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“Many of our fears are tissue-paper thin, and a single courageous step would carry us clear through them.”

-Brendan Francis

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

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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.



Help Wanted

Dairy Queen in Groton has openings for part-time team members – day hours during the school year and can be year round, if desired. Flexible scheduling. Stop in to apply. 11 East Hwy 12, Groton, SD.



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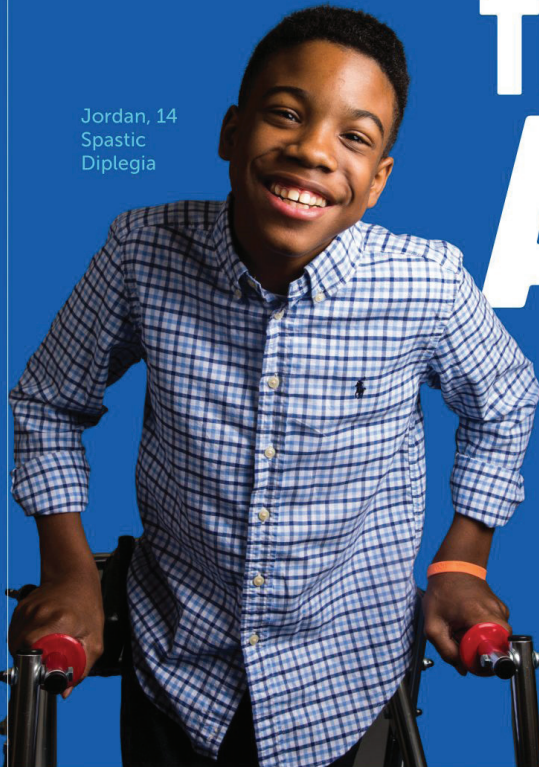
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MIRACLE TREAT DAY



THURSDAY AUG 2

Jordan, 14
Spastic
Diplegia



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First Presbyterian Church: Pictured left to right are Glenn Cooper, Dwight Zerr, Jacqueline Wagner, Janet Anderson, Pastor Terry Kenny, Jon Anderson and Tom Blair.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Two churches receive Deadwood Historic Preservation Grants

Trinity Episcopal Church: Pictured here are Topper Tastad, Dick Kolker, Tom Blair and Betty Breck. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Two Groton churches have been awarded grants by the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission. Tom Blair, a 1963 GHS graduate, came to Groton last week to present the grants on behalf of the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission.

The Trinity Episcopal Church received \$17,000 for roof repairs. The First Presbyterian Church received \$15,000 for roof repairs and tuck-pointing.

The Groton Historical Society is the caretaker of the Trinity church.



Aglow International Retreat

The South Dakota East River Area Aglow Retreat, "Aligning with God," is being held August 17-18, 2018, at the Abbey of the Hills Inn & Retreat Center near Summit, SD, which provides a beautiful atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

Sande Lofberg of Rapid City, SD, the Aglow International U.S. Director of the Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Region, will share how we can align with God's purpose and plan...by the power of the Holy Spirit...in order for His will to be fulfilled!

Pastor Roger Day of the Hosanna Church in Highmore, SD, will lead praise and worship.

Registration fee of \$75 includes Friday night lodging, continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

Contact Glenna at 605-377-0709 or Marcia at 605-885-6398 before August 8 for more information.



DPS Encourages Motorists to be Patient During Sturgis Rally

PIERRE, S.D. – Patience will be a virtue for motorists this week as more traffic is expected on South Dakota highways with the start of the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The 78th Sturgis Motorcycle Rally begins Friday, Aug. 3, and runs through Sunday, Aug. 12. That means more motorists on the highways driving different kinds of vehicles, especially in the Black Hills.

Officials with the South Dakota Department of Public Safety say that means drivers need to focus on safety.

“South Dakota has had eight motorcycle fatalities so far this year; that’s two more than at the same time last year,” says Highway Patrol Superintendent Col. Price. “A majority of the 2018 deaths so far have been due to inexperienced riders. Five of the eight fatalities weren’t wearing helmets.”

August is traditionally the state’s highest vehicle fatality month each year. In the last five years, statistics show that most crashes in the Black Hills occur between 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

“We want every motorcyclist to be safe and that’s why we offer both new and experienced rider courses,” says Office of Highway Safety Director Lee Axdahl. “Safe riders know their skill level, their equipment and what needs to be done to increase the odds of returning home safe and sound.”

Axdahl says through the Office of Highway Safety’s partnership with the South Dakota Safety Council, both new and experienced riders can take safety courses statewide. Visit

<https://southdakotarides.com> and follow the link for Rider Safety Courses. The website also offers information needed to negotiate roads in the Black Hills.

Rally attendees looking for real-time public safety information about the Sturgis Rally can also follow four Twitter sites at @SDPublicSafety, @SDHighwayPatrol, @SouthDakotaDOT and @RallyTraffic.

Motorcyclists and motorists alike are reminded of the rules for sharing the road:

*** Motorcyclists should ride in single-file lines and avoid crowding the center line or crowding motorists;

*** Motorists should remember not to crowd cycles. Motorcycles have the same rights on the road as motorists;

*** Motorists and cyclists should follow the recommended speed limits. Motorcyclists should be especially aware of speed limits on curves;

*** It is against the law to drink and drive. Motorists and cyclists should make sure they have sober drivers;

*** Motorists should remember to buckle up, it’s the law; and,

*** Motorcyclists are encouraged to wear helmets.

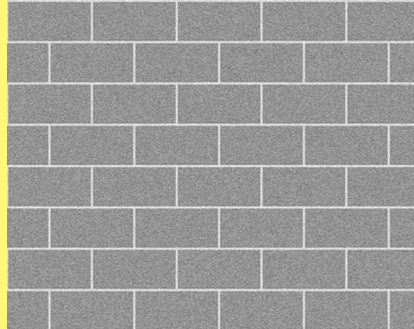
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Today in Weather History

July 31, 1966: A deadly, estimated F3 tornado moved southeast, passing south of Ashley, North Dakota, destroying buildings on five farms with near F4 damage to one farm house. Another tornado with F2 strength occurred north of Long Lake where two adults were killed, and three children were injured as a car was thrown 500 feet from Highway 101. A second estimated F2 tornado moved ENE just south of Aberdeen. A trailer was demolished, killing a man and injuring his wife. Seven airplanes were also had damage. Property damage was estimated at a quarter million dollars. An estimated 90 mph wind gust was also reported northeast of Aberdeen.

July 31, 2008: In the early morning hours of the 31st, a line of storms originating in North Dakota began to expand and surge southeast into northeast South Dakota. As the storms moved southeast, they started to tap into warmer, more humid air and rapidly evolve into a line of severe thunderstorms. Widespread damage occurred in a broad swath extending from Long Lake in McPherson County all the way into eastern Grant County and southern Big Stone County in Minnesota. The most extensive damage was found along and near US Highway 12 from Aberdeen to Milbank. Several observing stations in the path of this system measured wind speeds ranging from 70 mph to over 115 mph. Estimated wind speeds from damage surveys indicated even stronger winds with peak speeds of 120 mph.

Over fifty communities in northeast South Dakota and the surrounding rural areas received minor to major tree, and structural damage as straight-line winds from 70 to 120 mph raced across the area. Webster and Waubay received the most extensive damage from the storms. Thousands of trees were snapped or uprooted, hundreds of grain bins were damaged or destroyed, hundreds of homes, businesses, and outbuildings were damaged or destroyed along with many power poles and miles of power lines downed. Many mobile homes, campers, and boats were damaged or destroyed along with many road and business signs.

Fallen trees also damaged countless homes, vehicles, and campers. Thousands of acres of crops were also damaged or destroyed by the winds and hail. The most significant crop damage occurred in the Roslyn, Grenville, Eden, and Pickerel Lake areas in Marshall and Day counties. Many acres of corn were blown down and not able to come back. The large hail combined with the strong winds also broke out many windows in homes and vehicles along with damaging the siding on houses. Thousands of people were left without power for up to several days. Large hay bales were moved up to 700 yards by the high winds. A semi was overturned on Highway 12 near Webster, injuring the driver. Near Milbank on Highway 12, two other semis were blown off the road resulting in injuries to both drivers. A State Forestry Specialist said it was one of the worst tree damage events he has ever seen in the Webster area. A fifty-eight-year-old man died two miles north of Waubay during the cleanup after the storms when he was pinned between a backhoe and a tree.

1715: Spanish treasure ships, returning from the New World to Spain, encountered a hurricane during the early morning hours on this day. Eleven of the twelve ships were lost near present-day Vero Beach, Florida.








1949: Lightning struck a baseball field at Baker, Florida during a game. The shortstop and third baseman were killed instantly.

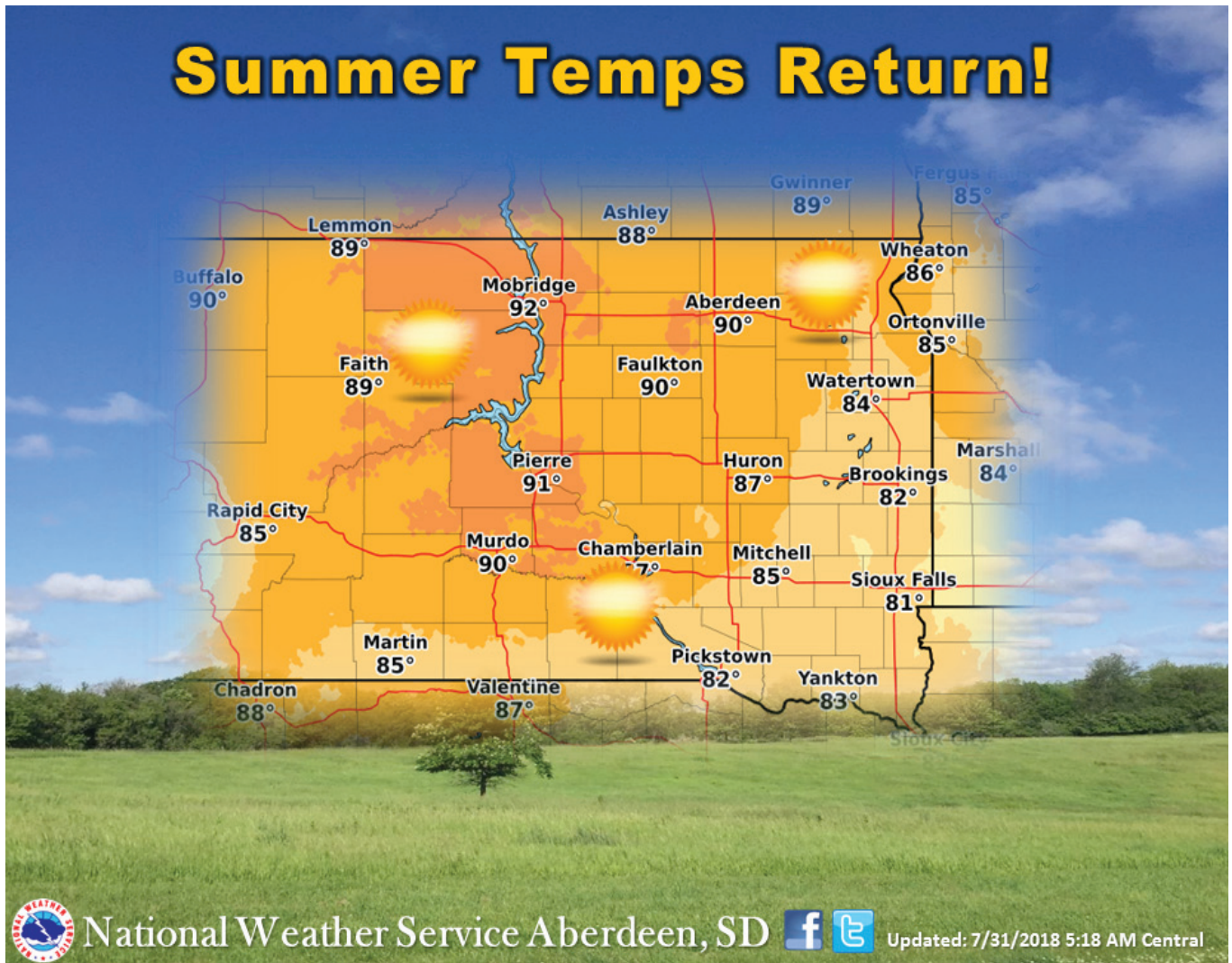
1987: The second deadliest tornado in Canadian history occurred in Edmonton, Alberta. An F4 tornado killed 27 people, injured over 300, and caused a quarter of a billion dollars in damage.

1997: South Pole, Antarctica recorded their coldest July ever. The average temperature of -86.8 degrees broke the previous record of -83.6 degrees set in July 1965.

