

Groton Daily Independent

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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

"Often the right path is one that may be the hardest for you to follow. But the hard path is also the one that will make you grow as a human being."

-Karen Mueller Coombs

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



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Groton Area Schedule of Events

Tuesday, Sept. 25

Tuesday Dress up Day: MS/HS: Decades; Elementary: Celebrity Day (dress up like someone famous- examples: a singer, movie star, professional athlete, person from history, etc.).

4 p.m.: Cross Country meet at 4 p.m. at Olive Grove Golf Course. Teams attending are Aberdeen Roncalli, Britton-Hecla, Frederick, Groton Area, Leola, Rosholt, Sargent Central, Tiospa Zina and Waubay-Summit.

4 p.m.: Eighth Grade football hosts Aberdeen Central on Doney Field, Groton.

Cheerleaders, King, and Queen to elementary for Lunch @ 11:30-12:20 MUST check out of office and back into office- NO DRIVING (Shyla Larson, Indigo Rogers, Tanae Lipp, Chloe Daly, Trinity Smith, Maddy Schuelke, Ashley Fliehs, Megan Fliehs, Tiara Dehoet, Gabby Merkel)

FCCLA Students to the Elementary School 11:30-12:30 (Claire Davidson, Devan Howard)



Diegel and Maine are HC Royalty

Treyton Diegel, son of Steve and Becky Diegel, and Payton Maine, daughter of Tracy Maine and Steve and Connie O'Neill, were chosen as the 2018 GHS Homecoming King and Queen. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Parade Marshals

This year's parade marshals are Rosalie and Jim Gerdes.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Pictured in back, left to right, are the rest of the Homecoming candidates: Clark Gibbs, son of Steve and Ann Gibbs; Wyatt Locke, son of Darren and Lisa Locke; Tylan Glover, son of Burt and Angela Glover; Micah Poor, son of David and Anissa Poor; Taylor Holm, daughter of Jason and Kathy Holm; Jennie Doeden, daughter of Toby and Liz Doeden; Emily Thompson, daughter of Lee and Jennifer Thompson; and Portia Kettering, daughter of Scott Kettering and Kevin and Kara Pharis. In front are Eli Heilman on the left and Elaina Myburgh on the right who carried the scrolls; and King Treyton Diegel and Queen Payton Maine. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Burning of the "G"

After the homecoming coronation, the crowd went outside for the burning of the "G." (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Guthmiller advances to state golf

Cade Guthmiller placed 13th in the regional golf tournament held Monday at the Olive Grove Golf Course in Groton. He shot a 41 going out and a 48 coming back in for a total score of 89. Tristan Traphagen shot a 53 and a 48 for a score of 101. Hunter Kassube shot a 56 and a 52 for a score of 108. Lucas Simon shot a 67 and a 52 for a score of 119.

The state golf meet will be held next week in Dell Rapids.

| Region 1 | Seed Points | W-L |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|------|
| Aberdeen Roncalli | 43.786 | 11-3 |
| Groton Area | 43.235 | 11-6 |
| Redfield/Doland | 42.500 | 9-3 |
| Milbank | 40.842 | 10-9 |
| Sisseton | 39.250 | 5-11 |
| Webster Area | 38.267 | 5-10 |
| Tiospa Zina | 36.500 | 1-9 |

| Region 1 | Seed Points | W-L |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----|
| Groton Area | 40.333 | 4-2 |
| Mobridge-Pollock | 39.800 | 2-3 |
| Aberdeen Roncalli | 39.500 | 3-3 |
| McLaughlin | 37.800 | 3-2 |
| Sisseton | 36.400 | 1-4 |
| Redfield/Doland | 36.333 | 1-5 |

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Monday's Dress Up Day Winners - College Day

In back left to right are Kylie Kassube 12th grade, Portia Ketterling 12th grade, Payton Maine 12th grade, Trista Keith 9th grade, Hailey Monson 10th grade, and Layne Hanson 7th grade. In front is Jenny Doeden 12th grade and Brook Gengerke 8th grade. Missing is Madeline Flihs 9th grade, Ashley Flihs 11th grade, and Alexis Simon and Emily Blocker 12th grade. (Photo by Tina Kosel)

Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden club met at the Groton Health and Rehab Center with Linda Anderson and Deb McKiver hosting on September 17. All twelve members answered roll call with their favorite fall food. A thank you from the Senior Citizens was read for naming them "Yard of the Week." The fall board meeting was held September 22, at 11:00, at the Pizza Ranch. Members will meet at Wells Fargo at 1:30, September 24 to decorate Main St. for Fall with weeding the park circle following. We will have a golf cart float in the Jungle Day Parade and will distribute candy. A memorial check from the family was accepted to plant perennial in the Park circle. Next meeting will be October 15, at the Methodist Church with Laurie Mitchell and Pam Rix hosting. Following the meeting Pam Rix gave the program on "Squash, and Pumpkins ."

