

# Groton Daily Independent

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Chicken Soup  
for the Soul

"An affirmation  
opens the door.  
It's a beginning point  
on the path to change."  
-Louise L. Hay



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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.

"From minor scratches to a complete rebuild . . . we can do it all"

**NOW OPEN**

# Harris

**Auto Body** ABDN

225 Brown County Hwy 19 South  
Aberdeen: 605/725-4900



## 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.

## Janitor Wanted

The Groton Area School District has immediate openings for a full or part-time custodian. Position includes great benefits package. Apply at the Groton Area School District Office – 406 N 2nd Street. (0808.0823)



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## Guthmiller places seventh at Milbank Poet Golf Invitational

Cade Guthmiller placed seventh at the Pine Hills Golf Course on August 16 as the Milbank Poet Invitational golf meet was held. Guthmiller shot an 88 with a 45 in the front half and a 43 in the back half. Tristan Traphagen shot a 60 and a 50 for a score of 110. Lucas Simon shot a 52 and a 66 for a score of 118. Hunter Kassube shot a 71 and a 65 for a score of 136.

**TIMED ONLINE** 9445 State Line Road, Frederick, SD 57441

# AUCTION

**OPENS: TUES., AUG. 21 / CLOSSES: TUES., AUG. 28** 2018

<p><b>TRACTORS</b></p> <p>2003 Case STX440 4WD 2005 John Deere 8420 MFWD Allis Chalmers 7040 2WD</p>	<p><b>GRAIN CART &amp; GRAVITY BOX</b></p> <p>Brent Avalanche 1084 grain cart Minnesota 260 gravity box</p>	
<p><b>COMBINE &amp; HEADS</b></p> <p>2009 John Deere 9770 STS 2006 John Deere 635 flex head 2009 John Deere 612C chopping corn head</p>	<p><b>TRUCK</b></p> <p>2004 Freightliner Classic XL tri-axle flat top sleeper 60"</p>	
<p><b>DRILL</b></p> <p>Great Plains grain drill, 20', 6" spacing, 3 pt., mounted gauge, rubber press wheels</p>	<p><b>TRAILERS</b></p> <p>2013 Featherlite 8270 aluminum livestock trailer 2010 Timpfe hopper bottom trailer 1996 Timpfe hopper bottom trailer 1999 Doonan 502DB14 step deck trailer EZ-Trail 680 header trailer</p>	
<p><b>FERTILIZER CADDY</b></p> <p>Pattison CB1600 fertilizer caddy w/pump</p>	<p><b>LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT</b></p> <p>1993 IHC 4900 truck (3) Vern's creep feeders 150 bu. Wheel loader livestock water tank</p>	
<p><b>DISCS</b></p> <p>John Deere 235 disc Sunflower disc John Deere 712 disc chisel</p>	<p><b>ATTACHMENTS</b></p> <p>MDS pallet forks for John Deere 840 loader Snow/silage bucket John Deere material bucket</p>	
<p><b>OTHER TILLAGE EQUIPMENT</b></p> <p>Landoll 7430 VT-Plus vertical tillage John Deere 726 mulch finisher Rite Way landroller, 42'</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PREVIEW: August 13-28 from 8AM-5PM</b> <b>LOADOUT: Thursday, August 30 from 8AM-5PM</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TIRES &amp; PARTS</b></p> <p>(4) Skid steer loader tires Landoll disc blades &amp; bearings John Deere grill guard (10) John Deere suitcase weights</p>		

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## Candidates for governor differ on openness task force, release of emails

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association



**Kristi Noem**

BROOKINGS — Task forces delving into open government issues have been appointed by various elected leaders the past 20 years, but that practice would stop if U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem is elected governor.

"My goal is not going to be to create new task forces," said Noem, the Republican candidate for governor, who noted that there are 130 state boards and commissions. "I think we can utilize their resources and get the people that we need participating in those to where we don't need to create another layer of bureaucracy to get the decisions that we need to serve the people of South Dakota."

Her Democratic opponent, State Sen. Billie Sutton, embraced the use of a task force which in the past has brought together representatives of the media, law enforcement, local govern-



**Billie Sutton**

ment, the judiciary and others to find common ground on proposed legislation.

"When the law needs to be changed, I think we need a task force approach to move the ball so everybody's on the same page and we're all communicating what makes sense," Sutton said.

The two candidates made their remarks to members of the South Dakota Newspaper Association First Amendment Committee and the SDNA Board of Directors. The gubernatorial candidates were questioned in separate interviews about their views concerning open meetings and open records laws in South Dakota.

Noem assured newspaper editors and publishers that the lack of a new open government task force would not result in a lack of input from their industry. She explained that talking to stakeholders was the way her congressional office operates before proposing legislation.

"I would not begin to start pushing a lot of these other transparency initiatives until we had you guys in the loop," Noem said. "That's just been our normal, standard operating procedure for the last eight years."

The candidates also differed on their approach to the open records exception that keeps government correspondence, including emails, from public disclosure.

"I think a presumption of openness as it pertains to emails is a good step," Sutton said. "That is definitely something I want to do."

Noem said she was concerned about the protection of personal information that may be included in the emails as well as the prospect of implementing strict rules that would drive officials away from email and toward using the telephone, where there would be no record of their interaction.

"If you asked me today if I'm open to opening all emails, I would say, 'No, I'm not,'" Noem said. "But I would love to sit down and figure out a way it could work because those two concerns are big concerns."



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Both candidates were in favor of looking at ways to limit confidential settlements in state government lawsuits.

"I think it makes sense for the public to know anytime taxpayer dollars are involved," Sutton said. "I feel strongly that the public should have access to information."

Noem said information about victims should be protected, but that state government lawsuit settlements should be an open record.

"If the taxpayers are picking up the tab," Noem said, "they should get a receipt for what they paid for."

In South Dakota, law enforcement investigative records for closed cases and inactive cases are closed to the public as are police reports generated by calls for service. Both candidates showed a degree of reluctance when asked if they would work toward opening those records.

"I think definitely when cases are closed and investigations are complete," Sutton said of opening the investigative records. "I'd be more hesitant on ongoing investigations. I also have a strong belief that somebody's innocent until proven guilty."

Noem said she would need to hear from law enforcement about why the records are closed. She said her congressional office has fielded requests from families seeking old police records to get information.

"So I do know there is a general frustration for families that are caught up in those cases," Noem said. "They're sitting out there for years with no answers and no way to get them."

Both candidates were open to a possible tightening of the rules that allow public elected bodies to go into executive session. They also expressed support for a law that would require executive sessions be recorded so that the recording could be reviewed by a judge if a complaint about the legality of the session were filed.

Both candidates also said they supported the continued publication of public notices in newspapers as well as favoring a continuation of the sales and use tax exemption for advertising services.

Noem got the attention of editors and publishers when she said that her administration would seek a reporter shield law. Shield laws protect reporters from revealing sources, turning over notes or being compelled to testify in court.

"There should be that protection for investigative reporters to do their jobs without fear of consequences and legal action," Noem said.

The candidates differed when asked to grade South Dakota's efforts in the areas of open government and transparency.

Noem gave the state a B.

"I think we have made strides," Noem said. "We've got some room for improvement that can happen."

To help the state improve, Noem has proposed what she calls the Sunshine Initiative. It includes steps to further open government in the areas of live streaming more government meetings, expanding open.SD.gov, implementing the reporter shield law, limiting confidentiality in state government lawsuit settlements and reviewing open meetings laws.

Sutton wasn't as generous with his grade: "If I had to grade us on transparency and accountability it would not be higher than a C and in some instances I think it's an F."

Sutton's plan for government transparency includes opening more government records to the public, adding more and more easily accessible information to open.SD.gov, standardizing records retention rules and ensuring access to state government officials by the press and the public.

When it comes to open records, Sutton said, "We've gotten a little complacent as a state government."

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## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

The Minnesota Vikings suffered a preseason loss on Saturday, losing to the Jacksonville Jaguars 14-10 at U.S. Bank Stadium. The Vikings played a sloppy game and were outmatched in nearly every important category, including total yards, turnovers, first downs, third-down conversion rate, red zone scoring rate and time of possession. Let's take a look at how the first-team offense and defense performed, as well as some players battling for a roster spot who stood out.

The Vikings' first-team offense played into the second quarter but only produced 33 total yards and three points on their four drives. Cousins, who looked hurried and shaken from the very start, finished with a stat line of three completions on eight attempts for 12 yards. Some of that can be attributed to the offensive line because the team was missing four starters, but Kirk will need to learn to play with a shaky offensive line if he wants to have a good season. Latavius Murray got the start at running back with Dalvin Cook sitting out, but he was unable to get anything going on the ground. He rushed the ball six times but only accumulated 12 yards while also fumbling the twice.

With the offense struggling, the Vikings' first-team defense did their best to carry the load. Most of the starters played through the first quarter and the first two drives were impressive – a three-and-out followed by an interception on the second play of their second drive. On their third and final drive of the game, however, the defense allowed the Jaguars to go 70-yards on twelve plays for a touchdown. Most of those yards (48) came from short passes and screens to Jacksonville running backs, which seem to be a problem area for the Vikings' defense through the first two preseason games.

Players who stood out

Defensive ends Ifeadi Odenigbo and Stephen Weatherly both had great games and appear to have secured roles in the defensive line rotation. Odenigbo was particularly impressive, and he practically lived behind the line of scrimmage. He finished with seven tackles, two sacks, two tackles for a loss and three quarterback hits.

In the middle of the defensive line, defensive tackle Jaleel Johnson created plenty of havoc. Johnson may have secured his role as the first DT off the bench, as the second-year player finished with seven tackles and a tackle for a loss.

Linebacker Eric Wilson and safety Anthony Harris both filled up the stat sheets and both players are making a case to be the primary backup at their respective positions.

First-round rookie cornerback Mike Hughes has been impressive through the first two preseason games. He does a great job of recognizing what route his receiver is running, which is rare for a rookie. He also has impressive speed and change-of-direction agility. He appears to have everything you would want from a cornerback and might work his way into playing time as a rookie.

There wasn't a lot to love about the offensive line play in this game, but one player who stood out was Aviante Collins who has been having a good training camp and got the start on Saturday at right tackle. He also played some left tackle and left guard, providing great versatility for the Vikings.

The competition for the third running back spot is a closely contested battle between Mike Boone and Roc Thomas, and both players had good games against the Jaguars. Boone got 13 carries which was a team high and responded with 91 yards (7 yards per carry). Thomas only got five carries in the game but ran for 25 yards for a respectable five yards per carry, while also catching two passes on four targets. Through two preseason games, Boone has 29 touches for 135 yards and one touchdown, while Thomas has 18 touches for 168 yards and two touchdowns.

Finally, the injury bug really hit the Vikings in the game as six players left the game and three of them needed to be carted off. Mackensie Alexander is the biggest name of the bunch, but his injury doesn't appear to be too serious.

Looking ahead, the Vikings remain home and will play the Seattle Seahawks on Friday, August 24. The game will be at 7pm central time. The third preseason game is known as the dress rehearsal for the regular season, as the starters will likely remain in the game into the third quarter. If you only watch one preseason game, this will be the one to watch. Skol!

If you have any questions or comments, reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL)

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## Today in Weather History

August 20, 1904: A destructive, estimated F4 tornado moved ESE from 7 miles WNW of Willow Lake, through the town, and on into Bryant. Most of the damaged occurred in those two towns. All buildings on at least three farms were blown away. One woman died in Bryant, Hamlin County, as the tornado swept across the residential west side of town. Another man was killed just west of Willow Lake, as his farm house was scattered for miles.

1886: The 1886 Indianola Hurricane destroyed the town of Indianola, Texas and as such had a significant impact on the history and economic development of Texas. The storm ended the rivalry between Galveston and Indianola as the chief port of Texas. With the abandonment of Indianola and the unwillingness of the former residents to rebuild close to shore, Galveston became the most important Texan port until the 1900 Galveston Hurricane led to the rise of Houston as a major port. It was the fifth hurricane of the 1886 Atlantic hurricane season and one of the most intense hurricanes ever to hit the United States.

1910: The Great Fire of 1910 finally came to an end in Idaho. A record dry August fueled 1736 fires that burned three million acres destroying six billion board feet of timber. The fires claimed the lives of 85 persons, 78 of which were firefighters, and consumed the entire town of Wallace. The smoke spread a third of the way around the world producing some dark days in the U.S. and Canada. The forest fires prompted federal fire protection laws.

1928: A tornado estimated at F4 intensity initially touched down in Winnebago County, Iowa, moved to Freeborn County, Minnesota, and hit the south side of Austin, MN. Five of the six deaths were in Austin with 60 injuries.

