

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 1 of 46

“Every great move forward in your life begins with a leap of faith, a step into the unknown.”

-Brian Tracy



Chicken Soup
for the Soul

- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Harr Motors Ad
- 1- Mosquito Control Tonight
- 1- Recycling Trailer
- 1- Dairy Queen Help Wanted
- 2- Miracle Treat Day ad
- 3- Brown County Resident First WNV Death Of Season
- 3- Vold Consignment Auction Ad
- 4- Groton Care School Supply Drive
- 5- Outdoor World
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Today's Forecast
- 8- Yesterday's Weather
- 8- National Weather map
- 8 Today's Weather Almanac
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 11- News from the Associated Press

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.



www.harrmotors.com

605-225-3078 ~ 1-800-658-3463



**Mosquito Control Tonight
in Groton,
starting around 9 p.m.
With the south wind, we will
be doing only the Avenues**

Today is the Day!



**MIRACLE
TREAT
DAY**

**THURSDAY
AUG 2**

**THE ORIGINAL
BLIZZARD
ONLY AT DQ**

DQ

**Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals***



Groton DQ Grill & Chill Restaurant

11 E. Hwy 12

Groton, SD 57445

Phone: 605-397-8627

All trademarks owned or licensed by Am. D.Q. Corp. ©2018. ®, TM and ©2018 O.J of Am.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 3 of 46

Brown County Resident First WNV Death Of Season

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Health reported today a Brown County resident died of West Nile virus (WNV) associated causes, the state's first WNV related death this season. The individual was in the 80 to 89 age group.

"Our sympathy is with the family. We only hope their tragic loss will encourage others to take the threat of West Nile virus seriously," said Dr. Joshua Clayton, state epidemiologist for the department. "We can't emphasize enough how important it is for people to protect themselves and their families by using repellent and avoiding the outdoors when mosquitoes are most active."

To date this season, South Dakota has reported 10 cases of human WNV and three hospitalizations. Nationally, 39 cases and one West Nile-associated death have been reported. Clayton said weekly surveillance updates will show cases continuing to climb.

South Dakotans can reduce their risk with the following precautions:

Apply mosquito repellents (DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone or IR3535) to clothes and exposed skin.

Reduce mosquito exposure by wearing pants and long sleeves when outdoors.

Limit time outdoors from dusk to dawn when Culex mosquitoes, the primary carrier of WNV in South Dakota, are most active.

Get rid of standing water that gives mosquitoes a place to breed.

Regularly change water in bird baths, ornamental fountains and pet dishes.

Drain water from flower pots and garden containers.

Discard old tires, buckets, cans or other containers that can hold water.

Clean rain gutters to allow water to flow freely.

Support local mosquito control efforts.

These precautions are especially important for people at high risk for WNV, including individuals over 50, pregnant women, organ transplant patients, individuals with cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease, and those with a history of alcohol abuse. People with severe or unusual headaches should see their clinician.

Visit the department's website at westnile.sd.gov for more information.

CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

Sat. Aug. 18, 2018 10:00 am

Location: Trucks-N-Tractors, 14069 434th Ave., Webster, SD 57274

Now taking Consignments – Watch Website & Next Week's Forum for Sale Bill. Tractors, Combines/Heads, Payloaders/Skidsteers, Semis/Trailers, Vehicles/ATVs, Planting/Haying/Spraying/Augers, Construction Equipment, Fencing.

**To consign your equipment, call our office at
605-448-0048 or Bill Jensen 605-848-0943**

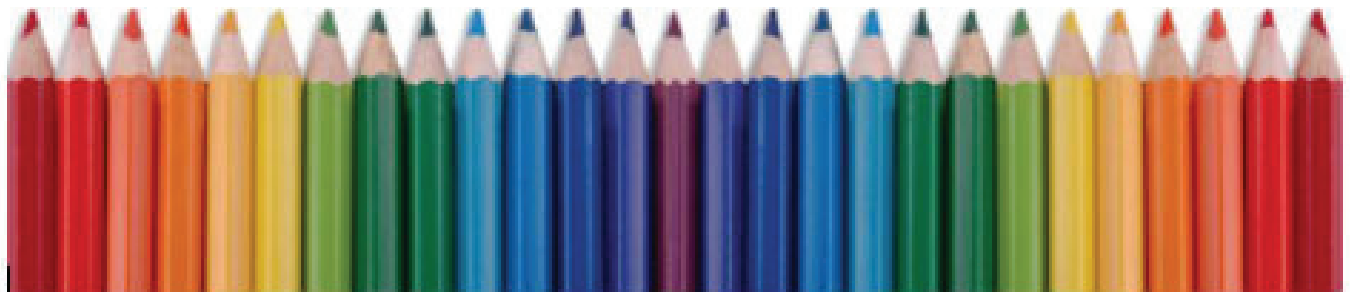
Don Wolter 605-881-6789

SD-518821-1

VOLD AUCTIONEERS & REALTY

voldrealty.com voldauctions@ag4bid.com

SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE



**GROTON CARE AND REHABILITATION CENTER
HAS BACK TO SCHOOL SPIRIT! STARTING
AUGUST 1ST THRU AUGUST 20TH WE WILL BE
COLLECTING SCHOOL SUPPLIES AT THE
FACILITY TO GIVE TO THE GROTON AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT.**





FISHING GEAR FOR KIDS

When you teach a kid to fish, try to avoid using adult tackle. Instead, use the best quality kid's gear you can find because it is usually designed for their hands and is more user-friendly.

Adult ultra-light spin casting combos are a good, durable choice for young anglers. They are easy for kids to hold and are relatively tangle free. Best of all, they make even a small perch feel like a whopper to a kid.

Go with a combo with a soft tip which will be easier to cast. Make sure the reel handles 4-pound test line well and has a smooth drag. Start a kid right with decent, functional tackle – anything less performs poorly and invites discouragement.

When using a bobber for kids, keep in mind that for best results you want the bait to hang about halfway between the surface and the bottom. If you're not sure how deep the spot is, set the bobber for 4 feet. If the bobber rests on its side, the bait is on the bottom. Shorten the distance between the hook and the bobber.

Outdoor World Tips presents free, seasonal how-to advice from Larry Whiteley, host of the award-winning Outdoor World Radio show. Each weekly tip offers practical advice to improve your outdoor skills or learn something you might not have known.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 6 of 46

Today in Weather History

August 2, 1960: Hail, the size of a hen egg caused moderate damage to a total loss of corn, soybean, and grain crops on 50 to 75 farms in Marshall, Roberts, and Grant Counties. High winds caused damage to buildings and uprooted trees in Britton.

1954 - Severe thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail for thirty minutes in north central Kansas. One drift measured 200 feet long, seventy feet wide and three feet deep. (The Weather Channel)

1975 - Record heat gripped New England. Highs of 104 degrees at Providence, RI, and 107 degrees at Chester and New Bedford, MA, established state records. The heat along the coast of Maine was unprecedented, with afternoon highs of 101 degrees at Bar Harbor and 104 degrees at Jonesboro. (The Weather Channel)

1985: A strong and sudden wind gusts cause a plane crash at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in Texas that kills 135 people. The rapid and unexpected formation of a supercell, an incredibly powerful form of a thunderstorm, led to the tragedy.

1987 - Hot weather continued in the central U.S. Fifteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Concordia KS with a reading of 106 degrees, and Downtown Kansas City, MO, with a high of 105 degrees. Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Ohio Valley and the north central U.S. Thunderstorms in South Dakota produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Philip, and hail two inches in diameter at Faulkton. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Searing heat continued from the Middle and Upper Mississippi Valley to the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast States. Twenty-six cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Chicago IL reported a record seven days of 100 degree heat for the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Low pressure representing the remains of Hurricane Chantal deluged north central Texas with heavy rain. Up to 6.50 inches drenched Stephens County, and Wichita Falls reported 2.22 inches of rain in just one hour. Bismarck, ND, reported a record warm morning low of 75 degrees, and record hot afternoon high of 101 degrees, and evening thunderstorms in North Dakota produced wind gusts to 78 mph at Lakota. Early evening thunderstorms in Florida produced high winds which downed trees at Christmas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2006: Johannesburg, South Africa residents see snow flurries for the first time in at least eight years.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 7 of 46

Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
Patchy Fog then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance Showers	Slight Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny
High: 84 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 93 °F	Low: 68 °F	High: 89 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 86 °F

Warmer, With Thunderstorms Possible

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Highs: 75-95 F	Highs: 85-98 F	Highs: 83-94 F	Highs: 84-90 F

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD
 Created: 8/2/2018 5:17 AM

www.weather.gov/abr
 US National Weather Service Aberdeen SD
 @NWSAberdeen

Published on: 08/02/2018 at 5:28AM

A surface high pressure will continue to drift off to the east today, with southerly breezes gradually returning to the area. Those southerly winds will usher in warmer temperatures, along with increasing humidity through the first part of the weekend. The returning heat and humidity may lead to some showers and thunderstorms, beginning tonight through weekend.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 8 of 46

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 67.0 F at 12:49 PM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 54.2 F at 11:28 PM

High Gust: 19.0 Mph at 10:04 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1938, 1930

Record Low: 40° in 1971

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 59°F

Average Precip in July: 3.10

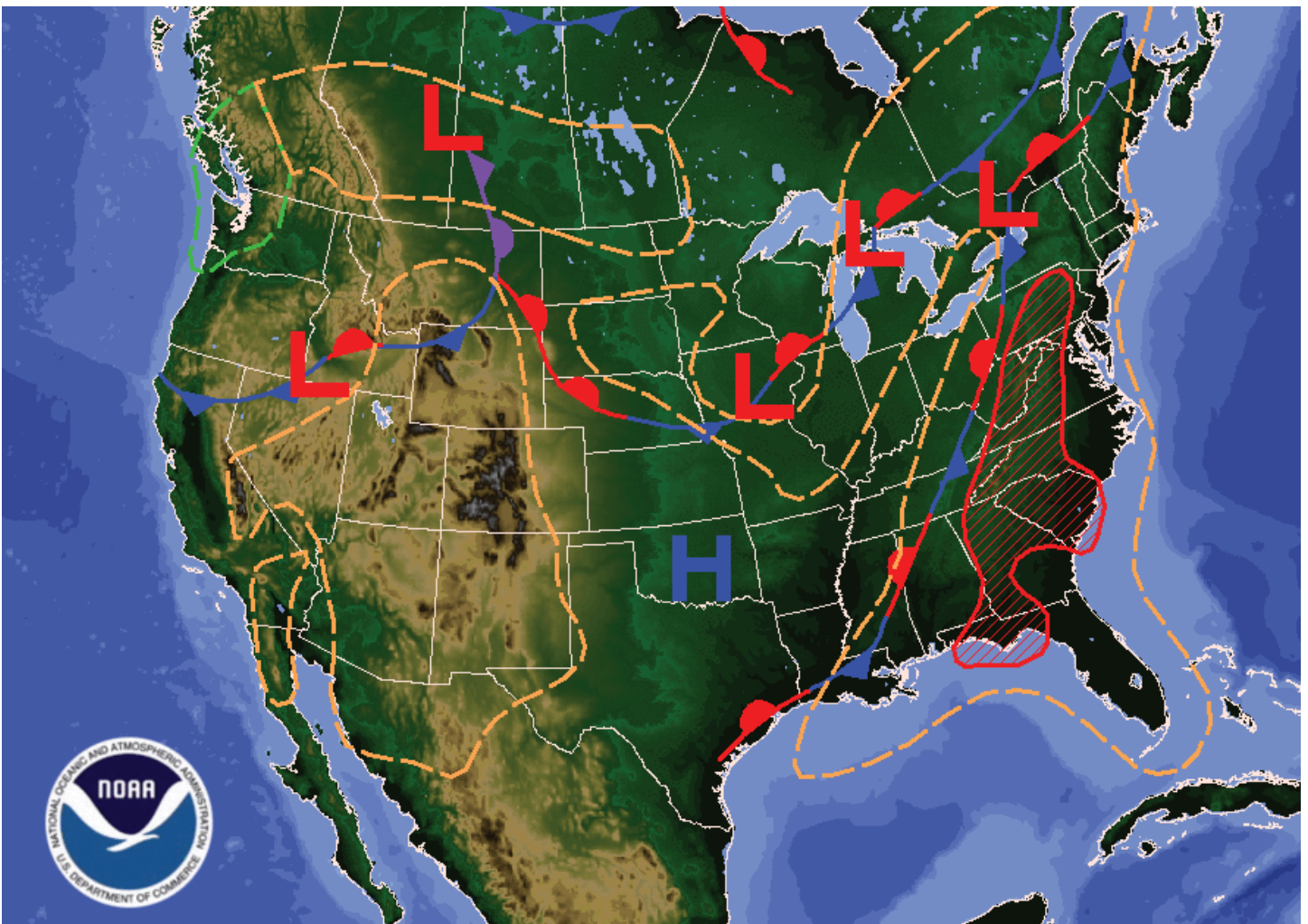
Precip to date in July: 3.99

Average Precip to date: 13.94

Precip Year to Date: 9.89

Sunset Tonight: 9:00 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:20 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Thu, Aug 02, 2018, issued 4:46 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds 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)

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 9 of 46



WHOS WATCHING OVER YOU?

C. I. Scofield is recognized as one of the worlds most influential theologians, ministers, and writers. For many years the Scofield Reference Bible shaped the thoughts of Christians and their interpretation of the Word of God. But Scofield did not begin his career as a student of Scripture. He intended to be a lawyer.

On one occasion he confessed to a friend, I was once a drunken lawyer visiting some friends in Saint Louis when I was converted. No one had ever told me anything about the keeping power of Jesus Christ. But I was standing before a picture of Daniel in the den of lions one day, and great hope and faith came into my heart.

I said, Why, there are lions all around me - my old habits and sins - but the God that shut the mouths of the lions for Daniel can shut them for me.

And the remainder of his life proves that fact!

The Psalmist wrote, The Lord will keep you from all harm - He will watch over your life.

The Lord wants to watch over us as though we were the only person in the world. He knows all about us: our strengths and weaknesses, our assets and liabilities, what tempts and threatens us, what troubles and tries us. And, even though He has the same responsibility for each of His children, He can pay attention to each one of us as though we were the only one that mattered.

The Lord will keep you, said the Psalmist. He did not say might or may or should or could or would keep you if you...Indeed not. He said, He will keep you!

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for the assurance that Your protection does not depend upon us, but upon Your grace! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 121:5 The Lord will keep you from all harm - He will watch over your life.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 10 of 46

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash
11-12-17-18-31
(eleven, twelve, seventeen, eighteen, thirty-one)
Estimated jackpot: \$157,000

Lotto America
03-08-24-25-50, Star Ball: 5, ASB: 3
(three, eight, twenty-four, twenty-five, fifty; Star Ball: five; ASB: three)
Estimated jackpot: \$5.77 million

Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

Powerball
05-22-32-38-58, Powerball: 26, Power Play: 2
(five, twenty-two, thirty-two, thirty-eight, fifty-eight; Powerball: twenty-six; Power Play: two)
Estimated jackpot: \$187 million

SD's first West Nile death this year occurs in Brown County

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The first confirmed West Nile virus-related death in South Dakota this summer has occurred in the northeastern part of the state.

The American News reports that Joshua Clayton, state epidemiologist, said Tuesday that a woman in her 80s had died. As of last Thursday, there were two people with confirmed cases in Buffalo and Minnehaha counties. People who donated blood tested positive for West Nile in six counties.

