into it for no reason," he wrote, attaching a map that he said indicated the rescue occurred in Libya's search-and-rescue area and in waters between Libya and the Italian island of Lampedusa.

A day earlier, a Spanish aid boat reported that it was called off rescuing a boat in trouble by Italy's coordination center, which said the Libyan coast guard would handle it. The Libyan coast guard rescued 16 people, but another 100 migrants were reported missing and feared dead at sea.

Even before those deaths Friday, the U.N. refugee agency said 1,137 migrants are estimated to have died crossing the Mediterranean so far this year.

While politicians bickered, those rescued by the Open Arms were jubilant, jumping, chanting and hugging their rescuers.

A 9-year-old boy's eyes sparkled when the Open Arms crew referred to him as "captain" after he was

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allowed to sit in the captain's seat on the bridge for a few minutes. Krisley Dokouada from Central African Republic was rescued along with his parents.

Others rescued Saturday included six Libyans and people from Mali, Eritrea, Egypt, Bangladesh, South Sudan and Guinea.

Saturday's successful rescue was witnessed by four European Parliament lawmakers aboard a companion vessel, the Astral. The lawmakers and an AP journalist then boarded the Open Arms to meet the migrants and rescue crew.

One lawmaker, Javi Lopez of Spain, said authorities in Spain were studying the possibility of taking in the migrants since Malta and Italy weren't providing safe harbor.

There was no immediate answer from Spanish authorities. Proactiva Open Arms spokeswoman Laura Lanuza said the boats were heading north while negotiations with different countries were ongoing.

Earlier in June, Spain took in 630 migrants on another rescue group's vessel, the Aquarius, after they spent nearly a week stuck in the Mediterranean after both Malta and Italy refused to let it dock.

Italian officials have called humanitarian groups "taxi services" for human traffickers based in largely lawless Libya, while other people, including Pope Frances, have demanded that authorities treat the migrants with respect.

D'Emilio reported from Rome. Stephen Calleja in Malta and Aritz Parra in Madrid contributed.

Protests in cities large and small over immigration policy

By GILLIAN FLACCUS and AMY TAXIN, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Thousands of protesters across America, moved by accounts of children separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border, marched Saturday — in major cities and tiny towns — to demand President Donald Trump's administration reunite the divided families.

More than 700 planned marches are expected to draw hundreds of thousands of people across the country, from immigrant-friendly cities like Los Angeles and New York to conservative Appalachia and Wyoming under the banner Families Belong Together.

Thousands dressed in white and gathered early Saturday morning in sweltering 90-degree heat in Lafayette Park across from the White House in what was expected to be the largest of the day's protests.

"What's next? Concentration Camps?" one marcher's sign read. "I care, do you?" read another, referencing a jacket the first lady wore when visiting child migrants amid the global furor over the administration's zero-tolerance policy that forced the separation of more than 2,000 children from their parents. Her jacket had "I really don't care. Do you?" scrawled across the back, and that message has become a rallying cry for Saturday's protesters.

"We care!" marchers shouted outside city hall in Dallas. Organizer Michelle Wentz says opposition to the administration's "barbaric and inhumane" policy has seemed to cross political party lines. Marchers carried signs that read "Compassion not cruelty" and "November is coming."

In New York City, thousands began chanting "shame!" and singing "shut detention down!" before their planned march across the Brooklyn Bridge.

Smaller groups came together in city parks and downtown squares in every state, a total of 703 places across the country, and photos quickly started ricocheting around social media.

Some carried tiny white onesies. "What if it was your child?" was written on one. "No family jails," said another.

Children joined in. A little girl in Washington, D.C., carried a handwritten sign: "I get my mommy. Why can't she?"

Though many who show up to the rallies across the country will be seasoned anti-Trump demonstrators, others are new to immigration activism, including parents who say they feel compelled to show up after heart-wrenching accounts of children forcibly taken from their families as they crossed the border illegally. In Portland, Oregon, for example, several stay-at-home moms have organized their first rally while caring

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for young kids.

"I'm not a radical, and I'm not an activist," said Kate Sharaf, a Portland co-organizer. "I just reached a point where I felt I had to do more."

Immigrant advocacy groups say they're thrilled — and surprised — to see the issue gaining traction among those not tied to immigration.

"Honestly, I am blown away. I have literally never seen Americans show up for immigrants like this," said Jess Morales Rocketto, political director at the National Domestic Workers Alliance, which represents nannies, housekeepers and caregivers, many of whom are immigrants. "We just kept hearing over and over again, if it was my child, I would want someone to do something."

Saturday's rallies are getting funding and support from the American Civil Liberties Union, MoveOn.org, the National Domestic Workers Alliance and The Leadership Conference. But local organizers are shouldering on-the-ground planning, many of them women relying on informal networks established during worldwide women's marches on Trump's inauguration and its anniversary.

Tyler Houlton, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, welcomed interest in the immigration system and said only Congress has the power to change the law.

"We appreciate that these individuals have expressed an interest in and concern with the critical issue of securing our nation's borders and enforcing our immigration laws," Houlton said. "As we have indicated before, the department is disappointed and frustrated by our nation's disastrous immigration laws and supports action."

Trump took to Twitter on Saturday morning to show his support for Immigration and Customs Enforcement amid calls from some Democrats for major changes to immigration enforcement.

Tweeting from New Jersey, Trump said that Democrats "are making a strong push to abolish ICE, one of the smartest, toughest and most spirited law enforcement groups of men and women that I have ever seen." He urged ICE agents to "not worry or lose your spirit."

In Portland, Sharaf and other mothers who organized the rally hope to attract 5,000 people.

Right-wing activists with the group Patriot Prayer also have a permit to march later in the day Saturday and the Portland Police Bureau said Friday they planned to have a heavy police presence.

Sharaf and co-organizer Erin Conroy have coordinated with immigrant advocacy groups.

"This is not my wheelhouse," Conroy said. "As far as I'm concerned, this is a national emergency that we all need to be focused on right now."

Immigration attorney Linda Rivas said groups have met with U.S. authorities, congressional representatives and other leaders to discuss an escalating immigration crackdown that they say began decades ago. But the family separation policy has been a watershed for attracting a broader spectrum of demonstrators, she said.

"To finally have people on board wanting to take action, marching, taking to the streets," Rivas said. "It's been motivating for us as advocates because we have to keep going."

Taxin reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press reporter Susan Montoya Bryan in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Ryan Tarinelli in Dallas, Julie Walker in New York City and Bob Lantz in Philadelphia contributed to this report. Follow Flaccus on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/gflaccus>. Follow Taxin on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/ataxin>

Trump claims Saudi Arabia will boost oil production

By KEN THOMAS and JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

BERKELEY HEIGHTS, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Saturday that he had received assurances from King Salman of Saudi Arabia that the kingdom will increase oil production, "maybe up to 2,000,000 barrels" in response to turmoil in Iran and Venezuela. Saudi Arabia acknowledged the call took place, but mentioned no production targets.

Trump wrote on Twitter that he had asked the king in a phone call to increase oil production "to make

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up the difference...Prices to (sic) high! He has agreed!"

A little over an hour later, the state-run Saudi Press Agency reported on the call, but offered few details.

"During the call, the two leaders stressed the need to make efforts to maintain the stability of oil markets and the growth of the global economy," the statement said.

It added that there also was an understanding that oil-producing countries would need "to compensate for any potential shortage of supplies." It did not elaborate.

Oil prices have edged higher as the Trump administration has pushed allies to end all purchases of oil from Iran following the U.S. pulling out of the nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers. Oil prices also have risen with the ongoing unrest in Venezuela, as well as with fighting in Libya over control of that country's oil infrastructure.

Last week, members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries cartel led by Saudi Arabia and non-cartel members agreed to pump 1 million barrels more crude oil per day, a move that should help contain the recent rise in global energy prices. However, summer months in the U.S. usually lead to increased demand for oil, pushing up the price of gasoline in a midterm election year. A gallon of regular gasoline sold on average in the U.S. for \$2.85, up from \$2.23 a gallon last year, according to AAA.

Trump is trying to exert maximum pressure on Iran while at the same time not upsetting potential U.S. midterm voters with higher gas prices, said Antoine Halff, a Columbia University researcher and former chief oil analyst for the International Energy Agency.

"The Trump support base is probably the part of the U.S. electorate that will be the most sensitive to an increase in U.S. gasoline prices," Halff said.

Trump's comments came Saturday as global financial markets were closed. Brent crude stood at \$79.42 a barrel, while U.S. benchmark crude was at \$74.15.

Saudi Arabia currently produces some 10 million barrels of crude oil a day. Its record is 10.72 million barrels a day. Trump's tweet offered no timeframe for the additional 2 million barrels — whether that meant per day or per month.

However, Saudi Aramco CEO Amin Nasser told journalists in India on Monday that the state oil company has spare capacity of 2 million barrels of oil a day. That was after Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said the kingdom would honor the OPEC decision to stick to a 1-million-barrel increase.

"Saudi Arabia obviously can deliver as much as the market would need, but we're going to be respectful of the 1-million-barrel cap — and at the same time be respectful of allocating some of that to countries that deliver it," al-Falih said then.

The Trump administration has been counting on Saudi Arabia and other OPEC members to supply enough oil to offset the lost Iranian exports and prevent oil prices from rising sharply. But broadcasting its requests on Twitter with a number that stretches credibility opens a new chapter in U.S.-Saudi relations, Halff said.

"Saudis are used to U.S. requests for oil," Halff said. "They're not used to this kind of public messaging. I think the difficulty for them is to distinguish what is a real ask from what is public posturing."

The administration has threatened close allies such as South Korea with sanctions if they don't cut off Iranian imports by early November. South Korea accounted for 14 percent of Iran's oil exports last year, according to the U.S. Energy Department.

China is the largest importer of Iranian oil with 24 percent, followed by India with 18 percent. Turkey stood at 9 percent and Italy at 7 percent.

The State Department has said it expects the "vast majority" of countries will comply with the U.S. request.

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. AP Writer Matt O'Brien contributed to this report from Providence, Rhode Island.

Melania Trump weighs migrant visits with husband's policy

By LAURIE KELLMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Melania Trump lit up when a 3-year-old boy darted out of "Family Unit 8" at a migrant center in Tucson, Arizona.

"Hello!" said the first lady, brightening amid the semicircle of eight cells in a short-term holding center for migrants. "How are you?"

