

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 1 of 58

“The strong individual is the one who asks for help when he needs it.”

-Rona Barrett

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

- 1- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- 1- Johnson Agency Ad
- 1- Recycling Trailer
- 1- Dairy Queen Help Wanted
- 1- School Help Wanted
- 2- Groton Garden Club News
- 2- Hokana Auction Ad
- 3- Bring Weed Questions to SDSU WEED Project booth at the 2018 S.D. State Fair
- 4- South Dakota Farmers Union Foundation Offers \$2,500 Agricultural Graduate School Scholarship
- 5- Groton Area hosts Back-To-School Gathering
- 6- Ways to Save Money at the State Fair
- 6- School Calendar
- 7- Protect your Family from Future Scourges
- 8- Today in Weather History
- 9- Today's Forecast
- 10- Yesterday's Weather
- 10- National Weather map
- 10- Today's Weather Almanac
- 11- Daily Devotional
- 12- 2018 Groton Community Events
- 13- News from the Associated Press

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

JOHNSON AGENCY

Real Estate & Insurance

Jay Johnson, Broker

www.johnsonagencygroton.com

102 N Main St. Office: 605/397-2424
Groton, SD 57445 Home: 605/397-8565



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)



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.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 2 of 58

Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden Club met at the home of Marg Overacker with Pat Larson assisting. Ten members answered roll call with what they like about Fall. Correspondence included a thank you from Ton and Alesa Mahan for naming their yard "Yard of the week". Unfinished business included the fall board meeting held in Milbank in September 22. New business included decorating main street on September 24, at 1pm beginning at the bank. We also decided to have a mini float in the homecoming parade. The next meeting will be at the Groton Health and Rehab September 17, at 5:30 pm. Linda Anderson and Deb McKiver will host and Pam Rix will give the program. The August program was given by Linda Anderson on the "Easter Egg Plant."

TIMED ONLINE 9445 State Line Road, Frederick, SD 57441

AUCTION

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

<p>TRACTORS</p> <p>2003 Case STX440 4WD 2005 John Deere 8420 MFWD Allis Chalmers 7040 2WD</p> <p>COMBINE & HEADS</p> <p>2009 John Deere 9770 STS 2006 John Deere 635 flex head 2009 John Deere 612C chopping corn head</p> <p>DRILL</p> <p>Great Plains grain drill, 20', 6" spacing, 3 pt., mounted gauge, rubber press wheels</p> <p>FERTILIZER CADDY</p> <p>Pattison CB1600 fertilizer caddy w/pump</p> <p>DISCS</p> <p>John Deere 235 disc Sunflower disc John Deere 712 disc chisel</p> <p>OTHER TILLAGE EQUIPMENT</p> <p>Landoll 7430 VT-Plus vertical tillage John Deere 726 mulch finisher Rite Way landroller, 42'</p>	<p>GRAIN CART & GRAVITY BOX</p> <p>Brent Avalanche 1084 grain cart Minnesota 260 gravity box</p> <p>TRUCK</p> <p>2004 Freightliner Classic XL tri-axle flat top sleeper 60"</p> <p>TRAILERS</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>LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT</p> <p>1993 IHC 4900 truck (3) Vern's creep feeders 150 bu. Wheel loader livestock water tank</p> <p>ATTACHMENTS</p> <p>MDS pallet forks for John Deere 840 loader Snow/silage bucket John Deere material bucket</p>	 <p>PREVIEW: August 13-28 from 8AM-5PM LOADOUT: Thursday, August 30 from 8AM-5PM</p> <p>TIRES & PARTS</p> <p>(4) Skid steer loader tires Landoll disc blades & bearings John Deere grill guard (10) John Deere suitcase weights</p>
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Complete terms, lot listings and photos at
SteffesGroup.com
Randy Kath MN47-007

COLE & HOLY HOKANA | 701.210.0548
or Dave Krostue at Steffes, 218.779.6865 or Randy Kath at Steffes, 701.429.8894

Steffes Group, Inc. | 24400 MN Hwy 22 South, Litchfield, MN 55355 | 320.693.9371

Bring Weed Questions to SDSU WEED Project booth at the 2018 S.D. State Fair

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Growers will have an opportunity to vote whether or not Wormwood sage should be considered a noxious weed during the 2018 South Dakota State Fair, held in Huron Aug. 30-Sept. 3. The straw poll vote will take place at the SDSU Extension SDSU WEED Project booth. Recommendations from this polling will be passed along with recommendations to the S.D. Weed Commission.

In addition to voting, SDSU Extension staff will be on sight to answer South Dakotans weed questions in booth Southeast corner of EXPO building.

"There is a lot of concern on control of Wormwood sage/ Absinth wormwood in pasture range and no-till fields," said Paul O. Johnson, SDSU Extension weed science coordinator.

Johnson explained that this weed is being considered as an addition to the Statewide Noxious weed registry. Currently Wormwood sage/ Absinth wormwood is declared a locally noxious weed in 39 South Dakota counties.

In addition to voting, Johnson and the SDSU Extension team make the SDSU WEED Project booth a one stop location to get weed questions answered by the experts.

The booth also features a weed display which includes crop and pasture weeds along with a lawn and garden weeds.

"Along with experts to answer questions, the booth contains several publications South Dakotans can take home as resources," Johnson said.

Publications include the South Dakota Weeds 2017 edition.

Bring weed samples to the fair for identification

Is there a weed you'd like help identifying? Johnson encourages South Dakotans to bring samples or photos with them to the State Fair SDSU WEED Project booth.

Whether a weed sample or photo is brought to the fair, Johnson reminds folks that for accurate identification, experts will need to see as much of the plant as possible.

South Dakota Farmers Union Foundation Offers \$2,500 Agricultural Graduate School Scholarship

HURON, S.D. - Applications for the South Dakota Farmers Union Foundation Graduate School Scholarship are now available at www.sdfufoundation.org.

The Farmers Union Foundation Scholarship is designed to help retain talent in South Dakota to support South Dakota's agriculture industry. It is open to students from South Dakota, pursuing a graduate degree in research, animal science, agriculture business or agriculture education at an accredited South Dakota school.

"Education is our future. This scholarship is one way Farmers Union works to help retain highly skilled individuals in South Dakota," said Doug Sombke, SDFU President and fourth-generation Conde farmer.

Application deadline is December 15, 2018

Also sponsored by Travelers Motor Club, scholarship preference is given to students from South Dakota who have/had an affiliation with Farmers Union.

Awards are for one academic year, beginning in the fall, and students may reapply at the end of the award period.

Eligible graduate students include on-campus and distance education students who are pursuing any master's or doctoral program, agriculture teacher certification program (CERT/FCSC) or graduate certificate program (GCERT).

To learn more, contact, Karla Hofhenke, Executive Director, South Dakota Farmers Union at khofhenke@sdfu.org or call 605-352-6761 ext.114.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 5 of 58

Groton Area hosts Back-To-School Gathering



The Groton Area School District held its back-to-school gathering on Tuesday. Cooking the hamburgers in the top left photo are board members Steve Smith and Clint Fjelstad. Above right is Elementary Principal Brett Schwan getting the lemonade ready. Below are board members Marty Weismantel, Deb Gengerke and Kara Pharis doing the serving.



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 6 of 58

Ways to Save Money at the State Fair

HURON, S.D. - The South Dakota State Fair offers several ways to save money during the fair.

Save on gate admission by purchasing your grandstand tickets on or before Wednesday, Aug. 29. Tickets purchased by then include gate admission. Grandstand tickets can be purchased by calling 866.605.3247, online at www.sdstatefair.com or at the grandstand ticket office.

On Thursday, Aug. 30, all veterans and active military members receive free gate admission. 4-H youth also receive free gate admission by showing their 4-H card, which can be obtained from county 4-H offices.

Coupons for \$1 off gate admission on Friday, Aug. 31 are available at Prostrollo Motors on east Highway 14 in Huron. The Prostrollo's Rockin' Rollback coupons are valid on Friday, Aug. 31, only.

Monday, Sept. 3, is Fairytales and Fantasies Day, as well as Pay it Forward Day. Kids can dress up as their favorite fantasy character and be eligible for \$1 off admission into the fair. The fair is also teaming up with businesses and organizations that are generously sponsoring gate admission passes for those in need. Passes will also be randomly handed out at the gate entrances. Fairgoers can pay it forward to the food pantry by bringing a non-perishable food item for the 'Drive to End Hunger' between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 a.m. and receive \$2 off gate admission.

There are also plenty of ways to save money at the carnival throughout the week. All rides on Wednesday, Aug. 29, are only a dollar! The Weekly Passport to Fun pass offers a carnival ride pass for all five days of the fair. Advanced passes can be purchased at Prostrollo Motors through Sept. 1 for \$52. Big Jim 93.3 and Iversons are offering a \$3 off coupon for weekday ride wristbands. Coupons can be picked up at Iversons at 101 2nd St. SW in Huron through Saturday, Sept. 1. They will be available at the Iverson's State Fair location Sunday, Sept. 2 and Monday, Sept. 3.

The 2018 South Dakota State Fair will run from Thursday, Aug. 30, through Monday, Sept. 3. Channel Seeds preview night will be Wednesday, Aug. 29. This year's theme is "Experience the Magic." For more information on State Fair events, contact the Fair office at 800.529.0900, visit www.sdstatefair.com or find them on Facebook or Twitter.

Agriculture is a major contributor to South Dakota's economy, generating \$25.6 billion in annual economic activity and employing over 115,000 South Dakotans. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture's mission is to promote, protect and preserve South Dakota agriculture for today and tomorrow. Visit us online at <http://sdda.sd.gov> or find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

School Calendar

Wednesday

Faculty Inservice: Groton Area School District

Thursday

1st Day of School, Groton Area School District

10:00am: Golf: Boys Varsity Northeast Conference vs. Tiospa Zina @ Hankinson, ND (Casino)

5:00pm: Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. St. Thomas More @ Groton Area High School

6:00pm: Volleyball: Girls Varsity Match vs. Redfield-Doland @ Groton Area High School (C at 5:00 PM, JV at 6:00 PM followed by varsity match)

Protect your Family from Future Scourges

By Richard P. Holm, MD

Vaccines protect people from illness with minimal risk.

Smallpox has been around for many millennia. For thousands of years, the virus caused a deadly illness that killed more than 35 percent of adults and 80 percent of children who contracted the disease. That is until the smallpox vaccine was discovered in 1796. Noting that milk maids rarely got smallpox, British rural physician Edward Jenner found that deliberate infection with the milder cowpox disease provided substantial immunity to smallpox. After decades of improvement to the vaccine and a campaign led by the World Health Organization, global deaths from smallpox were reduced from two million per year in 1967 to zero in 1977. Human smallpox infections were virtually eliminated from this world because of vaccinations.

Another example of clever manipulation of the immune system is the story of a pneumonia vaccine. In a 2003 study, researchers noted there had been a huge drop in hospitalizations of the elderly for pneumonia, with 12,000 fewer yearly deaths—especially in those older than 85. This is the result of routine childhood pneumonia vaccination. Although we now encourage two different pneumonia vaccines for those older than 65, the authors of the study claim that it was the routine vaccination of children that was responsible for the reduction of pneumonia in the elderly. Thus, herd immunity profoundly protects immune deficient adults by reducing their exposure to sick kids.

There have been dangerous and untrue rumors that vaccinations in children are responsible for autism. Despite the natural human wish to find something to blame for this condition, autism appears in similar rates in children who are given and not given vaccinations. Don't get me wrong, some vaccines carry risks, but it all depends on the specific type of vaccine and what disease it is treating. Most vaccines are incredibly safe.

Take for example the vaccine for Dengue fever, where the risk of side effects is significant. With Dengue vaccine, ten children are saved for every one child who is harmed. Compare that with the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine series given in the U.S. which has mild temporary side effects including fussiness, mild fever, injection-site soreness, affecting one child in four. There is temporary mild joint pain, rash, mild glandular swelling, and loss of appetite affecting one in 50, and high fever and platelet problems affecting one in 25,000. Much better than Dengue vaccine. The benefits of the MMR vaccine far outweigh the risks. That is why we routinely give people the MMR vaccine and only give people the Dengue vaccine if they have a high chance of exposure.

Vaccination, a clever manipulation of our immune system, protects us from the scourges of the future.

Watch On Call with the Prairie Doc® most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central on SDPTV and follow the Prairie Doc® on Facebook and YouTube for free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 8 of 58

Today in Weather History

August 22, 1985: Intense thunderstorms moved from near Shadehill Reservoir in northwest South Dakota late in the evening of the 21st, to northern Brown County after sunrise on the 22nd. These thunderstorms produced high winds, large hail, rain, and lightning. Considerable crop and property damage were caused mainly by the strong winds and hail. Winds gusts ranged from 55 mph at Mobridge to 60 mph in and around Akaska. Winds of 70 mph were reported at Onaka and Faulkton. The strongest wind gust was reported in Hoven with a peak gust of 72 mph. Widespread damage was reported throughout the area. Many mobile homes, storage sheds, silos, and roofs were damaged or destroyed. Nine miles south and four miles west of Keldron, over two inches in diameter hail fell for 40 minutes, breaking windows and piling in ditches to a depth of four feet. These intense thunderstorms also produced brief heavy rainfall ranging from three-quarters of an inch to over four inches.

August 21, 2011: The Missouri River at Pierre, Fort Pierre, and Chamberlain/Oacoma fell throughout August as releases on the Oahe Dam were slowly decreased. The Missouri River at Chamberlain/Oacoma fell below flood stage on August 22nd. The extensive damage to homes and roads began to surface as the water receded. The river continued to fall into September.

1816 - The growing season for corn was cut short as damaging frosts were reported from North Carolina to interior New England. (David Ludlum)

1893: Four hurricanes are observed in the Atlantic Ocean at the same time. Over a century would pass, 1998 before four hurricanes would again rage together in the Atlantic.

1923 - The temperature at Anchorage, AK, reached 82 degrees, a record for August for the location which was later tied on the 2nd in 1978. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A cold front lowered temperatures 20 to 40 degrees across the north central U.S., and produced severe thunderstorms in Ohio and Lower Michigan. An early morning thunderstorm near Sydney MI produced high winds which spun a car around 180 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Afternoon highs of 88 degrees at Astoria, OR, and 104 degrees at Medford, OR, were records for the date, and the number of daily record highs across the nation since the first of June topped the 2000 mark. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Evening thunderstorms in the central U.S. produced golf ball size hail at May City IA, and wind gusts to 66 mph at Balltown IA. Lightning struck a barn in Fayette County IA killing 750 hogs. Evening thunderstorms in Montana produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Havre. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1992 - Hurricane Andrew makes landfall in Southern Florida as a Category 5 storm with wind gusts estimated in excess of 175 m.p.h. Estimated damages exceeded \$20 billion, more than 60 people were killed and approximately 2 million people were evacuated from their homes. (University of Illinois WW2010)

1994: Hurricane John, about 345 miles south of Hilo, Hawaii had winds of 175 mph and pressure at 920 millibars or 27.17 inches of mercury, making it one of the strongest hurricanes ever in the Central Pacific. The 31-day existence made John the longest-lasting tropical cyclone recorded in both the Pacific Ocean and worldwide, surpassing both Hurricane Tina's previous record in the Pacific of 24 days in the 1992 season and the 1899 San Ciriaco hurricane's previous world record of 28 days in the 1899 Atlantic season. John was also the farthest-traveling tropical cyclone in both Pacific Ocean and worldwide, with distance traveled of 7,165 miles, out-distancing previous record holders Hurricane Fico in the Pacific of 4,700 miles in the 1978 season and Hurricane Faith worldwide of 6,850 miles in the 1966 Atlantic season.

2003: The Okanagan Mountain fire reaches its destructive peak, destroying 250 homes. Nearly 40,000 residents have been evacuated or are on evacuation alert. The Okanagan Mountain Park Fire is estimated to be 17,000 hectares and continues to grow.

Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 9 of 58

Today



Sunny

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Thursday



Mostly Sunny
then Chance
T-storms

Thursday
Night



T-storms
Likely

Friday



Slight Chance
T-storms

High: 80 °F


Low: 59 °F

High: 79 °F

Low: 62 °F

High: 82 °F

Temperatures Warming into the Weekend
Storms returning Thursday afternoon-early Friday morning.

Today	Thursday
	STRONG 
	A few strong to severe storms possible from afternoon on.

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 8/22/2018 3:35 AM Central

Published on: 08/22/2018 at 3:40AM

High pressure is exiting, with warmer and more humid air returning. Showers and thunderstorms will be possible Thursday afternoon into early Friday morning as an area of low pressure shifts across the Dakotas. A few strong to severe storms will be possible. Check out your local forecast for further details...
www.weather.gov/abr

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 10 of 58

Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 76.1 F at 7:07 PM

Heat Index:

Low Outside Temp: 53.2 F at 1:23 AM

High Gust: 14.0 Mph at 1:34 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1971

Record Low: 36° in 1904

Average High: 81°F

Average Low: 55°F

Average Precip in Aug: 1.64

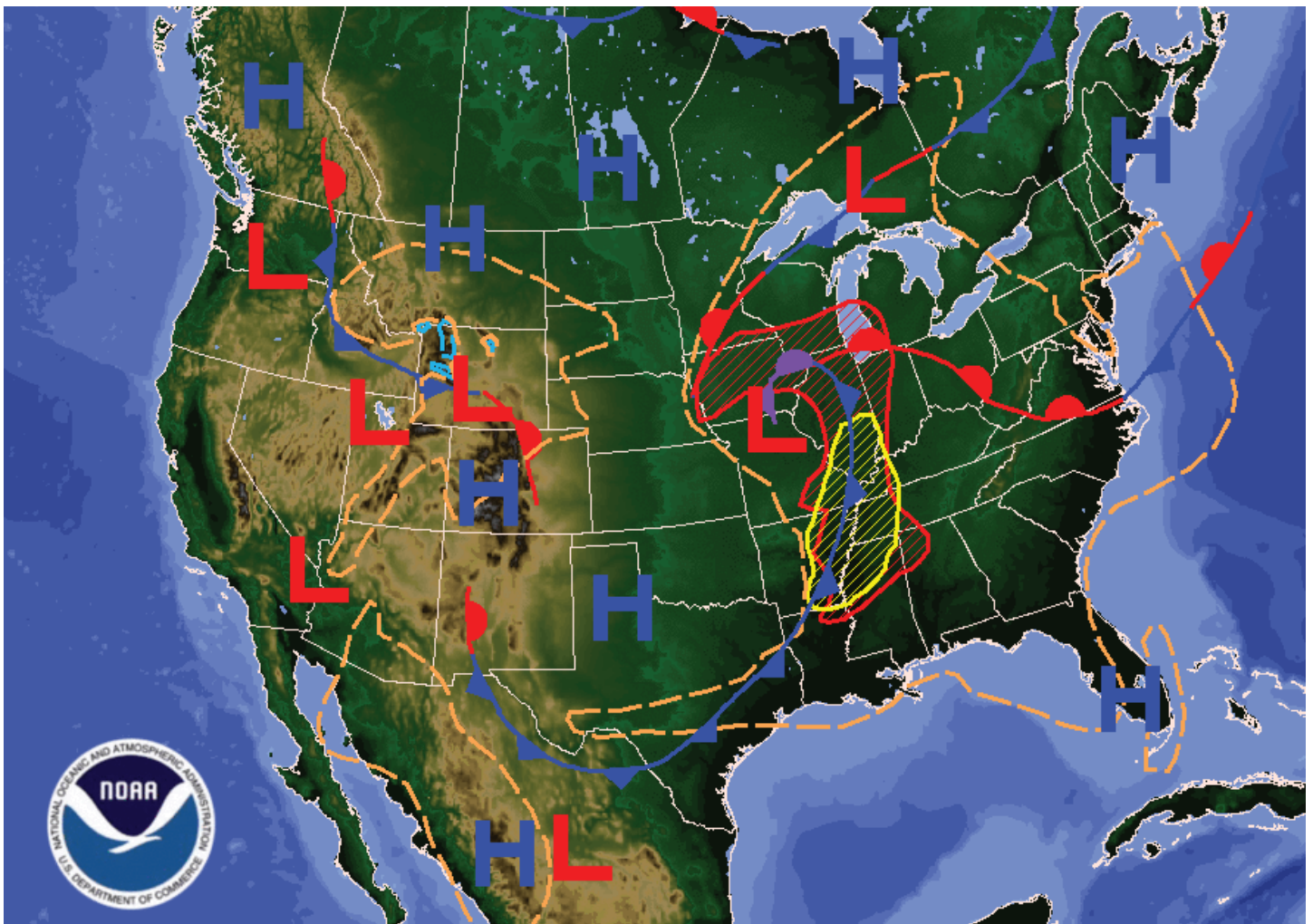
Precip to date in Aug: 0.57

Average Precip to date: 15.50

Precip Year to Date: 10.46

Sunset Tonight: 8:29 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:44 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Aug 20, 2018, issued 4:19 PM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by campbell 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)



COURAGE!