Clayton says about 20 percent of people exposed to the virus show symptoms, while the other 80 percent naturally make antibodies to fight it off. Clayton said West Nile cases have started slower this year, but predictive models anticipate roughly 127 cases.

So far this season, South Dakota has reported 10 cases of human West Nile virus and three hospitalizations.

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

Thune says he'll vote to confirm Kavanaugh to Supreme Court

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota U.S. Sen. John Thune says he will vote to confirm Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court.

Thune announced his support Wednesday after meeting with President Donald Trump's nominee to replace the retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy.

The Republican senator says he's confident that Kavanaugh "has exactly what it takes to defend the Constitution and call balls and strikes from the bench."

Thune says over the course of his judicial career, Kavanaugh has demonstrated his commitment to deciding cases based on law, not on his own opinions.

Thune also calls Kavanaugh a "well-qualified, mainstream jurist," and said that he hopes both Republican and Democratic senators will reach the same conclusion.

Family of woman fatally struck by tribal police sues US

STOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The family of a South Dakota woman who was run down by a tribal police officer in 2016 is suing the federal government over her death.

Melanie DuBray's family alleges the U.S. government was negligent.

According to the lawsuit, DuBray was run down outside her apartment complex in Kyle by a police officer with the Oglala Sioux Tribal Police Department, which contracts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to provide police services for the Pine Ridge Indian Reservatino.

DuBray had fled her apartment because of an altercation when a police officer driving into the parking lot struck her.

The Argus Leader reports the family filed an administrative claim with the federal government, but it was denied. The family was seeking \$900,000 in restitution.

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's office declined comment.

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

Rapid City officials ready for motorcycle rally

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City law enforcement, transportation and health care officials are preparing for an onslaught of traffic, accidents and injuries linked to an upcoming annual motorcycle rally.

The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, taking place less than 30 miles north of Rapid City, begins Friday and runs through Aug. 12.

"We encourage city employees to be extra cautious as they're doing their jobs," Rapid City communications coordinator Darrell Shoemaker told the Rapid City Journal .

The state Department of Transportation will put up temporary signals and signs throughout the Black Hills to ease traffic, reduce speeds and increase safety.

"The highway patrol will be out in force as they always are during the rally," said State Department of Public Safety spokesman Tony Mangan.

The agency also announced that it will have sobriety checkpoints in Meade, Pennington, Butte and Fall River counties in August.

"We really encourage all people coming out for the rally to do all the basic safety things — slow down, wear your seatbelt, be ready to share the road, don't get distracted," Mangan said.

Regional Health's hospitals, clinics and urgent care facilities are also readying for a surge of patients due to the rally, said Marla Venjohn, who is coordinating the system's rally planning.

The health system expects an influx of rally-related head trauma and neurosurgery cases, she said. More staff will be available to accommodate.

Regional Health's urgent care center in Rapid City will have extended hours during the week.

"We hope that will help our locals to be able to have urgent care as an option if (their medical need) is appropriate," Venjohn said.

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

Pop-up dog park to open in downtown Sioux Falls next week

STOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Fido and Rover soon will have another place to frolic in downtown Sioux Falls. A pop-up dog park opens next week. The dog park will be open Aug. 7 through Labor Day weekend.

The Argus Leader reports dog owners were looking for additional amenities for their pets in downtown Sioux Falls.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 13 of 46

Volunteers will install donated elements this week, including field turf from Howard Wood Field, fencing, a pet waste station and shade sails.

Since the pop-up dog park won't have access to water because of the short time period, dog owners should bring their own.

Downtown Sioux Falls Inc. is hosting a free public event at the pop-up dog park on Aug. 30.

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

South Dakota man accused of entering home, stealing 3 beers

LAKE ANDES, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man is accused of entering a house and stealing three beers. Forty-year-old Jonathon Abdo of Lake Andes was arrested July 20. A witness told police he saw Abdo enter a house that afternoon through a sliding glass door that had come off its track.

The homeowner told police three beers were missing from his refrigerator.

The Daily Republic reports Abdo is scheduled to make his initial court appearance next Tuesday on charges of second-degree burglary, a felony, and second-degree petty theft, a misdemeanor.

Abdo remains in the Charles Mix County Jail. His attorney did not immediately return a phone message for comment on his behalf Wednesday.

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

Man charged with leaving explosives at gas station

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Court documents say a man found with bomb-making materials in his Sioux Falls home during a search is suspected of placing an explosive device at a gas station.

Forty-three-year-old Mark Einerwold was arrested July 17 on charges of burglary and possessing a destructive device. Additional charges, including possessing explosives with intent to destroy property, accuse Einerwold of placing explosives at the Get 'n Go station July 2.

The Argus Leader says a station customer twice kicked the device away from a gas meter before any explosion could occur.

Prosecutors said in court that authorities found a manifesto that included threats toward law enforcement and the government at Einerwold's residence. He's scheduled in court later this week. It was not immediately clear if he has an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

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

Midwest economy: July state-by-state glance

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates growth in that factor over the next three to six months.

Here are the state-by-state results for July as well as some export figures for 2017:

Arkansas: The state's overall index fell to 56.7 last month from June's 62.5. Index components were new orders at 54.8, production or sales at 57.7, delivery lead time at 59.8, inventories at 52.9 and employment at 58.4. U.S. Census data indicate that Arkansas exported \$1.1 billion in agriculture and food products in 2017, Goss said.

Iowa: Iowa's overall index sank to 55.9 in July from 62.6 in June. Index components were new orders at

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 14 of 46

53.6, production or sales at 58.8, delivery lead time at 58.4, employment at 57.1 and inventories at 51.6. U.S. Census data indicate that Iowa exported \$4.5 billion in agriculture and food products last year.

Kansas: The state's overall index dipped to 60.5 last month from June's 62.5. Index components were new orders at 58.3, production or sales at 61.9, delivery lead time at 64.1, employment at 62.1 and inventories at 56.7. U.S. Census data indicate that Kansas exported \$3.8 billion in agriculture and food products in 2017.

Minnesota: Minnesota's overall index hit 55.8 in July, compared with 58.8 in June. Index components were new orders at 56.6, production or sales at 56.1, delivery lead time at 58.0, inventories at 51.3 and employment at 56.9. U.S. Census data indicate that Minnesota exported \$2.3 billion in agriculture and food products in 2017.

Missouri: The state's overall index sank to 56.4 last month from 62.6 in June. Index components were new orders at 54.5, production or sales at 57.4, delivery lead time at 59.4, inventories at 52.5 and employment at 58.0. U.S. Census data indicate that Missouri exported \$1.8 billion in agriculture and food products in 2017.

Nebraska: Nebraska's overall index fell to 61.0 in July from 66.1 in June. Index components were new orders at 58.6, production or sales at 62.3, delivery lead time at 64.5, inventories at 57.1 and employment at 62.5. U.S. Census data indicate that Nebraska exported \$3.7 billion in agriculture and food products in 2017.

North Dakota: The state's overall index climbed to 69.6 last month from June's 66.4. Index components were new orders at 66.4, production or sales at 71.5, delivery lead time at 74.1, employment at 70.7 and inventories at 65.5. U.S. Census data indicate that North Dakota exported \$709.2 million in agriculture and food products in 2017.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma's overall index hit 60.6 in July, compared with 61.1 in June. Index components were new orders at 57.1, production or sales at 60.5, delivery lead time at 68.9, inventories at 55.4 and employment at 61.1. U.S. Census data indicate that Oklahoma exported \$561.1 million in agriculture and food products in 2017.

South Dakota: The state's overall index fell to a still solid 54.3 from 58.0 in June. Index components were new orders at 52.6, production or sales at 55.2, delivery lead time at 57.1, inventories at 50.5 and employment at 56.1. U.S. Census data indicate that South Dakota exported \$475.3 million in agriculture and food products in 2017.

Report: Midwest's economy still growing, but at slower pace

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Economic growth is still slowing in nine Midwestern and Plains states amid trade and tariff disputes, according to a monthly survey report released Wednesday.

The Mid-America Business Conditions Index declined to 57.0 in July, from 61.8 in June and 67.3 in May, the report states. It's still the 20th straight month that the index remained above 50. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth.

"The regional economy continues to expand at a healthy pace, with manufacturing growth of approximately 2.6 percent over the past 12 months, compared to a lower 2.3 percent for the U.S.," said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey. "However, I expect expanding tariffs, trade restrictions and rising short-term interest rates from a more aggressive Federal Reserve to slow growth to a more modest but still positive pace."

The results from the survey of business supply managers are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The slowdown is reflected in the July employment index, which dropped to 58.9 from June's 61.9.

"Overall employment growth in the region over the past 12 months has been healthy but expanding at a rate below that of the nation," Goss said. "On the other hand, manufacturing job growth has been stronger in the region than the rest of the U.S."

Almost two-thirds of the supply managers who responded said the tariffs and trade restrictions have harmed or will harm their companies. Nevertheless, the economic optimism index hit 63.9 last month, compared with 59.8 in June.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 15 of 46

"Despite trade tensions and skirmishes, healthy profit growth, still low interest rates, and lower tax rates, supported robust business confidence," Goss said.

Recent storms cause damage in Oglala Lakota County

KYLE, S.D. (AP) — The National Weather Service says a tornado twisted trees and straight-line winds damaged several houses near Kyle over the weekend.

The Rapid City Journal reports that winds reached 80 mph in the Sunday afternoon tornado that developed out of an intense thunderstorm in eastern Oglala Lakota County. One house southwest of Kyle was destroyed by winds estimated to have reached 120 mph.

No injuries were reported.

The storm came just two days after a thunderstorm dropped hail as large as softballs in the county, damaging about 300 homes and 100 vehicles.

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

2 in custody in armed robbery at Spearfish restaurant

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — Spearfish police have two people in custody in an armed robbery at a restaurant. Authorities say two males with a handgun entered a Pizza Ranch shortly before 10:30 p.m. Monday and demanded money. They fled with an unspecified amount of cash.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports that officers identified a suspect video through surveillance video, located it and executed a search warrant at a residence, finding money and other evidence related to the robbery. Authorities also recovered two stolen vehicles at the scene.

Officers arrested a 19-year-old man and a juvenile male, both from Rapid City.

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

Rains soak Black Hills National Forest; caution urged

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. Forest Service is urging caution in the Black Hills National Forest after recent saturating rains.

The agency says the wet weather has resulted in high water levels and swift currents in lakes and creeks, and many trails and roads are in poor condition.

Officials say the conditions can create potential hazards for drivers, hikers, bikers and horseback riders. People who use muddy trails also can increase erosion. People are asked to use trails responsibly.

Pukwana man pleads not guilty to secretly filming woman

PUKWANA, S.D. (AP) — A Pukwana man accused of sneaking a camera into a Brule County home to surreptitiously record a woman has pleaded not guilty.

Twenty-year-old Jason Pickner was arrested after a woman reported finding the camera concealed in a pile of clothes in her bedroom in mid-May. She found a video of a male on the camera and identified him as Pickner.

The Daily Republic reports that Pickner faces up to 32 years in prison if convicted of burglary and using a camcorder or camera to secretly record a person. He's scheduled for trial Oct. 22.

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

Abortion-rights activists brace for new wave of restrictions

By DAVID CRARY, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Abortion-rights advocates are intensifying efforts to make it easier for women to get abortions amid a new wave of state-level bans and restrictions expected to occur under a reconfigured U.S. Supreme Court.

The efforts include boosting financial aid for women needing to travel long distances to get an abortion, and raising awareness about the option of do-it-yourself abortions.

The sense of urgency stems from the retirement of Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, who sometimes provided the decisive vote in support of abortion rights, and the possibility that Brett Kavanaugh, nominated by President Donald Trump to replace him, would give the court an anti-abortion majority.

Advocates anticipate new limits on abortion access in red states that are emboldened by the prospect of a more solidly conservative court. The Republican-led states want more latitude in the courts to impose far-reaching abortion restrictions while hoping that a lawsuit on the issue makes its way to the Supreme Court and is the case that ultimately overturns *Roe v. Wade* — the 1973 establishing a nationwide right to abortion.

Yamani Hernandez, executive director of the National Network of Abortion Funds, said that since Kennedy's retirement announcement on June 27, there has been a surge of donations to help the network assist low-income women in paying for their abortions. There are 70 funds in 38 states, currently assisting about one-fifth of the 150,000 women who inquire about assistance each year.

"Without a doubt we're moving into a bleaker time," Hernandez said. "People who haven't been paying attention are realizing what is at stake, and wanting to get involved."

If *Roe* were overturned, abortion-rights advocates anticipate that 20 or more states would ban most abortions. Women in those states might face long and costly interstate journeys to reach an abortion provider, or they could avail themselves of information about how to self-induce an abortion.

The two main abortion-inducing drugs, mifepristone and misoprostol, are legally available only through authorized medical professionals in the U.S., and numerous states have placed restrictions on medical abortions. In many places abroad, misoprostol is widely available, even over the counter in pharmacies in some countries, and has been used extensively for self-induced abortions in countries such as Brazil that have restrictive laws.

For American women, the most likely means of obtaining misoprostol is via an online purchase from a foreign provider. That method is considered difficult to prevent, even in states with laws explicitly banning self-induced abortion.

A 2-year-old California-based organization, the Self-Inducted Abortion Legal Team, is expanding its operations this summer, convinced that the ongoing push for tougher abortion restrictions will prompt more women to consider the self-induced option.

Jill Adams, the team's founder and chief strategist, said a top priority is to provide legal advice and support for any women who face possible prosecution for do-it-yourself abortions. Her group plans to launch a help line this fall that will provide callers with basic advice and, if warranted, connect them with an attorney in their area.

Her team and its allies are advocating that states avoid such prosecutions, a goal recently backed by two major medical associations.

Dr. Jamila Perritt, a Washington, D.C.-based obstetrician-gynecologist who provides abortions, says she has counseled some women who opted for self-induced abortions, and is grateful that they now have relatively safe and effective means of doing that, thanks to the abortion pill.

"Whatever happens with the Supreme Court, there are safer options now that we didn't have 40 years ago," she said.

Anti-abortion leaders are troubled by the positive talk about self-induced abortion.

"This kind of effort is dangerous and highly irresponsible," said Carol Tobias, president of the National Right to Life Committee. She evoked the potential difficulties of women who used that method and then suffered serious side effects.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 17 of 46

Tobias said her organization does not favor criminal action against women who self-abort, and instead would prefer targeting those who make the medicine available.

Many of the abortion-related topics now being discussed in the context of the Supreme Court vacancy will be summarized in a book being written by journalist and activist Robin Marty, titled "Handbook for a Post-Roe America." It is scheduled for publication on Jan. 22, the 46th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision.

Marty describes the book as "a step-by-step guide explaining what any person can do once abortion becomes illegal or inaccessible in the U.S." It covers possible legislative action, ways of supporting women who need to cross state lines for abortions, and the key factors involved in considering a self-induced abortion.

"The internet will be a great way to find information, but it's a double-edged sword because it leaves a trail," Marty said. "How do you access these things online without being able to be tracked?"

Trump thanks North Korea's Kim for handing over war remains

By AUDREY McAVOY and KIM YONG-HO, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — The U.S. military is beginning the painstaking process of analyzing remains from the Korean War now that they are back on American soil after having been handed over by North Korea last week.