Groton's 3rd Pumpkin Fest

Saturday, October 6, 2018

10am - 3pm

Groton City Park



Hayrides to and from the Pumpkin Patch, Train Rides,
Face Painting, Pumpkin Painting, Inflatables,
Fall Mini Photo Sessions, Lunch Served 11am-1pm

Thanks to our many sponsors!!

Alternate Date: October 7, 2018

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Today in Weather History

September 25, 1981: A late September tornado touched down briefly 14 miles west of Pierre during the early evening hours with no damage occurring.

September 25, 1996: An early fall storm over the Black Hills of northeast Wyoming and western South Dakota re-acquainted area residents with their winter driving techniques. Snow totals ranged from 4 to 8 inches. U.S. Highway 385, south of Deadwood South Dakota, was temporarily closed after a semi-truck jack-knifed on Strawberry Hill. Numerous minor accidents were reported in the Black Hills due to slick roads. Heavy wet snow closed the Needles Highway and Iron Mountain Road in the central/southern Black Hills until snowplows could clear the roads.

1848: The Great Gale of 1848 was the most severe hurricane to affect Tampa Bay and is one of two major hurricanes to make landfall in the area. This storm produced the highest storm tide ever experienced in Tampa Bay when the water rose 15 feet in six to eight hours.

1939 - A west coast hurricane moved onshore south of Los Angeles bringing unprecedented rains along the southern coast of California. Nearly five and a half inches of rain drenched Los Angeles during a 24 hour period. The hurricane caused two million dollars damage, mostly to structures along the coast and to crops, and claimed 45 lives at sea. "El Cordonazo" produced 5.66 inches of rain at Los Angeles and 11.6 inches of rain at Mount Wilson, both records for the month of September. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hurricane Emily crossed the island of Bermuda during the early morning. Emily, moving northeast at 45 mph, produced wind gusts to 115 mph at Kindley Field. The thirty-five million dollars damage inflicted by Emily made it the worst hurricane to strike Bermuda since 1948. Parts of Michigan and Wisconsin experienced their first freeze of the autumn. Snow and sleet were reported in the Sheffield and Sutton areas of northeastern Vermont at midday. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure off the Northern Pacific Coast brought rain and gale force winds to the coast of Washington State. Fair weather prevailed across most of the rest of the nation. (The National Weather Summary)

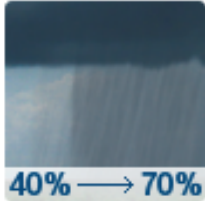
1989 - Twenty-three cities in the south central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Topeka KS with a reading of 33 degrees, and Binghamton NY with a low of 25 degrees. Showers and thunderstorms in the southeastern U.S. drenched Atlanta GA with 4.87 inches of rain, their sixth highest total of record for any given day. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1998: Four hurricanes were spinning simultaneously in the Atlantic basin: Georges, Ivan, Jeanne, and Karl. That was the first time this had happened since 1893.

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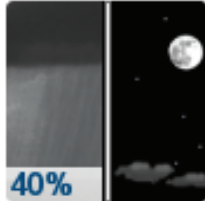
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Today



Chance
Showers then
Showers
Likely

Tonight



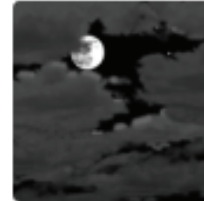
Chance
Showers then
Mostly Clear

Wednesday



Sunny

Wednesday
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Thursday



Partly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
Showers

High: 59 °F

Low: 37 °F

High: 66 °F

Low: 43 °F

High: 58 °F

Showers and a Few Thunderstorms Today

- Highs only in the upper 50s to lower 60s
- Breezy north winds developing
- Strongest winds along and west of the Missouri River
- Lows tonight in the mid 30s to the lower 40s

Showers, and a few thunderstorms will cross the region this morning, and into Minnesota by early this afternoon. Additional showers and thunderstorms will develop over North Dakota this afternoon. These storms will track southeastward across the area through this evening. Skies will clear tonight with lows dropping into the 30s and low 40s.

