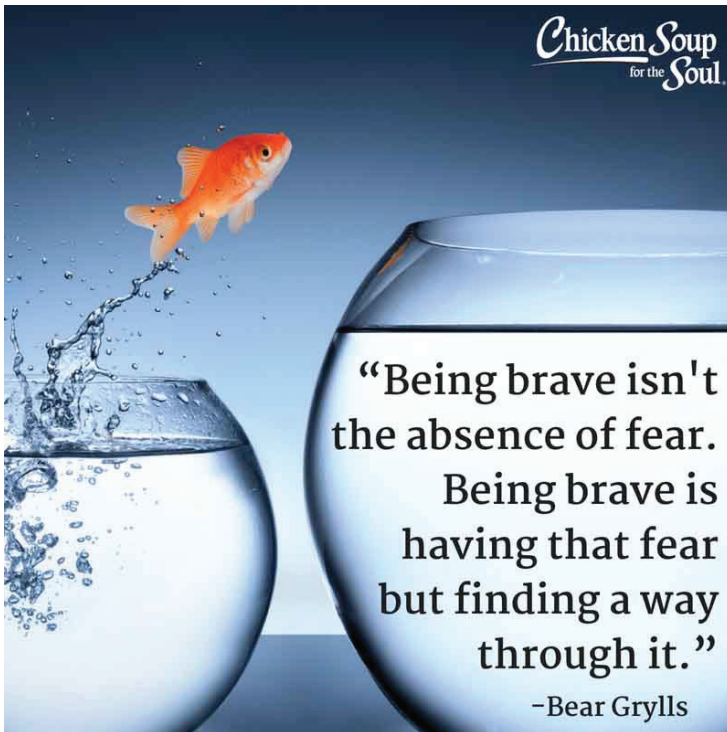


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- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Harry Implement Ad
- 1- Recycling Trailer
- 1- Dairy Queen Help Wanted
- 2- Sunrise over the clouds photo
- 3- New stop signs erected
- 4- City Council Agenda
- 5- Groton Care School Supply Drive
- 6- Outdoor World
- 6- Vold Consignment Auction Ad
- 7- Kosel has high balloon sales at DQ
- 8- Groton loses first game of Jr. State Legion Tourney
- 9- Today in Weather History
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Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.



Help Wanted

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

Harry Implement

"Family Owned & Operated Since 1935!"



(605) 395-6421
Ferney

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The sun rises over the clouds this morning.



New Stop Signs

Two new stop signs were erected at the intersection of Fifth Avenue East and North Fourth Street on Friday for east-west bound traffic. The stop signs are posted on the agenda for Monday night's council meeting.

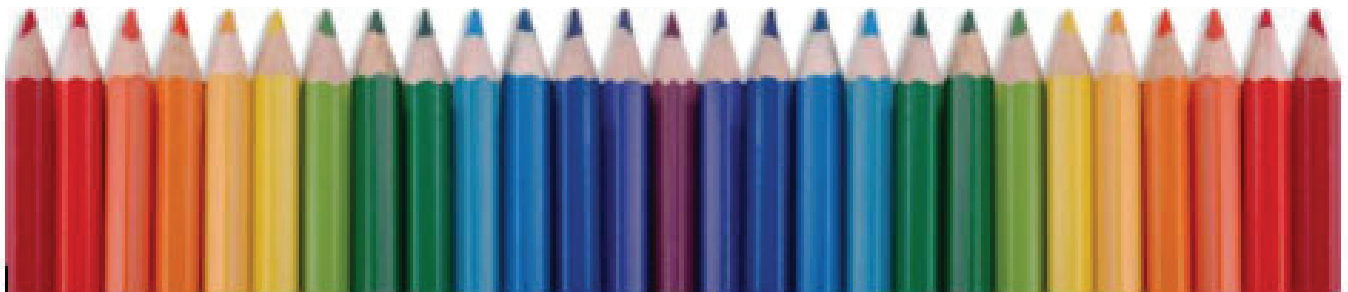
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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda
August 6, 2018 – 7:00pm
Groton Community Center

1. Minutes
2. Bills
3. 7:15 pm Representative from Sanitation Products
4. Department reports
5. Surplus Roller and 2 FO desks
6. Stop signs East and West bound on 5th Ave. and 4th Street
7. Heartland rebates
8. Swimming pool season report
9. No Zoning Required Letter
10. Election Workshop – September 9, Pierre
11. 2019 budget proposed budget
12. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
13. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
14. Adjournment

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.**





BEGINNER BOW HUNTING TIPS

There are a few steps you can take to improve your skills as a beginner bow hunter. The first is to practice. Take some time to shoot at least a few quivers of arrows a week, every week, year around. Practice builds skill and confidence that you are taking an appropriate shot and can make the shot that you take.

Step two is to go into the woods with a plan that you believe and trust. Nothing is worse than moving from one location to another and jumping deer. Scout the area that you are going to hunt, pick stand locations that you feel will put you in a good place to succeed and stick with them.

The third way to improve your bow hunting skills is to hunt. While good information can be gathered from practicing, scouting, reading magazines and web articles, watching YouTube videos and talking to others, there is no substitute for the skills that hunting will provide you over time. The only way to learn to really learn is from the actual mistakes that you will make.

Stop by your local Bass Pro Shops or Cabela's store or go to www.basspro.com or www.cabelas.com for a great selection of bow hunting equipment.

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.

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

VOLD AUCTIONEERS & REALTY
voldrealty.com voldauctions@ag4bid.com

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Kosel has high balloon sales at Groton Dairy Queen

Julianna Kosel (middle), sold the most balloons during July for the Children's Miracle Network. She sold 233 balloons during the month. A total of 1,244 balloons were sold. Pictured with her are the owners, Joyce and Dale Grenz. Miracle Treat Day was held Friday with the Groton Dairy Queen selling 1,629 blizzards as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Opening Ceremony of the State Junior Legion Tournament. (Photos by Mindy Jones)



Austin Jones



Darien Shabazz



Wyatt Locke



Alex Morris with a single

Junior Legion State Tournament in Winner Claremont-Britton defeated Groton, 13-6

Claremont-Britton took a 2-1 lead after the first inning as Groton gave up three hits and an error. Groton had three hits to score one run. Claremont-Britton scored two more runs in the second inning to take a 4-1 lead as Darien Shabazz started pitching the inning and Wyatt Locke finished the inning with a strike-out. Hunter Schaller hit a triple in the bottom of the second inning, but was left stranded there. Claremont-Britton scored two more runs in the third to take a 6-1 lead.

Darien Shabazz had a lead off double in the bottom of the fifth. After two hits and an error, Groton scores two runs to trail, 6-3. Claremont-Britton scored two more runs in the sixth and five more in the seventh to take a 13-3 lead. Groton scored three runs in the bottom of the seventh. It is a double elimination tournament so Groton will play today.

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Today in Weather History

August 4, 1960: At Draper in Jones County, three-inch hail caused substantial damage to roofs, building windows and automobiles. Losses estimated at 100,000 dollars. About 1,000 chickens and turkeys killed on nearby farms.

August 4, 2000: Tennis ball size hail along with high winds caused a lot of damage throughout Selby. Many east and north windows were broken along with many vehicle's windshields. Also, many cars were dented, house siding was damaged, gardens were destroyed, and many acres of crops around Selby were destroyed. Softball hail broke windows and caused extensive damage to a few vehicles and homes west of Faulkton. Baseball size hail and high winds had broken out about every window on all of the buildings at the Brentwood Colony in Edmunds County. The large hail and strong winds also damaged many of the buildings.

2008: Severe storms moved across northern Illinois and Indiana with tornadoes and stiff winds reported. With tornado sirens blaring, the game at Wrigley Field between Cubs and Astros was stopped as fans were told to evacuate to the lower concourse. Passengers at O'Hare International Airport were evacuated to lower levels of buildings as well. An estimated 350 flights were canceled.

2009: The strongest tornado to hit Quebec since the same date in 1994 ripped through Mont-Laurier. The F2 tornado tore through the small western Quebec town severely damaging about 40 homes. Two men were taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

1882 - A vivid aurora was visible from Oregon to Maine, down the east coast as far as Mayport FL, and inland as far as Wellington KS. Observers at Louisville KY noted merry dancers across the sky, and observers at Saint Vincent, MN, noted it was probably the most brilliant ever seen at that location. (The Weather Channel)

1930 - The temperature at Moorefield, WV, soared to 112 degrees to establish a state record, having reached 110 degrees the previous day. Widespread drought after April of that year caused some towns to haul water for domestic use, and many manufacturing plants were barely operational. (The Weather Channel)

1961 - Spokane, WA, reached an all-time record high of 108 degrees. Kalispell, MT, set an all-time record with a reading of 105 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1980 - A record forty-two consecutive days of 100 degree heat finally came to an end at the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. July 1980 proved to be the hottest month of record with a mean temperature of 92 degrees. There was just one day of rain in July, and there was no measurable rain in August. There were 18 more days of 100 degree heat in August, and four in September. Hot weather that summer contributed to the deaths of 1200 people nationally, and losses from the heat across the country were estimated at twenty billion dollars. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)




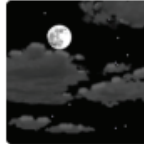

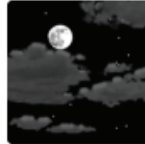

1987 - A cold front brought relief from the heat to a large part of the Midwest, while hot weather continued in the south central and eastern U.S. Morning thunderstorms in Nebraska deluged the town of Dalton with 8.71 inches of rain, along with hail three inches in diameter, which accumulated up to four feet deep near the town of Dix. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from eastern Iowa to Lower Michigan during the afternoon and evening hours, producing golf ball size hail and spawning several tornadoes. A thunderstorm at Maquoketa, IA, produced wind gusts to 75 mph. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from eastern Nebraska and northeastern Kansas to the Great Lakes Region, with 150 reports of large hail or damaging winds during the afternoon, evening, and nighttime hours. Thunderstorms produced tennis ball size hail at Claremont, MN, and wind gusts to 75 mph at Milwaukee, WI. Thunderstorms representing what once was Hurricane Chantal produced five inches of rain at Grant, MI, and deluged Chicago, IL, with more than three inches of rain in three hours. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

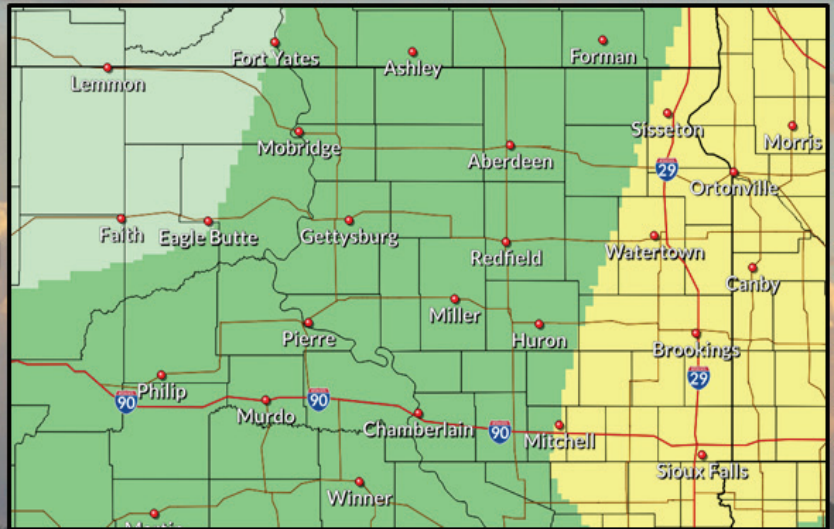
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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
						
Slight Chance T-storms then Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Slight Chance T-storms	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
High: 88 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 86 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 81 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 86 °F

Severe Storms Possible This Evening

The main threats being strong winds and large hail this evening and overnight, especially across eastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota.



 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 8/4/2018 5:30 AM Central

Published on: 08/04/2018 at 5:36AM

A frontal boundary crossing the region will bring the potential for strong to severe storms this evening through tonight. Eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota will have the best potential of seeing severe storms. Hail and damaging winds will be the main threats.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 85.8 F at 1:21 PM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 68.1 F at 1:37 AM

High Gust: 21.0 Mph at 9:26 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 107° in 1934