1987 - Half a dozen cities in the Central Plains Region reported record high temperatures for the date, including Pueblo CO with a reading of 102 degrees, and Goodland KS with a high of 104 degrees. Hill City KS reached 106 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Sheridan, WY, reported a record hot temperature reading of 100 degrees. Evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail near Fortuna ND, and wind gusts to 70 mph near Webster SD. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Early morning thunderstorms produced heavy rain in southeast Kansas and northeastern Oklahoma, with up to six inches reported around Tulsa OK. Some roads in the Tulsa area were closed by water 10 to 12 feet deep. Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in northern Oklahoma and southern Kansas. Thunderstorms produced winds gusts to 75 mph in Major County OK, and hail two inches in diameter at Jennings KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today



Mostly Sunny  
then Patchy  
Smoke and  
Breezy

Tonight



Patchy Smoke

Tuesday



Mostly Sunny

Tuesday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 74 °F

Low: 49 °F

High: 75 °F

Low: 49 °F

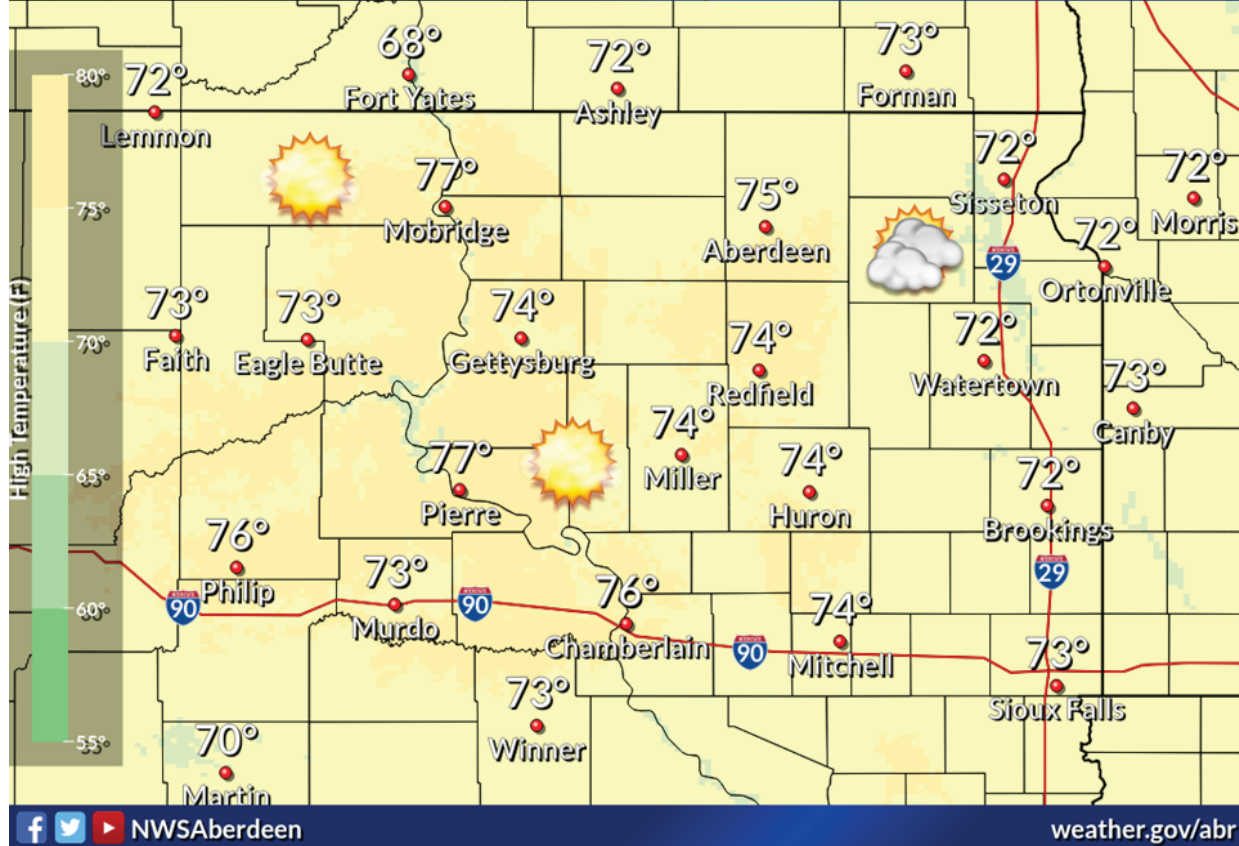
High: 80 °F

## Pleasant temperatures today

Aberdeen, SD

Lingering clouds across the east today - breezy north winds everywhere

Issued Aug 20, 2018 5:39 AM CDT



f t NWSAberdeen

weather.gov/abr

Published on: 08/20/2018 at 5:50AM

Conditions will dry out today as low pressure moves away from the region. High pressure will begin building into the area today as northerly winds remain breezy and gusty at times. Clouds will linger this morning across eastern portions of the forecast area, but expect sunshine to gradually increase this afternoon. Skies should be mostly sunny today across central South Dakota, but smoke could once again bring hazy skies across the area.



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## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 73.8 F at 2:19 AM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 60.2 F at 11:28 PM

High Gust: 22.0 Mph at 2:52 PM

Precip: 0.32

## Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1976

Record Low: 33° in 1950

Average High: 81°F

Average Low: 56°F

Average Precip in Aug: 1.48

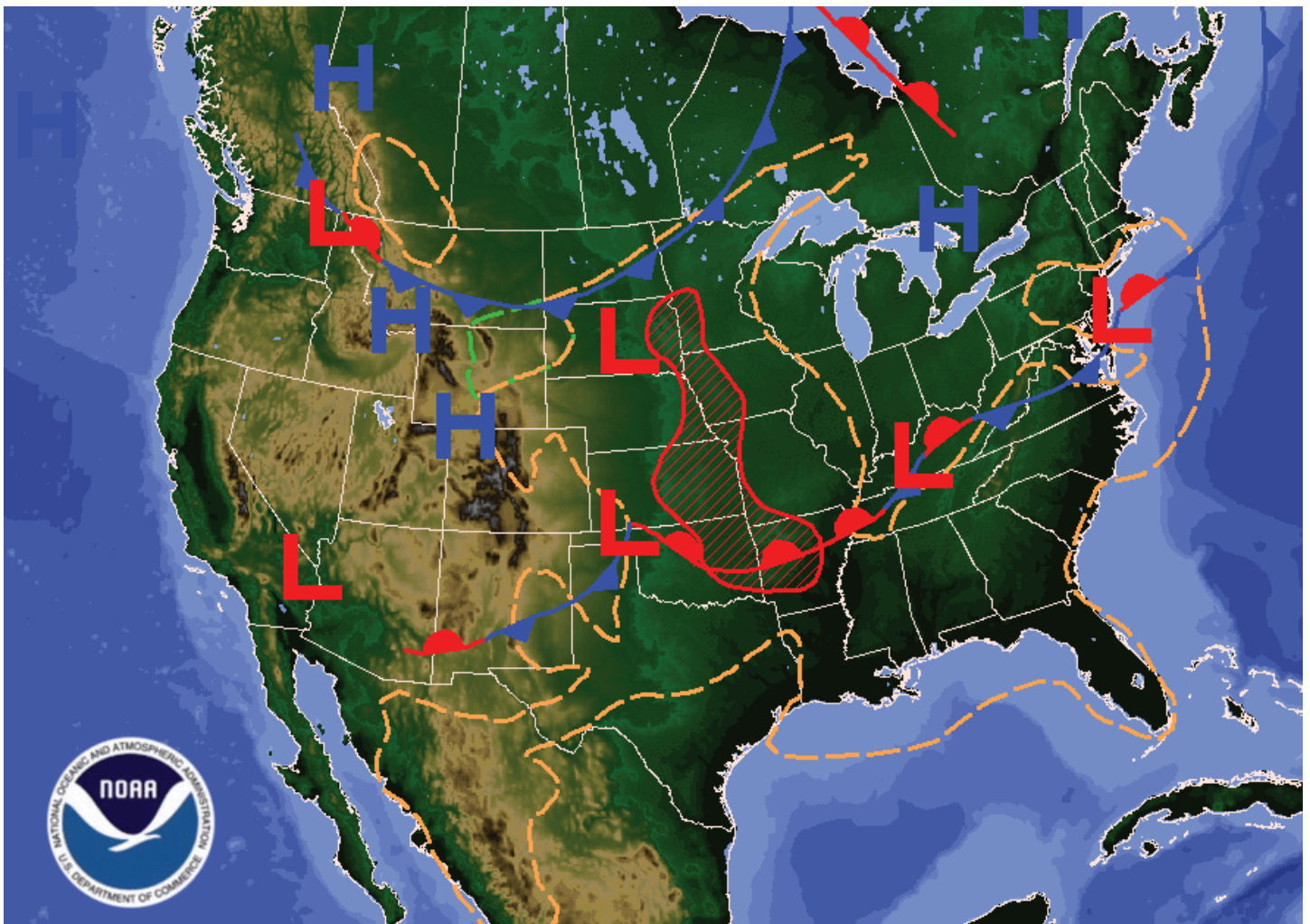
Precip to date in Aug: 0.57

Average Precip to date: 15.34

Precip Year to Date: 10.46

Sunset Tonight: 8:33 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:42 a.m.



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Aug 19, 2018, issued 4:18 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Gallina 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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## UNENDING MERCY

One of the greatest attractions in all of America is Yellowstone National Park. There are over two hundred active geysers in the park, but Old Faithful is the best known and most visited. It is famous because it is so predictable in its activity of shooting steams of water high into the air.

No one knows when it began, but it was first discovered in 1870. The silvery cascades of water shoot out of the geyser about every sixty-five minutes every day of the year.

The ancient Hebrews and present-day Christians see in the faithfulness of this geyser the unending, timeless and inexhaustible mercy of God. Since the fall of man, there has not been one moment when God did not have mans need for redemption in the center of His heart. And, this need for our redemption springs upward and outward from Gods unlimited mercy every moment of every day - much like the dependability of Old Faithful.

The mercy of God is an everlasting expression of His divine compassion. This mercy of God is a statement of the undeserving love that He has for us by withholding His judgment on us for our sins. We are reminded of His immeasurable love whenever we pause and think of His Son coming to earth to die on a cross for our sins. God's mercy is God at work helping and healing, protecting and providing, strengthening us sustaining us each day and saving us from death and destruction.

Give thanks to the Lord! His mercy is never ending!

Prayer: We lift grateful hearts to You, Lord, for mercy we do not deserve yet desperately need for our salvation. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven. His faithful love endures forever.

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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)
- 7/4/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 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

### **Sanford Health, Good Sam to merge earlier than expected**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The senior care provider Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society will become part of Dakotas-based Sanford Health sooner than expected.

The society membership and the health network board approved a merger in June. The merger has now received regulatory approval, and the Argus Leader reports the two nonprofits will join effective Nov. 1. The earlier goal had been by the end of January.

The Good Samaritan Society has 200 locations in 24 states. Sanford bills itself as one of the largest health systems in the nation, with 44 hospitals and nearly 300 clinics in nine states and four countries. The two nonprofits together employ about 47,000 workers nationwide.

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

### **Rapid City police arrest juvenile in weekend shooting**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police took a juvenile into custody in a weekend shooting at a residence.

Authorities say officers responded to the home shortly before 11 p.m. Friday and found a male with a gunshot wound. He was taken to a hospital with injuries considered life-threatening.

Officers later located the juvenile suspect and arrested him.

Police are still investigating the circumstances of the shooting but say there is no risk to the public. No other details were immediately released.

### **2 tribal energy projects in Dakotas getting federal money**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Two tribal energy infrastructure projects in the Dakotas are among 15 nationwide sharing in nearly \$9 million in federal Energy Department funding.

The Spirit Lake Sioux tribe in North Dakota is getting \$1 million toward a \$4.2 million wind turbine project.

The Rosebud Sioux tribe in South Dakota is getting about \$450,000 for a \$900,000 solar energy project.

The money is being doled out through the Energy Department's Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs.

### **Northern State uses research, advanced planning for stadium**

**By CUYLER MEADE, Aberdeen American News**

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The plans for Northern State's new sports complex didn't come together haphazardly.

They also didn't come together all at once.

Northern athletic director Josh Moon and his team have traveled the region, met with professionals, and evolved their plans since the original announcement of the future Dacotah Bank Stadium.

And that's how it's supposed to work, Moon told the Aberdeen American News.