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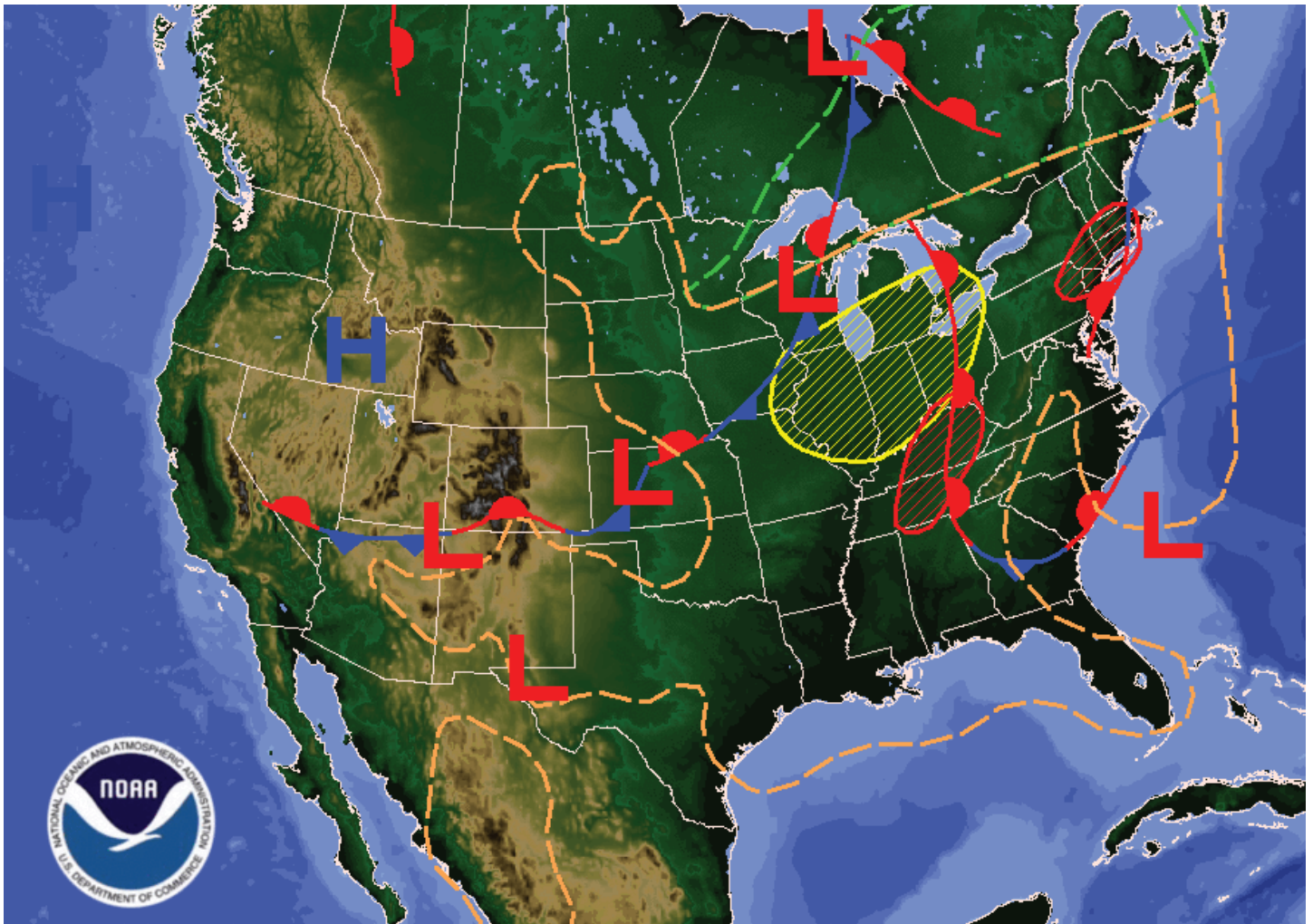
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 60.2 F at 12:08 AM
Low Outside Temp: 44.8 F at 11:25 PM
High Gust: 18.0 Mph at 3:31 AM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 95° in 1935
Record Low: 19° in 1926
Average High: 68°F
Average Low: 42°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.76
Precip to date in Sept.: 1.80
Average Precip to date: 18.05
Precip Year to Date: 13.01
Sunset Tonight: 7:25 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:26 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Sep 25, 2018, issued 4:37 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Little Harry was saying his prayers before climbing into bed. In a very soft voice, his mother said, I cant hear you!