Mrs. Trump, an immigrant and a mother herself, wanted to find out more about how her husband's strict immigration policy was playing out on the ground, especially among families that have been separated at the border. Two tours of migrant detention centers in a week gave her a sometimes grim view.

Now the question is what she does with that knowledge — and how she meshes it with her dislike for dividing up families and a concurrent belief in strong borders.

Spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham says more border visits or talks with lawmakers are possible, but it's not clear what lessons the first lady took from her visits and what she'll communicate to her husband.

"She cares about children deeply," Grisham said. "She also believes in strong border laws and treating everybody equally."

The first lady has given her husband her views on controversial political issues throughout his presidency, but never in such a public way as with the issue of immigrant children.

Before her husband reversed himself and put a halt to separations at the border, Mrs. Trump's office put out a statement saying the first lady "hates" to see families separated and expressing hope that "both sides of the aisle" can reform the nation's immigration laws. She did not say whether she supports the president's "zero tolerance" policy for criminally prosecuting those who cross the border illegally.

"This is a complex issue," Grisham said. "She recognizes that."

The sights and sounds of Mrs. Trump's visits to border facilities in Texas and Arizona amounted to a hard-to-forget information file about the 2,000 children separated from their families nationally.

Thursday's visits to a migrant center and a school provided Mrs. Trump with indelible images and facts on the perils for families crossing the desert, the challenges for law enforcement and what happens to illegal border crossers and their children when they are caught.

Despite the camera-ready nature of the events, some of the images were bleak: a cell block, doors open at the time, where minors are sorted into "Families," "Males" and "Processed" and "Unprocessed." Six expressionless teenage boys seated on a bench outside their cell. A daycare for children under 2 and a few mothers — also minors.

At a Tucson roundtable with law enforcement officials responsible for hundreds of miles of border, the first lady asked how many children cross the desert alone. One official told her a 16-year-old was raped on her journey into the U.S. and gave birth in federal custody.

Another official showed Mrs. Trump a picture that seemed to take her aback. It appeared to be a photo described as showing a 6-year-old boy who was found crossing the desert alone with a soda bottle and a note saying he was looking for his mother. Reporters later learned that the boy is alive.

The first lady at times deliberately leaves her message unclear.

On her first trip to the border, her choice of clothing left everyone scratching their heads, with the inscription on the back of her jacket that read, "I really don't care, do u?"

On her second visit, her wardrobe was understated. But Mrs. Trump didn't expound on her view of her husband's immigration policy.

That didn't stop critics of the Trump administration from lumping her in with her husband.

In Phoenix, as the first lady's motorcade approached a sprawling Southwest Key migrant facility, protesters lined the sidewalk amid a big inflatable likeness of her husband, dressed in a white robe and holding a hood reminiscent of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Melania Trump is guilty, guilty, guilty!" the protesters chanted of the first lady, who is from Slovenia and came to the United States on a special visa during her modeling career.

Inside, she stopped at an air-conditioned trailer marked No. 4 that held 10 boys and girls around 5 years

old.

"Do you like it here with some friends?" Mrs. Trump asked.

"Si," said one girl.

A few protesters screamed from a nearby balcony that overlooked the compound's playground as Mrs. Trump's retinue shifted buildings.

Then came perhaps the most sobering stop, to another cooled room containing nine babies and toddlers, and four of their moms.

Mrs. Trump stepped onto the carpet in her sneakered feet and squatted down to get closer to the children, still sleepy from recent naps. She glanced up toward the women standing nearby and asked, "Who are the moms?" One woman from Honduras raised a hand. "Where is your baby?" the first lady asked. A translator helped the young woman point out a boy, 14 months old. An official traveling with Mrs. Trump said there were 121 children there and their average stay was 48 days.

The balcony was empty by the time Mrs. Trump departed.

At the gates of the compound, some protesters tried briefly to jog alongside the first lady's motorcade as it sped, lights flashing, toward the airport and the four-hour flight back to Washington.

Kellman reported from Arizona and Washington. Associated Press Writer Astrid Galvan contributed from Phoenix.

Follow Kellman on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/APLaurieKellman>

Grief in small town: March honors victims of newsroom attack

By **MICHAEL KUNZELMAN** and **BRIAN WITTE**, Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Quietly clutching candles or hoisting #AnnapolisStrong signs, more than 1,000 people streamed through Maryland's capital, remembering five people slain in a newspaper office not just as gatekeepers of the news but as a crucial piece of their tight-knit community.

Friends, former co-workers and people who felt connected to the victims took part in a strikingly silent candlelit march Friday night to honor the employees of The Capital newspaper who were killed a day earlier in one of the deadliest attacks on journalists in U.S. history.

Melissa Wilson, who came to the vigil with her husband, Benjamin, their 9-year-old daughter and 5-year-old son, said many Annapolis residents have "one degree of separation" from at least one victim.

"The people who made our newspaper are people we felt we knew, even if we had never met them before," Benjamin Wilson said.

Melissa Wilson's employer has offices in the same building as the newspaper and her co-workers were there when a gunman methodically blasted his way through the newsroom with a 12-gauge pump-action shotgun.

Jarrod W. Ramos has been charged with five counts of first-degree murder. Authorities say he has a longtime grudge against the paper, suing it in 2012 after it ran an article about him pleading guilty to harassing a woman. He also sent a barrage of menacing tweets that led to an investigation five years ago.

A detective concluded he was no threat, and the paper didn't want to press charges for fear of "putting a stick in a beehive."

But residents focused on the victims: assistant managing editor Rob Hiaasen, editorial page editor Gerald Fischman, special projects editor Wendi Winters, reporter John McNamara and sales assistant Rebecca Smith.

David Marsters, who worked at the newspaper from 2008 to 2016 and knew four of the slain employees, said the outpouring of grief over their deaths is a testament to the special bond the newspaper has with its readers.

"They were great people who did amazing work in the community," he said.

He took part in the march that ended at a waterfront harbor called "City Dock," where laughter and the

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noise of playing children usually carries across the restaurants, bars and shops. But not on Friday.

"For it to be so still and so somber, especially on a Friday night, it's startling," Kit O'Neill said, describing Annapolis as "a small town with a big heart."

"And the Gazette is its mighty newspaper," she added.

Earlier, dozens of mourners gathered at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis to pay tribute to congregation member Wendi Winters and the other victims.

The Rev. Fred Muir's voice cracked as he described the mounting dread he felt Thursday as it became clear Winters didn't survive. He described her as a beloved "pillar of her community."

"Everybody has a Wendi Winters story. She was a force to be reckoned with," he said.

Muir said the shock and grief have reverberated across Annapolis, a city he described as a small town where many people knew somebody who worked at the newspaper.

In the attack, police said Ramos barricaded the rear exit of the office to prevent anyone from escaping, gunning down one victim trying to slip out the back.

His public defenders had no comment after he was denied bail in a brief court appearance. He was placed on suicide watch.

Ramos had repeatedly targeted staffers with angry, profanity-laced tweets, launching so many online attacks that then-publisher Tom Marquardt called police in 2013.

A detective investigated, holding a conference call with an attorney for the publishing company, a former correspondent and the paper's publisher, Anne Arundel County Police Chief Timothy Altomare said.

A police report said the attorney produced a trove of tweets in which Ramos "makes mention of blood in the water, journalist hell, hit man, open season, glad there won't be murderous rampage, murder career."

The detective, Michael Praley, said in the report that he "did not believe that Mr. Ramos was a threat to employees" at the paper, noting that Ramos hadn't tried to enter the building and hadn't sent "direct, threatening correspondence."

"As of this writing the Capital will not pursue any charges," Praley wrote. "It was described as putting a stick in a beehive which the Capital Newspaper representatives do not wish to do."

Marquardt, the former publisher, said he talked with the newspaper's attorneys about seeking a restraining order but didn't because he and others thought it could provoke Ramos to do something worse.

Later, in 2015, Ramos tweeted that he would like to see the paper stop publishing, but "it would be nicer" to see two of its journalists "cease breathing."

Then Ramos "went silent" for more than two years, Marquardt said.

"This led us to believe that he had moved on, but for whatever reason, he decided to resurrect his issue with The Capital yesterday," the former publisher said. "We don't know why."

The police chief said new posts went up just before the killings but authorities didn't know about them until later.

Little has been released about Ramos, other than that he is single, has no children and lives in an apartment in Laurel, Maryland. He was employed by an IT contractor for the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics from 2007 to 2014, a department spokesman said.

The rampage began with a shotgun blast that shattered the glass entrance to the open newsroom. Ramos carefully planned the attack, using "a tactical approach in hunting down and shooting the innocent people," prosecutor Wes Adams said.

Journalists crawled under desks, describing agonizing minutes of terror as they heard the gunman's footsteps and the repeated blasts.

"I was curled up, trying not to breathe, trying not to make a sound, and he shot people all around me," photographer Paul Gillespie, who dove beneath a desk, told The Baltimore Sun, owner of the Annapolis paper.

Gillespie said he heard a colleague scream, "No!" A gunshot blast followed. He heard another co-worker's voice, then another shot.

The chief said Ramos' shotgun was legally purchased about a year ago despite his guilty plea in the harassment case. He also carried smoke grenades, authorities said.

Associated Press writers Sarah Rankin and Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Va., contributed to this story, as did the AP News Research Center in New York.

Trump's own tariffs make it harder to rebuild infrastructure

By DAVID A. LIEB, Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — President Donald Trump wants to rebuild the nation's transportation infrastructure. He also wants to strengthen the U.S. steel industry through tariffs on imports.

But that second goal could make it more costly to accomplish the first.

Since Trump announced the tariffs in March, prices have been rising for the American steel used to build bridges, reinforce concrete highways and lay the rails for mass transit systems. Though many of this summer's big construction projects had locked in pre-tariff prices, concerns are mounting among contractors and some transportation officials that the tariffs could raise costs and delay work that is still in the planning stages.

"The president seems to be at loggerheads with two conflicting priorities of his administration," said Brian Turmail, vice president of public affairs and strategic initiatives at the Associated General Contractors of America. "He's making it very difficult for construction firms and people who build infrastructure to be successful, at least in the short term."

In Kansas City, for example, voters recently approved higher sales and property taxes to fund a streetcar extension that had been estimated to cost at least \$250 million. Though the project had been in the works for a year, officials are now recalculating.

"We are anticipating our prices to increase because of the tariffs," said Donna Mandelbaum, communications director for the Kansas City Streetcar Authority.