"We started with a preliminary idea," he said. "And we follow the process. You have this idea, you have donors, you hire the architect and keep building off that as the process goes. That's how it should work. That's the process that's going to lead to the most successful outcomes."

Moon and his team took donor-provided trips to peer schools like Missouri Western, Abilene Christian, South Dakota State, Southwest Minnesota State, Minot State, Dickinson State, Colorado School of Mines, University of Sioux Falls and Augustana. Stadiums were toured, athletic departments were interviewed and dos and don'ts were gleaned.



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"Each of those stadiums has some things that are done very well," Moon said. "Somewhere maybe I wouldn't have done that. (The schools) were very open and gracious to (tell us) what we'd have done here or there. That's kind of the thing — you learn little things about, 'Hey, the radios from the coach's box, the glass is too thick so they don't work.' Or, 'Our site holders really like to have operable windows, or some connection to the outside,' because some places have no connection to the stadium, just glass."

As the Wolves group gathered data of this nature, Moon said the preliminary plans predictably shifted. Perhaps most notably, at least to the Aberdeen community at large, was the request to take over a block-and-a-half stretch of 15th Avenue Southeast for the sake of the complex's permanent construction.

The closure request would allow for a contiguous sports complex from the Barnett Center through to the football stadium and softball field, as well as significant parking in the northwest corner of the property and a green space in the southwest quadrant.

Moon and Northern State University president Tim Downs acknowledge that it's a big ask. Considering the school is already making a number of significant requests of the city, they aren't taking it lightly.

"You start looking at this, looking at options, and you ask, 'What's the best thing for the next 100 years of Northern and Aberdeen?' This plan makes sense," Moon said.

The big — and reasonable — arguments against the closure include the question: Why give all this for a football field that gets used five or six times a year? Yes, there's a softball field, too, but are Northern State softball games so overrun today that they need a move from Moccasin Creek Softball Complex? Is that reason enough?

Moon and Downs would respond that, no, it's not. That's why the plans for Dacotah Bank Stadium include much more home Wolves football games.

"We're working through that right now, but that's part of the design," Moon said. "We know for sure we want high school football games there. There may be potential for marching band activities. Intramural activities — obviously a lighted facility (helps) — different campus and community things, as we develop the spaces of the interior, maybe even corporate events. With the size of the stadium, could you have concerts? Potentially a lot of different things you could look at.

"(The architect) said it best: It's a four-season facility, not a five- or six-game facility. We want it to be a 365 facility. We want it to be a driver for this community and this region."

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

## Basketball academy works to address recruiting challenges

By BRIAN HAENCHEN, The Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Alejandro Rama will be playing college basketball next season.

The 6-foot-1-inch guard used 2017-18 as his coming-out party, averaging 22 points while leading Red Cloud to the Class A state tournament as a junior and earning second team all-state honors. Factor in Rama's academics and community service, and you have the profile of a well-rounded college recruit.

But as an athlete coming from the reservation, that alone is not enough to get recruited.

Most college coaches are unlikely to visit the reservation, meaning it's up to the players to get themselves on the recruiting radar.

The best way to get noticed? Summer AAU-style basketball, which involves playing tournaments on all-star teams in front of coaches looking for talent.

"That's how you get exposure," Rama told The Argus Leader. "You're going to the coaches and playing against tough competition. It's helped me become a better player, too."

Getting on an AAU team has done wonders for Rama, who has also taken advantage of specific skill camps and training sessions to elevate his game. However, almost none of these opportunities have been offered on the reservation.

This discrepancy in opportunity served as inspiration for Sacred Hoops Basketball Academy.

"We really wanted to be able to provide opportunities for kids who maybe don't have the same opportuni-

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ties as kids coming from other areas," program founder Allan Bertram said. "The goal was to get as many kids involved in a program that was really going to be about developing them as players and as people."

Bertram's desire to give back was partly inspired by his time coaching on the Rosebud reservation, where he realized just how much of an impact a simple game could have on people's lives. As he got older, he gained a greater appreciation for those who helped him throughout his career and began looking for ways to pay it forward.

That's how Sacred Hoops was born.

It began as an ambitious proposal discussed over the years among Bertram, Red Cloud coach Matt Rama (Alejandro Rama's father) and White River athletic director and boys basketball coach Eldon Marshall.

Bertram admits it seemed like nothing more than a pipe dream when they were younger, but earlier this year, he decided to go for it.

"It's like, if we don't start doing something now, it's going to get to a point where we're too old to do something," he explained. "We just kind of came to a recognition that it's either now or never."

Bertram said Sacred Hoops had 32 teams with 310 players in its first season. By comparison, South Dakota's other top clubs (Venom, Attack, Bartlett Academy, Pentagon and Network) average out to 15 teams apiece (Bartlett has 21). Additionally, Sacred Hoops ran 141 high school program workouts, many of which were on the reservation.

In terms of Native American participation, the boys' teams included six players from three different reservations, with high schools from Pine Ridge (Red Cloud, Little Wound), Rosebud (Todd County) and Cheyenne River (Timber Lake).

On the girls' side, the top 10 high school players from each age group were selected to form four all-Native teams. Thanks to fundraising efforts, these teams' expenses were covered entirely by outside funding.

While the exposure from Sacred Hoops doesn't necessarily guarantee a college basketball career, it does provide inspiration for young athletes, who would not have otherwise had the opportunity to play in front of college coaches.

"I've been rewarded more from the game in the last three months than I have in the last 20 years," said Bertram. "It means so much to be able to see kids who never thought college was even an opportunity now have a smile on their face because they really, truly believe they can go do it, go play something that they really love."

Sacred Hoops is part of a greater overall movement to provide more opportunities for athletes on the reservation.

At the grassroots level, the rise of high school athletes like Rama has bolstered the push, providing a strong role model for younger generations as they see him succeed.

"It helps the youth here, because they can see that process and how hard he works," McGhee explained. "They think, 'OK, I can do that. I have a chance.' Because sometimes being Native American, the kids don't feel that way."

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

## 1 man killed, 2 hurt in car crash in southeast South Dakota

LESTERVILLE, S.D. (AP) — One man is dead and two others seriously injured after a car crash in southeastern South Dakota.

Authorities say the 1983 Ford Mustang crashed Saturday afternoon near Lesterville in Yankton County.

The state Department of Public Safety says the driver lost control and the car went into a ditch, hit a field approach, went airborne and caught fire after landing.

All three men were thrown from the car and airlifted to a Sioux Falls Hospital. One passenger, a 20-year-old man, later died. The 29-year-old driver and the other passenger, a 25-year-old man, suffered life-threatening injuries.

Names of the victims were not released.

Authorities say charges are pending against the driver. The Highway Patrol is investigating.

## Planners envision improvements to Rapid City downtown park

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — City planners are looking to attract more visitors to a park in Rapid City's downtown.

Rapid City staff recently unveiled conceptual drawings of improvements to be made to Memorial Park, the Rapid City Journal reported. City planners have envisioned a Ferris wheel, a carousel and an elevated pedestrian crossing above Omaha Street with green space. Other ideas include public art installations, outdoor fitness centers and a fishing pier.

"We are still in the envisioning stage," said Community Development Director Ken Young.

But the goal is to better connect Memorial Park to downtown and the Performing Arts Center, he said.

City officials are gathering public input on the concept while searching for potential grant funding.

The elevated walkway could draw people to the park and provide a safe flow of pedestrian traffic, according to Young. The crossing would be the most expensive and complicated part of the park improvement project, but Young said it's feasible if proper draining is built on the road.

Improving pedestrian access downtown could also help with the city's lack of parking options.

"Parking is always an issue and if we have better pedestrian access between downtown and the civic center, perhaps someone is willing to park downtown, go to dinner and then just walk to the civic center," Young said.

Making space for smaller public gathering areas and public art installations could also increase interest in the area, according to Young.

City planners will continue to hold public input sessions for local artists and "creative thinkers" in the coming months.

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

## Spearfish golf course installs hundreds of solar panels

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A golf course in western South Dakota has added more than 230 solar panels to offset the energy use of an irrigation system.

The panels were installed over 10 days along the north side of the irrigation pond at the Elkhorn Ridge Golf Club and Resort's 18th hole. They're expected to cut the electrical bills for the course by more than \$13,000 a year, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

"They currently provide power to the pumps for the irrigation system and the well we use to fill the pond," said course superintendent Greg Brandriet. "The system will generate a yearly average of 120 MWh (megawatts per hour), around 43 percent of our annual usage for the irrigation system."

The system would produce an excess of electricity during the winter months, when that energy would be returned to the grid. The system would provide as little as 25 percent in the peak usage months of July and August.

"In the world of golf, there is a growing movement to become more sustainable and enhance the many benefits golf has for the environment," Brandriet said. "This system highlights the forefront of this national movement into alternative energy and environmental stewardship and also strengthens our dedication to the local community."

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

## Spanish police shoot man dead in suspected terror attack

By EMILIO MORENATTI, Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — A man pleaded to be let into a locked police station in Barcelona before dawn Monday, then lunged with a knife at officers inside. Police shot him dead and the attack is being investigated for any links to terror, authorities said.

Commissioner Rafel Comes, the second-in-command of the Catalan regional police, told reporters that



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police are treating it as a terrorist attack "for the moment" because the incident was "extremely serious," involving a "premeditated" attack that intended to kill police.

The man shouted "Allah" and other words that police officers did not understand, Comes said, adding that Spanish intelligence services are helping with the investigation.

But he added that police have found no evidence linking the incident to terror attacks last August in Barcelona and nearby Cambrils, which killed 16 people.

Officers opened a locked police station security door to the man, who lived in a nearby apartment, Comes said. The police station is located in the Cornellà district on the outskirts of the city.

He said the suspect repeatedly pressed the buzzer to be let in at around 5.45 a.m. and spoke with officers inside over an intercom. After they decided to let him in, he pulled out "a large knife" and lunged at officers, according to Comes.

The man had ID documents on him and police are checking whether they are authentic.

Police are investigating the man's background and awaiting a warrant to search his apartment.

## Shots fired at gate of US Embassy in Turkey; no one hurt

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — The U.S. Embassy in Turkey was shot at from a moving car before dawn on Monday, an attack that came during heightened tensions between the two NATO allies.

There were no casualties and no claim of responsibility for the fleeting attack, in which three of the six bullets that were fired hit the embassy gate and a reinforced window.

"We can confirm a security incident took place at the U.S. Embassy early this morning. We have no reports of any injuries and we are investigating the details" embassy spokesman David Gainer said. He thanked Turkish police for their "rapid response."

Turkish officials, who are locked in a trade and diplomatic dispute with the United States, condemned the shooting in Ankara, the capital.

Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin tweeted that it was "an attempt to create chaos."

A top official in Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party said the attack was a "clear provocation" and that foreign diplomatic missions are guests of the country.

"The utmost sensitivity will be shown to ensure their security," said the official, Omer Celik. "Turkey is a safe country."

An investigation of the drive-by shooting is underway and the suspect or suspects have not yet been identified, said the governor's office in Ankara. The U.S. Embassy was scheduled to close at midday Monday until the end of the week for the Islamic holiday of Eid al-Adha, according to its website.

Tensions between the U.S. and Turkey are high, partly because of the case of Andrew Brunson, an American pastor who is being prosecuted in Turkey for alleged espionage and terrorism-related offenses that he denies. U.S. President Donald Trump has called for his immediate release.

Turkey has long criticized the United States for not agreeing to hand over Fethullah Gulen, a Muslim cleric accused by Turkish authorities of engineering an attempted coup in 2016. Gulen denies those allegations, and Washington has urged Turkey to present convincing evidence for any extradition proceeding to go forward.

The United States recently imposed economic penalties on Turkey, including tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminum, that contributed to a slide in the value of the Turkish lira. Turkey's economy is already vulnerable because of heavy foreign currency borrowing that fueled high growth for years.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose government imposed its own tit-for-tat tariffs on some American goods, alluded to the dispute with the U.S. in a pre-recorded holiday message.

"There is no difference between the direct attacks on our call to prayer and our flag and the attack on our economy," said Erdogan, a pious Muslim who has drawn on religious and nationalist references in comments about the standoff.

U.S. diplomatic offices have been targeted in the past in Turkey, where various armed groups are active.

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At least one suspect was wounded in a shooting outside the U.S. consulate in Istanbul in 2015. In 2013, a suicide bomber killed a Turkish guard and himself after detonating an explosive device outside the embassy in Ankara. In 2008, three assailants and three Turkish police officers died in a shootout outside the Istanbul post.

Associated Press writer Christopher Torchia in Istanbul contributed to this report.