Vice President Mike Pence and the top commander of U.S. forces in Asia, Adm. Phil Davidson, received the remains contained in 55 caskets during an emotional and solemn ceremony Wednesday after the caskets arrived by military cargo jets from South Korea.

"They were husbands and fathers, brothers and neighbors — long gone, but never lost to the memory of their loved ones," Pence said during the ceremony at a military base in Hawaii.

The homecoming comes 65 years after an armistice ended the conflict and after President Donald Trump received a commitment from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, at their June summit in Singapore, for their return.

Trump, in a tweet Wednesday night, thanked Kim "for keeping your word & starting the process of sending home the remains of our great and beloved missing fallen! I am not at all surprised that you took this kind action."

Each container was covered in an American flag and carried off the aircraft by one Marine, one sailor, one soldier and one airman. The troops carefully set each box on risers inside a hangar as Pence stood watching with his hand over his heart. Davidson saluted. Some of the invited guests wiped tears from their eyes during the procession.

The homecoming comes 65 years after an armistice ended the conflict and weeks after President Donald Trump received a commitment from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for their return.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency will take the remains to a lab on the base where forensic anthropologists will study bones and teeth to identify their race, gender and age. Scientists will extract DNA and compare it to DNA samples collected from families of troops still missing from the war.

The agency usually also relies on any items that may have been found with remains like uniforms, dog tags and wedding rings to identify remains. But North Korea only provided one dog tag with the 55 boxes it handed over last week.

It could take months or years to determine their identities.

"Some have called the Korean War the 'forgotten war.' But today, we prove these heroes were never forgotten," Pence said. "Today, our boys are coming home."

The U.S. military believes the bones are those of U.S. servicemen and potentially servicemen from other United Nations member countries who fought alongside the U.S. on behalf of South Korea during the war.

Australia, Belgium, France and the Philippines have yet to recover some of their war dead from North Korea.

"Whosoever emerges from these aircraft today begins a new season of hope for the families of our missing fallen," Pence said. "Hope that those who are lost will yet be found. Hope that after so many years of

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 18 of 46

questions, they will have closure.”

There are 7,699 U.S. service members listed as unaccounted for from the 1950-53 Korean War, of which about 5,300 are believed to have died on North Korean soil. The remainder are those who died in South Korea but have not been recovered; those who died in air crashes at sea or on ships at sea, as well as a number who are believed to have been taken to China.

During his summit with Trump, Kim also agreed to “work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” in return for Trump’s promise of security guarantees. Trump later suspended annual military drills with South Korea which North Korea had long called an invasion rehearsal.

But Trump now faces criticism at home and elsewhere that North Korea hasn’t taken any serious steps toward disarmament and may be trying to buy time to weaken international sanctions against it.

North Korea halted nuclear and missile tests, shut down its nuclear testing site and began dismantling facilities at its rocket launch site. But many experts say those are neither irrevocable nor serious steps that could show the country is sincere about denuclearization.

North Korea may want to use the remains’ return to keep diplomacy with the United States alive and win a reciprocal U.S. concession. Experts say the North likely wants a declaration of the end of the Korean War as part of U.S. security assurances.

An armistice that ended the Korean War has yet to be replaced with a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula in a technical state of war. North Korea has steadfastly argued its nuclear weapons are meant to neutralize alleged U.S. plans to attack it.

Kim Yong-Ho reported from Pyeongtaek, South Korea. Associated Press writers Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul and Robert Burns in Washington contributed to this report.

Pope changes death penalty teaching, now ‘inadmissible’

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis has changed Catholic Church teaching about the death penalty, saying in a new policy published Thursday that it is always “inadmissible” because it “attacks” the inherent dignity of all humans.

The Vatican said Francis had approved a change to the Catechism of the Catholic Church — the compilation of official Catholic teaching. Previously, the catechism said the church didn’t exclude recourse to capital punishment “if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor.”

The new teaching, contained in Catechism No. 2267, says the previous policy is outdated, that there are other ways to protect the common good, and that the church should instead commit itself to working to end capital punishment.

“The church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide,” reads the new text, which was approved in May but only published Thursday.

The death penalty has been abolished in most of Europe and South America, but it is still in use in the United States and in several countries in Asia, Africa and the Mideast. In addition, just this week Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey could soon move to reinstate the death penalty, which it had abolished in 2004 as part of its bid to join the European Union.

In an accompanying letter explaining the change, the head of the Vatican’s doctrine office said the development of Catholic doctrine on capital punishment didn’t contradict prior teaching but rather was an evolution of it.

“If, in fact the political and social situation of the past made the death penalty an acceptable means for the protection of the common good, today the increasing understanding that the dignity of a person is not lost even after committing the most serious crimes,” said Cardinal Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Ladaria said the new change aims to “give energy” to the anti-death penalty movement “and, in respectful dialogue with civil authorities, to encourage the creation of conditions that allow for the elimination of the death penalty where it is still in effect.”

Francis has long railed against the death penalty, insisting it can never be justified, no matter how heinous the crime. He has also long made prison ministry a mainstay of his vocation. On nearly every foreign trip, Francis has visited with inmates to offer words of solidarity and hope, and he still stays in touch with a group of Argentine inmates he ministered to during his years as archbishop of Buenos Aires.

He announced his intention to change church teaching on capital punishment last October, when he marked the 25th anniversary of the publication of the catechism by announcing his intention to update it. The catechism, first promulgated by St. John Paul II, gives Catholics an easy, go-to guide for church teaching on everything from the sacraments to sex.

At that 2017 ceremony, Francis said the death penalty violates the Gospel and amounts to the voluntary killing of a human life, which “is always sacred in the eyes of the creator.”

He acknowledged that in the past even the Papal States had allowed this “extreme and inhuman recourse.” But he said the Holy See had erred in allowing a mentality that was “more legalistic than Christian” and now knew better.

Amnesty International, which has long campaigned for a worldwide ban on the death penalty, welcomed the development as an “important step forward.”

“Already in the past, the church had expressed its aversion to the death penalty, but with words that did not exclude ambiguities,” said Riccardo Noury, Amnesty Italia spokesman. “Today they are saying it in an even clearer way.”

In addition, he praised the clear indication of the church’s commitment to the cause beyond doctrine.

“There seems to be also a desire to see the Catholic Church take an active role in the global abolitionist movement,” he added.

AP writer Simone Somekh contributed.

Follow Nicole Winfield at www.twitter.com/nwinfield

Russia: UN peacekeepers back on Golan Heights-Syria frontier

By MARIA DANILOVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — U.N. peacekeepers returned on Thursday to patrol the frontier between Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights for the first time in years, Russia’s Defense Ministry announced — Moscow’s latest achievement in efforts to negotiate a solution to the crisis along the volatile border.

Col. Gen. Sergei Rudskoy of the Russian General Staff told reporters at a press conference in Moscow that the U.N. peacekeepers, aided by Russian forces, conducted their first patrolling mission in the area earlier in the day.

The development also marked the first time that Russian forces, a major ally of the Damascus government, were involved in the patrols.

The peacekeeping mission was halted back in 2014 amid the violence in Syrian’s civil war over security concerns.

“As the situation stabilizes, these posts will be handed over to Syrian government forces,” Rudskoy told reporters.

The U.N. peacekeeping forces first deployed along the frontier in 1974 to separate Syrian and Israeli forces after Israel occupied the Golan Heights in the 1967 war.

After Syria’s civil war erupted, clashes broke out between Syrian President Bashar Assad’s forces and rebels inside the disengagement zone. In 2014, al-Qaida militants in the area kidnapped 45 U.N. peacekeepers before releasing them after two weeks. The U.N. withdrew from many of its positions shortly

after that incident.

Israel's military spokesman, Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, said in a telephone briefing with reporters that he could not immediately comment on the deployment on the Syrian side of the border.

Also Thursday, Conricus said the Israeli military targeted and killed seven "armed terror operatives" who had crossed into Israeli territory in the southern Golan Heights.

Israel tracked the armed infiltrators who approached the border on Wednesday night and a military aircraft struck as they attempted to cross a security fence on the Israeli side of the frontier.

A subsequent search of the area yielded several assault rifles and explosives, Conricus added. He said a preliminary assessment was that the infiltrators were Islamic State militants.

Israeli troops were on "high alert and readiness" following the strike. The army's announcement came shortly after Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman toured a Patriot missile defense battery in northern Israel during a military preparedness drill.

Associated Press writers Ilan Ben Zion in Jerusalem, and Sarah El Deeb and Philip Issa in Beirut contributed to this report.

Wildfires scorching homes, land and California's budget

By JANIE HAR and BRIAN SKOLOFF, Associated Press

UPPER LAKE, Calif. (AP) — Just a month into the budget year, the state has already spent more than one-quarter of its annual fire budget, at least \$125 million, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokesman Mike Mohler said Wednesday.

Following years of drought and a summer of record-breaking heat, immense tracts of forests, chaparral and grasslands have become tinder that allows even a small spark to explode into a devouring blaze, authorities said.

"We're being surprised. Every year is teaching the fire authorities new lessons," Gov. Jerry Brown said at a news conference. "We're in uncharted territory."

More than 13,000 firefighters are battling fires with the help of crews from as far away as Florida but Brown repeated predictions from fire officials that California can expect a future of devastating fires, in part because of the changing climate.

"People are doing everything they can, but nature is very powerful and we're not on the side of nature," Brown said.

The largest blaze burned in the Redding area, in Shasta County north of Sacramento. Six people, including two firefighters, have died and the fire has destroyed 1,058 homes and nearly 500 other buildings, including barns and warehouses, making it the sixth most destructive wildfire in California history, state fire officials said.

Tens of thousands of people remain under evacuation orders.

However, authorities who had feared there might be more casualties reported Wednesday that all those who had been reported missing had been located.

The fire, which is nearly twice the size of Sacramento, was only 35 percent contained after more than a week.

"Unstable conditions, shifting winds, steep terrain, and dry fuels continue to challenge firefighters," a state fire update warned Wednesday evening, noting that 35-mph wind gusts were expected on ridge tops that could whip up the flames.

Meanwhile, at least three new fires erupted Wednesday in the Sierra Nevada region, including a blaze in Placer County that had consumed 1 1/2 square miles (1,000 acres or 4 square kilometers) of land.

North and east of San Francisco, two wildfires that began Tuesday near the communities of Covelo and Yuba City continued to burn through grass, brush and timberlands. The fire near Covelo prompted evacuation orders for about 60 homes in the farming and ranching area on the edge of the Mendocino National Forest.

Twin fires also burned in Mendocino and Lake counties. They burned 14 homes and threatened 12,000 more.

A 100-square mile fire near Yosemite National Park prompted evacuation orders Wednesday for the community of Wawona inside the park, which has fewer than 200 residents. Yosemite Valley and other areas of the park have been closed to tourists since July 25 because of heavy smoke from the fire, which has burned nearly 64,000 acres (258 square kilometers) and is only 39 percent contained.

Har reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writer Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco also contributed to this report.

Follow AP's wildfire coverage here: <https://apnews.com/tag/Wildfires>

White House: Trump's tweet about Russia probe was an opinion

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump bluntly declared his attorney general should terminate “right now” the federal probe into the campaign that took him to the White House, a newly fervent attack on the special counsel investigation that could imperil his presidency. Trump also assailed the trial, just underway, of his former campaign chairman by the special counsel's team

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders scrambled to explain that Trump's tweet Wednesday was “not an order” and the president was not directing his attorney general to do anything.

“It's the president's opinion,” she said.

But Trump's early morning tweetstorm again raised the specter that he could try to more directly bring special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia-Trump election-collusion probe to a premature end. And it revived the idea that the president's tweets themselves might be used as evidence that he is attempting to obstruct justice.

Meanwhile, Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani said negotiations are continuing to have Trump sit down for questions from Mueller, though the lawyer said, “I'm not going to give you a lot of hope that it's going to happen.” He said both sides had exchanged proposals for conditions for such an interview, “and yesterday we got a letter back from them and now we're in the process of responding.”

Trump has raged privately in recent days that both the forces of government and the media are trying to undermine him. That includes trumped-up charges against his former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, and distorting the outcome of the Helsinki summit to make it appear he was beholden to Russia, according to two Republicans close to the White House not authorized to speak about private conversations.

Trump was closely monitoring news coverage of the Manafort proceedings, which provoked the spate of incendiary tweets, according to the two Republicans and two White House officials.

“The president's not obstructing, he's fighting back,” said Sanders, dismissing the idea Trump's tweets could be tantamount to obstruction of justice.

The most inflammatory of Trump's tweets said, “This is a terrible situation and Attorney General Jeff Sessions should stop this Rigged Witch Hunt right now, before it continues to stain our country any further. Bob Mueller is totally conflicted, and his 17 Angry Democrats that are doing his dirty work are a disgrace to USA!”

The president's anger came the day after the start of the trial of Manafort, who is facing federal charges of bank fraud and tax evasion. And while Mueller did not bring any election-related charges against Manafort, the specter of the Russian investigation is hanging over the Alexandria, Virginia, courthouse. And Trump's White House.

“Paul Manafort worked for Ronald Reagan, Bob Dole and many other highly prominent and respected political leaders,” Trump tweeted. “He worked for me for a very short time. Why didn't government tell me that he was under investigation. These old charges have nothing to do with Collusion - a Hoax!”

Later the president invoked one of the nation's most notorious criminals, 1920s gangster Al Capone,

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 22 of 46

and posed the question "who was treated worse" while airing his grievance about Manafort being held in solitary confinement ahead of a conviction. Manafort is in detention after having his bail revoked because of allegations that he was attempting to tamper with witnesses in his case. Federal prosecutors revealed last month that he was afforded unusual privileges while in detention.

Trump has spent more than a year trying to distance himself from his one-time top political aide, and to minimize the role Manafort played in his campaign. Trump's protestations aside, Manafort worked on the campaign during a critical six-month period in 2016, during which he led the effort to ensure Trump won the Republican nomination. He oversaw the early days of the general election effort.

Sanders said Trump wants Mueller's investigation concluded swiftly without intervention, though Trump has publicly mused as recently as May about interfering in the Department of Justice's oversight of the probe. "At some point I will have no choice but to use the powers granted to the Presidency and get involved!" he tweeted then.

Trump has repeatedly belittled the probe as "a hoax," as those close to him suggest he feels that any talk of Russian interference tarnishes his electoral victory and delegitimizes his presidency.

One of the president's confidants deemed Trump in "a dark place," seething about the longlasting probe and the media's depiction of his White House under siege. Though long antagonistic toward the press, Trump's anger toward the media has only grown over the past month, as he has berated coverage of his Singapore and Helsinki summits, the possible prosecutorial cooperation of his former legal "fixer" Michael Cohen and the Mueller probe.

After complaining about the tough questions he received from American reporters in Finland, Trump has largely steered clear of the mainstream media, instead opting for safer spaces like an interview with ally Rush Limbaugh this week. From the White House briefing room podium on Wednesday, Sanders declined to denounce the harassment of a CNN reporter during a Trump rally in Florida on Tuesday.

The president's social media outburst renewed discussion of the significance of his tweets.

Rudy Giuliani, the president's lawyer, stressed that Trump was just issuing an opinion, though he also said the White House believes "the investigation should be brought to a close."

"I guess, if we were playing poker — we're not — put up or shut up, what do you got?" Giuliani said. "We have every reason to believe they don't have anything."