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| Today | Tonight | Wednesday | Wednesday Night | Thursday | Thursday Night | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hot | Increasing Clouds | Mostly Sunny | Mostly Clear | Sunny | Mostly Clear | Hot |
| High: 90 °F | Low: 60 °F | High: 73 °F | Low: 51 °F | High: 85 °F | Low: 66 °F | High: 90 °F |



Published on: 07/31/2018 at 5:24AM

Above average temperatures make a return today as southwesterly winds usher in 80s and low 90s. It will be short-lived, however, as a cold front is set to sink south over the region tonight. The front will bring showers and thunderstorms to northeastern SD and west central MN. Temperatures will only rise into the 70s on Wednesday.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 82.1 F at 5:36 PM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 53.9 F at 5:59 AM

High Gust: 10.0 Mph at 2:20 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 106° in 1987

Record Low: 42° in 1903

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 59°F

Average Precip in July: 2.94

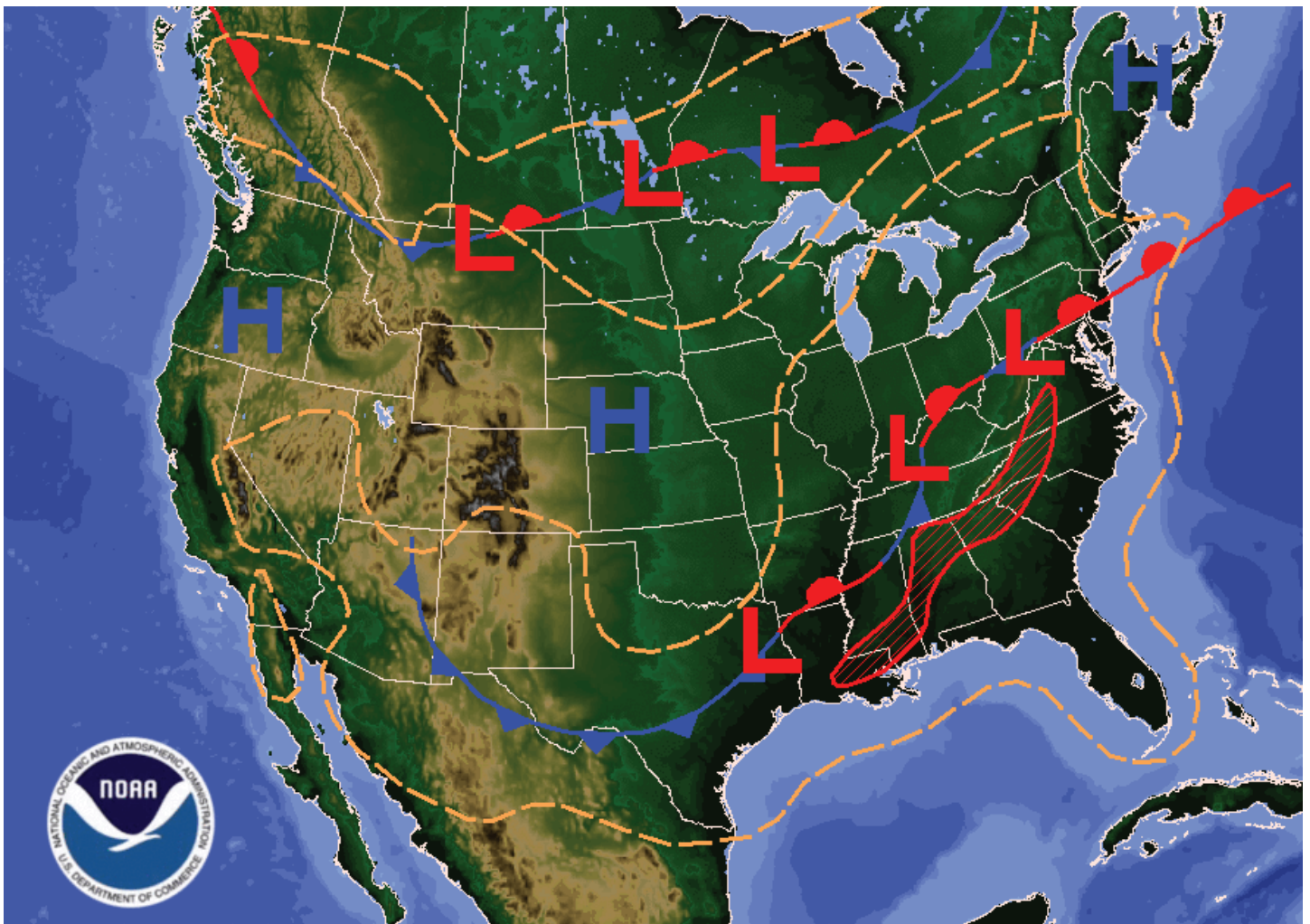
Precip to date in July: 3.99

Average Precip to date: 13.78

Precip Year to Date: 9.89

Sunset Tonight: 9:03 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:18 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Jul 31, 2018, issued 4:45 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds 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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OUR SOURCE FOR SAFETY

What our family and friends call us usually depends on how they see us or our personality or some particular trait or habit. A good example of this was the name given to Thomas Jonathan Jackson, a Confederate general. He was responsible for commanding his brigade in the first Battle of Bull Run.

Soon after the battle began his men realized that they faced an overwhelming force of men with what they understood was an unlimited supply of ammunition. But General Jackson and his men stood their ground and fought fiercely.

"There stands Jackson like a stone wall!" exclaimed an officer. That name fit his personality so well that he was always called "Stonewall" Jackson after that.

One day he was painfully wounded in battle. One of his captains asked, "General, how is it that you could keep your senses and appear so utterly insensitive to the danger in the storm of shells and bullets that rained about you?"

"Captain," explained "Stonewall" Jackson, "my religious belief teaches me to feel as safe in battle as I feel in bed."

The Psalmist had that same sense of God's presence and security when he wrote, "You are my refuge and my shield: I have put my hope in Your Word."

The Lord's protective "shield" is always around us and no matter where we are, He is our "refuge." Those who trust in Him and follow His "commands" will always be protected.

Prayer: How great is Your faithfulness, Lord, and how blest we are to have Your protection, night and day, in peace and in conflict. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 119:114 You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- 11/18/2017-3/31/2018 Groton Lion's Club Wheel of Meat- Saturday Nights 7pm at the Groton Legion (Fall/Winter Months)
- 1/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 4/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 5/4/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 5/27/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- 6/14/2018 Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- 6/15/2018 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/16/2018 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2018 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/22/2018 Summer Fest (4th Sunday in July)
- 9/8/2018 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/6/2018 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/12/2018 Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2018 Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/10/2018 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/01/2018 Olive Grove Golf Course 2018 Holiday Party

- Best Ball Golf Tourney
- SDSU Golf Tourney
- Sunflower Golf Tourney
- Santa Claus Day
- Fireman's Stag
- Tour of Homes
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events

News from the Associated Press

Hunter permits granted despite outcry for 2015 death of lion

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A wildlife advocacy group says the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued permits to hunters in South Dakota and Wisconsin to bring back lion trophies from Africa.

Nonprofit Friends of Animals disclosed last week that nearly three dozen Americans have been granted such permission since Donald Trump was elected president, the Star Tribune reported.

Jon F. Dagel is among the applicants that were granted a permit. He had submitted his application in February 2017 to import a "threatened-listed lion," explaining that he planned to travel to Zimbabwe to hunt for a lion and would want to bring back "all the parts," said Friends of Animals spokeswoman Fran Silverman.

The Trump administration's loosened federal restrictions on permits follows an international outcry over the 2015 death of a lion. Five months after Cecil was killed by Twin Cities dentist Walter Palmer, the former President Barack Obama's administration placed lions in Africa under the protection of the Endangered Species Act.

Palmer, who wasn't charged with a crime for the lion's death, told the newspaper two months after the hunt that the kill was legal. He also said the others in his guided hunting party had no idea that the 13-year-old lion was the subject of research.

But the Trump administration has since backed off. Federal officials are allowing hunters to import lions killed in Zimbabwe and granting permits in all countries on a case-by-case basis.

Information from: Star Tribune, <http://www.startribune.com>

Group aims to help resolve Dakota Access protest warrants

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — An organization formed to provide legal help to opponents of the Dakota Access oil pipeline is launching an effort this week to help protesters with criminal warrants resolve their cases.

There are about 100 outstanding warrants issued for people from 25 states, according to the Water Protector Legal Collective nonprofit, which takes its name from the moniker that pipeline opponents gave themselves. Most of those people are from the Dakotas, California and New York.

The legal collective is planning "outreach tour" events Thursday at Oglala Lakota College's Paha Sapa location in Rapid City, South Dakota; Friday and Saturday at the powwow grounds in Pine Ridge, South Dakota; and Saturday and Sunday at the powwow grounds in Fort Yates, North Dakota.

"We want to be available to speak in person, especially with those water protectors who may have doubts about negotiating the criminal justice system, or who may not know who we are," paralegal Mary Redway said.

The collective has promoted the effort through tribal media and social media. It also has set up a hotline for people who can't make it to one of the events.

The legal collective's effort is not being done in conjunction with the courts, and those who attend one of the events will not be offered a special deal. Morton County prosecutors Allen Koppy and Brian Grosinger did not immediately respond Monday to a request for comment.

Thousands of people gathered in encampments in southern North Dakota in 2016 and early 2017 to protest the \$3.8 billion pipeline built by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners to move North Dakota oil through South Dakota and Iowa to a shipping point in Illinois. ETP says the pipeline is safe, but opponents worry about environmental harm. Many of them clashed with police, resulting in 761 arrests in a six-month span.

Of the 831 protest-related cases in North Dakota's South Central Judicial District, where the protests occurred, only 19 remain open, 16 are on appeal and 95 are considered inactive with warrants issued, ac-

According to Trial Court Administrator Donna Wunderlich. The legal collective keeps its own tally that differs slightly, with 838 total cases and 104 warrants.

The legal collective aims to help resolve the warrant cases by the end of August, when it plans to scale back its activities due to the dwindling number of unresolved cases, Executive Director Terry Janis said. Another organization that's been providing financial help for suspects' bail, travel and housing expenses also is expected to disband at the same time.

Some people might not even be aware they have an outstanding warrant, while others might have little interest in resolving their case, the collective said.

"It is an unfortunate reality that having a warrant can come back to cause them some problems in the future," Janis said. "We encourage people to get in touch with us."

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

South Dakota's challenge to western town returns to court

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — A town in western South Dakota is returning to court to seek a dismissal of the state's case against its incorporation.

Court arguments over whether Buffalo Chip can incorporate are scheduled for Tuesday in Fourth Circuit Court in Sturgis, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

"If the judge grants our motion on the 31st, then that should be the end of everything," said Buffalo Chip's Kent Hagg about the ongoing legal battle since Meade County voters approved the town's incorporation in 2015. Several county residents and the city of Sturgis have since attempted to appeal the decision.

The South Dakota Supreme Court ruled in January that any action challenging Buffalo Chip's incorporation must be brought by the state.

But Hagg argues that the state doesn't have the authority to dissolve a municipality.

"While the state may believe itself to possess the power to dissolve an existing municipality, it has provided no authority for such omnipotence," he said.

James Moore, the state's special assistant attorney general, said South Dakota can challenge the town's incorporation under state law.

"What the state grants, the state may take away," Moore said.

In its application for permission to challenge, the state said that a municipality can't legally be incorporated if it has fewer than 100 residents or 30 voters. Census information submitted at the time showed Buffalo Chip didn't meet the threshold.

The law's threshold changed in 2016 to 100 legal residents and 45 registered voters.

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

Man held on charges of kidnapping woman in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls man police say a 25-year-old man is being held for kidnapping a woman outside a Walmart store.

Police said Monday the kidnapping happened about 8:30 p.m. Friday when the man "body slammed" a woman into the front seat of a car and drove away.

Witnesses were able to give police a description of the car and part of its license plate number. Police spokesman Sam Clemens says officers later found the car in the Good Samaritan parking lot. The 23-year-old woman was not seriously injured. The man was arrested on possible kidnapping, assault and false imprisonment charges.

North Dakota State unanimous pick to win Valley title

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Defending national champion North Dakota State has been unanimously picked to win the Missouri Valley Football Conference title.

The FCS powerhouse, which has won or shared the league crown in each of the last seven seasons, received all 39 first-place votes in a poll conducted by league coaches, media and sports information directors.

South Dakota State was picked second, followed by Northern Iowa, Youngstown State and Illinois State. MVFC teams went 8-4 in last year's FCS playoffs, and North Dakota State won its sixth national title since 2011.

North Dakota nurse staffing agency settles wage lawsuit

MANDAN, N.D. (AP) — A North Dakota nurse staffing agency has settled a federal lawsuit over wage disputes with more than 100 nurses.

Employees of Mandan-based Dakota Travel Nurse have started receiving cash payments after settling the lawsuit, The Bismarck Tribune reported. The settlement is sealed so details of the amount of compensation aren't publicly available.

The nurses alleged they weren't properly compensated for overtime under state law and were overcharged for company-provided lodging.

"As a local company, I think there needs to be exposure of (Dakota Travel Nurse's) unfair business practices," said Boe Kuch, who worked as a registered nurse for the company for 18 months.

The company helps staff 90 health care facilities in North Dakota, Montana and South Dakota. Company Owner Jamie Fleck's lawyer declined to comment to the newspaper.

Kuch said he joined the lawsuit about a year ago after being notified by the law firm filing the suit on behalf of former employees, Jamie Diaz and others.

Diaz alleged that she didn't receive the full time-and-a-half payment required under state law for overtime she put in from October 2014 through July 2015. Diaz said she was paid \$20 an hour as a certified nursing assistant and only \$25 an hour for overtime.

Diaz also said she was charged a fee for company housing even after moving out of the accommodations. Kuch said Dakota Travel Nurse changed its overtime practices in April, before the settlement was reached.

Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

Eagle Butte woman sentenced for stealing from tribal store

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — An Eagle Butte woman has been sentenced to a month in custody for embezzling from a tribal business on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation.