I wasnt talking to you, Mom, he responded. I was talking to God. And I dont have to yell because Hes closer to me than you are and I know Hes listening!

The Psalmist reminded us that The Lord is near to all who call on Him, who call on Him in truth.

Here are three guidelines for our prayers:

Make them simple. Our prayers ought to be as natural as breathing. Think of praying as a conversation with God. When children call on their father for help, they dont use long, drawn-out sentences with words that dont make any difference. They get right to the point.

Make them sincere. We must be genuine when we go to Him in prayer. Included in this part of our prayer life would be honesty and openness. God will not put up with trying to hide the truth when we call on Him for help. Trying to say Its Your will, Lord, when we know its our wants, wont work. Being open with God means that we must confess our sin and ask for Him to forgive and cleanse us when we pray.

Make them specific. If you order an item on-line, it has a number to go with it. When we order from a menu, we specify what we want. Jesus said, If you ask for anything - implying a specific, identifiable item or need I will do it or get it for you. Or, Get to the point!

God is close, compassionate, considerate and caring.

Prayer: Father, may we realize the power of prayer and the need to be simple, sincere and specific in our prayers. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 145:18 The Lord is near to all who call on Him, who call on Him in truth.

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2018 Groton SD Community Events

- Groton Lion's Club Bingo- Wednesday Nights 6:30pm at the Groton Legion (Year Round)
- Nov./Dec./Jan./Feb./Mar. 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)
- Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- SDSU Golf at Olive Grove
- 6/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 7/4/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 7/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 9/7/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching 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

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News from the Associated Press

Monday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Andes Central/Dakota Christian def. Menno, 25-19, 25-18, 18-25, 25-23
Avon def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-12, 25-20, 23-25, 25-19
Chester def. Deubrook, 25-9, 25-11, 25-16
Freeman def. Iroquois, 25-14, 25-11, 25-7
Herreid/Selby Area def. Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D., 25-22, 25-15, 25-10
Milbank Area def. Ortonville, Minn., 25-18, 25-20, 17-25, 25-15
Santee, Neb. def. Flandreau Indian, 20-25, 25-18, 25-19, 25-11
Tri-Valley def. Baltic, 25-20, 25-16, 25-22
Waubay/Summit def. Leola/Frederick, 25-23, 25-23, 25-19
Waverly-South Shore def. Tri-State, N.D., 25-15, 25-18, 25-23

South Dakota Prep Polls By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Prep Media football polls for the week of Sept. 3 are listed below, ranking the top-five teams in each class. First-place votes received are indicated in parentheses.

Class 11AAA

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | |
|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 1. Sioux Falls Roosevelt | (25) | 5-0 | 141 | 1 | |
| 2. Sioux Falls O'Gorman | (4) | 5-0 | 120 | 2 | |
| 3. Sioux Falls Washington | - | 3-2 | 81 | 4 | |
| 4. Brandon Valley | - | 3-2 | 58 | 3 | |
| 5. Watertown | - | 4-1 | 35 | 5 | |

Others receiving votes: None.

Class 11AA

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | |
|---------------|------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 1. Pierre | (29) | 4-1 | 145 | 1 | |
| 2. Harrisburg | - | 3-2 | 101 | 4 | |
| 3. Yankton | - | 2-3 | 32 | 5 | |
| 4. Huron | - | 3-2 | 98 | 2 | |
| 5. Brookings | - | 3-2 | 81 | 3 | |

Others receiving votes: Mitchell 13.

Class 11A

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | |
|------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 1. Dakota Valley | (26) | 5-0 | 142 | 1 | |
| 2. Tea Area | (3) | 5-0 | 118 | 2 | |
| 3. Madison | - | 4-1 | 88 | 3 | |
| 4. Hot Springs | - | 4-1 | 34 | RV | |
| 5. West Central | - | 2-3 | 25 | 4 | |

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Others receiving votes: Dell Rapids 19, Lennox 7, Todd County 2.