When pressed by reporters on how she tells the difference between a presidential order or an opinion, Sanders said Trump makes his intentions "pretty clear."

But the line between registering an opinion or governing by tweet has bedeviled the White House from the start, even when former press secretary Sean Spicer declared tweets could be official White House statements. Earlier this year, Trump blindsided the Defense Department when he tweeted out a transgender ban for the military, prompting the Pentagon to slow walk the program.

Mueller already is interested in some of Trump's tweets to the extent they raise obstruction of justice concerns. Though experts believe obstruction by tweet is possible, prosecutors have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a particular act got in the way of an investigation and that the person who did it intended to obstruct.

The president's tweets on Wednesday were greeted warily on Capitol Hill, with most lawmakers, regardless of party, urging Trump to let the probe run its course.

No. 3 Senate GOP leader John Thune of South Dakota said, "The idea that they should truncate it doesn't make sense to me." Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut went much further, declaring. There is now highly credible evidence that the president of the United States is committing obstruction of justice in real time, right before our eyes."

Associated Press writer Mark Sherman contributed reporting.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Miller at <http://twitter.com/@zekejmilller>

Papa John's founder: I should be back as chain's public face

By CANDICE CHOI, AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The founder of Papa John's says the pizza chain needs him back as its public face, and that it was a mistake for the company to scrub him from its marketing materials after he acknowledged using a racial slur last month.

John Schnatter said in an interview with The Associated Press that he believes he can return to TV and radio ads once the public understands the context of his comments.

"My persona resonates with the consumer because it's authentic, it's genuine and it's the truth," Schnatter said in a phone interview late Wednesday, with his lawyer and representative present.

A representative for Papa John's International Inc. did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Schnatter has been under fire after Forbes reported last month that he used the N-word during a media training conference call in May. He apologized for using the word, but said it was taken out of context and that he didn't use it as an epithet. He resigned as chairman quickly after the report was published, but subsequently called the decision a "mistake."

Since then, Schnatter has criticized Papa John's handling of the matter, saying it acted hastily without investigating what happened. He also criticized the company's failure to clarify his comments last year blaming disappointing pizza sales on the NFL leadership's handling of player protests during the national anthem. Those comments were seen as insensitive to players, and prompted Schnatter stepping down as CEO last year.

Schnatter said the remarks were aimed at the league's leadership, not its players.

Keith Hollingsworth, a professor of business at Morehouse College, said it would be best for the company if Schnatter kept a low profile for the near term, regardless.

"Even if everything he's saying is true, I'm not sure you can convince people of that," Hollingsworth said.

Hollingsworth said he thinks Schnatter can eventually return in a public role, but that he needs to give it some time.

Even before the backlash to Schnatter's NFL remarks, a key sales figure had been slowing partly because of competitive pressures, noted Alexander Slagle, an analyst for Jefferies. Slagle said he believes the negative publicity will continue to be "painful" for the company, but that "the brand will survive."

Since the NFL remarks last year, Schnatter said he didn't feel comfortable appearing in TV and radio ads. His image remained on a logo that was all over Papa John's website and on its pizza boxes, but the company began removing those too after the latest controversy.

Papa John's had been testing his return to TV and radio ads before the latest controversy, he said.

Though Papa John's may blame its poor performance on him, Schnatter said the company is suffering because it moved away from its "roots" and made too many marketing changes at once. In addition to his disappearance from ads, he said Papa John's stopped focusing on its "better ingredients" mantra and made misguided changes, such as tweaking the red and green in the logo "to cater to the millennials."

Schnatter remains a board member and owns nearly 30 percent of Papa John's stock. Following the Forbes report, Papa John's adopted a "poison pill" plan to prevent him from mounting a takeover.

Papa John's reports its quarterly results next week, and Wall Street analysts expect a key sales figure in North America to decline for the third quarter in a row. Schnatter has requested documents from the company relating to its actions following the Forbes report, and believe they will help vindicate him.

"Once the public actually grasps what the board and what the management did to cause the problem and the truth gets out, of course I can be back in the ads," he said.

Papa John's, which is based in Louisville, Kentucky, began operations in 1984 and has more than 5,200 locations globally.

Facebook page's removal angers Washington protest organizers

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN, Associated Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. (AP) — Facebook stunned and angered organizers of a protest against white supremacists when it disabled their Washington event's page this week, saying it and others had been created by "bad actors" misusing the social media platform.

The company said the page — one of 32 pages or accounts it removed Tuesday from Facebook and Instagram — violated its ban on "coordinated inauthentic behavior" and may be linked to an account created by Russia's Internet Research Agency, a so-called troll farm that has sown discord in the U.S.

But the organizers of next weekend's protest in Washington say Facebook has unfairly and recklessly tarnished their work by suggesting their event could be linked to a Russian campaign to interfere in U.S. politics.

April Goggans, an organizer of Black Lives Matter DC, said protest organizers began planning the event before the Facebook page's creation. Organizers have set up a new page, but Goggans fears Facebook's crackdown left many people with the false impression that a Russian bot is behind their event.

"Our participation may take a hit because people are trying to find out what's legit and what's not," she said Wednesday.

For weeks, activists have been planning a counterprotest to the Washington rally organized by Jason Kessler, the principal organizer of last summer's deadly white nationalist gathering in Charlottesville, Virginia. Hundreds of Facebook users clicked on the event's Facebook page to signal their intent to attend the counterprotest.

Nathaniel Gleicher, Facebook's head of cybersecurity policy, said in a statement Tuesday that "inauthentic" administrators of a page called "Resisters" connected with administrators from five legitimate pages to co-host the event and enlist support from "real people."

"These legitimate Pages unwittingly helped build interest in 'No Unite Right 2 - DC' and posted information about transportation, materials, and locations so people could get to the protests," Gleicher wrote.

Gleicher's statement said Facebook disabled the event page Tuesday and reached out to the administrators of the five other pages "to update them on what happened." Facebook also planned to report the issue to approximately 2,600 users who had expressed interest in the event and to more than 600 users who said they planned to attend it.

Andrew Batcher, an organizer for the Shut It Down DC coalition formed to protest Kessler's rally, said the event page created by "Resisters" was taken over and controlled by "a lot of real people doing real work." Batcher said he hasn't seen any evidence that any of administrators for the "Resisters" page was a "bad actor."

"All the content on the page came from local organizers," he said. "Facebook took it all down, which I see as censorship of a real protest event."

Researchers at the Atlantic Council, a nonprofit working with Facebook to analyze abuse on its service, said the accounts identified for removal sought to promote divisions between Americans. The accounts seemed focused on building an online audience and moving it to offline events such as protests.

Facebook didn't directly link Tuesday's crackdown to Russia or U.S. midterm elections in the fall. But the company said it found evidence of "some connections" between the deleted accounts and accounts that Russia's IRA created before Facebook disabled them last year. Facebook said one of the disabled IRA accounts shared a Facebook event hosted by the "Resisters" page, which had an IRA account as one of its administrators "for only seven minutes."

"If that's the case, then it's pretty meaningless infiltration," Batcher said.

But that discovery "could be a sign of something deeper" and not necessarily the full extent of the IRA account's activity on the page, said Dipayan Ghosh, a former Facebook employee who worked on global privacy and public policy issues for the company.

"It just raises a bunch of questions that suggest there is a complicated ecosystem here and we're only scratching the surface," said Ghosh, a fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy.

In February, a federal indictment accused 13 Russians of operating a hidden social media trolling campaign, posing as U.S. activists and posting about divisive political and social issues. Investigators have concluded the Russians coordinated and leveraged the support of unwitting Americans in carrying out their campaign.

Kessler scheduled his Aug. 12 event in Washington to mark the anniversary of the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, where hundreds of white supremacists and counterprotesters clashed in the streets before a car plowed into a crowd, killing 32-year-old counterprotester Heather Heyer. The National Park Service approved Kessler's application for a "white civil rights" rally at Lafayette Square, near the White House, but hasn't issued a permit for the event.

Goggans said Facebook's crackdown has been a time-consuming distraction for counterprotest organizers. "Over the past 18 hours, we've been having to prove we exist," she said.

Witnesses: Manafort himself directed millions of dollars

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort personally directed millions of dollars in international wire transfers to pay for high-end suits and more than \$3 million in improvements at his various houses, witnesses testified on the second day of his financial fraud trial.

The testimony Wednesday was aimed at bolstering the prosecution's argument that Manafort hid millions of dollars in income from the IRS and used the funds for a lavish lifestyle. The witness accounts were also intended to contradict Manafort's lawyers, who have signaled they will pin blame for any illegal conduct on his longtime deputy, Rick Gates.

The prosecution's focus on Manafort's personal finances — at times laid out in painstaking detail — underscored the vast amount of documents accumulated by special counsel Robert Mueller's team in their case against the longtime political consultant. But it also tried the patience of U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III, who repeatedly scolded the government's attorneys for what he said was excessive and unnecessary information.

Ellis, who warned prosecutors against using the word "oligarchs" to describe wealthy Ukrainians, several times admonished them for spending so much time documenting Manafort's extravagant lifestyle.

It's not a crime to be wealthy, he noted. And the pejorative term "oligarchs" and evidence of home renovations aren't necessarily relevant to the charges in question, he added.

"The government doesn't want to prosecute somebody because they wear nice clothes, do they?" Ellis said amid testimony that Manafort had spent more than \$900,000 on clothing from a boutique retailer where he was one of only about 40 clients. "Let's move on."

Ellis even called out lawyers from both sides for rolling their eyes.

The trial is the first courtroom test for the special counsel, who was tasked last year with investigating Russia's efforts to sway the 2016 election and to determine whether the Trump campaign was involved. So far, Manafort is the lone person to stand trial as a result of the ongoing probe, even though the charges of bank fraud and tax evasion are unrelated to possible collusion.

Still, the trial has pulled back the curtain on the former lobbyist who steered Trump's election efforts for a time, including descriptions of Manafort's \$15,000 jacket made of ostrich and the more than \$6 million in cash he put toward real estate. One witness, Maximillian Katzman, testified that Manafort spent more than \$900,000 at his boutique retailer in New York. He said Manafort was the only business client of his who paid via international wire transfer.

An FBI agent described the July 2017 raid on Manafort's Virginia condominium, saying he knocked multiple times before entering with a key and finding Manafort inside. The searches described by agent Matthew Mikuska found expensively tailored suits and documents related to other luxury items allegedly bought by Manafort, including two silk rugs bought for \$160,000 paid from offshore accounts.

But when prosecutors introduced photos of Manafort's high-end condo and expensive suits, Ellis interrupted so as to limit the growing list of evidence jurors would have to consider.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 26 of 46

"All this document shows is that Mr. Manafort had a lavish lifestyle," Ellis said. "It isn't relevant."

On the term "oligarchs," Ellis said use of the word implied that Manafort was associating with "despicable people and therefore he's despicable."

"That's not the American way," the judge said.

Prosecutor Greg Andres argued that documenting Manafort's spending for the jury was important to the case.

"Judge, this is not an effort to prove Mr. Manafort lived lavishly," Andres said. "It's evidence of his income."

Ellis seemed to grow impatient after being told that attorneys on both sides were seen rolling their eyes after leaving the bench or in response to his rulings. The lawyers' facial expressions, Ellis said, appeared to show them thinking: "Why do we have to put up with this idiot judge?"

The proceedings clearly caught the attention of President Donald Trump, who defended his 2016 hiring of Manafort and suggested Manafort was being treated worse than mobster Al Capone. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the president indeed felt Manafort had been treated unfairly.

"Why didn't government tell me that he was under investigation," Trump tweeted Wednesday. "These old charges have nothing to do with Collusion - a Hoax!"

Manafort's attorneys are putting the blame on Gates, Manafort's business associate.

Gates was expected to be the government's star witness at trial, but prosecutor Uzo Asonye said he could not say with certainty whether Gates would or would not testify. He later clarified to say that that uncertainty applies to any witness, not just Gates, as the prosecution team assesses the pace of the trial and the evidence it needs.

Asonye also told Ellis that prosecutors expect to rest their case next week, noting that they are "ahead of schedule."

Testimony was to resume Thursday morning with witnesses including bookkeepers and accountants.

Manafort has a second trial scheduled for September in the District of Columbia. It involves allegations that he acted as an unregistered foreign agent for Ukrainian interests and made false statements to the U.S. government.

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

Hemingway story from 1956 published for first time

By HILLEL ITALIE, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The themes and trappings are familiar for an Ernest Hemingway narrative: Paris, wartime, talk of books and wine and the scars of battle.

But the story itself has been little known beyond the scholarly community for decades: "A Room on the Garden Side," written in 1956, is being published for the first time. The brief, World War II-era fiction appears this week in the summer edition of *The Strand Magazine*, a literary quarterly which has released obscure works by Raymond Chandler, John Steinbeck and others.

"Hemingway's deep love for his favorite city as it is just emerging from Nazi occupation is on full display, as are the hallmarks of his prose," *Strand* Managing Editor Andrew F. Gulli wrote in an editorial note.

Kirk Curnutt, a board member of The Hemingway Society, contributed an afterword for the *Strand*, saying that "the story contains all the trademark elements readers love in Hemingway."

"Steeped in talk of Marcel Proust, Victor Hugo, and Alexandre Dumas, and featuring a long excerpt in French from Charles Baudelaire's 'Les Fleurs du Mal,' the story implicitly wonders whether the heritage of Parisian culture can recover from the dark taint of fascism," Curnutt wrote.

War was a longtime muse for Hemingway. He served as an ambulance driver during World War I, drawing upon his experiences for his classic novel "A Farewell to Arms." The Spanish Civil War inspired his novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls." He was both soldier and correspondent during World War II and was on hand in Paris in August 1944 for the liberation from Nazi occupation, described by the author in reports

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 27 of 46

published soon after by Collier's magazine.

"A Room on the Garden Side" takes place in the Ritz hotel (Hemingway liked to say that he liberated the Ritz bar) and is narrated by a Hemingway stand-in called Robert who shares the author's own nickname — Papa. Robert and his entourage drink wine, quote from Baudelaire and debate "the dirty trade of war."

"I did it to save the lives of people who had not hired out to fight," the narrator explains. "There was that and the fact that I had learned to know and love an infantry division and wished to serve it in any useful way I could.

"I also loved France and Spain next to my own country. I loved other countries too but the debt was paid and I thought that the account was closed, not knowing the accounts are never closed."

Hemingway left numerous works unpublished at the time of his suicide, in 1961. "A Moveable Feast," his celebrated memoir on Paris in the 1920s, came out three years after his death. Other posthumous Hemingway books include the novels "The Garden of Eden" and "Islands in the Stream, and "The Dangerous Summer," a nonfiction account of bullfighting.

Hemingway wrote other World War II stories over the last decade of his life. In August 1956, he told publisher Charles Scribner Jr. that he had completed five: "A Room on the Garden Side," "The Cross Roads," "Indian Country and the White Army," "The Monument," and "The Bubble Reputation." Until now, only "The Cross Roads" had been widely seen.

"I suppose they (the stories) are a little shocking since they deal with irregular troops and combat and with people who actually kill people," Hemingway told Scribner. "Anyway, you can always publish them after I'm dead."

On the Internet: www.strandmag.com

Court strikes down Trump push to cut 'sanctuary city' funds

By SUDHIN THANAWALA, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A divided U.S. appeals court on Wednesday struck down a key part of President Donald Trump's contentious effort to crack down on cities and states that limit cooperation with immigration officials, saying an executive order threatening to cut funding for "sanctuary cities" was unconstitutional.