Trump in February announced a \$1.5 trillion infrastructure plan that would use \$200 billion in federal funds to leverage state, local and private-sector investment. The proposal had yet to gain traction in Congress when the president announced tariffs of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum imported from most countries. After a temporary exemption, the metal tariffs hit the U.S. allies of Canada, Mexico and the European Union on May 31.

Most federally funded transportation projects in the U.S. already are required by law to use U.S. steel. Tariffs are like taxes charged only on imported products. But because they make foreign steel more expensive, tariffs also allow U.S. steel producers to raise prices without being undercut by international competitors.

The price of U.S. hot-rolled coil steel, a bellwether product for the industry, is up about 40 percent since the start of this year due to a combination of Trump's tariffs and strong economic demand, said Joe In-nace, the metals content director in the Americas at S&P Global Platts.

Prices also have been rising for specific transportation-related products, such as fabricated metal for bridges.

That's created a predicament for the owners of a 127-year-old railroad bridge over the Mississippi River at St. Louis that is in danger of being shut down if not replaced soon. Bids for the \$219 million Merchants Bridge project were made in February, shortly before Trump announced the tariffs. But in June, the administration denied a grant that would have financed one-third of the project.

Bridge officials now are scrambling to fill the funding gap before a July 7 deadline to decide whether to go forward with the winning bid. Adding to their urgency is the price for the needed 12,500 tons of steel.

"The bidding environment is not going to get better," said Mike McCarthy, president of the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, which owns the bridge. "In light of steel prices, I think they're going to be creeping up."

Some other states also are warily watching steel prices.

California already faces uncertainty because of an attempt to repeal a gas tax hike that's projected to

raise \$52 billion for roads and bridges over the next decade. The state Department of Transportation is monitoring whether the steel tariffs will raise material costs "to determine if adjustments may need to be made in future contracts," agency spokesman Mark Dinger said.

In Pennsylvania, concerns that tariffs could drive up the steel market have officials watching for any effects on their four-year construction plan, said Rich Kirkpatrick, a spokesman for the Pennsylvania Transportation Department.

Rhode Island transportation officials said they are allowing for retroactive cost adjustments in contracts to account for significant changes in steel prices. They have asked the Federal Highway Administration for permission to use federal money to cover those higher costs.

Steel-related products account for about 10 cents of every \$1 spent on highways and bridges, though that ratio can be significantly higher for particular projects, said Alison Black, chief economist at the American Road & Transportation Builders Association.

Economic analysts say uncertainty about the duration and impact of the steel tariffs could force some projects to get scaled back or postponed. The ripple effect also could drive up costs for companies that manufacture asphalt pavers, graders and other heavy equipment used in road projects.

Ned Hill, a professor of economic development at Ohio State University, said the situation will "raise havoc." If construction companies try to bid six months to a year ahead of time, "they aren't going to know what price to bid on. ... And public works departments aren't going to know how much the project's going to cost them."

Follow David A. Lieb at: <http://twitter.com/DavidALieb> .

Roberts may hold key vote as Supreme Court moves right

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief Justice John Roberts is the Supreme Court's new man in the middle. It's just that the middle may have moved well to the right.

The retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy means Roberts probably will be the conservative justice closest to the court's four liberals, allowing him to control where the panel comes down in some of its most contentious cases.

Roberts will be the justice who determines "how far they go and how fast they go," said Washington lawyer John Elwood.

Kennedy played a similar role for many years — his votes on gay rights, abortion, the death penalty, the environment, voting rights and affirmative action basically determined the outcome of cases on which the court was divided between liberals and conservatives.

Roberts has typically been to Kennedy's right. He did not endorse a constitutional right to marry for same-sex couples. He dissented when the court struck down Texas abortion clinic restrictions in 2016. The chief justice also was in dissent from the court's first major climate change decision in 2007, when it held that the Environmental Protection Agency could regulate emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as air pollutants.

New cases on any of those issues could be before the court soon and, even if Roberts is not prepared to overrule major Supreme Court precedents, he could be in position to cut back on environmental protections as well as gay rights and abortion rights.

Smaller steps might be in keeping with Roberts' preference for avoiding major divides where possible, and attracting votes from both conservatives and liberals. The 63-year-old chief justice may be in no hurry to move quickly, as he could be on the bench another 15 to 20 years.

"Chief Justice Roberts, more than any other justice on the court, believes in narrow rulings that attract broad majorities, answering no more than necessary to resolve a given case," Jonathan Adler, a professor at the Case Western Reserve University School of Law, wrote on the Volokh Conspiracy legal blog.

In one sense, the Supreme Court's immediate future could look a lot like the term that just ended. Rob-

erts seemed firmly in control of a court that overwhelmingly went conservative in divided cases, including upholding President Donald Trump's travel ban, striking a blow at public-sector labor unions, limiting workers' rights to band together to complain about pay and affirming Ohio's aggressive efforts to purge its voting rolls.

Only on one occasion did Roberts join with the liberal justices in a 5-4 decision, a ruling that said police generally must have warrants to get telecommunications companies' records showing where people have used their cellphones.

Twice, though, Roberts was among a larger grouping of justices in cases that skirted the big issue at stake, but that could return to the court. In one case, the justices rejected a lower-court ruling that set limits on redistricting for partisan gain, but without deciding whether limits ever could be imposed. In another, the court ruled in favor of a baker who would not create a wedding cake for a same-sex couple, yet left on the table the question of whether religious objections could be used to avoid complying with anti-discrimination laws that protect LGBT people.

For all his votes on the conservative side of issues, Roberts has had his critics on the right. They include Trump, who once labeled Roberts "an absolute disaster" for the chief justice's critical vote to uphold the Affordable Care Act in 2012. Trump has not publicly criticized Roberts since he's been president.

The case arose in the middle of the 2012 presidential campaign, in which Barack Obama was seeking re-election and the health care law also known as "Obamacare" was a major issue. Then, as now, the five conservatives were nominees of Republican presidents, while the four liberals were chosen by Democrats.

In the end, Roberts sided with the liberals, a decision some court observers have attributed in part to concern about public perceptions of the court and the chief justice's desire to be seen as above the political fray.

"He's conservative, but he is an institutionalist. He believes deeply in the Supreme Court," said George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley.

A test of Roberts' ability to set the court's agenda could come on the topic of guns, said UCLA law professor Adam Winkler.

Roberts voted in favor of gun rights in two cases that held that Americans have the right to have guns, at least for self-defense in their homes. But the court has since rejected repeated attempts to expand on the right of gun ownership, in part because Roberts and Kennedy would not join the other conservative justices to take on a new case.

It takes the votes of four justices for the court to agree to review a case. If Kennedy's replacement is a fourth vote for a new case about guns, then Roberts might soon have to weigh in on issues like the right carry a concealed firearm in public or bans on assault weapons, Winkler said.

Associated Press writers Jessica Gresko and Noreen Nasir contributed to this report.

Evangelical leaders downplay potential Roe v. Wade reversal

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — For evangelical Christian leaders like Jerry Falwell Jr., this is their political holy grail. Like many religious conservatives in a position to know, the Liberty University president with close ties to the White House suspects that the Supreme Court vacancy President Donald Trump fills in the coming months will ultimately lead to the reversal of the landmark abortion case Roe v. Wade. But instead of celebrating publicly, some evangelical leaders are downplaying their fortune on an issue that has defined their movement for decades.

"What people don't understand is that if you overturn Roe v. Wade, all that does is give the states the right to decide whether abortion is legal or illegal," Falwell told The Associated Press in an interview. "My guess is that there'd probably be less than 20 states that would make abortion illegal if given that right."

Falwell added: "In the '70s, I don't know how many states had abortion illegal before Roe v. Wade, but it won't be near as many this time."

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The sentiment, echoed by evangelical leaders across the country this past week, underscores the delicate politics that surround a moment many religious conservatives have longed for. With the retirement of swing vote Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, Trump and his Republican allies in the Senate plan to install a conservative justice who could re-define the law of the land on some of the nation's most explosive policy debates — none bigger than abortion.

And while these are the very best of times for the religious right, social conservatives risk a powerful backlash from their opponents if they cheer too loudly. Women's groups have already raised the alarm for their constituents, particularly suburban women, who are poised to play an outsized role in the fight for the House majority this November.

Two-thirds of Americans do not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned, according to a poll released Friday by the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. Among women of reproductive age, three out of four want the high court ruling left alone. The poll was conducted before Kennedy's retirement was announced.

"The left is going to try very hard to say this is all about overturning *Roe*," said Johnnie Moore, a Southern Baptist minister who was a co-chairman of the Trump campaign's evangelical advisory board. The more significant shift on the high court, he said, would likely be the help given to conservatives in their fight for what they call religious freedom.

Tony Perkins, who leads the socially conservative Family Research Council, said abortion was simply "a factor" in evangelicals' excitement over a more conservative Supreme Court. He suggested that public opinion was already shifting against abortion rights, although that's not true of the *Roe v. Wade* ruling, which has become slightly more popular over time.

Perkins agreed with Moore that the broader push for religious freedom was a bigger conservative focus. Many evangelicals, for example, have lashed out against Obama-era laws that required churches and other religious institutions to provide their employees with women's reproductive services, including access to abortion and birth control. Others have rallied behind private business owners who faced legal repercussions after denying services to gay people.

Yet sweeping restrictions to abortion rights are certainly on the table, Moore noted.

"There is a high level of confidence within the community that overturning *Roe* is actually, finally possible," Moore said. He added: "Evangelicals have never been more confident in the future of America than they are now. It's just a fact."

In Alabama, Tom Parker, a Republican associate justice on the state Supreme Court who is campaigning to become the state's chief justice, explicitly raised the potential of sending cases to Washington that would lead to the overturning of key rulings, including *Roe v. Wade*.

"President Trump is just one appointment away from giving us a conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court," Parker said in an interview on the radio program *Wallbuilders Live*. "And they are going to need cases that they can use to reverse those horrible decisions of the liberal majority in the past that have undermined the Constitution and really just abused our own personal rights."

Despite Trump's struggles with Christian values in his personal life at times, skeptical evangelical Christians lined up behind him in the 2016 election, and they remain one of his most loyal constituencies.

The president's standing with white evangelical Christians hit an all-time high in April when 75 percent of evangelicals held a favorable view of Trump, according to a poll conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute.