Class 11B

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | | |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|---|
| 1. Bridgewater-Emery-Ethan | | | (27) | 5-0 | 147 | 1 |
| 2. Canton (2) | 5-0 | 116 | 2 | | | |
| 3. Mount Vernon-Plankinton | | | - | 6-0 | 83 | 3 |
| 4. SF Christian | - | 4-1 | 71 | 4 | | |
| 5. Winner | - | 3-2 | 29 | 5 | | |

Others receiving votes: Lead-Deadwood 5, Beresford 4.

Class 9AA

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|----|--|
| 1. Wolsey-Wessington | | (28) | 6-0 | 143 | 2 | |
| 2. Bon Homme | (1) | 5-1 | 114 | 3 | | |
| 3. Gregory - | 4-1 | 89 | 1 | | | |
| 4. Garretson | - | 5-0 | 46 | RV | | |
| 5. Arlington-Lake Preston - | | | 5-0 | 26 | RV | |

Others receiving votes: Baltic 8, Hamlin 5, Webster Area 3, Irene-Wakonda 1.

Class 9A

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | | |
|----------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|---|--|
| 1. Britton-Hecla | (28) | 5-0 | 144 | 1 | | |
| 2. Canistota-Freeman | (1) | 5-0 | 86 | 3 | | |
| 3. Warner - | 5-1 | 85 | 4 | | | |
| 4. Clark-Willow Lake | | - | 6-0 | 70 | 2 | |
| 5. Timber Lake | - | 6-0 | 30 | RV | | |

Others receiving votes: Alcester-Hudson 15, Howard 5.

Class 9B

| Rank-School | FPV | Rcd | TP | Pvs | | |
|-----------------|------|-----|-----|-----|--|--|
| 1. Sully Buttes | (28) | 5-0 | 143 | 1 | | |
| 2. Castlewood | (1) | 5-0 | 103 | 2 | | |
| 3. Colome - | 5-0 | 89 | 3 | | | |
| 4. Colman-Egan | - | 5-0 | 68 | 4 | | |
| 5. Wall | - | 5-0 | 25 | 5 | | |

Others receiving votes: Faulkton Area 6, Harding County 1.

Drones to fly over tailgaters before NDSU game Saturday

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Look up, tailgaters. You'll see a drone in the sky as you party before Saturday's North Dakota State football game in Fargo.

The first public mission of North Dakota's drone program will be held between 9 a.m. and about 1 p.m. before the Bison take on South Dakota State at the Fargodome.

The Federal Aviation Administration has allowed North Dakota's Unmanned Aircraft System team to conduct drone flights at the Fargodome parking lots of E, F and G. The drones will be flying over the tailgating area to gather data.

Gov. Doug Burgum, U.S. Sen. John Hoeven, U.S. Rep. Kevin Cramer and other officials will be present during the mission and making remarks at 11 a.m. at the Fargo Air Museum .

Tiger Woods winning adds to Ryder Cup buzz

By DOUG FERGUSON, AP Golf Writer

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France (AP) — Already the most intense competition in golf, the Ryder Cup doesn't need help to boost the excitement.

Tiger Woods managed to take it to another level.

He looked like the Woods of old by leading the final 36 holes of the Tour Championship, not letting anyone near him until it was too late, a vintage performance made all the more remarkable by four back surgeries and a future that looked bleak only a year ago.

Woods was a vice captain at the Presidents Cup a year ago this week and said he envisioned a scenario where he never returned to competition. One PGA Tour event into his return, Jim Furyk selected him as a vice captain for the Ryder Cup.

And then he picked him for the team. And then Woods won for the first time in more than five years.

"It's obviously a nice buzz for our team," Furyk said Monday, a few hours after the American charter plane landed in Paris.

The entire U.S. team was on a charter that arrived in Paris at about 12:45 p.m. European captain Thomas Bjorn arrived late last week, as did a few of his players. Six of them were at East Lake for the Tour Championship. The first official day of practice is Tuesday.

Monday was as much a time to reflect on Woods as it was to rest up for a busy week at Le Golf National.

"I spent 25 years playing professional golf with Tiger Woods on the scene, and any time he does anything great, that's a story. And that's where we want to see him," said Bjorn, the only player to be paired with Woods over 72 holes and beat him. That was in Dubai in 2001.