In a 2-1 decision, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with a lower court that the order exceeded the president's authority. Congress alone controls spending under the U.S. Constitution, and presidents do not have the power to withhold funding it approves to pursue their policy goals, the court majority said.

"By its plain terms, the executive order directs the agencies of the executive branch to withhold funds appropriated by Congress in order to further the administration's policy objective of punishing cities and counties that adopt so-called 'sanctuary' policies," wrote Chief Judge Sidney Thomas, joined by Judge Ronald Gould, who both were nominated by Democratic President Bill Clinton.

The court, however, also said the lower-court judge went too far when he blocked enforcement of Trump's order nationwide after a lawsuit by two California counties — San Francisco and Santa Clara.

Thomas said there wasn't enough evidence to support a nationwide ban, limited the injunction to California and sent the case back to the lower court for more arguments on whether a wider ban was warranted.

Devin O'Malley, a spokesman for the U.S. Justice Department, called the ruling a victory for "criminal aliens in California, who can continue to commit crimes knowing that the state's leadership will protect them from federal immigration officers whose job it is to hold them accountable and remove them from the country."

"The Justice Department remains committed to the rule of law, to protecting public safety, and to keeping criminal aliens off the streets," he said.

The decision overall is a big win for opponents of the executive order, but Trump could try to enforce it against jurisdictions outside the nine Western states covered by the 9th Circuit, said David Levine, an expert on federal court procedure at the University of California, Hastings College of Law.

"If they wanted to go after Chicago, if they wanted to go after Denver or Philadelphia, they would not

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 28 of 46

be bound by an injunction," he said. "Those places would have to bring their own lawsuits and whatever happens, happens in those cases."

Trump signed the executive order in January 2017 — part of a push by his administration to go after cities and states that don't work with U.S. immigration authorities.

The government also has moved to withhold a particular law enforcement grant from sanctuary jurisdictions and sued California over three laws that extend protections to people in the country illegally.

The Trump administration says sanctuary cities and states allow dangerous criminals back on the street. San Francisco and other sanctuary cities say turning local police into immigration officers erodes the trust needed to get people to report crime.

The executive order directed the attorney general and secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that jurisdictions refusing to comply with a particular immigration law generally are not eligible to receive U.S. grants.

U.S. District Judge William Orrick in San Francisco ruled in November that the order threatened all federal funding and that the president lacked the authority to attach new conditions to spending approved by Congress.

The executive order potentially jeopardized hundreds of millions of dollars in funding to San Francisco and Santa Clara counties, Orrick said, citing comments by Trump and U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions as evidence of the order's scope.

The Trump administration said the order applied to a relatively small pot of money that already required compliance with the immigration law.

"When a president overreaches and tries to assert authority he doesn't have under the Constitution, there needs to be a check on that power grab," San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera said in a statement Wednesday. "The courts did that today, which is exactly what the framers of the Constitution had in mind."

Santa Clara County Counsel James R. Williams said the decision was a victory for a key provision of the U.S. Constitution.

In a colorful dissenting opinion, 9th Circuit Judge Ferdinand Fernandez said the executive order clearly says any action by the attorney general or Homeland Security secretary was to be taken in accordance with the law.

Fernandez, who was nominated to the 9th Circuit by Republican President George H.W. Bush, said Orrick had pushed that language aside. Fernandez called the counties' fears about the order an "imagined beast."

This story has been corrected to reflect that the 9th Circuit covers nine Western states.

'Our boys are coming home;' Pence welcomes Korean War dead

By AUDREY McAVOY and KIM YONG-HO, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — In an emotional and solemn ceremony, the remains of dozens of presumed casualties from the Korean War were escorted by military honor guards onto U.S. soil on Wednesday, 65 years after an armistice ended the conflict and weeks after President Donald Trump received a commitment from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for their return.

The U.S. military believes the bones are those of U.S. servicemen and potentially servicemen from other United Nations member countries who fought alongside the U.S. on behalf of South Korea during the war. What is expected to be an exhaustive analysis and identification process will soon begin.

"Some have called the Korean War the 'forgotten war.' But today, we prove these heroes were never forgotten," Vice President Mike Pence said at a ceremony welcoming the remains, which were flown from South Korea earlier in the day. "Today, our boys are coming home."

Each container was accompanied by one Marine, one sailor, one soldier and one airman. They set them gently on risers lined up inside the hangar as Pence stood watching with his hand over his heart. Adm. Phil Davidson, commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, saluted. Some of the invited guests wiped tears from their eyes during the procession of the containers off the planes.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 29 of 46

Sixteen other United Nations member countries fought alongside U.S. service members on behalf of South Korea. Some of them, including Australia, Belgium, France and the Philippines, have yet to recover some of their war dead from North Korea.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has said some remains could turn out to be those of missing from other nations. He said last week that the return was a positive step but not a guarantee that the bones are American.

"Whosoever emerges from these aircraft today begins a new season of hope for the families of our missing fallen," Pence said. "Hope that those who are lost will yet be found. Hope that after so many years of questions, they will have closure."

North Korea handed over the remains last week. A U.S. military plane made a rare trip into North Korea to retrieve the 55 cases.

Hanwell Kaakimaka's uncle, John Kaakimaka, is among those who never came home.

"We've been watching the news, and we've been hopeful that my uncle is among the remains," he said, adding that it could bring his family some closure.

His uncle, who was from Honolulu, was a corporal in the 31st Infantry Regiment of the Army's 7th Infantry Division. He went missing on or about Dec. 2, 1950.

Hanwell Kaakimaka said the story he heard from his dad was that his uncle was injured and was being brought back from the front when Chinese troops overran the area and attacked the convoy.

The Kaakimaka family provided DNA samples to the U.S. military's Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency over a decade ago, hoping officials would be able to make a match.

The agency identifies remains of servicemen killed in past conflicts. It typically uses bones, teeth and DNA to identify remains along with any items that may have been found with remains like uniforms, dog tags and wedding rings. But North Korea only provided one dog tag with the 55 boxes it handed over last week.

Before the remains were put on military planes bound for Hawaii, hundreds of U.S. and South Korean troops gathered at a hanger at the Osan base in South Korea for the repatriation ceremony.

The repatriation is a breakthrough in a long-stalled U.S. effort to obtain war remains from North Korea.

There are 7,699 U.S. service members listed as unaccounted for from the 1950-53 Korean War, of which about 5,300 are believed to have died on North Korean soil. The remainder are those who died in South Korea but have not been recovered; those who died in air crashes at sea or on ships at sea, as well as a number who are believed to have been taken to China.

The bones' return was part of an agreement reached during a June summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Trump thanked Kim for the return.

During the summit, Kim also agreed to "work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" in return for Trump's promise of security guarantees. Trump later suspended annual military drills with South Korea which North Korea had long called an invasion rehearsal.

But Trump now faces criticism at home and elsewhere that North Korea hasn't taken any serious steps toward disarmament and may be trying to buy time to weaken international sanctions against it.

North Korea halted nuclear and missile tests, shut down its nuclear testing site and began dismantling facilities at its rocket launch site. But many experts say those are neither irrevocable nor serious steps that could show the country is sincere about denuclearization.

North Korea may want to use the remains' return to keep diplomacy with the United States alive and win a reciprocal U.S. concession. Experts say the North likely wants a declaration of the end of the Korean War as part of U.S. security assurances.

An armistice that ended the Korean War has yet to be replaced with a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula in a technical state of war. North Korea has steadfastly argued its nuclear weapons are meant to neutralize alleged U.S. plans to attack it.

Kim Yong-Ho reported from Pyeongtaek, South Korea. Associated Press writers Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul and Robert Burns in Washington contributed to this report.

Trump urges end to probe 'right now,' setting off new storm

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump bluntly declared on Wednesday his attorney general should terminate “right now” the federal probe into the campaign that took him to the White House, a newly fervent attack on the special counsel investigation that could imperil his presidency. Trump also assailed the trial, just underway, of his former campaign chairman by the special counsel’s team.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders scrambled to explain that Trump’s tweet was “not an order” and the president was not directing his attorney general to do anything.

“It’s the president’s opinion,” she said.

But Trump’s early morning tweetstorm again raised the specter that he could try to more directly bring special counsel Robert Mueller’s Russia-Trump election-collusion probe to a premature end. And it revived the idea that the president’s tweets themselves might be used as evidence that he is attempting to obstruct justice.

Meanwhile, Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani said negotiations are continuing to have Trump sit down for questions from Mueller, though the lawyer said, “I’m not going to give you a lot of hope that it’s going to happen.” He said both sides had exchanged proposals for conditions for such an interview, “and yesterday we got a letter back from them and now we’re in the process of responding.”

Trump has raged privately in recent days that both the forces of government and the media are trying to undermine him. That includes trumped-up charges against his former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, and distorting the outcome of the Helsinki summit to make it appear he was beholden to Russia, according to two Republicans close to the White House who were not authorized to discuss private conversations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Trump was closely monitoring news coverage of the Manafort proceedings, which provoked the spate of incendiary tweets, according to the two Republicans and two White House officials.

“The president’s not obstructing, he’s fighting back,” said Sanders, dismissing the idea that Trump’s tweets could be tantamount to obstruction of justice.

The most inflammatory of Trump’s tweets said, “This is a terrible situation and Attorney General Jeff Sessions should stop this Rigged Witch Hunt right now, before it continues to stain our country any further. Bob Mueller is totally conflicted, and his 17 Angry Democrats that are doing his dirty work are a disgrace to USA!”

The president’s anger came the day after the start of the trial of Manafort, who is facing federal charges of bank fraud and tax evasion. And while Mueller did not bring any election-related charges against Manafort, the specter of the Russian investigation is hanging over the Alexandria, Virginia, courthouse. And Trump’s White House.

“Paul Manafort worked for Ronald Reagan, Bob Dole and many other highly prominent and respected political leaders,” Trump tweeted. “He worked for me for a very short time. Why didn’t government tell me that he was under investigation. These old charges have nothing to do with Collusion - a Hoax!”

Later the president invoked one of the nation’s most notorious criminals, 1920s gangster Al Capone, and posed the question “who was treated worse” while airing his grievance about Manafort being held in solitary confinement ahead of a conviction. Manafort is in detention after having his bail revoked because of allegations that he was attempting to tamper with witnesses in his case. Federal prosecutors revealed last month that he was afforded unusual privileges while in detention.

Trump has spent more than a year trying to distance himself from his one-time top political aide and to minimize the role Manafort played in his campaign. Trump’s protestations aside, Manafort worked on the campaign during a critical six-month period in 2016, during which he led the effort to ensure Trump won the Republican nomination. He oversaw the early days of the general election effort.

Sanders said Trump wants Mueller’s investigation concluded swiftly without intervention, though Trump has publicly mused as recently as May about interfering in the Department of Justice’s oversight of the probe. “At some point I will have no choice but to use the powers granted to the Presidency and get

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 31 of 46

involved!" he tweeted then.

Trump has repeatedly belittled the probe as "a hoax," as those close to him suggest he feels that any talk of Russian interference tarnishes his electoral victory and delegitimizes his presidency.

One of the president's confidants deemed Trump in "a dark place," seething about the long-lasting probe and the media's depiction of his White House under siege. Though long antagonistic toward the press, Trump's anger toward the media has only grown over the past month, as he has berated coverage of his Singapore and Helsinki summits, the possible prosecutorial cooperation of his former legal "fixer" Michael Cohen and the Mueller probe.

After complaining about the tough questions he received from American reporters in Finland, Trump has largely steered clear of the mainstream media, instead opting for safer spaces like an interview with ally Rush Limbaugh this week. From the White House briefing room podium on Wednesday, Sanders declined to denounce the harassment of a CNN reporter during a Trump rally in Florida on Tuesday.

The president's social media outburst renewed discussion of the significance of his tweets.

Giuliani stressed that Trump was just issuing an opinion, though he also said the White House believes "the investigation should be brought to a close."

"I guess, if we were playing poker — we're not — put up or shut up, what do you got?" Giuliani said. "We have every reason to believe they don't have anything."

When pressed by reporters on how she tells the difference between a presidential order or an opinion, Sanders said Trump makes his intentions "pretty clear."

But the line between registering an opinion or governing by tweet has bedeviled the White House from the start, even when former press secretary Sean Spicer declared tweets could be official White House statements. Earlier this year, Trump blindsided the Defense Department when he tweeted out a transgender ban for the military, prompting the Pentagon to slow walk the program.

Mueller already is interested in some of Trump's tweets to the extent they raise obstruction of justice concerns. Though experts believe obstruction by tweet is possible, prosecutors have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a particular act got in the way of an investigation and that the person who did it intended to obstruct.

The president's tweets on Wednesday were greeted warily on Capitol Hill, with most lawmakers, regardless of party, urging Trump to let the probe run its course.

No. 3 Senate GOP leader John Thune of South Dakota said, "The idea that they should truncate it doesn't make sense to me." Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut went much further, declaring: "There is now highly credible evidence that the president of the United States is committing obstruction of justice in real time, right before our eyes."

Associated Press writer Mark Sherman in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Miller at <http://twitter.com/@zekejmilller>

Social media plays whack-a-mole with Russia interference

By MATT O'BRIEN and RYAN NAKASHIMA, AP Technology Writers

Facebook is spending heavily to avoid a repeat of the Russian interference that played out on its service in 2016, bringing on thousands of human moderators and advanced artificial intelligence systems to weed out fake accounts and foreign propaganda campaigns.

But it may never get the upper hand. Its adversaries are wily, more adept at camouflaging themselves and apparently aren't always detectable by Facebook's much-vaunted AI. They employ better operational security, constantly test Facebook's countermeasures and then exploit whatever holes they find.

"They've got lots of very good, smart technical people, who are assessing the situation all the time and gaming the system," said Mike Posner, a former U.S. diplomat who directs New York University's Stern Center for Business and Human Rights.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 32 of 46

With the U.S. midterm elections approaching and renewed scrutiny on Capitol Hill, Facebook revealed this week that it has uncovered and removed 32 apparently fake accounts and pages. The accounts appear designed to manipulate Americans' political opinions using tactics similar to those adopted ahead of the 2016 presidential election on social-media services, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr and Reddit.

This time, however, whoever is responsible is doing a better job hiding their tracks. They are buying ads with U.S. or Canadian dollars, not rubles, and using virtual private networks and other methods to look more like people logging in from U.S. locations.

"Offensive organizations improve their techniques once they have been uncovered," Facebook Chief Security Officer Alex Stamos wrote in a blog post Tuesday. That also makes it harder to know who Facebook's current adversaries are.

"Because the 2016 operation was widely seen as a success, it means a number of other players are likely entering the field," said Thomas Rid, a professor of strategic studies at the Johns Hopkins University who is writing a book about 20th century disinformation efforts.

Much like during the Cold War — when Soviet agents once pretended to be the Ku Klux Klan to stoke racial division — the strategy remains to "strengthen the fringes, boosting the far right extremists and far left extremists at the same time," Rid said.

Facebook has not said who's responsible for the latest influence campaign. The fake accounts, however, resemble those created from 2014 through 2016 by the Internet Research Agency, a so-called troll farm based in St. Petersburg, Russia. In February, U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller indicted 13 people associated with the IRA for plotting to disrupt the 2016 election.