The unlikely marriage between the thrice-married president and Christian conservatives has always been focused on Trump's ability to re-shape the nation's judicial branch.

On the day she endorsed candidate Trump in March 2016, the late iconic anti-abortion activist Phyllis Schlafly first asked him privately whether he would appoint more judges like the conservative Antonin Scalia, recalled Schlafly's successor Ed Martin, who was in the room at the time. Trump promised he would.

The president followed through with the appointment of Neil Gorsuch less than a month after his inauguration, delighting religious conservatives nationwide. And the Trump White House, while disorganized in other areas, made its relationship with the religious right a priority.

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The first private White House meeting between evangelical leaders and senior Trump officials came in the days after the Gorsuch nomination, said Moore, who was in attendance. He said the White House has hosted roughly two dozen similar meetings since then in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building adjacent to the White House.

A senior administration official such as Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump or Kellyanne Conway — if not Trump himself — has always been present, Moore added. Each meeting featured a detailed briefing on the administration's push to fill judicial openings.

"The courts have been at the very center of the relationship," Moore said.

And now, as the focus shifts toward the president's next Supreme Court nomination, evangelical leaders who once held their noses and voted for Trump have little doubt he will pick someone who shares their conservative views on abortion, same-sex marriage and other social issues.

Falwell insisted only that Trump make his next selection from the list of prospective nominees he released before his election. All are believed to oppose the Roe v. Wade ruling.

Any deviation from the list, Falwell said, would be "a betrayal." He noted, however, that he's in weekly contact with the White House and has supreme confidence that the president will deliver.

"This is a vindication for the 80 percent of evangelicals who supported Trump. Many of them voted on this issue alone," Falwell said. "Today's a day that we as evangelicals, and really all average Americans, can say we told you so."

Associated Press writer Jay Reeves in Birmingham, Alabama, contributed to this report.

Trump enjoying a hot streak, a break from immigration news

By **KEN THOMAS** and **CATHERINE LUCEY**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Supreme Court vacancy just fell in his lap, offering a chance to shape the court for decades. The current court handed him two favorable rulings in a single week. And there's a Russia summit on the horizon, promising headlines for a week or more. President Donald Trump is enjoying quite a hot streak.

Some of the good news is not of his making. Still, a series of welcome events has given the president a reprieve from images of migrant children being separated from their families at the border, as well as negative headlines about administrative chaos implementing his hardline immigration policies.

Trump sought to keep the good vibes going Friday with an event marking the six-month anniversary of his tax cuts.

"We are bringing back our beautiful American dreams," Trump declared, as he used a celebratory East Room event with top aides and business owners to showcase the \$1.5 trillion tax package passed last December.

He declared recent growth an "economic miracle," though there's credit to be shared: Lower unemployment, fewer claims for jobless benefits and many other positive economic indicators reflect the slow and steady nine-year recovery that began under President Barack Obama.

Trump's tax cuts will add a hefty dose of debt-financed stimulus to the economy. Government agencies and outside analysts estimate the tax cuts will temporarily boost growth in 2018 and 2019, then fade as the national debt mounts.

Looking ahead, Trump is expected to announce his nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court and hold a highly anticipated sit-down with Russian President Vladimir Putin — both events he will treat with his customary flair for building suspense. His recent summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un won him buckets of TV coverage highlighting his stature on the world stage.

Trump relished his moment speaking to reporters on Air Force One Friday evening. Of the Supreme Court opening, he said: "It is exciting though, right? From day one, I've heard outside of war and peace, of course, the most important decision you make is the selection of a Supreme Court judge — if you get it."

During his tumultuous presidency, Trump has had plenty of frustrations and setbacks. He watched his

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hoped-for repeal of the Obamacare health care law go down to defeat, acknowledged his lawyer's payments to porn actress Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about her allegations of an affair — which he denied — and grappled with the federal investigation into Russia's role in the 2016 election. But he has consistently maintained backing from bedrock supporters.

Overall, 41 percent of Americans approve of the job Trump is doing as president, while 57 percent disapprove, according to a recent Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research survey. That rating has held steady since March.

Still, Jon Meacham, a presidential historian, said a lesson of the past 18 months is that Trump has a tendency "to create a distracting drama of his own making that tends to distract and detract from what we consider typical political momentum." He said the coming weeks will pose "an interesting test of whether there's enough discipline to go from strength to strength."

In Wisconsin this week, Trump said: "We're passing so much. Look at what's happening with our Supreme Court. Look at the victories we've had. Look at the victories we've had."

Filling a Supreme Court vacancy is a welcome opportunity for any president. The retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy gives Trump the ability to lock in a conservative majority that could endure long after his presidency has ended.

After Trump's sweeping tax overhaul, his successful nomination of Justice Neil Gorsuch to the court last year was his most significant achievement, affirming the unifying role that Supreme Court politics have played for Republicans. Trump can thank Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky for keeping the court seat open during the last year of Obama's presidency.

He also benefits from good timing in Kennedy's decision to step down at this moment. If Kennedy had stayed for another term, Trump would have had a harder time using the issue to fire up his base of conservatives in the midterm elections.

With Gorsuch in place, the high court has been particularly generous to Trump's causes of late. Just this week, the justices upheld his travel ban on visitors from several majority Muslim countries and followed that up with a ruling on union fees that was long sought by conservatives.

In recent weeks, the president also has stoked a contentious trade dialogue with U.S. allies at the Group of Seven summit in Quebec and pushed ahead with plans to impose steep tariffs on Chinese goods.

Former White House strategist Steve Bannon sums it up as a banner time for the president's agenda: "In past two weeks the G-7, the economic confrontation with China, the travel ban, the border and the Supreme Court vacancy, among other events, crystalize the vital and historic nature of Trump's presidency."

Trump's political fortunes also improved this week with a series of primary elections. He decided to go all-in for South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster, one of his earliest supporters, holding a rally in the state just hours before a tight runoff election. After Trump's rally, McMaster cruised to victory.

And Trump picked up a win of sorts in a congressional district in his hometown of New York. Rep. Joe Crowley, a member of the House Democratic leadership team viewed as a potential House speaker, was defeated in his primary campaign by 28-year-old Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a former Bernie Sanders campaign organizer.

The sudden rise of Ocasio-Cortez helps Trump paint Democrats with a broad brush, identifying them as supporters of socialist health care and economic policies.

There are still plenty of storm clouds on his horizon. The Russia probe continues, and there could be further fallout on immigration. Financial markets, jittery over tariffs and health care premiums, could decline before the election.

More immediately, there are concerns the upcoming NATO summit could turn contentious, like Trump's recent showdown at the G-7. And there are worries he could give up too much in his meeting next month with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki.

"He's like the guy you play a board game with and it's a game of luck and no matter what, he wins. We all know somebody like that," said Republican consultant Rick Tyler. But he added that Trump's luck also changes: "He'll have a good week and then he'll have a bad week."

Trump has long believed in good fortune. In his book "The Art of the Deal," he wrote that in real estate,

"What you need, generally, is enough time and a little luck."

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Josh Boak contributed to this report.

US lawyers: Ruling allows detention of immigrant families

By **ASTRID GALVAN, Associated Press**

PHOENIX (AP) — The Trump administration says a ruling this week by a federal judge in San Diego requiring the government to reunify families separated at the border means authorities can legally keep families detained until their cases are complete.

The interpretation means immigrant families could spend months or even years in detention — even those seeking asylum — because of a years-long backlog in immigration court.

The Justice Department has said cases in which immigrants remain detained move through the system quicker than if they are released, but the backlog is still thousands of cases deep.

The Department of Justice said in a court filing Friday in Los Angeles that a case known as the Flores agreement allows the government to detain families now that the California judge has barred their separation.

"The Trump Administration has been engaged — since January of 2017 — in restoring order to the lawlessness at the Southwest border and protecting our nation's citizens, but we are beholden to a broken immigration system that Congress has refused to fix and that courts have exacerbated," the department said in a news release.

The Flores agreement is a long-standing guide as to how and how long the government can detain immigrant children. It stems from a lawsuit filed in 1985 by an immigrant girl, Jenny Lisette Flores, who was detained by immigration authorities in poor conditions and who was not allowed to be released to an aunt.

The Flores agreement requires the government to release children from immigration detention "without unnecessary delay," which the government has generally interpreted to mean about 20 days.

But the DOJ is zeroing in on the requirement, saying the order this week from U.S. District Court Judge Dana Sabraw requires that children's release be delayed so that they can stay with their parents.

Sabraw set a 30-day deadline for reuniting parents and children and called for young children to be reunited more quickly.

The ACLU is disputing the Trump administration's interpretation of the ruling.

Lee Gelernt, deputy director of its Immigrants' Rights Project, said the government has a constitutional obligation to release parents who don't pose a flight risk or danger, and that parents can choose to release their children if they don't want them to be in a family detention center.

"Ultimately the (San Diego) case leaves it up to parents to decide what is in the best interests of the child," Gelernt said. "It would be flatly unconstitutional if the government's purpose in detaining families is punitive or is intended to serve as a deterrent."

The administration has long-argued that releasing asylum-seekers who cross the border illegally amounts to catch-and-release and results in many not showing up for their court hearings.

The administration says it is enforcing a zero-tolerance policy requiring border agents to arrest and prosecute anyone caught crossing the border illegally. That resulted in more than 2,000 children being separated from their parents.

Trump says he'll bring up election meddling with Putin

By **KEN THOMAS and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press**

MORRISTOWN, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Friday he plans to bring up Russian election meddling during his upcoming summit with Vladimir Putin, part of a wide-ranging list of topics that could include sanctions and the status of Crimea.

Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One that he planned to discuss Ukraine, Syria and Crimea as well

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as election interference when he meets with the Russian president in Helsinki, Finland, next month in a summit he said could help defuse tensions between Moscow and Washington.

"We'll be talking about elections. We don't want anybody tampering with elections," Trump said. The president has repeatedly minimized the conclusion of the U.S. intelligence community that Russia meddled in the 2016 election to help him win.

He tweeted Thursday, "Russia continues to say they had nothing to do with Meddling in our Election!" And he has called the FBI's investigation into potential Russian coordination with his campaign a "witch hunt" designed to delegitimize his presidency.

Trump was noncommittal when asked if he might lift sanctions imposed on Russia, telling reporters: "We'll see what Russia does. We're going to be talking to Russia about a lot of things. We're going to be talking to them about Syria, we're going to be talking to them about Ukraine. We might even be talking about some of the things President Obama lost, like Crimea, that could come up."