## **Pope on sex abuse: "We showed no care for the little ones"**

**By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press**

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis issued a letter to Catholics around the world Monday condemning the "crime" of priestly sexual abuse and its cover-up and demanding accountability, in response to new revelations in the United States of decades of misconduct by the Catholic Church.

Francis begged forgiveness for the pain suffered by victims and said lay Catholics must be involved in any effort to root out abuse and cover-up. He blasted the self-referential clerical culture that has been blamed for the crisis, with church leaders more concerned for their reputation than the safety of children.

"With shame and repentance, we acknowledge as an ecclesial community that we were not where we should have been, that we did not act in a timely manner, realizing the magnitude and the gravity of the damage done to so many lives," Francis wrote.

"We showed no care for the little ones; we abandoned them."

The Vatican issued the three-page letter ahead of Francis' trip this weekend to Ireland, a once staunchly Roman Catholic country where the church's credibility has been damaged by years of revelations that priests raped and molested children with impunity and their superiors covered up for them.

Priestly sex abuse was always expected to dominate the trip, but the issue has taken on new gravity following revelations in the U.S. that one of Francis' trusted cardinals, the retired archbishop of Washington Theodore McCarrick, allegedly sexually abused and harassed minors as well as adult seminarians.

In addition, a grand jury report in Pennsylvania last week reported that at least 1,000 children were victims of some 300 priests over the past 70 years, and that generations of bishops failed repeatedly to take measures to protect their flock or punish the rapists.

In the letter, which was issued in seven languages and addressed to the "People of God," Francis referenced the Pennsylvania report, acknowledged that no effort to beg forgiveness of the victims will be sufficient but vowed "never again."

He said, looking to the future, "no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated."

Francis didn't, however, provide any indication of what concrete measures he is prepared to take to sanction those bishops — in the U.S. and beyond — who covered up for sexually abusive priests. Francis several years ago scrapped a proposed Vatican tribunal to prosecute negligent bishops, and he has refused to act on credible reports from around the world of bishops who have failed to report abusers to police or otherwise botched handling cases, and yet remain in office.

In Chile, where a church sex abuse scandal exploded earlier this year, Francis strong-armed the 31 active bishops to offer to resign en masse over their handling of abuse. So far he has accepted five of their resignations.

Unlike the U.S. bishops' conference, which has referred only to "sins and omissions" in their handling of abuse, Francis labeled the misconduct "crimes."

"Let us beg forgiveness for our own sins and the sins of others," he wrote. "An awareness of sin helps us to acknowledge the errors, the crimes and the wounds caused in the past and allows us, in the present, to be more open and committed along a journey of renewed conversion."

## Afghan forces free 149 hostages taken by Taliban in ambush

By AMIR SHAH, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Afghan forces launched a lightning operation in northern Kunduz province on Monday, rescuing 149 people, including women and children, abducted by the Taliban just hours earlier, officials said.

By mid-afternoon, fighting was still underway in the area to free 21 remaining hostages, officials added.

The operation was a boost for Afghan forces, which have struggled to contain a resurgent Taliban on battlefields across the country.

On Monday morning, the Taliban ambushed a convoy of three buses travelling on a road in the Khan Abad district, and forced everyone to come with them, according to Nasrat Rahimi, deputy spokesman for the Interior Ministry.

Rahimi said that after Afghan security forces freed 149, the insurgents were still holding 21 hostages from the buses. He added at least seven Taliban fighters have been killed in the fighting so far.

The ambush came despite Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's announcement of a conditional cease-fire with the Taliban during the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha this week.

The Taliban have stepped up their assaults in recent months, seizing entire districts across Afghanistan and regularly carrying out large-scale bombings and attacks that have killed scores of people.

Esmatullah Muradi, spokesman for the provincial governor in Kunduz, also confirmed the rescue of the hostages. According to Mohammad Yusouf Ayubi, the head of the provincial council in Kunduz, the Taliban were likely looking for government employees or members of the security forces who usually go home for the holidays.

All the passengers on the buses were from Badakhshan and Takhar provinces and were traveling to the capital, Kabul, said Abdul Rahman Aqtash, police chief in neighboring Takhar province.

Ghani's call for the truce, made during celebrations Sunday of the 99th anniversary of Afghanistan's independence, said "the cease-fire should be observed from both sides, and its continuation and duration also depend on the Taliban's stand."

On Saturday, the leader of the Afghan Taliban, Maulvi Haibatullah Akhunzadah, said that there will be no peace in the country as long as the "foreign occupation" continues. He reiterated the group's standing position that the country's 17-year war can only be brought to an end through direct talks with the United States.

In a message released on the occasion of Eid al-Adha, and without mentioning any cease-fire, Akhunzadah said the insurgents remain committed to "Islamic goals," the sovereignty of Afghanistan and ending the war.

For his part, Ghani said he hoped extensions could also be agreed upon to make the cease-fire last until Nov. 20, which will mark the birth anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad.

The government had previously announced a cease-fire with the Taliban during the Eid al-Fitr holiday in June. The Taliban accepted that three-day truce but later rejected a call by the president to extend it.

Earlier this month, the Taliban launched a major assault on the eastern city of Ghazni, just 120 kilometers (75 miles) from Kabul and the capital of a province with the same name. Afghan security forces battled the militants inside the city for five days, with the U.S. carrying out airstrikes and sending advisers to help the Afghan ground forces, until the Taliban were routed from Ghazni.

The battle for the city killed at least 100 members of the Afghan security forces and 35 civilians, according to Afghan officials. The heavy casualties underscore the challenges the government in Kabul faces since the U.S. and NATO officially ended their combat mission at the end of 2014. Since then, American forces, now in a training and advising role, have repeatedly come to the aid of Afghan forces.

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Associated Press writer Rahim Faiez in Kabul, Afghanistan, contributed to this report.



## Indians begin massive cleanup as rains diminish in Kerala

By AIJAZ RAHI, Associated Press

ALAPPUZHA, India (AP) — Thousands of people in flood-ravaged south India waded Monday through muck and mud to begin the immense task of cleaning their homes and businesses.

Rains have been diminishing in parts of Kerala state, where floods and landslides have killed more than 200 people in less than two weeks and about 800,000 more have been forced into thousands of relief camps.

Abdul Samad, a 56-year-old fish seller, scooped water and garbage from his devastated concrete home in the town of Pandalam.

"When the flood waters came, we were not anticipating a calamity of this kind," he said. "But minute by minute the water level began to rise."

The family had no time to save anything they owned, and fled as water poured over the wall and into the home.

Samad, who made a living pedaling through the area selling fish, has no idea now what he'll do for work. Among the many things he lost in the floodwaters: his bicycle.

Torrential rains began Aug. 8 in Kerala in the midst of the annual monsoon season, eventually leaving much of the state partially submerged.

The Indian military also opened an air base Monday to commercial flights to help bring in relief goods and fly out residents.

The first flight landed Monday morning at the naval air station in the city of Kochi, where the commercial airport has been closed for nearly a week. The Air India flight came from Bangalore in the nearby state of Karnataka, Suresh Prabhu, the minister of civil aviation, said on Twitter.

Other air bases in the region should open to commercial traffic soon, he said.

Thousands of people are taking shelter in small camps in the coastal town of Alappuzha. Many are in schools, but at least one is on the grounds of a mosque where Christians, Hindus and Muslims have all found food and a place to sleep.

The town itself, which is on slightly higher ground, escaped the worst of the flooding, but the situation is far more grim just a few kilometers (a couple of miles) away.

"The water came almost up to my head," said Ullas, a 48-year-old man who uses only one name, who fled his village for the safety of the town.

He has no idea when he'll be able to come back. "We don't know," he said, as he helped distribute food in one relief center. "It could take a month."

With rains decreasing, the water has started receding in parts of Kerala but thousands of people remain cut off and in need of help.

Thousands of people have been saved by the state's fishermen, many of whom headed into the floodwaters to help. On Monday, the state's top official, Pinarayi Vijayan, announced the government would pay those fishermen about \$50 for each day they helped and also pay for repairs for boats damaged during rescues.

Officials say it is the worst flooding in Kerala in a century, with rainfall in some areas well over double that of a typical monsoon season.

Relief supplies and donations have poured into Kerala from across India.

Officials have put initial storm damage estimates at nearly \$3 billion.

## Quake swarm jolts Indonesian islands, killing at least 12

By ROSIDIN SEMBAHULUN, Associated Press

SEMBALUN, Indonesia (AP) — Multiple strong earthquakes killed at least a dozen people on the Indonesian islands of Lombok and Sumbawa as the region was trying to recover from a temblor earlier this month that killed hundreds of people.

A shallow magnitude 6.9 quake that hit about 10 p.m. was one of several powerful earthquakes Sunday in the northeast of Lombok that also caused landslides. The nighttime quake was followed by strong af-

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tershocks.

At least 10 people on Lombok and neighboring Sumbawa island were killed by collapsing buildings or heart attacks, National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said Monday. Two people died earlier Sunday on Lombok during a magnitude 6.3 quake.

More than 1,800 houses were damaged, at least half of them severely, he said.

The swarm of quakes caused panic in Sembalun subdistrict on Lombok in the shadow of Mount Rinjani, but many people were already staying in tents following the deadly jolt in early August and its hundreds of aftershocks. On Sumbawa, a neighborhood was engulfed by a fire that started in a collapsed house.

"People panicked and scattered," Nugroho said. "Some people are hysterical because they feel earthquake aftershocks that are harder than before. They heard a roar that probably came from landslides in the hills and Mount Rinjani."

Dwikorita Karnawatim, who heads Indonesia's Meteorology and Geophysics Agency, said buildings that haven't collapsed so far have suffered repeated stress, and authorities have urged people to avoid both the mountain's slopes and weakened buildings.

Sunday night's tremor occurred on a different fault and was not an aftershock of the magnitude 7.0 quake on Aug. 5 that killed 460 people, damaged tens of thousands of homes and displaced several hundred thousand people.

The quake lasting five to 10 seconds also was felt in the neighboring island of Bali and as far away as East Java and Makassar in Sulawesi.

Quakes earlier Sunday caused landslides on Rinjani, an active volcano. Video shot by the Indonesian Red Cross showed huge clouds of dust billowing from the mountain's slopes.

Rinjani has been closed to visitors following a July earthquake that killed 16 people, triggered landslides and stranded hundreds of tourists on the mountain.

Indonesia, a sprawling archipelago that straddles the Pacific "Ring of Fire," is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

## Trump calls Russia probe "McCarthyism at its 'WORST'"

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — President Donald Trump insists that his White House counsel isn't a "RAT" like the Watergate-era White House attorney who turned on Richard Nixon, and he is blasting the ongoing Russia investigation as "McCarthyism."

Trump, in a series of angry tweets, denounced a New York Times story that his White House counsel, Don McGahn, has been cooperating extensively with the special counsel team investigating Russian election meddling and potential collusion with Trump's Republican campaign.

"The failing @nytimes wrote a Fake piece today implying that because White House Council Don McGahn was giving hours of testimony to the Special Council, he must be a John Dean type 'RAT,'" Trump wrote, misspelling the word "counsel." "But I allowed him and all others to testify - I didn't have to. I have nothing to hide ..."

The New York Times said it stands by its story.

Dean, a frequent critic of the president, was the White House counsel for Nixon during the Watergate scandal. He ultimately cooperated with prosecutors and helped bring down the Nixon presidency in 1974, though he served a prison term for obstruction of justice.

Dean tweeted Saturday night in response to the Times story: "Trump, a total incompetent, is bungling and botching his handling of Russiagate. Fate is never kind to bunglers and/or botchers! Unlike Nixon, however, Trump won't leave willingly or graciously."

He added Sunday in response to Trump's tweets that he doubts the president has "ANY IDEA what McGahn has told Mueller. Also, Nixon knew I was meeting with prosecutors, b/c I told him. However, he didn't think I would tell them the truth!"

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Trump's original legal team had encouraged McGahn and other White House officials to cooperate with special counsel Robert Mueller, and McGahn spent hours in interviews.

Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, said in an appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press" that Trump didn't raise executive privilege or attorney-client privilege during those interviews because his team believed — he says now, wrongly — that fully participating would be the fastest way to bring the investigation to a close.

"The president encouraged him to testify, is happy that he did, is quite secure that there is nothing in the testimony that will hurt the president," Giuliani said.

McGahn's attorney William Burck added in a statement: "President Trump, through counsel, declined to assert any privilege over Mr. McGahn's testimony, so Mr. McGahn answered the Special Counsel team's questions fulsomely and honestly, as any person interviewed by federal investigators must."

Trump on Sunday continued to rail against the Mueller investigation, which he has labeled a "witch hunt."