"He does so much for the game of golf," Bjorn said. "Watching that last night, I thought it was brilliant. It was great for the greater aspect of the game."

The television ratings show as much.

NBC Sports Group said the overnight rating from the Tour Championship was 5.21, the highest-rated telecast in the 12-year history of the FedEx Cup playoffs, which cover 48 events featuring some of the strongest fields of the year.

That was the highest rating of the year this side of the majors, and the highest for the Tour Championship dating to 2000.

"In the end, whatever it is these 24 guys are going to do this week, the game of golf needs that boost of somebody like him that transcends the game to the masses," Bjorn said. "So for everyone in golf, it's brilliant."

Now that Woods is back on his game, the hope for Furyk and the U.S. team is that he's not back to Ryder Cup form.

For all that he has achieved — 80 victories on the PGA Tour, 14 majors, No. 1 in the world for 683 weeks — he has a 13-17-3 record in Ryder Cup matches, and he has played on only one winning team since his first one in 1997.

"We don't fear anyone because we've played against them so many times before individually," Bjorn said. "But we respect our opponents and know what we are up against. What stands on the other side we know is one of the strongest American teams of all time. ... We do what we do as a European team, and then we go out and take that on the golf course, and that's all 12 Americans. It's not one individual."

Europe has done it well over the years.

The Americans have not won the Ryder Cup away from home since 1993, a drought Furyk has been hearing about since he was appointed captain in January 2017. The Americans have confidence from winning big at Hazeltine two years ago — Woods was a vice captain that week — and from a team that boasts nine major champions.

That makes them favorites on paper. And that means little, as recent history would suggest. Even with the loss two years ago, Europe still has won eight out of the last 11 times dating to that '93 American victory at The Belfry.

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"I'm not sure you really need extra motivation in a Ryder Cup," Furyk said. "Obviously, I think there's a thorn in their side, and it's been that since 1993, and there's some veteran players that have played on a number of these teams that have never won on foreign soil. It's not anything I need to mention in the team room. They are well aware of it, and they are well aware of how difficult it is to win in Europe."

Furyk, meanwhile, did well not to add to the hyperbole over Woods winning again. Woods was trending in that direction, from the brief time he held the lead on Sunday at the British Open to his runner-up finish at the PGA Championship.

How much did Woods contribute to the buzz Sunday night?

The Americans had a room set aside in a hotel near the Atlanta airport for a team dinner before flying to France.

"We had a whole group of guys waiting in the team room, and then a giant roar when Steve Stricker walked in the room after his victory," Furyk said with a laugh.

Stricker, a vice captain for the U.S. team, won a PGA Tour Champions event in South Dakota.

"Nice to have those two guys play so well, and start us off pretty well this week," Furyk said.

Man sues troubled wild horse sanctuary in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Pennsylvania man who bailed out a failing wild horse sanctuary in South Dakota by purchasing its ranch is now suing the nonprofit for nearly \$135,000 in allegedly delinquent rent.

John Fine filed a lawsuit Aug. 29 against nonprofit International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros and Karen Sussman, the society's president, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Sussman didn't return the newspaper's requests seeking comment.

The society surrendered nearly all of its 810 horses last year in a deal with state and local officials. The move came after a former employee in 2016 released images and videos that revealed starvation and neglect of horses on the nonprofit's ranch straddling the Dewey and Ziebach county line. The photographs showed emaciated wild horses, some of them dead, with protruding bones, severe wounds and overgrown hooves.

Fine had been supportive of the society prior to the 2016 revelations. Fine bought the ranch from Sussman in 2013 to lease it back to her. He said learning about the ranch's poor conditions in 2016 was shocking.

"It's very sad," Fine said. "All of that has been very dismaying to me."

Fine sold the approximately 660-acre (267-hectare) ranch in August for about \$595,000, according to county documents.

The hundreds of horses removed from the ranch last year were transferred to Fleet of Angels, a Colorado nonprofit that led an effort to find the animals adoptive homes. The nonprofit announced that all of the horses had been placed with new owners by January.

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

Keystone XL developer plans to start construction in 2019

By GRANT SCHULTE, Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The developer of the Keystone XL oil pipeline plans to start construction next year, after a U.S. State Department review ordered by a federal judge concluded that major environmental damage from a leak is unlikely and could quickly be mitigated, a company spokesman said Monday.