Asked if the U.S. might recognize Crimea to be part of Russia, he said, "We're to have to see" and then said the situation was handled "unfortunately" by his predecessor, President Barack Obama.

Trump has previously suggested Russia should be allowed to return to the Group of Seven — formerly Eight — economic powers. Putin was expelled from the international group in 2014 after Russia moved troops into eastern Ukraine and annexed the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea. Leaders of the other G-7 nations — Britain, Canada, Italy, France, Germany and Japan — have all made clear Russia is not welcome back until and unless it gives Crimea back to Ukraine.

The Obama administration, along with the European Union and individual allied countries, imposed sanctions on Russia over Crimea, and even members of Trump's Cabinet have said they will not be lifted until the situation is resolved.

During the flight Friday to his New Jersey golf resort, Trump was also asked to preview next month's NATO summit in Brussels. He reiterated his plans to push fellow NATO members to devote more of their budgets to defense.

"Germany has to spend more money," he said. "Spain, France, it's unfair what they've done to the United States."

Month after diss track, Drake emerges unfazed with new album

By MESFIN FEKADU, AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A month ago, Drake's world was crumbling.

Now, he's untouchable.

Pusha T's infamous diss track — where he was in full investigative journalist mode, divulging new information about Drake while also shading his mother, father and bestie — hit Drake hard. Drake's reply — well, lack thereof, marked a low for the rapper-singer, who had surprised music fans when he won his rap beef with Meek Mill in 2015.

But Drake, who has been criticized by some as too commercial and too soft, is back on top seemingly unfazed. And those fans who enjoyed the revelations in Pusha T's "The Story of Adidon" are likely listening to "Scorpion," the highly anticipated, 25-track album by pop music's No. 1 player released Friday.

"It's not going to hurt him," Carl Chery, Spotify's creative director for urban music, said of the diss track. "If Drake comes out with his new single, you're not going to listen to it? Everyone is going to run and play it. And it's going to become an Instagram caption."

"Scorpion," which features songs with Jay-Z and a previously unreleased Michael Jackson track, includes the massive No. 1 hits "God's Plan" and "Nice for What." It's expected to debut at No. 1, and it was already heavily trending on social media ahead of its release.

Over the last few weeks, Drake memes were also trending, but it wasn't advance publicity he would have hoped for. Instead, the rapper — derided for being too sensitive by some hip-hop heads — was being roasted after the release of "The Story of Adidon," which besides going for the jugular lyrically, also featured as its cover a photo of Drake in blackface (which the rapper explained was a publicity shot from

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his acting days from a project about the difficulties black actors face).

Pusha T started the beef with a line in his recently released album "Daytona," and Drake responded with a whole track of digs in the song "Duppy Freestyle." It seemed he won the battle until Pusha T released his track — and Drake went silent.

Damien Scott, Complex's editor-in-chief and vice president of content and development, said that he thought Drake might have gone back in the studio to re-record "Scorpion" following Pusha T's shocking revelation that Drake was a father ("A baby's involved, it's deeper than rap/We talkin' character, let me keep with the facts/You are hiding a child, let that boy come home").

"I think that the diss had an effect on him personally and as an artist," said Scott, who said the song wouldn't put a dent in Drake's professional career. "He's never been in this space before. He's never been on his left foot before and I don't think he knows what that's like."

Scott may have been right. For the first time Drake addresses his son in a song, rapping on "Emotionless": "I wasn't hiding my kid from the world, I was hiding the world from my kid." On the closing track "March 14," he raps about being a single father and says: "She's not my lover like Billie Jean, but the kid is mine."

For another artist, a diss track so heavy might have hurt their career — but not for Drake.

"He can still put this (album) out and get so much love in the midst of all of this other drama that's happening," said Cori Murray, entertainment director at Essence magazine. "He's still beloved."

The Grammy winner has been on a white-hot streak since he jumped from the acting world onto the music scene as both a rapper and singer in 2009, releasing hit after hit, multiplatinum albums and collaborations with everyone from Rihanna to Romeo Santos. His sound has evolved over the years to incorporate not just rap and R&B but pop, dancehall and African music.

"I call Drake the No. 1 pop star because of the type of music he makes. And I don't mean that in a derogatory sense. I legitimately think he's pop music in the way that Michael Jackson and Madonna were pop music, in the sense that they take all these influences and all these genres and use themselves as a filter through which they're distilled into something brand new," Scott said.

Murray agreed.

"Because of Drake I learned about WizKid. Because of Drake I learned about Black Coffee," Murray said of the Nigerian singer who appeared on Drake's hit "One Dance" and the South African DJ who performs around the world. "He's introducing you to something (new) ... so why not give him his credit for introducing us to someone we may not have known about?"

Chery said Drake's ever-changing sound has kept him consistent — with fans and on the pop charts.

"You have to change with the times, and he's done that," said Chery, referencing that Drake's recent collaborations include Migos and rising rapper Lil Baby. "I think he just really has his finger on the pulse of what's happening. And he knows when it's appropriate for him to jump on something and kind of incorporate it in his game plan."

"He's like become a tastemaker in a sense," Chery added.

Online:

<https://drakeofficial.com/>

Trump says he has 'good relationship' with chief of staff

By KEN THOMAS, CATHERINE LUCEY and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

MORRISTOWN, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Friday that he gets along well with his embattled White House chief of staff but doesn't know how long John Kelly will remain in the job.

Kelly has been back in the spotlight this week as word surfaced that the president has been sounding out allies about potential replacements for the retired four-star general. Kelly is credited with bringing order to the West Wing but also grates on the freewheeling president.

Asked about all the speculation, Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One that "we're getting along very well." But he added: "Look, at some point, things happen but I will tell you ... we have a very good

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relationship. He's a wonderful man."

Asked if Kelly was leaving, the president said, "That I don't know. I like John a lot. I like him and I respect him." The president spoke en route to a weekend at his golf club in New Jersey.

Two possible replacements for Kelly: Trump's budget director, Mick Mulvaney, and Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Nick Ayers, according to two people with knowledge of Trump's thinking. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss personnel matters.

Trump often openly muses about replacements for his aides without follow-through, and speculation has bubbled up about Kelly and other aides in the past without action.

The White House has previously denied talk of impending staff shake-ups that later came to pass. The long list of White House staffers who have recently left or are planning to go in the coming weeks includes legislative director Marc Short.

Kelly has told confidants he currently has no plan to leave and has made no formal preparations to do so, according to one person with knowledge of his thinking. But he has also told people close to him that he'd be happy if he made it to the one-year mark in the position, which would mean he stays until late July.

The latest speculation about Kelly comes as he has seen his White House role diminished in recent months.

Trump and Kelly have drifted apart, as the president has chafed at the retired general's attempts to impose order. The president has increasingly followed his own counsel and added more like-minded aides to his staff, many of whom have direct access to the Oval Office without going through Kelly.

That list will soon include former Fox News executive Bill Shine, who is expected to join the administration as deputy chief of staff for communications.

Kelly has often joked publicly about how working for Trump is the hardest job he's ever had, including those on the battlefield.

Trump has discussed replacing Kelly before, and any personnel changes should be considered tentative until he carries them out. Rarely does the president directly fire anyone, frequently letting out-of-favor aides dangle in limbo for months.

Mulvaney on Friday told Fox Business Network he'd "heard those same rumors about three times now in the last 12 months. I'll start dealing with that issue when the president actually raises it with me as opposed to the meeting that hasn't happened yet." Ayers did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump, fielding questions from reporters en route to a weekend getaway to his New Jersey golf course, suggested it's possible that Hope Hicks — who was a top campaign and White House aide before leaving in March — could someday return. "I'll bet you Hope misses it. I think everybody misses it."

"You exhaust a lot of people, you understand that? You people exhaust a lot of people. They come in full of life and vim and vigor and they're exhausted and then they get their breath," Trump told reporters. "And frankly Hope is great and so are many of the other people. Many people would like to come back. Look, there is nothing more exciting than what we're doing."

— Lucey reported from Washington.

NSA deleting more than 685 million call records

By DEB RIECHMANN and SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Security Agency is deleting more than 685 million call records the government obtained since 2015 from telecommunication companies in connection with investigations, raising questions about the viability of the program.

The NSA's bulk collection of call records was initially curtailed by Congress after former NSA contractor Edward Snowden leaked documents revealing extensive government surveillance. The law, enacted in June 2015, said that going forward, the data would be retained by telecommunications companies, not the NSA, but that the intelligence agency could query the massive database.

Now the NSA is deleting all the information it collected from the queries.

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The agency released a statement late Thursday saying it started deleting the records in May after NSA analysts noted "technical irregularities in some data received from telecommunication service providers." It also said the irregularities resulted in the NSA obtaining some call details it was not authorized to receive.

That points to a failure of the program, according to David Kris, a former top national security official at the Justice Department.

"They said they have to purge three years' worth of data going back to 2015, and that the data they did collect during that time — which they are now purging — was not reliable and was infected with some kind of technical error," said Kris, founder of Culper Partners, a consulting firm in Seattle. "So whatever insights they were hoping to get over the past three years from this program of collection ... is all worthless. Because of that, they are throwing all the data away and basically starting over."

Christopher Augustine, an NSA spokesman, disagreed with the claim that the program had failed.

"This is a case in which NSA determined that there was a problem and proactively took all the right steps to fix it," he said.

The agency has reviewed and re-validated the intelligence reporting to make sure it was based only on call data that had been properly received from the telecommunication providers, he said. The agency declined to assign blame, and said the "root cause of the problem has since been addressed."

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., a staunch advocate of privacy rights, placed the blame on the telecom companies providing the NSA with call records.

"This incident shows these companies acted with unacceptable carelessness, and failed to comply with the law when they shared customers' sensitive data with the government," he told The Associated Press in a written statement Friday.

Under law, the government can request information, such as the type of details that might be printed on a phone bill: the date and time of a call or text, a telephone calling card number, the duration of a call and to what phone number it was made. The details provided to the government do not include the content of any communications, the name, address or financial information of a customer, cell site location or GPS information.

If government investigators have reasonable suspicion that a certain phone number is being used by a terrorist, who might be in the U.S. or overseas, the government asks the phone companies which other numbers have been in touch with the suspicious number — something known as the "first hops" — and then which numbers are in touch with those numbers, the "second hops."