"So many lives have been ruined over nothing - McCarthyism at its WORST!" Trump tweeted, referencing the indiscriminate and damaging allegations made by Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s to expose communists.

"Study the late Joseph McCarthy, because we are now in period with Mueller and his gang that make Joseph McCarthy look like a baby! Rigged Witch Hunt!" he later wrote.

Giuliani, in his interview, also acknowledged that the reason for the June 2016 Trump Tower meeting between Trump campaign aides and a Russian lawyer, arranged by Trump's son Donald Trump Jr., was that they had been promised dirt on Trump's 2016 Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton.

"The meeting was originally for the purpose of getting information about Clinton," he said, adding that the Trump team didn't know that Natalia Veselnitskaya was Russian — even though emails later released by Trump Jr. show that she had been described as a "Russian government attorney."

Giuliani also tried to make the case that having Trump sit down for an interview with Mueller's team wouldn't accomplish much because of the he-said-she-said nature of witnesses' recollections.

"It's somebody's version of the truth, not the truth," he said, telling NBC's Chuck Todd: "Truth isn't truth."

Todd appeared flummoxed by the comment, responding: "This is going to become a bad meme."

## Steve Bannon wants GOP to rally behind Trump

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Steve Bannon has a dire warning for Republicans — rally around President Donald Trump.

During a Sunday interview with The Associated Press, the former chief strategist to Trump said he believes the GOP would lose 35 to 40 seats in the House if the election were held today, thereby ceding their majority to Democrats he's convinced will pursue impeachment.

He argued there's still time to turn that around and is launching a group, Citizens of the American Republic, to pitch the election as a vote to protect Trump from that outcome.

"You can't look at this as a midterm and you can't run it out of the traditional Republican playbook. If you do that, you're going to get smoked," said Bannon, arguing that Republicans must redouble efforts against motivated Democrats.

The effort is a test of Bannon's sway in the GOP a year after he was fired from his White House post. His relationship with Trump soured after a tell-all book published in January included searing quotes of Bannon portraying Trump as undisciplined and criticizing son Donald Trump Jr. His stock fell further after he stuck by Alabama Republican Roy Moore's Senate campaign even after decades-old sexual misconduct allegations emerged. A reliably Republican Senate seat turned Democratic.

As he attempts a comeback, Bannon acknowledged the challenges he faces, including an invigorated Democratic base. Less than three months from Election Day, Democrats need a net gain of 24 seats to retake the House, and the party is increasingly bullish about its chances after strong turnout in a series of special elections. Bannon said Republicans can gain ground if they focus on turning out Trump supporters.

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"This is not about persuasion. It's too late to persuade anybody. We're 90 days away from this election. This is all about turnout and what I call base-plus," he said.

While Bannon makes his move, many Republicans view holding the House as an uphill battle. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Bannon said his new venture will focus on rapid response and polling with the goal of framing the election as an "up or down vote" on Trump and impeachment. He is also releasing a movie about the president, "Trump@War," geared at Trump supporters.

Bannon said he was being backed by private donors, but he did not detail who was funding the effort or how much he had raised. He said his efforts were independent of the Republican National Committee, the White House or a Trump-supporting super PAC.

In keeping with his midterm mission, Bannon defended the president on both policy and style, arguing that the president had an economic record to run on and has been making the right pitch on the campaign trail.

On trade, Bannon backed the president's aggressive tariffs, which have drawn criticism in agricultural states crucial to Trump's victory. He argued they were a key part of Trump's nationalistic economic strategy.

"People in Iowa, once it's explained to them, will fully support the president in this," he said. "We don't have a choice. We either win the economic war with China or we're going to be a secondary, a tertiary power."

He said Trump's culture wars, which have included public attacks on women and minorities, don't present a problem, calling it his "house style" and saying people should "separate out the signal from the noise." He argued that Trump would benefit from shutting down the government over funding for his border wall, saying it would "galvanize the populist right," though he acknowledged it was a minority view.

Bannon also pushed back against the idea that a loss of the House could be a positive development for Trump as it would give him a new foil heading into the 2020 presidential election. He called such notions "dangerously naive."

Looking ahead to 2020, Bannon said attorney Michael Avenatti, who is weighing a bid as a Democratic candidate, could be a contender. The combative attorney has been taking on Trump on behalf of a porn actress who claims a sexual encounter with the president, which Trump denies.

"He's a fighter and people are looking for fighters," Bannon said of Avenatti, though he believes Trump would defeat any opponent. "He's going to be a force in the primary for the simple reason that he comes across as what many of the Democrats don't, which is a fighter."

## Brief Korean reunions bring tears for separated families

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM and KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press**

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The 92-year-old South Korean woman wept and stroked the wrinkled cheeks of her 71-year-old North Korean son on Monday, their first meeting since they were driven apart during the turmoil of the 1950-53 Korean War.

"How many children do you have? Do you have a son?" Lee Keum-seom asked her son Ri Sang Chol during their long-awaited encounter at the North's Diamond Mountain resort.

The emotional reunion came after dozens of elderly South Koreans crossed the heavily fortified border into North Korea to meet temporarily with their relatives. The weeklong event, the first of its kind in nearly three years, was arranged as the rival Koreas boost reconciliation efforts amid a diplomatic push to resolve a standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Hugging the woman he'd last seen when he was 4, Ri showed his mother a photo of her late husband, who had stayed behind in North Korea with him after being separated from his wife while fleeing south. "Mother, this is how my father looked," Lee said.

Before leaving for North Korea, Lee said she wanted to ask her son "how he grew up without his mom and how his father raised him."

Most of the participants in the reunions are in their 70s or older and are eager to see their loved ones once more before they die. Most have had no word on whether their relatives are still alive because they



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are not allowed to visit each other across the border or even exchange letters, phone calls or email.

About 90 elderly South Koreans, accompanied by their family members, will have three days of meetings with their North Korean relatives before returning to the South on Wednesday. A separate round of reunions from Friday to Sunday will involve more than 300 other South Koreans, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

During Monday's meeting, many elderly Koreans held each other's hands and wiped away tears with handkerchiefs while asking how their relatives had lived. They showed photos of family members who couldn't come to their meetings.

Han Shin-ja, a 99-year-old South Korean woman, was at a loss for words after she reunited with her two North Korean daughters, both in their early 70s. Not knowing their separation would be permanent, she left them behind in the North during the war while fleeing south with her third and youngest daughter.

She could only say "Ah" and "When I fled ..." before choking up with tears.

Kim Sun Ok, an 81-year-old North Korean woman, said she found that she and her 88-year-old brother from South Korea resembled each other a great deal. "Brother, it would be really good if Korean unification comes. Let's live together even at least one minute after unification before we die," the woman said tearfully.

Before this week's reunions, nearly 20,000 people had participated in 20 rounds of face-to-face reunions since 2000. Another 3,700 exchanged video messages with their North Korean relatives. None have had a second chance to see or talk with their relatives.

During the three years since the reunions were last held, North Korea tested three nuclear weapons and multiple missiles that demonstrated they potentially could strike the continental United States.

North Korea has shifted to diplomacy in recent months. Leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, a son of North Korean war refugees, agreed to resume the reunions during the first of their two summits this year in April.

South Korea sees the separated families as the largest humanitarian issue created by the war, which killed and injured millions and cemented the division of the Korean Peninsula into the North and South. The Unification Ministry estimates there are currently about 600,000 to 700,000 South Koreans with immediate or extended relatives in North Korea. More than 75,000 of the 132,000 South Koreans who have applied to participate in reunions have died, according to a ministry record.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Monday reiterated that time is running out to expand the reunion program, saying it would be a "shameful thing" for both Koreas to see many elderly people dying without even finding out whether their loved ones are still alive.

Moon attended a 2004 reunion to meet his aunt. "As a separated family member, I deeply share their sorrow and pitifulness," he said during a meeting with his aides.

North Korea is reluctant to accept calls for more reunions. Analysts say it sees the reunions as an important bargaining chip and believes more reunions would give its people a better awareness of the outside world. While South Korea uses a computerized lottery to pick participants for the reunions, North Korea is believed to choose based on loyalty to its authoritarian leadership.

## Muslim pilgrims gather at Mount Arafat for hajj's pinnacle

By OMAR AKOUR, Associated Press

MOUNT ARAFAT, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Some 2 million Muslim pilgrims gathered on Monday in the valley of Mount Arafat in Saudi Arabia for a day of prayer that marks the pinnacle of the annual hajj.

Pilgrims stood shoulder to shoulder for an emotional day of repentance and supplication at the site Muslims believe the Prophet Muhammad delivered his final sermon, calling for equality and for Muslims to unite. According to the hadiths, traditional collections of the prophet's sayings and anecdotes about his life, Muhammad also reminded his followers of women's rights and that every Muslim life and property is sacred.

Muslims believe prayer on this day at Mount Arafat, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) east of the holy city

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of Mecca, is their best chance to erase past sins and start anew.

"Today is the most important part of the hajj, and we are all feeling great, and we pray for all Muslims in the world," said Abdel-Munem Ali, a Libyan pilgrim.

Syrian pilgrim Mohammad Nezar said he was praying "to Allah to restore peace for people everywhere."

Mohammad Neem, a Pakistani pilgrim, said he couldn't find the words to describe his feelings. "This is the day to pray, and this is the right time to do that," he added.

Around sunset, pilgrims will head to an area called Muzdalifa, which is 9 kilometers (5.5 miles) west of Arafat. Many walk, while others use buses. They spend the night there and pick up pebbles along the way that will be used in a symbolic stoning of the devil back in the city of Mina, where Muslims believe the devil tried to talk Ibrahim out of submitting to God's will.

The kingdom has spent billions of dollars of its vast oil revenues on security and safety measures, particularly in Mina, where some of the hajj's deadliest incidents have occurred.

The worst in recorded history took place only three years ago. On Sept. 24, 2015, a stampede and crush of pilgrims in Mina killed at least 2,426 people, according to an Associated Press count.

The official Saudi toll of 769 people killed and 934 injured has not changed since only two days after the tragedy. The kingdom has never addressed the discrepancy in the casualty toll, nor has it released any results of an investigation that authorities had promised to conduct over the disaster.

The five-day hajj pilgrimage represents one of the world's biggest gatherings every year, and is required of all able-bodied Muslims once in their life.

At the hajj's end, male pilgrims will shave their hair and women will cut a lock of hair in a sign of renewal for completing the pilgrimage. Around the world, Muslims will mark the end of hajj with a celebration called Eid al-Adha. The holiday, remembering Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son, sees Muslims slaughter sheep and cattle, distributing the meat to the poor.

Overnight, a sandstorm packing strong winds and thunderstorms roared through Mecca. Officials say the severe weather slightly damaged some tents housing pilgrims, but caused no injuries. They said further severe weather was possible through Monday.

## Report: MeToo activist Argento settled sex assault complaint

NEW YORK (AP) — Italian actress Asia Argento — one of the most prominent activists of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment — recently settled a complaint filed against her by a young actor and musician who said she sexually assaulted him when he was 17, the New York Times reported.

Argento, 42, settled the notice of intent to sue filed by Jimmy Bennett, who is now 22, for \$380,000 shortly after she said last October that movie mogul Harvey Weinstein raped her, the Times reported.

Argento and Bennett co-starred in a 2004 film called "The Heart Is Deceitful Above All Things" in which Argento played Bennett's prostitute mother.

Bennett says in the notice that he had sex with Argento in a California hotel in 2013. The age of consent in California is 18.

The notice says the encounter traumatized Bennett and hurt his career, the Times reported.

The newspaper said it received court documents that included a selfie of Argento and Bennett in bed. Three people familiar with the case said the documents were authentic, the Times reported.

Argento became one of the most well-known activists of the #MeToo movement after she told the New Yorker magazine that Weinstein raped her at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997 when she was 21. Argento told the magazine that she continued to have a relationship with Weinstein because she was afraid of angering him.

Weinstein has been indicted on sex crime accusations involving three women, but not including Argento.

Representatives for Argento could not be immediately reached by The Associated Press for comment. Through a representative, Bennett declined to comment to the Times.

\_\_\_ This story has been clarified to say that Jimmy Bennett filed a notice of intent to sue.

## Project uncovering South's hidden LGBTQ history

By JAY REEVES, Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — A new project is documenting the history of LGBTQ people in the Deep South, a region that once all but forced gays, lesbians and others to live in hiding.

Bob Burns, who is gay, both lived through some of the toughest times for LGBTQ Southerners and documented them through years of activism. Now 66, he compiled a trove of information from years that included the AIDS epidemic and the systemic oppression of gay people in the Deep South.

Burns is now among the donors to a nonprofit organization that's gathering information about the hidden history of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people and others in the Southern United States.