The U.S. attorney's office says 27-year-old Calynn Gunville stole more than \$10,600 from the Lakota Thrifty Mart.

Gunville was indicted in February on a charge of theft from an Indian tribal organization and pleaded guilty in May.

She was ordered at her recent sentencing to pay restitution.

Sioux Falls business owner cited after teens break curfew

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls business owner was cited after dozens of teenagers broke curfew by hanging out in his hair salon.

Police Capt. Loren McManus says officers have dealt with multiple instances of children breaking the citywide 11 p.m. curfew at Tigg's Hair Design. Officers investigated shortly after midnight Thursday and determined that up to 200 children had been there throughout the night. Twenty were cited, including an 11-year-old.

The Argus Leader reports the business hosts a "Club Night Teen Night" every Thursday, though it's

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scheduled to end at 11 p.m.

The salon's owner was cited for contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

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

Indoor water park in Rapid City to be auctioned

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A massive indoor water park in Rapid City is going on the auction block, even before it ever opened.

Construction on the Rippin' Rapids Water Park & Resort began in 2014, but eventually stalled due to financial woes by its developer, Capitol Management of Rapid City.

The Rapid City Journal says the 54,000 square-foot building and property is now owned by Great Western Bank.

An auction for the 7-acre property will be held Aug. 14. Potential buyers can bid on the whole property, or just the land or the salvage rights to the building.

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

Man pleads not guilty to sex abuse charge on reservation

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Cherry Creek man has pleaded not guilty to sexually abusing a girl on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation.

The U.S. attorney's office says 32-year-old Keeler Condon is accused of engaging in a sex act with a female juvenile who was incapable of understanding what was going on or declining to participate.

Condon is scheduled for trial Sept. 18. He could face life in prison if convicted.

Malaysia's civil aviation chief quits over Flight 370 lapses

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia's civil aviation chief said Tuesday he has resigned to take responsibility after an independent investigative report highlighted shortcomings in the air traffic control center during Malaysia Airlines Flight 370's disappearance four years ago.

The report released Monday raised the possibility that the jet may have been hijacked even though there was no conclusive evidence of why it went off course and flew for over seven hours after severing communications.

Azharuddin Abdul Rahman said the report didn't blame the civil aviation department for the plane's loss but found that the Kuala Lumpur air traffic control center failed to comply with operating procedures.

"Therefore, it is with regret and after much thought and contemplation that I have decided to resign as chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia," he said in his statement, adding he has presented his resignation and will step down in two weeks.

The jet carrying 239 people from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing vanished March 8, 2014, and is presumed to have crashed in the far southern Indian Ocean. The investigative report, prepared by a 19-member international team, said the cause of the disappearance cannot be determined until the wreckage and the plane's black boxes are found.

However, the report said the investigation showed lapses by air traffic control, including a failure to swiftly initiate an emergency response and monitor radar continuously, relying too much on information from Malaysia Airlines and not getting in touch with the military for help.

New Malaysian Transport Minister Anthony Loke said Tuesday the government has formed a committee to investigate and take action on any misconduct based on the report's findings.

The report said there was insufficient information to determine if the aircraft broke up in the air or during impact with the ocean.

Scattered pieces of debris that washed ashore on African beaches and Indian Ocean islands indicated a distant remote stretch of the ocean where the plane likely crashed. But a government search by Australia,

Malaysia and China failed to pinpoint a location. And a second, private search by U.S. company Ocean Infinity that finished at the end of May also found no sign of a crash site.

Grace Subathirai Nathan, whose mother was aboard the plane, said the outcome could have been different if Malaysia's air traffic control didn't commit "horrible mistakes."

She welcomed the "display of accountability" by Azharuddin, who headed operations at the time of the jet's disappearance and gave daily media briefings, but said he has "taken the easy way out."

"He has not explained the failings of the controllers, why it happened, what caused it? Was (it) incompetence? Was it neglect? What was it?" she wrote on Facebook.

"I hope that immediate action is taken against all the people who made these mistakes as a lesson for these people who hold a huge responsibility to take their jobs more seriously so that we can avoid disasters like this from happening again," Nathan said.

Malaysia's government has said it will resume searching if credible evidence of the plane's location emerges.

Twin wildfires threatening 10,000 California homes

By MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ and SUDHIN THANAWALA, Associated Press

LAKEPORT, Calif. (AP) — Twin wildfires tearing through vineyards and brushy hills threatened some 10,000 homes in Northern California Tuesday — yet another front in the seemingly endless summer of wildfires that have ravaged some of the most scenic areas of the state.

The two fires straddling Mendocino and Lake counties had burned seven homes by Monday night along with some 107 square miles (277 square kilometers) of rural land.

About 100 miles (160 kilometers) north, the so-called Carr Fire that has burned more than 800 homes and killed six people has become the ninth most destructive wildfire in California history, said Scott McLean, a spokesman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

In Lake County, evacuation orders were in effect for the 4,700-resident town of Lakeport along with some smaller communities and a section of Mendocino National Forest. In all, some 10,000 people have been warned to flee, fire officials said.

Lakeport, north of San Francisco, is the county seat and a popular destination for bass anglers and boaters on the shores of Clear Lake. But by Monday night it was a ghost town, the main streets deserted.

A few miles away embers, ash and smoke swirled through vineyards where at least one home had gone up in flames. Firefighters set blazes at the bottom of hills in order to burn up the tinder-dry brush before flames cresting the ridge tops could feed on it and surge downhill. A fleet of aircraft made continuous water and fire retardant drops on the blaze, filling the air with the roar of their engines.

But not everyone heeded orders issued Sunday and Monday to evacuate.

Derick Hughes II remained behind at his property in Nice, California, where he ran sprinklers on his roof and removed yard plants that could catch fire.

The 32-year-old Marine Corps veteran sent his wife and two daughters to safety along with three carloads of belongings. But he said he had too much at stake to leave himself. He bought his three-bedroom house last year using a loan from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"This is everything I bled for, and I've worked really hard to get to where I am, and I'm just not willing to give it up so easily," he said over the phone. "Some people may think that's selfish of me, and I have insurance. But the way things go, I'd rather not start over."

Farther north, police said five people were arrested on suspicion of entering areas evacuated due to the explosive wildfire around Redding.

The blaze, which killed two firefighters and four civilians including two children, has now destroyed 818 homes and 311 outbuildings and damaged 165 homes, McLean said.

More than 27,000 people remained evacuated from their homes although another 10,000 were allowed to return Monday as fire crews reinforced lines on the western end of Carr Fire.

Some 12,000 firefighters were battling the blaze. Fire officials were hopeful that they could make progress

containing the blaze, which was 23 percent contained.

The fire's northwestern corner continued to be active.

"It's still putting up a fight," McLean said.

Those fires were among 17 burning across the state, where fire crews were stretched to the limit.

In Riverside County, east of Los Angeles, an arson fire that destroyed seven homes last week was 82 percent contained Monday.

Fire crews also have battled numerous small brushfires this summer, most charring only a few acres but still threatening homes in built-up areas along parched foothills. A 10-acre fire damaged 13 homes and apartments Monday in Santa Clarita, northwest of Los Angeles, county fire officials said.

McLean, the state fire spokesman, said there was no guarantee of safety in a state that has been ravaged by years of drought that has turned trees and brush to tinder.

"Anything could happen anywhere. That's the nature of the beast for all of these fires," he said. "The vegetation is so dry all it takes is a spark to get it going."

Thanawala reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Lorin Eleni Gill and Olga Rodriguez also contributed to this report.

Rival Koreas' generals discuss easing military confrontation

By HYUNG-JIN KIM, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Generals from the rival Koreas met Tuesday at their shared border for talks on easing their countries' decades-long military standoff, the second such meeting since their leaders held a landmark summit in April and pledged to reduce the danger of another war on the peninsula.

The meeting comes days after North Korea returned the reported remains of U.S. war dead, the most recent sign of positive diplomacy after last year's threats of war.

The Korean generals met at the border village of Panmunjom and discussed the implementation of agreements from the inter-Korean summit on non-nuclear military issues. Some experts say South Korea can't agree on any drastic measures to reduce animosity unless the North takes serious steps toward nuclear disarmament.

In the April 27 summit, the leaders of the Koreas agreed to disarm a jointly controlled area at Panmunjom, work to prevent accidental clashes along their disputed western sea boundary and halt all hostile acts. Since then, the Koreas have dismantled their frontline propaganda loudspeakers, restored a military hotline and held their first general-level talks since 2007.

The generals were expected to discuss a reduction in the number of military guards at Panmunjom, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the area, and the removal of some guard posts from the Demilitarized Zone, a buffer zone that separates the two countries. They could also talk about ways to ensure that fishermen operate peacefully along the Korean sea boundary, the site of several bloody naval skirmishes in recent years.

The Defense Ministry wouldn't discuss any detailed agenda for the talks.

The meeting began in an amicable manner with delegates from both countries saying they expect a meaningful outcome.

Chief North Korean delegate Lt. Gen. An Ik San said he felt a "sense of mission" to contribute to peace and prosperity for the Koreas. His South Korean counterpart, Maj. Gen. Kim Do Gyun, said he was confident the talks would produce "achievements that South and North Korea and the international community want," according to South Korean media pool reports from the venue.

Last Friday, North Korea returned what were said to be dozens of remains of American soldiers missing from the 1950-53 Korean War, something leader Kim Jong Un promised during a June summit with U.S. President Donald Trump.

Trump thanked Kim for "fulfilling a promise" to send back U.S. remains and said it was a step in the right direction following their summit.

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During the Singapore meeting, Kim also committed to work toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula while Trump promised to provide security assurances. But there have been worries that North Korea hasn't taken any serious disarmament measures since then.

In exchange for returning the U.S. war dead, North Korea may demand that the United States agree on a declaration to end the Korean War as a U.S. security guarantee. That could be discussed at Tuesday's meeting, according to analyst Cho Han Bum at Seoul's Korea Institute for National Unification.

The Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula in a technical state of war. North Korea has long argued its nuclear weapons are a response to U.S. military threats, saying it wants to sign a peace treaty with the United States to formally end the war. That could then allow the North to demand the pullout of 28,500 U.S. troops deployed in South Korea.

At the meeting, the North Korean delegate mentioned a South Korean media report that North Korea would ask South Korea to pressure the United States to jointly declare the war's end. "Before determining whether that (report) is accurate, I realize that the entire people in North and South Korea think highly of our meeting," he said.

The military talks are part of a number of recent steps toward reconciliation by the Koreans that began with North Korea's participation in February's Winter Olympics in South Korea. The Koreans are to field combined teams in basketball, rowing and canoeing during the upcoming Asian Games in Indonesia. On Tuesday, North and South Korean athletes trained together in rowing and canoeing in southern South Korea.

Threats aside, Trump says he's willing to meet with Iranians

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said that he'd "certainly meet" with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, and without preconditions, if the Iranian leader were willing.

Speaking Monday during a joint news conference with Italy's premier, Trump said he would meet with the Iranians "anytime they want to."

"I'll meet with anybody," he said. "There's nothing wrong with meeting."

The overture comes as Trump and the Iranians have been escalating their rhetoric after Trump's May withdrawal from the landmark nuclear accord. The United States has also vowed to boost sanctions until Iran changes its regional policies, including its support for regional militant groups. The first of those sanctions are to go into effect Monday.

Iranian officials reacted skeptically on Tuesday. Iran's semi-official ISNA news agency quoted political adviser Hamid Aboutalebi as saying that for talks to happen, the U.S. needs to rejoin the nuclear deal.

It's unclear whether Rouhani has any interest in meeting with Trump. Rouhani's chief of staff claimed earlier this month in Iran's state-owned newspaper that Rouhani had rejected eight requests from Trump for one-on-one talks last year.

Rouhani recently warned the U.S. that "war with Iran is the mother of all wars," prompting an all-caps retort from Trump.

"To Iranian President Rouhani," he wrote on Twitter. "NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE. WE ARE NO LONGER A COUNTRY THAT WILL STAND FOR YOUR DEMENTED WORDS OF VIOLENCE & DEATH."

He ended the message with a warning: "BE CAUTIOUS!"

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif fired back with his own message that began, "COLOR US UNIMPRESSED."

Trump tempered his threatening rhetoric two days later when he said his administration stands ready for Iran to come back to the negotiating table.

"We're ready to make a real deal, not the deal that was done by the previous administration, which was a disaster," he said.

Trump has long cast himself as a master negotiator who is most effective when he meets with his coun-

terparts face-to-face. He pointed to his recent one-on-ones with North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Russia's Vladimir Putin as examples of the benefits of such get-togethers.

"I believe in meeting," he said, talking up the benefits of "speaking to other people, especially when you're talking about potentials of war and death and famine and lots of other things."

Asked whether he would set any preconditions for the meetings, Trump was clear.

"No preconditions, no. If they want to meet, I'll meet anytime they want, anytime they want," he said. "Good for the country, good for them, good for us and good for the world. No preconditions. If they want to meet, I'll meet."

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told CNBC on Monday that he was onboard with the president's invitation, saying Trump "wants to meet with folks to solve problems."

But he appeared to add several qualifications: "If the Iranians demonstrate a commitment to make fundamental changes in how they treat their own people, reduce their maligned behavior, can agree that it's worthwhile to enter in a nuclear agreement that actually prevents proliferation, then the president said he's prepared to sit down and have a conversation with him."