Record Low: 42° in 2017, 1978

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 59°F

Average Precip in July: 3.25

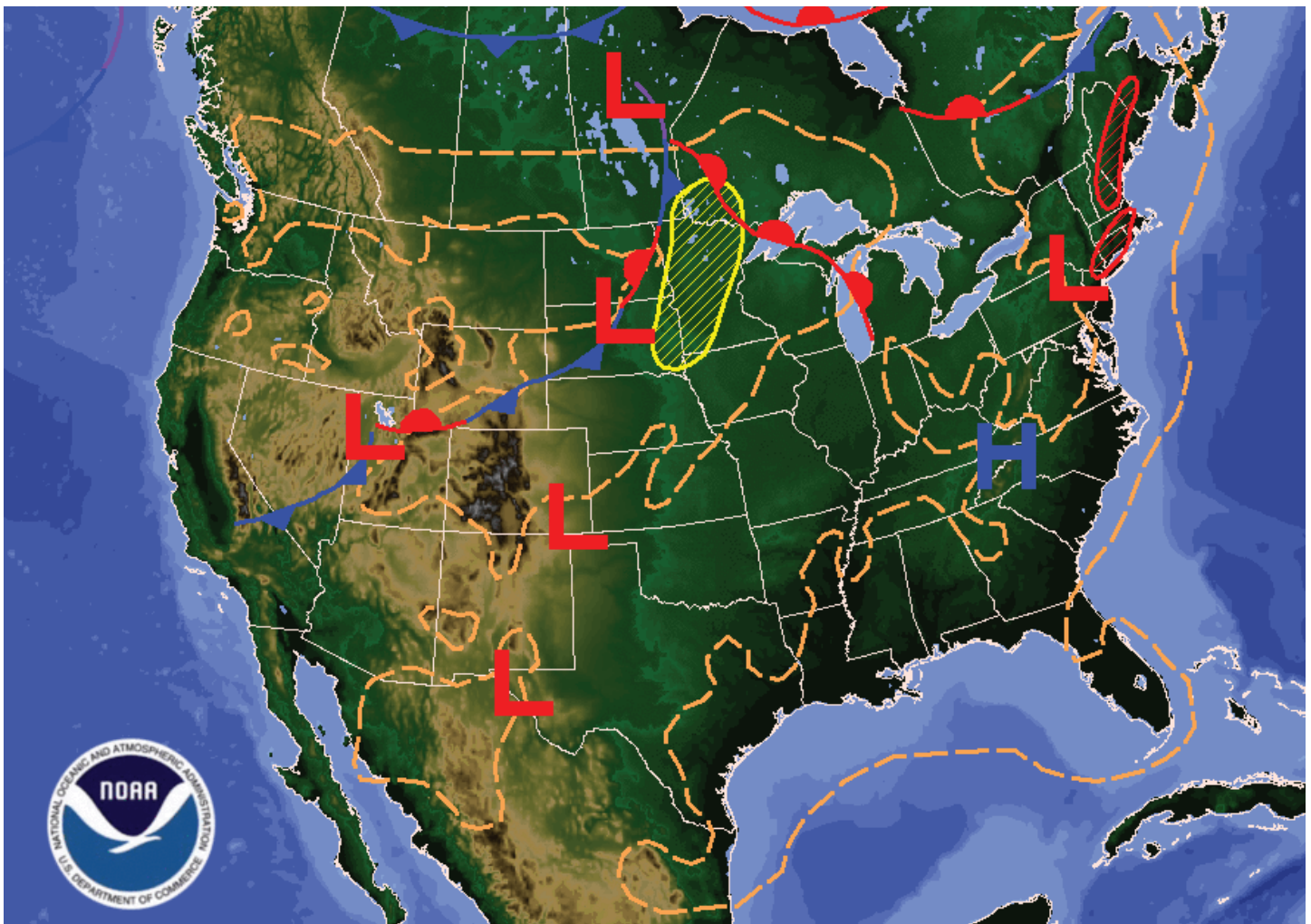
Precip to date in July: 3.99

Average Precip to date: 14.09

Precip Year to Date: 9.89

Sunset Tonight: 8:57 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:23 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Aug 04, 2018, issued 5:05 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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LOOK UP!

It was a bright summer day. The waves were stable and the winds gentle. It was a perfect day for sailing.

Rod decided to take his young son with him to enjoy a day on the ocean in his new sailboat. Not long after they left the dock, he heard Little Ben's voice screaming, Dad, help me. Dad, I'm afraid. Dad, save me.

Looking around he could not see him anywhere on deck. Suddenly, he turned his eyes upward, and there was Little Ben at the top of the mast. If you don't come to get me, I'm going to fall! he shouted.

Don't look down, Son. Whatever you do, don't look down. Look up. Hold the ladder steps tightly, look up toward the sky and take one step at a time beneath you until you reach the deck.

Little Ben did what he was told and returned safely to the arms of his dad. Ben looked up just as the Psalmist did: I will lift up my eyes to You, to You who sit enthroned in heaven.

Do you need to lift up your eyes to God? Recall the story of Peter. He and the other disciples were fighting heavy seas and strong winds. Jesus came to them walking on water. They screamed in terror. So, He said to them, Don't be afraid!

Peter said, If it's really You, tell me to come to You walking on water. Jesus said, It's me. Come on. And he did.

Peter went over the side of the boat and began walking on water. But when he realized what he had done and the size of the waves, he got scared, and shouted, Save me, Lord.

And Jesus did.

To look at circumstances always distress us. To look to our friends may disappoint us. To look at ourselves will discourage us. To look up to the Lord will bring us deliverance.

Prayer: May we look to You in trust, Lord, when the storms of life are raging and know that You are always there to rescue us! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 123:1 I will lift up my eyes to You, to You who sit enthroned in heaven.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

09-28-30-54-60, Mega Ball: 2, Megaplier: 2

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

Estimated jackpot: \$50 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$203 million

Sioux Falls sees a rise in opioid deaths

By GARRETT AMMESMAKI AND DANIELLE FERGUSON, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Anna Welter knew something was wrong.

She asked her fiance, Nick Laughlin, repeatedly if he was using drugs and heard his denials. She was suspicious he was on something, certain he was lying.

"When you live with someone for nearly three years, you can tell if they're gacked out," Welter said. "You know if they're high."

She was aware of Laughlin's past heroin use, his taking of prescription pills to deal with sciatic nerve damage and stomach pains from alcohol abuse. But he continually denied being on any drugs.

In the morning, Welter found him on the bathroom floor, overdosed on heroin laced with morphine.

She sprang toward him and frantically tried to perform chest compressions after calling 911. An ambulance arrived and paramedics brought him out of the small bathroom and into the living room. Officers kept her away as EMTs worked on Laughlin for more than half an hour.

He had four holes in him. Three from Narcan and one in his arm where the needle broke off. He was pronounced dead Feb. 10, 2017 at 10:33 a.m. He was 28 years old, one of the many young victims of the growing Sioux Falls opioid epidemic.

"You never think this will happen to you," said Welter. "Until it does."

Local law enforcement is seeing more opioids than ever before, a deadly trend that made its way from the East Coast to the Midwest.

The majority of heroin found in Minnehaha County is laced with fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 100 times more potent than heroin, the Argus Leader reported.

A lethal dose of fentanyl is about 2 mg, the size of Abraham Lincoln's hair on a penny.

Dealers often mix fentanyl with heroin to stretch out their batch. Street dealers may even sell pure fentanyl as heroin, Minnehaha County Sheriff Mike Milstead said. These dealers aren't chemists, and if they're off by a speck, it could mean life or death for their addicted customers.

"They're taking among our most deadly poisons and hoping they have it about right so that you get high and don't die, so they can sell it to you again," Milstead said.

In 2016, 11 people died from an overdose in Minnehaha County.

In 2017, that number doubled. Two-thirds of fatal overdoses last year were caused by heroin and fentanyl or other opioids, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, oxycontin, Milstead said.

The average age of someone dying from an overdose is 43, but Sioux Falls Police Capt. Blaine Larsen and Milstead have seen people of all ages succumb to the addiction. They've also seen people of all races and economic status.

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"Anyone can get roped into this," Larsen said. "It's a lot more lethal than some of our drug problems that we've seen in the past."

In many ways, Nick Laughlin's death underscored the devastating toll of opioid abuse. The former Lincoln High School student was a talented musician, an award-winning cook and a "social butterfly," according to family and friends.

"He cared about everybody," said Welter, who still wears the engagement ring he gave her. "I'll never meet anyone like Nick for the rest of my life."

His struggles with addiction began in his early 20s — a frequent presence that would rear its head before receding into the background, always to return. But though drug abuse led to Laughlin's death, loved ones insist that it didn't define him.

"He always loved cooking," said Shelley Johnson, Nick's mother. "To him, that was the way he made people happy — making delicious food for them."

He worked at restaurants in downtown Sioux Falls, including Icon Lounge, Skelly's Bar and Makenzie River. While at Skelly's he won second place in the 2015 Sioux Falls Taste of Elegance competition for a specialty pork belly dish.

His culinary expertise was matched by his talent for making and keeping close friends. When he passed away, Makenzie River shut down the restaurant the day of his funeral so fellow employees could attend.

Welter recounted how often Nick would perform "random acts of kindness" for strangers and friends. Their couch was always open for anyone who needed a place to stay, and he would go out of his way to help those in need.

Beneath it all, the true extent of his drug use lurked in the shadows.

Heroin users aren't like those strung out on methamphetamine, Milstead said. Heroin addicts aren't out on a robbery spree. They're not in a group, car hopping or flashing stolen guns, as those seeking meth are often found.

They are usually alone, maybe with an addicted friend, when they're found. First responders frequently find victims passed out in the corner of their house, sitting at a table, or on their knees.

One recent case involved 21-year-old Emily Groth, an O'Gorman High School graduate known for her vast creative talent and strong athletic abilities who died of an overdose May 16 in Sioux Falls.

The man who sold her the drugs, Devlin James Tommeraasen, was found unconscious at Hy-Vee on South Minnesota Avenue the same day. Officers gave him Narcan, according to court documents, and he was taken to the hospital.

He sold Groth and another person .20 grams of heroin on May 14. He sold them another .75 gram later that day.

Tommeraasen was indicted by a Minnehaha County grand jury for distributing a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance.

His alleged supplier, Corrod Phillips, 26, of Chicago, was indicted by a federal grand jury for possession with intent to distribute heroin. If convicted, he faces a maximum of 20 years in federal prison.

Federal law has allowed prosecutors to increase the severity of the punishment for drug dealers if their batch leads to serious injury or death. A state law passed this year allows state prosecutors to do the same. The charge is still an intent to distribute, but the mandatory minimum is increased.

"One of the things that drive cases to go federal are higher mandatory minimums," said Sioux Falls-based U.S. Attorney Ron Parsons. "That's an effective tool prosecution has to try to work up the chain of drug distribution."

Erik Premer, who was Laughlin's best friend, is a former addict who bonded with Nick over shared struggles with drugs. Premer started using opioids after breaking a finger. Unable to afford a doctor, his friend gave him OxyContin.

"When you start using opioids, you think, 'It's not heroin, it's pills. It comes from a doctor, so it must be OK,'" said Premer. "Most people don't even know they're addicted until they try to stop."

The first time he used opioids, it only made him sick.

"But the second time was like meeting God," said Premer, who works as a piercer at Vishnu Bunny Tat-

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too and Piercing in downtown Sioux Falls. "It was dangerously enjoyable."

The addiction wasn't clear to him until he went to work as a plumber with his father in Chicago. It was then, without any pills, that he started to experience withdrawal.

"It's like the flu times a million," he said. "You have anxiety so bad, you just want to rip your skin off to make the unsettling feeling go away."

Like Premer, Laughlin's descent into drug abuse was fueled by an addictive personality, backed up by family history. On both sides of Laughlin's extended family was a deep history of alcoholism. His father, Kevin Laughlin, is also a recovering heroin and opioid addict.

"The cards were stacked against Nick, genetically," said his mother.

Minnehaha County is one of a select group using a Baltimore-based technology called OD Map. The technology tracks in real time overdose data across the law enforcement's jurisdiction. Milstead's deputies can log overdose data from the scene: Was it fatal? Was Narcan or Naloxone used? How many times?

If a particularly potent batch is causing a flare-up of overdoses, Milstead and his team can use the map to figure out where it came from, and where the next batch could hit.

Minnehaha County is the only department utilizing OD Map in the region. He's hoping cities like Minneapolis, Omaha and Des Moines start using the technology, because trends and issues there often make their way here.

"The statistics of success (for addicts) are discouraging," Milstead said. "That person is addicted. They don't want to quit. If they do want to quit, it is not easy. They have to have it or they're going to be really miserable really soon."

Milstead is looking forward to the opening of the county's Triage Center, a starting point for people with acute mental health or substance abuse crisis. Local hospitals, law enforcement and mental health care providers are all involved in creating the drop site, where people can go to be referred to whatever services they need most.

The goal is to redirect the overutilizers of the jail and emergency rooms to a more suitable place to be treated.

"What is this doing here?" Milstead said of the emerging crisis. "We know it's killing people. We know that there are a lot who have survived that still have a chance."

Kevin Laughlin, Nick's father, hides sharp blue eyes behind thick-framed glasses. His hair reaches down past his shoulders, and wrapped around his forearms are tattoos smudged from age.

The three lines tattooed on each thumb are for his son. Three red lines on the left, three black on the right, just like the markings Nick had on his own hands.

They serve as a sort of memento, a way to honor his memory. Premer has them on his thumbs as well.

Kevin began abusing opiates in the 1990s, after doctors gave him fentanyl nasal spray to deal with headaches. In 2010, he began taking pain pills during recovery from shoulder surgery. After noticing some of his medication was missing, he confronted Nick.

They began sharing pills.

"It's embarrassing, really, that I used with him like that," Kevin said. But as an addict, he only thought of getting high.

"If you're in that frame of mind and they're available, it's terrible," he said. "It's a terrible addiction."

The fallout from that addiction is still felt by Laughlin's mother, whose divorce from Kevin stemmed from his drug use while Nick was in middle school.

On a recent afternoon, she looked through photographs at her house in eastern Sioux Falls, alternating between smiles and tears as Nick's fiancée sat nearby.

"You always hear things like 'they should just shape up,'" Shelley Johnson said.

"If it was that easy, people would do it," Welter added. "If it were that easy, we wouldn't have addicts."

The night before Nick died, Johnson had dropped him off at his apartment.

"He didn't say he loved me that night," she said. "He usually told me he loved me."

Laughlin and Welter went to the grocery store, where he pushed her around in a cart. He had just bought

her a gigantic stuffed dog for Valentine's Day, and that night they had a quiet dinner at home. Afterward, when Welter went to bed, Laughlin's addiction reared its head one final time.

"Who would put themselves through that hell?" Johnson said. "When Nick passed away, one thing I thought was, 'At least his demons are gone.' That's what it seemed like, that his demons were always after him."

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

New South Dakota school for blind will have stairs

By KATHERINE GRANDSTRAND, Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The new South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is going to have stairs.

That's a feature that's almost completely absent in its current building, except for the few that lead up to the top of the stage, said Marje Kaiser, superintendent of the school for the blind and South Dakota School for the Deaf.

"The idea was we're going to make this really easy for kids to travel," Kaiser told Aberdeen American News. "But our kids — the real world environment includes stairs."

So the new building will have two staircases — one winding, one straight — as well as an elevator to its second floor, Kaiser said. A second floor is something that's also missing from the current building.

The budget for the project is \$13.7 million, with construction expected to cost just under \$12 million, although the work won't go out for bid until the final plan gets approval from the South Dakota Board of Regents.

Sioux Falls-based TSP is the lead architect, Kaiser said. There are two experts assisting TSP.

One is Chris Downey, a California-based architect who lost his sight at age 45.

"It's not about not having sight, it's about having an abundance of all this other information," Downey said about designing spaces for the blind and visually impaired. "It's really about designing for all these other senses and being aware of it so they're intentional, not just accidental."