The NSA collected more than 534.4 million details of calls and text messages in 2017 from American telecom providers like AT&T and Verizon, according to the most recent government report covering NSA surveillance activities that year. That was more than three times the 151.2 million collected in 2016.

The call records were part of an intelligence collection effort aimed at 42 targets in 2016 and 40 targets in 2017, according to the report. It defines a target as an individual, group of individuals, organization or entity.

Annual reports to Congress from the intelligence community are now required under the 2015 surveillance reform legislation. The law also requires the government to seek a court order to collect call records to obtain intelligence. Requests for records of U.S. citizens must be based on an investigation being conducted to protect against terrorism or clandestine intelligence activities and the probe cannot be conducted solely on activities protected by the First Amendment.

However, despite the reforms, the NSA still received some data from the telecommunications companies that the agency was not authorized to see and some of that data was erroneous, Augustine said.

"We cannot go into greater detail because those details remain classified. However, at no point in time did NSA receive the content of any calls, the name, address or financial information of a subscriber or customer, nor cell site location information or global positioning system information," he said.

Privacy and civil rights advocates said the NSA announcement raised further concerns about the program.

"This is another in a series of failures that shows that many NSA spying programs have ballooned out of control and have repeatedly failed to meet the basic limits imposed by Congress and the FISA court,"

said Neema Singh Guliani, legislative counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union in Washington. Guliani was referring to a U.S. federal court established and authorized under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to oversee requests for surveillance warrants.

She said the public has a right to know more about the cause and scope of the problem, such as how many of the records were obtained in error and whether the NSA notified any individuals that their information improperly ended up in the agency's hands.

Trump pledges July 9 announcement on Supreme Court nominee

By **KEN THOMAS** and **CATHERINE LUCEY**, Associated Press

MORRISTOWN, N.J. (AP) — Powering forward with a decision that could reshape the Supreme Court for decades, President Donald Trump said Friday he will announce his choice to succeed retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy on July 9. He added that two women are among his top candidates for the job.

The president, who spoke aboard Air Force One on the way to his golf club in New Jersey, said he had identified a group of at least five potential candidates for the nation's high court and he may interview as many as seven.

"It's a great group of intellectual talent," Trump said.

Kennedy, a key swing vote on the court, announced Wednesday that he would retire this summer. Kennedy's news that he'll leave the court next month immediately activated a network of White House aides, congressional allies and outside advocates, all set for their second Supreme Court confirmation fight in two years.

Trump told reporters he planned to begin interviewing possible candidates Monday but he may meet with some over the weekend in New Jersey. Asked if he planned to question potential court nominees their views on abortion rights and *Roe v. Wade*, he responded, "That's not a question I'll be asking."

He added, "I think it's inappropriate to discuss."

The president did not disclose whom he is considering for the job. But he has promised to draw the next justice from a list of 25 prospective candidates that was first established during the 2016 presidential campaign and updated last fall, with advice from conservatives. That list includes six women.

Some possible nominees being eyed include Thomas Hardiman, who serves alongside Trump's sister on the Philadelphia-based 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and Raymond Kethledge, a federal appeals court judge who clerked for Kennedy. Also of interest are Amul Thapar, who serves on the federal appeals court in Cincinnati; Brett Kavanaugh, a former clerk for Kennedy who serves on the federal appeals court in Washington, D.C.; and Amy Coney Barrett, who serves on the federal appeals court in Chicago.

Other women on the list include Joan Larsen, who serves on the federal appeals court in Cincinnati and previously served as a Michigan Supreme Court Justice, and Allison Eid, who serves on the federal appeals court based in Denver and previously served as a Colorado Supreme Court justice.

On whether the time was right for a conservative woman to join the court, Trump said: "Could be. As I said, I'm looking specifically at two women." Asked about Barrett, he said, "She's an outstanding woman."

Trump was also asked about Sen. Mike Lee, who is the one non-judge on the list.

"Mike Lee, he's an outstanding talent," Trump said. "I actually saw him on television last night where he said he'd love the job. Usually they don't say that."

Trump has moved quickly on his selection process. He met Thursday with key Republican and Democratic senators at the White House in the evening to discuss the vacancy. Trump welcomed Republicans Chuck Grassley, Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski and Democrats Joe Manchin, Joe Donnelly and Heidi Heitkamp as part of the effort. The White House said Trump's team also spoke with more than a dozen additional senators.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has committed to confirming a nominee in the fall, which the Republican-controlled Senate should be able to do if McConnell can hold his razor-thin majority together.

In the run-up to selecting Gorsuch, Trump met with three contenders and White House officials vetted several more.

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The Judicial Crisis Network, a conservative political campaign organization, has launched a seven-figure ad buy aimed at vulnerable Democrats, said chief counsel and policy director Carrie Severino.

"We'd be very happy if he'd pick any name on that list," said Severino. "Judges, and particularly the Supreme Court, have been a resounding success of this administration. What we're seeing here is Gorsuch 2.0."

Steven Law, president of the Senate Leadership Fund, a campaign group aligned with McConnell, said the group is running digital ads in 10 states that Trump won in 2016 where Democratic senators are now up for re-election.

With a little over a week before his big announcement, Trump is relishing the moment.

"It is exciting though, right?" said Trump. "From day one, I've heard, outside of war and peace of course, the most important decision you make is the selection of a Supreme Court judge — if you get it."

LeMond, Holocaust survivors ride to celebrate Jewish life

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Three-time Tour de France winner Greg LeMond, two Holocaust survivors and some 200 others took part in a symbolic ride from Auschwitz-Birkenau to a Jewish cultural center in Poland to support the renewal of Jewish life.

The ride Friday began at the site of the former Nazi German death camp and ended at the Jewish Community Center of Krakow, 55 miles (89 kilometers) away, site of a growing Jewish community.

LeMond described the ride as a powerful experience, saying, "It was an amazing event riding with two survivors 73 years after the Holocaust ... We should never forget!"

Jonathan Ornstein, the director of the center in Krakow, who himself took part in the ride, said one survivor, Marcel Zielinski, biked the entire distance, while the second did 14 miles and traveled the rest of the way by car.

He said LeMond and his wife a day earlier visited the site of Auschwitz, where barracks and the ruins of gas chambers are an enduring testament of the atrocities committed there. They were also spending the weekend with his community.

"It was incredibly exciting for us to have such a famous international cyclist not only participate in the ride but get to know Krakow's story of Jewish rebirth," Ornstein said.

On the eve of the Holocaust, Poland was home to 3.3 million Jews. Most were murdered by Nazi Germany in death camps like Auschwitz and in ghettos.

Moms outraged by family separations become protest leaders

By GILLIAN FLACCUS and AMY TAXIN, Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Immigrants who have spent years fighting to change the country's immigration system are getting newfound support from liberal activists, moms and first-time protesters motivated by a visceral narrative: President Donald Trump's administration separating children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Groups that pulled off massive women's marches the past two years and other left-leaning rallies are throwing their weight behind migrant families Saturday. More than 600 marches could draw hundreds of thousands of people nationwide, from immigrant-friendly cities like Los Angeles and New York City to conservative Appalachia and Wyoming.

Though many are seasoned anti-Trump demonstrators, others are new to immigration activism, including parents who say they feel compelled to show up after heart-wrenching accounts of children forcibly taken from their families as they crossed the border illegally. In Portland, Oregon, for example, several stay-at-home moms are organizing their first rally while caring for young kids.

"I'm not a radical, and I'm not an activist," said Kate Sharaf, a Portland co-organizer. "I just reached a point where I felt I had to do more."

She and others are undaunted after nearly 600 women wearing white and railing against the now-

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abandoned separation policy were arrested Thursday in Washington, D.C. With demonstrations emerging nationwide, immigrant advocacy groups say they're thrilled — and surprised — to see the issue gaining traction among those not tied to immigration.

"Honestly, I am blown away. I have literally never seen Americans show up for immigrants like this," said Jess Morales Rocketto, political director at the National Domestic Workers Alliance, which represents nannies, housekeepers and caregivers, many of whom are immigrants. "We just kept hearing over and over again, if it was my child, I would want someone to do something."

Saturday's rallies are getting funding and support from the American Civil Liberties Union, MoveOn.org, the National Domestic Workers Alliance and The Leadership Conference. But local organizers are shouldering on-the-ground planning, many of them women relying on informal networks established during worldwide women's marches on Trump's inauguration and its anniversary.

Tyler Houlton, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, welcomed interest in the immigration system and said only Congress has the power to change the law.

"We appreciate that these individuals have expressed an interest in and concern with the critical issue of securing our nation's borders and enforcing our immigration laws," Houlton said. "As we have indicated before, the department is disappointed and frustrated by our nation's disastrous immigration laws and supports action."

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley didn't respond to a request for comment.

In Portland, Sharaf and other mothers are working to organize a march expected to attract 5,000 people — all while they change diapers, nurse babies and prepare snacks. They have marched for women's rights but have never spearheaded a political rally, which isn't related to an 11-day vigil at an U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in Portland that led to arrests this week.

Sharaf and three other women recently fired up their laptops and cellphones at her dining room table — one mother breastfeeding her son as she worked. A toddler wolfed down pasta in a high chair and two 5-year-olds and a 4-year-old careened around the house.

"I'm a mom, and I think everyone I know that I've talked to about this issue has had a very visceral reaction," Sharaf said. "Because as moms, we know how important it is to be with your child and how critical attachment is to a child. It's just heartbreaking for me to see."

Sharaf and co-organizer Erin Conroy are coordinating their efforts with immigrant advocacy groups.

"This is not my wheelhouse," Conroy said. "As far as I'm concerned, this is a national emergency that we all need to be focused on right now."

That passion is heartening for the broader anti-Trump coalition, which hopes the weekend marches will attract people who have otherwise been on the sidelines, said David S. Meyer, a political science professor at the University of California, Irvine, who has authored books on U.S. political protest.

"There are people who have all kinds of other grievances or gripes with the Trump administration and they're quite happy to use this one as the most productive and salient for the moment," he said.

The groups planning the so-called Families Belong Together rallies have carefully framed them as peaceful and family-friendly — another draw for those looking to jump into their first protest, Meyer said.

That's in contrast to the sit-in in the nation's capital Thursday, where participants knew they might be arrested.