The battle was long and fierce. Although it was dark, the skies were bright with tracer bullets and bombs bursting everywhere. Frightened soldiers were afraid to move from their trenches fearing that the enemy would see them. Suddenly, one of them began to cry.

Im afraid. Im a coward. Will someone please help me? I dont want to die, he cried out in fear.

His friend, hiding next to him, extended a word of comfort. Its O.K. to be afraid. Im right here with you. Lets pray for Gods help. Then his friend began to quote Psalm 138:3: As soon as I pray You answer me, You encourage me by giving me strength.

Fear is a normal feeling when our lives are being threatened. It is a gift from God sending us a signal that we need to reach out to Him for His protection as well as a reminder that He will never leave us nor forsake us no matter how desperate or dangerous our surroundings may be.

Courage can be compared to a muscle: it will grow over time if used. Often, however, we would rather give in to a test or temptation that God sends our way than to call on Him for strength. As the Psalmist said, As soon as I pray You answer! Included in the answer are His courage and His strength.

God is the very best resource available to us when we need help in any situation. Friends are helpful, but God is faithful - and will not allow us to be tempted or tested beyond His power or ability to rescue and save us.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your promise to give us courage and strength when we face the dangers of life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 138:3 As soon as I pray, You answer me; You encourage me by giving me strength.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 13 of 58

News from the Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Beresford def. Canton, 25-12, 25-20, 25-19
Chester def. Flandreau, 25-6, 25-9, 25-16
Deuel def. Sioux Valley, 25-23, 20-25, 25-22, 14-25, 15-9
Estelline/Hendricks def. Iroquois, 25-10, 25-13, 25-7
Hamlin def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-10, 25-11, 25-15
James Valley Christian def. Lake Preston, 25-21, 25-23, 25-21
McCook Central/Montrose def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-9, 25-20, 25-14
Northwestern def. Aberdeen Roncalli, 25-21, 25-15, 26-24
Parker def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-15, 25-9, 25-17
Sioux Falls Washington def. Brandon Valley, 25-16, 22-25, 25-16, 25-15
St. Thomas More def. Douglas, 25-18, 25-21, 25-10
Watertown def. Yankton, 25-14, 25-14, 25-15
Webster def. Florence/Henry, 17-25, 25-18, 25-14, 25-19
Winner def. Bon Homme, 25-19, 25-12, 25-13
Hanson Tournament
First Round
Hanson def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-23, 25-18
Platte-Geddes def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-20, 22-25, 25-17
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Gayville-Volin, 18-25, 25-21, 26-24
Warner def. Avon, 25-19, 25-16
Semifinal
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Hanson, 25-17, 25-22
Warner def. Platte-Geddes, 25-21, 25-17

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

14-16-19-38-57, Mega Ball: 11, Megaplier: 3
(fourteen, sixteen, nineteen, thirty-eight, fifty-seven; Mega Ball: eleven; Megaplier: three)
Estimated jackpot: \$102 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$60 million

Ex-football player found not guilty in rape case

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — A former University of South Dakota football player has been found not guilty of attempted rape.

The Argus Leader reports Clay County jurors announced the verdict Tuesday evening. Twenty-two-year-old Dale Williamson of Donalsonville, Georgia, had been charged with attempted second-degree rape stemming from an October 2017 incident.

Police alleged Williamson and fellow player Danny Rambo entered a bedroom where a woman was having consensual sex with another player and assaulted her at the off-campus residence the three players shared.

Williamson denied being involved or even being in the room during the incident .

Rambo pleaded guilty in March to sexual contact without consent and was sentenced to 10 days in county jail.

Williamson is also facing a rape charge for a separate alleged incident in March 2017.

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

Dakota Access protester reaches plea deal in riot case

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — An American Indian activist accused of inciting a riot during protests in North Dakota against the Dakota Access oil pipeline reached a plea deal with prosecutors Tuesday under which the charge will be reduced to disorderly conduct and he'll avoid jail time.

The deal awaiting a judge's signature called for Chase Iron Eyes to serve one year of probation and pay \$1,850 in fines and fees. In return, prosecutors agreed to dismiss a criminal trespass charge.

Defense attorneys called the agreement "a major victory" for their client. Prosecutors Brian Grosinger and Chase Lingle didn't immediately comment on their decision not to take the case to trial in November as scheduled.

Iron Eyes could have faced five years in prison if convicted of the felony riot charge filed after a February 2017 incident in which he and 73 others were arrested after erecting teepees on disputed land. Authorities said the land was owned by Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners. Protesters said they were peacefully assembling on land they believe rightfully belongs to American Indians under old treaties.

"The world should know that it's legally impossible for me and other Native people to trespass on treaty land, and I never started a riot," Iron Eyes said Tuesday. "I and the water protectors are not terrorists."

"Water protectors" is what members of the Standing Rock Sioux and others dubbed themselves as they opposed the \$3.8 billion pipeline to move North Dakota oil under the tribe's Missouri River water supply and through South Dakota and Iowa to a shipping point in Illinois.

Thousands of opponents who worried about environmental harm gathered in encampments near the Standing Rock Reservation in 2016 and early 2017 to protest the pipeline that ETP maintains is safe. Some of them clashed with police, resulting in 761 arrests in a six-month span. The pipeline began operating in June 2017, but Standing Rock and three other tribes are still fighting in federal court to try to shut it down.

Iron Eyes' plea agreement came two days before he and his attorneys were scheduled to appear in court and make a case for presenting a so-called "necessity defense" — that his actions were justified because they prevented a greater harm.

Pipeline protesters who have recently tried the necessity defense in other cases in North Dakota and other states have argued that the greater harm they're trying to prevent is climate change due to fossil fuels. Iron Eyes, a Standing Rock member, also had planned to argue that civil disobedience was his only option to resist a pipeline's incursion on his ancestral lands and prevent a threat to his tribe's water supply.

"Now I can be with my family and continue defending the sovereignty of my people," said Iron Eyes, an attorney with the Lakota People's Law Project. "This will allow me to keep working nonstop to protect First Amendment, human and Native rights."

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

Police hold 2 juveniles in Rapid City man's fatal shooting

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City police say two juveniles are being held in the shooting death of a 43-year-old man.

Police were called about a shooting at a Rapid City home late Friday night. Officers found the man with a gunshot wound. He was taken to a hospital and later died.

Authorities identify the victim as Nathan Graham of Rapid City.

Police found two juvenile males suspected in the shooting. The boys were taken into custody. No one else is believed to have been involved.

Since the suspects are juveniles, police say they cannot release much information about their alleged involvement.

Landowners sue South Dakota utility, phone company over fire

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A group of landowners is suing a South Dakota utility and a Minnesota-based telephone company for alleged negligence in the third-largest wildfire in the Black Hills region's history.

Black Hills landowners filed the lawsuit Friday in Custer County against Black Hills Power and Hanson Communications, The Rapid City Journal reported . The lawsuit alleges the companies caused the Legion Lake fire in December by failing to use proper care around the root system of a large tree in Custer State Park that fell onto a power line.

"Upon investigation, it was discovered that the root system was cut when a utility trench was dug adjacent to the tree, causing the tree's soil root plate to be severely damaged, rendering it vulnerable to toppling," the lawsuit said.

A state investigation had found that the Legion Lake fire began when a tree fell onto a power line in the park. Flames spread into Wind Cave National Park and onto private property, ultimately scorching 84 square miles (218 square kilometers).

A spokeswoman for Black Hills Corporation, the parent company of Black Hills Power, declined to comment on the lawsuit.

The companies should've conducted a "tree risk assessment" and removed or trimmed trees so they wouldn't be capable of striking the power line, the lawsuit said.

"Black Hills Energy has a proactive vegetation management program that meets industry standards and accounts for all applicable state laws and regulations," the company said in an earlier statement about the fire. "We monitor all right-of-way clearances via aerial or ground patrol."

The lawsuit notes the loss of real estate, agricultural value and aesthetics. The landowners are seeking unspecified damages.

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

New report sheds light on reservation hospital's woes

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A hospital serving the Rosebud Indian Reservation failed to give patients appropriate medical care or ensure their safety, including a man who died in the hospital after being pepper-sprayed and restrained, according to new federal reports.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently released inspection reports that detail why the federal agency threatened to pull critical funding this month from the Rosebud Indian Health Service hospital, The Argus Leader reported . The reports were compiled from an investigation conducted in July.

One incident cited involved a drunken 12-year-old girl who tried to hang herself while left alone. The report found that the patient wasn't properly triaged and should've had a monitor throughout her visit. It also found that there was a faulty call button in her room.

Another incident involved a 35-year-old man who was hallucinating while on methamphetamine and died of a heart attack in the emergency room after being pepper-sprayed and restrained.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 16 of 58

Hospital administrators said they take the report "very seriously" and have submitted an improvement plan.

Employees are now trained to test and monitor call lights every 12 hours and maintain a log of their use. Staff members have also reviewed restraint policies and protocols for treating minors. Employees will review high-risk cases within 24 hours of their occurrence, the proposal said.

The hospital's deficiencies identified in the inspections triggered the federal agency to issue a warning last week that the hospital will lose funding if it doesn't fix the problems by the end of the month. The hospital would be unable to bill Medicare and Medicaid if it fails to enact its improvement plan by the Aug. 30 deadline.

The notice comes more than two years after the hospital was cited for similar shortcomings, which resulted in the seven-month shut down of its emergency room and the closure of the facility's surgical and obstetrics and gynecology units.

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

More teens in South Dakota text and drive

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A newly published study finds South Dakota has the highest rate of teen texting and driving in the 35 states analyzed.

The survey published in the Journal of Adolescent Health says 64 percent of teens in South Dakota acknowledged texting and driving at least once in the month prior to completing a survey. North Dakota landed in the second spot with 58 percent of texting teen drivers. Maryland had the lowest number of texting teens at 26 percent.

Researchers analyzed data on about 101,000 high school students aged 14 years and older in 35 states from the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The results were published in the journal's latest issue. The study says distracted driving heightens the risk of crashing by up to nine times.

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, Aug. 17

Downtown baseball stadium could be home run

For a while now, there has been chatter about the possibility of building a baseball stadium in downtown Sioux Falls and scrapping the current "Birdcage" near the Denny Sanford Premier Center.

There is more urgency to the discussion now that the rail yard acquisition and Sioux Steel relocation have freed up more space for development. But the concept of relocating the Canaries has failed to gain significant momentum in the minds of key decision-makers.

We think it's time to take a hard look at making the move.

The Canaries, members of the independent American Association, currently play at Sioux Falls Stadium in the Premier Center complex, where they list their average attendance at 2,542.

Building a new venue could help breathe new life into the city's baseball scene, which thrives on fan experience rather than wins or losses, while also sparking more downtown revitalization.

It would require a combined effort between the team, city and private interests to create a unique setting not just for baseball but also summer activities and family events.

Sioux Falls architect Tom Hurlbert pushed the multi-use concept with a blog post detailing several possible stadium locations, including one north of Sioux Steel that would mesh nicely with Falls Park and the Levitt Pavilion, scheduled to open next year.

If there was ever a time to support a public-private initiative to create a fan-friendly venue while also freeing up space at the Premier Center complex by razing the old stadium, this is it.

Proponents point to the success of the St. Paul Saints' \$65 million downtown ballpark, which opened in

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 17 of 58

2015 and has helped the team dominate the rest of the league in attendance (8,257) while also selling out non-baseball events.

The Sioux Falls ballpark model would be more modest, perhaps in the \$15-20 million range with traditional seating for about 5,000, following the basic blueprint of Haymarket Park in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Any talk of a "Ball Park at Falls Park" fizzled under former mayor Mike Huether, who was reluctant to support another public sports facility on the heels of the events center. He and others noted that the Birdcage received a \$5.6 million face-lift as part of a joint effort between the team and city in 2000.

Realistically, though, those renovations are now nearly two decades old, and the ballpark, which originally opened in 1964, has lost whatever charm it once possessed. In an era of more sophisticated fan amenities and expectations, just how far out of date will it appear in a decade?

Rather than calling this Plan B for those who sought a downtown events center, let's just say it's a separate decision that makes sense. Putting a reasonably sized ballpark downtown is more logistically feasible than a hulking events center, not to mention the role that the convention center played in the Premier Center equation.

Downtown baseball fits the strategy of getting people to linger at bars, restaurants and shops during warm-weather months, and parking and traffic will be lesser factors than they were with the events center.

As we saw during that process, it's imperative for City Hall to set the tone for major projects. It makes sense for Mayor Paul TenHaken and his staff to take a close look at prospective design elements and get behind the possibilities.

"If you love downtown Sioux Falls and want to see it continue to grow and prosper, this could be a once-in-a-lifetime catalyst," wrote Hurlbert.

Couldn't have said it better ourselves.

American News, Aberdeen, Aug. 19

Standards-based report card idea gets a passing grade

A plan by the Aberdeen public school system to offer more detailed report cards gets a passing grade. The concept sounds smart.

The district will start using standards-based grading and report cards at elementary schools for the 2019-20 school year. Instead of teachers issuing a traditional letter grade for a (sometimes generic) subject, the new report cards will offer a proficiency number for a specific skill.

For example, instead of a kindergartner getting an S for satisfactory in language arts, she or he might get a 4 in the use of upper and lower case letters and a 2 in spelling simple words phonetically.

Students in more advanced grades would get a number instead of a letter grade.

Under the new system, 4 — distinguished — is the highest score. Three reflects mastered, 2 developing and 1 beginning.

"It just really lays a clear path and feedback for parents and students on what skills they have mastered," Camille Kaul, assistant superintendent, told school board members at their Monday meeting.

In an era of standardized testing (whether we like it or not), this seems like a good idea for everybody involved.

All South Dakota students in third through eighth grades and in 11th grade take some form of the Dakota STEP test. Any idea that helps them be better prepared for it is worth exploring.

The new grading procedure is not something to make everybody feel better about themselves by not issuing letter grades.

And while it could mean more work for teachers, the aim is not to overwhelm them, either, and we certainly hope it doesn't.

The point is to help students and let parents know what their kids need to spend more time studying or working on.

When a student has mastered a skill, he or she will move on, Kaul said. But if a child gets a 1 or a 2, the teacher will present the information in a different way in hopes that will help comprehension.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 18 of 58

"Parents can see exactly what their their students know and are able to do," Kaul told school board members.

Better information for parents is hard to argue with. And we hope the new grading system encourages them to get involved with their kids while they study.

The change will take getting used to for some, but it feels like a common sense move.

Students won't waste time on disciplines they already have a handle on and, as a result, will have more time to brush up on areas in which they need to improve.

Eventually, the new grading system could be used throughout the district. But for now, school officials have scheduled three informational meetings for parents ...

Instead of bucking a new idea that seems to have promise, we encourage parents to take time to learn more about it.

Maybe there are hidden hurdles that will hinder the new system. If so, the school district can always return to the traditional letter grades everybody knows.

But for now, we applaud the district and school board for embracing an idea that, at least to us, seems to have a very simple, logical and worthy goal — getting more detailed information to parents so students can do better in their classes.

Madison Daily Leader, Madison, Aug. 20

If tariffs are taxes, why isn't Congress engaged?

Tariffs on a wide range of products are in the news these days, which causes us to wonder about the process of how they are enacted and modified in the United States.

A tariff is a tax on imports or exports between sovereign states (countries).

A brief history:

Before the 1920s, tariffs were more common, providing a major source of revenue for the federal government. They were a constant source of debate for members of Congress, who went back and forth on what products should be subject to tariffs, the amounts and what the money should be used for.

When the Great Depression hit, international trade shrank drastically. Congress imposed increased tariffs through the Smoot-Hartley Act to try to protect American businesses. It backfired. Canada, Britain, Germany, France and others retaliated with their own tariffs and American imports and exports went into a tailspin.

In 1934, the U.S. Congress, in a rare delegation of authority, authorized the executive branch to negotiate tariffs. For the next seven decades, tariffs ratcheted lower, promoting free trade and boosting economic growth in the U.S. and other countries. Notable was the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993 and allowing China into the World Trade Organization in 2000.

Today, new tariffs have been enacted by the Trump administration for a broad and expanding range of imported products, such as steel, aluminum, automobiles, newsprint paper and others. Other countries have retaliated by enacting tariffs on American products such as corn, soybeans, beef, airplanes and many others.

The back-and-forth tariff-raising process, considered a "trade war," was originally intended to protect American businesses which have fared poorly against foreign competition. In recent weeks, however, tariffs have been enacted for other purposes, such as to apply pressure to release an American pastor in Turkey. They now appear to be a favorite fighting tool for a president who looks for fights.

It's still possible this trade war eventually leads to improved trade agreements between the U.S. and other countries. But we wonder if all the authority for this sort of fight, which has a huge economic impact on Americans of all sorts, should be solely with the administration. Other sorts of taxes require the approval of both Congress and the President.

While we don't have a lot of faith Congress could come to reasonable agreements, either, perhaps involving Congress could provide balance to what has become a one-man fighting tool.

Authorities ID Wagner man killed in Douglas County crash

DELMONT, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Wagner man who died after a sport utility vehicle crash in Douglas County.

The Highway Patrol says 28-year-old Quaid Montgomery lost control of his SUV on U.S. Highway 18 and it rolled several times Friday night south of Delmont. He died of his injuries at an Armour hospital.

He was traveling alone.

Sioux Falls man pleads guilty to pimping charges

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man has pleaded guilty to pimping and prostitution charges in federal court.

The Argus Leader reports 26-year-old Jaquon Nathaniel Duckworth filed a guilty plea agreement on Friday. Duckworth is pleading guilty to transporting a person with the intent to have that person engage in prostitution or a criminal sexual activity. He faces up to 10 years in prison.

A sentencing hearing has not been scheduled.

Duckworth was arrested and charged in Minnehaha County in December 2017 after police found online advertisements involving prostitution of an adult woman that seemed to indicate human trafficking.

Duckworth has a previous conviction of pimping and promoting prostitution in Sioux Falls and Minnesota.

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

Spearfish man accused of embezzling from local gas station

DEADWOOD, S.D. (AP) — A Spearfish man is accused of embezzling from a local gas station.

The Black Hills Pioneer reports 25-year-old Seth McFarland allegedly stole between \$5,000 and \$100,000 from Williams Standard Service last year. He faces a felony charge that carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

McFarland is scheduled to enter a plea during a Sept. 6 hearing. He's free on \$2,000 bond.

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

Hawaii residents brace themselves as hurricane strengthens

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Hawaii residents rushed to stores to stock up on bottled water, ramen, toilet paper and other supplies as they faced the threat of heavy rain, flash flooding and high surf as a strengthening hurricane continued to churn toward the state.

On Tuesday night, the National Weather Service announced that Hurricane Lane had become a Category 5 hurricane, which means that it is likely to cause catastrophic damage with winds 157 mph or above. The hurricane is about 500 miles (804 kilometers) southeast of Honolulu.

Earlier Tuesday, the weather service issued a hurricane warning for Hawaii island and a hurricane watch for Oahu, Maui and other smaller islands, meaning tropical storm-force winds, excessive rain and large swells could arrive starting Wednesday.

Hurricane Lane "is forecast to move dangerously close to the main Hawaiian islands as a hurricane later this week, potentially bringing damaging winds and life-threatening flash flooding from heavy rainfall," the weather service's Central Pacific Hurricane Center warned as it got closer to the state.