One of Downey's biggest criticisms of the current building is its expanse.

"It's sprawling, long, there's some things that are good about it, and there are some things that are challenging," he said. "When all spread out on one level, it's an incredibly long place. It takes a long time to get from one place to another."

In 10 years as a blind architect, and about 30 years in the field, this is the first school for the blind Downey has gotten to design.

"There will be fewer options and less space to get confused," he said. "(There will be) more manageable and memorable types of spaces and relationships of spaces to work with."

Losing his sight as an adult, Downey never attended a school for the blind, opting to learn things like orientation and mobility from his home city of San Francisco.

"There was no school that I could go to that could help me answer the question of, 'How the heck am I going to be a blind architect?'" Downey said.

The other expert is Julie Walleisa, a New Mexico-based architect who drew up the preliminary plans that went to the regents in October.

"She's worked on maybe 10 different projects on schools for the blind," Kaiser said.

In a conference call meeting Friday, the school for the blind building committee approved final plans, which will go to the regents for approval during an August meeting in Pierre.

The new building will sit on the corner of South State Street and 14th Avenue Southeast. The academic part of the new building will be two floors, with most of the classrooms for younger students on the first floor, and most of the second floor taken up by the older kids, Kaiser said. The library and music rooms will be on the second floor.

The school for the blind serves about 200 students each year, but thanks to expanded outreach programs

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many of those students don't come to Aberdeen. About 30 students live on campus during the school year, while a summer program is busier, drawing 40 or so.

The dorms in the new school will be on one floor facing the recreation and athletic fields to the east, Kaiser said. They're arranged around the perimeter of the building, with restrooms and a kitchen on the interior.

Rather than having one big bathroom for girls and another for boys, the dorms are arranged in pods, with a handful of rooms sharing a bathroom.

"The idea then is that we can close these off at various intervals," Kaiser said. "It gives us a lot more versatility."

There's also a media room for computers and TV, a teen lounge for older students and a playroom for the young kids.

There are also two independent apartments planned for transitioning students, Kaiser said.

On the academic side, most of the classrooms are the same as any other school, with science, math and a library, Kaiser said. What's unique are classrooms dedicated to orientation and mobility courses, Braille, and one dedicated for Northern State University classes, especially those focusing on teaching blind students.

Recreationally, the new gymnasium will be set up for goalball, a sport designed specifically for people with visual impairments, Kaiser said. Occupational and physical therapies will be in that space, planned for south of the dorms, facing May Overby Elementary School, as will a dedicated fitness center.

Outdoors, a bike loop and sensory garden are planned, as is a playground, Kaiser said. It's still being worked out whether the 10-year-old equipment at the current school will make the trip across the street, or if new equipment will be installed.

Either way, the fenced-in space will be open for everyone in the neighborhood, just like the current playground, Kaiser said.

One other feature lacking in the 1960s building that will be in the new school is central air conditioning, which is important not only for the relief it brings during summer months, but in the sound it doesn't create, Kaiser said.

"One of the things we do now, in those classrooms that we're using during the summer, is use window air conditioners," she said. "You know how noisy those are, and you're working with kids who rely on their hearing to stay tuned with what's going on. That's not a good combination."

The new building is scheduled for completion in fall 2019.

Exactly what move-in looks like depends on the completion date, Kaiser said. If it's sometime in August, move-in will happen before the school year starts. Any time after the start of school, and plans get a little fuzzier.

"There's a lot of quality control things that have to go in and be monitored to make sure that, at the end of the day, we have the building that we need," she said.

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

Appeals court upholds inmate's conviction, death sentence

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A federal appeals court has upheld the conviction and death sentence of a man who killed a South Dakota doughnut shop employee in 1992.

South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley said Friday that the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling affirms Charles Rhines' death sentence and murder conviction are "appropriate and constitutional." Jackley's office says Rhines could ask for reconsideration or request that the U.S. Supreme Court weigh his appeal.

Rhines was convicted in the stabbing death of 22-year-old Donnivan Schaeffer while Rhines burglarized a Rapid City doughnut shop in March 1992. A jury convicted Rhines in 1993, and the state Supreme Court affirmed his sentence and conviction in 1996.

Rhines has also sought to overturn his sentence and conviction in federal and state habeas corpus proceedings.

South Dakota jail expansion project to cost \$48M

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The expansion of the Minnehaha County jail will cost about \$48 million, project officials said.

Project leaders informed County Commissioners on Tuesday that the final estimate for the project's cost is about \$2 million more than planned, The Argus Leader reported .

The expansion will add 320 beds to the current 400-bed facility and is projected to meet the county's needs until 2030. It will include a larger booking space, more medical space, a larger laundry facility and an internal court room.

Construction work is expected to cost the county \$40 million, according to project leaders. The remaining costs include architect fees, furniture and equipment. A final contract will be available next week.

Lincoln County will also be able to house up to 45 inmates at the facility. Lincoln County will reimburse Minnehaha County for each bed and fund the inmates' medical costs.

Utility work will start Aug. 7 and construction work is scheduled to begin Aug. 14. More than 60 percent of construction work will be done by local contractors, while non-local contractors will handle things such as security, project officials said.

The project is expected to be completed in June 2020.

The expansion will be built on the location of more than 100 parking spaces. Minnehaha County plans to develop a vacant property into a 54-space parking lot to make up for the loss.

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

South Dakota congregation to help nearby fire-damaged church

BRISTOL, S.D. (AP) — A church in a rural northeastern South Dakota city plans to raise money for a nearby congregation recovering from a fire.

Bergen Lutheran Church in Bristol will give proceeds from its fourth annual threshing bee on Sunday to Westside Wesleyan Church, which was badly damaged by a fire last month, The Aberdeen American News reported .

The event raises money for community causes. Last year's festivities raised \$7,000.

The Bergen Lutheran congregation voted unanimously to help Westside Wesleyan following the fire, said Karen Johnson, the event's organizer.

"One of my council members told me when I asked him, he said, 'It's God's work, let's do it,'" she said. "It says to me that faith has no denomination. They are as much a part of our family as our own congregation members."

The July 20 fire damaged Westside Wesleyan's sanctuary, pastor study and main structure. It's unclear if the church will be remodeled or rebuilt completely, said David Dulitz, a Westside Wesleyan Church board member.

"It's kind of emotional right now, for me, walking around and the floor is so dirty," Dulitz said. "I don't want to track dirt in the church, on the carpet. That's hard for me. Seeing all these piles of melted stuff. ... This is just not the way we treat our church."

Westside Wesleyan is holding church services at the Bristol Community Center for the time being.

Sunday's activities will include potato-picking, the chance to use old-fashioned farm equipment and the opportunity to ride in a covered wagon.

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

Motorcyclists headed from LA to Sturgis killed in Utah crash

KANAB, Utah (AP) — Police say two women were killed in southern Utah when a pickup truck collided with a group of motorcyclists traveling from California to Sturgis, South Dakota, ahead of a well-known motorcycle rally.

The Utah Highway Patrol says it happened after a rider realized he forgot a bag at a McDonald's near Kanab on Thursday, and he stopped to tell other group members he was turning back.

Troopers say some of the motorcycles stopped in the travel lane and the driver didn't see them in time.

Sixty-two-year-old Ingreborg Treitinger of Los Angeles and 50-year-old Brigit Stein of Germany were killed. A third unidentified motorcyclist suffered critical injuries.

The group of eight was headed from Los Angeles to South Dakota, where the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally begins Friday.

Arrest warrant issued for mother in baby's death

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say an arrest warrant has been issued for a woman in the death of her 4-month-old baby.

The 22-year-old mother is wanted for abuse or cruelty to a minor, among other charges. Police spokesman Sam Clemens says officers have not been able to locate the woman.

Police responded to a home Wednesday on a report of an unresponsive infant. The baby girl was found unconscious on a bed, was taken to the hospital and pronounced dead.

The Argus Leader says an affidavit says the mother told police she drank tequila until she passed out the night before and woke up the next morning to find the child unconscious. The document says an autopsy conducted on the baby found the cause of death to be undetermined.

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

Suspected drunken driver crashes into helicopter

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police say a suspected drunken driver crashed his car into a medical helicopter and drove away in Rapid City.

Authorities say the helicopter was parked on a pad at Rapid City Regional Hospital when it was struck early Friday morning. A witness told police the driver revved his engine just before hitting the chopper.

The Rapid City Journal says officers later found the man driving a damaged car with deflated tires and placed him under arrest.

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

Sioux Falls firefighters lending aid in Colorado

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls firefighters will help battle western wildfires.

Mayor Paul TenHaken said in a tweet that six members of Sioux Falls Fire Rescue have been deployed to help fight a wildfire that's engulfed more than 3,000 acres near Rangely in northwestern Colorado's Rio Blanco County.

The mayor says the firefighters have orders that could keep them in Colorado for up to two weeks. Their expenses are being picked up by the federal government.

Minnesota man injured in South Dakota motorcycle crash dies

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Minnesota man has died of injuries he suffered in a motorcycle crash in eastern South Dakota.

The Highway Patrol says 37-year-old Paul Carver of St. Paul, Minnesota, was injured July 28 when he

lost control of his bike on Interstate 90 west of Sioux Falls and it crashed in the median. Carver was taken to a Sioux Falls hospital, where he died Wednesday.

Authorities ID Aberdeen man killed in Brown County crash

GROTON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified an Aberdeen man who died in a one-vehicle crash in Brown County.

The Highway Patrol says 22-year-old Joshua Leonard was driving a sport utility vehicle that went out of control on a rural road near Groton, went in the ditch, struck a residence driveway and rolled several times.

Leonard died at the scene Monday night. A 21-year-old female passenger was taken to a Sioux Falls hospital with what the patrol says were life-threatening injuries.

New trial ordered in manslaughter case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Supreme Court has ordered a new trial for a Sioux Falls man serving time for first-degree manslaughter.

David Randle Jr. was convicted in the 2015 death of 19-year-old Mikael Ashame. Prosecutors say Randle was drinking and using drugs when handling a gun that discharged and hit Ashame.

The Argus Leader reports that in an opinion released Thursday, the high court said the circuit court failed to give instructions on excusable homicide to the jury during the 2016 trial and ordered a new trial. The defense had tried to offer an excusable homicide option to the jury, but circuit court disallowed the instruction because it was submitted after the state finished its case.

Randle was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

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

1 injured in crash of sightseeing helicopter near Custer

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — One person was injured when a sightseeing helicopter on a training flight crashed north of Custer.

Custer County Sheriff Marty Mechaley says the Bell 47 chopper lost power just before landing and came up short of a helipad Thursday morning. It clipped a van, came down on a highway and flipped into a ditch.

A 30-year-old person in the helicopter was taken to a Custer hospital with unspecified injuries. Two others onboard weren't hurt. All three were employees of Black Hills Aerial Adventures.

The van's occupants were uninjured.

The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board are investigating.

Transient arrested hundreds of times loses federal lawsuit

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A federal judge has dismissed a lawsuit filed by a Sioux Falls transient who was arrested by police nearly 200 times in two years.

Robert Running Shield Sr. sued the city after he was repeatedly arrested, mainly for trespassing and unlawful occupancy. He contended the arrests were racially motivated and violated his rights. He represented himself in the case.

The Argus Leader reports the city argued Running Shield often was arrested for sleeping in laundry rooms or abandoned apartments. It also argued that the arrests were not racially motivated.

Judge Larry Piersol dismissed the suit, citing a lack of evidence.

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

All eyes on 'right-hand man' in Manafort trial

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — The bookkeeper said Paul Manafort submitted fake financial documents. The accountant testified he hid foreign bank accounts. And a series of businessmen said he used international wire transfers to pay for millions of dollars in luxury items.

On Friday, a tax preparer even admitted that she helped disguise \$900,000 in foreign income as a sham loan to lower Manafort's tax bill.

But the most critical moment in the former Trump campaign chairman's financial fraud trial will likely arrive next week with the testimony of his longtime associate Rick Gates, whom witnesses have described as Manafort's "right-hand man" and defense attorneys are looking to blame for any crimes.

Gates, who also served in a senior role in President Donald Trump's campaign, has been a key cooperator for special counsel Robert Mueller's team after he cut a plea deal earlier this year. During that process, he admitted to two felony charges, but when he testifies it will be the first time he'll detail those crimes face-to-face with his former boss and mentor.

The trial, in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, is the first of Mueller's prosecutions to reach a jury. But lawyers have made no mention of Trump or possible campaign coordination with the Kremlin, the central question behind the special counsel's investigation. Still, Trump has made clear his interest in the case, suggesting in a tweet that Manafort was being treated worse than gangster Al Capone. And Manafort's decision to stand trial instead of cooperate has raised speculation that he may be looking for a pardon.

The trial opened with a display of Manafort's opulent lifestyle, then progressed into testimony about what prosecutors say were years of financial deception. In calling Gates, the government will present jurors with the first-hand account of a co-conspirator expected to say Manafort was knee-deep in an alleged scheme to hide millions of dollars from the IRS and defraud several banks.

Manafort's defense team has already signaled that it will paint Gates as an embezzler and liar who took advantage of Manafort and flouted the law without his boss's knowledge. Gates is expected to face bruising cross-examination, and his credibility is likely to be an important test of the prosecution's case.

During the questioning, U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III will be both referee and wild card. He has played those roles throughout the trial, repeatedly scolding prosecutors to rein in their depictions of Manafort's lavish lifestyle and demanding that they "move it along." It is not a crime, he has said several times, to be rich and to spend ostentatiously.

Nonetheless, jurors were told of more than \$900,000 in expensive suits, a \$15,000 ostrich jacket and lavish properties replete with expensive audio and video systems, a tennis court encircled by hundreds of flowers and, as one witness put it, "one of the bigger ponds in the Hamptons."

One-by-one, a retired carpenter, a natty clothier and a high-end landscaper detailed how Manafort paid them in international wire transfers from offshore companies.