Early reaction on Capitol Hill was mixed, with Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., who is often critical of Trump, telling reporters: "I actually think that's a good idea."

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker, R-Tenn., characterized the overture as "fine," but only "as long as they are willing to talk about being a normal country in the future."

Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., a frequent Trump critic, was more skeptical, calling it "another recipe for bad outcomes."

"It's the same as North Korea," he said. "No preconditions, no preparation. And what do we have? We have Kim Jong Un was elevated from an international pariah to someone who seems like a legitimate statesman."

Associated Press writers Matthew Lee and Alan Fram contributed to this report.

Trial set to begin for ex-Trump campaign chairman Manafort

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two questions loom large as Paul Manafort prepares to walk into a federal courtroom Tuesday: Will Donald Trump's former campaign chairman spend what effectively could be the rest of his life in prison? Or will special counsel Robert Mueller be handed a defeat in his team's first trial since his appointment more than a year ago?

Those questions will be answered by 12 jurors selected this week as Manafort's trial on tax evasion and bank fraud charges gets underway at the courthouse in Alexandria, Virginia. The pool of jurors will face questions from both sides and U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III as they try to weed out potential prejudice in what has become a highly publicized and politically divisive investigation.

That task comes as the president and his lawyer-spokesman, Rudy Giuliani, have intensified their attempts to undermine the Mueller investigation in the court of public opinion and as the president continues to waffle on whether he'll sit for a private interview with prosecutors. The president criticized Mueller by name over the weekend and continues to refer to the special counsel investigation into Russian election interference as a "witch hunt" and "an illegal scam."

While the main areas of Mueller's investigation are Russia's actions during the 2016 presidential election and any attempts by Trump to obstruct justice, none of those topics are expected to come up in Manafort's trial. In fact, prosecutors said last week they don't expect the word "Russia" to be mentioned at all.

Instead, the trial will center on Manafort's Ukrainian consulting work and only briefly touch on his involvement with the president's campaign.

Prosecutors have lined up 35 witnesses and more than 500 pieces of evidence they say will show how Manafort earned more than \$60 million from his Ukrainian work and then concealed a "significant percentage" of that money from the IRS. Prosecutors will also argue that Manafort fraudulently obtained millions

more in bank loans, including during his time on the campaign.

In particular, prosecutors say they will introduce evidence that a chairman of one of the banks allowed Manafort to file inaccurate loan information in exchange for a role on the Republican campaign and the promise of a job in the Trump administration that never materialized.

At the center of all this will be another Trump campaign aide, Rick Gates, who spent years working for Manafort in Ukraine and is also accused of helping him falsify paperwork used to obtain the bank loans. Gates, who cut a plea deal with Mueller earlier this year, is expected to testify against his former mentor.

Gates is also expected to play a key role in Manafort's second trial scheduled for September. That trial, set in the District of Columbia, involves allegations that the longtime political consultant acted as an unregistered foreign agent for Ukrainian interests and made false statements to the U.S. government.

Manafort is the only American charged by Mueller to opt for a trial.

The other 31 people charged have either pleaded guilty or are Russians seen as unlikely to enter an American courtroom. Three Russian companies have also been charged. One of those companies has pleaded not guilty and is fighting the allegations in federal court in Washington.

Follow Chad Day at <https://twitter.com/ChadSDay> and Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

ICE, Border Patrol at Senate hearing on family separations

By ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate Judiciary Committee is demanding answers from federal immigration officials about the Trump administration's separation of migrant children from their families and its struggle to reunite them, a fraught effort that's drawn election-year criticism from both parties.

But a hearing scheduled for Tuesday on the topic may have a wider focus after the committee's bipartisan leaders asked federal investigators to probe reports of sexual and other abuse of immigrants at government detention facilities.

Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, and top panel Democrat Dianne Feinstein of California asked late Monday for an examination of alleged sexual, physical and emotional mistreatment of immigrants held at agency facilities, saying the problems may have been occurring since 2014 or earlier.

With President Donald Trump already under fire for taking thousands of migrant children from their detained parents — and botching the reunification of many — the request for the investigation elevated yet another issue to the administration's list of immigration headaches.

"These allegations of abuse are extremely disturbing and must be addressed," Grassley and Feinstein wrote in a letter to the departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services. "This is not a partisan issue as reporting suggests many have been occurring for years. Immigrant families and children kept in federal custody deserve to be treated with basic human dignity and respect and should never be subjected to these forms of abuse."

Set to testify Tuesday to the Judiciary panel were officials from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Border Patrol and other agencies.

Trump began a policy of "zero tolerance" this spring, prosecuting all migrants caught entering the U.S. without authorization. To help discourage border crossing, his administration also began separating children from their detained parents, rather than following the policy used by previous administrations, which generally released the entire family pending court action.

Under withering public rejection and criticism from congressional Democrats and Republicans alike, Trump stopped taking children from their parents. But of the more than 2,500 children held, hundreds were not reunited by last week. That includes more than 400 whose parents were deported.

U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw in San Diego set a deadline of last Thursday to reunite the families. While he commended administration officials for reuniting many parents in its custody with their children, it

faulted them for leaving hundreds of families still apart and warning that a better system must be in place.

Trump seized on the praise, tweeting Monday that "a highly respected Federal judge" had said that the "Trump Administration gets great credit" for reuniting illegal families. Thank you, and please look at the previous administrations record - not good!"

The senators' letter, based on articles by The Associated Press and other news organizations, says the allegations suggest "a long-term pattern" of mistreatment. Those reports describe claims of abuse from this year dating back to before Trump took office.

The lawmakers want the inspectors general for the departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services to investigate the abuse allegations immediately and to release any previous investigations into the charges. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a branch of Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services oversee the facilities.

The AP reported last month that children held at an immigration detention facility in Roanoke, Virginia, said they were beaten while handcuffed, locked in solitary confinement and left nude and cold in concrete cells.

A civil rights lawsuit has been filed alleging mistreatment at the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center from 2015 to 2018. The alleged victims, Hispanic youths held for months or years, have submitted sworn statements in the case.

Lawyers for the facility have denied the alleged abuse. Many of the children have been accused by immigration officials of belonging to MS-13 and other violent gangs, an activity Trump has used to justify his "zero tolerance" policy of prosecuting immigrants caught entering the country without permission.

The senators' letter also cited a New York Times report this month about two female migrants who described sexual abuse at detention facilities in Texas and Pennsylvania. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has reported 1,310 cases of sexual abuse against detainees from 2013 to 2017, the report said.

A June report by the website Dallas News described alleged sexual abuse at a detention center near Austin, Texas, in 2017. The Arizona Republic reported alleged inappropriate contact involving a teenage boy in 2015 and a girl who accused a staffer of making suggestive comments in 2017 at facilities in Glendale and Tucson, Arizona. The lawmakers' letter cited those reports as well.

Homeland Security spokeswoman Katie Waldman said agency officials perform their duties "professionally and humanely" and that the agency "is abiding by the intent and letter of law and maintains the highest standards care for individuals in our custody."

Undercover video shows pig abuse but also common practices

By COLLEEN SLEVIN, Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Recently released undercover video showing pigs being kicked, hit and punched at a Kentucky supplier for the world's largest meat producer drew prompt condemnation from animal rights groups and the agricultural industry alike.

However, the images sandwiched in between — adult pigs in cages barely bigger than their bodies and a piglet squealing while being castrated — show still widely accepted industry practices, but were aimed at pressuring Brazilian-based JBS to abandon them.

Ten states — none major pork producers — have passed laws that ban or phase out the use of those narrow metal cages, known as gestation crates or stalls, where sows are confined during their frequent pregnancies.

Among them is California, where voters agreed to phase out the crates along with chicken cages and veal crates starting in 2015. This fall, voters will be asked to go further and ban the sale of pork from pigs confined to the crates, along with pork from their offspring. The measure also would bar the sale of veal from crated calves and eggs from caged chickens.

Massachusetts voters passed a similar ban in 2016 that takes effect in 2022.

Sows account for only about 6 percent of the pigs on American farms, but pork producers have been slow to give up confinement, said Josh Balk, vice president of farm animal protection for The Humane

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Society of the United States.

While shoppers are familiar with the bewildering array of cage-free and free-range egg options in stores, how pigs are raised is not something frequently touted on bacon or sausage packages.

Still, activists have made an impact with their gradual, state-by-state approach of passing ballot measures and bills to outlaw crates, and by gathering pledges from more than 100 large restaurant and food companies including McDonald's, Chipotle and Target, (<http://cagefreefuture.com/wp/commitments/>) to move away from suppliers that use gestation crates. Some meat producers have also pledged to phase them out.

The world's largest pork producer, Smithfield Foods, announced in January it had switched to open group housing for pregnant pigs at its company-owned U.S. farms. JBS has said it plans to transition to collective rather than individual crates by 2025. In January, it said 45 percent of its suppliers have already made the switch. <https://jbs.com.br/en/imprensa/jbs-avanca-em-ranking-global-de-bem-estar-animal/>

JBS' U.S. branch, based in Greeley, Colorado, suspended shipments from the Franklin, Kentucky, farm after the video was released earlier this month by Los Angeles-based Mercy for Animals, a backer of the California proposal. It said it would investigate the incident at the farm operated by Tennessee-based Tosh Farms.

"Animal welfare is a priority for our company and our customers," JBS USA said in a statement at the time. "We will ensure that all of our suppliers adhere to our high standards for animal care."

An estimated 75 percent of U.S. pig farms regularly use gestation stalls. The rest are owned by companies that pledged to cut stall use or are in states that ban it, and mostly use open pens instead, according to the National Pork Producers Council.

However, even most of those farms still use gestation stalls when sows are artificially inseminated, and some use them to test whether the sows are pregnant, council spokesman David Warner said. State bans, like Colorado's, typically include exceptions for testing, treatment or research.

After sows give birth, farms that use confinement usually put them in slightly larger farrowing stalls, which give them enough room to lie down and nurse their piglets.

Gestation stalls are intended to minimize fighting among hierarchical sows and protect workers from the pregnant animals, which can weigh between 350 and 450 pounds (160 and 200 kilograms), said Sarah Crawford, assistant vice president of animal welfare for the National Pork Board in Des Moines, Iowa. She said the stalls are long enough for the animals to lie in, and research has shown some will choose a stall over living in a group.

"The good thing is farmers have the choice to decide what fits best for their farm," she said.

Temple Grandin, an animal science professor at Colorado State University and consultant on livestock treatment, said confined pregnant pigs lack the space to turn around, and compared the experience to humans having to spend their lives in an airline seat.

Grandin, who has worked for JBS in the past, said crates should be phased out and has seen group housing for pigs working well. She also said the way male piglets are castrated — done in their first week to prevent aggression and variations in meat flavor — could change too because of new research into pain medication for livestock.

"Gradually, people are realizing that these animals feel pain and we need to give them pain relief," she said.

Balk of The Humane Society, a major funder of the California proposal, said gestation crates typically are used in places like China and Europe, although the European Union allows sows to be confined for only the first six weeks — or about a third — of their pregnancy.

U.S. farms, he said, shouldn't resort to "substandard practices."

"Instead, we should set the bar on proper treatment of animals that reflects our mercy and compassion toward animals," Balk said.

Follow Colleen Slevin on Twitter: @colleenslevin. Her work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/Colleen%20Slevin>

Don't call dolphin hybrid spotted off Hawaii a 'wholphin'

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Scientists are touting the first sighting of a hybrid between a melon-headed whale and a rough-toothed dolphin in the ocean off Hawaii. But don't call it a "wholphin," they say.

The melon-headed whale is one of the various species that's called a whale but is technically a dolphin. "Calling it something like a wholphin doesn't make any sense," said one of the study's authors, Robin Baird, a Hawaii research biologist with Washington state-based Cascadia Research Collective. "I think calling it a wholphin just confuses the situation more than it already is."

In a study published last week, scientists say the animal spotted off the island of Kauai in August 2017 appears to be the first record of a hybrid involving either species. It's also only the third confirmed instance of a wild-born hybrid between species in the Delphinidae family.

The label "wholphin" has stuck for a hybrid born in 1985 at Hawaii's Sea Life Park of a false killer whale and an Atlantic bottle-nose dolphin. The hybrid named Kekaimalu still lives at the marine mammal park, where she helps teach children about genetics. News of the hybrid spotted in the wild during Navy-funded research to study the effects of sonar, proves the "genetic diversity of the ocean," said Sea Life Park Curator Jeff Pawloski. "I always thought they were out there in the wild existing — it only makes sense," he said. "And to know she has cousins out there in the ocean is an amazing thing to know."

While some news organization have described the melon-headed whale and rough-toothed dolphin hybrid as a new species, in order for that to happen other things need to occur, including more widespread hybridization, Baird said.

"That isn't the case, although there are examples where hybridization has resulted in a new species," he said. "There's no evidence to suggest it's leading toward anything like species formation."

The male hybrid presents an opportunity to look for others. Hybrids generally occur when there's a decline in the population in one of the parental species, so scientists will be looking out for such a decline.

A likely scenario for how the hybrid came to be is a melon-headed whale getting separated from its group and ending up traveling with rough-toothed dolphins.

Scientists don't know how old it is, but believe it's close to adult age.

Huge sea-life sculptures made from ocean's plastic trash

By JANET McCONNAUGHEY, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Huge sculptures of sea life are dotted about New Orleans' aquarium and zoo, all of them made from plastic trash that washed ashore. There's a great white shark made partly of bottle caps and beach toys and a jellyfish made mostly of cut-up water bottles.