In El Paso, Texas, immigrant advocacy groups are partnering with religious leaders and women's march organizers Saturday to try to shut down the bridge connecting El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

Immigration attorney Linda Rivas said groups have met with U.S. authorities, congressional representatives and other leaders to discuss an escalating immigration crackdown that they say began decades ago. But the family separation policy has been a watershed for attracting a broader spectrum of demonstrators, she said.

"To finally have people on board wanting to take action, marching, taking to the streets, it's been motivating for us as advocates because we have to keep going," Rivas said.

In Los Angeles, Angelica Salas said she has been marching to fix the immigration system for nearly two

decades. The executive director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights said she would often tell people about how immigration enforcement was splitting up families and non-immigrants couldn't believe it. Now, she said, they do.

Taxin reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press reporter Susan Montoya Bryan in Albuquerque, New Mexico, contributed to this report. Follow Flaccus on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/gflaccus>. Follow Taxin on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/ataxin>

New rallying call for 2020 Democrats: 'Abolish ICE'

By BILL BARROW, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Several prominent Democrats who are mulling a bid for the White House in 2020 sought to bolster their progressive credentials this week by calling for major changes to immigration enforcement, with some pressing for the outright abolition of the federal government's chief immigration enforcement agency.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York said Immigration and Customs Enforcement, known as ICE, has "become a deportation force."

"You should get rid of it, start over, reimagine it and build something that actually works," she told CNN late Thursday.

Her comments follow similar sentiments expressed by Sen. Kamala Harris of California over the past week. In interviews with multiple outlets, she has said the government "maybe" or "probably" should "start from scratch" on an immigration enforcement agency.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who sought the Democratic nomination in 2016 and is mulling another run, has stopped short of his colleagues' calls to dismantle ICE. But he has also been quick to note his vote opposing the 2002 law that paved the way for ICE to replace the old Immigration and Naturalization Service following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Housed within the Department of Homeland Security, ICE is in charge of executing hundreds of federal immigration statutes. The debate over the agency's future follows the widespread outcry in recent weeks after the Trump administration separated more than 2,000 migrant children from their parents. Marches are scheduled across the country Saturday to protest the policy, which President Donald Trump later reversed.

The Democratic calls to scrap the agency underscore the balancing act the party is facing on immigration issues. Such rhetoric could prove unhelpful to the 10 Democratic senators seeking re-election this fall in states Trump carried in 2016, where conservative views on immigration prevail. But calling for an end to ICE could be a winner for Democrats seeking to rally the party's base in the 2020 presidential primaries.

Many anti-Trump activists, who are driving the Twitter hashtag #abolishICE, have celebrated the moves by Gillibrand, Harris and others.

Nelini Stamp, the national organizing director for the Working Families Party, one of many progressive groups that ratcheted up its activity after Trump's election, called it a "critical moment" in the early maneuverings for 2020.

"Any Democrats who want to be the nominee needs to stand on the right side of this," Stamp said. "Even if they don't say 'abolish ICE,' they can't not address it."

Angel Padilla, policy director at the grassroots group Indivisible, said ICE "terrorizes communities" and that Gillibrand's move "demonstrates where the progressive base is."

Still, not every immigrant advocacy group takes the same view.

Cristobal Alex, president of the Latino Victory Project, a political action group that backs pro-immigration candidates, rejected ICE as a "litmus test." But he said it's "heartening" that immigration policy in general "is at the forefront of the conversation ahead of 2020."

Alex said his group has met privately with several potential presidential candidates.

Their focus, Alex said, should be on "stopping the long-standing culture of corruption" in U.S. immigration policy and "the appalling practices" of the Trump administration, not on a move that by itself "amounts

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to rebranding.”

Indeed, the would-be presidential candidates haven't yet detailed what they propose in ICE's place. Harris had introduced legislation before the border separation crisis that would curb the expansion of immigration detention centers. She and Gillibrand and others have at least hinted that they would want the Justice Department's prosecutorial power less involved in border security.

Whatever the details, the focus on ICE could cause problems for some potential candidates with more conservative records on immigration.

Former Vice President Joe Biden voted as a senator from Delaware for the 2002 law — the Homeland Security Act — that paved the way for ICE to replace the Immigration and Naturalization Service. He also voted in 2006 for a Bush administration-backed border security measure. Biden, however, has been critical of Trump's immigration policy as he considers a 2020 run. Earlier this year, Biden headlined a private event with the Latino Victory Project in Miami.

The activists pushing for ICE abolition, meanwhile, said they aren't worried about potential blowback or any difficulties for Democrats facing more conservative voters, including those potentially swayed by Trump's repeated charges that Democrats favor "open borders."

At the Working Families Party, Stamp said she sees the activists taking a position that "offers space" to other Democrats activists know won't agree with them. "We give them room to talk about better immigration policy," she said, comparing the circumstances to the civil rights movement, when Martin Luther King Jr., was viewed more favorably by white power brokers than more strident leaders like Malcolm X.

"Martin Luther King never said, 'Black power,'" Stamp said. "But having the left flank that did made the right folks willing to at least talk to King."

Follow Barrow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP>

World Cup fans rev up revenues for sanctions-hobbled Russia

By ANGELA CHARLTON, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Moscow's beer kegs are emptying fast and demand for Vladimir Putin T-shirts is overwhelming St. Petersburg street vendors as the World Cup sends business surging across the 11 Russian cities hosting soccer's biggest show.

The Russian president was counting on just such a boost after U.S. and European sanctions and low oil prices sank the country into recession, and after Russia's government spent 800 billion rubles (\$12.7 billion) to ready for the World Cup. But experts warn the boon won't last long without deeper change to the oil-reliant, corruption-tainted Russian economy.

Here's a look at some businesses booming thanks to the World Cup:

RED SQUARE REVELRY

Among the big winners: freelance taxi drivers, dating apps and bars where fans gather to watch matches or celebrate their teams' victory.

"We are so far off the chart on this, we order as much beer in one night as we would order in a month," said Doug Steele, owner of Papa's Bar & Grill on Nikolskaya Street just off Red Square. He dragged a keg on a dolly as he talked, too busy to stop.

This neighborhood has become the place to party since the World Cup opened June 14. The block-long GUM shopping mall that faces the Kremlin has seen traffic climb 80 percent compared to the same period last year, according to its manager, Teymuraz Guguberidze.

"The effect is much higher than our expectation," he said. "It makes us very happy."

PROUD PROVINCES

The lift has reached retailers far beyond the Russian capital, helping other host cities far off the tourist path.

The lowest-profile of the bunch, Saransk, spent hundreds of millions of dollars to build a stadium, high-

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rises and transport to accommodate tens of thousands of visitors who descended in recent weeks. Proud residents rented out their apartments and kept businesses open extra late to host fans after night games. High demand at restaurants so frequently caused shortages that patrons had to make a list of menu items they liked before ordering.

Mexican fans revved up business in the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg, overwhelming vendors at a sports store as they bought up any available souvenirs.

Sales of Kazan's chak-chak dessert, Rostov's local cakes and Russian pelmeni dumplings everywhere have soared.

So have visits to lesser-known monuments and cultural sites — a World War II museum in Volgograd, a Cossack village in Rostov, a museum dedicated to the Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad and its most famous resident, philosopher Immanuel Kant.

SUMMER PLEASURES

So much for Russia's chilly reputation.

Sunny days, white nights and sometimes sweltering temperatures greeted the world's soccer fans in Russia this month — and no city has benefited more than the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

Long popular with Russians, Sochi finally got a long-awaited spike in foreign visitors this summer as fans from Brazil, Australia and beyond are packing onto its shoreline cafes or visiting its amusement parks.

In St. Petersburg's northern latitudes, the summer season means that night never really falls, and savvy boat owners are cashing in by taking tourists through the city's canals all night long.

REALITY CHECK

Russia is hoping for an enduring economic boost, well beyond the World Cup final July 15. But first it has to recoup the costs of preparing for the event — and the prime minister announced this week that the government must spend an additional 800 million rubles (\$12.7 million) going forward to maintain World Cup-related sites after the crowds go home.

While it's too early to estimate the overall economic gains from the event, the government should at least break even, predicts Vladimir Ageyev, Moscow State University sports management expert, citing preliminary data estimating the "World Cup effect" at 800 billion rubles (\$12.7 billion).

Moody's ratings agency warned just before the tournament opened that despite the boost in tourism industry revenues, the World Cup would only make a "short-lived" contribution to the economy. Most host regions are unlikely to keep drawing tourists afterward, Moody's warned, because they are too hard to reach, too cold and must compete with more attractive destinations elsewhere.

Yet the tournament is bringing intangible advantages that business leaders hope leave a lasting mark.

"The World Cup has a very good influence," said Guguberidze of Moscow shopping mecca GUM. "It creates a good mood, and leaves a good impression of Russia."

Brett Martel in Saransk, Karel Janicek in Yekaterinburg, Tim Booth in Sochi, Derek Gatopoulos in Rostov, Yulia Subbotovska and Amer Cohadzic in Moscow contributed to this report.

More World Cup coverage at www.apnews.com/tag/WorldCup

LeBron James weighing many options as free agency looms

By TOM WITHERS, AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — LeBron James posted a video of himself jumping off a cliff while on a Caribbean vacation with his family.

He's about to dive into free agency.

James told the Cleveland Cavaliers on Friday that he will not exercise his \$35.6 million contract option for next season, making him an unrestricted free agent on Sunday when NBA teams can begin negotiations with players before signing them on July 6.

By declining his option, James positioned himself to be able to choose where he'll play next and Cleveland,

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his basketball home for 11 of the past 15 seasons, remains a strong possibility. But there are at least three other teams — and maybe an outsider or two — with legitimate shots at landing the three-time MVP, who made it clear following this year's NBA Finals that he's still driven to win championships.

While every team dreams of being ruled by King James, only a few have a legit chance of signing him. Here are the cases — for and against — the leading contenders:

CLEVELAND

WHY: Home; money.

James came back four years ago to a hero's welcome, something that seemed unimaginable when he left in disgrace four years earlier for Miami. But he vowed to do everything he could to deliver a title to championship-starved Cleveland. He delivered in 2016, erasing past sins and raising James to a worshipped level few athletes in any sport have experienced. His family is comfortable here and it's where he has complete control.

The Cavs can also offer him the most lucrative package, a five-year, \$209 million contract.

WHY NOT: Flawed roster; blemished relationship with owner Dan Gilbert.