The Atlantic Council, a Washington-based think tank that works with Facebook to analyze disinformation around elections worldwide, analyzed eight of the 32 pages and accounts a day before Facebook shut them down. While researchers found the pages left "few clues to their identities" compared to Russian accounts Facebook shut down in April, they noticed that more posts avoided English text in favor of memes or other graphics.

Such text can yield telltale grammatical errors common to Russian speakers. Some cropped up in posts that used text, such as conjugation mistakes between singular and plural verb forms and the misuse of articles like "a" and "the."

The Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab found many of the accounts were similar to IRA pages in their approach, tactics, language and content — in particular, the targeting of specific demographics like feminists, blacks, Latin Americans, and anti-Trump activists.

"It is becoming clearer that IRA activity represents just a small fraction of the total Russian effort on social media," said Democratic Sen. Mark Warner, speaking Wednesday at a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing. "In reality, the IRA operatives were just the incompetent ones who made it easy to get caught."

Experts, meanwhile, warn that Facebook's AI tools aren't a panacea. The tools can help human moderators identify posts that warrant a closer look, but they can't do the job themselves.

"A couple thousand moderators are all going to have slightly different criteria that they spot," said Joanna Bryson, a computer scientist at the University of Bath. "It's not quite as easy to sneak by as it is with a single algorithm."

Miles Brundage, a research fellow at Oxford University's Future of Humanity Institute, says any Facebook AI is in for a "cat and mouse game of evasion and detection" with adversaries who can try different techniques until they find something that works.

Facebook, which last year said IRA-connected accounts generated 80,000 posts that could have reached 126 million people, isn't the only social-media network that's been targeted by Russians. Twitter told Congress last October that it shut down more than 2700 accounts linked to the IRA, but only after they put out 1.4 million election-related tweets.

Google likewise said it found two accounts linked to the Russian group that bought almost \$5,000 worth of ads during the 2016 election, as well as 18 YouTube channels likely backed by Russian agents.

For the moment, however, Facebook is alone in disclosing additional problems. Google did not imme-

diately respond when contacted to see if it had discovered any further influence efforts. Twitter had no comment, and in a statement, Reddit dodged the question, saying only that it has always had measures in place to "prevent or limit" malicious actions.

In general, tech companies have been reluctant to share everything — or anything — they find with the public, even as they work behind the scenes with law enforcement and intelligence officials.

Judge raps prosecutors over testimony on Manafort's luxuries

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort personally directed millions of dollars in international wire transfers to pay for high-end suits and more than \$3 million in improvements at his various houses, witnesses testified Wednesday on the second day of his financial fraud trial.

The testimony was aimed at bolstering the prosecution's argument that Manafort hid millions of dollars in income from the IRS and used the funds for a lavish lifestyle. The witness accounts were also intended to contradict Manafort's lawyers, who have signaled they will pin blame for any illegal conduct on his longtime deputy, Rick Gates.

The prosecution's focus on Manafort's personal finances — at times laid out in painstaking detail — underscored the vast amount of documents accumulated by special counsel Robert Mueller's team in their case against the longtime political consultant. But it also tried the patience of U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III, who repeatedly scolded the government's attorneys for what he said was excessive and unnecessary information.

Ellis, who warned prosecutors against using the word "oligarchs" to describe wealthy Ukrainians, several times admonished them for spending so much time documenting Manafort's extravagant lifestyle.

It's not a crime to be wealthy, he noted. And the pejorative term "oligarchs" and evidence of home renovations aren't necessarily relevant to the charges in question, he added.

"The government doesn't want to prosecute somebody because they wear nice clothes, do they?" Ellis said amid testimony that Manafort had spent more than \$900,000 on clothing from a boutique retailer where he was one of only about 40 clients. "Let's move on."

Ellis even called out lawyers from both sides for rolling their eyes.

The trial is the first courtroom test for the special counsel, who was tasked last year with investigating Russia's efforts to sway the 2016 election and to determine whether the Trump campaign was involved. So far, Manafort is the lone person to stand trial as a result of the ongoing probe, even though the charges of bank fraud and tax evasion are unrelated to possible collusion.

Still, the trial has pulled back the curtain on the former lobbyist who steered Trump's election efforts for a time, including descriptions of Manafort's \$15,000 jacket made of ostrich and the more than \$6 million in cash he put toward real estate. One witness, Maximillian Katzman, testified that Manafort spent more than \$900,000 at his boutique retailer in New York. He said Manafort was the only business client of his who paid via international wire transfer.

An FBI agent described the July 2017 raid on Manafort's Virginia condominium, saying he knocked multiple times before entering with a key and finding Manafort inside. The searches described by agent Matthew Mikuska found expensively tailored suits and documents related to other luxury items allegedly bought by Manafort, including two silk rugs bought for \$160,000 paid from offshore accounts.

But when prosecutors introduced photos of Manafort's high-end condo and expensive suits, Ellis interrupted so as to limit the growing list of evidence jurors would have to consider.

"All this document shows is that Mr. Manafort had a lavish lifestyle," Ellis said. "It isn't relevant."

On the term "oligarchs," Ellis said use of the word implied that Manafort was associating with "despicable people and therefore he's despicable."

"That's not the American way," the judge said.

Prosecutor Greg Andres argued that documenting Manafort's spending for the jury was important to the case.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 34 of 46

"Judge, this is not an effort to prove Mr. Manafort lived lavishly," Andres said. "It's evidence of his income." Ellis seemed to grow impatient after being told that attorneys on both sides were seen rolling their eyes after leaving the bench or in response to his rulings. The lawyers' facial expressions, Ellis said, appeared to show them thinking: "Why do we have to put up with this idiot judge?"

The proceedings clearly caught the attention of President Donald Trump, who defended his 2016 hiring of Manafort and suggested Manafort was being treated worse than mobster Al Capone. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the president indeed felt Manafort had been treated unfairly.

"Why didn't government tell me that he was under investigation," Trump tweeted Wednesday. "These old charges have nothing to do with Collusion - a Hoax!"

Manafort's attorneys are putting the blame on Gates, Manafort's business associate.

Gates was expected to be the government's star witness at trial, but prosecutor Uzo Asonye said he could not say with certainty whether Gates would or would not testify. He later clarified to say that that uncertainty applies to any witness, not just Gates, as the prosecution team assesses the pace of the trial and the evidence it needs.

Asonye also told Ellis that prosecutors expect to rest their case next week, noting that they are "ahead of schedule."

Testimony was to resume Thursday morning with witnesses including bookkeepers and accountants.

Manafort has a second trial scheduled for September in the District of Columbia. It involves allegations that he acted as an unregistered foreign agent for Ukrainian interests and made false statements to the U.S. government.

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

Police: Bush's doctor's killing may have been act of revenge

By JUAN A. LOZANO, Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A man suspected of killing one of former President George H.W. Bush's doctors may have been seeking revenge for his mother, who died on the doctor's operating table more than 20 years ago, authorities said Wednesday.

Joseph James Pappas, 62, should be considered armed, dangerous and possibly suicidal, Houston police Chief Art Acevedo said at a news conference Wednesday afternoon.

"There was a lot of planning that went into this. There was a lot of planning and, sadly, some skill," Acevedo said of the July 20 attack on Dr. Mark Hausknecht. Hausknecht was gunned down while riding his bike to work at Houston Methodist Hospital, which is part of the busy Texas Medical Center. Authorities say the shooter rode past Hausknecht before turning around and firing.

A tip on Tuesday led police to suspect Pappas, the chief said, though he didn't elaborate as to the nature of the tip.

Acevedo said Pappas hadn't been seen in 36 to 48 hours. He said the last anyone had heard from Pappas was in a Tuesday morning text message in which Pappas wrote that he was going to kill himself.

Acevedo said police searched his home at 4 a.m. Wednesday and found evidence that ties Pappas to the killing, but he declined to elaborate as to the nature of the evidence.

The chief said Pappas is very fit, and that he's likely getting around on his 10-speed bicycle, which he rides "extensively and almost exclusively."

Friends and family have described Hausknecht as a humble and generous man who was adored by his patients, volunteered in his community and cared about the environment.

Hausknecht was also an avid cyclist and rode his bike to work each morning, as he lived less than 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from his office.

In 2000, Hausknecht treated Bush for an irregular heartbeat after the ex-president complained about lightheadedness.

Neighbor Jim Herd said he has known Pappas all of his life, having attended the same high school and church as him.

Herd described Pappas as a nice, quiet man who kept to himself and had few close friends.

"He was a loner," he said.

Pappas' house, in which no one was found Wednesday, is in an older, established neighborhood in southwest Houston. Most of the homes are single-story ranch homes with neatly manicured lawns.

Indeed, Pappas kept a neat yard, Herd said, and he saw Pappas mowing his lawn a week after the doctor was slain.

The house was home to Pappas's parents and their family from the time Pappas was born, Herd said, adding that Pappas inherited the house after his father's death about 10 years ago. Since then, Pappas had lived there alone.

Herd said he and Pappas had few words but would wave at each other in passing — the last time on Saturday, when Pappas waved at him as Herd washed his car in his driveway.

Herd said he does not remember ever hearing Pappas speak bitterly about his mother's death or place blame for it. But "it hit him hard," he said, and Pappas stopped attending church for a long time afterward.

After police released photos from surveillance video of the suspect in Hausknecht's slaying, Herd said he thought it resembled Pappas but brushed the notion aside.

"Never in a million years would I have thought it was him," he said.

Follow Juan A. Lozano on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/juanlozano70>

Bulldozer drivers fighting fires get 'a rush' but also risk

By JONATHAN J. COOPER, Associated Press

REDDING, Calif. (AP) — Not all firefighters carry a hose or shovel.

The adrenaline junkies who steer heavy bulldozers across steep ridges face serious hazards, from smoke and flames but also from unsteady dirt and steep terrain that can flip them over. The deaths of two bulldozer operators battling California wildfires in July highlighted the dangers confronting these less visible firefighters.

Braden Varney, 36, was clearing a fire line near Yosemite National Park on July 14 when his vehicle overturned and rolled down a ridge. Don Ray Smith, 81, was overtaken by wildfire near Redding last week.

Drivers of so-called dozers say they are acutely aware of the dangers and regularly find themselves in sticky situations. They do it for the thrill, the challenge, the good money and the opportunity to make a difference saving people's lives and homes.

"To me, it's the closest thing to war without getting shot at," said Dustin Westfall, a dozer operator working for a private contractor on the fire near Redding that's killed six people. "It's pandemonium ... it's wild out there. You're getting to see 200- to 300-foot flame lengths. It's a whole different world. It's a rush."

Dozers are an integral part of the battle against large blazes but are rarely seen in dramatic images of flaming trees and raining ash.

They use roughly 10-foot (3-meter) blades to push aside shrubs, brush, grass and even trees so the advancing flames meet bare dirt and have nothing to consume. Ideally, the lack of fuel will stop the fire's progress. At the very least, it generally will slow down the flames.

Dozers usually work in small groups, but sometimes alone, in extremely steep terrain. Soft soils or hard granite can cause them to slide. It's hard to see because of smoke and the dirt they kick up. Fire moves faster than heavy machines, so shifting winds can send flames toward bulldozers.

Because dozers can get into places no other equipment can reach, the drivers sometimes find themselves far away from backup, relying on radio traffic and aircraft to tell them what the fire is doing.

Some work close to flames. Others build "contingency lines" farther back to act as a backstop if the first line is breached.

"They're a special breed of guys," said Cliff Allen, president of the union representing California Depart-

ment of Forestry and Fire Protection personnel, including dozer operators. "The job that they do, it takes a special person, because they're going up and down really steep terrain."

Dozer operators looking to work directly for Cal Fire, the state's firefighting agency, must have 500 hours of experience just to be considered. Privately hired operators have various experience levels, but all must complete an annual course in fire line safety.

Authorities have released little information about how Varney and Smith died.

Their deaths come two years after a dozer trying to maneuver around a fire engine overturned near Big Sur and the operator was ejected. Another dozer operator was killed in the same region in 2007 when his rig rolled, causing him to hit his head on the wall of the cab, according to Cal Fire investigative reports.

The deaths have weighed heavily on dozer drivers busy with an active fire season across the Western United States — a reminder of the perils that await them on the fire line.

Dean Mullis, a childhood friend of Varney's and a fellow heavy equipment operator for Cal Fire, said Varney was devoted to his family and unfailingly generous.

"Braden would go to a fire, get covered in dirt, come home and play crocodile with his kids on his living room carpet," Mullis said. "He was a man's man, and he was a father first and foremost."

He came from a bulldozing family — his father was a dozer driver for Cal Fire, and the two started a grading and excavating business.

Smith, a bulldozer operator working for a private company on contract for the state, "always had some good laughs and good stories" and liked to sit outside his trailer drinking beer with friends, said Vaughn Hohing, who used to fight fires as a bulldozer operator and said he worked often with Smith.

When he wasn't fighting fires, Smith lived and worked on a horse ranch in Pollock Pines, east of Sacramento, repairing things, plowing snow and performing other maintenance. Smith had lots of experience working outdoors with heavy equipment.

At 81, Smith was one of the older guys working on fires, but dozer operators said it's common for people to work into their 60s and 70s. Fighting fire is a specialized skill, and while the pay is good, it's an expensive business to get into.

"If you're in a bad mood, go see Don," Hohing said. "You always felt better when you left."

Associated Press reporter Sophia Bollag contributed from Sacramento.

Follow AP's wildfire coverage: <https://apnews.com/tag/Wildfires>

Mexico plane hit sudden, violent storm before crash

By **CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN, Associated Press**

DURANGO, Mexico (AP) — It began with a strong burst of wind and pounding hail that pummeled the Aeromexico jetliner minutes after takeoff in northern Mexico then sent it smashing belly-down onto a field near the runway.

Frightened passengers scrambled to flee as flames and blinding black smoke erupted around them. Miraculously, all 103 on board survived the crash Tuesday.

On Wednesday, passengers described the terrifying sequence of events.

"It's not every day you kind of fall from the sky and live to tell about it," said Alberto Herrera, a 35-year-old webpage engineer from Chicago.

Jose Luis Corral, a 52-year-old business owner from Portland, Oregon, agreed.

"It's a good thing we're all alive," said Corral, who still wore a neck brace from injuries he suffered in the crash.

"It's so fast, terrifying to see all the people screaming," added Corral, who was one of four people who helped the plane's badly injured pilot escape the blaze. The pilot suffered a serious neck injury and remains hospitalized. Forty-eight others were also injured, and 22 remained hospitalized Wednesday.

Herrera said the skies were sunny as passengers boarded the flight from Durango to Mexico City Tuesday

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 37 of 46

afternoon and the violent storm seemed to come from nowhere.

"When we were sitting on the plane there was a little drizzle, but nothing to worry about. It was just a little light rain, super light, like barely hitting the windows," Herrera said.

But another passenger Ramin Parsa, 32, of Los Angeles, said the weather was ominous even before takeoff.

"The airplane actually was shaking before we even moved so I knew it was dangerous weather," he said. "I thought that we were going to have a delay until the weather clears up, but the pilot began to move so I thought that he knows what he is doing."

"I think it was a mistake by the pilot. He should not have taken off," Parsa said.

Durango state Gov. Jose Aispuro said it was too soon to speculate on the cause of the crash. Mechanical failure and human error could be factors, but certainly the weather wasn't favorable.

Herrera said the takeoff went bad, seemingly in an instant.