The storm had been moving west, but it is expected to turn northwest toward the state Wednesday. There's uncertainty to Lane's path — whether it moves north or south, meteorologist Gavin Shigesato said.

"It is much too early to confidently determine which, if any, of the main Hawaiian islands will be directly impacted by Lane," the weather service said.

But the hurricane center said the storm will move very close to or over the islands from Thursday through

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 20 of 58

Saturday. Even if the center of Lane doesn't make landfall, the islands could be walloped with rain and wind.

Public schools on the Big Island and in Maui County are closed Wednesday until further notice.

Hawaii Gov. David Ige is allowing non-essential state employees on the Big Island and Maui to go on administrative leave from Wednesday to Friday as Hurricane Lane approaches. Employees on Hawaii and Maui islands who work in disaster response as well as in hospitals and prisons are required to report to their jobs, the governor said.

Longtime Hawaii residents recalled a devastating 1992 hurricane as they prepared for Hurricane Lane.

Kauai resident Mike Miranda was 12 when Hurricane Iniki devastated the island 26 years ago. "A lot of people are comparing the similarities between Iniki and Lane," he said.

Iniki's turn into the islands was sudden, he recalled.

"I remember how very little rain fell. But I remember the wind being the strongest force of nature I've ever witnessed and probably the scariest sounds I've ever heard in my life," he said.

Utility poles were down all over the island, and his 7th-grade classes were held in Army tents for several months.

Miranda said his family is used to preparing for hurricane season.

"A lot of people who moved here and never experienced a hurricane . they're the ones rushing to the store," he said.

Associated Press writer Dan Joling in Anchorage, Alaska, contributed to this report.

Tears, farewell hugs end 1st round of Korean reunions

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — As her two North Korean daughters, both in their 70s, wailed outside her bus, 99-year-old Han Shin-ja pounded the windows from inside in despair, moving her lips to say "don't cry" and "farewell."

As her bus left for South Korea on Wednesday, Han's daughters chased the moving vehicle before being stopped by a North Korean official, a predictable but no less heart-wrenching departure that's likely to be the last time they saw their mother after decades of separation.

Han's family was among hundreds of elderly Koreans who tearfully said their final goodbyes at the end of the first round of rare reunions between relatives separated by the 1950-53 Korean War.

About 200 South Koreans returned home after the end of three days of meetings with North Korean relatives at the North's Diamond Mountain resort. Another 337 South Koreans will participate in a second round of reunions from Friday to Sunday.

The first set of meetings created highly emotional images of relatives weeping, embracing and caressing each other in a rush of emotions in what's likely to be the last time they see each other before they die. Many of the South Korean participants were war refugees who reunited with the siblings or infant children they left behind, many of whom are now into their 70s.

At their final lunch meeting on Wednesday, 91-year-old Lee Ki-soon initially seemed lost for words as he shared a glass of "soju," a vodka-like alcohol loved in both Koreas, with his 75-year-old North Korean son.

Lee later told his son, Ri Kang Son, "I am not your fake father. You have a father." Ri replied: "Be healthy and live long. Then we can meet again," according to pool reports.

An Jong Sun, a 70-year-old North Korean, carefully fed her 100-year-old South Korean father food. In the same large meeting hall, Kim Byung-oh, 88, quietly wept as his 81-year-old North Korean sister tried to calm him down.

Nearby, Ri Chol, a 61-year-old North Korean, was also in tears as he grasped the hands of a 93-year-old South Korean grandmother he was only just getting to know.

"Don't cry, Chol," an equally emotional Kwon Seok told her grandson.

Han told her two North Korean daughters to eat a lot of "chap-ssal," or sticky rice, for health. She told them she would always pray for their happiness and also for the future of her North Korean great-grand-

children she never got to see.

Some relatives exchanged their phone numbers and home addresses, although the Koreans since the end of the war have banned ordinary citizens from visiting relatives on the other side of the border or contacting them without permission.

Shin Jae-cheon, a 92-year-old from the South Korean town of Gimpo, not far from the border, lamented that his 70-year-old North Korean sister lived about an hour's drive away all these years.

"It will take 40 minutes for me to drive there," Shin told his sister, Sin Kum Sun, who lives in the North Korean border town of Kaesong. "The bus that goes to my home is No. 8. No. 8. The No. 8 bus," Shin added, expressing a wish for his sister to come visit one day.

After organizers aired an announcement that the reunions were officially over, Han and her daughters broke down. They wept, embraced each other and temporarily refused to leave their lunch table. Two North Korean officials politely separated Han from one of her daughters, 71-year-old Kim Kyong Yong, who kept holding on to one of Han's arms.

After the South Koreans boarded the bus, workers brought steppers so that Han's daughters could put their hands on the bus window, with Han doing the same on the inside of the glass.

After wiping off tears with a handkerchief, Kim looked up toward his sister, smiled and created a heart with his arms. His sister, Kim Sun Ok, made the same gesture outside the bus.

"Goodbye, oppa (older brother)! Goodbye, oppa!," Kim Sun Ok cried as the bus rolled out of the resort.

Nearly 20,000 people have participated in 20 rounds of face-to-face reunions held between the countries since 2000. No one has had a second chance to see their relatives.

The latest reunions come after a three-year hiatus during which North Korea conducted three nuclear tests and multiple missile launches that demonstrated a potential capability to strike the U.S. mainland. Analysts say the North still has some work to do before those missiles are perfected, however. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has shifted toward diplomacy in 2018 and has met South Korean President Moon Jae-in twice and also held a summit with President Donald Trump.

While Seoul has long pushed for more reunions, analysts say North Korea is reluctant because of fears that increasing their frequency will loosen its authoritarian control and relinquish a coveted bargaining chip.

Ex-Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort guilty on 8 charges

By MATTHEW BARAKAT, CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Paul Manafort, the longtime political operative who for months led Donald Trump's successful presidential campaign, was found guilty of eight financial crimes in the first trial victory of the special counsel investigation into the president's associates.

A judge declared a mistrial Tuesday on 10 other counts the jury could not agree on.

The verdict was part of a stunning one-two punch of bad news for the White House, coming as the president's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, was pleading guilty in New York to campaign finance charges arising from hush money payments made to two women who say they had sexual relationships with Trump.

WHAT HAPPENED IN COURT?

The jury returned the decision after deliberating four days on tax and bank fraud charges against Manafort, who led Trump's election effort during a crucial stretch of 2016, including as he clinched the Republican nomination and during the party's convention.

Manafort, who appeared jovial earlier in the day amid signs the jury was struggling in its deliberations, focused intently on the jury as the clerk read off the charges. He stared blankly at the defense table, then looked up, expressionless, as the judge finished thanking the jury.

"Mr. Manafort is disappointed of not getting acquittals all the way through or a complete hung jury on all counts," said defense lawyer Kevin Downing. He said Manafort was evaluating all his options.

The jury found Manafort guilty of five counts of filing false tax returns on tens of millions of dollars in Ukrainian political consulting income. He was also convicted of failing to report foreign bank accounts in

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 22 of 58

2012 and of two bank fraud charges that accused him of lying to obtain millions of dollars in loans after his consulting income dried up.

The jury couldn't reach a verdict on three other foreign bank account charges, and the remaining bank fraud and conspiracy counts.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR MANAFORT?

The outcome, though not the across-the-board guilty verdicts prosecutors sought, almost certainly guarantees years of prison for Manafort. It also appears to vindicate the ability of special counsel Robert Mueller's team to secure convictions from a jury of average citizens despite months of partisan attacks, including from Trump, on the investigation's integrity.

The verdict raised immediate questions of whether the president would seek to pardon Manafort, the lone American charged by Mueller to opt for trial instead of cooperating. The president has not revealed his thinking but spoke sympathetically throughout the trial of his onetime aide, at one point suggesting he had been treated worse than gangster Al Capone.

The president on Tuesday called the outcome a "disgrace" and said the case "has nothing to do with Russia collusion."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE MUELLER PROBE?

The trial did not resolve the central question behind Mueller's investigation — whether Trump associates coordinated with Russia to influence the election. Still, there were occasional references to Manafort's work on the campaign, including emails showing him lobbying Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, on behalf of a banker who approved \$16 million in loans because he wanted a job in the Trump administration.

Manafort urged Kushner to consider the banker, Stephen Calk, for secretary of the Army. Though Kushner responded to Manafort's email by saying, "On it!" Calk ultimately did not get an administration post.

For the most part, jurors heard detailed and sometimes tedious testimony about Manafort's finances and what prosecutors allege was a yearslong tax-evasion and fraud scheme.

Manafort decided not to put on any witnesses or testify himself. His attorneys said he made the decision because he didn't believe the government had met its burden of proof.

His defense team attempted to make the case about the credibility of longtime Manafort protege Rick Gates, attacking the government's star witness as a liar, embezzler and instigator of any crimes while trying to convince jurors that Manafort didn't willfully violate the law.

Gates spent three days on the stand, telling jurors how he committed crimes alongside Manafort for years. He admitted to doctoring documents, falsifying information and creating fake loans to lower his former boss' tax bill, and also acknowledged stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars without Manafort's knowledge by filing fake expense reports.

WHAT WAS THE EVIDENCE?

Beyond the testimony, prosecutors used emails and other documents to try to prove that Manafort concealed from the IRS, in offshore accounts, millions of dollars in Ukrainian political consulting fees. Overall, they said, he avoided paying more than \$16 million in taxes.

Central to the government's case were depictions of an opulent lifestyle, including a \$15,000 ostrich jacket, luxury suits and elaborate real estate that prosecutors say was funded through offshore wire transfers from shell companies in Cyprus and elsewhere.

U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III repeatedly grew impatient with prosecutors as they sought to demonstrate Manafort's garish tendencies. The clashes between the judge and the prosecutor became a sideshow of sorts during the weeklong trial, with the judge at one point appearing to acknowledge that he had erroneously scolded them.

After the trial, Ellis complimented lawyers on both sides for "zealous and effective representation." He also remarked on his surprise at the level of attention the case has received and the criticism he received for his management of the trial.

"We all take brickbats in life," Ellis said.

ANOTHER TRIAL LOOMING?

The trial in Alexandria, Virginia, is the first of two for Manafort. He faces a trial later this year in the

District of Columbia on charges of conspiracy against the United States, conspiracy to launder money, making false statements and acting as an unregistered foreign agent for Ukrainian interests. He is also accused of witness tampering in that case.

Associated Press writers Stephen Braun and Jeff Horwitz contributed to this report.

Trump's lawyer pleads guilty, implicates president

By ANNE FLAHERTY, ZEKE MILLER, JONATHAN LEMIRE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer has pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations and his former campaign chairman convicted for financial fraud and, raising questions about the president's own legal jeopardy.

Most damaging to Trump were statements by his longtime attorney and "fixer" Michael Cohen, who pleaded guilty in New York, saying he and Trump had arranged the payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels and a former Playboy model to influence the election.

Trump tried to distance himself, mostly ignoring the back-to-back blows at a campaign rally in West Virginia on Tuesday and declaring that his administration was still "winning."

"It's going to be hard for the president to try to discredit all this. It's circling him," said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor who is not involved in the case.

In a split screen for the history books, Trump's former campaign chairman Paul Manafort was convicted of financial crimes at nearly the same moment Tuesday Cohen pleaded guilty to a series of felonies, including campaign finance violations that the lawyer said he carried out in coordination with Trump.

With two men who played prominent roles on the president's campaign convicted of multiple criminal charges, the investigations circled ever closer to Trump. But for all that, Trump spent more than an hour at a rally in Charleston on Tuesday night painting a rosy view of his accomplishments in office, ticking off developments on trade, taxes, North Korea and even his plans for a Space Force.

"What we're doing is winning," Trump told cheering supporters.

"Where is the collusion?" he demanded, underscoring that Manafort's crimes had occurred before he became involved with the Trump campaign. "You know they're still looking for collusion."

The president did say he felt "badly for both" men, but he largely ignored Cohen's guilty pleas to eight felonies.

Manafort was convicted in Virginia on charges brought by special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election and potential obstruction of justice. Cohen pleaded guilty in New York, saying he and Trump had arranged the payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels and a former Playboy model to influence the election.

Trump has shown an uncanny ability to shake off a relentless stream of accusations and jolting statements that provoked outrage. His loyal base of supporters has stayed with him despite his effort to blame "both sides" for the deadly violence between white nationalists and anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, for one, and his refusal to side with the U.S. intelligence services over Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki last month, among other controversies.

Case in point, the crowd in West Virginia loudly chanted Trump's campaign staples "Drain the swamp!" and "Lock her up!" despite the fresh corruption convictions and looming prison sentences for his former advisers.

Manafort's conviction served as a vindication of Mueller's work as investigators continue to probe potential misdeeds by the president and those in his orbit. Mueller's team also had referred evidence in the Cohen case to federal prosecutors in New York.

Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani sought to cast the blame solely on Cohen in a Tuesday statement, saying: "There is no allegation of any wrongdoing against the President in the government's charges against Mr.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 24 of 58

Cohen.”

Trump’s legal team has also been engaged in a monthslong negotiation with Mueller’s team about a potential sit-down with the president, but has objected to the scope of the questions.

In a separate courtroom Tuesday, prosecutors and defense attorneys for former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn agreed to postpone his sentencing after he pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his contacts with a Russian official, in a sign his cooperation was still needed in the Mueller probe.

The afternoon of explosive legal developments comes as the White House is refocusing itself around the upcoming midterms and as Trump allies like Steve Bannon seek to frame the election as a referendum on the potential impeachment of the president. Trump confidants have long argued that the president’s fate in such a scenario would ultimately be more a matter of politics than law.

Of Cohen’s plea, Bannon argued Tuesday that it “takes away the argument from those who are telling the president it’s not that bad if he loses the House. This now becomes more than ever a national election on the issue of impeachment.”

The president seemed to convey the stakes in Charleston, warning the crowd that “You aren’t just voting for a candidate. You’re voting for which party controls the House and which party controls the Senate.”

Trump confidants reasserted late Tuesday that it is the White House position that a president cannot be indicted, referring to a 2000 opinion of the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel, which provides legal advice and guidance to executive branch agencies. Trump’s lawyers have said Mueller plans to adhere to that guidance, though Mueller’s office has never independently confirmed that. There would presumably be no bar against charging a president after he or she departs the White House.

Michael Avenatti, a lawyer pressing a civil case against Trump for Daniels, who has said she had sex with the president, tweeted Tuesday that the resolution of the criminal case against Cohen “should also permit us to proceed with an expedited deposition of Trump under oath about what he knew, when he knew it, and what he did about it.”

The Supreme Court in 1997, ruling in a sexual harassment lawsuit brought by Paula Jones, held that a sitting president could be made to answer questions as part of a lawsuit. That ruling did not directly address whether a president could be subpoenaed to testify in a criminal investigation.

Despite blustery public denials, the fate of Manafort and Cohen has worried the president’s inner circle.

For many around Trump, Cohen has represented a greater threat than even the Russia investigation, drawing from his decade of working as the then-celebrity real estate developer’s fixer. An FBI raid on Cohen’s New York office and hotel room in April rattled the president, who has complained publicly about what he felt was government overreach while privately worrying about what material Cohen may have had after working for the Trump Organization for a decade.

Those in Trump’s orbit, including Giuliani, have steadily ratcheted up attacks on Cohen, suggesting he was untrustworthy and lying about what he knew about Trump’s business dealings. When Cohen’s team produced a recording that the former fixer had made of Trump discussing a payment to silence a woman about an alleged affair, Giuliani sought to impugn Cohen’s credibility and question his loyalty.

Trump stewed for weeks over the media coverage of the Manafort trial. Though the proceedings were not connected to Russian election interference, Trump has seethed to confidants that he views the Manafort charges as “a warning shot” from Mueller.

As he watched the courtroom proceedings, he told confidants that he feared his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., could at some point be the one on trial, according to two people familiar with his thinking but not authorized to discuss private conversations.

“What matters is that a jury found that the facts presented to them by the special prosecutor warranted a conviction of someone who surrounds the president,” Weinstein said.

Superville reported from Charleston, West Virginia. Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey, Ken Thomas and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

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

Alaska primary sets stage for three-way governor's race

By BECKY BOHRER, Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The race for Alaska governor looks to be a three-man contest, though some are still seeking to pressure the Democratic challenger to bow out.

That Democrat, Mark Begich, said he's not going anywhere: "I'm in the race," he said.

During Tuesday's primary, Republican former state Sen. Mike Dunleavy advanced to the general election, where he is expected to face Begich, who was unopposed in the Democratic race, and Gov. Bill Walker, an independent who skipped a head-to-head primary fight with Begich and instead gathered signatures to appear on the November ballot. Walker's move was intended to ensure that he could run as a team with his Democratic lieutenant governor, Byron Mallott.

Walker in 2014 changed his party affiliation from Republican to undeclared in forming a so-called unity ticket with Mallott that was backed by Democrats.

Some Democrats and independents worry that Begich and Walker will split the vote and hand the race to Republicans. But Begich has said he wouldn't have gotten into the race if he didn't think he could win, and he and Walker have each been full-steam ahead with their campaigns.

A former chairman of the state Democratic party, Don Gray, has circulated a petition, asking Begich to withdraw. Those who have signed include members of Walker's administration and others who support Walker.

Jay Parmley, executive director of the Democratic party, called the petition a campaign stunt. He said Begich was willing to get in a three-way race "because he knew where this was going."

"I still spend a fair amount of time telling people, take a deep breath. This is doable," Parmley said, adding later: "I don't know where anyone thinks this is easy. I don't think it's easy if it were a two-way race. I think we're going to have to fight for every vote we get but we know what we're doing."

Libertarian William "Billy" Toien is also running.

Dunleavy on Tuesday topped a crowded field in the GOP gubernatorial primary that included former Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell, who had fashioned himself as the more experienced candidate.

Dunleavy in January left the state Senate after five years to focus on his campaign. While a senator, he clashed with GOP leaders over cuts to the annual check Alaskans receive from the state's oil-wealth fund and over what he saw as insufficient cuts to the state budget.

Dunleavy said he likes his chances against Walker and Begich.

"I feel we're on the right side of the issues," Dunleavy said Tuesday night. "I feel that Alaskans want to send somebody down to Juneau that they feel is going to fight for them." Juneau is the state capital.

Begich said he plans to outwork his opponents and continue to travel the state to share his message with Alaskans. He said a majority of Alaskans are looking for a change.

"The majority is not with the current governor. The majority of Alaskans are looking for something different," Begich said.

In the Democratic U.S. House primary, independent Alyse Galvin advanced to challenge GOP incumbent Rep. Don Young, 85. Young is the longest-serving member of the U.S. House and easily won his primary.

The Alaska Democratic party changed its rules to let independents run in its primaries if they want the party's backing.

Galvin, an education advocate who has a reputation for being persistent, planned to greet supporters Tuesday night and get them ready for the challenge ahead.

The time between now and the general election "is not that long when you want to make a big change. I do intend to keep people charged. ... We are going to be hitting the ground running tomorrow."

Party primaries for governor and lieutenant governor determine who runs as a ticket in November. Candidates who bypass the primaries and instead gather signatures to appear on the general election ballot — as Walker opted to do — have a say in their running mates.

The next governor will face big issues, including crime and the economy, and decisions on the annual check that Alaskans receive from the state's oil-wealth fund, the Alaska Permanent Fund.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 26 of 58

Dunleavy and Treadwell had positioned themselves as conservatives critical of a 2016 criminal justice overhaul and the state's approach to budgeting. Both supported the formula in state law for calculating the oil-wealth check, which has been ignored, first by the governor and then by legislators, for the past three years amid a budget deficit.

Mary Bolin, an Anchorage Republican, voted for Dunleavy. She said he was "most in line with the values I hold and the way I would like to see things run."

Bolin said she supported Walker in 2014 and could possibly do so again in the general election, saying they share personal values. She said she wanted to hear more from the candidates before deciding who she thinks could best get the state out of its financial difficulties.

In east Anchorage, Bill Cody voted for Treadwell, whom he said made the most sense to him. Cody voted for Walker four years ago but didn't like the governor's handling of the Permanent Fund dividend.

"I don't think he listened to the people at all," Cody said, adding he hopes it hurts Walker at the polls. "I didn't even consider voting for him this time."