Prosecutors say Manafort used those companies to stash millions of dollars from his Ukrainian consulting work, proceeds he omitted year-after-year from his income tax returns. Later, they say, when that income dwindled, Manafort launched a different scheme, shoring up his struggling finances by using doctored documents to obtain millions more in bank loans.

On Friday, one of Manafort's tax preparers admitted that she helped disguise \$900,000 in foreign income as a loan in order to reduce his tax burden. Cindy Laporta, who testified under an immunity deal with the government, acknowledged that she agreed under pressure from Gates to alter a tax document for one of Manafort's businesses.

All told, prosecutors allege that Manafort failed to report a "significant percentage" of the more than \$60 million they say he received from Ukrainian oligarchs. They sought to show jurors how that money flowed from more than a dozen shell companies used to stash the income in Cyprus.

Though the names of those companies appeared on wire transfers and at times on his bookkeeper's ledger, both Manafort's accountants and his bookkeeper say they never knew the companies — and corresponding offshore bank accounts — were controlled by Manafort.

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When they appeared, the bookkeeper and accountants said, they thought the companies were clients or, in some cases, lenders.

But defense lawyers are trying to convince the jury that Manafort was consumed by his consulting business and left the particulars of his finances to professionals and, in particular, to Gates.

"Money's coming in fast," Manafort's lawyer, Thomas Zehnle, told jurors at the trial's beginning. "It's a lot, and Paul Manafort trusted that Rick Gates was keeping track of it."

Associated Press writers Matthew Barakat and Stephen Braun contributed to this report.

GOP grumbles as Donald Trump reshapes midterm campaigns

By LISA LERER and KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's strategy of becoming aggressively involved in the midterm elections is prompting concern among some Republicans who worry he's complicating the political calculus for GOP candidates trying to outrun his popularity.

Those Republicans worry their statewide candidates may rise or fall based on Trump's standing, muddling their path to maintain control of Congress.

But Trump has no plans to step out of the spotlight. He will hold a rally Saturday in Ohio and plans to host two fundraisers at the Trump National Golf Course in Bedminster, New Jersey, next week for House and Senate candidates, according to a campaign official with knowledge of the president's events. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss details about the fundraisers that haven't yet been publicly released.

The president is casting himself as the star of the midterms, eagerly inserting himself into hotly contested primaries, headlining rallies in pivotal swing states and increasing his fundraising efforts for Republicans. Last week, Trump agreed to donate a portion of his reelection fund to 100 GOP candidates running in competitive House and Senate races.

He's expected to be even more aggressive in the fall. White House officials say he's reserving time on his schedule for midterm travel and fundraising likely to surpass that of former presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

"This is now about Donald Trump," said Al Cardenas, a former Florida Republican chairman. "It's a high-risk, high-stakes proposition."

The question facing Republicans is whether turning out those Trump loyalists is enough to win in toss-up congressional districts or if their path to victory depends more on capturing a share of independents and suburban women turned off by Trump's tumultuous first term. It's a dilemma they will confront in 2018 and beyond.

"If we lose the governor's race for the first time in 20 years, all of a sudden President Trump's chances of winning in 2020 diminish with a Democratic governor," said Cardenas. "You can't win a presidential election if you're a Republican without winning Florida."

Trump aides argue no one energizes Republicans like the president, pointing to the throngs of thousands who wait in long lines to attend his rallies — he's held 17 since taking office. The aides say the White House is taking a two-pronged approach, sending Trump to mobilize the base while other officials, such as his daughter Ivanka, can generate local headlines and help with voters who may not like the president's aggressive style. The goal is to ensure that the occasional voters who turned out for Trump in 2016 cast ballots in the midterms.

But there are some signs that Trump's unpopularity with the general electorate may hamper more than help individual Republican candidates.

While Republicans have won a series of special elections since Trump took office, they've captured smaller margins than in previous years. Democrats also had two high-profile upsets, nabbing victories in an Alabama Senate race and a Pennsylvania House race.

The GOP is worried about a special congressional election Tuesday in a central Ohio district that Trump

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won by 11 percentage points in 2016. A Monmouth University poll released this past week showed the race tightening, leaving Republican Troy Balderson with just a 1-point edge. The survey found 46 percent of likely voters approved of Trump, while 49 percent disapproved.

Hoping to shore up GOP support, Trump plans to host a rally in the district Saturday. His visit follows a Monday stop by Vice President Mike Pence.

The president's team keeps a close eye on data assessing whether Americans believe the country is headed in the right direction under Trump. And they point to Trump's strength among Republican voters and an upbeat attitude about the nation's economic climate as evidence Republicans will avoid the rough midterm elections that have afflicted previous administrations.

But some Republicans warn Trump's outsized media presence drowns out the messages of congressional candidates, who believe the path to victory lies with a focus on local issues, the Republican tax cuts and the prospect of Nancy Pelosi becoming House speaker again. In Ohio, Balderson and his GOP allies have tried to tie Democrat Danny O'Connor to Pelosi. O'Connor has repeatedly said he would like to see a new generation of leadership in the House.

"Part of the reason why the Nancy Pelosi attacks are so important is that they're a way to motivate the Republicans who might not love Trump," said Ohio GOP strategist Terry Casey.

Still, Republicans are often forced to fend off questions about Trump-sparked controversies. In recent days, Trump publicly mused about a government shutdown sometime in the fall — a possibility that Republican congressional leaders fear would significantly hamper their electoral prospects.

In Pennsylvania on Thursday, Trump said he was a "little bit torn" about whether it would be better to shut down the government before or after the midterm elections to secure funding for his border wall. "Whether it's before or after, we are getting it or we are closing down government," he told thousands of supporters at a rally in Wilkes-Barre.

That kind of uncertainty only serves to further embolden Trump's opposition, say Democrats.

"Clearly he lights the fire when it comes to energized Democrats," said Ohio Democratic Party chairman David Pepper. "He's going to come and give a rambling, over-the-top speech that has nothing to do with this district or Troy Balderson. It may hurt more than it helps."

The president's decision to intervene in recent GOP primaries is also raising concerns among some state party officials and politicians, who fear he's siding with candidates who could prove weaker in general elections. Trump has relished doling out endorsements, sometimes blasting out several a day — even for those who don't need his backing right now.

On Thursday, he tweeted support for Rep. Steve Stivers, an Ohio congressman who chairs the campaign committee for the House GOP, urging people to back him in a primary contest next week. Stivers' primary was held in May and he ran unopposed. The tweet was quickly deleted.

The president has compiled a winning streak in recent primaries in which he has made an endorsement, helping favored candidates in South Carolina, Alabama and Georgia.

His rally this week in Tampa, Florida, represented his most ambitious attempt to nationalize two races crucial to Republicans' midterm hopes.

Trump stood onstage with Rep. Ron DeSantis, a 39-year-old three-term congressman, imploring his supporters to back his campaign for governor. DeSantis was little-known to Republican voters until Trump first tweeted support for him in December. Since then, he's made his ties to Trump a centerpiece of his primary race, focused on Fox News appearances and ads. In recent weeks, he's opened up a double-digit lead over state Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam, a longtime fixture in Florida politics.

DeSantis said he was grateful for Trump's support but added, "I appreciate more the leadership you're showing for our great country."

The president also repeatedly praised Gov. Rick Scott, a Trump ally running for Senate, and attacked his opponent, Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson. Trump, who spends winter weekends at his estate in Palm Beach, claimed the only time he sees the senator is "five months before every election."

"After a while, you forget who's the senator," Trump said.

US, North Korean top diplomats exchange pleasantries, barbs

By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

SINGAPORE (AP) — Roller-coaster nuclear diplomacy between the United States and North Korea hit highs and lows on Saturday as the countries' top diplomats traded polite words and barbs, leaving efforts to rid the North of its atomic weapons at an uncertain juncture.

At a security conference in Singapore, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused North Korea and countries including Russia of continuing to violate U.N. sanctions aimed at pressing Pyongyang to give up its nuclear arsenal. But at the same time, he oversaw the handover of a letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un from President Donald Trump and exchanged pleasantries with the North's top diplomat.

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho, meanwhile, greeted Pompeo with a smile, but then delivered a scathing attack on the Trump administration for approaching the negotiation poorly by insisting on sanctions enforcement. Ri said North Korea would not be forced into acting unilaterally and demanded that the U.S. undertake "confidence building" measures if the negotiation was to be successful.

After Pompeo warned anew that no sanctions would be lifted until North Korea fully and finally denuclearizes, Ri told the annual ASEAN Regional Forum that the North would not be bullied into concessions.

"Confidence is not a sentiment to be cultivated overnight," he said. "In order to build full confidence between the DPRK and the U.S., it is essential for both sides to take simultaneous actions and phased steps to do what is possible one after another." North Korea's official name is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"Only when the U.S. ensures that we feel comfortable with and come close to it, will we be able to open our minds to the U.S. and show it in action," Ri said.

The U.S. has previously dismissed calls for a phased approach, insisting that sanctions be maintained until the North delivers on its commitments but suggesting that some other steps may be possible.

Ri, though, appeared unmoved and accused elements of the U.S. government of going against Trump's wishes by taking a hard line on sanctions.

"What is alarming, however, is the insistent moves manifested within the U.S. to go back to the old, far from its leader's intention," he said.

Instead of responding reciprocally to North Korea's suspension of nuclear tests and missile launches and other goodwill gestures such as the return of suspected remains of American troops killed in the Korean War, the U.S. has maintained hostility, Ri said.

"The United States, instead of responding to these measures, is raising its voice louder for maintaining the sanctions against the DPRK and showing the attitude to retreat even from declaring the end of war, a very basic and primary step for providing peace on the Korean Peninsula," he said. He also accused Washington of taking "extremely inappropriate moves" by discouraging third countries from sending high-level delegations to the North's 70th anniversary celebrations in September.

Pompeo had already left the meeting when Ri delivered his remarks in order to travel to Jakarta for talks with senior Indonesian officials. As he arrived in Jakarta, the State Department said that a written reply to Kim from Trump had been delivered to Ri in Singapore.

"We had a quick, polite exchange," Pompeo tweeted. "Our US delegation also had the opportunity to deliver (Trump's) reply to Chairman Kim's letter."

State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said Trump's reply to Kim was given to Ri by Sung Kim, the U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines who has been leading logistical negotiations with the North on its pledge to denuclearize. Nauert would not address the content of Trump's letter to Kim.

The White House said earlier in the week that Kim had sent a new letter to Trump and that the president had written a response.

Earlier Saturday, Pompeo warned Russia, China and other countries against any violation of international sanctions on North Korea that could reduce pressure on the North to abandon its nuclear weapons. Pompeo's comments came on the heels of a new United Nations report that found North Korea has not

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stopped its nuclear and missile programs and is violating U.N. sanctions, including through illicit ship-to-ship transfers of oil.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Singapore forum, Pompeo told reporters that the U.S. has new, credible reports that Russia is violating U.N. sanctions by allowing joint ventures with North Korean companies and issuing new permits for North Korean guest workers. He said Washington would take "very seriously" any violations, and called for them to be roundly condemned and reversed.

"If these reports prove accurate, and we have every reason to believe that they are, that would be in violation," Pompeo said, noting that the U.N. Security Council had voted unanimously in favor of the sanctions. "I want to remind every nation that has supported these resolutions that this is a serious issue and something we will discuss with Moscow."

"We expect the Russians and all countries to abide to the U.N. Security Council resolutions and enforce sanctions on North Korea," he said. "Any violation that detracts from the world's goal of finally, fully denuclearizing North Korea would be something that America would take very seriously."

At the United Nations, a summary of a report by experts monitoring U.N. sanctions against North Korea was sent to the Security Council on Friday that said North Korea is continuing with both its nuclear and missile programs. And, in addition to the oil transfers, it said the North was violating sanctions by transferring coal at sea and flouting an arms embargo and financial sanctions.

Late Friday, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley raised the alarm, saying that "talk is cheap." "Russia cannot support sanctions with their words in the Security Council only to violate them with their actions," she said in a statement. She made the remarks as the U.S. asked the Security Council to add a North Korean bank executive, a North Korean company, a Chinese company and a Russian bank to the U.N. sanctions blacklist.

In his discussions with Southeast Asian officials in Singapore, Pompeo said he had implored them all to "strictly enforce all sanctions," including an end to ship-to-ship transfers of oil for North Korea, and had been encouraged by the response.

Despite the warning to Russia, Pompeo said he remained optimistic that Kim will follow through on his pledge to Trump to denuclearize. But he said the timeline for the North's full and final denuclearization remains a work in progress.

Associated Press writer Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed to this report.

Trump wants a Space Force, but Pentagon has different idea

By **ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump wants a Space Force, a new military service he says is needed to ensure American dominance in space. But the idea is gaining little traction at the Pentagon, where the president's defense chief, Jim Mattis, says it would add burdensome bureaucracy and unwanted costs.

The Pentagon acknowledges a need to revamp its much-criticized approach to defending U.S. economic and security interests in space, and it is moving in that direction. But it's unclear whether this will satisfy Trump, who wants to go even further by creating a separate military space service.

The administration intends to announce next week the results of a Pentagon study that is expected to call for creating a new military command — U.S. Space Command — to consolidate space warfighting forces and making other organizational changes short of establishing a separate service, which only Congress can do. Any legislative proposal to create a separate service would likely not be put on the table until next year.

Mattis, who said prior to Trump's "Space Force" announcement in June that he opposes creating a new branch of the military for space, said afterward that this would require "a lot of detailed planning."

Mattis is allied on this with key Republicans on Capitol Hill including Sen. James Inhofe, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who opposes a separate Space Force but is open to creating a Space Command. The command would coordinate the use of space forces of existing services, such as those that operate military satellites, but would not be a separate service.

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Mattis's chief spokeswoman, Dana W. White, said Friday he believes that consolidating space functions will "ensure we move at the speed of relevancy. Space is a joint warfighting domain that the U.S. must dominate."

Trump mentioned as recently as Tuesday that he had ordered the Pentagon to begin the process of creating a Space Force as a new branch of the military, but he did not repeat the phrase he used in June — a "separate but equal" service. That may open the possibility of the Pentagon proposing to establish a cadre of space experts that would be part of a space "corps" attached to the Air Force rather than as a separate service.