The artwork, part of a project called Washed Ashore : Art to Save the Sea, is the creation of Angela Haseltine Pozzi, who started making the pieces after seeing plastic heaped by the waves onto Oregon's southern coast. Pozzi was in the town of Bandon, where her grandparents had lived, mourning her first husband's death.

"I'd known its beaches all my life," she said. "I went to the ocean to heal and found that the ocean needed healing."

She wants the scale of her creations to make people realize just how much plastic gets into the ocean — and to act on that knowledge. Signs next to each piece suggest simple ways to reduce the problem, such as not using plastic straws, re-using water bottles, and picking up other people's litter.

"Every piece of trash picked up and properly disposed of is a piece that will not cause harm to local environments and animals," states the sign for "Greta the Great White Shark."

Pozzi's aim is art that is "beautiful, and a little horrifying."

An army of volunteers in Oregon — about 10,000 since Pozzi started in 2010 — help her collect, prepare and assemble the beach trash into art. One of their wash-basins for plastic is a bathtub also found on the beach.

She now has more than 70 pieces in three exhibitions currently traveling the U.S., and has requests from

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overseas. Her work has been displayed at zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens, and she has permanent exhibits at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and a gallery in Bandon.

The Audubon Aquarium of the Americas is currently showing six sculptures, while one of a puffin is on display at the Audubon Zoo; more pieces will be added to both locations in October.

In addition to the shark and two jellyfish sculptures, there's a walk-through whale ribcage made with bucket lids, bottles, buoys and bait traps; a marlin with a beak made of fishing rods; and percussive "Musical Seaweed." That statue's long leaves include metal and plastic bottle caps strung on wires so they rattle when a leaf is hit lightly.

Robert and Lauryn Geosits of Mandeville, Louisiana, were visiting with their three children.

"This is such a great idea for people to visualize just how much trash is in the ocean," said Lauryn Geosits.

Her husband read from a sign while their baby slept in a stroller and Chelsea, 7, and Preston, 8, searched the shark for the items he named: "There's a toy car bumper, bottle caps, beach toys, a lighter ..."

Asked about the strangest piece she's used, Pozzi said: "When you've processed more than 21 tons of debris into more than 70 pieces of art you've seen pretty much everything."

"One of the most shocking are bleach bottles that have bite marks from fish," Pozzi said.

A fish made entirely of fish-bitten plastic is among the pieces to be added in October.

Most of the pieces coming to New Orleans this fall are on display at Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, including a river otter, a seahorse and a clownfish in an anemone.

"We are very sad to see them go, because they've been very successful," said Tynnetta Qaiyim (KY-im), vice president for planning and design at Shedd.

She said the response has been far beyond what she expected, both in the number of pictures patrons have posted on social media and in increased conservation awareness.

Qaiyim had thought the exhibit might be more interesting to coastal residents, but said it also connects Midwesterners to the Great Lakes.

"People are talking about plastics and the Great Lakes and the waterways in a way that we were hoping for but not really sure it would happen," she said.

In New Orleans, the sculptures are in a variety of places and will stay up through April.

"Look! A jellyfish! A jellyfish!" Elliot Harold of Chalmette shouted as he approached a stairway below one of Pozzi's creations.

"It's the only thing he's liked all day," said his grandmother, Gera Mendel.

Levi's, Yelp join coalition pledging not to discriminate

By DEE-ANN DURBIN, AP Business Writer

Levi Strauss, Yelp and Lyft are leading a coalition of 1,200 businesses and cities that are pledging not to discriminate against employees or customers based on race, sexual orientation, or other characteristics.

Normally, making a promise to serve every customer might seem like a no-brainer. But the Open to All coalition is launching in a highly charged atmosphere, with florists refusing to provide flowers for gay weddings and stores turning away Muslim customers. On the same June weekend that White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders was asked to leave a Virginia restaurant because of her affiliation with President Donald Trump, a transgender woman was harassed by staff at a Washington restaurant for using the women's restroom.

So it remains to be seen if the "Open to All" message — on businesses' Yelp pages or on stickers in their windows — will calm frayed tempers or anger customers and businesses who might question its motives.

Tia Agnew, co-founder and CEO of New Day Craft, an Indianapolis-based producer of mead and cider, is excited to put up her "Open to All" window sticker, which she says matches her "personal and professional ethos." She's not worried that it will be a turn-off to some potential patrons.

"All I can do is put our best foot forward and say, 'Hey, come on in and hang out,'" she said.

But George Marinakos, the owner of The Exchange Saloon in Washington, isn't sold on the idea. His bar is near the White House, and he has served Sanders as well as members of the Obama administration.

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A chalkboard in front of the bar reads, "Everyone welcome," but he thinks an "Open to All" sticker might raise questions. If he doesn't put it up, some people will wonder why; if he does, some people might not feel welcome because of what they interpret as a left-leaning message.

"You're putting yourself in the position of being damned if you do or damned if you don't," he said.

The Open to All coalition got its start late last year as the U.S. Supreme Court was preparing to consider the case of a Colorado baker who refused to bake a wedding cake for a gay couple because it violated his religious beliefs. The court ultimately ruled for the baker but didn't give businesses a blanket right to discriminate against gays.

Calla Rongerude, Open to All's campaign manager, said businesses were asking civil rights groups how to make it clear they would serve gays and other minorities. The cities of New York and Oakland, California, are also part of the coalition, as are 190 civil rights groups, organizations and faith groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the Interfaith Alliance, the Service Employees International Union and the NAACP.

"People have been really hungry to engage and let people know that they're welcome," she said.

Rongerude also says she doesn't think the campaign will face any backlash from conservatives.

"Having a business say, 'I am going to serve all of my customers on the same terms' is inherently positive," she said. "I think we want to get beyond the 'us versus them' mentality. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect."

Levi Strauss and Co. said it plans to display "Open to All" window stickers at nearly 200 U.S. stores and outlets.

Yelp is adding a tab to its site so restaurants and other locations can note that they are "Open to All." Owners will also have the option to leave that space blank or say the establishment is not open to all, said Luther Lowe, Yelp's senior vice president of public policy. Yelp already bans speech on its site that attacks someone based on race, religion, sexual orientation and other traits.

"Up and down the company, these are issues that we've always leaned in on," Lowe said. Asked if the label might be divisive, Lowe said Yelp is simply trying to guide people to places that welcome them.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws discrimination in public places on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. But only 21 states and the District of Columbia ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Rongerude said many businesses have gone further than the government. Uber, for example, includes sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status in its nondiscrimination policy. It dumped a Houston driver from its platform earlier this year after the driver made a gay couple get out of his car.

"Business really is in a unique place to lead right now," Rongerude said.

But not every business contacted by Open to All plans to join the coalition. Target Corp., for example, said it won't join because it has a policy prohibiting third-party signs on its doors.

Participants in the coalition risk turning off some customers. Mark McLean, a retired business owner and conservative blogger in Tennessee, says "Open to All" signs are divisive. He likens them to "Gun-Free Establishment" signs that infringe on gun owners' rights.

"We can't govern how people think. That's a dangerous slope to go down," McLean said.

But Jacinta Gauda, principal and chief strategy officer at The Gauda Group, who counsels companies about diversity and inclusion, says businesses are also facing pressure from employees and customers to take a stand on issues and make their values clear.

"I'm just of the mind that the movement to do this, driven by their employees and customers, is larger than the political risk," she said. "They calculated this and said, 'We have more to gain than we have to lose.'"

Northern California wildfire 9th most destructive in history

By **MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ** and **SUDHIN THANAWALA**, Associated Press

LAKEPORT, Calif. (AP) — A pair of wildfires that prompted evacuation orders for nearly 20,000 people barreled Monday toward small lake towns in Northern California, and authorities faced questions about how quickly they warned residents about the largest and deadliest blaze burning in the state.

Ed Bledsoe told CBS News he did not receive any warning to evacuate his home in the city of Redding before the flames came through last week and killed his wife, Melody, and his great-grandchildren, 5-year-old James Roberts and 4-year-old Emily Roberts.

"If I'd have any kind of warning, I'd have never, ever left my family in that house," Bledsoe said.

Shasta County Sheriff Tom Bosenko told the network there's an investigation into whether the Bledsoe home received a warning call or a knock on the door. The sheriff cited evidence that door-to-door notifications were made in the area. Bosenko did not return a message from The Associated Press on Monday.

The dispute came as authorities on Sunday ordered evacuations around twin fires in Mendocino and Lake counties, including from the 4,700-resident town of Lakeport, a popular destination for bass anglers and boaters on the shores of Clear Lake, about 120 miles (195 kilometers) north of San Francisco. The blazes have destroyed seven homes and threaten 10,000 others. So far, the flames have blackened more than 68,000 acres — well over 100 square miles (277 square kilometers) — with minimal containment.

By early evening, the town of Lakeport seemed to be completely deserted, while a few miles away embers, ash and smoke swirled through vineyards where at least one home had gone up in flames. Firefighters set blazes at the bottom of hills in order to burn up the tinder-dry brush before flames cresting the ridge tops could feed on it and surge downhill. A fleet of aircraft made continuous water and fire retardant drops on the blaze.

Those fires were among 17 burning across the state, where fire crews were stretched to the limit.

"We have experienced fires the last four years, and so we're very aware of what can happen with fires and the damage they can cause," Lake County Sheriff Lt. Corey Paulich said.

Fire crews also have battled numerous small brushfires this summer, most charring only a few acres but still threatening homes in built-up areas along parched foothills. A 10-acre fire damaged 11 units of an apartment building Monday in Santa Clarita, northwest of Los Angeles, county fire officials said.

Derick Hughes II did not heed the order and remained behind at his property in Nice, California, where he ran sprinklers on his roof and removed yard plants that could catch fire.

The 32-year-old Marine Corps veteran sent his wife and two daughters to safety along with three carloads of belongings. But he said he had too much at stake to leave himself. He bought his three-bedroom house last year using a loan from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"This is everything I bled for, and I've worked really hard to get to where I am, and I'm just not willing to give it up so easily," he said over the phone. "Some people may think that's selfish of me, and I have insurance. But the way things go, I'd rather not start over."

Hughes said about five of his neighbors also disobeyed the evacuation text alert they got Sunday evening to protect their homes and keep looters out.

Farther north, police said five people were arrested on suspicion of entering areas evacuated due to the explosive wildfire around Redding.

That blaze is now believed to be the ninth most destructive in state history, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokesman Scott McLean said.

The blaze, which killed two firefighters and four civilians including two children, has now destroyed 818 homes and 311 outbuildings and damaged 165 homes, McLean said.

More than 27,000 people remained evacuated from their homes although another 10,000 were allowed to return Monday as fire crews reinforced lines on the western end of the blaze.

Fire officials were hopeful that they could make progress containing the blaze, which was 23 percent contained.

The fire's northwestern end continued to be active.

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"It's still putting up a fight," McLean said.

The fire that threatened Redding — a city of about 92,000 — was ignited by a vehicle problem a week ago about 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of the city. On Thursday, it swept through the historic Gold Rush town of Shasta and nearby Keswick, fueled by gusty winds and dry vegetation. It then jumped the Sacramento River and took out subdivisions on the western edge of Redding.

"It wasn't expected to travel that far that fast," Mclean said.

The fire slowed down as winds subsided, and crews were able to get into neighborhoods to prevent embers from taking out additional homes, he said.

Bledsoe said he did not know his home was in danger when he left his wife and great grandchildren to run an errand on Thursday. He said he received a phone call from his wife 15 minutes after he left saying he needed to get home because the fire was approaching. He said one of the children told him the blaze was at the back door. When he tried to return, the road was blocked and flames prevented him from returning on foot.

The sheriff has said the fire was moving fast, but authorities still alerted residents in a variety of ways, including going door-to-door and using loudspeakers on emergency vehicles.

Authorities also use electronic warning systems, including an emergency alert system that is repeated by local news media and an automated calling system that can be targeted to phones within a geographic area. Another method known as the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System can be directed to any cellphone within reach of a particular transmission tower, said Sherry Bartolo, operations manager for the Shasta County dispatch center.

The drawback of the automated calling system is that it is designed to dial landlines, but cellphone users must register their phones if they are to receive alerts, she said.

The dispatch center put out more than 18 emergency alerts between Thursday evening and midday Friday, Bartolo said.

The center usually has eight dispatchers on duty, but overnight Thursday had at least 12, along with four supervisors and three managers who worked through the night, she said.

Thanawala reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Lorin Eleni Gill and Olga Rodriguez also contributed to this report.

States suing Trump administration, company over 3D guns

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM, Associated Press

Eight states are filing suit against the Trump administration over its decision to allow a Texas company to publish downloadable blueprints for a 3D-printed gun, contending the hard-to-trace plastic weapons are a boon to terrorists and criminals and threaten public safety.

The suit, filed Monday in Seattle, asks a judge to block the federal government's late-June settlement with Defense Distributed, which allowed the company to make the plans available online. Officials say that 1,000 people have already downloaded blueprints for AR-15 rifles.

"I have a question for the Trump Administration: Why are you allowing dangerous criminals easy access to weapons?" Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, a Democrat, said in a statement Monday. "These downloadable guns are unregistered and very difficult to detect, even with metal detectors, and will be available to anyone regardless of age, mental health or criminal history."