Established in late 2016, the Birmingham-based Invisible Histories Project already has gathered boxes full of information about gay life in Alabama, including decades-old directories of gay-friendly businesses dating to the late 1960s; activist T-shirts; records from gay-rights groups; and rainbow-themed material.

The organization will expand its work to Mississippi and Georgia later this year, and organizers hope to cover the entire Southeast within a few years.

The Stonewall National Museum and Archives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, has thousands of books and artifacts documenting LGBT cultural and social history across the nation, and the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco tells the story of the Bay Area community. The History Project does the same in Boston for New England gays.

Historian and archivist Joshua Burford said the goal of the Invisible Histories Project is to create a uniquely Southern collection that will "give Southern history back to queer Southerners."

While the stereotypical LGBTQ person might live openly in an urban center and have plenty of money, he said, plenty of Southern gays live both in cities and in rural areas where they hold working-class jobs.

"If the model is always the West Village or Boy's Town or Fire Island, then the South can never be the same as that. So we have to stop pretending like we want to be," said Burford, engagement director of the group. "What we are is very queer and very Southern, and those two things are always overlapping."

Items in the collection include documents about a conflict over plans to hold the Southeastern Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual College Conference at the University of Alabama in 1996. U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Alabama's attorney general at the time, unsuccessfully argued that holding the event at a public university conflicted with a state law then in effect, prohibiting homosexual acts.

The meeting went ahead as planned without incident, and Alabama voters elected Sessions to the U.S. Senate later that year.

The archive also includes documents related to the arrest of about 20 men accused of cruising for gay sex in a weeklong police sting conducted in a park in Tuscaloosa in 2002, said Burford, who originally researched the cases for school and is giving personal materials to the project.

Rather than developing a mammoth, gay version of the Smithsonian Institution that could be difficult for people to visit, the Invisible Histories Project plans to store items in smaller, local repositories. Much of the Alabama archive is housed at Birmingham's main public library.

"We want to make sure that people who really care and are most affected by the materials can access it easily," said development director Maigen Sullivan. "So we're working with a number of smaller institutions that are closer to the community so that we can store their things there."

Burns, a prominent architect, likes the idea.

After hearing about the project through a friend, he met with Burford and donated items including the results of lengthy surveys he helped compile in 1989 and again in 1999 documenting what he called almost continual discrimination and rights violations directed at LGBTQ people in Alabama.

"That all had been sitting in a trunk here because there was no one to give it to," said Burns, who has lived in Birmingham nearly 40 years.

He also donated a report compiled following a daylong event held years ago at a gay-friendly church to assess the needs and desire of the gay community around Birmingham.

"There was no place for that information to go so it was basically wasted," he said. "But at least now it's part of history. We know what people in whatever year it was, 15 or 20 years ago, thought was important."

Burford said it's important to document the past accurately because LGBTQ people have been lied about and disregarded for generations.

"Queer people are orphaned from American history," he said.

## **Brennan gets offers for legal action on clearance revocation**

**By JILL COLVIN and LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former CIA Director John Brennan said Sunday that he is considering taking legal action to try to prevent President Donald Trump from stripping other current and former officials' security clearances.

Speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press," Brennan said he's been contacted by a number of lawyers about the possibility of an injunction in the wake of Trump's move to revoke his clearance and threaten nine others who have been critical of the president or are connected to the Russia probe.

"If my clearances and my reputation as I'm being pulled through the mud now, if that's the price we're going to pay to prevent Donald Trump from doing this against other people, to me it's a small price to pay," Brennan said. "So I am going to do whatever I can personally to try to prevent these abuses in the future. And if it means going to court, I will do that."

Brennan, who served in President Barack Obama's administration, said that while he'll fight on behalf of his former CIA colleagues, it's also up to Congress to put aside politics and step in. "This is the time that your country is going to rely on you, not to do what is best for your party but what is best for the country," he said.

Trump yanked Brennan's security clearance last week, saying he felt he had to do "something" about the "rigged" probe of Russian election interference. And he has said he may do the same for nine others, including a Justice Department official whose wife worked for the firm involved in producing a dossier on Trump's ties to Russia.

An executive order signed in 1995 by President Bill Clinton lays out the process for approving security clearances and describes a detailed revocation and appeal procedure.

Former Obama-era CIA Director Leon Panetta, who also served as defense secretary, said Sunday that Trump must abide by the executive order unless he decides to change or cancel it. Speaking on CBS' "Face the Nation," he said Trump's decision to revoke Brennan's clearance raises questions about whether he followed due process.

Brennan's legal warning came as other officials joined the growing chorus of critics — now more than 75 intelligence officials — denouncing Trump's security clearance threats, saying they have a right to express their views on national security issues without fear of punishment.

Retired Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under George W. Bush and Obama, likened it to President Richard Nixon's use of a political enemies list.

Mullen told "Fox News Sunday" that while he doesn't agree with Brennan's decision to criticize the president, the former CIA director has the right to freedom of speech unless he's revealing classified information.

"It immediately brings back the whole concept of the enemies list," Mullen said, "and even before that, in the early '50s, the McCarthy era, where the administration starts putting together lists of individuals that don't agree with them and that historically, obviously, has proven incredibly problematic for the country."

Republican Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin agreed with Trump that Brennan's comments "really did cross a line."

But, he said, rather than pulling officials' security clearances, Trump should avoid politicizing the issue and simply deny them access to classified material.

"I don't want to see an enemies list," he said.

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Colvin reported from Bridgewater, N.J.



## Quakes cut power, topple homes on Indonesia island; 3 dead

By **ROSIDIN SEMBAHULUN, Associated Press**

SEMBALUN, Indonesia (AP) — Multiple strong earthquakes cut power across the Indonesian island of Lombok, toppled buildings and killed at least three people as the tourist hotspot was trying to recover from a temblor earlier this month that killed hundreds of people.

A shallow magnitude 6.9 quake that hit about 10 p.m. was one of several powerful earthquakes Sunday in the northeast of the island that also caused landslides. The nighttime quake was followed by strong aftershocks.

Two people died when their homes collapsed on Lombok and neighboring Sumbawa island, National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho tweeted Monday morning. Another person died earlier Sunday during a magnitude 6.3 quake.

The swarm of quakes caused panic in Sembalun subdistrict on Lombok in the shadow of Mount Rinjani, but many people were already staying in tents following the deadly jolt in early August and its hundreds of aftershocks. On Sumbawa, a neighborhood was engulfed by a fire that started in a collapsed house.

"People panicked and scattered," Nugroho said. "Some people are hysterical because they feel earthquake aftershocks that are harder than before. They heard a roar that probably came from landslides in the hills and Mount Rinjani."

Many homes were damaged or destroyed, he said.

Dwikorita Karnawatim, who heads Indonesia's Meteorology and Geophysics Agency, said buildings that haven't collapsed so far have suffered repeated stress, and authorities have urged people to avoid both the mountain's slopes and weakened buildings.

Sunday night's tremor occurred on a different fault and was not an aftershock of the magnitude 7.0 quake on Aug. 5 that killed 460 people, damaged tens of thousands of homes and displaced several hundred thousand people.

The quake lasting five to 10 seconds also was felt in the neighboring island of Bali and as far away as East Java and Makassar in Sulawesi.

Quakes earlier Sunday caused landslides on Rinjani, an active volcano. Video shot by the Indonesian Red Cross showed huge clouds of dust billowing from the mountain's slopes.

Rinjani has been closed to visitors following a July earthquake that killed 16 people, triggered landslides and stranded hundreds of tourists on the mountain.

Indonesia, a sprawling archipelago that straddles the Pacific "Ring of Fire," is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

## Catholics consider withholding donations amid scandals

By **IVAN MORENO and JEFF KAROUB, Associated Press**

For decades, Michael Drweiga has opened his wallet whenever the donation basket comes around at church, but the latest revelations of priests sexually abusing children brought him to the conclusion that he can no longer justify giving.

Brice Sokolowski helps small Catholic nonprofits and churches raise money, but he too supports the recent calls to withhold donations.

And Georgene Sorensen has felt enough anger and "just total sadness" over the past few weeks that she's reconsidering her weekly offering at her parish.

Across the U.S., Catholics once faithful with their financial support to their churches are searching for ways to respond to the constant sex-abuse scandals that have tarnished the institution in which they believe, with back-to-back scandals in the past two months.

The most recent came Tuesday when a grand jury report revealed that hundreds of Roman Catholic priests in Pennsylvania molested more than 1,000 children in six dioceses since the 1940s — crimes that church leaders are accused of covering up. The report came two months after Pope Francis ordered disgraced ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick removed from public ministry amid allegations the 88-year-

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old retired archbishop sexually abused a teenage altar boy and engaged in sexual misconduct with adult seminarians decades ago. Last month, Francis accepted McCarrick's resignation as cardinal and ordered him to a "life of prayer and penance."

The most recent "whopper of a report" from Pennsylvania, Drweiga said, was enough to make him wonder where his money was going and whether it was being used to cover up abuses.

"In an organization that spans the whole world like the Catholic Church, you don't know where your money is going. And when you read about these priest-abuse scandals it just raises that question to the highest power. What is this money going for?" said Drweiga, 63, who lives in Wilmette, Illinois.

Sokolowski, an Austin, Texas, resident who founded Catholicfundraiser.net to provide advice to Catholic nonprofits and churches, said he's heard from many who are "really sick and tired" of hearing about priests abusing children.

"So the big thing that people are saying is, 'We just need to stop funding their crap,'" said Sokolowski, 36. He said he encourages people to stop giving money to their diocese, which oversees the network of churches in an area, but to keep supporting their local parish and tell their priest and bishop what they're doing.

Calls to financially boycott the Catholic Church are not new. Five years ago, after sex-abuse scandals rocked the archdiocese in St. Paul, Minnesota, parishioners talked about withholding their donations in protest.

But Catholics face a delicate balance because some of the money dioceses raise are shared with parishes, cautioned Dr. Edward Peters, the Edmund Cardinal Szoka Chair at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit.

"I'm just saying, be careful about punishing the Spouse of Christ and her dependent children because some priests and even bishops, men presumably wedded to her as Jesus was wedded to her, abandoned her so shamelessly," Peters wrote in a blog post Thursday, referring to the Catholic Church.

Sorensen, who lives near Tucson, Arizona, said after the McCarrick story broke, her prayer group sent a letter to her bishop voicing their concerns.

"Then came the Pennsylvania scandal and we thought, 'Oh my God, this isn't over. We thought it was over,'" the 72-year-old Sorensen said. "We thought we were building the new church again."

Sorensen said she doesn't plan to withhold money that she has pledged, including her diocese's Annual Catholic Appeal, but she has spoken with others about the possibility of not giving a regular weekly contribution or only offering money to specific projects.

As for future major giving, she said, "we are definitely waiting to see where all the chips are going to fall."

"It comes down to one thing: It's the message, not the messenger," she said. "I'm a faithful Catholic. ... I will never leave the church. I will fight to save it."

For Eddie Shih, however, the scandal has shaken his faith — one to which he converted about a decade ago and has intensely studied through three years of night school to earn a master's degree in theology.

"I am struggling with it — it's not easy for me," said Shih, a Taiwanese immigrant who lives in New York City and attends several Catholic churches. "I don't think I'll leave the church but I can imagine a lot of people ... will just drop out of the church."

Tim Lennon, the president of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, said his organization has fielded calls from Catholics who have pledged to stop giving to their church.

"It's an action as opposed to just sitting here doing nothing," he said, but added that it's a symbolic gesture.

"That in itself will not protect children. That in itself will not support survivors. That in itself will not compel ... an attorney general to take action," he said. "It's just a message to the church that it's not just survivors knocking at their door as we have been for the last 30 years."

Ilene Kennedy, a San Antonio resident who attended Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on Sunday, said she doesn't know "what the fix would be" aside from "holding the higher-ups accountable." Still, she doesn't think withholding her money from the collection basket is the answer.

"I don't think that we should punish all churches just for that," she said. "I don't think that's right."

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Associated Press video producer Robert Bumsted in New York contributed to this report.

## Science Says: Hotter weather turbocharges US West wildfires

By SETH BORENSTEIN, AP Science Writer

As temperatures rise in the U.S. West, so do the flames.

The years with the most acres burned by wildfires have some of the hottest temperatures, an Associated Press analysis of fire and weather data found. As human-caused climate change has warmed the world over the past 35 years, the land consumed by flames has more than doubled.

Experts say the way global warming worsens wildfires comes down to the basic dynamics of fire. Fires need ignition, oxygen and fuel. And what's really changed is fuel — the trees, brush and other plants that go up in flames.