On Friday, Trump hailed the news that NASA has named the astronauts who will ride the first commercial capsules into orbit next year. "We have the greatest facilities in the world and we are now letting the private sector pay to use them," he tweeted. "Exciting things happening. Space Force!"

Trump's focus has generated an unusual level of talk about space, but with little clarity.

"At the moment, there is no concrete proposal on the table for what a Space Force will look like or what it will do," said Brian Weeden, an Air Force veteran who is director of program planning at the Secure World Foundation, which promotes peaceful uses of outer space. "It's just sort of a notional concept."

Weeden points out that creating a new service would not address what is generally seen as a need for a more coherent force to defend U.S. interests in space, since by law a service recruits, trains and equips troops but does not do combat. That is why a Space Command is being considered, since it would be the combat arm for space much as Central Command is the organization responsible for combat operations in the Middle East.

Aside from the organizational issues, the Pentagon's role in space is under scrutiny because of a recognition that the United States is increasingly reliant on satellites that are difficult to protect in space. Satellites provide communications, navigation, intelligence and other services vital to the military and the economy. Whereas space has long been America's technological edge, it is increasingly seen as its Achilles' heel.

War in space is not just Hollywood fiction. The U.S. intelligence agencies reported earlier this year that Russia and China are pursuing "nondestructive and destructive" anti-satellite weapons for use during a future war.

A related problem that the Pentagon has struggled to address is the sluggish pace of developing and acquiring satellites through the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, which could be replaced by a new space development agency.

In an interim report to Congress in March on ways to reorganize its space organizations, the Pentagon said it is making changes to "ensure that we are prepared for" potential conflicts in space. This includes making satellites more resilient to potential attack by Russia or China.

Deborah James, who was the civilian leader of the Air Force for the final three years of the Obama administration, said at a think tank forum Monday that creating a separate Space Force does not address the legitimate concerns about U.S. space defenses. One of the criticisms of the Air Force, which is the primary service responsible for military satellites, is that it devotes too little money and attention to space.

"If money is your issue, Space Force is not your answer," she said. If the logic of creating a separate space service were applied broadly, she said, it would imply other radical changes such as creating a single nuclear service by combining management of the strategic nuclear weapons of the Air Force and Navy, which no one is considering.

Associated Press reporter Lolita C. Baldor contributed to this report.

Weather to bring renewed fire danger to Northern California

By PAUL ELIAS, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Crews battling deadly Northern California wildfires braced for a weekend of windy, hot weather that could drive the flames into new areas and threaten more homes.

The National Weather Service issued red flag warnings of critical fire weather conditions through Saturday

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night, saying a series of dry low-pressure systems passing through the region could bring wind gusts of up to 35 mph that could turn small fires or even sparks into racing walls of flame.

"This is a particularly dangerous situation with extremely low humidity and high winds. New fires will grow rapidly out of control, in some cases people may not be able to evacuate safely in time should a fire approach," the weather service said in its bulletin for the Mendocino area north of San Francisco.

As a precaution, new evacuations were called Friday for an area of Mendocino and Lake counties where week-old twin fires have destroyed 41 homes and threaten about 9,000 more.

The fire has charred an area of the forested, rural area five times the size of San Francisco and is only 30 percent contained. Thousands of people remain evacuated.

The fire remained several miles from the evacuated communities along the eastern shore of Clear Lake but "it looks like there's dicey weather on the way," California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokeswoman Jane LaBoa said.

However, some days-old evacuations were lifted Friday in an area near Redding, where armies of firefighters and fleets of aircraft have been battling an immense blaze about 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of the Oregon line. Some areas on the fire's southeastern flank were reopened to residents.

The Carr Fire was 39 percent contained after killing six people and incinerating 1,067 homes.

Gov. Jerry Brown was scheduled to visit the fire area in Shasta County on Saturday.

The fire burned slowly for days before winds suddenly whipped it up last week and drove it furiously through brush and timber.

The blaze burned so furiously on July 26 that it created a "fire whirl." The twirling tower of flame reached speeds of 143 mph (230 kph), which rivaled some of the most destructive Midwest tornados, National Weather Service meteorologist Duane Dykema said. The whirl uprooted trees and tore roofs from homes, Dykema said.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, which uses acres to describe fire size, said the blaze had blackened nearly 206 square miles (533 square kilometers).

In the Sierra Nevada, firefighters achieved 41 percent containment of a forest fire that has shut down Yosemite Valley and other adjacent portions of Yosemite National Park at what is normally the height of summer tourism.

The fire had reached into remote areas of the country's third-oldest national park. Workers who live in Yosemite's popular Valley region were ordered to leave Friday because of inaccessible roads.

The blaze has killed two firefighters.

A new report says the first firefighter, a California bulldozer operator, nearly slipped off a steep mountain trail three times before his vehicle finally rolled into a ravine and fatally crushed him.

Each earlier slip alone qualified as a "near miss" warning that the century-old mining trail could collapse, according to the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's preliminary report.

Braden Varney, 36, was working alone overnight July 14 fighting the wildfire while his assistant went to get a new hydraulic hose. Varney's radio wasn't communicating with headquarters, so his assistant relayed messages — until they lost contact.

The report says the death of the 10-year veteran highlights the need for better risk assessment, communication and supervision.

Associated Press writer Don Thompson contributed to this report from Sacramento, California.

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

Russian airline says 18 killed in Siberian helicopter crash

MOSCOW (AP) — A Russian helicopter crashed shortly after takeoff in Siberia on Saturday, killing all 18 people aboard.

The Interstate Aviation Committee, which oversees civil aviation in much of the former Soviet Union, said the Mi-8 helicopter collided with the load being carried by another helicopter that had taken off from

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the same pad in Vankor, above the Arctic Circle about 2,600 kilometers (1600 miles) northeast of Moscow. The second helicopter was undamaged and landed safely, the committee said.

Helicopters frequently carry loads in slings that hang below the craft.

There were 15 passengers and three crew aboard the crashed helicopter, said a statement from the operator, UTair airlines.

Russian news reports said all the passengers were believed to have been working for a subsidiary of the state oil company Rosneft.

UTair, one of Russia's largest airlines, operates an extensive fleet of helicopters serving Siberian oil fields as well as fixed-wing flights within Russia and to international destinations, mostly in former Soviet republics.

The helicopter that crashed was manufactured in 2010 and the pilot had nearly 6,000 hours of experience, including 2,300 as a captain, the UTair statement said.

Russian air safety has improved since the 1990s, when poor aircraft maintenance, pilot training and official oversight in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in a high crash incidence.

In February, a Saratov Airlines An-148 regional jet crashed about six minutes after takeoff from Moscow's Domodedovo Airport, killing all 71 people aboard. Investigators said the crew had failed to turn on a heating unit, resulting in flawed airspeed readings. A UTair ATR 72 crashed in Siberia in 2012, killing 33 of the 43 people aboard, after failing to be de-iced before takeoff.

Thailand's rescued cave boys end stay at Buddhist temple

By SAKCHAI LALIT, Associated Press

MAE SAI, Thailand (AP) — With their heads bowed and wearing orange robes, the members of the boys' soccer team rescued from almost three weeks trapped in a cave in northern Thailand on Saturday completed their time as novice Buddhist monks.

About 300 people gathered for the ceremony on a rainy morning that saw the boys leave temple life to return to their families. Those present gave alms — flowers, food, money — as a gesture of their religious devotion.

The July 25 ordination of 11 boys of the Wild Boars soccer team along with the 25-year-old coach was especially dedicated to a former Thai navy SEAL, Saman Gunan, who died while diving during a volunteer mission to supply the cave with oxygen tanks essential to a successful rescue. A twelfth boy did not go through the religious ritual because he isn't Buddhist.

At the temple near Thailand's mountainous border with Myanmar, the boys and their coach sat barefooted in a large pavilion in their orange robes. The adults sitting behind them wore white.

With heads bowed, they prayed, fidgeted and occasionally yawned as monks chanted sacred texts. They then placed new monks' robes on a table in front of a large photo of Saman.

They afterward changed into white shirts and blue pants. Coach Ekapol "Ake" Chanthawong remained in his Buddhist robe, as he has committed to an extended period in the monkhood.

Although they will be giving up their Buddhist robes, it is likely that the boys will retain some of the solitude of temple life, as the government has discouraged for the time being any interviews with them, wielding the threat of legal action under child protection laws.

While there has been some criticism that the government wants to control the narrative of the boys' ordeal to exploit for political purposes — Thailand's military rulers are seeking to booster their popularity ahead of a possible election next year — psychologists agree that the boys may be vulnerable to post-traumatic stress disorder. Both their physical and mental health has been judged fine.

According Dr. Paul Auerbach of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Stanford University's medical school, it's possible that they might suffer withdrawal or perhaps post-traumatic stress disorder, which is characterized by symptoms that include insomnia, nightmares, hypervigilance, low mood, difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, flashbacks and avoidance of situations similar to those that caused the original trauma.

"On the bright side, it is predictable that not all will be adversely affected — perhaps only about a third

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of them — and in those cases only a few might require professional psychological or psychiatric intervention,” he said, speaking before the rescue.

The boys and their coach entered the cave on June 23 for a quick, casual trek, but flooding quickly blocked the exit and they had to retreat deeper inside the cave. Heavy rains raised water levels further and thwarted the initial searches before two British divers on July 2 found the group huddled on a dry patch of ground, safe but hungry. They were extricated from the cave in an intricate operation involving an international team of divers over three days beginning July 8.

The epic event is being commemorated with construction of a museum, expected to open within six months, along with a statue of Saman.

Saman, who is considered a national hero, was cremated in a royally sponsored funeral and had his ashes scattered in the Mekong River.

Warren: Criminal justice system ‘racist’... ‘front to back’

By **BILL BARROW** and **CHEVEL JOHNSON**, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Potential Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren delivered what she called “the hard truth about our criminal justice system: It’s racist ... I mean front to back.”

While speaking at a historically black college, the Massachusetts senator identified some of the system’s failures: disproportionate arrests of African-Americans for petty drug possession; an overloaded public defender system; and state laws that keep convicted felons from voting even after their sentences are complete.

Warren was participating in a Q&A session hosted by Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Cedric Richmond at Dillard University in New Orleans.

She was among several possible Democratic White House contenders who spoke Friday at Netroots Nation, an annual conference for progressives. She was the only leading Democrat to appear at Dillard.

The stop is the latest sign of Warren’s effort to forge ties beyond her largely white political base in Massachusetts and avoid the fate of fellow progressive icon Bernie Sanders, who struggled to win over African-Americans during his failed bid for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination.

Warren has previously addressed the NAACP and the Rev. Al Sharpton’s annual civil rights gathering. She visited Martin Luther King Jr.’s Atlanta church last year for a program alongside the Rev. Bernice King, the slain civil rights leader’s youngest daughter.

Facing re-election to the Senate this year, Warren did not directly address her 2020 plans. But when Richmond asked her what might have changed since she decided not to run in 2016, the senator was ready.

“Two words: Donald Trump,” Warren said, before shifting to warn the audience that the November mid-term vote is the immediate fight as Democrats try to break GOP control of Congress.

Other than on criminal justice, Warren did not focus her answers on race, offering her usual creed about bending public policy back toward working-class Americans. She called for support for unions, massive investments in infrastructure and more spending on education, including programs for preschool-age children and debt relief for student loans.

Ahead of the event, Richmond said any aspiring Democratic nominee will have to address black voters directly.

“The biggest political frustration in the African-American community,” Richmond told The Associated Press, “is that we have a bunch of Democrats, both black and white, but primarily white, they don’t get it — the black experience, the black struggle, what it’s like to raise a young black man or black woman from infant to high school.”

Richmond praised Warren’s work as a consumer advocate and her willingness to explain her policies with her personal story, principally her mother’s venture into the workforce to support the family amid her father’s health problems. Warren opened with that narrative at Dillard, and it struck a chord with some who came to hear her.

“What really resonates with me was her background, coming from a meager place and using hard work

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and education to get to where she is today," said David Hoey, a pastor in Shreveport, Louisiana.

C.J. Wiltz, a retired Dillard professor who came to hear Warren, said her work on Capitol Hill stands out. "I was especially interested in what's she's been saying about the financial sector and how the impact of big banks on poor people has manifested," he said, adding that he'd "like to see her run" in 2020.

In Massachusetts, less than 10 percent of the electorate is African-American. Running for president, Democrats must navigate a primary calendar front-loaded with Southern states where African-Americans determine the outcome.

In 2008, that helped Barack Obama sweep the South and build an early, insurmountable delegate lead over Hillary Clinton. In 2016, Clinton managed the same sweep against Sanders, a Vermont senator whose home base is mostly white.

The coming campaign could include several black candidates such as Sens. Kamala Harris of California and Cory Booker of New Jersey, former Attorney General Eric Holder and former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick. Sanders could make another bid. And while Obama isn't on the ballot, his vice president, Joe Biden, could be.

"There will be a search for someone they can hear and see and immediately identify with," Aneesa McMillan, who worked for Sanders' campaign, said of black voters. But, she added, "it's not impossible" for that to be a white candidate.

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

Hot, dusty and on fire: Portugal's heatwave breaks records

By BARRY HATTON, Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal (AP) — Eight places in Portugal broke local temperature records as a wave of heat from North Africa swept across the Iberian peninsula — and officials predicted the scorching temperatures could get even worse over the weekend.

Temperatures built to around 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit) Friday in many inland areas of Portugal, and were expected to peak at 47 C (116.6 F) in some places Saturday. Large sections of Portugal are on red alert on the Civil Protection Agency's danger scale.

The highest temperature recorded Thursday, when the heat began to rise, was 45.2 C (113.4 F) near Abrantes, a town 150 kilometers (93 miles) northeast of the capital, Lisbon, the country's weather agency IPMA said.

Portugal's highest recorded temperature was 47.4 C (117.3 F) in 2003. Emergency services have issued a red alert through Sunday, placing extra services such as medical staff and firefighters on standby.