"You start gaining speed and as soon as you start taking off all of the sudden the plane starts struggling and it's getting hit with hail. The higher up we went into the storm, the heavier the hail got and more wind got to us," Herrera said.

"Then all of a sudden the plane starts rocking and it starts seriously, seriously moving around and then hitting the ground," he said. "We skidded and hit a second time and you saw the flames. ...You're like 'This might be bad.'"

Herrera braced for impact and yelled for others to do the same. The woman seated next to him was able to hold onto her toddler, though the little girl suffered some scratches and may have hit her head on a seat.

Officials said the impact ripped both engines off the Embraer 190 jetliner, and fire immediately broke out in the wings.

"My window turned red because of the flames," Parsa said. He said he tried to kick out a window but couldn't. He searched for an exit and at first couldn't find one because of all the smoke. Then suddenly he felt fresh air on his face. He was in front of the exit.

"Imagine you put 100 people in a room, in a dark room, pitch dark, filled with smoke and there's a small door, everybody's trying to find it. That's what the situation was," Parsa said.

At the back exit, Herrera said the emergency slide had deployed but the fuselage was at an odd angle, so it was unusable and people had to jump to the ground.

The passengers walked back across the muddy field to the end of runway and waited there for emergency vehicles.

Herrera said he was thankful to be alive.

"Me, I just came out of it with scratches. Other people are seriously injured," he said.

He credits both the pilot and the fact that the plane had not gained much altitude when the storm broke out for the good outcome.

"The pilot had to execute a maneuver correctly and then we hit the storm at its peak while we were going up, and not while we were up in the air," he said.

An Illinois priest was on the plane. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago said the Rev. Esequiel Sanchez suffered some injuries but was alert and resting.

Mexico's Transport Department said the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board was sending two investigators to assist in the investigation, and the plane's manufacturer will also participate.

The department did not immediately answer questions about whether the airport was equipped with a Low Level Wind Shear Alert System that can detect weather conditions like severe down drafts or microbursts.

Donor helping fraudsters, offshore bettors backs Trump

By JAKE PEARSON and JEFF HORWITZ, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — One customer was a debt collector that threatened to jail people if they didn't pay back loans that they never took out. Another was an offshore gambling operation that hid bets behind innocuous-sounding websites, including one dedicated to orange cats. A third was a phone-sex business

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 38 of 46

catering to men with diaper fetishes or fantasies of raping women.

Ahmad "Andy" Khawaja made his fortune in online payment processing for a host of companies, providing a key conduit in e-commerce for "high risk" merchants by helping route customers' credit card purchases to banks. And recently Khawaja has shared that wealth in the form of multimillion-dollar political donations, first to Hillary Clinton and then to Donald Trump.

But thousands of internal company documents obtained by The Associated Press reveal that Khawaja's company, Allied Wallet Inc., has profited from guiding dubious businesses past the gates of the banking system. The records, which include email conversations as well as business and financial documents, show Allied Wallet executives helped deploy sham websites and dummy companies to hide these businesses' tracks, even in cases where Allied Wallet's own staff deemed the underlying business activities to be "very, very illegal."

The company's actions in these cases flout bank policies, credit card network rules and potentially U.S. laws designed to prevent money laundering. In one instance, a company official complained to Khawaja that a colleague had provided "specific instructions on how to set up and operate an illegal gaming operation online."

Khawaja and a company lawyer didn't address a detailed list of questions from the AP about Allied Wallet's business, as well as Khawaja's political giving, for over a month.

This week the Los Angeles-based company's marketing director, A.J. Almeda, said in a statement that "any accusations of illicit or prohibited activities are misleading and categorically false." Almeda called the AP's line of inquiry "a political hit job due to the Allied Wallet's contribution to President Donald Trump's inauguration and support of his tax cut agenda."

The Lebanese-born Khawaja gave more than \$4 million to Clinton's failed presidential campaign and other Democrats, then began extending his largesse to Republicans after a lunch with Republican fundraiser Elliott Broidy two weeks after Trump clinched the presidency.

Within days of that lunch, Khawaja met Trump at a \$5,000-per-person transition fundraiser in Manhattan. Soon after he contributed \$1 million to his inaugural committee, eventually earning himself a photo with the president inside the Oval Office.

The documents reviewed by the AP provide an unprecedented look behind the scenes of Khawaja's company, which claims to process billions of dollars a year in online transactions.

They also come against the backdrop of a previous run-in with federal authorities over processing illegal online gambling proceeds: In 2010, Khawaja and his company were forced to give up \$13 million in a civil forfeiture stemming from a sprawling FBI probe into the online poker industry.

"The reason they had to forfeit the money was they were acting on behalf of an illegal gambling outfit," said Roy Pollitt, a former FBI special agent who worked the case. "Based upon the agreement that was made years ago, it's troubling to hear there might be similar behavior still occurring."

Allied Wallet's past hasn't stopped Washington from accepting Khawaja's political generosity.

In all, Khawaja, his company and its executives have contributed at least \$6 million to politicians and political organizations since late 2015, according to an AP review of disclosure reports.

Since Trump's inauguration, the company and its executives have given nearly \$1 million more to Republican candidates and committees, including \$200,000 from Khawaja to Rep. Ron DeSantis, a Trump-backed candidate running for governor in Florida.

Donations to Democrats include nearly \$2 million to the Democratic National Committee, along with a who's who of top candidates, including Missouri Sen. Claire McCaskill.

In June, the Senate minority leader, New York Democrat Chuck Schumer, appointed Khawaja as one of nine members on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. In April, Charlie Kirk, the outspoken head of the pro-Trump super PAC Turning Point USA, touted Khawaja on Twitter as a beneficiary of Trump's tax plan.

Nobody in Washington, Democrat or Republican, appears to have questioned how Khawaja earned his money, and what exactly Khawaja might hope to gain from his political giving is not entirely clear. The records reviewed by the AP show that Khawaja has pursued foreign business deals, including an invest-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 39 of 46

ment by a United Arab Emirates-controlled wealth fund, a prospective deal with an Iranian bank and a potential business arrangement with Lebanon. Some U.S. senators he has supported are on the banking committee, which writes laws governing his industry.

'IT JUST SCARED ME SO I PAID IT'

Last August, the Trump administration ended a Justice Department effort called Operation Choke Point that investigated banks and other financial institutions working in industries such as payday lending that carry high risks of fraud.

That kind of policy change could be helpful for Allied Wallet customers like Stark Law LLC of Chicago, an aggressive debt collector that posed as a law firm and threatened tens of thousands of Americans into giving them money — often for payday loans they never even signed up for.

That's what happened to Mary Liz Noguerras when a Stark debt collector called her at work in late 2015 and threatened to take her to court if she didn't immediately pay \$890 to cover an outstanding payday loan. Noguerras didn't recall owing any money but was frightened by the collector's abrasiveness, so she offered up her credit card number over the phone.

"It just scared me so I paid it," said Noguerras, who lives in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, with her husband and their two children, one of whom has special needs.

A few months later, in March 2016, Federal Trade Commission regulators and Illinois prosecutors charged Stark's owners with running a massive fraud operation, eventually forcing them out of the debt collection business entirely, issuing a \$47 million judgment against them and making them personally forfeit \$9 million — along with a 1-kilogram gold bar — to settle the claims.

Eight months before Stark was busted, Allied Wallet set up credit card processing for a web of online merchants that supposedly sold home goods but actually were owned by payday loan-related companies with names like Clearwater Lending, the records reviewed by the AP show. The arrangement included some indications of suspicious activity: The websites lacked inventory, were unable to collect payments and failed to correctly spell words like "towels."

Whenever a bank caught the obvious misconduct, Allied Wallet would shut down the site and notify the bank of its actions — but then route the same payments through a new fake company, the records show. In just one month in late 2015, consumers filed hundreds of fraud complaints with their credit card companies about bills from Stark and a web of other front companies, the documents show.

In October 2015, just three months after Allied Wallet began processing for Stark Associates Ltd., a UK shell company that handled the Stark debt collections, a risk analyst warned Allied Wallet about questionable transactions on the account, examining in detail the sale of a yellow curtain valance supposedly shipped to a nonexistent address: 123 Main Street in Townsville, New York.

Not only had one of the banks processing Stark's payments — OCBC Wing Hang Bank in Macau — noticed multiple fraud complaints on the account, the analyst wrote, but also the websites on the account itself were fishy, designed exactly like another site that Allied had recently shut down for engaging in "transaction laundering," according to the email.

A month later, the risk analyst followed up with top Allied employees, this time certain Stark was not legitimate: "In case it is of interest to you, we have now received a chargeback case that confirms that the merchant STARK, which you already closed, was indeed misrepresenting its business and offering loan services instead of home decor," the analyst wrote.

But the risk analyst was mistaken.

Allied Wallet hadn't stopped processing for Stark and continued to do so until February 2016, one month before regulators busted the company, the emails show.

The account itself was moved to a related company called Rolling Plains Ltd., according to a November 2015 email to Allied Wallet's chief operating officer, Moe Diab, from Tom Wells, an intermediary who brought Allied the Stark accounts in exchange for a percentage of the business.

"They never stopped processing," Wells wrote. "In fact you made payment to new acct this week."

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 40 of 46

Regulators named Gaurav Mohindra as a key player in the Stark debt-collection scheme. He told the AP he had never heard of Allied Wallet. Incorporation records show he was the director of Stark Associates Ltd., the UK corporation Allied Wallet created for the supposed home decor website jvalances.com that was used to disguise Nogueras' \$890 fake debt payment when it was passed along to Visa.

Wells did not return phone and email messages seeking comment.

'I NEED YOU TO HELP ME HELP YOU'

With most of the questionable customers Allied Wallet took on, the documents show, the company appeared to seek plausible deniability.

First, Allied Wallet helped businesses create dormant shell corporations in the United Kingdom to access its network of friendly banks from Malta to Macau, the records show. Then it coached clients on how to curate their websites to fool investigators performing compliance checks for banks and credit card companies, the documents reveal.

"Remove the video of the woman being tortured in the top left corner of the home page," Amy Ringler, the company's vice president of operations, wrote to one pornography client in October 2012, noting the video would violate Mastercard's standards.

Once websites passed muster, company officials would then route those businesses' incoming payments to banks willing to accept them. If a merchant racked up too many fraud complaints — or a bank caught on to suspicious behavior — Allied Wallet would sometimes simply shift the account to a new institution to start fresh. In exchange, Allied Wallet charged hefty rates and fees as a processor of last resort for especially risky clientele, the records show.

These merchants were then mixed in with others that Allied Wallet sent to banks which, though considered in the industry to be "high-risk," weren't necessarily legally problematic. Among them: clients peddling multilevel marketing deals, IT help desk services and natural supplements, the records show.

Not all customers were happy with Allied Wallet's insistence on holding funds for long stretches to cover expected chargeback and fraud fees, but the nature of legally dubious businesses prevented many from finding an alternative processor.

"Why would anyone use a high priced processor unless they have a questionable product?" the frustrated CEO of an unusual Irish company that specializes in selling phony ATM receipts, forged hotel bills and other fabricated documents wrote in a March 2016 email to company officials. "If I'm going to go to the bother of pretending I am a clean green business, then I'll use a payment system that gets me more of the money in a quicker manner."

To help the now-defunct website www.phonesexcoffeehouse.com get its payments processed by American Express — which the credit card company wouldn't otherwise accept — Allied Wallet worked with the company to disguise its true business, the records showed.

The website charged callers in the U.S. \$2 a minute to talk about various fetishes or engage in elaborate rape fantasies with female accomplices, according to an archived webpage.

To coordinate their arrangement, an Allied Wallet salesman used a private email address to communicate with Donna Jones, one of the sex line's owners: "I'll help you out but I need you to help me help you, notice the email I'm sending this from."

To avoid raising the suspicions of American Express, Jones and Allied Wallet funneled the payments through another business Jones owned that had nothing to do with sex: a home-cleaning company called WKPS Group, according to the records.

"We will do whatever is asked, and keep our mouths shut," Jones wrote. "You can make a lot of money with us, I will do as you say."

Just 45 minutes after the arrangement started, Allied Wallet's chief compliance officer issued an urgent internal warning based on a tip: The cleaning company had already been identified by a rival processor as a front for phone-sex transactions.

The November 2016 warning went unanswered. Some company officials knew the cleaning business

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 41 of 46

was a front because they already were using it that way.

American Express declined to address Allied Wallet or the records detailing how it processed funds for the defunct sex site. In a statement, a spokesman, Andrew Johnson, said the company could require a processor to cancel processing for merchants that break the law, violate its rules or damage its brand.

Jones could not be reached for comment. She did not return a message sent to the email addresses she used to correspond with Allied Wallet.

'VERY, VERY ILLEGAL'

The records show that Allied Wallet also took extraordinary steps to disguise how it processed payments for online gamblers — a bold foray back into an industry that just years earlier had involved Khawaja in an FBI investigation.

To settle claims from a 2010 federal probe involving the website PokerStars, Khawaja enlisted former FBI Director Louis Freeh to negotiate with federal prosecutors in New York and write anti-money laundering policies for Allied Wallet, according to court records.

Since then, Khawaja appears to have avoided processing payments for U.S. bettors, the records show. But the documents show that his company has accepted and obscured international business from GVC Holdings PLC, one of the most prominent gambling outfits in the online industry, often in places where online gambling is prohibited or highly regulated.

For example, Allied Wallet handled processing for a company behind the now-defunct, bare-bones website totembazaar.com, which claimed to sell e-books and told credit card companies that it was selling miscellaneous general merchandise.

It wasn't.

The website was a front, listed in 2012 business paperwork for LLJH Ltd., a company owned by Elizabeth Cullen, then a top corporate officer at GVC Holdings PLC, according to the records.

The records obtained by the AP show that top GVC executives collaborated with Allied Wallet and a trusted middleman to hide gambling operations involving currencies from countries where online betting is illegal or highly regulated, including Turkey, Brazil and Mexico.

Just before Christmas 2012, Jim Humberstone, GVC's head of operations, worked with Wells, the intermediary who would later bring the fraudulent Stark debt collectors to Allied Wallet, the emails show.

The records show that Wells passed GVC's information along to Khawaja and other top Allied Wallet company officials, who placed the business in an Allied Wallet account called Bluestar 7. That account handled payments for totembazaar, along with the site radialmarkets.com, which GVC claimed was owned by a company called JHLL Ltd.

"I'm concerned about the descriptor containing 'GVC' could we remove this and have 'Radial' and 'Totem' alone?" Lisa Lupi, then the head of GVC's risk department, wrote in an email to Wells.

Allied Wallet made the changes and processed payments for the gambling sites, switching the Bluestar 7 account every week between two banks, Borgun in Iceland and Postbank in Germany.

In February 2016, Wells wrote to top Allied Wallet officials to inquire about leftover reserves in the Bluestar gambling accounts on behalf of GVC, noting they were handling Brazilian, Mexican or Turkish currencies, according to the email.

Online betting is highly regulated in Mexico and Brazil. In Turkey, it is prohibited altogether; an internal Allied Wallet guide to global casino regulations described it as "very, very illegal" there.

Humberstone and GVC's head of corporate communications did not respond to emails and phone calls over several weeks seeking comment. Lupi and Cullen didn't return emailed messages.

Allied Wallet's chief operating officer, Diab, said in a brief phone interview that he didn't know what GVC was and denied the company transacted for it.

"We don't do gambling at all," he told the AP, directing further questions to Khawaja and a company lawyer.