Cody's wife, Holly Cody, also is an undeclared voter, but she voted on the Democratic ballot. In the U.S. House race, she supported Democrat Dimitri Shein. She said she met Shein and he left a good impression.

"He's a family man," she said. But she's not holding out hope that anyone will defeat Young. "Don Young's been around forever. I think he's got a lot of support in Alaska."

The primaries also include a contested GOP race for lieutenant governor and state legislative races.

Of the candidates in the Democratic U.S. House race, Galvin and Shein, a Russian immigrant who became involved in politics after President Donald Trump's election, most actively campaigned.

Young faced a primary challenge from Thomas "John" Nelson and Jed Whittaker, who had limited resources and little name recognition.

Dunleavy wins GOP nomination for governor in Alaska

By BECKY BOHRER, Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Former state Sen. Mike Dunleavy won the Republican nomination for governor in Alaska, setting the stage for what's expected to be a three-way fight for the office this fall.

He topped a crowded field in Tuesday's GOP primary that included former Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell, who had fashioned himself as the more experienced candidate.

Dunleavy in January left the state Senate after five years to focus on his campaign. While a senator, he clashed with GOP leaders over cuts to the annual check Alaskans receive from the state's oil-wealth fund and over what he saw as insufficient cuts to the state budget.

In the November general election Dunleavy will face former U.S. Sen. Mark Begich, a Democrat, and Gov. Bill Walker, who is running as an independent.

Walker opted to bypass the primaries and instead gather signatures to appear on the November ballot. Begich was unopposed in Tuesday's primary.

Begich said he plans to outwork his opponents and continue to travel the state to share his message with Alaskans.

"It's clear to me when you look at, in three-way race, a majority of Alaskans are looking for a change. The majority is not with the current governor. The majority of Alaskans are looking for something different," he said.

In the Democratic U.S. House primary, independent Alyse Galvin advanced to challenge GOP incumbent Rep. Don Young, 85, who is the longest-serving member of the U.S. House and easily won his primary.

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Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 27 of 58

Party primaries for governor and lieutenant governor determine who runs as a ticket in November. Candidates who bypass the primaries and instead gather signatures to appear on the general election ballot — as Walker opted to do — have a say in their running mates.

Walker flirted with running in the Democratic primary but decided not to when it appeared that Begich would run. Walker wanted to run with Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott, a Democrat. Walker changed his party affiliation from Republican to undeclared in 2014 in forming a so-called unity ticket with Mallott, which was backed by Democrats.

The next governor will face big issues, including crime and the economy, and decisions on the annual check that Alaskans receive from the state's oil-wealth fund, the Alaska Permanent Fund.

Dunleavy and Treadwell had positioned themselves as conservatives critical of a 2016 criminal justice overhaul and the state's approach to budgeting. Both supported the formula in state law for calculating the oil-wealth check, which has been ignored, first by the governor and then by legislators, for the past three years amid a budget deficit.

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Wyoming rebuffs Trump, picks native son in GOP governor race

By MEAD GRUVER, Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — President Donald Trump tried his best to appeal to coal country but, amid a truckload of bad political news, the top coal-producing state didn't love him back.

Instead, Wyoming voters chose Secretary of State Mark Gordon, a rancher who grew up at the foot of the Bighorn Mountains, over political mega-donor Foster Friess in the state's Republican primary for governor. Calling Friess "Strong on Crime, Borders & 2nd Amendment," Trump had endorsed Friess on Twitter as voting got underway Tuesday.

Trump hours later walked back Obama-era environmental regulations viewed as economic warfare in coal country and told a West Virginia rally that miners were headed back to work. About 40 percent of the nation's coal comes from Wyoming — Trump no doubt got heard out West.

Wyoming voters had their own ideas.

"This is a governor's race. This is about the state of Wyoming," Gordon said after winning his six-way primary. "President Trump is doing great things that are important for Wyoming in terms of getting our

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 28 of 58

economy going, and all of that. But in the end, I think people in Wyoming concentrated on who's got the experience, who's got the record and who's got the best message going forward for Wyoming."

Trump won Wyoming by the widest margin in 2016, but his support here may be seen as a mile wide and an inch deep. After all, Wyoming Republicans by far preferred another candidate, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, in the battle for the GOP presidential nomination that year.

Wyoming could even choose a Democrat again. Attorney and former state Rep. Mary Throne, who was raised on a ranch not far from Gordon's and beat three others to win the Democratic nomination for governor, will be a formidable opponent, Gordon said.

"Traditionally in Wyoming, we focus on the person and not the party when it comes to electing our governors. And that we like our governors to be independent and thoughtful and all about Wyoming," Throne said Tuesday.

The winner will succeed term-limited Gov. Matt Mead. Like Democratic Gov. Dave Freudenthal, who served two terms before Mead and then on St. Louis-based Arch Coal's board of directors, Throne describes herself as pro-coal. There's no good reason to doubt it.

Throne grew up in Campbell County, home to some of the world's biggest open-pit coal mines.

While Trump's former campaign manager Paul Manafort and attorney Michael Cohen were convicted of felonies Friday, the president did pick a winner in Wyoming. Trump endorsed Sen. John Barrasso over a wealthy opponent, Jackson Hole business investor Dave Dodson.

Delayed by thunderstorms, Barrasso barely made it back to Wyoming from Washington, D.C., in time to hear he'd won the Republican primary. Busy traveling, Barrasso said he had read little about the news involving Trump's associates. He declined comment on how Trump's political and potentially legal fortunes could affect his work with the White House.

"I go to work every day thinking about the people of Wyoming. Every day I wake up I think about Wyoming, jobs, the economy, how we can make life better for the people of Wyoming. I think that the voters saw that," Barrasso said.

Barrasso faces Wilson businessman Gary Trauner in the general election. Trauner, who ran unopposed for the Democratic nomination, ran for the U.S. House twice and came within half a point of beating Republican Rep. Barbara Cubin in 2006.

Incumbent Liz Cheney easily won the Republican nomination for Wyoming's lone U.S. House seat.

Cheney beat two other Republicans, Blake Stanley of Cheyenne and Rod Miller of Buford. Stanley and Miller both characterized themselves as blue-collar conservatives and ran low-key campaigns.

Cheney will run against Laramie businessman Greg Hunter, who beat attorney Travis Helm for the Democratic nomination for U.S. House.

___ Follow Mead Gruver at <https://twitter.com/meadgruver>

Democrats gather to confront lingering 2016 frustration

By **BILL BARROW**, Associated Press

Democrats are bullish about their prospects in the November midterms, and are peeking around the corner at a 2020 rematch with President Donald Trump. But first, they're confronting the lingering frustration from 2016.

That bitter nominating fight between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders is front and center in Chicago this week as members of the Democratic National Committee gather for their summer meeting. They'll decide the fate of so-called superdelegates — DNC members, elected officials and other party dignitaries. Two years after such delegates overwhelmingly backed Clinton, Sanders supporters argue that this group is the epitome of establishment favoritism.

As he seeks to build a unified front among Democrats heading into the next presidential primary, DNC Chairman Tom Perez is pushing a proposal to limit the influence of superdelegates at the 2020 convention. The primary could feature as many as two dozen Democrats vying to take on Trump.

"These moves are about rebuilding trust," Perez told reporters recently, defending a plan that would strip

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 29 of 58

party insiders of their votes on the first ballot of a contested nominating convention, leaving the outcome to pledged delegates whose votes are dictated by the results of state primaries and caucuses.

Perez predicted he'll secure the DNC majority required to change party rules when the full committee considers the matter Saturday.

Yet in trying to mollify Sanders' supporters and grassroots activists, Perez has inflamed tensions among the DNC membership and on Capitol Hill, where rank-and-file party leaders and Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Cedric Richmond have blasted the proposal.

"Three months before the midterms, and this is what Bernie Sanders and Tom Perez have us discussing? Such fools," said Bob Mulholland, a DNC member from California who backed Clinton in 2016 and has protested since then that Sanders' backers have wielded undue influence over the party because the Vermont senator is elected as an independent.

Don Fowler, who served as DNC chairman during President Bill Clinton's administration, said the party is punishing loyal party leaders "on some vague presumption that it will be fairer." He promised an organized opposition at Saturday's meeting.

The situation comes as Democrats are trying to weather domestic abuse allegations facing their deputy chairman, Keith Ellison. The Minnesota congressman, who last week secured his party's nomination to compete for state attorney general, denies the accusations from an ex-girlfriend and is not expected to attend the party gathering as he campaigns back home. Perez has said the DNC is investigating the matter.

Beyond changing the rules for superdelegates at the 2020 convention, the rules overhaul includes provisions intended to make vote counting at presidential preference caucuses more transparent, while making it easier for voters other than longtime registered Democrats to participate in caucuses and primaries. That could affect states such as Iowa, which might have to develop paper ballots for caucus sites instead of its usual method of sorting into groups and counting heads. New York, meanwhile, would be pressured to relax its party registration deadline, which in 2016 fell six months before the primary, leaving many independents who wanted to back Sanders no option to vote.

Those changes may have the most tangible effects on average voters, but superdelegates have drawn the most attention, drawing comparisons to the bygone era of brokered conventions where party bosses picked nominees.

In 2016, superdelegates, officially called "unpledged delegates" in party rules, accounted for about 15 percent of the 4,763 delegates. The rest were apportioned based on state-by-state primary and caucus results. Whatever the leanings of DNC officials during the campaign, Clinton got 3.7 million more votes than Sanders in cumulative primary and caucus popular vote. Still, she was just short of the 2,382 delegate votes needed to win the nomination. Her advantage among superdelegates made her nomination a fait accompli, but their influence ultimately reflected the will of the Democratic voters who'd been voting over the preceding months.

As the latest proposal stands, superdelegates in such an instance would be apportioned along with the pledged delegates to reflect that primary and caucus voting. If that still left no candidate with a majority, superdelegates then would be free to vote however they pleased on subsequent ballots.

Superdelegates would still be on the convention floor as delegates regardless, but Mulholland, the California DNC member, scoffs at that concession. "Janitors and reporters have floor access but not votes," he said. "It's spin. I don't like spin from Trump, and I don't like spin from Perez."

Perez's allies say party stalwarts aren't facing the realities of a populist era driven by activists who may never affiliate formally with a party but want to have a say beyond the general election ballot.

"We need to lift people up from the grassroots level and make them a part of the process," said David Bowen, vice chairman of the Wisconsin Democratic Party and a state representative. That includes, he said, voters who were influenced by Russian propaganda and hackers who exposed internal DNC communications that suggested favoritism toward Clinton.

"Doing this," Bowen said, "will fly in the face of that criticism."

Little damage reported from strong quake in Venezuela

By **FABIOLA SANCHEZ** and **SCOTT SMITH**, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A powerful earthquake shook Venezuela's northeastern coast and parts of the Caribbean but likely caused little damage besides knocking out power in some places and toppling supermarket shelves because of its depth, experts said.

The magnitude 7.3 quake Tuesday was the largest to strike Venezuela since 1900, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. But at a depth of some 76 miles (123 kilometers) beneath the Earth's surface it appeared to have caused only limited damage even near its epicenter a few miles off the Cariaco peninsula stretching into the eastern Caribbean.

"Shaking does die off at a distance," said seismologist Lucy Jones, a research associate with the California Institute of Technology, adding that the earthquake's considerable depth likely prevented a tragedy.

In Cumana, the biggest city near the quake's center, supermarket shelves came crashing down.

In downtown Caracas, concrete from the top floors of the unfinished Tower of David skyscraper fell to the sidewalk, forcing firefighters to close off traffic. A block away, children wearing surgical masks stretched their neck toward the 620-foot (190 meter) building after having fled a nearby foundation for poor children suffering from cancer.

"We felt something strong and they told everyone to run," said Marisela Lopez, who was at the foundation with her 7-year-old daughter when the quake struck.

Construction of the Tower of David began in 1990 as a symbol to the OPEC nation's ambitions of becoming a regional finance center. But it was abandoned after a banking crisis and in the past two decades of socialist rule has become a symbol of urban blight, having been occupied by squatters until 2015.

The quake was felt as far away as Colombia's capital of Bogota, where authorities briefly closed the international airport to inspect for runway damage.

The confusing moments after the quake were captured live on Venezuelan state television as Diosdado Cabello, the head of the all-powerful constitutional assembly, was delivering a speech at a march in support of the socialist government's recent package of reforms to rescue an economy beset by hyperinflation and widespread shortages.

"Quake!" people yelled as Cabello and others looked from side to side with a mixture of laughter and concern. "It's the Bolivarian revolution speaking to the world," Cabello thundered to applause.

Experts have long warned that Venezuela's cash-strapped government is ill-prepared to deal with a major natural disaster. Hospitals have scant supplies, many ambulances are grounded and food and water are among goods that have disappeared in a country suffering from inflation estimated by the International Monetary Fund to reach 1 million percent this year.

Interior Minister Nestor Reverol said that so far there were no reports of fatalities.

Power outages were reported across nearby Trinidad, where people ran into the street and gasped as large glass panes at one supermarket shattered and falling concrete smashed several cars. The quake also cracked walls and thousands of goods fell off supermarket shelves. No injuries or deaths were immediately reported.

The earthquake also was felt in Guyana, Barbados and Grenada.

Associated Press writers Danica Coto in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Tony Fraser in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Christine Armario in Bogota, Colombia contributed to this report.

Facebook uncovers new global misinformation operations

By **RYAN NAKASHIMA**, AP Technology Writer

Facebook has identified and banned hundreds of accounts, groups and pages engaged in misleading political behavior, a far larger discovery than a "sophisticated" effort it reported three weeks ago with great fanfare.

The social network said Tuesday that it had removed 652 pages, groups, and accounts linked to Russia

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 31 of 58

and, unexpectedly, Iran, for “coordinated inauthentic behavior” that included the sharing of political material.

Facebook has significantly stepped up policing of its platform since last year, when it acknowledged that Russian agents successfully ran political influence operations on its platform that were aimed at swaying the 2016 presidential election. Other social media networks have done likewise, and continue to turn up fresh evidence of political disinformation campaigns.

Facebook’s action in late July against 32 accounts possibly linked to Russia generally involved U.S. political activity ahead of the midterm elections in November. By contrast, the latest group of apparently fake accounts appeared more intent on influencing U.S. foreign policy and regional politics in the Middle East.

Shortly after Facebook’s announcement, Twitter revealed that it had also suspended 284 accounts for “coordinated manipulation,” many of them apparently originating from Iran. A day earlier, Microsoft also reported a new Russian effort to impersonate conservative U.S. websites, potentially as part of an espionage campaign.

The social network said it had not concluded its review of the material and declined to say how or why the state-backed actors were behaving the way they did. But it said it has informed the U.S. and U.K. governments as well as the U.S. Treasury and State departments because of ongoing sanctions against Iran.

“There’s a lot we don’t know yet,” CEO Mark Zuckerberg said on a hastily called conference call with reporters Tuesday afternoon.

“You’re going to see people try to abuse the services in every way possible ... including now nation states,” he said. He described the deception campaigns as “sophisticated and well-funded efforts that aren’t going to stop.”

FireEye, a cybersecurity firm that alerted Facebook to some of this activity, noted that it “does not appear to have been specifically designed to influence the 2018 U.S. midterm elections, as it extends well beyond U.S. audiences and U.S. politics.”

Facebook said its latest action on Tuesday morning resulted from four investigations — three involving Iran, one involving Russia.

The first focused on a group called “Liberty Front Press” that set up multiple accounts on Facebook and Instagram that were followed by 155,000 other accounts. The group was linked to Iranian state media based on website registrations, IP addresses and administrator accounts, Facebook said. The first accounts were created in 2013 and posted political content about the Middle East, the U.K., and the U.S., although the focus on the West increased starting last year, Facebook said.

“The Iranians are now following the Kremlin’s playbook,” said Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee. On Sept. 5, leaders of Facebook, Google and Twitter are scheduled to testify before the intelligence committee about their efforts to combat political disinformation on their social media networks.

FireEye called the Liberty Front Press group an influence operation apparently aimed at promoting Iranian political interests “including anti-Saudi, anti-Israeli, and pro-Palestinian themes” and support for the U.S.-Iran nuclear deal.

President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from that agreement earlier this year.

While that group did not appear to be attempting to influence the U.S. midterms, FireEye said its analysis “does not preclude such attempts being made.” Several social media personas it found related to the group masqueraded as liberal U.S. activists who supported Sen. Bernie Sanders. One persona also used the Twitter handle “@berniecratss” and listed its location as the United States even though the phone number associated with it began with Iran’s country code, +98.

The group’s activity included “significant anti-Trump messaging,” but FireEye said in a detailed report “the activity extends well beyond U.S. audiences and U.S. politics.”

The second group also had multiple accounts and 15,000 followers. The group was linked to “Liberty Front Press” and attempted to hack people’s accounts to spread malware. Facebook said it disrupted those attempts.

A third group also operated out of Iran had as many as 813,000 followers, and also shared political content about the Middle East, the U.K. and U.S.

In all the Iranian-linked groups spent some \$12,000 in advertising and hosted 28 different events. A fourth group that attempted to influence politics in Syria and the Ukraine was connected to sources that Facebook said the U.S. had linked to Russian military intelligence.

"We're working closely with U.S. law enforcement on this investigation," Facebook said in a blog post.

In late July, Facebook also removed 32 apparently fake accounts on Facebook and Instagram that collectively had nearly 300,000 followers, including thousands that expressed interest in events they promoted.

Politicians target immigration law after arrest in Iowa case

By RYAN FOLEY, Associated Press

MONTEZUMA, Iowa (AP) — The disappearance of a well-liked college student from America's heartland had touched many people since she vanished one month ago while out for a run. But the stunning news that a Mexican man living in the U.S. illegally has allegedly confessed to kidnapping and murdering her thrust the case into the middle of the contentious immigration debate and midterm elections.

President Donald Trump seized on the man's arrest in the death of Mollie Tibbetts on Tuesday to call the nation's immigration laws "a disgrace" that will only be fixed by electing more Republicans. Iowa's Republican governor, facing a tough re-election challenge in November, blasted an immigration system that "allowed a predator like this to live in our community." And Iowa's two GOP U.S. senators called the death a tragedy that "could have been prevented."

Cristhian Bahena Rivera, 24, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder in the death of the 20-year-old Tibbetts, whose July 18 disappearance set off a massive search involving state and federal authorities.

Rivera led investigators early Tuesday to a body believed to be Tibbetts in a cornfield about 12 miles (19 kilometers) southeast of Brooklyn, Iowa, where Tibbetts was last seen going for a routine evening run, Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation special agent Rick Rahn said.

"I can't speak about the motive. I can just tell you that it seemed that he followed her, seemed to be drawn to her on that particular day, for whatever reason he chose to abduct her," Rahn told reporters at a news conference outside the sheriff's office in Montezuma, where Rivera was being jailed on \$1 million cash-only bond.

Within hours, Trump noted the arrest at a rally in West Virginia on a day when his former personal lawyer and ex-campaign chairman both faced major legal problems.

"You heard about today with the illegal alien coming in, very sadly, from Mexico and you saw what happened to that incredible, beautiful young woman," Trump told the crowd in Charleston. "Should've never happened. Illegally in our country. We've had a huge impact, but the laws are so bad. The immigration laws are such a disgrace, we're getting them changed, but we have to get more Republicans. We have to get 'em."

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds said residents were heartbroken and angry. U.S. Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst vowed, "We cannot allow these tragedies to continue."

Trump has made further crackdown on illegal immigration a core policy of his administration. He often has claimed widespread crime by people living in the country illegally, citing among other things the indictments of 11 suspected MS-13 gang members from El Salvador charged in connection with the slayings of two Virginia teens. Trump also has held events at the White House with members of "angel families," whose relatives were killed by immigrants.

Although Trump claims legal U.S. residents are less likely to commit crime, several studies from social scientists and the libertarian think tank Cato Institute find that isn't accurate and states with a higher share of people living in the country illegally have lower violent crime rates.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it lodged a federal immigration detainer for Rivera after he was arrested on the murder charge. That move means the agency has probable cause to believe he is subject to deportation.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 33 of 58

Investigators said they believed Rivera had lived in the area from four to seven years.