"Hotter, drier weather means our fuels are drier, so it's easier for fires to start and spread and burn more intensely," said University of Alberta fire scientist Mike Flannigan.

It's simple, he said: "The warmer it is, the more fire we see."

Federal fire and weather data show higher air temperatures are turbocharging fire season.

The five hottest Aprils to Septembers out West produced years that on average burned more than 13,500 square miles (35,000 square kilometers), according to data at the National Interagency Fire Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration .

That's triple the average for the five coldest Aprils to Septembers.

The Western summer so far is more than 3 degrees Fahrenheit (1.7 degrees Celsius) warmer than the 20th century average. California in July logged its hottest month in 124 years of record-keeping.

The five years with the most acres burned since 1983 averaged 63.4 degrees from April to September. That's 1.2 degrees warmer than average and 2.4 degrees hotter than the years with the least acres burned, AP's data analysis shows.

In California, the five years with the most acres burned (not including this year) average 2.1 degrees warmer than the five years with the least acres burned.

A degree or two may seem like not much, but it is crucial for fuel. The hotter it is, the more water evaporates from plants. When fuel dries faster, fires spread more and burn more intensely, experts said.

For every 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit that the air warms, it needs 15 percent more rain to make up for the drying of the fuel, Flannigan said.

Fuel moisture levels in California and Oregon are flirting with record dry levels, NOAA western regional climate center director Tim Brown said.

And low humidity is "the key driver of wildfire spread," according to University of Colorado fire scientist Jennifer Balch who says the Western U.S. soon will start to see wildfires of 1 million acres (1,562 square miles).

Veteran Colorado hotshot firefighter Mike Sugaski used to consider 10,000-acre (16-square-mile) fires big, now he fights ones 10 times that or more.

"You kind of keep saying, 'How can they get much worse?' But they do," Sugaski said.

The number of U.S. wildfires hasn't changed much over the last few decades, but the area consumed has soared.

"The year 2000 seemed to be some kind of turning point," said Randy Eardley, the fire center's chief spokesman.

From 1983 to 1999, the United States didn't reach 10,000 square miles burned annually. Since then, 10 years have had more than 10,000 square miles burned, including 2017, 2015 and 2006 when more than 15,000 square miles burned.

Some people who reject mainstream climate science point to statistics that seem to show far more acres burned in the 1930s and 1940s. But Eardley said statistics before 1983 are not reliable because fires "may be double-counted, triple-counted or more."

Nationally, more than 8,900 square miles (23,050 kilometers) have burned this year, about 28 percent more than the 10-year average as of mid-August. California is having one of its worst years.

Scientists generally avoid blaming global warming for specific extreme events without extensive analysis,

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but scientists have done those extensive examinations on wildfire.

John Abatzgolou of the University of Idaho looked at forest fires and dry conditions in the Western United States from 1979 to 2015 and compared that to computer simulations of what would be expected with no human-caused climate change. He concluded that global warming had a role in an extra 16,200 square miles (42,000 square kilometers) of forests burning since 1984.

A study of the 2015 Alaska fire season — the second biggest on record — did a similar simulation analysis, concluding that climate change from the burning of coal, oil and gas increased the risk of the fire season being that severe by 34 to 60 percent.

One 2015 study said globally fire seasons are about 18.7 percent longer since 1979. Another study that year says climate change is increasing extreme wildfire risk in California where wildfires already are year-round.

Also, drought and bark beetles have killed 129 million trees in California since 2016, creating more fuel.

Contrary to fire scientists, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke this week told Breitbart radio that “what’s driving” increased wildfires is an increase in fuel. He said the government has “been held hostage by environmental terrorist groups” that oppose clearing dead trees that they say provide wildlife habitat. Zinke, however, has acknowledged that climate change was a factor in worsening wildfires.

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Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears . His work can be found here .

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## **Backstreet Boys fans treated for injuries after storm**

THACKERVILLE, Okla. (AP) — An Oklahoma casino says 14 people suffered cuts and bruises when a powerful rainstorm toppled entrance trusses and disrupted the start of an outdoor concert by the Backstreet Boys.

Kym Koch-Thompson, spokeswoman for the WinStar World Casino and Resort, says the concertgoers were treated at the scene following Saturday’s storm, then taken to hospitals in Oklahoma and Texas. She says they were all treated for minor injuries and released. The casino in Thackerville is about 70 miles (110 kilometers) northwest of Dallas.

The casino says a storm packing winds of up to 80 mph (128 kph) struck the venue about 5:30 p.m. and blew down entrance trusses on about 150 concertgoers who didn’t heed earlier evacuation warnings. Koch-Thompson says the concert was postponed. A new date hasn’t yet been set.

## **US says conserving oil is no longer an economic imperative**

**By ELLEN KNICKMEYER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Conserving oil is no longer an economic imperative for the U.S., the Trump administration declares in a major new policy statement that threatens to undermine decades of government campaigns for gas-thrifty cars and other conservation programs.

The position was outlined in a memo released last month in support of the administration’s proposal to relax fuel mileage standards. The government released the memo online this month without fanfare.

Growth of natural gas and other alternatives to petroleum has reduced the need for imported oil, which “in turn affects the need of the nation to conserve energy,” the Energy Department said. It also cites the now decade-old fracking revolution that has unlocked U.S. shale oil reserves, giving “the United States more flexibility than in the past to use our oil resources with less concern.”

With the memo, the administration is formally challenging old justifications for conservation — even congressionally prescribed ones, as with the mileage standards. The memo made no mention of climate change. Transportation is the single largest source of climate-changing emissions.

President Donald Trump has questioned the existence of climate change, embraced the notion of “energy



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dominance" as a national goal, and called for easing what he calls burdensome regulation of oil, gas and coal, including repealing the Obama Clean Power Plan.

Despite the increased oil supplies, the administration continues to believe in the need to "use energy wisely," the Energy Department said, without elaboration. Department spokesmen did not respond Friday to questions about that statement.

Reaction was quick.

"It's like saying, 'I'm a big old fat guy, and food prices have dropped — it's time to start eating again,'" said Tom Kloza, longtime oil analyst with the Maryland-based Oil Price Information Service.

"If you look at it from the other end, if you do believe that fossil fuels do some sort of damage to the atmosphere ... you come up with a different viewpoint," Kloza said. "There's a downside to living large."

Climate change is a "clear and present and increasing danger," said Sean Donahue, a lawyer for the Environmental Defense Fund.

In a big way, the Energy Department statement just acknowledges the world's vastly changed reality when it comes to oil.

Just 10 years ago, in summer 2008, oil prices were peaking at \$147 a barrel and pummeling the global economy. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries was enjoying a massive transfer of wealth, from countries dependent on imported oil. Prices now are about \$65.

Today, the U.S. is vying with Russia for the title of top world oil producer. U.S. oil production hit an all-time high this summer, aided by the technological leaps of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing.

How much the U.S. economy is hooked up to the gas pump, and vice versa, plays into any number of policy considerations, not just economic or environmental ones, but military and geopolitical ones, said John Graham, a former official in the George W. Bush administration, now dean of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University.

"Our ability to play that role as a leader in the world is stronger when we are the strongest producer of oil and gas," Graham said. "But there are still reasons to want to reduce the amount we consume."

Current administration proposals include one that would freeze mileage standards for cars and light trucks after 2020, instead of continuing to make them tougher.

The proposal eventually would increase U.S. oil consumption by 500,000 barrels a day, the administration says. While Trump officials say the freeze would improve highway safety, documents released this month showed senior Environmental Protection Agency staffers calculate the administration's move would actually increase highway deaths.

"American businesses, consumers and our environment are all the losers under his plan," said Sen. Tom Carper, a Delaware Democrat. "The only clear winner is the oil industry. It's not hard to see whose side President Trump is on."

Administration support has been tepid to null on some other long-running government programs for alternatives to gas-powered cars.

Bill Wehrum, assistant administration of the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, spoke dismissively of electric cars — a young industry supported financially by the federal government and many states — this month in a call with reporters announcing the mileage freeze proposal.

"People just don't want to buy them," the EPA official said.

Oil and gas interests are campaigning for changes in government conservation efforts on mileage standards, biofuels and electric cars.

In June, for instance, the American Petroleum Institute and other industries wrote eight governors, promoting the dominance of the internal-combustion engine and questioning their states' incentives to consumers for electric cars.

Surging U.S. and gas production has brought on "energy security and abundance," Frank Macchiarola, a group director of the American Petroleum Institute trade association, told reporters this week, in a telephone call dedicated to urging scrapping or overhauling of one U.S. program for biofuels.

Fears of oil scarcity used to be a driver of U.S. energy policy, Macchiarola said.

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Thanks partly to increased production, "that pillar has really been rendered essentially moot," he said.

## **The Latest: The new alternative facts: 'Truth isn't truth'**

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — The Latest on President Donald Trump (all times local):

11:50 a.m.

Move over, alternative facts. Now, truth isn't truth.

President Donald Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani used the line Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" with Chuck Todd.

Giuliani was trying to make the case that having Trump sit down for an interview with special counsel Robert Mueller's team wouldn't accomplish much because of the he-said-she-said nature of witnesses' recollections.

Giuliani says it's "silly" to say Trump should testify "because he's going to tell the truth and he shouldn't worry" because "it's somebody's version of the truth. Not the truth."

Todd insisted: "Truth is truth," Giuliani responded: "Truth isn't truth." The comment left Todd flummoxed.

Trump and his aides have been criticized for spreading lies and disinformation. White House counselor Kellyanne Conway famously referred to it as "alternative facts."

8:35 a.m.

President Donald Trump is insisting that White House lawyer Don McGahn isn't "a John Dean type 'RAT.'"

Trump in a series of Sunday morning tweets is responding to a New York Times story reporting that McGahn has given hours of testimony to the special counsel investigating Russian election meddling.

Dean was White House counsel for President Richard Nixon during Watergate. He ultimately cooperated with prosecutors and helped bring down the Nixon presidency, though he served a prison term for obstruction of justice.

Trump says he allowed McGahn and others to testify. He says, "I didn't have to. I have nothing to hide....."

Trump is also calling the investigation "McCarthyism at its WORST," a reference to indiscriminate allegations made by Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s to expose communists.

## **US firms to Trump: Don't raise tariffs on more Chinese goods**

**By PAUL WISEMAN, AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fishermen off the Alaskan coast. A Florida maker of boat trailers. A building materials distributor in Tennessee.

Those and hundreds of other American businesses are delivering the same plea to President Donald Trump as he considers imposing tariffs on nearly 40 percent of imported Chinese goods:

Don't do it.

The Trump administration will hold six days of hearings starting Monday in Washington on the next barrage in an escalating trade war between the world's two largest economies: Trump's proposed tariffs of 10 percent to 25 percent on \$200 billion in Chinese goods that could kick in as early as next month.

Once in effect, the tariffs would immediately inflate the prices that American companies would have to pay for Chinese components they need to build their products. Those companies would have to decide whether to pass those costs on to their customers or absorb the higher prices themselves.

The first shots have already been fired: In July, Trump slapped 25 percent tariffs on \$34 billion in Chinese imports. Taxes on an additional \$16 billion are set to kick in this week. China is counterpunching with tariffs of its own.

But the \$200 billion in additional Chinese goods that the Trump administration is considering taxing would mark a significant escalation in its trade fight with Beijing.

Washington and Beijing are clashing over U.S. allegations that China uses predatory tactics to try to overtake American technological dominance: Those tactics, the administration argues, include cyber-theft and pressure for U.S. companies to hand over trade secrets in return for access to the Chinese market.

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So far, the U.S. tariffs have targeted imported Chinese industrial products — not the electronics, toys and food that ordinary Americans might buy at a mall or order online. But adding \$200 billion to the target list would expose to hefty taxes many more of the \$506 billion in goods that China shipped to the United States last year, including many consumer products. The list includes 6,031 Chinese imports — an eclectic compilation that ranges from buttons to burglar alarms to motorboats.

JO-ANN Stores, which sells fabric and crafting supplies, says it imports about 500 items on the tariff list, including fleece, yarn and cotton fabric. Ed Weinstein, JO-ANN's vice president of tax and public affairs, said he doesn't understand how supplies for knitters and crafters became caught up in a trade dispute over high-tech policy.

"Our products are very simple," Weinstein told The Associated Press. "I would never have expected to see fabric and craft components on the tariff list."

In their filings to the Trump administration, companies that import from China complain that the tariffs will force them to raise prices, pay higher costs, try to find alternative suppliers or lose business to foreign rivals that don't have to pay a penalty on components and machinery they import from China.