Khawaja and the lawyer did not respond to specific questions from the AP about the company's busi-

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 42 of 46

ness practices.

As recently as February 2017, Allied Wallet operated as many as two dozen Bluestar accounts, recycling old companies to host websites that served as fronts for gambling operations, the records show. The sites could be created as fast as they shut down.

"This is the URL that was closed the other day because the bank said the transactions were coming from a gaming website," Ringler, the Allied Wallet vice president of operations, wrote to Wells in May 2014 regarding a site called plusfigurines.com.

Plusfigurines.com was being processed via an Allied Wallet account called Bluestar 18, another account dedicated to gambling. But to keep the business flowing, Allied Wallet needed new fronts to disguise the transactions.

"I need a different website, descriptor and company from you," Ringler wrote Wells in an email reviewed by the AP.

The risks from the gambling business weren't lost on company officials, the documents show.

In May 2015, the company's chief compliance officer emailed the top Allied Wallet executives that he had personally verified a company salesman giving "specific instructions on how to set up and operate an illegal gaming operation online."

That prompted Khawaja to interject: "Guys, stop this... Come on."

Nine months later, Wells, the trusted Allied Wallet intermediary, notified top company officials that he would be meeting with GVC in London and wanted to know what procedure to follow to open a new set of disguised gambling accounts, according to a February 2016 email.

"Can we create website and eu Corp as before or has anything changed?" Wells asked.

The response from Diab, Allied Wallet's chief operating officer: "Set up will be the same."

Horwitz reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Chad Day and editor Ted Bridis in Washington contributed to this report.

Corporate donations are new test for Democratic candidates

By LISA LERER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — When an audience member at a town hall asked California Sen. Kamala Harris earlier this year to reject corporate donations, her answer was decidedly non-committal. "Well, that depends," she said.

"Wrong answer," the questioner responded, shrugging his shoulders.

Harris wouldn't be wrong twice: Less than a month later, she reversed herself, telling the hosts of a morning radio show that she'd no longer accept checks from corporate political action committees.

"Money has now really tipped the balance between an individual having equal power in an election to a corporation," Harris said on "The Breakfast Club," a program on a New York hip hop and R&B radio station.

Long considered a peripheral issue in midterm elections, money in politics is emerging as a new litmus test for Democratic candidates. In ads, stump speeches and debates, scores of politicians are pledging to reject corporate PAC donations. Their ranks include a handful of Democrats, including Harris, who are widely rumored to be exploring presidential bids: New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Joining them is Vermont's independent senator, Bernie Sanders.

In total, more than federal 170 candidates have said they're not accepting corporate PAC donations, according to a tally by the group End Citizens United, a political action committee dedicated to campaign finance reform.

The groundswell of opposition to corporate PACs has developed quickly as Democrats aim to tap into the anti-establishment sentiment that President Donald Trump successfully harnessed in 2016. When Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., started the "NO PAC Caucus" in July 2017, only two members joined his cause — Rep. Beto O'Rourke, who's now challenging Sen. Ted Cruz in Texas, and Democratic Rep. Jared Polis, the party's gubernatorial nominee in Colorado.

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 43 of 46

"There wasn't a lot of interest. I was told it would unnecessarily ruffle feathers," said Khanna. "But now it has really caught people's imagination across the country."

The pledge may be more symbolic than financial: In a world of dark money and super PACs, corporate donations make up only a small percentage of the total dollars flooding into the political system.

"Corporate PACs making contributions is not where the major campaign finance action is these days," said Rick Hasen, an election law expert at the University of California at Irvine. "If you asked me to name the top 10 things wrong with campaign finance, I'm not sure corporate PAC money would be among them."

Democrats have had a complicated relationship with corporate cash since Citizens United, the controversial 2010 Supreme Court ruling that cleared the way for the flood of anonymous corporate dollars into politics. While the party railed against the ruling, most Democrats have continued to court wealthy liberal donors and big business.

But the 2016 presidential election showed that voter frustration with influence of money in politics may have become a powerful force in politics. Trump tapped into anger with a "rigged system," as did Sanders, who fueled a robust primary campaign against Hillary Clinton while largely eschewing big corporate dollars. While the two Democratic presidential candidates largely shared policies on regulating money in politics, advocates argue that Sanders' long-standing policy of rejecting corporate donations helped him own the issue.

Nearly all Americans — 96 percent — blamed money in politics as a cause for some or a lot of the dysfunction in the U.S. political system, according to a Washington Post-University of Maryland poll conducted last October.

The no-corporate PAC pledge is a fairly cheap way for candidates to signal their campaign finance bona fides, particularly for challengers who tend to get less from those groups. Corporate PACs are committees largely funded by individual employee contributions — not the company itself — and have a \$5,000 per candidate, per election limit.

Only a dozen candidates have rejected all PAC money, according to End Citizens United, meaning that the vast majority still accept donations from leadership, labor union and special interest group PACs. They don't plan to return corporate contribution or reject the support of super PACs, which can raise and spend unlimited amounts to help candidates.

In the second quarter of 2018, 32 of the Democratic candidates taking the pledge outraised their incumbent opponents, according to End Citizens United.

"It's a smart political move," says Trevor Potter, a former Republican chairman of the Federal Election Commission who has criticized the Citizens United ruling. "You're not giving up much by forswearing PAC contributions and you are able to make the political point that you are opposed to the Washington influence buying system."

For senators, corporate PACs make up a relatively small amount of their total fundraising. Harris, who won her first term in 2016, has raised nearly \$19.7 million. Only about \$900,000, or 4.59 percent, came from PAC contributions, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan research group.

Democrats argue that symbolism matters, particularly given their lack of legislative power in Washington. Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., who announced last week that he'd no longer accept corporate PAC money, acknowledged that corporate dollars don't make up a big part of his campaign fundraising.

"I just have come to the realization over time that as long as the Republicans are in charge, they're not going to move forward with any of the significant campaign finance reform," he said. "Maybe this is a small way, on your own, to make a difference."

The issue has gained traction in part due to the work of organizations like End Citizens United, a Democratic advocacy group that formed in 2015. It's running \$4 million in television ads attacking Republican candidates in Montana and Nevada for accepting corporate donations. The group argues that every dollar matters in close races: Democratic congressional candidates typically lose about \$20,000 in donations and senators about a million dollars, according to the group.

"But this isn't just about dollar amounts," says Tiffany Muller, the president of End Citizens United. "This

is about taking action to show voters that you're on their side."

Republicans, too, see new opportunities in the no-PAC push. On Monday, Cruz attacked O'Rourke for accepting contributions collected by a political action committee that backs candidates who support a two-state solution in the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

"Rep. Robert 'Beto' O'Rourke travels all over Texas claiming that PACs are corrupt, and he's made his alleged rejection of PAC influence a cornerstone of his campaign," said Cruz campaign spokeswoman Emily Miller. "But now we know that O'Rourke's actions have not matched his words."

O'Rourke's campaign said the PAC did not contribute directly to his campaign but bundled hundreds of individual contributions. "What is important to know is that no special interests, no political action committee, no corporation has the ability to purchase influence or access," he told reporters at a town hall on Monday evening.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump's grocery store ID statement unfounded

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is justifying his call for voter ID cards by saying photo identification is already a universal requirement in the marketplace. As anyone who frequents a grocery store knows, it's not.

A look at his comments on the subject Tuesday and his press secretary's attempt to explain them Wednesday:

TRUMP: "We believe that only American citizens should vote in American elections, which is why the time has come for voter ID like everything else. If you go out and you want to buy groceries, you need a picture on a card, you need ID. You go out, you want to buy anything, you need ID, you need your picture." — remarks Tuesday at Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa.

THE FACTS: No photo is required to purchase items at retail stores with cash or to make routine purchases with credit or debit cards.

Identifications are required to purchase limited items such as alcohol, cigarettes or cold medicine and in rapidly declining situations in which a customer opts to pay with a personal check.

According to the National Grocers Association's most recent data, the use of checks as a percentage of total transactions dropped from 33 percent in 2000 to 6 percent in 2015, due in part to the popularity of debit cards, which use PIN codes. The group's members are independent food retailers, family-owned or privately held, both large and small.

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS: "He's not saying every time he went in; he said when you go to the grocery store." — press briefing Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Actually, Trump did claim, erroneously, that photo IDs are required whenever "you want to buy anything," not only in limited cases.

Asked when Trump last bought groceries, Sanders responded: "I'm not sure. I'm not sure why that matters, either."

SANDERS: "The president wants to see the integrity of our election systems upheld, and that's the purpose of his comments. He wants to make sure that anybody that's voting is somebody that should be voting."

THE FACTS: This concern, often voiced by Trump as well, stems from an unsupported theory that voter fraud has shaped election outcomes.

The actual number of fraud cases is very small, and the type that voter IDs are designed to prevent — voter impersonation at the ballot box — is virtually nonexistent.

In court cases that have invalidated some ID laws as having discriminatory effects, election officials could barely cite a case in which a person was charged with in-person voting fraud.

Democrats have opposed voter-ID laws as unnecessarily restricting access for nonwhites and young people, who tend to vote Democratic. Republicans accuse Democrats of wanting noncitizens to be able

to vote in U.S. elections.

Neither Sanders nor Trump has offered evidence of consequential fraud. Sanders said Wednesday that "even if there are 10 people that are voting illegally, it shouldn't happen."

Associated Press writer Marcy Gordon in Washington contributed to this report.

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apne.ws/2kbn8bd>

Follow @APFactCheck on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APFactCheck>

Asian markets extend losses on China-US trade jitters

By **ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer**

BANGKOK (AP) — Share benchmarks in Asia are sliding, tracking losses overnight on Wall Street, where investors sold industrial stocks following reports that the Trump administration is considering a higher tax rate on Chinese imports.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 index sank 0.7 percent to 22,596.31 while the Shanghai Composite index lost 2.5 percent to 2,755.22. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index dropped 2.4 percent to 27,652.85 and the Kospi in South Korea shed 1.3 percent to 2,277.53. Australia's S&P ASX 200 skidded 0.3 percent to 6,259.40. Shares also fell in Southeast Asia and Taiwan.

APPLE RECORD: Already the most valuable company in the U.S., Apple was the biggest gainer of any S&P 500 stock Wednesday, finishing at another record high. The tech giant said the average selling price for the iPhone jumped 20 percent in its latest quarter and its third-quarter profit and sales both surpassed analyst projections. Apple's third fiscal quarter is usually its weakest. The company's forecast for fourth-quarter revenue also topped Wall Street estimates. Apple surged 5.9 percent to \$201.50. That gives the company a value of \$973 billion, based on its latest quarterly filing.

WALL STREET: The tech-heavy Nasdaq picked up 0.5 percent to 7,707.29. But other benchmarks were lower overall after the Trump administration said it might put a 25 percent tax on \$200 billion in imports from China. It had proposed a 10 percent tax in July, shortly after imposing a 25 percent tax on \$34 billion worth of imports. China again threatened to retaliate. The S&P 500 index shed 0.1 percent to 2,813.36. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.3 percent to 25,333.82 and the Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks lost 0.1 percent to 1,669.26. Almost two-thirds of the stocks on the New York Stock Exchange traded lower.

ANALYST'S VIEWPOINT: "Oscillating risk sentiment over trade concerns return to the fore in denting markets into Thursday with the market biting on the prospect of the latest threat for Chinese goods, setting a soft start to the Asia session," Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary.

FED TALK: As expected, the Federal Reserve left interest rates unchanged, but hinted it's likely to raise rates again in September. High-dividend stocks like consumer products makers sank as bond yields increased. The central bank noted the labor market continues to improve and the economy is growing at a strong clip, while inflation has reached its target of 2 percent a year.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude added 18 cents to \$67.84 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It dropped 2 percent to \$67.66 per barrel in New York. Brent crude, used to price international oils, gained 24 cents to \$72.63 per barrel in London.

CURRENCY: The dollar fell to 111.59 yen from 111.72 yen. The euro slipped to \$1.1655 from \$1.1659.

AP Markets Writer Marley Jay contributed. He can be reached at <http://twitter.com/MarleyJayAP> His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/marley%20jay>

Groton Daily Independent

Thursday, Aug. 02, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 024 ~ 46 of 46

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Aug. 2, the 214th day of 2018. There are 151 days left in the year.

On August 2, 1939, Albert Einstein signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt urging creation of an atomic weapons research program.

On this date:

In 1610, during his fourth voyage to the Western Hemisphere, English explorer Henry Hudson sailed into what is now known as Hudson Bay.

In 1776, members of the Second Continental Congress began attaching their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.

In 1876, frontiersman "Wild Bill" Hickok was shot and killed while playing poker at a saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, by Jack McCall, who was later hanged.

In 1909, the original Lincoln "wheat" penny first went into circulation, replacing the "Indian Head" cent.

In 1923, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco; Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

In 1939, President Roosevelt signed the Hatch Act, which prohibited civil service employees from taking an active part in political campaigns.

In 1943, during World War II, U.S. Navy boat PT-109, commanded by Lt. (jg) John F. Kennedy, sank after being rammed in the middle of the night by the Japanese destroyer Amagiri off the Solomon Islands. Two crew members were killed.

In 1974, former White House counsel John W. Dean III was sentenced to one to four years in prison for obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up. (Dean ended up serving four months.)

In 1980, 85 people were killed when a bomb exploded at the train station in Bologna, Italy.

In 1985, 137 people were killed when Delta Air Lines Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed while attempting to land at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, seizing control of the oil-rich emirate. (The Iraqis were later driven out in Operation Desert Storm.)

In 2000, Republicans awarded Texas Gov. George W. Bush their 2000 presidential nomination at the party's convention in Philadelphia and ratified Dick Cheney as his running mate.

Ten years ago: Police in southern Afghanistan reported a bus carrying a wedding party had struck a mine, killing 10 people, including the bride and groom; meanwhile, two French humanitarian aid workers kidnapped on July 18 were released.

Five years ago: The United States issued an extraordinary global travel warning to Americans about the threat of an al-Qaida attack and closed down 21 embassies and consulates across the Muslim world for the weekend.

One year ago: Former Notre Dame football coach Ara Parseghian died at his home in Granger, Indiana, at the age of 94. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above 22,000 for the first time, after stocks spent five months gradually moving higher.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Nehemiah Persoff is 99. Former Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., is 96. Rock musician Garth Hudson (The Band) is 81. Singer Kathy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 75. Actor Max Wright is 75. Actress Joanna Cassidy is 73. Actress Kathryn Harrold is 68. Actor Butch Patrick (TV: "The Munsters") is 65. Rock music producer/drummer Butch Vig (Garbage) is 63. Singer Mojo Nixon is 61. Actress Victoria Jackson is 59. Actress Apollonia is 59. Actress Cynthia Stevenson is 56. Actress Mary-Louise Parker is 54. Rock musician John Stanier is 50. Writer-actor-director Kevin Smith is 48. Actress Jacinda Barrett is 46. Actor Sam Worthington is 42. Figure skater Michael Weiss is 42. Actor Edward Furlong is 41. Rock musician Devon Glenn is 38. TV meteorologist Dylan Dreyer (TV: "Today") is 37. Actress Marci Miller is 33. Singer Charli XCX is 26. Actress Hallie Eisenberg is 26.

Thought for Today: "Ideas are powerful things, requiring not a studious contemplation but an action, even if it is only an inner action." — Midge Decter, American writer.