In a statement late Tuesday, Yarrabee Farms said Rivera had worked at its farms for the last four years and was an employee in good standing. The Brooklyn-based company said it was shocked to hear that Rivera was charged in Tibbetts' death. Yarrabee Farms is owned by the family of Craig Lang, a prominent Republican who previously served as president of the Iowa Farm Bureau.

A search of Iowa court records revealed no prior criminal history, and it's unclear whether he had ever been subject to prior deportation proceedings.

Rivera's Facebook page described him as being from Guayabillo, a community of less than 500 people in the Mexican state of Guerrero. It's about a three-hour drive from the resort city of Acapulco.

Investigators said they zeroed in on Rivera after obtaining footage from surveillance cameras in Brooklyn. The footage showed a Chevy Malibu connected to Rivera that was driving back and forth as Tibbetts was running in the area, Rahn said.

An affidavit attached to the criminal complaint against Rivera alleged that he admitted to investigators he got out of his car and started running alongside Tibbetts.

Tibbetts grabbed her phone and said she was going to call the police. The affidavit said Rivera panicked and then said he blacked out. Rivera next remembers seeing her earphones on his lap, and taking her bloody body out of the trunk of his car, it said.

"The defendant further described during the interview that he dragged Tibbetts on foot from his vehicle to a secluded location in a cornfield," the affidavit said.

Investigators said they had earlier searched the area for Tibbetts but didn't find her, noting the body was covered by corn stalks when recovered early Tuesday.

Rahn said Rivera was cooperating with investigators and speaking with the help of a translator. He said an autopsy would be performed on the body Wednesday by the state medical examiner's office, which would assist investigators in understanding whether Tibbetts had been assaulted or tried to fight him off.

Rivera's initial court appearance is scheduled for 1 p.m. Wednesday in Montezuma.

A conviction on first-degree murder carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole in Iowa, which doesn't have the death penalty.

Tibbetts' disappearance set off a massive search involving dozens of officers from the FBI, as well as state and local agencies. They focused much of their efforts in and around Brooklyn, searching farm fields, ponds and homes. Investigators asked anyone who was around five locations, including a car wash, a truck stop and a farm south of town, to report if they saw anything suspicious on July 18.

Last week, Vice President Mike Pence met privately with the Tibbetts family during a visit to Iowa and told them that "you're on the hearts of every American."

At Brooklyn City Hall, city clerk Sheri Sharer said Tuesday was a sad day for the town.

"It never crossed our mind that she wouldn't come home safe," she said.

The University of Iowa mourned the loss of Tibbetts, a psychology major who would have started her junior year this week.

"We are deeply saddened that we've lost a member of the University of Iowa community," said university official Melissa Shivers, who urged students to seek counseling and other support services as needed.

Rahn said he met with the parents and other relatives of Tibbetts to inform them of the arrest Tuesday. He told them that the investigation revealed that they had "raised a great daughter."

"We got to know Mollie," he said. "She was a phenomenal individual."

Experienced politicians win Wyoming's primary

By MEAD GRUVER, Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — The only candidate with experience in elected office beat five challengers Tuesday to claim the Republican nomination for Wyoming governor, a win that goes a long way toward winning top office in this deep-red state.

Meanwhile, experience also won out as U.S. Sen. John Barrasso fended off a well-funded challenger in

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 34 of 58

his GOP primary.

In the race for governor, State Treasurer Mark Gordon beat wealthy political donor Foster Friess by a comfortable margin despite Friess' national name recognition and last-minute endorsement from President Donald Trump.

Gordon also beat rancher-attorney Harriet Hageman and dot-com businessman Sam Galeotos in a race uncharacteristically full of political newcomers for Wyoming.

"It was the kind of hard-fought battle people in Wyoming would expect," Gordon said.

Friess said Gordon would make a "good governor" and said he would continue to advocate for issues including financial transparency in Wyoming government.

Gordon faces attorney and former state Rep. Mary Throne, of Cheyenne, in the general election. Throne beat three little-known candidates to secure the Democratic nomination.

Outgoing Republican Gov. Matt Mead is term-limited after serving two full terms.

Wyoming's party-registration statistics alone give Gordon a huge advantage over Throne, but Wyoming not long ago had a Democratic governor, Dave Freudenthal, who served two terms before Mead.

"Traditionally in Wyoming we focus on the person and not the party when it comes to electing governors. We like our governors to be independent and thoughtful," Throne said.

Gordon called Throne "a formidable force" and said he's not taking the race for granted.

Barrasso beat five opponents, including investor and Stanford University lecturer Dave Dodson of Jackson Hole. Dodson put \$1 million of his own money toward a campaign that questioned Barrasso's ties to corporate interests and Washington political insiders.

Barrasso spent much of Tuesday attending to business in Washington, D.C., and after thunderstorms delayed his flights, he landed in Casper well after polls closed.

"I've always been in Wyoming for primary day but we canceled the August recess. We're working on (nominee Brett) Kavanaugh for the Supreme Court. We're working on lots of things," Barrasso said.

As for beating Dodson, Barrasso said he works every day thinking about how to make life better for Wyoming residents and "I think that the voters saw that."

A political newcomer, Dodson hinted he might continue advocating for term limits, reducing the influence of money in politics and other issues he focused on in his campaign.

"I will not in any way stop this fight because I knew that these problems existed, but now they have faces, and they have names, and I care about them," Dodson said.

Barrasso faces Wilson businessman Gary Trauner in the general election. Trauner ran unopposed for the Democratic nomination.

Incumbent Liz Cheney won the Republican nomination for Wyoming's lone seat in the U.S. House.

Cheney beat two other Republicans, Blake Stanley of Cheyenne and Rod Miller of Buford. Stanley and Miller both characterized themselves as blue-collar conservatives and ran low-key campaigns.

Cheney will run against Laramie businessman Greg Hunter, who beat attorney Travis Helm for the Democratic nomination for U.S. House.

Follow Mead Gruver at <https://twitter.com/meadgruver>

Inside catch and kill: Cohen, a porn star and 'Individual 1'

By ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — His name is Donald John Trump, but federal prosecutors have a simpler moniker for the 45th president: Individual 1.

Dry legalese and generic aliases could do nothing to tone down the tale of the scheme to protect Trump outlined in court documents Tuesday. The criminal campaign finance case against the president's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, revealed a complex, illegal operation to stifle sex stories and distribute hush money. The documents also lay out new details about the involvement of Trump's real estate company.

Cohen's plea agreement and the details it revealed now pose a direct threat to the president, perhaps

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 35 of 58

one even more damaging than the separate special counsel investigation examining whether the president's campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the 2016 election.

The colorful cast of characters depicted in documents includes a Playboy model and a porn actress who reported having sex years earlier with the married Trump; a tabloid executive who relished juicy scandals but also his own friendship with the candidate; and a lawyer eager at all costs to protect the interests of his star client. At the center of the intrigue is Trump himself, referenced obliquely but unmistakably as "Individual 1" — a man who prosecutors note, in formulaic but wry phrasing, began his bid "on or about June 16, 2015."

Just two months later, as Trump stunned the political world with his rise, the chairman of a tabloid media company offered the campaign some assistance, the documents said.

The company agreed to flag for Cohen and the campaign unflattering, unpublished stories about Trump's relationships with women "so they could be purchased and their publication avoided," prosecutors said. The company eventually did exactly that, allowing for Cohen throughout the campaign to arrange for the stories to be bought and suppressed with the express purpose of "influencing the election." The strategy is known in tabloid circles as "catch and kill."

The company is not named in the court filings and neither are the women, but description matches that of American Media Inc., the parent company of the National Enquirer, and its chairman, David Pecker, a longtime Trump friend and ally. The timing and amount of the payments line up with those paid to porn star Stormy Daniels and Playboy Playmate Karen McDougal to buy their silence in the weeks and months leading up to the election.

Although the plan was in place nearly a year earlier, the first arrangement began in June 2016, weeks after Trump had clinched the Republican nomination.

McDougal, prosecutors allege, began attempting to sell a story of a sexual relationship with Trump in 2006 and 2007.

As promised, it didn't take long for Cohen to be notified — and to take action, promising to reimburse his tabloid friends for the purchase of her tale. That August, prosecutors allege, AMI struck a \$150,000 deal with McDougal to buy her story, feature her on two magazine stories and publish more than 100 of her stories.

"Despite the cover and article features to the agreement, its principal purpose, as understood by those involved, including Michael Cohen, the defendant, was to suppress Woman-1's story so as to prevent it from influencing the election," prosecutors wrote.

The pattern repeated that October, this time with Daniels, who had her own story of a sexual relationship with Trump that she was prepared to tell in the National Enquirer.

In that case, Cohen and a lawyer for Daniels, whose real name is Clifford, negotiated a \$130,000 payment to buy her silence.

According to the government, the deal nearly fell apart just weeks before the election. Cohen was slow in finalizing the payment and was warned that Daniels was close to completing a separate deal with another outlet to make her story public. Cohen received an encrypted telephone message from someone matching Pecker's description and from another top editor at the publication before agreeing to make the payment and calling Daniels' lawyer to finalize the arrangement, prosecutors said.

On Oct. 26, 2016, just weeks before the election, Cohen drew down \$131,000 from a home equity line of credit he obtained by lying about his debt and cash flow. He wired funds to a lawyer for Daniels, falsely saying that it was for a "retainer," and soon after received copies of a signed confidential agreement with the actress.

Prosecutors allege that Trump Organization executives ultimately reimbursed Cohen for both the \$130,000 hush money payment to Stormy Daniels and another \$50,000 for "tech services" that Cohen had solicited on the Trump campaign's behalf. Prosecutors cited an email in which one unnamed Trump Organization executive told another to pay Cohen \$420,000 out of "the trust," according to the indictment, disguising the money as payment owed to Cohen under a legal retainer agreement.

"In truth and in fact, there was no such retainer agreement," prosecutors wrote.

For federal prosecutors who have spent months investigating the president's lawyer, the timing of the payments was no accident.

They don't say specifically that Trump directed Cohen to make the payments — an allegation Cohen made in court. The documents do note that Cohen "coordinated with one or more members of the campaign."

The money, the government says, was intended "to influence the 2016 presidential election."

The intent is essential to the government's case. Corporations are not permitted to contribute to campaigns and money intended to influence an election must be reported as a contribution. The money to Daniels and McDougal was not.

All told, Cohen pleaded guilty to eight crimes, including a campaign finance violation, tax evasion and making false statements to a bank. He could get about four to five years in prison at sentencing Dec. 12.

As for Trump, his personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, said there "is no allegation of any wrongdoing against the president in the government's charges against Mr. Cohen."

It's true the Justice Department did not go as far as Cohen did in pointing the finger at Trump, but legal experts say the allegations bring the president closer into his associates' criminal conduct, especially if it can be established that he conspired with Cohen to knowingly violate campaign finance law.

"The president has certain protections while a sitting president, but if it were true, and he was aware and tried to influence an election, that could be a federal felony offense," said Daniel Petalas, a former Justice Department public corruption prosecutor. "This strikes close to home."

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire and Jeff Horwitz contributed to this report.

Ex-Trump lawyer Cohen pleads guilty in hush-money scheme

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER** and **TOM HAYS**, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The unveiling of federal criminal charges against President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer came with drama as attorney Michael Cohen went farther than prosecutors were willing to go in pointing fingers. Not only did Cohen plead guilty to all eight charges, but he directly implicated the president in the payment of hush money to two women who claim they had affairs with him.

How did the court appearance play out and what are the implications? Some questions and answers:

WHAT HAPPENED IN COURT?

Cohen, Trump's longtime "fixer," claimed his ex-boss — described only as the "candidate," was to blame for hush money paid to porn star Stormy Daniels and a former Playboy model to influence the 2016 election.

He told U.S. District Judge William H. Pauley III that he arranged a \$150,000 payment from a media company to the model "in coordination with, and at the direction of, a candidate for federal office." He said it was "for the principle purpose of influencing the election."

In the second instance, Cohen said he arranged a \$130,000 payment to Daniels "in coordination with, and at the direction of, the same candidate."

The emotional Cohen, who shook his head repeatedly during the 40-minute proceeding and cried outside court, did not name the two women either. But the amounts and the dates all lined up with payments made to Daniels and Playboy Playmate Karen McDougal in the weeks and months leading up to the presidential election.

Other charges included tax evasion and making false statements to a bank.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR COHEN?

A plea agreement with prosecutors calls for Cohen, 51, to get about four to five years in prison at his sentencing, which is scheduled for Dec. 12. He remains free in the meantime.

WHAT ABOUT COOPERATION?

Before the guilty plea, speculation swirled about whether Cohen could deliver more dirt on his former boss as part of the deal. His legal team, as if to prove his value, took the unusual step of going public with a tape recording his client made of Trump discussing one of the hush-money payments.

But a plea agreement Cohen signed on Tuesday made no mention of cooperation.

By contrast, the agreement struck last year with Trump's former national security advisor, Michael Flynn, spelled out that he had to fully cooperate with the expectation he could be rewarded with a more lenient sentence.

Robert Mintz, a former federal prosecutor now in private practice, said there's still a chance that Cohen could be cooperating under a separate agreement that's under seal.

"For a variety of reasons, prosecutors may not want to announce to the world that a defendant has agreed to cooperate," he said. Still, he added, prosecutors also could "have concluded that any additional information that he could provide beyond his public statements doesn't rise to the level of substantial assistance."

WHAT WAS THE REACTION TO COHEN'S GUILTY PLEA?

As cable networks were showing split-screen coverage of the dueling conviction and plea bargain by two former loyalists, Trump boarded Air Force One in the afternoon on the way to a rally in West Virginia. He ignored shouted questions from reporters about both former aides, retreating to his private stateroom on the airliner.

As Cohen left the courthouse, a couple of people outside chanted, "Lock him up!"

"If those payments were a crime for Michael Cohen, then why wouldn't they be a crime for Donald Trump?" Cohen's lawyer, Lanny Davis, tweeted.

Daniel Petalas, former prosecutor in the Justice Department's public integrity section, said, "This brings President Trump closer into the criminal conduct."

Michael Avenatti says Cohen's plea should open the door to questioning Trump about "what he knew, when he knew it, and what he did about it."

Avenatti told The Associated Press that he was certain "cooperation was occurring" between Cohen and prosecutors, saying he had been made "very familiar" with what's going on.

Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor and professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, noted the possibility of Cohen cooperating should be worrying to the president and his allies.

"What it shows is that the people close to the president have criminal exposure and it may mean they don't need Cohen to cooperate," she said.

Associated Press writers Stephen R. Groves and Michael R. Sisak in New York, Jonathan Lemire and Catherine Lucey in Washington and Michael Balsamo in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Microsoft's anti-hacking efforts make it an internet cop

By **MATT O'BRIEN, AP Technology Writer**

Intentionally or not, Microsoft has emerged as a kind of internet cop by devoting considerable resources to thwarting Russian hackers.

The company's announcement Tuesday that it had identified and forced the removal of fake internet domains mimicking conservative U.S. political institutions triggered alarm on Capitol Hill and led Russian officials to accuse the company of participating in an anti-Russian "witch hunt."

Microsoft stands virtually alone among tech companies with an aggressive approach that uses U.S. courts to fight computer fraud and seize hacked websites back. In the process, it has acted more like a government detective than a global software giant.

In the case this week, the company did not just accidentally stumble onto a couple of harmless spoof websites. It seized the latest beachhead in an ongoing struggle against Russian hackers who meddled in the 2016 presidential election and a broader, decade-long legal fight to protect Microsoft customers from cybercrime.

"What we're seeing in the last couple of months appears to be an uptick in activity," Brad Smith, Microsoft's president and chief legal officer, said in an interview this week. Microsoft says it caught these particular sites early and that there's no evidence they were used in hacking.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 38 of 58

The Redmond, Washington, company sued the hacking group best known as Fancy Bear in August 2016, saying it was breaking into Microsoft accounts and computer networks and stealing highly sensitive information from customers. The group, Microsoft said, would send "spear-phishing" emails that linked to realistic-looking fake websites in hopes targeted victims — including political and military figures — would click and betray their credentials.

The effort is not just a question of fighting computer fraud but of protecting trademarks and copyright, the company argues.

One email introduced as court evidence in 2016 showed a photo of a mushroom cloud and a link to an article about how Russia-U.S. tensions could trigger World War III. Clicking on the link might expose a user's computer to infection, hidden spyware or data theft.

An indictment from U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller has tied Fancy Bear to Russia's main intelligence agency, known as the GRU, and to the 2016 email hacking of both the Democratic National Committee and Democrat Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

Some security experts were skeptical about the publicity surrounding Microsoft's announcement, worried that it was an overblown reaction to routine surveillance of political organizations — potential cyberespionage honey pots— that never rose to the level of an actual hack.

The company also used its discovery as an opportunity to announce its new free security service to protect U.S. candidates, campaigns and political organizations ahead of the midterm elections.

But Maurice Turner, a senior technologist at the industry-backed Center for Democracy and Technology, said Microsoft is wholly justified in its approach to identifying and publicizing online dangers.

"Microsoft is really setting the standards with how public and how detailed they are with reporting out their actions," Turner said.

Companies including Microsoft, Google and Amazon are uniquely positioned to do this because their infrastructure and customers are affected. Turner said they "are defending their own hardware and their own software and to some extent defending their own customers."

Turner said he has not seen anyone in the industry as "out in front and open about" these issues as Microsoft.

As industry leaders, Microsoft's Windows operating systems had long been prime targets for viruses when in 2008 the company formed its Digital Crimes Unit, an international team of attorneys, investigators and data scientists. The unit became known earlier in this decade for taking down botnets, collections of compromised computers used as tools for financial crimes and denial-of-service attacks that overwhelm their targets with junk data.

Richard Boscovich, a former federal prosecutor and a senior attorney in Microsoft's digital crimes unit, testified to the Senate in 2014 about how Microsoft used civil litigation as a tactic. Boscovich is also involved in the fight against Fancy Bear, which Microsoft calls Strontium, according to court filings.

To attack botnets, Microsoft would take its fight to courts, suing on the basis of the federal Computer Fraud and Abuse Act and other laws and asking judges for permission to sever the networks' command-and-control structures.

"Once the court grants permission and Microsoft severs the connection between a cybercriminal and an infected computer, traffic generated by infected computers is either disabled or routed to domains controlled by Microsoft," Boscovich said in 2014.

He said the process of taking over the accounts, known as "sinkholing," enabled Microsoft to collect valuable evidence and intelligence used to assist victims.

In the latest action against Fancy Bear, a court order filed Monday allowed Microsoft to seize six new domains, which the company said were either registered or used at some point after April 20.

Smith said this week the company is still investigating how the newly discovered domains might have been used.

A security firm, Trend Micro, identified some of the same fake domains earlier this year. They mimicked U.S. Senate websites, while using standard Microsoft log-in graphics that made them appear legitimate,

said Mark Nunnikhoven, Trend Micro's vice president of cloud research.

Microsoft has good reason to take them down, Nunnikhoven said, because they can hurt its brand reputation. But the efforts also fit into a broader tech industry mission to make the internet safer.

"If consumers are not comfortable and don't feel safe using digital products," they will be less likely to use them, Nunnikhoven said.

Associated Press Technology Writer Frank Bajak in Boston contributed to this report.

Back-to-back legal blows in Trump circle jolt presidency

By **ZEKE MILLER, JONATHAN LEMIRE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump confronted one of the most perilous moments of his presidency Tuesday after two onetime members of his inner circle simultaneously were labeled "guilty" of criminal charges. Although Trump largely ignored the jarring back-to-back blows at a campaign rally in West Virginia, questions mounted about his possible legal exposure and political future.

In a split screen for the history books, Trump's former campaign chairman Paul Manafort was convicted of financial crimes at nearly the same moment Trump's former personal attorney Michael Cohen pleaded guilty to a series of felonies, including campaign finance violations that the lawyer said he carried out in coordination with Trump.

With two men who played prominent roles on the president's campaign convicted of multiple criminal charges, the investigations circled ever closer to Trump. But for all that, Trump spent more than an hour at a rally in Charleston on Tuesday night painting a rosy view of his accomplishments in office, ticking off developments on trade, taxes, North Korea and even his plans for a Space Force.