"If you look at the filings, a lot of them are mom-and-pop businesses saying, 'Please don't do this to us,'" said Bryan Riley, director of the Free Trade Initiative at the conservative National Taxpayers Union. Consider:

— Seattle's Groundfish Forum, a trade group for the operators of 19 fishing trawlers off Alaska. It warns that the tariffs will hit flatfish caught off the U.S. coast that are sent to China for processing before being shipped back to the United States. Trump's proposed 10 percent tariff on those fish would leave the "sustainably harvested fish caught by U.S. fishermen at a competitive disadvantage," the group says in a filing with the administration's Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

— Magic Tilt Trailers, a company in Clearwater, Florida, that makes boat trailers. It says it has to buy Chinese tires and parts on Trump's target list; there are few alternatives.

"The tariffs will have little to no impact on the sourcing options of members in the trailer manufacturing community," the company wrote. "We will just be getting a 10 percent tax, payable to the general treasury."

— Building Plastics Inc., a Memphis-based building materials distributor. It buys 400- to 800-pound slabs of Chinese quartz and sells them to fabricators that turn them into countertops and other items for homes and offices. The company says it's tried and failed to find alternative sources of the mineral.

"We did not want to go to China, but we were forced to go to China," said Mike Perkowski, a product manager for the company.

Perkowski said the tariffs could prove "catastrophic."

"There's a possibility we could be priced out of the market," he said in an interview. "We're definitely going to have to pass along the tariffs ... We've been educating our customer base that tariffs are coming. There will definitely be a price increase."

Can the U.S. and China avoid a \$200 billion tariff collision? Hopes rose last week on news that China will send an envoy to Washington this month to discuss a way out of the standoff.

But many trade analysts aren't very optimistic. A solution would likely require China to widen its market to foreign companies, reduce subsidies to domestic industries and rethink industrial policies that are considered vital to helping Chinese companies become leaders in such advanced fields as electric cars and robotics and thereby strengthening China's economy.

"China is not going to become a functioning market economy as we would like to see it in the next two months or even in the next two years," said Bradford Ward, a former U.S. trade official and now at the law firm King & Spalding. "People need to prepare for and plan for the long haul. This is not going to be resolved quickly."

The tit-for-tat tariffs between the U.S. and China, Riley said, "could become the new normal."

## North Carolina acts deep blue with state worker minimum wage

By GARY D. ROBERTSON, Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina Republicans have infuriated liberal activists by slashing income-tax rates, defending illegally gerrymandered districts and passing a now-partially repealed “bathroom bill” aimed at transgender people.

But GOP legislators surprised critics by acting more like lawmakers in a deep-blue state when they passed a \$15-per-hour “living wage” for about 10,000 state government and university system employees, including secretaries, hospital workers, security guards and housekeepers.

At least four other states have steps already in place to increase pay for state workers to \$15. But North Carolina sped to the front of the line, with salary bumps for many arriving in their late-July paychecks.

The lawmakers’ motives appear to be both economic and political. One top budget writer at the legislature says it helps state agencies retain veteran workers doing often-thankless jobs. But it also wins favor with North Carolina’s chief state employees’ union in an election year for Republicans trying to hold onto their control of the General Assembly.

Until now, the North Carolina state employee salary floor was about \$24,300, or about \$11.70 per hour. That means some received as much as a 28 percent raise to bring them up to the new minimum equivalent of \$31,200 per year.

For Gloria Dockery, who cleans buildings at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for less than \$28,000 a year, an increase will make it easier to cover her house payment and even treat herself occasionally.

“About the time you pay all of your bills, it’s gone,” said Dockery, 58. “We should have a little change in our pocket. ... It sure would help me a lot.”

GOP leaders who control the General Assembly have shown no interest in raising the minimum wage for all employees above the \$7.25 federal level. So why are they doing so for state workers?

“It’s hard to recruit and maintain good employees,” said Sen. Harry Brown of Jacksonville, a top budget writer. “We’ve lost some good employees ... to the private sector.”

Ratcheting up the minimum wage benefited around 10 percent of the state government workforce but only cost \$15 million, legislators said. It also puts Republican lawmakers in the good graces of the 50,000-member State Employees Association of North Carolina.

“You’re seeing a confluence of economics and politics, and if it ends up this small amount of money helped the Republicans retain their veto-proof majorities in the legislature, then to them it was well worth it,” said Eric Heberlig, a political science professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Republicans embraced the “living wage” phrase despite sharing little with the “Fight for 15” movement that started in 2012. Since then more than 20 states and 40 cities have raised their minimum wages for millions of state and nongovernment workers, according to the National Employment Law Project. San Francisco became the first major city last month to reach \$15.

“It’s a popular issue ... for the electorate across the political spectrum,” said Tsedeye Gebreselassie, a law project attorney.

New York, California and Massachusetts are increasing the pay of state government workers in phases as their minimum wage for nongovernment employees simultaneously rises. The government raises in the three states and Pennsylvania are expected to reach \$15 per hour starting in mid-2021 to 2024. State workers in New York City will reach the \$15 threshold at the end of this year.

The liberal-leaning Economic Policy Institute estimates 1.7 million North Carolina workers would benefit if the statewide minimum wage for all workers reached \$15 by 2024.

“The big question that legislators have to answer is why they think some people in North Carolina deserve a living wage and others do not,” said Allan Freyer with the North Carolina Justice Center, which lobbies for the poor. Still, he called the uptick for state workers a “great first step.”

Brown said the GOP philosophy is that employers should make their own pay decisions.

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper supports a minimum wage increase but hasn’t talked much about how



high it should go. Cooper vetoed the state budget containing the \$15 wage, in part because Republicans wouldn't suspend planned tax cuts for the highest wage earners and for corporations.

Collective bargaining by North Carolina state workers is prohibited, but the State Employees Association and smaller North Carolina Public Service Workers Union have sought \$15 per hour for years.

Association executive director Robert Broome pitched the idea to Republicans as a way to help workers living near the poverty level — currently \$25,100 for a family of four — share the benefits of state GOP tax-and-spending policies that have resulted in revenue surpluses and corporation windfalls.

Broome said the association has a proud history backing those "who champion the issues and policies that are important to state employees and retirees, regardless of their political affiliation."

For Sekia Royall, 48, a food worker at Cherry state mental hospital in Goldsboro, her projected \$4,000 annual raise will help get a little more spending money to a daughter in college and support Royall's side catering business.

"It's a little extra to help through the month," Royall said.

## Survey of economists: Some Trump policies could slow growth

By JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. business economists are concerned about the risks of some of President Donald Trump's economic policies, saying they fear his tariffs and higher budget deficits could eventually slow the economy.

More than 90 percent of economists surveyed by the National Association for Business Economics in a report being released Monday said they think the Trump administration's current and threatened tariffs will harm the economy.

The administration has imposed tariffs on goods from many of America's main trading partners — from China and Europe to Mexico and Canada. Trump officials argue that the tariffs, which are taxes on imports, will help the administration gain more favorable terms of trade. But so far, U.S. trading partners have simply retaliated with tariffs of their own.

Seven in 10 of the economists surveyed by the NABE said they thought Trump's tax cuts were "too stimulative" because of the resulting increase in the national debt, even though two-thirds said the corporate tax cuts generally benefit their companies.

The 251 respondents, surveyed between July 19 and Aug. 2, said they do envision some of Trump's policies as supporting the economy. Eighty percent, for example, told the NABE that the administration's efforts to ease regulations would boost growth in the short run.

As a whole, though, the responses of the business economists represent a rebuke of the Trump administration's overall approach to the economy. The administration has been hailing a recent pickup in growth as heralding the start of an enduring and more vigorous economic boom.

Job gains have been solid, and the economy expanded at a brisk 4.1 percent annual pace in the April-June quarter. The Trump team has also portrayed a bump in retail sales and the confidence expressed in surveys of consumers and small businesses as evidence of more robust growth ahead.

"Our economy, our investors, our workforce are crushing it right now," Larry Kudlow, the top White House economic adviser, said at a Cabinet meeting Thursday. "Any business economist worth his or her salt would look at these trends and tell you we're going for a while."

But the surveyed business economists said they thought the \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts over the next decade would produce higher budget deficits that should be reduced. The survey showed that while the economists expect the tax cuts to boost the economy this year, 62 percent forecast that the lower taxes would accelerate growth by an annual average of just 0.1 percent or less through 2027.

Though most respondents told the NABE that they thought the administration's drive to end many regulations would lift growth in the short run, nearly half said they felt deregulation would have negative consequences over the long term.

In addition, 60 percent said they believed economic policy should do more to address climate change.

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The Trump administration announced last year that it was withdrawing the United States from an international climate accord that was designed to reduce carbon emissions.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Aug. 20, the 232nd day of 2018. There are 133 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 20, 1953, the Soviet Union publicly acknowledged it had tested a hydrogen bomb.

On this date:

In 1866, President Andrew Johnson formally declared the Civil War over, months after fighting had stopped.

In 1910, a series of forest fires swept through parts of Idaho, Montana and Washington, killing at least 85 people and burning some 3 million acres.

In 1914, German forces occupied Brussels, Belgium, during World War I.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill paid tribute to the Royal Air Force before the House of Commons, saying, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." Exiled Communist revolutionary Leon Trotsky was assassinated in Coyoacan, Mexico by Ramon Mercader. (Trotsky died the next day.)

In 1955, hundreds of people were killed in anti-French rioting in Morocco and Algeria.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act, a nearly \$1 billion anti-poverty measure.

In 1968, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations began invading Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring" liberalization drive.

In 1977, the United States launched Voyager 2, an unmanned spacecraft carrying a 12-inch, gold-plated copper phonograph record containing images, greetings in dozens of languages, samples of music and sounds of nature.

In 1986, postal employee Patrick Henry Sherrill went on a deadly rampage at a post office in Edmond, Okla., shooting 14 fellow workers to death before killing himself.

In 1988, a cease-fire in the war between Iraq and Iran went into effect.

In 1989, entertainment executive Jose Menendez and his wife, Kitty, were shot to death in their Beverly Hills mansion by their sons, Lyle and Erik. Fifty-one people died when a pleasure boat sank in the River Thames (tehms) in London after colliding with a dredger.

In 2000, Tiger Woods won the PGA Championship in a playoff over Bob May, becoming the first player since Ben Hogan in 1953 to win three majors in one year.

Ten years ago: A Spanish jetliner crashed during takeoff from Madrid, killing 154 people; 18 survived. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski signed a deal to put a U.S. missile defense base in Poland. In Beijing, Usain (yoo-SAYN') Bolt of Jamaica broke the world record by winning the 200 meters in 19.30 seconds. Former Chinese leader Hua Guofeng died in Beijing at age 87. U.S. Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones, the first black woman to represent Ohio in Congress, died in Cleveland at age 58. Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association, died near California's Lake Tahoe at age 63.

Five years ago: A Pakistani court indicted former president and army chief Pervez Musharraf on murder charges stemming from the assassination of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Qatar-based Al-Jazeera Media Network launched its U.S. cable news outlet, Al-Jazeera America. Crime novelist Elmore Leonard, 87, died in Bloomfield Township, Michigan. Jazz pianist Marian McPartland, 95, died in Port Washington, New York, of natural causes.

One year ago: Actor, comic and longtime telethon host Jerry Lewis died of heart disease in Las Vegas at the age of 91.

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Today's Birthdays: Writer-producer-director Walter Bernstein is 99. Boxing promoter Don King is 87. Former Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, is 85. Former U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, is 83. Former MLB All-Star Graig Nettles is 74. Broadcast journalist Connie Chung is 72. Musician Jimmy Pankow (Chicago) is 71. Actor Ray Wise is 71. Actor John Noble is 70. Rock singer Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) is 70. Country singer Rudy Gatlin is 66. Singer-songwriter John Hiatt is 66. Actor-director Peter Horton is 65. TV weatherman Al Roker is 64. Actor Jay Acovone is 63. Actress Joan Allen is 62. Movie director David O. Russell is 60. TV personality Asha Blake is 57. Actor James Marsters is 56. Rapper KRS-One is 53. Actor Colin Cunningham is 52. Actor Billy Gardell is 49. Rock singer Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit) is 48. Actor Jonathan Ke Quan is 48. Rock musician Brad Avery is 47. Actor Misha Collins is 44. Rock singer Monique Powell (Save Ferris) is 43. Jazz/pop singer-pianist Jamie Cullum is 39. Actor Ben Barnes is 37. Actress Meghan Ory is 36. Actor Andrew Garfield is 35. Actor Brant Daugherty is 33. Actress-singer Demi Lovato is 26.

Thought for Today: "Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity." — Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Russian author (1918-2008).