In Portugal's southern Alentejo province, streets were largely deserted. Some farmers chose to work during the night instead of in the heat of the day. Beaches around Lisbon, the capital, were packed.

Some 400 firefighters and five water-dropping aircraft, meanwhile, were battling a wildfire in southern Portugal's Algarve region.

Portugal sees large wildfires every year, although unseasonably cool weather through the end of July has meant fewer blazes in 2018. The government says only about 15 percent of the 10-year average area has been charred so far this year.

Temperatures were being driven higher across the Iberian peninsula by a hot air mass moving northward from Africa, which is also bringing dust from the Sahara Desert, meteorologists said. The dust gave the sky a dark yellow hue in some places.

In Spain, heat warnings were also issued for 41 of the country's 50 provinces as temperatures were expected to reach up to 44 C (111.2 F). Spain's highest recorded temperature is 46.9 C (116.42 F) in Cordoba, a southern city, in July 2017.

The World Meteorological Organization says continental Europe's record is 48 C (118.4 F) in Greece in 1977.

In northern Europe, Sweden was still under threat from wildfires, which in recent weeks have extended into the Arctic Circle.

Sweden's Civil Contingencies Agency warned of "a high risk" for wildfires in central and southern Sweden this weekend because of the continuing dry weather and strong winds.

And over in Britain, an unusually long, torrid summer has taken its toll on the country's flowers. The supermarket chain Morrisons has begun selling "wonky" flowers that have not developed properly.

The U.K.'s Met Office weather service says July was the country's third-warmest month in more than a century.

In Moscow, as temperatures rose to close to 30 C (86 F), city authorities announced they were opening hundreds of "cool rooms" where residents could rest amid air conditioning, with water dispensers and medical attendants.

Although that temperature is far below the blazing heat hitting southern Europe, it's well above the Russian capital's average August maximum of 23 C (73 F).

Associated Press writers Jill Lawless in London, Jim Heintz in Moscow and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, contributed to this report.

Lady Gaga collaborator known as Zombie Boy dead at 32

MONTREAL (AP) — Rick Genest, a Quebec model known for his head-to-toe tattoos and participation in the Lady Gaga music video "Born This Way," has died, his talent agency said.

Dulcedo Management confirmed on Facebook late Thursday the passing of Rick Genest, who was better known as Zombie Boy. Dulcedo said it "was in shock" and called the 32-year-old represented by the agency an "icon of the artistic scene and of the fashion world."

Lady Gaga said on her official Twitter account Thursday night that "the suicide of friend Rick Genest, Zombie Boy is beyond devastating."

The American singer added: "We have to work harder to change the culture, bring Mental Health to the forefront and erase the stigma that we can't talk about it."

According to his website, he holds the Guinness World Book of Records for the most insects tattooed on a human body (178), as well as the most bones inked on a human body, at 138.

But while his outward appearance may have been intimidating, he was unfailingly mild-mannered and polite, according to the CEO of the Welcome Hall Mission, a homeless shelter Genest visited as a teen and continued to support as an adult.

Sam Watts said he last saw Genest in June, when the artist lent his famous image to a campaign to raise awareness about the issues facing marginalized and homeless youth.

"This was a guy who put you totally at ease," he said.

"Immediately you knew this was a kind and gentle soul who had some deep concerns about anybody who is on the fringes or being dismissed for how they looked."

In early 2011, a photo of Genest in a fashion magazine drew the attention of fashion designer Nicola Formichetti, then the artistic director for French fashion house Mugler.

It was Formichetti who helped Genest secure his first major modelling gigs with Mugler and introduced him to Lady Gaga, who cast him in the video for her 2011 single "Born This Way."

In their scenes together, the singer sported face paint that mimicked Genest's tattoos as the two performed to the hit song in matching black suits.

Quebec's coroner's office said an autopsy would be conducted to determine the cause of death.

Meyer defends himself and former assistant denies abuse

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

Urban Meyer defended himself Friday, admitting he was not forthright with reporters when questioned about 2015 allegations of domestic violence against one of his assistant coaches, but also insisting he handled the situation properly at the time.

The assistant Meyer fired, Zach Smith, also spoke up, denying he abused his wife, backing his former

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boss and placing Ohio State's athletic director into the middle of the picture.

Two days after Ohio State sidelined Meyer and opened an investigation into what its superstar coach knew and did about accusations of abuse made against Smith by his ex-wife, two central figures in this college football drama answered some questions — and left much to be explained.

Meyer posted a statement addressed to Buckeyes fans on Twitter not long after his team, expected to be one of the best in the nation, opened practice for the upcoming season without him. Meyer was put on paid administrative leave Wednesday.

While Meyer's statement was still being digested, Smith went on Columbus radio station 105.7 The Zone. In the interview, Smith said Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith questioned him during the 2015 football season about the allegations made by Courtney Smith that fall. Police reports were made about two separate incidents, but Zach Smith has never been criminally charged.

Zach Smith was fired last week by Meyer, a few days after his wife obtained a protective order against him.

Smith also did an interview with ESPN. He said never assaulted his wife and any physical injuries she might have suffered were the result of him defending himself.

He said Gene Smith was alerted by police about the 2015 allegations. Zach Smith said after speaking to Gene Smith about them and he spoke to Meyer. He said Meyer told him then he would fire Smith if the head coach found out Smith hit his wife.

"I don't know what else Urban Meyer could have done," Zach Smith told ESPN.

The crisis at one of the most storied programs in college football history comes as the school is reeling from a sexual abuse scandal involving a now-dead sports doctor, Richard Strauss.

The Buckeyes open the season at home Sept. 1 against Oregon State. Co-offensive coordinator Ryan Day is acting head coach and there is no timetable for the Meyer inquiry to conclude.

"Over the past several days I have been portrayed as being indifferent to domestic violence and as someone who did not take appropriate action when warranted," Meyer said.

"Here is the truth: While at the University of Florida and now at the Ohio State University I have always followed proper reporting protocols and procedures when I have learned of an incident involving a student-athlete, coach or member of our staff by elevating the issues to the proper channels. And I did so regarding the Zach Smith incident in 2015. I take that responsibility very seriously and any suggestion to the contrary is simply false."

At Big Ten media days last week, Meyer said he knew of an incident involving the Smiths in 2009 and that he and his wife, Shelley Meyer, addressed it with the Smiths. He was also asked about a 2015 incident alleged by Courtney Smith, who also said she told Meyer's wife about those incidents.

"I can't say it didn't happen because I wasn't there," Meyer said at the time. "I was never told about anything and nothing ever came to light. I've never had a conversation about it. I know nothing about it. First I heard about that was last night. No, and I asked some people back at the office to call and say what happened and they came back and said they know nothing about it."

Meyer said his intention at media day was not to say anything inaccurate.

"However, I was not adequately prepared to discuss these sensitive personnel issues with the media, and I apologize for the way I handled those questions," Meyer said

Meyer said he will fully cooperate with investigators. Ohio State did not respond Friday to a request seeking comment on the comments by Meyer or Smith, who told the radio station his marriage was volatile and that he made mistakes. The Smiths divorced in 2016.

"I don't believe I have ever threatened her or anyone," said Zach Smith, who had been an assistant at Ohio State since Meyer was hired in 2012, in the radio interview.

Smith, the grandson of late Buckeyes coach Earle Bruce, a mentor to Meyer, played for Meyer when he was coach at Bowling Green in 2001-02. Smith also was a graduate assistant for Meyer at Florida for five seasons.

In 2009, Zach Smith was accused by his wife of assault, but charges were not filed. Meyer has said he

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and his wife, Shelley, counseled the couple at the time. Courtney Smith has also said she told Shelley Meyer about the 2015 incidents and shared pictures of injuries through text messages that she shared with college football reporter Brett McMurphy .

In one text to Courtney Smith, Shelley Meyer said of Zach Smith: "He scares me"

Meyer has been at Ohio State for six seasons, going 73-8 with a national championship in 2014 and two Big Ten conference titles. He earlier won two national titles at Florida.

Ohio State's policy on sexual misconduct says anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students or volunteers has a duty to report "when they receive a disclosure of sexual misconduct or become aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that sexual misconduct may have occurred involving anyone covered under this policy."

A clause in Meyer's new contract, which raised his salary to \$7.6 million this year and runs through 2022, also requires him to "report to Ohio State's Title IX athletics any known violations" of the sexual misconduct policy involving students, faculty or staff at the risk of being fired with cause.

Firing Meyer without cause would cost Ohio State a nearly \$40 million buyout.

Follow Ralph D. Russo at www.twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP and listen on <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/ap-top-25-college-football-podcast/id1138957862?mt=2>

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Man who harassed Yellowstone bison arrested at Glacier park

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. (AP) — An Oregon man who was caught on video harassing a bison in Yellowstone National Park was arrested in Glacier National Park in the third disturbance in less than a week at a national park, officials said Friday.

Rangers looking for Raymond Reinke of Pendleton, Oregon, found him causing a disturbance Thursday evening at the historic Many Glacier Hotel in the popular Montana park, the National Park Service said.

He remains jailed pending a hearing next week and has requested a court-appointed attorney. A message left at a phone listing for Reinke in Oregon was not immediately returned.

Reinke, 55, had been cited for drunken and disorderly conduct in a third national park, Grand Teton, last Saturday and was released on \$500 bond that required him to follow the law and avoid alcohol.

Yellowstone rangers cited him three days later for not wearing a seat belt and noted that he appeared intoxicated, park officials said. They didn't know of Reinke's bond conditions at the time.

Reinke was later cited after another Yellowstone visitor took video of him walking up to a bison in a roadway congested with stopped cars and waving his arms. The animal charges him a couple of times, but Reinke doesn't appear to get hurt.

Yellowstone officials warn visitors to stay at least 25 yards (23 meters) away from bison, which injure tourists every year who get too close.

After the video gained attention online and Yellowstone rangers learned of Reinke's charges in Grand Teton, an assistant U.S. attorney asked that his bond be revoked. A warrant was issued for Reinke's arrest.

He had told rangers he planned to travel to Glacier National Park. Rangers there were looking for his vehicle when they got a report about two guests arguing and creating a disturbance at Many Glacier Hotel.

Rangers identified one of the guests as Reinke, who was sent back to Yellowstone and appeared in U.S. court Friday.

Judge says reuniting families is government's sole burden

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A federal judge on Friday said the Trump administration was solely responsible for reuniting hundreds of children who remain separated from the parents after being split at the U.S.-Mexico border, puncturing a government plan that put the onus on the American Civil Liberties Union.

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"The reality is that for every parent that is not located, there will be a permanently orphaned child and that is 100 percent the responsibility of the administration," U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw said.

His remarks in a conference call came a day after the administration and the American Civil Liberties Union submitted widely divergent plans on how to reunify more than 500 still-separated children, including 410 with parents outside the United States.

The government proposed Thursday that the ACLU, which represents parents, use its "considerable resources" to find parents in their home countries, predominantly Guatemala and Honduras. The Justice Department said in a court filing that the State Department has begun talks with foreign governments on how the administration may be able to aid the effort.

Sabraw said he was disappointed with the court filing "in the respect that there's not a plan that has been proposed." He said he would order the government to name someone to lead the effort.

"This is going to be a significant undertaking, and it's clear that there has to be one person in charge," he said.

Left unresolved Friday was a temporary halt on deporting reunified families that Sabraw imposed on July 16 to allow time to address another dispute. The ACLU has asked that families have at least a week to decide if they want to seek asylum after they are reunited with their children, a step that the administration opposes.

Sabraw said he wanted to wait to see how a federal judge in Washington, D. C., rules on a lawsuit that also seeks a temporary halt on deportations. If that judge transfers the case to San Diego, Sabraw said he planned to convene a hearing next week for oral arguments.

In late June, Sabraw ordered that more than 2,500 children rejoin their parents by July 26. Hundreds remain apart, however, mainly because their many of those parents are outside the country.

Las Vegas gunman became unstable but didn't raise suspicions

By **KEN RITTER, MICHELLE L. PRICE and MICHAEL BALSAMO, Associated Press**

LAS VEGAS (AP) — In the months before unleashing a hail of bullets into a Las Vegas concert crowd, Stephen Paddock burned through more than \$1.5 million, became obsessed with guns and increasingly unstable, and distanced himself from his girlfriend and family, according to an investigative report released Friday.

With those revelations, police announced they were closing their 10-month investigation without a definitive answer for why Paddock, a high-stakes gambler, amassed an arsenal of weapons and carried out the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

"By all accounts, Stephen Paddock was an unremarkable man whose movements leading up to Oct. 1 didn't raise any suspicion," Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo said. "An interview with his doctor indicated signs of a troubled mind, but no troubling behavior that would trigger a call to law enforcement."

Paddock left no manifesto or "even a note to answer questions" about his motive for a rampage that killed 58 people and injured more than 800 others, Lombardo told reporters.

The FBI is expected to release its final investigative report, including a psychological profile of the gunman, later this year, Lombardo said, noting that authorities want to leave "no stone unturned."

"The FBI's assessment may shed a better light on Paddock's personality and what motivated him, but I don't know if they can provide a motive," said police Sgt. Jerry MacDonald, a key investigator in the case.

One of Paddock's brothers told investigators that he believed the gunman had a "mental illness and was paranoid and delusional." A doctor believed he may have had bipolar disorder, the report said.

Paddock's girlfriend said he had suddenly stopped being affectionate and constantly complained of being ill. Marilou Danley told investigators that he said doctors could not cure him but told him he had a "chemical imbalance."

In its final report released Friday, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department found Paddock acted alone and no one else will be charged, said Lombardo, the elected head of the police department.

Earlier this year, U.S. prosecutors charged an Arizona man accused of selling illegal armor-piercing bul-

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lets found in Paddock's room at the Mandalay Bay hotel-casino. Douglas Haig has pleaded not guilty and maintains he sold tracer ammunition, which illuminate a bullet's path.

The report included a summary of 14 of Paddock's bank accounts, which contained a total of \$2.1 million in September 2015. Two years later, the amount had dropped to \$530,000. He "wasn't as successful in the gambling as he was in the previous years," Lombardo said.