"What we're doing is winning," Trump told cheering supporters.

"Where is the collusion?" he demanded, underscoring that Manafort's crimes had occurred before he became involved with the Trump campaign. "You know they're still looking for collusion."

The president did say he felt "badly for both" men, but he largely ignored Cohen's guilty pleas to eight felonies.

Manafort was convicted Tuesday in Virginia on charges brought by special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election and potential obstruction of justice. Cohen pleaded guilty in New York, saying he and Trump had arranged the payment of hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels and a former Playboy model to influence the election.

It is the Cohen case that places Trump in the most jeopardy, legal experts said, as the longtime personal "fixer" acknowledged his role in a scheme to pay off women who accused the future president of sexual misconduct.

"It's going to be hard for the president to try to discredit all this. It's circling him," said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor who is not involved in the case.

Trump has shown an uncanny ability to shake off a relentless stream of accusations and jolting statements that provoked outrage. His loyal base of supporters has stayed with him despite his effort to blame "both sides" for the deadly violence between white nationalists and anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, for one, and his refusal to side with the U.S. intelligence services over Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki last month, among other controversies.

Case in point, the crowd in West Virginia loudly chanted Trump's campaign staples "Drain the swamp!" and "Lock her up!" despite the fresh corruption convictions and looming prison sentences for his former advisers.

Manafort's conviction served as a vindication of Mueller's work as investigators continue to probe potential misdeeds by the president and those in his orbit. Mueller's team also had referred evidence in the Cohen case to federal prosecutors in New York.

Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani sought to cast the blame solely on Cohen in a Tuesday statement, saying: "There is no allegation of any wrongdoing against the President in the government's charges against Mr.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 40 of 58

Cohen.”

Trump’s legal team has also been engaged in a monthslong negotiation with Mueller’s team about a potential sit-down with the president, but has objected to the scope of the questions.

In a separate courtroom Tuesday, prosecutors and defense attorneys for former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn agreed to postpone his sentencing after he pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his contacts with a Russian official, in a sign his cooperation was still needed in the Mueller probe.

The afternoon of explosive legal developments comes as the White House is refocusing itself around the upcoming midterms and as Trump allies like Steve Bannon seek to frame the election as a referendum on the potential impeachment of the president. Trump confidants have long argued that the president’s fate in such a scenario would ultimately be more a matter of politics than law.

Of Cohen’s plea, Bannon argued Tuesday that it “takes away the argument from those who are telling the president it’s not that bad if he loses the House. This now becomes more than ever a national election on the issue of impeachment.”

The president seemed to convey the stakes in Charleston, warning the crowd that “You aren’t just voting for a candidate. You’re voting for which party controls the House and which party controls the Senate.”

Trump confidants reasserted late Tuesday that it is the White House position that a president cannot be indicted, referring to a 2000 opinion of the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel, which provides legal advice and guidance to executive branch agencies. Trump’s lawyers have said Mueller plans to adhere to that guidance, though Mueller’s office has never independently confirmed that. There would presumably be no bar against charging a president after he or she departs the White House.

Michael Avenatti, a lawyer pressing a civil case against Trump for Daniels, who has said she had sex with the president, tweeted Tuesday that the resolution of the criminal case against Cohen “should also permit us to proceed with an expedited deposition of Trump under oath about what he knew, when he knew it, and what he did about it.”

The Supreme Court in 1997, ruling in a sexual harassment lawsuit brought by Paula Jones, held that a sitting president could be made to answer questions as part of a lawsuit. That ruling did not directly address whether a president could be subpoenaed to testify in a criminal investigation.

Despite blustery public denials, the fate of Manafort and Cohen has worried the president’s inner circle.

For many around Trump, Cohen has represented a greater threat than even the Russia investigation, drawing from his decade of working as the then-celebrity real estate developer’s fixer. An FBI raid on Cohen’s New York office and hotel room in April rattled the president, who has complained publicly about what he felt was government overreach while privately worrying about what material Cohen may have had after working for the Trump Organization for a decade.

Those in Trump’s orbit, including Giuliani, have steadily ratcheted up attacks on Cohen, suggesting he was untrustworthy and lying about what he knew about Trump’s business dealings. When Cohen’s team produced a recording that the former fixer had made of Trump discussing a payment to silence a woman about an alleged affair, Giuliani sought to impugn Cohen’s credibility and question his loyalty.

Trump stewed for weeks over the media coverage of the Manafort trial. Though the proceedings were not connected to Russian election interference, Trump has seethed to confidants that he views the Manafort charges as “a warning shot” from Mueller.

As he watched the courtroom proceedings, he told confidants that he feared his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., could at some point be the one on trial, according to two people familiar with his thinking but not authorized to discuss private conversations.

“What matters is that a jury found that the facts presented to them by the special prosecutor warranted a conviction of someone who surrounds the president,” Weinstein said.

Superville reported from Charleston, West Virginia. Catherine Lucey, Ken Thomas and Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this report.

___ Follow Miller on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@zekejmiller> , Lemire at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> and Superville at <http://twitter.com/@dsupervilleap>

Trump looking to best Obama's travel schedule for midterms

By **ZEKE MILLER and DARLENE SUPERVILLE, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is preparing for an aggressive campaign schedule this fall to boost Republican candidates on the ballot in 2018.

Trump is aiming to spend more than 40 days on the campaign trail between the beginning of August and the Nov. 6 midterms, as he hopes to best his predecessors' travel schedules, White House officials said. The officials said Trump wants to be on the road for Republicans more than President Barack Obama was for Democrats in 2010 — when his party suffered what Obama called a "shellacking" — and beyond what President George W. Bush did in 2002.

"We expect the president to be the most aggressive campaigner in recent presidential history," said John Destefano, a counsellor to the president.

Trump, for his part, told supporters at a rally in West Virginia that he would campaign as much as feasible, taking into account concerns about security and other pressing national matters.

The Republican Party is defending its majorities in the House and Senate, facing headwinds from retirements and an energized Democratic opposition.

"We are fighting history," White House political director Bill Stepien said, noting that the party of an incumbent president traditionally suffers electoral losses in the midterm year.

White House officials are unwilling to publicly list specific goals for the coming election, with Stepien saying only that, "A successful year would be defying that history."

Stepien added, "The president has put his party in the best position to defy those odds."

White House officials say Trump can be best used in the campaign by holding campaign rallies in key states to boost Republican enthusiasm. He is also attending fundraisers for GOP candidates and various Republican groups.

Trump has predicted his party will defy expectations in November, suggesting there may be a "Red Wave" in the fall of Republican candidates.

"They keep talking about a blue wave," Trump said in West Virginia Tuesday. "I don't see it."

He warned Republican voters: "You aren't just voting for a candidate. You're voting for which party controls the House and which party controls the Senate."

The GOP does have several potential pick-up opportunities in the Senate, with vulnerable red-state Democrats on the ballot in West Virginia, North Dakota and Florida. But the House map appears far more challenging, made worse by the large number of GOP retirements.

Trump was in West Virginia to promote Republican Patrick Morrisey's Senate candidacy. That race is one of the GOP's prime pickup opportunities.

This story has been corrected to show that Trump's travel is being tallied from the beginning of August, not Labor Day.

US deports 95-year-old ex-Nazi guard to Germany

By **MICHAEL R. SISAK, DAVID RISING and RANDY HERSCHAFT, Associated Press**

BERLIN (AP) — A 95-year-old former Nazi concentration camp guard who lived quietly in New York City for decades was carried out of his home on a stretcher by federal agents and flown to Germany early Tuesday in what could prove to be the last U.S. deportation of a World War II-era war-crimes suspect.

Jakiw Palij's expulsion, at President Donald Trump's urging, came 25 years after investigators first accused Palij of lying about his wartime past to get into the U.S. But it was largely symbolic because officials in Germany have repeatedly said there is insufficient evidence to prosecute him.

Trump "made it very clear" he wanted Palij out of the country, and a new German government that took office in March brought "new energy" to expediting the matter, U.S. Ambassador Richard Grenell said.

"He's gone. He's back in Germany," Trump said at a campaign rally in West Virginia Tuesday night as he celebrated his role in the deportation.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 42 of 58

Eli Rosenbaum, the former head of the U.S. office investigating accused Nazi war criminals, said Palij's removal "is a landmark victory in the U.S. government's decades-long quest to achieve a measure of justice and accountability on behalf of the victims of Nazi inhumanity."

Palij lived quietly in the U.S. for years, as a draftsman and then as a retiree, until nearly three decades ago when investigators found his name on an old Nazi roster and a fellow former guard spilled the secret that he was "living somewhere in America."

Palij, an ethnic Ukrainian born in a part of Poland that is now Ukraine, said on his 1957 naturalization petition that he had Ukrainian citizenship. When their investigators showed up at his door in 1993, he said: "I would never have received my visa if I told the truth. Everyone lied."

A judge stripped Palij's U.S. citizenship in 2003 for "participation in acts against Jewish civilians" while he was an armed guard at the Trawniki camp in Nazi-occupied Poland and he was ordered deported a year later.

But because Germany, Poland, Ukraine and other countries refused to take him, he continued living in limbo in the two-story, red brick home in Queens he shared with his late wife, Maria. His continued presence there outraged the Jewish community, attracting frequent protests over the years that featured such chants as, "Your neighbor is a Nazi!"

According to the Justice Department, Palij served at Trawniki in 1943, the same year 6,000 prisoners in the camps and tens of thousands of other prisoners held in occupied Poland were rounded up and slaughtered. Palij has acknowledged serving in Trawniki but denied any involvement in war crimes.

Last September, all 29 members of New York's congressional delegation signed a letter urging the State Department to follow through on his deportation.

"Good riddance to this war criminal," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, a New York Democrat. The deportation came after weeks of diplomatic negotiations.

Grenell told reporters there were "difficult conversations" because Palij is not a German citizen and was stateless after losing his U.S. citizenship. But "the moral obligation" of taking in "someone who served in the name of the German government was accepted," he said.

Video footage from ABC News showed federal immigration agents carrying Palij out of his home Monday on a stretcher. Palij, with a fluffy white beard and a brown, newsboy-style cap atop his head, was wrapped in a sheet as the agents carried him down a brick stairway in front of his home and into a waiting ambulance. He ignored a reporter who shouted, "Are you a Nazi?" and "Do you have any regrets?"

Palij was flown on a specially chartered air ambulance from Teterboro, New Jersey, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and arrived in Dusseldorf, Germany, at 8 a.m. Tuesday.

Palij's lawyer, Ivars Berzins, declined to comment.

The local German government in Warendorf county, near Muenster, said Palij would be taken to a care facility in the town of Ahlen.

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said "there is no line under historical responsibility," but added in a comment to the German daily Bild that doing justice to the memory of Nazi atrocities "means standing by our moral obligation to the victims and the subsequent generations."

Jens Rommel, head of the German federal prosecutors' office that investigates Nazi war crimes, said Tuesday that the deportation doesn't change the likelihood that Palij will be prosecuted for war crimes. "A new investigation would only come into question if something changed in the legal evaluation or actual new evidence became known," he said.

However, Efraim Zuroff, the head Nazi-hunter at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said he hoped prosecutors would revisit the case now that Palij is in Germany.

"Trawniki was a camp where people were trained to round up and murder the Jews in Poland, so there's certainly a basis for some sort of prosecution," he said in a telephone interview from Jerusalem.

"The efforts invested by the United States in getting Palij deported are really noteworthy and I'm very happy to see that they finally met with success," he said.

Palij's deportation is the first for a Nazi war crimes suspect since Germany agreed in 2009 to take John

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 43 of 58

Demjanjuk, a retired Ohio autoworker who was accused of serving as a Nazi guard. He was convicted in 2011 of being an accessory to more than 28,000 killings and died 10 months later, at age 91, with his appeal pending.

Palij, whose full name is pronounced Yah-keev PAH'-lee, entered the U.S. in 1949 under the Displaced Persons Act, a law meant to help refugees from post-war Europe.

He told immigration officials that he worked during the war in a woodshop and farm in Nazi-occupied Poland, as well as at another farm in Germany and finally in a German upholstery factory. Palij said he never served in the military.

In reality, officials say, he played an essential role in the Nazi program to exterminate Jews as an armed guard at Trawniki. According to a Justice Department complaint, Palij served in a unit that "committed atrocities against Polish civilians and others" and then in the notorious SS Streibel Battalion, "a unit whose function was to round up and guard thousands of Polish civilian forced laborers."

After the war, Palij maintained friendships with other Nazi guards who the government says came to the U.S. under similar false pretenses.

The Justice Department's special Nazi-hunting unit started piecing together Palij's past after a fellow Trawniki guard identified him to Canadian authorities in 1989. Investigators asked Russia and other countries for records on Palij beginning in 1990 and first confronted him in 1993.

It wasn't until after a second interview in 2001 that he signed a document acknowledging he had been a guard at Trawniki and a member of the Streibel Battalion. Palij suggested at one point during that interview that he was threatened with death if he refused to work as a guard, saying, "If you don't show up, boom-boom."

Though the last Nazi suspect ordered deported, Palij is not the last remaining in the U.S.

Since 2017, Poland has been seeking the extradition of Ukrainian-born Michael Karkoc, an ex-commander in an SS-led Nazi unit that burned Polish villages and killed civilians during the war. But it could take years before the 99-year-old, who currently lives in Minneapolis, faces deportation. He was the subject of a series of 2013 reports by The Associated Press that led Polish prosecutors to issue an arrest warrant for him.

Sisak and Herschaft reported from New York. Associated Press writers Geir Moulson in Berlin and Jonathan Lemire and Ashraf Khalil in Washington contributed to this report.

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US plan for coal power deregulation could cause more deaths

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and SETH BORENSTEIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Tuesday moved to prop up the declining coal industry with an overhaul of Obama-era pollution rules, acknowledging that the increased emissions from aging coal-fired plants could kill hundreds more people annually and cost the country billions of dollars.

The proposal broadly increases the authority given to states to decide how and how much to regulate existing coal power plants.

The EPA said its Affordable Clean Energy rule "empowers states, promotes energy independence and facilitates economic growth and job creation."

"We are putting our great coal miners back to work," President Donald Trump crowed during a rally Tuesday night in West Virginia.

"We want a clean environment. ... I want clean air. I want crystal clean water and we've got it. We've got the cleanest country in the planet right now," Trump said. "But I'm getting rid of some of these ridiculous rules and regulations, which are killing our companies ... and our jobs."

Acting EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler told reporters, "Today we are fulfilling the president's agenda."

The proposal dismantles President Barack Obama's 2015 Clean Power Plan, one of his administration's

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 44 of 58

legacy efforts against climate change. The Obama rules, which have been halted by court challenges, would have increased federal regulation of emissions from the nation's electrical grid and broadly promoted cleaner energy, including natural gas and solar and wind power.

Michelle Bloodworth, president of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a trade group that represents coal producers, called the new rule a marked departure from the "gross overreach" of the Obama administration and said it should prevent a host of premature coal-plant retirements.

But the Natural Resources Defense Council called Trump's proposal the "Dirty Power Plan."

Gina McCarthy, EPA administrator when the Obama plan was developed, said the proposed changes show the Trump administration emphasizing "coal at all costs."

The EPA's 289-page regulatory analysis acknowledged that every possible scenario under its proposal projects "small increases" in climate-changing emissions and some pollutants, compared to the Obama plan.

EPA officials said they could give no firm projections for the health effects of their plan because that will depend on how states regulate power plants within their borders.

But models provided by the agency estimate that under the Trump plan, 300 to 1,500 more people would die prematurely each year by 2030, compared to the Obama plan.

The models for the Trump plan also project tens of thousands of additional major asthma attacks and hundreds more heart attacks compared with the Obama plan.

When health costs from air pollution — soot and smog killing people, increased asthma and heart attacks — are factored in, the repeal of the coal power plan would cost the country \$1.4 billion to \$3.9 billion annually, according to the agency.

"It shows that removing the Clean Power Plan would be detrimental to health," said University of North Carolina environmental engineering professor Jason West, who went through the agency's regulatory analysis with The Associated Press.

"The cost to society in increases of death and other outcomes from air pollution are greater than the cost to industry from removing the Clean Power Plan," West said.

The projection of increased deaths and costs marks "what's extraordinary about this proposal," said Richard Revesz, dean emeritus at the New York University School of Law. "To their credit, they tell us directly, 'We are doing something to cause great harm to the American people.'"

Environmentalists and other opponents said they expect legal challenges, arguing the Trump administration is abdicating its responsibilities under the Clean Air Act as set by Congress and the courts.

Bill Wehrum, head of the EPA's air office, told reporters that the administration rejects any suggestion the agency has a broad legal duty to combat climate change through regulation of power grids or promotion of cleaner energy.

"An important part of what we're doing here is getting us back into our lane," Wehrum said.

The EPA called the Obama-era regulations on coal power plants "overly prescriptive and burdensome."

Combined with the EPA's proposal earlier this month to ease gas-mileage requirements for vehicles, the move may actually increase the country's climate-changing emissions, according to some former top EPA officials, environmental groups and other opponents.

Tuesday's move opens a public-comment period on the proposal before any final approval by the president.

Scientists say that without extensive study, they cannot directly link a single weather event to climate change, but that it is responsible for more intense and more frequent extreme events such as storms, droughts, floods and wildfires.

The new proposal establishes guidelines for states to use when developing any plans to limit greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. Critics say the new plan would allow utilities to run older, dirtier power plants more often and extend their operating life.

Trump has already vowed to pull the U.S. out of the Paris climate agreement as he pushes to revive the coal industry.

Obama's plan was designed to cut U.S. carbon dioxide emissions to 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. The rule dictated specific emission targets for states and gave officials broad latitude to decide how

to achieve reductions.

The Supreme Court put the plan on hold in 2016 following a legal challenge by industry and coal-friendly states, an order that remains in effect.

Even so, the Obama plan has been a factor in the wave of retirements of coal-fired plants, which also are being squeezed by lower costs for natural gas and renewable power and state mandates that promote energy conservation.

Trump has vowed to end what Republicans call a "war on coal" waged by Obama.

This story has been corrected to increase the projected range of deaths compared to the Obama plan.

Father of slain Colorado woman sobs, seethes in courtroom

By DAN ELLIOTT and KATHLEEN FOODY, Associated Press

GREELEY, Colo. (AP) — Frank Rzucek Sr. leaned forward in a Colorado courtroom, weeping with his face in his hands as his son-in-law, just feet away, was told Tuesday he could face the death penalty if convicted of killing Rzucek's daughter and two granddaughters.

Collecting himself, Rzucek glared as Christopher Watts was escorted back to jail.

The brief hearing came a day after court documents revealed that Watts told police that it was Rzucek's daughter, Shanann Watts, who strangled the kids after he told her he wanted to separate.

Watts told police that he flew into a rage and strangled his wife, took the three bodies to a remote oil site north of Denver, buried Shanann in a shallow grave and dumped the girls' bodies inside oil tanks.

Rzucek's silent angst dominated a routine court hearing in which Watts, wearing an orange jail suit and cuffed at the wrists and ankle, stoically answered, "Yes sir," as District Judge Marcelo Kopcow told him of the possible punishments if he's found guilty of killing Shanann, 34, Celeste, 3, and Bella, 4.

Shanann's brother, Frank Rzucek Jr., rubbed his father's shoulders and glared unflinchingly at Watts. A deputy stood between the men and the defendant.

Watts didn't enter pleas to three first-degree murder charges, two counts of killing a child under 12, one count of unlawful termination of a pregnancy and three counts of tampering with a deceased human body.

GPS coordinates provided by police suggest the bodies were found at an oil worksite on or near a sprawling ranch close to Roggen, a high plains town about 40 miles (65 kilometers) east of the family's home in Frederick.

The oil site was not clearly visible Tuesday from the borders of the ranch, set in grazing land with sagebrush, yellow wildflowers and the occasional cottonwood tree. Gates to the property were closed, and the ranch owner did not immediately respond to a telephone message.

Watts worked as an operator for Anadarko Petroleum, a major Colorado oil and gas producer. He was fired Aug. 15, the day of his arrest.

Police first visited the Watts home on Aug. 13, after a friend asked officers to check on Shanann. Police searched the house and found the woman's cellphone stuffed inside a couch. Her purse was in the kitchen, and a suitcase was at the bottom of the stairs.