Joining the suit were Democratic attorneys general in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Maryland, New York and the District of Columbia. Separately, attorneys general in 21 states urged Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Attorney General Jeff Sessions on Monday to withdraw from the settlement with Defense Distributed, saying it "creates an imminent risk to public safety."

People can use the blueprints to manufacture a plastic gun using a 3D printer. But gun industry experts have expressed doubt that criminals would go to the trouble, since the printers needed to make the guns are very expensive, the guns themselves tend to disintegrate quickly and traditional firearms are easy to

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come by.

Cody Wilson, the founder of Defense Distributed, first published downloadable designs for a 3D-printed firearm in 2013. It was downloaded about 100,000 times until the State Department ordered him to cease, contending it violated federal export laws since some of the blueprints were downloaded by people outside the United States.

The State Department reversed course in late June, agreeing to allow Wilson to resume posting the blueprints. The files were published on Friday.

The company filed its own suit in Texas on Sunday, asserting that it's the victim of an "ideologically-fueled program of intimidation and harassment" that violates the company's First Amendment rights.

The company's attorney, Josh Blackman, called it an "easy case."

States are free to enact gun control measures, but "what they can't do is censor the speech of another citizen in another state, and they can't regulate the commerce of another citizen in another state when that commerce is authorized by a federal government license," Blackman said in an interview Monday. "It's a violation of the First Amendment, it's unconscionable and we're going to fight it to the very end."

Defense Distributed agreed to temporarily block Pennsylvania residents from downloading the plans after state officials went to federal court in Philadelphia on Sunday seeking an emergency order. The company said it has also blocked access to users in New Jersey and Los Angeles.

Associated Press writer Lisa Marie Pane contributed to this story.

Trump says 'no problem' shutting government, dismaying GOP

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Unnerving fellow Republicans, President Donald Trump declared Monday he would have "no problem" shutting down the federal government this fall if Congress won't come up with more money for border security.

Trump's threat, his second in two days, put him further at odds with his own party in Congress, where many Republicans are facing tough re-election fights this November. A shutdown when government funding expires at the end of September, just weeks before the midterm elections, would be the second under unified Republican control of Washington, following a weekend stoppage in January.

"I would have no problem doing a shutdown," Trump said during a joint press conference at the White House with Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. "It's time we had proper border security. We're the laughingstock of the world."

The president's comments suggest he continues to believe that an election-season showdown over immigration would fire up his base and boost his party's chances of holding power in Congress. Republican leaders disagree, hoping they can avoid a high-profile display of dysfunction and focus their message on the GOP tax cuts and the strong economy.

Trump has made no secret of his belief that his hard-line immigration policies boosted him to the Oval Office, and he launched an aggressive push for additional border security measures early this year. They include \$25 billion toward construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, but he acknowledged on Monday his demands are a starting point.

"I'll always leave room for negotiation," he said.

Republican leaders believed they had secured Trump's patience last week when they huddled at the White House to discuss strategy ahead of the budget year that starts Oct. 1.

After the meeting, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told a radio interviewer that a shutdown so close to the Nov. 6 midterm elections won't happen. He said the border funding issue in particular would probably have to wait until after the elections.

House Speaker Paul Ryan said on Capitol Hill after the meeting with Trump: "The president's willing to be patient to make sure that we get what we need so that we can get that done." He added that money for the wall was "not a question of if, it's a question of when."

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But on Sunday, Trump reversed course in a surprise tweet: "I would be willing to 'shut down' government if the Democrats do not give us the votes for Border Security, which includes the Wall!"

"Must get rid of Lottery, Catch & Release etc. and finally go to system of Immigration based on MERIT!" he tweeted.

With time so short, lawmakers appear most likely to approve a short-term funding measure to keep the government open through Election Day. That would set up another fiscal showdown during a lame duck session.

Trump on Monday said he had no "red line" for precisely what he would require from Congress, and he made no comment on timing.

The president has pledged to campaign aggressively, starting after Labor Day, to help Republicans retain control of the House and Senate, but GOP lawmakers don't appear to be rallying to his side this time on immigration.

Senate Appropriations Committee chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala., said that lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are working to fund the government and that Trump's threat "is not good for anything."

He added: "It might help him. It might not help him. It doesn't help us right now."

Trump campaigned on a promise of building a wall to deter illegal immigration and to make Mexico pay for it. Mexico has refused, leading Trump to look to U.S. taxpayers to fund the endeavor instead, at least for now.

Trump has gotten some wall money from Congress, and likely will get more, though the total is well short of the \$25 billion he has requested.

He also wants changes to legal immigration, including scrapping a visa lottery program. In addition, Trump wants to end the practice of releasing immigrants caught entering the country illegally on the condition that they show up for court hearings. And he wants to shift the U.S. immigration system to one based more on individual merit and less on family ties. Democrats and some Republicans have objected to those proposals.

Both chambers will have a short window to act before government funding expires at midnight Sept. 30.

The House is in recess and won't return until after Labor Day. The Senate will stay in session for most of August, except for a weeklong break scheduled to begin Aug. 6. McConnell canceled most of his chamber's recess to give senators time to work on the annual spending bills.

House Republicans released a spending bill this month that would provide \$5 billion next year to build Trump's wall, a plan Trump supports.

Democrats have long opposed financing the wall but don't have enough votes by themselves to block House approval of that amount. They have the strength to derail legislation in the closely divided Senate.

The \$5 billion is well above the \$1.6 billion in the Senate version of a bill funding the Department of Homeland Security. The higher amount matches what Trump has privately sought in conversations with Republican lawmakers.

At last week's White House meeting, Trump, Ryan and McConnell agreed that Congress was on track to enact more than half of federal spending before the new budget year begins Oct. 1, but that DHS funding, including the border wall money, doesn't have to be settled before then, according to a person familiar with the meeting who was not authorized to discuss it publicly and insisted on condition of anonymity.

AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro and Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Matthew Daly, Catherine Lucey and Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Follow Zeke Miller on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/ZekeJMiller>

No charges against Minneapolis officers in black man's death

By YOUSSEF RDDAD and AMY FORLITI, Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Two Minneapolis police officers who shot and killed a black man last month were justified in using deadly force, a prosecutor announced Monday, saying the man was fleeing police and turned toward them with a loaded gun before he was shot.

Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman said Thurman Blevins had refused commands to stop and show his hands, and was clearly a danger to the officers and community.

"Their decision to use deadly force against Mr. Blevins under those circumstances was authorized," Freeman said, adding that the officers will not be criminally charged.

His statements were in prepared remarks that were handed out to the media. Freeman had tried to make the announcement during a news conference, but he was shouted down by Blevins' friends and family members. They argue Blevins was no threat to anybody and was just sitting with a woman and his child.

"He was forced to run away from his family so they wouldn't shoot him down in his own community in front of his kid," said Sydnee Brown, a cousin.

Freeman's decision came after the city released the officers' body-camera video late Sunday. Freeman's report says Officers Justin Schmidt and Ryan Kelly were responding to a 911 call of a man firing a gun into the air June 23 on the city's north side. Body camera videos show them pulling their cruiser up and Blevins seated on a curb near a woman with a child in a stroller. As the officers pull up, one says, "He's got a gun!" and they jump from the squad car.

Schmidt yells "Put your (expletive) hands up now!" as Blevins runs. Schmidt also yells, "Put your hands up! I will (expletive) shoot you!" Kelly yells, "Stop or I'll shoot!" repeatedly.

In a chase that takes less than a minute, Blevins yells back, "I didn't do nothing bro," "Please don't shoot" and "Leave me alone." An enhanced version of the videos has a red circle drawn around what appears to be a gun in Blevins' right hand, as he looks over his left shoulder at the officers.

After the chase turns down an alley, Blevins is shot, still running.

At Freeman's aborted news conference, Jeniffer Rohr, a friend of the Blevins family, criticized the officer who said "He's got a gun."

"He just gave himself a license to shoot Mr. Blevins," Rohr said. She said Blevins was "assassinated." Others were upset that Blevins was shot while running away.

In interviews with investigators, Schmidt said he feared for his life when he saw Blevins take his gun out of his pocket. Kelly said he believed the gun was aimed directly at him, and he was "pretty sure" Blevins fired the weapon at him.

The report from Freeman's office says a shell casing from Blevins' gun was found near his body. In a conference call with reporters, Freeman said authorities can't be certain that Blevins shot at the officers, but it is irrelevant to the charging decision. He said merely pointing a handgun at officers is a threat that allows the officers to protect themselves.

"For our evaluation, the mere fact that he pointed a loaded handgun that he had fired earlier in the day ... gives officers justification to fire his weapon," Freeman said.

Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo said in a statement Monday that he accepts and respects the prosecutor's decision but cannot further comment until the criminal and internal investigations are complete. The statement said Arradondo will "continue to remain engaged, active and listen throughout the community."

Both officers remain on paid leave, Minneapolis police spokesman John Elder said. An internal investigation has begun, and it will be up to the chief to decide when and if the officers return to the street, Elder said.

Freeman said toxicology reports on Blevins showed his blood-alcohol content was 0.162, double the legal limit for driving. Blevins also had THC, a component of marijuana, and other drugs in his system. Freeman said that was also irrelevant to his decision.

Freeman said the officers fired 14 shots and Blevins was hit four times.

Lt. Bob Kroll, the head of the police union, said the body camera footage proved the two officers acted justifiably.

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"The officers deserve the Minneapolis Police Department's highest award — the Medal of Honor — and the respect of the population it swore to protect," Kroll said.

A protest of Blevins' death was planned for Tuesday afternoon at the Hennepin County Government Center.

Some witnesses had disputed Blevins was armed, saying he was carrying a bottle or a cup. The videos showed a bottle in Blevins' hand.

Blevins' death prompted earlier demonstrations and community advocates demanded transparency and urged the swift release of body camera footage. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said Blevins' family viewed the video about an hour before it was released publicly. He called Blevins' death "tragic," but declined to comment on what the footage showed.

"I know that right now in our city there's a lot of pain," he said. "Pain in many cases that I cannot understand."

Blevins' relatives previously called for both officers to face criminal charges. They renewed that call Monday, and also called for the officers to be fired.

The videos released Sunday by the city included raw footage from both officers' cameras, as well as what it called a "stabilized" video that includes footage from both officers produced by the National Center for Audio and Video Forensics in Beverly Hills, California. Officials said that footage had gone through a process to identify pixels from each frame and aligned them to help limit shaking.

Minneapolis has been rocked by two high-profile fatal police shootings in recent years, including the November 2015 shooting of Jamar Clark, 24, and last year's shooting of Justine Ruszczyk Damond, 40. Officers in the Clark case were not charged. Trial is pending for the officer who shot Damond.

Former FEMA head of personnel accused of sexual misconduct

By COLLEEN LONG, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The former head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's personnel office had improper sexual relationships with subordinates and created a "toxic" work environment that included giving preferential treatment to his fraternity brothers, according to a summary of an internal investigation obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

FEMA officials said Corey Coleman resigned June 18 amid the probe. The preliminary investigation began in January and was completed Friday.

FEMA administrator Brock Long said in a statement Monday that he was referring the case to the internal watchdog of its parent agency, the Department of Homeland Security, which could investigate any claims of possible criminal sexual assault. But victims would have to go to police for any charges to result.

"Anyone who disagrees with this zero tolerance approach will not be welcome at FEMA," Long said. "Employees at FEMA devote their careers to caring for disaster survivors in their time of greatest need. We must care for our own with the same respect, compassion and advocacy that we bring to our external operations."

Coleman is not named in the summary, but officials at the agency confirmed details in the report referred to him. A call to his home Monday wasn't returned.

According to the summary, after Coleman had a sexual relationship with one subordinate in 2015, he continued to pressure her for dates. When she refused, she was denied a promotion.

He had a second inappropriate relationship two years later with another subordinate, according to the report.

Coleman granted preferential treatment to fraternity brothers, according to the report, in part because he said he could "trust them."

It said he intimidated staff and created a management structure in which he was the foremost hiring and firing authority, in part to circumvent subordinates who might question him. Investigators interviewed 73 witnesses and took 98 statements.

The allegations were first reported by The Washington Post . Long told the newspaper that investigators uncovered a systemic problem going back years.

Long said in the statement that he is creating an office to ensure fair follow-up on claims of employee misconduct, and to conduct a third-party review on the management of sexual harassment and misconduct allegations at the agency.

The Post reported, citing unnamed sources, that Coleman also transferred some of the women he hired to regional offices so his friends could try to have relationships with them.

MGM, Caesars racing to cash in on sports betting market

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and WAYNE PARRY, Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Two titans of the casino industry are racing to cash in on the newly created U.S. sports betting market, taking steps to expand their footprint and strengthen their positions as more states approve necessary regulations and people become more interested in legally gambling on pro and college sports.

MGM Resorts International reached separate agreements Monday with a European bookmaker and a U.S.-based regional casino operator that will give it technological expertise and market access in several states where it doesn't already operate casino-resorts. Meanwhile, Caesars Entertainment opened the sports book at one of its New Jersey casinos and will do the same Wednesday at another property.

The moves from the casino operators come more than two months after the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for all 50 states to offer legal sports betting, should they desire. The ruling has prompted deals among gambling and technology companies that want to get ahead in an industry expected to expand across the United States.

The first of two agreements MGM Resorts announced Monday is a joint venture with the United Kingdom-based owner of Ladbrokes, GVC Holdings, that will lead to the creation of a sports betting and online gambling platform in the U.S. The platform will include a mobile app and website with features like odds and highlights.