Investigators said Paddock paid more than \$600,000 to casinos and over \$170,000 to credit card companies. The analysis said he also made nearly \$95,000 in firearms-related purchases.

The report gave no other information about the casino purchases. High-rollers like Paddock are often given credit lines at casinos.

Paddock bought more than three dozen guns between 2016 and 2017. Danley told investigators that she noticed he was buying large amounts of ammunition, but he dismissed her concerns by saying it was cheaper to buy in bulk, according to the report.

She told police that she accompanied Paddock to gun stores and gun shows and helped him set up a gun range in Nevada. Danley told authorities he tended to be obsessive when he dove into a new hobby, and she considered the behavior part of that same pattern, said Detective Trever Alsup, the lead investigator in the case.

Paddock's mother, Irene Hudson, told investigators she did not understand why her son would carry out an attack and believed he "must have developed some type of 'brain tumor,'" the report said.

An autopsy did not find anything unusual with Paddock's physical condition, even after a microscopic brain examination by experts at Stanford University.

A brother, Eric Paddock, described his sibling as a "narcissist" who only cared about people he could benefit from.

Survivor Megan O'Donnell Clements, who attended the music festival with three friends, said she had come to accept that a motive would likely never be found but "to see it written out and finalized" in the police report was gut-wrenching.

"It's worse. It's not closure," the resident of Wilmington, Delaware, told The Associated Press. "To know for real that we'll never really know, it's kind of horrifying. I just don't understand what would have driven someone to that, and to have absolutely no answers, even if I had in my brain accepted that, it's just really hard to swallow."

The final details of the investigation came after police released 13 batches of investigative documents, 911 calls, police reports, witness statements and video over the last three months. They have illustrated chaos, heartbreak and heroism from first responders, concertgoers and family members.

Police body camera recordings earlier made public showed officers using explosives to blast through the door of a 32nd-floor hotel suite to find Paddock dead on the floor from a self-inflicted gunshot. There were 23 assault-style weapons, including 14 fitted with rapid-fire "bump stock" devices, strewn about the room and a revolver near Paddock's body.

Authorities concluded that Paddock fired for 11 minutes, using multiple weapons outfitted with target scopes and bump stocks. Eight incendiary rounds were directed at an aviation fuel tank at the nearby airport. Two hit the tank, but it did not explode.

Officers found several laptops, including at least one that was missing a hard drive, the report said. Eric Paddock told investigators that he believed his brother had cheated on the family's tax preparation. Eric was worried he might be implicated for tax evasion if evidence was collected from his brother's hard drives, the report said.

When police told Eric Paddock about the missing hard drive, he repeated several times: "Maybe he did care for us."

Friday's report further detailed Paddock's meticulously planning, including researching SWAT tactics, renting other hotel rooms overlooking outdoor concerts and investigating potential targets in at least four cities.

The police department is conducting internal reviews into individual officers' actions, including one veteran officer who froze in a hallway a floor below where Paddock was firing onto the crowd of 22,000

country music fans.

Another officer accidentally fired a rifle during a blast to breach a locked door in Paddock's room. Police said no one was injured and the shot did not hit Paddock.

Balsamo reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Regina Garcia Cano in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

Deadly California blaze spawned destructive fire tornado

By PAUL ELIAS, Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A deadly Northern California wildfire burned so hot in dry and windy conditions that it birthed a record-breaking tornado of flame, officials said Friday.

They also warned of worsening conditions throughout the region.

Winds in the "fire whirl" created July 26 near Redding reached speeds of 143 mph (230 kph), a speed that rivaled some of the most destructive Midwest tornados, National Weather Service meteorologist Duane Dykema said. The whirl uprooted trees and tore roofs from homes, Dykema said.

The whirl measured a 3 on the five-level Enhanced Fujita scale, which scientists use to classify the strength of tornados, he said. California has not recorded a tornado of that strength since 1978.

That fire continues to burn about 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of the Oregon border as firefighters there and throughout Northern California brace for worsening conditions this weekend.

The weather service issued warnings for critical fire weather conditions into Saturday, saying a series of dry low-pressure systems passing through the region would bring afternoon wind gusts.

"This is a particularly dangerous situation with extremely low humidity and high winds. New fires will grow rapidly out of control, in some cases people may not be able to evacuate safely in time should a fire approach," the weather service said in its bulletin for the Mendocino area north of San Francisco.

Forecasters said areas with the highest threat include the massive blaze near Redding and two fires burning next to each other around Clearlake about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of San Francisco.

The Redding fire has grown to 206 square miles (533-square-kilometer) and has destroyed 1,060 homes and many other structures.

Two firefighters and four other people have been killed since the blaze, which ignited July 23, raced with extraordinary fury toward the region's largest city. More than 1,300 homes remained threatened.

Wildfires typically create whirls but rarely of the strength of the one recorded July 26, Dykema said.

Whirls are created when hot air rises and twists tightly, he said. The hotter the fire, the faster the air rises and the tighter it twists until it takes off as a tornado.

To the southwest of Redding, new evacuations were ordered late Thursday at the Mendocino Complex, where twin fires have ravaged a combined 250 square miles (621 square kilometers), destroyed 41 residences and threatened 9,200 homes.

The combined fires have prompted about 15,000 people to evacuate their homes.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokeswoman Jane LaBoa said wildfire remains several miles from the evacuated communities along the eastern shore of Clear Lake, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) northwest of Sacramento. But she said trajectory and the weather forecast prompted officials to evacuate the communities Friday out of an abundance of caution.

"It looks like there's dicey weather on the way," LaBoa said.

The wildfire has grown to 175 square miles (280 square kilometers) and is a few miles from connecting with a second blaze that has grown to 64 square miles (105 square kilometers).

The twin fires have destroyed 41 homes.

In Sierra Nevada, firefighters achieved 41 percent containment of a 115-square-mile (298-square-kilometer) forest fire that has shut down Yosemite Valley and other adjacent portions of Yosemite National Park at what is normally the height of summer tourism.

The fire has reached into remote areas of the country's third-oldest national park. Workers who live in

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Yosemite's popular Valley region were ordered to leave Friday because of inaccessible roads.

The fire also killed two firefighters.

A new report says the first firefighter, a California bulldozer operator, nearly slipped off a steep mountain trail three times before his vehicle finally rolled into a ravine and fatally crushed him.

Each earlier slip alone qualified as a "near miss" warning that the century-old mining trail could collapse, according to the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's preliminary report.

Braden Varney, 36, was working alone overnight July 14 fighting the wildfire while his assistant went to get a new hydraulic hose. Varney's radio wasn't communicating with headquarters, so his assistant relayed messages — until they lost contact.

The report says the death of the 10-year veteran highlights the need for better risk assessment, communication and supervision.

Officials have not said how the other three firefighters died fighting blazes near Yosemite and Redding.

Associated Press writer Don Thompson contributed to this report from Sacramento, California. Follow AP's wildfire coverage here: <https://apnews.com/tag/Wildfires>

Astronauts picked for SpaceX, Boeing capsule test flights

By MARCIA DUNN, AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA on Friday assigned the astronauts who will ride the first commercial capsules into orbit next year and bring crew launches back to the U.S.

SpaceX and Boeing are shooting for a test flight of their capsules by the end of this year or early next, with the first crews flying from Cape Canaveral, Florida, by next spring or summer.

Nine astronauts were named to ride the SpaceX Dragon and Boeing Starliner capsules — five on the first crew flights and four on the second round of missions to the International Space Station.

"For the first time since 2011, we are on the brink of launching American astronauts on American rockets from American soil," said NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine, who made the introductions at Johnson Space Center.

U.S. astronauts now take Russian capsules to the space station, with NASA paying as much as \$82 million a seat.

Boeing's first Starliner crew will include a former NASA astronaut who commanded the last shuttle flight in 2011, Chris Ferguson, who's now a Boeing employee. The other commercial crew members are still with NASA. All have a military background.

The seven men and two women pumped their fists in the air and gave thumbs-up as they strode onto the stage to cheers from the crowd.

"As a test pilot, it doesn't get any better than this," said astronaut Nicole Aunapu Mann, a Naval aviator who will make her first trip into space on the first Starliner crew.

She later said the energy in the packed auditorium was incredible.

"We're ushering in this new era of American spaceflight. I really think it's just the beginning," Mann told The Associated Press.

NASA has been paying billions of dollars to SpaceX and Boeing to develop the crew capsules to pick up where the shuttles left off, while also paying billions for cargo deliveries to the space station by SpaceX and Northrop Grumman. The cargo missions started in 2012. The crew missions have been delayed repeatedly because of the technical challenges and difficulties of making spacecraft safe for humans. A recent abort test by Boeing resulted in leaking engine fuel.

Astronaut Doug Hurley, who will be on the first crew of the SpaceX Dragon, hinted at the delays when he noted, "The first flight is something you dream about as a test pilot, and you don't think it's ever going to happen to you. But looks like it might."

"Oh, it better," Bridenstine chimed in.

Besides Ferguson and Mann, the initial commercial crew members are: Eric Boe, Sunita Williams and

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John Cassada riding on Boeing. Robert Behnken, Douglas Hurley, Victor Glover and Michael Hopkins will fly with SpaceX.

SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell took a photo of the astronauts before assuring them, "We won't let you down."

Boeing's Starliners will soar on United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rockets. Dragons, meanwhile, will fly on SpaceX's own Falcon 9 rockets. The race to get astronauts to the space station first is real; a U.S. flag that flew on the first space shuttle flight in 1981 and the last shuttle flight in 2011, awaits the winner.

A white SpaceX launch suit and a blue Boeing launch suit stood on display behind the astronauts on stage. Ferguson told the gathering that these new high-tech capsules will have a higher emphasis on safety than the shuttle did, with full abort systems. The group likened it to flying an iPhone, with a minimal number of switches compared with the 3,000 switches in the old shuttle cockpit.

As for being the only non-NASA guy on board, Ferguson explained later during a Reddit "Ask Me Anything" program that Boeing always uses company test pilots for first flights "and the Starliner is no exception."

Ferguson noted he's been involved with the Boeing capsule since the beginning.

"So good or bad, it's got my name on it, and I'm sure it's going to be good," he told the AP.

SpaceX is shooting for a test flight without passengers in November and a crew flight in April. Boeing is aiming for a test flight at the end of this year or early next, and the first crew flight in the middle of next year.

By handing off crew and cargo runs to the space station — which will keep orbiting until at least 2024 — NASA has set its sight on the moon and Mars, developing the Orion capsule and the massive Space Launch System rocket.

"This is truly an exciting time for human spaceflight in our nation, and believe me, it's only going to get better as we charge off into the future," said Bob Cabana, a former shuttle commander who now heads Kennedy Space Center.

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

Pentagon redoing space defenses, but will Trump demand more?

By ROBERT BURNS, AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump wants a Space Force, a new military service he says is needed to ensure American dominance in space. But the idea is gaining little traction at the Pentagon, where the president's defense chief, Jim Mattis, says it would add burdensome bureaucracy and unwanted costs.

The Pentagon acknowledges a need to revamp its much-criticized approach to defending U.S. economic and security interests in space, and it is moving in that direction. But it's unclear whether this will satisfy Trump, who wants to go even further by creating a separate military space service.

The administration intends to announce next week the results of a Pentagon study that is expected to call for creating a new military command — U.S. Space Command — to consolidate space warfighting forces and making other organizational changes short of establishing a separate service, which only Congress can do. Any legislative proposal to create a separate service would likely not be put on the table until next year.

Mattis, who said prior to Trump's "Space Force" announcement in June that he opposes creating a new branch of the military for space, said afterward that this would require "a lot of detailed planning."

Mattis is allied on this with key Republicans on Capitol Hill including Sen. James Inhofe, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who opposes a separate Space Force but is open to creating a Space Command. The command would coordinate the use of space forces of existing services, such as those that operate military satellites, but would not be a separate service.

Mattis's chief spokeswoman, Dana W. White, said Friday he believes that consolidating space functions will "ensure we move at the speed of relevancy. Space is a joint warfighting domain that the U.S. must dominate."

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Trump mentioned as recently as Tuesday that he had ordered the Pentagon to begin the process of creating a Space Force as a new branch of the military, but he did not repeat the phrase he used in June — a “separate but equal” service. That may open the possibility of the Pentagon proposing to establish a cadre of space experts that would be part of a space “corps” attached to the Air Force rather than as a separate service.

On Friday, Trump hailed the news that NASA has named the astronauts who will ride the first commercial capsules into orbit next year. “We have the greatest facilities in the world and we are now letting the private sector pay to use them,” he tweeted. “Exciting things happening. Space Force!”

Trump’s focus has generated an unusual level of talk about space, but with little clarity.

“At the moment, there is no concrete proposal on the table for what a Space Force will look like or what it will do,” said Brian Weeden, an Air Force veteran who is director of program planning at the Secure World Foundation, which promotes peaceful uses of outer space. “It’s just sort of a notional concept.”

Weeden points out that creating a new service would not address what is generally seen as a need for a more coherent force to defend U.S. interests in space, since by law a service recruits, trains and equips troops but does not do combat. That is why a Space Command is being considered, since it would be the combat arm for space much as Central Command is the organization responsible for combat operations in the Middle East.

Aside from the organizational issues, the Pentagon’s role in space is under scrutiny because of a recognition that the United States is increasingly reliant on satellites that are difficult to protect in space. Satellites provide communications, navigation, intelligence and other services vital to the military and the economy. Whereas space has long been America’s technological edge, it is increasingly seen as its Achilles’ heel.

War in space is not just Hollywood fiction. The U.S. intelligence agencies reported earlier this year that Russia and China are pursuing “nondestructive and destructive” anti-satellite weapons for use during a future war.

A related problem that the Pentagon has struggled to address is the sluggish pace of developing and acquiring satellites through the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, which could be replaced by a new space development agency.

In an interim report to Congress in March on ways to reorganize its space organizations, the Pentagon said it is making changes to “ensure that we are prepared for” potential conflicts in space. This includes making satellites more resilient to potential attack by Russia or China.