A detective spoke to Watts and learned about his plan to leave his wife. He told officers the conversation with Shanann was civil at first but that later "they were both upset and crying" and she planned to go to a friend's house, court papers said.

When she and the girls did not return home Aug. 14, investigators ramped up their efforts, with help from the FBI and Colorado Bureau of Investigation. Christopher Watts was interviewed by several local television stations, saying he missed his family.

In court papers, investigators said they learned that Watts was "actively involved in an affair with a co-worker," something he denied at first.

Separate documents filed by Watts' defense attorney last week said the girls' bodies were submerged in crude oil for four days before police found them late Thursday.

Prosecutors in Colorado have 60 days after someone is arraigned to say if they will seek the death pen-

alty. No date has been set for Watts' arraignment. District Attorney Michael Rourke said Monday that it was too early to discuss if he will pursue capital punishment.

Shanann Watts, who's originally from North Carolina, had told family and friends she was expecting a boy. The judge said the charge of unlawful termination of pregnancy carries a prison term between 16 and 48 years.

Colorado is one of 12 states without a law broadly allowing for homicide charges in the violent death of fetuses. But state lawmakers in 2013 made the unlawful termination of pregnancy a felony.

Several efforts to change state law to allow murder charges in the death of a fetus have stalled amid disagreement about how to pass such a law without infringing on abortion rights.

As Boulder County district attorney, Stan Garnett remembers receiving dozens of calls and letters as his office prosecuted a woman accused of cutting open a pregnant woman's belly and removing her unborn child in 2015.

Garnett said a murder charge is impossible in Colorado unless prosecutors can show a fetus lived outside the mother before death.

A case involving the death of a fetus is inevitably controversial, but for prosecutors, "all that matters is what the law is and what the evidence is," Garnett said.

Kavanaugh calls Roe V. Wade settled, but Dem critics unmoved

By **DUSTIN WEAVER** and **LISA MASCARO**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh on Tuesday said he views Roe v. Wade as settled law, according to Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, but the answer did little to mollify Democrats who say he would restrict abortion access from the bench.

In a two-hour meeting, Kavanaugh told Collins that he agrees with Chief Justice John Roberts, who called Roe v. Wade settled law during his confirmation hearings in 2005.

"We talked at great length about precedent and the application of stare decisis to abortion cases," Collins said, using the legal term for settled precedent.

Kavanaugh's views on abortion are of major importance to Collins, as the Maine Republican had vowed to oppose President Donald Trump's nominee if he had "demonstrated hostility" to the 1973 decision codifying abortion rights.

Collins called the meeting "very informative" and said they discussed a variety of topics. She said she would not make a decision on how to vote until after the Senate Judiciary Committee holds confirmation hearings for Kavanaugh, set for next month.

Democrats fighting Kavanaugh's ascension to the high court sought to keep up the pressure, dismissing Kavanaugh's stance on Roe v. Wade as an artful dodge.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., met with Kavanaugh later Tuesday. He said the judge refused to answer when asked directly whether Roe v. Wade was correctly decided.

That lack of clarity, Schumer said, should "send shivers down the spine of any American who believes in reproductive freedom for women."

Schumer added that Kavanaugh has a special obligation to be forthcoming on abortion, given Trump's "litmus test that he would only appoint judges who would overturn Roe."

Kavanaugh has already met with most Senate Republicans, but winning support from Collins and Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, could be crucial. Both senators support access to abortion services.

Republicans have a narrow 50-49 majority in the Senate due to the absence of ailing Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and can't afford a single defection on Kavanaugh if every Democrat votes no.

Schumer said he asked Kavanaugh about his views on executive power, and particularly whether the president must comply with a subpoena, testify or provide records. The questions are particularly relevant as special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation proceeds.

"He would not say that the president must comply with a subpoena or provide records," Schumer said.

Schumer said they also spent much of the interview going over Kavanaugh's years working at the White

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 47 of 58

House under President George W. Bush. "Unfortunately, the judge either wouldn't answer or could not remember key moments of his tenure," the senator said.

Schumer said that Kavanaugh's inability to "recall almost anything that happened while he was secretary for the president or while he was counsel is why we need his full record released to the American people."

Democrats complain that Republicans are withholding documents in their rush to confirm Trump's pick for the court ahead of the midterm elections.

They want records that crossed Kavanaugh's desk as Bush's staff secretary. But Republicans have declined to pursue them, saying there are adequate records available from Kavanaugh's previous administrative work, as well as his 12 years as an appellate court justice.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, said the Democrats' demand for more records is a stall tactic.

"We know the true reason for their unprecedented document demand: to delay Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation until after the midterm elections, when the Senate Democrats hope to win back the Senate and block Judge Kavanaugh's nomination forever," Grassley said.

The National Archives is also producing documents from Kavanaugh's time on Kenneth Starr's investigation of President Bill Clinton, but has said its larger cache of files from the Bush years won't fully be delivered until late October.

The Senate's No. 2 Republican, John Cornyn of Texas, said senators will have all the paperwork they need to make a decision on Kavanaugh's nomination. "I'm confident he will be confirmed," Cornyn said.

While Schumer was working to build opposition, several Democrats from states that Trump won in the 2016 election remained undecided about how to vote, including Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, Joe Donnelly of Indiana, Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota and Claire McCaskill of Missouri. Manchin, Donnelly and Heitkamp voted for Trump's first Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch.

McCaskill had her chance to question Kavanaugh on Tuesday and was noncommittal. She said she talked to the judge about access to health care and getting "dark money" from anonymous donors out of politics, among other things.

Kavanaugh, 53, is a conservative who, in replacing retired Justice Anthony Kennedy, could tip the court rightward for a generation.

Several Democratic female senators joined with advocates for women's health care Tuesday to talk about the stakes of adding Kavanaugh to the court, particularly when it comes to access to abortion services.

"This is a wakeup call," said Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y. "Do not take this moment lightly."

Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee pushed back, scolding colleagues for treating the nominee as if he'd just been released from prison. "I hope we treat him with dignity and respect," Alexander said.

Republicans hope to have Kavanaugh confirmed by the start of the court's session on Oct. 1.

Associated Press writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Rapper Post Malone's jet blows 2 tires but then lands safely

By DAVID KLEPPER, Associated Press

NEWBURGH, N.Y. (AP) — A private jet carrying rapper Post Malone blew two tires during takeoff at a small New Jersey airport on Tuesday but made a safe emergency landing hours later in upstate New York, prompting the rapper to thank fans who prayed for him and diss those who "wished death" on him while he was in the air.

The face-tattooed singer/rapper, who had been headed to England, tweeted, "i landed guys."

"Oh, my God, I hate flying in general. I don't even know what to say, man. I'm shook," he told the celebrity website TMZ on Facetime. "There was one hell of a team on that aircraft, and we're here, we're here on earth, and I need a beer, and I need some wine, at the same time, mixed together."

The plane had 16 people on board when it left Teterboro Airport on Tuesday morning, the Federal Aviation Administration said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 48 of 58

Fans gathered at New York Stewart International Airport in Newburgh, about 70 miles (112 kilometers) north of New York City, after hearing the rapper was on board, and they cheered when the plane landed just before 4 p.m. The rapper was scheduled to perform at the Reading and Leeds Festival in England over the weekend, according to his website's tour schedule.

"thank you for your prayers," he posted on Twitter after Tuesday's emergency landing. "can't believe how many people wished death on me on this website."

The troubled Gulfstream IV was en route from Teterboro to London Luton Airport in Luton, England, when the pilot realized shortly after takeoff that the tires had blown. The pilot circled the airport for about 30 minutes before the jet was diverted.

The plane originally was to attempt an emergency landing at Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport in Massachusetts, airport manager Eric Billowitz said. It circled over Connecticut to burn fuel, a practice sometimes used to decrease the risk of explosion and fire during emergency landings.

Post Malone had been in the New York area on Monday for the MTV Video Music Awards, where he won the song of the year prize.

A small group of the curious and fans who had heard he was on the plane on Tuesday initially gathered at the airport in Westfield, Massachusetts, hoping to watch the landing.

"We came down because he had the biggest day of his life yesterday and we wanted to make sure he is safe," said Jessica Kielb, of Chicopee, Massachusetts.

Dom Henry drove to the New York airport with friends as soon as he heard the plane would be landing there instead. He was one of several fans, mostly teenagers, who anxiously waited for the plane behind the chain link fence surrounding the runway.

"I was praying," he said.

Asked whether he was praying for Post Malone's safety, he said, "Yeah, of course. And to see him."

Anthony DeStefano saw the plane descend and said it appeared to have a normal landing, with no unusual noise or other indications of a problem. DeStefano, a local teacher, acknowledged being unfamiliar with Post Malone until his nephew informed him.

"Great job by the pilot," DeStefano said. "People started clapping as soon as it landed."

Billowitz said he was told the plane was first headed to the Massachusetts airport because there is a Gulfstream service center there and because the airport has "one of the longest runways in the Northeast" at 9,000 feet (2,740 meters), but the plane was then diverted to Stewart.

Stewart's signature feature is a nearly 12,000-foot (3,650-meter) runway, long enough to handle the fat-bodied C-5A Galaxy planes laden with supplies and better for such emergencies.

Post Malone took home the song of the year award at the VMAs for his hit "Rockstar," featuring 21 Savage. The song is from his latest album, "Beerbongs & Bentleys."

The 23-year-old was joined on stage by rockers Aerosmith and 21 Savage for a wild performance that closed out the awards show.

Associated Press writers David Porter in Newark, New Jersey, and Pat Eaton-Robb in Westfield, Massachusetts, contributed to this report.

Confederate toppling looms over debate about other statues

By **MARTHA WAGGONER** and **JONATHAN DREW**, Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Protesters at North Carolina's flagship university took advantage of a non-confrontational police response to topple a century-old Confederate statue that's long been the target of critics who say it symbolizes racism.

Now, backlash over the Monday night takedown could make it harder to negotiate a resolution to the fate of other Confederate monuments in the state — including three on state Capitol grounds being debated Wednesday by a state historical commission.

A year before protesters took down "Silent Sam," University of North Carolina campus police responded

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 49 of 58

much differently to a similar protest. In 2017, officers in riot gear faced criticism for heavy-handed tactics after using metal barricades to keep activists from getting near the statue.

The portable barriers weren't used Monday, and officers didn't keep protesters away from the statue. The bronze figure of an anonymous soldier was pulled down from its stone pedestal with ropes by protesters who used banners to mask their action.

University and legislative leaders said they're taking a hard look at how protesters used "mob rule" tactics to bring down the statue. A top legislative leader urged all levels of government to reevaluate the response to such protests, while campus police were preparing a detailed timeline of events leading to when "Silent Sam" fell.

North Carolina's powerful Republican state Senate leader Phil Berger urged officials "from the Governor down to the local District Attorney" rethink how they deal with such "violent riots" and work on "re-establishing the rule of law."

Chancellor Carol Folt and UNC System President Margaret Spellings, along with the heads of their boards, issued a joint statement acknowledging "many have questioned how police officers responded" but it wasn't the administration's intention to allow the statue to fall.

They said the protest was "unlike any previous event" on campus, "carried out in a highly organized manner."

To outwit officers, the protesters raised four tall black banners on bamboo poles, along with banners on the ground, concealing efforts to tie a rope around the sculpture. They then split into two groups. Most marched away as a small group remained behind. The banners were up for about an hour before the groups converged and yanked the statue down, according to videos.

The tactics appeared to have evolved from previous protests where activists wrapped the pedestal in banners, put up signs or staged a sit-in at its base. Police guarding the statue have also been closely watched by activists.

The statue, erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1913, had been under constant, costly police surveillance after being vandalized in recent months. Many students, faculty and alumni argued that "Silent Sam" symbolized racism and asked officials to take it down.

Campus police referred reporters to university media relations officials, who declined to answer questions Tuesday.

Seth Stoughton, a former police officer who teaches law at the University of South Carolina, said police at protests balance factors ranging from potential harm or damage to fostering community relationships. Further, social media has changed how protests coalesce.

"Those sets of priorities are in tension with each other. There is typically not going to be a single right answer," he said, later adding: "There will always be the potential for something to happen that would not have happened if police had taken a harder approach."

The backlash comes on the eve of the state historical commission's meeting to discuss Gov. Roy Cooper's request to remove three other Confederate monuments at the state Capitol.

Two state lawmakers — moderates from each political party — said they're worried the protesters' actions Monday could prevent finding peaceable solution to Confederate memorials statewide.

"People will harden their positions in response to this," Rep. Craig Horn, a Union County Republican, said in an interview, later adding: "When someone is taking a swing at you, it's human nature to try to swing back ... or say 'I'm done with you.'"

Democratic Rep. Ken Goodman of Richmond County said he doesn't approve of the way the statue was destroyed, but understands frustration over Confederate monuments.

"It needs to be resolved and I don't think leaving the statue there resolved the issue ... but you can't erase history, so maybe there's some third way to deal with that issue," he said.

North Carolina is one of the Southern states with the most Confederate monuments, and has been a focal point in the national debate over them following a deadly white nationalist protest a year ago in Charlottesville, Virginia.

On Tuesday, students stopped by the empty pedestal to take photos or simply observe the protest's

aftermath.

Freshman Joy Aikens said she's glad the statue is gone: "It was being talked about but it seemed like there wasn't very much listening or actual conversation going on."

Associated Press writers Alex Derosier, Gary D. Robertson and Emery P. Dalesio contributed to this report.

Follow Drew on Twitter at www.twitter.com/JonathanLDrew and Waggoner at www.twitter.com/mjwaggonernc

Poll: Support for school choice growing among Republicans

By MARIA DANILOVA, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Support for charter schools and private school voucher programs has gone up over the past year, with Republicans accounting for much of the increase, according to a survey published Tuesday.

The findings by Education Next, a journal published by Harvard's Kennedy School and Stanford University, come as Education Secretary Betsy DeVos promotes alternatives to traditional public schools.

Forty-four percent of respondents in the poll conducted in May said they support the expansion of charter schools, compared to 39 percent in 2017. The gain of 5 percentage points, however, did not fully offset the drop in support from 51 percent in 2016.

When broken down according to party affiliation, 57 percent of Republicans and 36 percent of Democrats voiced support for charter schools, compared to 47 percent of Republicans and 34 percent of Democrats in 2017.

"Support is up among Republicans for various strategies to expand school choice, and the Trump administration's embrace of those policies is a likely explanation," said Martin West, associate professor of education at Harvard University and a co-author of the report.

Nina Rees, president of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools said the findings "demonstrate through the educational choices they make for their children - families want high-quality charter school options for their kids.

"Above all else, parents care that their child has access to an excellent school, and as education advocates it is our job to ensure that wish becomes a reality," Rees added.

Support for publicly funded vouchers given to low-income families to help them pay tuition at private school rose from 37 percent to 42 percent over the past year.

The Education Department welcomed the results of the poll.

"The data consistently show that parents want more education options for their kids and when they are empowered with options, they like it and their kids benefit," said press secretary Elizabeth Hill. "Education freedom is the future."

Some experts, however, were skeptical.

Robin Lake, director of the Center on Reinventing Public Education, welcomed the increased support for charters, but noted that it has risen almost entirely among Republicans.

"I don't think that an education policy that's designed to get better outcomes for kids should ever be a partisan issue," Lake said.

Scott Sargrad with the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank, said the question on vouchers was misguided because it didn't mention that funds going to private schools will be diverted from public schools.

"In reality, when given that choice, parents and teachers overwhelmingly agree that public money should support the public schools that serve 90 percent of our nation's students," Sargrad said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Americans seem to be more satisfied with their local police and the post office than with their neighborhood school. While 51 percent of respondents said they would give their local schools a grade of A or B, 68 percent gave the local post office a similar grade and 69 percent the local police.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 51 of 58

"It makes sense that only 50 percent of Americans are giving their public school a good grade of an A or a B that they would express support for alternatives to those public schools," said Patrick McGuinn, a professor of political science and education at Drew University.

In the Black Lives Matter era, African-American respondents gave their local police much lower marks than other respondents, but their views of their local schools were even worse. Thirty-nine percent gave their local schools an A or a B, while the local police force received such marks from 43 percent of African-American respondents.

The study also found that many Americans favor raising teacher salaries and increasing school funding in the aftermath of teachers walking out of schools in six states earlier this spring to protest pay and other issues.

Informed about average teacher earnings in their state, nearly half said they support raising teacher pay. That number was 67 percent when respondents were not told explicitly how much their local teachers were making. Nationally, the average teacher's salary was \$58,950 in 2017, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

"The sense of economic insecurity for teachers is very strong and there is growing support for higher pay, not just from teachers but from the broader community," said Evan Stone, CEO of Educators For Excellence, a teachers' advocacy organization.

West said that while many believe teachers should be making more, there is disagreement over whether they should be compensated based on how much their students learn or using some other metric.

"To the extent that the debate moves from how much are teachers are paid to how they are paid, there is potential for continued conflict," West said.

The Education Next survey was based on interviews with 4,601 adults across the country. The margin of error was 1.4 percentage points.

Mississippi could re-examine 1959 racial killing of teenager

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS, Associated Press

CORINTH, Miss. (AP) — Eberlene King remembers her 15-year-old brother as he lay dying, after white teenagers cruised through their black neighborhood in a pickup on Halloween night 1959 and shot him in the face.

"His eyes ... were hanging out," King recalled. "His head was full of pellets."

William Roy Prather died the next morning in their hometown of Corinth, Mississippi, a few miles south of the Tennessee line.

Eight white teens were charged with murder, but only one was convicted. Jerry Darnell Glidewell, then 16, pleaded guilty to manslaughter in January 1960 and served less than a year in state prison. Six of the seven others in the truck got a year's probation through youth court, and an 18-year-old walked free.

The black teen's slaying has never drawn much attention, even as federal and state authorities in the past 15 years have re-opened investigations of racially motivated killings from the civil rights era.

Now, the U.S. Justice Department says it has referred Prather's killing to the state of Mississippi "for potential prosecution." The Associated Press dug into the case to reveal information not previously reported, including details about the Justice Department's investigation and AP interviews with King and Glidewell.

It's unclear whether a district attorney will pursue charges against any aging defendant in a decades-old case where witnesses' memories may be fading and some pieces of evidence, including the truck and the shotgun, have disappeared.

The case is briefly mentioned in a report the department filed in March — the same one that said the department is reviving its investigation into the brutal 1955 killing of another black teenager in Mississippi, Emmett Till.

"Although prosecution of some of the subjects may be barred by double jeopardy and other subjects are deceased, the Department referred the matter to the state of Mississippi to determine whether any state prosecutions might be appropriate," the Justice Department said of the Prather case.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 52 of 58

The state prosecutor whose territory includes Corinth, District Attorney John Weddle, did not return multiple calls seeking comment.

King said FBI agents knocked on her door a few years ago and hand-delivered a letter from the Justice Department. The letter said no federal charges could be brought in the killing of her brother, based on laws that existed in 1959. It said "the only possible prosecution" would be for the state to bring unspecified charges against one suspect who was 18 at the time of the crime.

Corinth — pronounced coh-RINTH by locals — is home to about 14,600 people, 70 percent of them white and 24 percent black.

In the city, once besieged during the Civil War, schools and neighborhoods remained segregated through the 1960s. While some black residents remember fear and violence, others say the town was quiet as long as everyone, in the language of the times, "remembered their place."

The 1950s and '60s saw racial strife throughout the South, as whites resisted racial integration. Prather's slaying came four years after Till's brutal killing galvanized the civil rights movement and three years before violence erupted about 80 miles (129 kilometers) southwest of Corinth at the University of Mississippi when the first black student enrolled.

A Confederate soldier still statue stands sentinel outside the courthouse on Corinth's town square.

Inside the courthouse, old handwritten records show that on Jan. 26, 1960, Glidewell pleaded guilty to manslaughter: "Ordered to serve 5 yrs. in State Penitentiary, the last 4 yrs. of which suspended on good behavior."

Glidewell, who goes by his middle name Darnell, now lives off a hilly country road north of Corinth. He answered the phone on a recent morning, and an Associated Press reporter asked about Prather's killing.