The separate agreement with Boyd Gaming Corp. opens markets for both companies, allowing them to offer sports betting and online wagering in 15 states where they operate casino-resorts. Boyd will give MGM access to Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana and other states pending the closure of planned casino purchases.

"We believe the joint venture deal is a net positive for both GVC and MGM as MGM gains the invaluable, and difficult to recreate technology platform and online expertise that GVC possesses in a cost efficient manner," Deutsche Bank analyst Carlo Santarelli wrote in a note to investors. "We also believe the deal helps both Companies in their speed to market, an important element, in our view, of U.S. sports betting as we expect market shares on a state by state basis to be largely concentrated over time."

MGM said in a statement the platform with GVC will benefit from its existing 30-million reward-member database as well as from the "market access agreement with Boyd Gaming which provides a pathway to access a total of fifteen states with an addressable population of approximately 90 million."

MGM's Borgata casino-resort in New Jersey already offers sports betting. Caesars-owned Bally's casino in Atlantic City started taking sports bets Monday morning and its sister casino in Atlantic City, Harrah's, will start taking sports bets on Wednesday.

The company says it soon will offer mobile sports betting, as well, although it did not set a timetable. The gambling industry is closely watching to see which casino will be the first in New Jersey to offer online sports betting.

Bally's and Harrah's will become the third and fourth Atlantic City casinos with sports betting, joining Borgata and Ocean Resort. Two horse racing tracks, Monmouth Park in Oceanport, and the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, also offer sports betting in New Jersey.

By mid-August, Harrah's Gulf Coast in Biloxi and Horseshoe Tunica, both in Mississippi, will begin taking on-premises sports bets. The company says it may expand the mobile betting app to other states besides

New Jersey, if and when it makes financial sense to do so.

Kevin Ortzman, who runs Caesars Entertainment's three Atlantic City casinos, said sports betting will bring a new customer through the doors, and soon, online. He said he hopes to have that approval from New Jersey gambling regulators by mid-August, while noting that numerous other gambling companies are all seeking the same thing at the same time in New Jersey.

As of Monday, no one had yet been approved for mobile or online sports betting in New Jersey.

"The sports betting customer is not your typical core gaming customer that Atlantic City has been used to," he said. "Offering this as another wagering opportunity opens up a whole new chance to integrate this with our food and beverage, gaming and entertainment offerings."

The company is partnering with Scientific Games to offer the sports betting technology through its OpenBet sports book.

Numerous other gambling companies have applied for permission from New Jersey gambling regulators to offer in-person or mobile sports betting, or both, by the time football season starts in the first week in September.

Parry reported from Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Follow Regina Garcia Cano at <https://twitter.com/reginagarciakNO> and Wayne Parry at <http://twitter.com/WayneParryAC>

50 years on, McDonald's and fast-food evolve around Big Mac

By CANDICE CHOI, AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — McDonald's is fighting to hold onto customers as the Big Mac turns 50, but it isn't changing the makings of its most famous burger.

The company is celebrating the 1968 national launch of the double-decker sandwich whose ingredients of "two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions and a sesame seed bun" were seared into American memories by a TV jingle. But the milestone comes as the company reduces its number of U.S. stores. McDonald's said Thursday that customers are visiting less often. Other trendy burger options are reaching into the heartland.

The "Golden Arches" still have a massive global reach, and the McDonald's brand of cheeseburgers, chicken nuggets and french fries remains recognizable around the world. But on its critical home turf, the company is toiling to stay relevant. Kale now appears in salads, fresh has replaced frozen beef patties in Quarter Pounders, and some stores now offer ordering kiosks, food delivery and barista-style cafes.

The milestone for the Big Mac shows how much McDonald's and the rest of fast-food have evolved around it.

"Clearly, we've gotten a little more sophisticated in our menu development," McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook said in a phone interview.

As with many of its popular and long-lasting menu items, the idea for the Big Mac came from a franchisee.

In 1967, Michael James "Jim" Delligatti lobbied the company to let him test the burger at his Pittsburgh restaurants. Later, he acknowledged the Big Mac's similarity to a popular sandwich sold by the Big Boy chain.

"This wasn't like discovering the light bulb. The bulb was already there. All I did was screw it in the socket," Delligatti said, according to "Behind the Arches."

McDonald's agreed to let Delligatti sell the sandwich at a single location, on the condition that he use the company's standard bun. It didn't work. Delligatti tried a bigger sesame seed bun, and the burger soon lifted sales by more than 12 percent.

After similar results at more stores, the Big Mac was added to the national menu in 1968. Other ideas from franchisees that hit the big time include the Filet-O-Fish, Egg McMuffin, Apple Pie (once deep-fried but now baked), and the Shamrock Shake.

"The company has benefited from the ingenuity of its small business men," wrote Ray Kroc, who transformed the McDonald's into a global franchise, in his book, "Grinding It Out."

Franchisees still play an important role, driving the recent switch to fresh from frozen for the beef in Quarter Pounders, Easterbrook says. They also participate in menu development, which in the U.S. has included a series of cooking tweaks intended to improve taste.

Messing with a signature menu item can be taboo, but keeping the Big Mac unchanged comes with its own risks. Newer chains such as Shake Shack and Five Guys offer burgers that can make the Big Mac seem outdated. Even White Castle is modernizing, recently adding plant-based "Impossible Burger" sliders at some locations.

A McDonald's franchisee fretted in 2016 that only one out of five millennials has tried the Big Mac. The Big Mac had "gotten less relevant," the franchisee wrote in a memo, according to the Wall Street Journal.

McDonald's then ran promotions designed to introduce the Big Mac to more people. Those kind of periodic campaigns should help keep the Big Mac relevant for years to come, says Mike Delligatti, the son of the Big Mac inventor, who died in 2016.

"What iconic sandwich do you know that can beat the Big Mac as far as longevity?" said Delligatti, himself a McDonald's franchisee.

Follow Candice Choi at www.twitter.com/candicechoi

This story has been updated to correct that Big Mac inventor James "Jim" Delligatti died in 2016, not last year.

Counting starts after Zimbabweans vote in pivotal election

By **CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA** and **FARAI MUTSAKA**, Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — With hope and pride, millions of Zimbabweans voted peacefully Monday in an election that many believe is their best chance to escape the toxic politics and dead-end economics of the era of Robert Mugabe, who wasn't on the ballot for the first time in the nation's nearly four-decade history.

But opposition activists used to the violence, intimidation and vote-tampering that marred elections under Mugabe called for vigilance against the same kind of skullduggery this time around. Western monitors noted some problems at polling stations, but said it wasn't yet clear whether they reflected a deliberate effort to manipulate the elections.

"They may be peaceful, but we don't know how credible they are," said 51-year-old Classified Chivese, a voter who, like many Zimbabweans, is unemployed.

Zimbabwe's political climate has opened up since 94-year-old Mugabe, who once said he would rule for life, resigned in November after a military takeover and ruling party move to impeach him. Throngs celebrated the removal of Mugabe, in power since independence from white minority rule in 1980, but many Zimbabweans view Monday's election as an equally important milestone.

More than 5.5 million people were registered to vote in an election featuring a record more than 20 presidential candidates and nearly 130 political parties vying for parliamentary seats. If no presidential candidate wins more than 50 percent of the vote, a runoff will be held Sept. 8.

The two main contenders were 75-year-old President Emmerson Mnangagwa, a former deputy president and longtime enforcer for Mugabe who has reinvented himself as a candidate for change; and 40-year-old Nelson Chamisa, a lawyer and pastor who became head of the main opposition party a few months ago after the death of its leader, Morgan Tsvangirai.

After polls closed at 7 p.m. and vote-counting began, Mnangagwa appealed to Zimbabweans to be patient and wait for the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to announce results. The final, official tally is expected within five days.

"Today, Zimbabwe experienced a beautiful expression of freedom & democracy," Mnangagwa tweeted. "No matter which way we voted, we are all brothers and sisters."

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Earlier, however, Chamisa said on Twitter that voting delays in urban areas, where his support is strong, were a “deliberate attempt” to undermine his election bid. The allegations by the head of the Movement for Democratic Change party intensified concerns about management of the election and the prospect of a dispute over its outcome.

The head of the European Union mission monitoring Zimbabwe’s elections said his team saw “huge differences” in the pace of voting at polling stations. Voters at one location waited less than an hour to cast their ballots while others at a nearby station waited more than half the day, Elmar Brok said.

“In some cases, it works very smoothly,” Brok said. “But in others, we see that it’s totally disorganized and that people become angry, that people leave.”

He noted a case of the ruling ZANU-PF party delivering 100 people by bus to vote in a district where they didn’t live. Observers have to check whether it was a single example or part of a pattern “which might have influence on the result of the elections,” Brok said.

The fact that Brok and other Western observers were even in Zimbabwe and free to operate wherever they liked reflected a new transparency after years of Mugabe banning outside monitors. Still, there were concerns about bias in state media, a lack of transparency in ballot printing and reports of intimidation by pro-government traditional leaders who are supposed to stay neutral.

Among opposition objections was that the ballots listed presidential candidates in two columns of 14 and nine names, with Mnangagwa at the top of the second column — a spot that would presumably make it easier for people to vote for him. Observers say the law requires a single column of names in alphabetical order.

Also, millions of Zimbabweans living abroad, including in neighboring South Africa, were barred from voting unless they traveled home to do so. The government said it did not have the resources to organize voting for expatriates, many of whom are believed to support the opposition.

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, accused of manipulating election wins for Mugabe in the past, has said this vote will be free and fair.

“We need peace and we need everyone to be comfortable, to go out and exercise their right to vote without fear,” Priscilla Chigumba, a judge who chairs the commission, said during voting Monday.

Chigumba also said police have been informed about two presidential candidates who might have violated the law by campaigning after the cutoff time. She didn’t name them, but they are likely to be Chamisa and Mnangagwa, both of whom issued public statements on Sunday.

Despite Mugabe’s troubled legacy, dozens of cheering Zimbabweans gathered outside the polling station in the capital where he voted. Struggling to walk, Mugabe raised his fist to acknowledge them. He made his way into the polling center, had his finger inked and was assisted by his wife into the booth.

On Sunday, Mugabe said Chamisa was the only viable candidate and rejected Mnangagwa and the ruling party, saying: “I cannot vote for those who have tormented me.”

Mnangagwa hopes an election viewed as credible will bring international legitimacy and investment to Zimbabwe, though a seriously flawed process could signal more stagnation. The president is himself the target of U.S. sanctions imposed on some government leaders and companies over human rights concerns during the Mugabe era.

Despite expectations that the elections could bring a better life, Zimbabwe remains plagued by the hopelessness of unemployment, cash shortages and moribund industries. Many problems are due to mismanagement exacerbated by the country’s old status as an international pariah.

“We need change because we have suffered a lot here,” said 65-year-old Mable Mafaro, a voter in Harare. Another voter was exultant, comparing the election to the end of white minority rule.

“I’m so happy,” said 28-year-old Tapiwa Kahondo. “This is 1980 for Zimbabwe. We are so happy for today.”

Associated Press journalist Bram Janssen contributed to this report.

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Study: 'Medicare for all' projected to cost \$32.6 trillion

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Bernie Sanders' "Medicare for all" plan would boost government health spending by \$32.6 trillion over 10 years, requiring historic tax hikes, says a study released Monday by a university-based libertarian policy center.

That's trillion with a "T."

The latest plan from the Vermont independent would deliver significant savings on administration and drug costs, but increased demand for care would drive up spending, according to the analysis by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University in Virginia. Doubling federal individual and corporate income tax receipts would not cover the full cost, the study said.

Sanders' plan builds on Medicare, the popular insurance program for seniors. All U.S. residents would be covered with no copays and deductibles for medical services. The insurance industry would be relegated to a minor role.

"Enacting something like 'Medicare for all' would be a transformative change in the size of the federal government," said Charles Blahous, the study's author. Blahous was a senior economic adviser to former President George W. Bush and a public trustee of Social Security and Medicare during the Obama administration.

Responding to the study, Sanders took aim at the Mercatus Center, which receives funding from the conservative Koch brothers. Koch Industries CEO Charles Koch is on the center's board.

"If every major country on earth can guarantee health care to all, and achieve better health outcomes, while spending substantially less per capita than we do, it is absurd for anyone to suggest that the United States cannot do the same," Sanders said in a statement. "This grossly misleading and biased report is the Koch brothers response to the growing support in our country for a 'Medicare for all' program."

Sanders' office has not done a cost analysis, a spokesman said. His 2016 presidential campaign website cites an estimated price tag of \$1.38 trillion a year for an earlier version of the plan, but other studies have projected much higher costs.

Sanders' staff found an error in an initial version of the Mercatus report, which counted a long-term care program that was in the 2016 proposal but not the current one. Blahous corrected it, reducing his estimate by about \$3 trillion over 10 years. Blahous says the report is his own work, not the Koch brothers'.

Also called "single-payer" over the years, "Medicare for all" reflects a longtime wish among liberals for a government-run system that covers all Americans. With Republicans in charge of Congress and the White House, it has little chance.

But Sanders' idea has broad rank-and-file support among Democrats, and polls show it also appeals to many independents. Looking ahead to the 2020 election, Democrats are debating whether single-payer should be a "litmus test" for national candidates.

The Mercatus analysis estimated the 10-year cost of "Medicare for all" from 2022 to 2031, after an initial phase-in. Its findings are similar to those of several independent studies of Sanders' 2016 plan. Those studies found increases in federal spending over 10 years that ranged from \$24.7 trillion to \$34.7 trillion.