Deborah James, who was the civilian leader of the Air Force for the final three years of the Obama administration, said at a think tank forum Monday that creating a separate Space Force does not address the legitimate concerns about U.S. space defenses. One of the criticisms of the Air Force, which is the primary service responsible for military satellites, is that it devotes too little money and attention to space.

“If money is your issue, Space Force is not your answer,” she said. If the logic of creating a separate space service were applied broadly, she said, it would imply other radical changes such as creating a single nuclear service by combining management of the strategic nuclear weapons of the Air Force and Navy, which no one is considering.

Associated Press reporter Lolita C. Baldor contributed to this report.

Report: Trump commission did not find widespread voter fraud

By MARINA VILLENEUVE, Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The now-disbanded voting integrity commission launched by the Trump administration uncovered no evidence to support claims of widespread voter fraud, according to an analysis of administration documents released Friday.

In a letter to Vice President Mike Pence and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, who are both Republicans and led the commission, Maine Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap said the documents show there was a “pre-ordained outcome” and that drafts of a commission report included a section on evidence of

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voter fraud that was “glaringly empty.”

“It’s calling into the darkness, looking for voter fraud,” Dunlap, a Democrat, told The Associated Press. “There’s no real evidence of it anywhere.”

Republican President Donald Trump convened the commission to investigate the 2016 presidential election after making unsubstantiated claims that between 3 million and 5 million ballots were illegally cast. Critics, including Dunlap, reject his claims of widespread voter fraud.

The Trump administration last month complied with a court order to turn over documents from the voting integrity commission to Dunlap. The commission met just twice and has not issued a report.

Dunlap’s findings received immediate pushback Friday from Kobach, who acted as vice chair of the commission while Pence served as chair.

“For some people, no matter how many cases of voter fraud you show them, there will never be enough for them to admit that there’s a problem,” said Kobach, who is running for Kansas governor and has a good chance of unseating the incumbent, Jeff Colyer, in the Republican primary Tuesday.

“It appears that Secretary Dunlap is willfully blind to the voter fraud in front of his nose,” Kobach said in a statement released by his spokesman.

Kobach said there have been more than 1,000 convictions for voter fraud since 2000, and that the commission presented 8,400 instances of double voting in the 2016 election in 20 states.

“Had the commission done the same analysis of all 50 states, the number would have been exponentially higher,” Kobach said.

In response, Dunlap said those figures were never brought before the commission, and that Kobach hasn’t presented any evidence for his claims of double voting. He said the commission was presented with a report claiming over 1,000 convictions for various forms of voter misconduct since 1948.

“The plural of anecdote is not data,” Dunlap said in his Friday letter to the shuttered commission’s leaders. Pence’s office did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

Dunlap said he is unsure whether the administration has released all relevant documents, and said the matter is in litigation. He said he was repeatedly rebuffed when he sought access to commission records including meeting materials, witness invitations and correspondence.

Dunlap released his findings on a website .

Emails released by Dunlap and promoted by the nonprofit American Oversight, which represented Dunlap, include examples of Republican voting integrity commissioners emailing each other as they worked on information requests without including Democrats.

“Indeed, a very few commissioners worked to buttress their pre-ordained conclusions shielded from dissent or dialogue from those commissioners not included in the discussions,” Dunlap said in his Friday letter.

In a June 2017 email, commissioner Christy McCormick unsuccessfully tried to suggest that the commission hire a statistician she knew. “When I was at DOJ, we had numerous discussions that made me pretty confident that he is conservative (and Christian, too),” said McCormick, in reference to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The emails also show some commission members had planned to ask for an interstate database used to identify duplicate voter registrations, as well as lists of individuals deemed ineligible for federal jury service due to death, relocation, convictions or lack of citizenship. It wasn’t clear in the emails whether or not such requests ended up being fulfilled, Dunlap said.

In two November 2017 emails, Republican commission member and election lawyer J. Christian Adams emailed all members and said there hadn’t been any prosecutions for double voting or any non-citizen voting in years. “Understanding the extent of un-prosecuted and known election crimes can inform the commission’s recommendations,” Adams said.

Adams also called for U.S. Customs and Immigration Services to obtain metadata from citizenship applications as well as a list of individuals removed from the U.S. due to their unlawful participation in elections.

“Many applicants note they have been registered to vote and are voting,” Adams said.

Associated Press writer John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas, contributed to this report.

How major US stock indexes fared Friday

By The Associated Press

U.S. stocks rose Friday after the Labor Department said hiring remained solid in July and strong quarterly earnings continued to boost the market.

On Friday:

The S&P 500 index added 13.13 points, or 0.5 percent, to 2,840.35.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 136.42 points, or 0.5 percent, to 25,462.58.

The Nasdaq composite picked up 9.33 points, or 0.1 percent, to 7,812.01.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks slipped 8.73 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,673.37.

For the week:

The S&P 500 rose 21.53 points, or 0.8 percent.

The Dow inched up 11.52 points, or less than 0.1 percent.

The Nasdaq advanced 74.60 points, or 1 percent.

The Russell 2000 gained 10.03 points, or 0.6 percent.

For the year:

The S&P 500 is up 166.74 points, or 6.2 percent.

The Dow is up 743.36 points, or 3 percent.

The Nasdaq is up 908.62 points, or 13.2 percent.

The Russell 2000 is up 137.86 points, or 9 percent.

US stocks rise as companies that pay big dividends surge

By MARLEY JAY, AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks rose Friday after the Labor Department said hiring remained solid in July and strong quarterly earnings continued to boost the market.

U.S. employers added 157,000 jobs last month, fewer than analysts expected. But the Labor Department said more jobs were added in May and June than it previously reported. That made up for the shortfall in July.

There was little reaction to China's threat to put tariffs on \$60 billion in U.S. goods. Larger multinational companies climbed while smaller, U.S.-focused companies lagged the rest of the market. That's the opposite of what generally happens when investors are worried about trade tensions.

Bond prices edged higher, sending yields lower. Food companies and other big-dividend stocks rose.

Brad McMillan, chief investment officer for Commonwealth Financial Network, said the data show the economy is likely to keep expanding, but it's not heating up in a way that would push the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates more quickly.

"That's exactly what the market wants to see," he said. "This report is right in the sweet spot."

The S&P 500 index rose 13.13 points, or 0.5 percent, to 2,840.35. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 136.42 points, or 0.5 percent, to 25,462.58. The Nasdaq composite rose 9.33 points, or 0.1 percent, to 7,812.01. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks lost 8.73 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,673.37.

The benchmark S&P 500 rose for the fifth week in a row. Some of those gains have been small, but that's the longest winning streak for the index this year.

The slightly weak jobs report reflected the bankruptcy of Toys R Us and job cuts in local governments, which dragged down the hiring totals.

Hourly wage growth remained modest in July, and inflation-adjusted wages are actually decreasing because inflation has gradually picked up. McMillan, of Commonwealth, said another reason for the slip is that companies are hiring people with lower education levels because there are more of those workers available. While low or stagnant wages are good for company profits and stock prices, it could pose a problem for the economy.

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"One of the real questions going forward is whether in fact consumers can keep spending at the rate they have," he said.

Kraft Heinz climbed after the maker of Oscar Mayer meats and Jell-O pudding said improved sales in Europe and Asia helped offset weaker results from the U.S. and Canada. The New York Post also reported that Kraft has had talks with Campbell Soup about a possible deal.

The Post said Kraft hasn't made an offer. Kraft Heinz gained 8.6 percent to \$64.48 and Campbell rose 2.5 percent to \$42.76.

Cereal maker Post Holdings climbed 8 percent to \$93.58 after reporting quarterly revenue that was higher than analysts expected. The company also said the private equity firm Thomas H. Lee Partners is investing in its private brands division, 8th Avenue Food & Provisions.

Video game publisher Take-Two Interactive jumped 9 percent to \$123.41 percent after it topped Wall Street's expectations in the fiscal first quarter and raised its projections for the rest of the year. The company said players spent more money on "Grand Theft Auto Online" and "NBA 2K18" than it expected. Rival Activision Blizzard lost 3.7 percent to \$71.32 after a weak revenue forecast.

China and the U.S. continued to threaten each other with tariffs. China's government said Friday that it will put tariffs on \$60 billion in goods including coffee, honey and industrial chemicals if the U.S. goes ahead with a proposal to tax \$200 billion in Chinese imports. The Trump administration said this week that it might put a tariff of 25 percent on those goods, a higher rate than it had threatened previously.

Bond prices rose. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.95 percent from 2.98 percent.

Benchmark U.S. crude lost 0.7 percent to \$68.49 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, used to price international oils, dipped 0.3 percent to \$73.21 per barrel in London.

Wholesale gasoline slipped 0.1 percent to \$2.07 a gallon. Heating oil fell 0.2 percent to \$2.13 a gallon. Natural gas rose 1.3 percent to \$2.85 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Energy companies traded lower following some disappointing quarterly reports. Noble Energy sank 7.9 percent to \$32.89 and EOG Resources fell 2.8 percent to \$122.41. Energy stocks have lagged the rest of the market in recent weeks after making big gains earlier this year.

Gold picked up 0.3 percent to \$1,223.20 an ounce. Silver added 0.5 percent to \$15.46 an ounce. Copper gained 0.9 percent to \$2.76 a pound.

The dollar weakened slightly. It fell to 111.23 yen from 111.69 yen. The euro fell to \$1.1578 from \$1.1587.

The British FTSE 100 jumped 1.1 percent. Germany's DAX added 0.6 percent and the CAC 40 in France edged up 0.3 percent.

Japan's Nikkei 225 added less than 0.1 percent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gave up 0.2 percent. South Korea's Kospi added 0.8 percent.

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

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Aug. 4, the 216th day of 2018. There are 149 days left in the year.

On August 4, 1944, 15-year-old diarist Anne Frank was arrested with her sister, parents and four others by the Gestapo after hiding for two years inside a building in Amsterdam. (Anne and her sister, Margot, died at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.)

On this date:

In 1735, a jury found John Peter Zenger of the New York Weekly Journal not guilty of committing seditious libel against the colonial governor of New York, William Cosby.

In 1790, the U.S. Coast Guard had its beginnings as President George Washington signed a measure authorizing a group of revenue cutters to enforce tariff and trade laws and prevent smuggling.

In 1830, plans for the city of Chicago were laid out.

In 1892, businessman Andrew Borden and his wife, Abby, were axed to death in their home in Fall River,

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Massachusetts. Lizzie Borden, Andrew's daughter from a previous marriage, was accused of the killings, but acquitted at trial.

In 1914, Britain declared war on Germany for invading Belgium; the United States proclaimed its neutrality in the mushrooming world conflict.

In 1936, Jesse Owens of the U.S. won the second of his four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics as he prevailed in the long jump over German Luz Long, who was the first to congratulate him.

In 1964, the bodies of missing civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney were found buried in an earthen dam in Mississippi.

In 1972, Arthur Bremer was convicted and sentenced in Upper Marlboro, Md., to 63 years in prison for his attempt on the life of Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace (the sentence was later reduced to 53 years; Bremer was released from prison in 2007).

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed a measure establishing the Department of Energy.

In 1987, the Federal Communications Commission voted 4-0 to abolish the Fairness Doctrine, which required radio and television stations to present balanced coverage of controversial issues.

In 1993, a federal judge sentenced Los Angeles police officers Stacey Koon and Laurence Powell to 2 1/2 years in prison for violating Rodney King's civil rights.

In 2009, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il pardoned American journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee for entering the country illegally and ordered their release during a surprise visit by former U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush signed legislation allowing the State Department to settle all remaining lawsuits against Libya by American victims of terrorism. In a brazen attack just days ahead of the Beijing Olympics, two men from a mainly Muslim ethnic group rammed a truck and hurled explosives at jogging policemen in western China, killing 16.

Five years ago: Security forces closed roads, put up extra blast walls and increased patrols near some of the more than 20 U.S. diplomatic missions in the Muslim world that Washington had ordered closed for the weekend following warnings of a possible al-Qaida attack. Missy Franklin claimed her record sixth gold medal on the final day of the world championships in Barcelona, becoming the most successful female swimmer ever at a world meet. American Stacy Lewis won the Women's British Open, finishing with a pair of birdies and closing with an even-par 72. Pro Football Hall of Famer Art Donovan, 89, died in Baltimore.

One year ago: Former pharmaceutical CEO Martin Shkreli, who became notorious for a price-gouging scandal, was convicted on federal charges that he deceived investors in a pair of failed hedge funds. (Shkreli was sentenced months later to seven years in prison.) President Donald Trump left Washington for a 2 1/2 week trip to his private golf club in central New Jersey and his home at New York City's Trump Tower; the president described it as a "working vacation." The unemployment rate ticked down to 4.3 percent, matching the 16-year low that had been recorded in May, as employers added 209,000 jobs.

Today's Birthdays: Actress-singer Tina Cole is 75. Actor-comedian Richard Belzer is 74. Football Hall of Famer John Riggins is 69. Former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales is 63. Actor-screenwriter Billy Bob Thornton is 63. Actress Kym Karath (Film: "The Sound of Music") is 60. Hall of Fame track star Mary Decker Slaney is 60. Actress Lauren Tom is 59. Former President Barack Obama is 57. Producer Michael Gelman (TV: "Live with Kelly & Ryan") is 57. Retired MLB All-Star pitcher Roger Clemens is 56. Actress Crystal Chappell is 53. Author Dennis Lehane is 53. Rock musician Rob Cieka (Boo Radleys) is 50. Actor Daniel Dae Kim is 50. Actor Michael DeLuise is 49. Race car driver Jeff Gordon is 47. Rapper-actress Yo-Yo is 47. Country singer Jon Nicholson is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer-actor Marques (MAR'-kus) Houston is 37. Britain's Duchess of Sussex, the former actress Meghan Markle, is 37. Actress Abigail Spencer is 37. Actress Greta Gerwig is 35. Country singer Crystal Bowersox (TV: "American Idol") is 33. Rock singer Tom Parker (The Wanted) is 30. Actors Dylan and Cole Sprouse are 26. Singer Jessica Sanchez (TV: "American Idol") is 23.

Thought for Today: "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." — Anne Frank (1929-1945).