"They charged me with that, yeah," said Glidewell, now in his mid-70s.

As to what happened that Halloween night, he said: "I'd rather not talk to you on the phone."

But Glidewell responded to a few more questions. He said investigators spoke to him about the case several years ago, and one said: "Don't worry about it."

"It's all over with, you know?" Glidewell said. "But I ain't heard any more from it. ... That's over 50 year ago."

Glidewell said "four or five" of the people with him that night are still alive. "I don't know where they live right now," he said. "I don't ever see them."

Their names don't appear in court records near Glidewell's, but they are listed in the Justice Department letter.

After the phone conversation, an AP reporter and photographer drove to Glidewell's house and knocked on the door. His wife said he has liver cancer, his memory is failing and he did not want to talk.

The Justice Department letter says that, based on investigators' interviews with witnesses, a group of white teens drove through a black neighborhood of Corinth on Halloween night 1959. Black witnesses said they saw the white teens throwing firecrackers at the black teens, and some young black people threw rocks and bricks at the truck. Investigators were told the white teenagers got a shotgun and shells from a home of one person in their group, then returned to the black part of town, where Glidewell shot Prather.

"Glidewell reported to police that before he fired the shotgun several of the subjects said, 'There they are, shoot,'" the Justice Department letter said.

News reports from the time said Prather was not among those who had thrown rocks or bricks at the truck.

"Although Glidewell and some of the subjects contended that Glidewell had shot straight up in the air, the autopsy report indicated that Glidewell had aimed the shotgun dead-straight at your brother's face," the Justice Department letter said.

King, now 73, said her older brother was "a real quiet person" who had helped his friends clean up a church on Halloween night.

"He didn't deserve what happened to him. ... Well, nobody deserves that," King said in a phone interview from her home near Atlanta. "He would just go to school, go back and do his chores at home."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 53 of 58

The Justice Department letter says the all-white grand jury that indicted Glidewell recommended he be treated with "leniency." The grand jury recommended that six of the remaining white teens have their cases sent to youth court, and that the one 18-year-old in the group have his case sent to a July 1960 grand jury; investigators found no record indicating any indictment against him.

A judge put the younger teens on probation and released them from that by March 1961, writing that each "would make a good citizen," according to the Justice Department letter.

Johnnie Sue Johnson, a second cousin of Prather, lived near the funeral home and went to view his body; she was 13. She said his face was swollen from being shot. "He looked like he was 90-something years old," Johnson said from her home in Champaign, Illinois. "It was just awful."

One of Johnson's nieces, Gennella Graham, was born in 1975 and grew up in Corinth but had never heard of Prather's death until the summer of 2017, when she took a course at Tougaloo College in Jackson and was assigned to write about her hometown's "hidden history." Graham, who teaches English at Corinth High School, was given Prather's name and called her aunt. Johnson told her about the killing and about their kinship to Prather. Johnson also told her that Prather's friend who was with him that night, Lavelle Powell, survived but lost hearing in one ear because of the shooting. Powell later moved away from Mississippi, and he died a few years ago.

Graham wrote a poem about Prather, which says, in part:

"Write that I,
"Wanted to fight,
"Wanted to live,
"But no one asked what I thought,
"What I wanted."

This school year, Graham will teach her 11th grade students about William Roy Prather.

"I know he just lived 15 years on this earth. But I would like to know — what was he interested in? Did he have a girlfriend? ... Did he have a job somewhere? Where did he attend church?" Graham said. "I just want them to know that he was important. When you die, that's not the end of your story."

Follow Emily Wagster Pettus on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/EWagsterPettus> .

This story has been corrected to show that Gennella Graham was born in 1975, not 1974.

Rockets strike Afghan capital in latest spike of violence

By AMIR SHAH and KATHY GANNON, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Rockets slammed into the heart of the capital of Kabul on Tuesday as President Ashraf Ghani delivered a speech marking a Muslim holiday, the latest in a series of brazen attacks that highlighted Afghanistan's deteriorating security.

No injuries were reported from the mortar rounds that hit in the diplomatic quarter; one struck near the presidential palace, another near a NATO compound and the U.S. Embassy, according to police official Jan Agha.

In response, Afghan helicopter gunships bombed the house from which the rockets were believed to have been launched. Hours later, at least two militants were reported killed.

The booms of the mortar rounds echoed during the live broadcast of Ghani's speech commemorating the Eid al-Adha holiday, and the president interrupted his remarks to say: "If they are thinking the rocket attack will keep Afghans down, they are wrong."

The attack came amid an unrelenting wave of deadly violence across the country in recent weeks and dealt another blow to Ghani's efforts to revive peace talks to end the 17-year war. On Sunday, he had offered a holiday cease-fire, saying it would only take effect if the Taliban reciprocated.

An affiliate of the Islamic State group claimed responsibility, saying its fighters had fired the shells that struck the heavily fortified Kabul neighborhood. There was no immediate comment from the Taliban.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 54 of 58

The Interior Ministry launched an investigation into the security breach.

Former Interior Minister Noorul Haq Olomi blamed political squabbling inside Ghani's government for distracting the president's attention from security matters, allowing the near-daily violence by insurgents to continue.

"The deaths every day of our security forces is a big calamity for our country," said Olomi, now a defense analyst.

He also blamed neighboring Pakistan, saying that the international community has done too little to force Islamabad to shut down safe havens for terrorist groups inside its territory. The U.S. and Afghanistan also have routinely alleged that Pakistan harbors Taliban insurgents,

Pakistan denies the allegation and says some of the deadliest terrorist attacks on its territory have been plotted by the Islamic State affiliate based in Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan.

Afghan security forces, aided by U.S. air support, have repeatedly struck IS redoubts in Nangarhar in recent months with some success, although the group still has been able to carry out attacks. Last week, it claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed 34 high school graduates, most of them Shiites, who were taking university entrance exams in Kabul. The IS affiliate is known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province, the ancient name of an area that once spanned parts of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia.

In Islamabad, new Prime Minister Imran Khan condemned the rocket attack.

"We are with the Afghan people and government to fully defeat this cowardly thinking," Khan said in an Urdu language statement.

The Kabul neighborhood where the mortar rounds hit is one of the most secure in the capital, where embassies and government buildings are surrounded by concrete blast walls and coils of razor wire. Many streets near the U.S. Embassy are closed off, along with those near sensitive government and military installations.

"It is clear that those that carried out the attack are enemies of Afghanistan, enemies of Islam and enemies of peace," said Lt. Col. Martin O'Donnell, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

Police had noticed a suspicious vehicle and followed it to a mud-brick house near the sprawling Eid Gah mosque, where hundreds were praying during the Eid al-Adha holiday, said police spokesman Hashmat Stanekzai. He told The Associated Press that the militants were believed to have fired the rockets from the house.

A helicopter gunship bombed the location, destroying the house and the vehicle.

After the explosions, witnesses reported sporadic shooting could be heard from the area, though it wasn't clear who was firing. The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing for their safety.

O'Donnell said four attackers were killed and five surrendered. But Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said two attackers were killed.

Danish initially said that two Afghan security forces were wounded in a subsequent firefight, but later revised the number to six, including some civilians. The gunbattle also ignited a fire that burned down a nearby market, he said.

The U.N. special representative to Afghanistan, Tadamichi Yamamoto, pleaded for peace on the Muslim holiday.

"To allow all Afghans to commemorate this auspicious celebration, I strongly urge the parties to the conflict to demonstrate good will, to respect this time of joy and tolerance and to refrain from resorting to violence," he said.

On Monday, the Taliban ambushed a convoy of buses and abducted scores of people, including women and children. Afghan forces rescued nearly 150 of them.

Earlier this month, the insurgents launched a coordinated assault on Ghazni, a strategic provincial capital only 120 kilometers (75 miles) from Kabul. It took Afghan forces, aided by U.S. airstrikes and advisers, more than five days to drive them out in a battle that killed at least 100 security forces and 35 civilians, while about 200 militants were killed.

Both the Taliban and the Islamic State group are fighting to overthrow the U.S.-backed government and impose a strict form of Islamic rule. But they are fiercely divided on leadership, tactics and ideology, and

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 55 of 58

routinely clash with one another.

The U.S. and NATO officially ended their combat mission at the end of 2014 but have repeatedly come to the aid of Afghan forces in recent years to prevent the Taliban from advancing into major cities. The U.S. has long insisted on an "Afghan-led" peace process between the government and the Taliban but recently has indicated it would be open to direct talks with the insurgents.

The Taliban have sent delegations to Uzbekistan and Indonesia in recent weeks. On Tuesday, Russia's foreign minister Sergey Lavrov said the Taliban have accepted an invitation to attend talks on Afghanistan in Moscow on Sept. 4.

All this has raised the Taliban's diplomatic profile while carrying out the deadly attacks. The Taliban say they met with a U.S. diplomat in Qatar this month for what the group described as "preliminary" talks, and said it expected further negotiations.

Gannon reported from Islamabad. Associated Press photographer Rahmat Gul in Kabul, correspondent Munir Ahmed in Islamabad, Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow and Maamoun Youssef in Cairo contributed.

Love, Oliver, Grier lead AP Preseason All-America team

By RALPH D. RUSSO, AP College Football Writer

Heisman Trophy runner-up Bryce Love of Stanford and Outland Trophy winner Ed Oliver of Houston highlight The Associated Press preseason All-America team.

Chosen by AP poll voters, the team announced Tuesday also features West Virginia quarterback Will Grier and his teammate, receiver David Sills V.

Love, along with Clemson defensive end Clelin Ferrell, Wisconsin linebacker T.J. Edwards and Utah kicker Matt Gay, were the only players who made first team All-American after last season and first team to start this season. Love ran for 2,118 yards and 8.05 per carry last season and was second to Baker Mayfield in the Heisman Trophy voting.

Oliver was a second-team All-American last year after being first team as a freshman in 2016.

Clemson and Wisconsin led the way with three players on the first team. Alabama and Wisconsin each had a total of five players on the first and second teams combined.

FIRST TEAM

Offense

Quarterback — Will Grier, senior, West Virginia.

Running backs — Bryce Love, senior, Stanford; Jonathan Taylor, sophomore, Wisconsin.

Tackles — Jonah Williams, junior, Alabama; Mitch Hyatt, senior, Clemson.

Guards — Beau Benzschawel, senior, Wisconsin; Nate Herbig, junior, Stanford.

Center — Ross Pierschbacher, senior, Alabama.

Tight end — Noah Fant, junior, Iowa.

Receivers — A.J. Brown, junior, Mississippi; David Sills V, senior, West Virginia.

All-purpose player — Myles Gaskin, senior, Washington.

Kicker — Matt Gay, senior, Utah.

Defense

Ends — Nick Bosa, junior, Ohio State; Clelin Ferrell, junior, Clemson.

Tackles — Ed Oliver, junior, Houston; Christian Wilkins, Senior, Clemson.

Linebackers — Devin White, junior, LSU; Devin Bush, junior, Michigan; T.J. Edwards, senior, Wisconsin.

Cornerbacks — Greedy Williams, sophomore, LSU; Deandre Baker, senior, Georgia.

Safeties — Jaquan Johnson, senior, Miami; Taylor Rapp, junior, Washington.

Punter — Mitch Wishnowsky, senior, Utah.

SECOND TEAM

Offense

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 56 of 58

Quarterback — Trace McSorley, senior, Penn State.

Running backs — A.J. Dillon, sophomore, Boston College; Damien Harris, junior, Alabama.

Tackles — David Edwards, junior, Wisconsin; Greg Little, junior, Mississippi.

Guards — Alex Bars, senior, Notre Dame; Michael Dieter, senior, Wisconsin.

Center — Sam Mustipher, senior, Notre Dame.

Tight end — Kaden Smith, junior, Stanford.

Receivers — N'Keal Harry, junior, Arizona State; Anthony Johnson, senior, Buffalo.

All-purpose player — Deebo Samuel, senior, South Carolina.

Kicker — Rodrigo Blankenship, junior, Georgia.

Defense

Ends — Rashan Gary, junior, Michigan; Raekwon Davis, junior, Alabama.

Tackles — Dexter Lawrence, junior, Clemson; Jeffrey Simmons, junior, Mississippi State.

Linebackers — Cameron Smith, senior, Southern California; Troy Dye, junior, Oregon; Mack Wilson, sophomore, Alabama.

Cornerbacks — Byron Murphy, sophomore, Washington; Julian Love, junior, Notre Dame.

Safeties — Lukas Dennis, senior, Boston College; Andrew Wingard, senior, Wyoming.

Punter — Jake Bailey, senior, Stanford.

More AP college football: <http://apnews.com/tag/Collegefootball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

This version corrects spelling to K-Neal Harry at ASU.

Asian shares mixed after S&P 500 touches all-time high

By YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were mixed Wednesday, as some markets were cheered by bullish sentiments on Wall Street despite concerns about U.S. trade disputes with China.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 gained 0.5 percent in morning trading to 22,321.14. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 0.4 percent to 6,256.60. South Korea's Kospi was up 0.4 percent at 2,277.85. Hong Kong's Hang Seng climbed 0.5 percent to 27,885.97, while the Shanghai Composite fell 0.6 percent to 2,718.71, erasing some of the gains from the day before. Many markets in Southeast Asia were closed for holidays.

TRADE TENSIONS: Stocks have been buffeted by concerns about mounting trade tensions in recent months between the U.S. and China, set off by President Donald Trump's tariff policies. Signs of potential progress have helped stocks rally in recent weeks. The latest development to cloud the horizon was Trump's comments to a rally overnight that "We're going to put a 25 percent tax on every car that comes from the European Union into the United States."

QUOTABLE: "The trade tensions will slow the revival of global economies if they intensify and extend in scope. This would not just harm the two countries but also affect trade dependent Asian countries, especially large exporters of 'intermediate goods' to China, where the goods are assembled into finished products for shipment to the U.S., such as Taiwan and South Korea," Moody's Investor's Service said in a report.

BULL MARKET: The S&P 500 index briefly traded at an all-time high Tuesday just as the U.S. stock market's bull run came closer to becoming the longest on record. The current bull market, which began in 2009, is on track to become the longest in history on Wednesday, surpassing the bull run of the 1990s.

WALL STREET: The S&P 500 rose 5.91 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,862.96. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 63.60 points, or 0.2 percent, to 25,822.29. The Nasdaq composite added 38.17 points, or 0.5 percent, to 7,859.17. The Russell 2000 picked up 19.35 points, or 1.1 percent, to 1,718.05. Its last all-time high was set June 20.

ENERGY: U.S. benchmark crude rose 30 cents to \$66.14 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the standard for international oil prices, gained 19 cents to \$72.82 per

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 57 of 58

barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 110.39 yen from 110.25 yen late Tuesday. The euro strengthened to \$1.1576 from \$1.1572.

Follow Yuri Kageyama on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

Her work can be found at <https://www.apnews.com/search/yuri%20kageyama>

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 22, the 234th day of 2018. There are 131 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 22, 1972, President Richard Nixon was nominated for a second term of office by the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach.

On this date:

In 1787, inventor John Fitch demonstrated his steamboat on the Delaware River to delegates from the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1851, the schooner America outraced more than a dozen British vessels off the English coast to win a trophy that came to be known as the America's Cup.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln responded to Horace Greeley's call for more drastic steps to abolish slavery; Lincoln replied that his priority was saving the Union, but he also repeated his personal wish "that all men everywhere could be free."

In 1910, Japan annexed Korea, which remained under Japanese control until the end of World War II.

In 1932, the British Broadcasting Corp. conducted its first experimental television broadcast, using a 30-line mechanical system.

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon were nominated for second terms in office by the Republican National Convention in San Francisco.

In 1972, John Wojtowicz (WAHT'-uh-witz) and Salvatore Naturile took seven employees hostage at a Chase Manhattan Bank branch in Brooklyn, New York, during a botched robbery; the siege, which ended with Wojtowicz's arrest and Naturile's killing by the FBI, inspired the 1975 movie "Dog Day Afternoon."

In 1978, President Jomo Kenyatta, a leading figure in Kenya's struggle for independence, died; Vice President Daniel arap Moi was sworn in as acting president.

In 1985, 55 people died when fire broke out aboard a British Airtours charter jet on a runway at Manchester Airport in England.

In 1986, Kerr-McGee Corp. agreed to pay the estate of the late Karen Silkwood \$1.38 million, settling a 10-year-old nuclear contamination lawsuit. The Rob Reiner coming-of-age film "Stand By Me" was put into wide release by Columbia Pictures.

In 1989, Black Panthers co-founder Huey P. Newton was shot to death in Oakland, California. (Gunman Tyrone Robinson was later sentenced to 32 years to life in prison.)

In 1992, on the second day of the Ruby Ridge siege in Idaho, an FBI sharpshooter killed Vicki Weaver, the wife of white separatist Randy Weaver (the sharpshooter later said he was targeting the couple's friend Kevin Harris, and didn't see Vicki Weaver).

Ten years ago: Russia said it had pulled back forces from Georgia in accordance with an EU-brokered cease-fire agreement. Usain (yoo-SAYN') Bolt helped Jamaica win the 400-meter relay final in 37.10 seconds for his third gold medal and third world record of the Beijing Olympics. Bryan Clay won the decathlon. Phil Dalhausser and Todd Rogers beat Brazil in the men's beach volleyball championship game.

Five years ago: Egypt's ousted leader Hosni Mubarak was released from prison and transported to a military hospital in a Cairo suburb to be held under house arrest. A day after being sentenced to up to 35 years in prison for leaking secrets, Army Pfc. Bradley Manning, in a statement to NBC's "Today" show, announced he intended to live as a woman named Chelsea and undergo hormone treatment. A mysteri-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2018 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 044 ~ 58 of 58

ous glitch halted trading on the Nasdaq for three hours.

One year ago: Protesters and police clashed outside a convention center in Phoenix where President Donald Trump had just wrapped up his first political rally since the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia; police fired pepper spray at crowds after someone apparently lobbed rocks and bottles at officers. A military commander reported that Iraqi troops had reached the first urban areas of the northern town of Tal Afar on the third day of an operation to retake it from the Islamic State group.

Today's Birthdays: Broadcast journalist Morton Dean is 83. Author Annie Proulx (proo) is 83. Baseball Hall of Famer Carl Yastrzemski is 79. Actress Valerie Harper is 79. Pro Football Hall of Fame coach Bill Parcells is 77. Writer-producer David Chase is 73. CBS newsman Steve Kroft is 73. Actress Cindy Williams is 71. Pop musician David Marks is 70. International Swimming Hall of Famer Diana Nyad is 69. Baseball Hall of Famer Paul Molitor is 62. Rock musician Vernon Reid is 60. Country singer Ricky Lynn Gregg is 59. Country singer Collin Raye is 58. Actress Regina Taylor is 58. Rock singer Roland Orzabal (Tears For Fears) is 57. Rock musician Debbi Peterson (The Bangles) is 57. Rock musician Gary Lee Conner (Screaming Trees) is 56. Singer Tori Amos is 55. Country singer Mila Mason is 55. Rhythm-and-blues musician James DeBarge is 55. International Tennis Hall of Famer Mats Wilander is 54. Actress Brooke Dillman is 52. Rapper GZA (JIHZ'-ah)/The Genius is 52. Actor Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje (ah-day-WAH'-lay ah-kih-NOY'-yay ah-BAH'-jay) is 51. Actor Ty Burrell is 51. Celebrity chef Giada DeLaurentiis is 48. Actress Melinda Page Hamilton is 47. Actor Rick Yune is 47. Rock musician Paul Doucette (Matchbox Twenty) is 46. Rap-reggae singer Beenie Man is 45. Singer Howie Dorough (Backstreet Boys) is 45. Comedian-actress Kristen Wiig is 45. Actress Jenna Leigh Green is 44. Rock musician Bo Koster is 44. Rock musician Dean Back (Theory of a Deadman) is 43. Talk show host James Corden is 40. Rock musician Jeff Stinco (Simple Plan) is 40. Actor Brandon Adams is 39. Actress Aya Sumika is 38. Actor Ari Stidham is 26.

Thought for Today: "Life does not give itself to one who tries to keep all its advantages at once. I have often thought morality may perhaps consist solely in the courage of making a choice." — Leon Blum, French statesman (1872-1950).