Kenneth Thorpe, a health policy professor at Emory University in Atlanta, authored one of the earlier studies and says the Mercatus analysis reinforces them.

"It's showing that if you are going to go in this direction, it's going to cost the federal government \$2.5 trillion to \$3 trillion a year in terms of spending," said Thorpe. "Even though people don't pay premiums, the tax increases are going to be enormous. There are going to be a lot of people who'll pay more in taxes than they save on premiums." Thorpe was a senior health policy adviser in the Clinton administration.

The study found that the plan would reap substantial savings from lower prescription costs — \$846 billion over 10 years — since the government would deal directly with drugmakers. Savings from streamlined administration would be even greater, nearly \$1.6 trillion.

But other provisions would tend to drive up spending, including coverage for nearly 30 million uninsured people, no deductibles and copays, and improved benefits, including dental, vision and hearing.

The Mercatus study also takes issue with a key cost-saving feature of the plan — that hospitals and doc-

tors will accept payment based on lower Medicare rates for all their patients. Medicare rates are currently about 40 percent less than private insurance, according to the analysis.

The study found U.S. health care spending under Sanders' plan would drop over time — about \$300 billion lower in 2031.

However, it also found that potential savings would vanish if hospitals and doctors aren't willing to accept lower fees for patients who are now privately insured. In that case, the U.S. would spend about \$400 billion more in 2031.

Costs have been a stumbling block for state efforts to enact a single-payer system, including in Sanders own state of Vermont.

Palestinian teen icon says she has a 'political future'

By MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH, Associated Press

NABI SALEH, West Bank (AP) — Teenage Palestinian protester Ahed Tamimi on Monday vowed to keep demonstrating against the Israeli occupation and said she expects to have a "political future."

Tamimi, 17, spoke to The Associated Press a day after she was released from Israeli prison, where she served an eight-month sentence for slapping two Israeli soldiers in an incident captured on film that made her an icon among Palestinians and their supporters.

She said she hopes to pursue a law degree in order to document human rights violations.

"I would like to be lawyer to convey the voice of my country and the message of my people," Tamimi said. "I expect to have a political future," she added.

She also said she will "always be in the field," referring to the protests regularly held against Israeli settlement-building and other actions in the West Bank.

The curly-haired 17-year-old struck the soldiers outside her West Bank home in frustration after learning that troops wounded a cousin in nearby clashes.

She said there had been daily protests and clashes with Israeli soldiers in December after U.S. President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a move that upended decades of U.S. foreign policy and an international consensus that the city's status should be settled in negotiations.

The move infuriated the Palestinians, who saw it as a blatant show of pro-Israel bias. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem, which Israel captured in the 1967 war as their capital.

"Soldiers used to deliberately come through the area of my house, and shoot from the entrance of the house," Tamimi said. She said the soldier she confronted was the same one who had shot her cousin "only five minutes" earlier. She said that soldiers had shot tear gas at her house even though there was an elderly couple inside.

"I was full of strong feelings, upset... burned from inside," she said.

Tamimi has since become a hero to the Palestinians and an international symbol of resistance to Israel's occupation.

Israeli authorities treated her actions as a criminal offense, indicting her on charges of assault and incitement.

In Israel, Tamimi is seen as a provocateur who was rightly punished for attacking soldiers. The incident set of a debate within Israel about the soldiers' refusal to respond when they were slapped, with many saying it had undermined their ability to deter future violence. More liberal Israelis said the hard-charging prosecution of Tamimi had been a public relations disaster that only amplified her fame.

Tamimi has long been active in protests in her village of Nebi Saleh, which have been held on a weekly basis since 2009 to protest the expansion of a nearby Jewish settlement.

Tamimi has scuffled with soldiers in the past, and a widely circulated photo shows her raising a clenched fist toward a soldier who towers over her. She was 12 when it was taken.

Malaysia's civil aviation chief quits over Flight 370 lapses

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Malaysia's civil aviation chief said Tuesday he has resigned to take responsibility after an independent investigative report highlighted shortcomings in the air traffic control center during Malaysia Airlines Flight 370's disappearance four years ago.

The report released Monday raised the possibility that the jet may have been hijacked even though there was no conclusive evidence of why it went off course and flew for over seven hours after severing communications.

Azharuddin Abdul Rahman said the report didn't blame the civil aviation department for the plane's loss but found that the Kuala Lumpur air traffic control center failed to comply with operating procedures.

"Therefore, it is with regret and after much thought and contemplation that I have decided to resign as chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia," he said in his statement, adding he has presented his resignation and will step down in two weeks.

The jet carrying 239 people from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing vanished March 8, 2014, and is presumed to have crashed in the far southern Indian Ocean. The investigative report, prepared by a 19-member international team, said the cause of the disappearance cannot be determined until the wreckage and the plane's black boxes are found.

However, the report said the investigation showed lapses by air traffic control, including a failure to swiftly initiate an emergency response and monitor radar continuously, relying too much on information from Malaysia Airlines and not getting in touch with the military for help.

New Malaysian Transport Minister Anthony Loke said Tuesday the government has formed a committee to investigate and take action on any misconduct based on the report's findings.

The report said there was insufficient information to determine if the aircraft broke up in the air or during impact with the ocean.

Scattered pieces of debris that washed ashore on African beaches and Indian Ocean islands indicated a distant remote stretch of the ocean where the plane likely crashed. But a government search by Australia, Malaysia and China failed to pinpoint a location. And a second, private search by U.S. company Ocean Infinity that finished at the end of May also found no sign of a crash site.

Grace Subathirai Nathan, whose mother was aboard the plane, said the outcome could have been different if Malaysia's air traffic control didn't commit "horrible mistakes."

She welcomed the "display of accountability" by Azharuddin, who headed operations at the time of the jet's disappearance and gave daily media briefings, but said he has "taken the easy way out."

"He has not explained the failings of the controllers, why it happened, what caused it? Was (it) incompetence? Was it neglect? What was it?" she wrote on Facebook.

"I hope that immediate action is taken against all the people who made these mistakes as a lesson for these people who hold a huge responsibility to take their jobs more seriously so that we can avoid disasters like this from happening again," Nathan said.

Malaysia's government has said it will resume searching if credible evidence of the plane's location emerges.

Asian markets mixed ahead of Bank of Japan policy statement

By ANNABELLE LIANG, Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Asian markets were mixed on Tuesday with narrow trading ahead of a key statement by the Bank of Japan, which could indicate a tightening of its monetary policy.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 index dropped 0.3 percent to 22,476.72 and South Korea's Kospi was flat at 2,293.43. The Shanghai Composite index gained 0.1 percent to 2,872.92 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index lost 0.3 percent to 28,650.72. Australia's S&P ASX 200 added 0.1 percent to 6,284.20. Shares fell in Indonesia but were higher in Taiwan and Singapore.

WALL STREET: Technology stocks have tumbled for the third day in a row, leading U.S. indexes to close lower. Microsoft and Alphabet slumped Monday and Facebook, Twitter and Netflix have all fallen at least

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20 percent from their record highs earlier this month. The S&P 500 dropped 0.6 percent to 2,802.60. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.6 percent to 25,306.83. The Nasdaq composite, which has more technology stocks among its ranks, gave up 1.4 percent to 7,630.00. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks shed 0.6 percent to 1,653.13.

BOJ MEETING: Investors are watching the Bank of Japan's statement on monetary policy due Tuesday. Sustained relatively strong growth has raised expectations that the central bank may need to consider further tempering its massive purchases of government bonds and other assets. They are also watching monetary policy meetings in the U.S. and U.K. The Bank of England is expected to nudge up its key interest rate by a quarter point on Thursday despite uncertainty around Brexit as inflation remains high.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "All attention on central banks this week is on the BOJ. The world has continuously been on the tightening path, starting with moves by the Fed in 2015. Even dovish central banks may be pulling the rope a little bit more," said Francis Tan, an economist at UOB Bank.

CHINESE PMI: China's manufacturing activity pulled back slightly in July, the National Bureau of Statistics said Tuesday. The official manufacturing purchasing managers' index was 51.2 in July, down from 51.5 a month earlier. Readings above 50 indicate expansion on the index's 100-point scale. New export orders were stable, but they came in at just below the neutral level for the second month, amid trade tensions between the U.S. and China.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude rose 2 cents to \$70.15 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 2.1 percent to settle at \$70.13 per barrel on Monday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 11 cents to \$75.44.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 111.07 yen from 111.00 yen on Monday. The euro remained flat at \$1.1710.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 31, the 212th day of 2018. There are 153 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 31, 1991, President George H.W. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in Moscow.

On this date:

In 1777, during the Revolutionary War, the Marquis de Lafayette, a 19-year-old French nobleman, was made a major-general in the American Continental Army.

In 1919, Germany's Weimar (VY'-mahr) Constitution was adopted by the republic's National Assembly.

In 1948, President Harry S. Truman helped dedicate New York International Airport (later John F. Kennedy International Airport) at Idlewild Field.

In 1954, Pakistan's K2 was conquered as two members of an Italian expedition, Achille Compagnoni (ah-KEE'-lay kohm-pahn-YOH'-nee) and Lino Lacedelli (LEE'-noh lah-chee-DEHL'-ee), reached the summit.

In 1957, the Distant Early Warning Line, a system of radar stations designed to detect Soviet bombers approaching North America, went into operation.

In 1964, the American space probe Ranger 7 reached the moon, transmitting pictures back to Earth before impacting the lunar surface.

In 1970, "The Huntley-Brinkley Report" came to an end after nearly 14 years as co-anchor Chet Huntley signed off for the last time; the broadcast was renamed "NBC Nightly News."

In 1971, Apollo 15 crew members David Scott and James Irwin became the first astronauts to use a lunar rover on the surface of the moon.

In 1972, Democratic vice-presidential candidate Thomas Eagleton withdrew from the ticket with George McGovern following disclosures that Eagleton had once undergone psychiatric treatment.

In 1989, a pro-Iranian group in Lebanon released a grisly videotape showing the body of American

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hostage William R. Higgins, a Marine lieutenant-colonel, dangling from a rope.

In 1992, the former Soviet republic of Georgia was admitted to the United Nations as its 179th member. Thai Airways Flight 311, an Airbus A310, crashed while approaching Tribhuvan International Airport in Nepal; all 113 people aboard died.

In 2002, a bomb exploded inside a cafeteria at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, killing nine people, including five Americans.

Ten years ago: Scientists reported the Phoenix spacecraft had confirmed the presence of frozen water in Martian soil. Three teenagers were shot to death when a gunman opened fire on a group of young people who'd gathered to go swimming in the Menominee River near Niagara, Wis. (The gunman, Scott J. Johnson, was later sentenced to life in prison without parole.)

Five years ago: President Barack Obama's national security team acknowledged for the first time that, when investigating one suspected terrorist, it could read and store the phone records of millions of Americans. Voters in Zimbabwe went to the polls in national elections that were won by President Robert Mugabe amid opponents' allegations of fraud.

One year ago: Retired Marine Gen. John Kelly was sworn in as White House chief of staff, replacing Reince Priebus. Hours later, White House communications director Anthony Scaramucci was let go, just 11 days after he was appointed to the job. Former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio was convicted of a criminal charge for refusing to stop traffic patrols that targeted immigrants. (Arpaio was later pardoned by President Donald Trump.) The Trump administration slapped financial sanctions on Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro after a weekend election that gave his ruling party virtually unlimited powers. Los Angeles reached a deal with international Olympic leaders to host the 2028 Summer Games. (The games were officially awarded to Los Angeles in September.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Don Murray is 89. Jazz composer-musician Kenny Burrell is 87. Actress France Nuyen is 79. Actress Susan Flannery is 79. Singer Lobo is 75. Actress Geraldine Chaplin is 74. Former movie studio executive Sherry Lansing is 74. Singer Gary Lewis is 73. Actor Lane Davies is 68. Actress Susan Wooldridge is 68. International Tennis Hall of Famer Evonne Goolagong Cawley is 67. Actor Barry Van Dyke is 67. Actor Alan Autry is 66. Jazz composer-musician Michael Wolff is 66. Actor James Read is 65. Actor Michael Biehn is 62. Rock singer-musician Daniel Ash (Love and Rockets) is 61. Actor Dirk Blocker is 61. Entrepreneur Mark Cuban is 60. Rock musician Bill Berry is 60. Actor Wally Kurth is 60. Actor Wesley Snipes is 56. Country singer Chad Brock is 55. Musician Fatboy Slim is 55. Rock musician Jim Corr is 54. Author J.K. Rowling (ROHL'-ing) is 53. Actor Dean Cain is 52. Actor Jim True-Frost is 52. Actor Ben Chaplin is 49. Actor Loren Dean is 49. Actress Eve Best is 47. Retired NFL quarterback Gus Frerotte is 47. Actress Annie Parisse (pah-REES') is 43. Actor Robert Telfer is 41. Country singer-musician Zac Brown is 40. Actor-producer-writer B.J. Novak is 39. Actor Eric Lively is 37. Country singer Blaire Stroud (3 of Hearts) is 35. Singer Shannon Curfman is 33. Hip-hop artist Lil Uzi Vert is 24. Actor Reese Hartwig is 20. Actor Rico Rodriguez is 20.

Thought for Today: "The trouble with the public is that there is too much of it." — Don Marquis, American journalist, poet and dramatist (1878-1937).