Last summer's stunning trade of guard Kyrie Irving left the Cavs without a quality running mate for James, who was forced to carry a heavier offensive load throughout the regular season and playoffs. Cleveland has deep salary-cap issues — partially caused by James' failure to commit long-term — and the Cavs currently lack enough talent to unseat the champion Golden State Warriors.

Gilbert and James mended some fences for his return in 2014, but they remain distant other than a shared commitment to winning. Gilbert has gone above and beyond financial barriers to appease James, but the well could be running dry.

LOS ANGELES LAKERS

WHY: Salary-cap space; business interests; iconic franchise.

With some savvy moves, the Lakers are poised to potentially add two superstars — James and Paul George and maybe Kawhi Leonard — to a team featuring up-and-coming talents like Kyle Kuzma, Brandon Ingram and Lonzo Ball, who is reportedly dealing with a knee injury. James loves the Hollywood lights, and with two homes in the Los Angeles area as well as a film production company, he has already established some roots in the land of movie stars and slow-moving traffic. The appeal of playing for one of the league's most storied teams is another allure.

WHY NOT: Youth; the Western Conference.

There's little doubt James has some quality years ahead of him. But does he have enough time to let a group of unproven players with no postseason experience develop into a title contender? And if he jumps conferences for the first time in his career, the path to the Finals is far more treacherous.

PHILADELPHIA

WHY: Rising team; staying in the East.

In Sixers guard Ben Simmons, James sees a younger version of himself and he'd relish the chance to play alongside the 21-year-old while mentoring him. The Sixers also have center Joel Embiid, 24, projected to become the game's next dominant big men. Philadelphia would instantly vault from conference contender to favorite with James, who could make a strong run at his ninth straight Finals in Year One.

WHY NOT: Too young; front-office dysfunction.

Much like the Lakers, the Sixers lack postseason experience and James would be surrounded by players who have barely tasted the postseason. General manager Bryan Colangelo's resignation following an investigation into whether he created Twitter accounts to criticize his own players, has given the impression that the team isn't operating in concert and then would turn off James quickly.

OTHER CONTENDERS

Houston: While the Rockets once seemed a good fit, James declining his option all but eliminated the chances of him joining up with close friend Chris Paul and MVP James Harden. If James had opted in with the Cavs, they could have worked out a sign-and-trade with Houston.

San Antonio: James reveres Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, but living in Texas doesn't seem appealing to the star's family and the Spurs are still trying to figure out what to do with Leonard, who can become a

free agent after next season.

More AP NBA: www.apnews.com/tags/NBAbasketball

Hossler in 3-way tie for lead, Woods 4 back at TPC Potomac

By DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

POTOMAC, Md. (AP) — Beau Hossler has been hanging around the lead on the weekend in search of his first PGA Tour victory, and he gets another chance at the Quicken Loans National.

So does Tiger Woods.

Hossler, the 23-year-old in his first full year on the tour, birdied four of his last five holes and finished with a 35-foot birdie putt on No. 18 for a 4-under 66, giving him a share of the lead with Ryan Armour and Brian Gay.

Armour (65) and Gay (64) each made short birdies on the par-3 ninth hole to finish their rounds and tie for lead.

Woods finished a steamy morning on the TPC Potomac at Avenel with two pars that felt just as big. On a day in which he made seven birdies — all but two of them from 15 feet or longer — Woods didn't let a good round go to waste at the end. He saved par from the bunker on the eighth and ninth holes for a 65. That matched his low score of the year and left him four shots behind, the closest he has been going into the weekend since he was two shots back at the Valspar Championship.

"I'm not that far back," Woods said. "The scores aren't going to be that low and it's going to be a tough weekend. It will be over 100 degrees and it will be a long weekend mentally and physically. I'm in a good position now."

Hossler has at least a share of the 36-hole lead for the third time this year, and he had a close call in the Houston Open, losing in a playoff to Ian Poulter. He has shot in the 60s in 21 of his last 38 rounds.

"I've had a lot of really good rounds. Unfortunately, I've had some kind of high ones that are uncharacteristic for me," Hossler said. "I think that was six in a row in the 60s, so I'm feeling good. I'm getting it in play nicely off the tee and I'm rolling the putter really well, so that obviously helps."

They were at 9-under 131, one shot ahead of Francesco Molinari (65) and Billy Horschel (68). Molinari, who is playing the Quicken Loans National and John Deere Classic with hopes of boosting his FedEx Cup standing, hit all 18 greens in regulation.

Woods was among 20 players separated by four shots going into the weekend that is expected to be hot as ever along the Potomac River.

The course rated the fourth-toughest on the PGA Tour schedule last year behind only three majors, though the greens have remained mostly receptive even under a blistering sun on Friday.

"I think the course changed a little bit at the end of the day," Horschel said after finishing in the afternoon. "I think the course will be a little bit firm, a little bit faster, but I don't think it's going to be anywhere what it was last year, so I think you can still go out there and score. We're going to try to put two more rounds in the 60s, see where it puts us for Sunday."

Hossler had a 66 on Sunday at the Travelers Championship to tie for second behind Bubba Watson. He began his big finish by driving just through the green on the reachable 14th for a simple up-and-down birdie, stuffed his approach to 3 feet on the next hole, and then took on the water to the right of the green on the par-3 17th and hit that to 6 feet for birdie.

Gay started on the back nine and opened with five birdies in eight holes before his momentum slowed. Armour, playing in the same group, had only one birdie in 10 holes until he finished with four birdies on the front nine.

"Brian got off to such a hot start, you were just trying to keep up," Armour said. "You were just trying not to fall too far behind him, and if you do that, you probably were up near the lead."

Rickie Fowler, the only player from the top 10 in the world playing this week, shot a 66 and was in the group five shots behind.

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Woods didn't make a putt over 8 feet in the opening round. He started Friday with a 25-foot birdie putt on the par-5 10th, and after a bogey from the hazard on the next hole, followed that with an 18-foot birdie putt. His biggest shot was chipping in from 80 feet on the 18th for birdie as he made the turn. His favorite shot was a 3-wood he hammered from 282 yards onto the green at the par-5 second hole for a two-putt birdie.

It added to a 65 and a realistic chance going into the weekend.

"I think I'm not that far away from putting it together where I can win," Woods said.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, June 30, the 181st day of 2018. There are 184 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 30, 1953, the first Chevrolet Corvette, with its innovative fiberglass body, was built at a General Motors assembly facility in Flint, Michigan.

On this date:

In 1859, French acrobat Charles Blondin (blahn-DAN') walked back and forth on a tightrope above the gorge of Niagara Falls as thousands of spectators watched.

In 1865, eight people, including Mary Surratt and Dr. Samuel Mudd, were convicted by a military commission of conspiring with John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Abraham Lincoln. (Four defendants, including Surratt, were executed; Mudd was sentenced to life in prison, but was pardoned by President Andrew Johnson in 1869.)

In 1908, the Tunguska Event took place in Russia as an asteroid exploded above Siberia, leaving 800 square miles of scorched or blown-down trees.

In 1918, labor activist and socialist Eugene V. Debs was arrested in Cleveland, charged under the Espionage Act of 1917 for a speech he'd made two weeks earlier denouncing U.S. involvement in World War I. (Debs was sentenced to prison and disenfranchised for life.)

In 1936, the Civil War novel "Gone with the Wind" by Margaret Mitchell was first published by The Macmillan Co. in New York.

In 1949, "The Missouri Waltz" became the official state song of Missouri.

In 1963, Pope Paul VI was crowned the 262nd head of the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1966, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was founded in Washington, D.C.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter announced he had decided against production of the Rockwell B-1 bomber, saying it was too costly. (However, the B-1 was later revived by President Ronald Reagan.)

In 1985, 39 American hostages from a hijacked TWA jetliner were freed in Beirut after being held 17 days.

In 1993, actor George "Spanky" McFarland of "Our Gang" and "Little Rascals" fame died in Grapevine, Texas, at age 64.

In 1997, the Union Jack was lowered for the last time over Government House in Hong Kong as Britain prepared to hand the colony back to China at midnight after ruling it for 156 years.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush signed legislation to pay for war operations in Iraq and Afghanistan for the rest of his presidency and beyond, hailing the \$162 billion plan as a rare product of bipartisan cooperation. The United States announced that it was charging Saudi Arabian Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri (ahbd al-ruh-HEEM' al-nuh-SHEE'-ree) with "organizing and directing" the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in waters off Yemen, and would seek the death penalty. (Al-Nashiri, who's being held at Guantanamo, has yet to stand trial.)

Five years ago: Nineteen elite firefighters known as members of the Granite Mountain Hotshots were killed battling a wildfire northwest of Phoenix after a change in wind direction pushed the flames back toward their position. Addressing students at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, President Barack Obama declared that the future of the young and growing continent still rested in Nelson Mandela's vision

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for equality and opportunity. Inbee Park won the U.S. Women's Open in Southampton, New York, for her third straight major of the year.

One year ago: President Donald Trump and South Korea's new leader, Moon Jae-in, concluding two days of talks at the White House, showed joint resolve on North Korea despite their divergent philosophies for addressing the nuclear threat.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Lea Massari is 85. Actress Nancy Dussault (doo-SOH') is 82. Songwriter Tony Hatch is 79. Singer Glenn Shorrock is 74. Actor Leonard Whiting is 68. Jazz musician Stanley Clarke is 67. Actor David Garrison is 66. Rock musician Hal Lindes (Dire Straits) is 65. Actor-comedian David Alan Grier is 62. Actor Vincent D'Onofrio is 59. Actress Deirdre Lovejoy is 56. Actor Rupert Graves is 55. Boxer Mike Tyson is 52. Actor Peter Outerbridge is 52. Rock musician Tom Drummond (Better Than Ezra) is 49. Actor-comedian Tony Rock (TV: "Living Biblically") is 49. Actor Brian Bloom is 48. Actor Brian Vincent is 48. Actress Monica Potter is 47. Actress Molly Parker is 46. Actor Rick Gonzalez is 39. Actor Tom Burke is 37. Actress Lizzy Caplan is 36. Rock musician James Adam Shelley (American Authors) is 35. Country singer Cole Swindell is 35. Rhythm and blues singer Fantasia is 34. Olympic gold medal swimmer Michael Phelps is 33. Actor Sean Marquette (TV: "The Goldbergs") is 30.

Thought for Today: "We all live under the same sky, but we don't all have the same horizon." — Konrad Adenauer, German statesman (1876-1967).