TransCanada spokesman Matthew John said the company remains committed to moving ahead with the project following years of reviews from federal and state regulators. The company has already started preparing pipe yards, transporting pipe and mowing parts of the project's right-of-way in Montana and South Dakota, but TransCanada said in court documents it doesn't plan start construction in Nebraska in the first half of 2019.

The report issued Friday from the Trump administration's State Department drew criticism from environmental groups, who say they'll continue to fight the project they view as an environmental threat.

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"The Trump administration sees no problem with building the Keystone XL — in other news, the grass is still green and the sky is still blue," said Kelly Martin, a campaign director for the Sierra Club.

The updated, 338-page report was released a little more than a month after a federal judge in Montana ordered the U.S. State Department to conduct a more thorough review of the pipeline's proposed pathway after Nebraska state regulators changed the route.

The original environmental impact study was issued in 2014, before Nebraska regulators approved a longer "mainline alternative" route that veered away from the company's preferred pathway. President Donald Trump approved a federal permit for the project in March 2017, reversing former President Barack Obama's decision to reject it amid concerns over greenhouse admissions.

The report said the \$8 billion, 1,184-mile pipeline would have a "negligible to moderate" environmental impact under its normal operations, and continuous monitoring and automatic shut-off valves would help company officials quickly identify a leak or rupture. Additionally, the report said TransCanada has a response plan in place that should mitigate the effects if it's implemented quickly.

"Prompt cleanup response would likely be capable of remediating the contaminated soil before the hazardous release reaches groundwater depth," the report said.

Environmentalists, Native American tribes and a coalition of landowners have prevented the company from moving ahead with construction. In addition to the federal lawsuit in Montana that seeks to halt the project, opponents have a pending lawsuit before the Nebraska Supreme Court. Oral arguments in the Nebraska case aren't expected until next month.

Critics of the project have raised concerns about spills that could contaminate groundwater and the property rights of affected landowners. In Nebraska, a major battleground for the project, opponents are trying to change the makeup of the Nebraska Public Service Commission in hopes of overturning its previous decision to approve an in-state route for the pipeline.

The latest State Department report is a draft that must still face public review and comments, but federal officials say they expect to have the final draft ready by December. In court documents from the Montana lawsuit, TransCanada's attorneys said they believe all the pending lawsuits will be resolved before construction begins.

The pipeline would carry up to 830,000 barrels of crude oil per day from Canada through Montana and South Dakota to Steele City, Nebraska, where it would connect with the original Keystone pipeline that runs down to Texas Gulf Coast refineries. The State Department has noted that TransCanada has a lower overall spill rate than average in the pipeline industry.

Follow Grant Schulte on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/GrantSchulte>

Pennington County opening \$14M social services complex

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Pennington County is opening a \$14 million all-in-one social services complex. The Rapid City Journal reports that a noon Monday opening was scheduled for the Care Campus in the former National American University building.

The 70,000-square foot facility will bring various programs that are spread around town under one roof. Services will range from transitional housing to detox treatment.

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

South Dakota Guard soldiers back in US after overseas duty

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Nearly 100 South Dakota National Guard soldiers have returned to the U.S. after serving about a year overseas.

The members of the 189th Aviation Regiment's Company C, 1st Battalion provided medical evacuation flights in the Middle East, using Black Hawk helicopters.

The soldiers with the Rapid City-based unit are now back at Fort Hood, Texas, going through demobilization. They'll then return home to South Dakota. A welcome-home ceremony is being planned for early November.

Teen's nonprofit to help women obtain hygiene products

By DANIELLE FERGUSON, Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Watching a video featuring a homeless woman rolling up toilet paper to use as a makeshift menstrual pad triggered outrage for Tatiana Chance.

The 17-year-old couldn't imagine dealing with a menstrual cycle every month without being able to afford tampons or pads, so she decided to take action.

The New Technology High School senior is in the early stages of forming a nonprofit reorganization called Help 4 Huhas, with the goal of getting necessary feminine hygiene products to homeless and financially unstable women in Sioux Falls, the Argus Leader reported.

"Tampons or pads are 7 to 10 dollars a box," Chance said. "It's women having to decide if they want food or wanting to be clean."

The idea to gather and distribute period products started about a year ago, when Chance saw a video from Bustle that showed how some homeless women cope with their periods.

She put out a call on social media, asking friends on Snapchat and Facebook if they would be interested in donating products. The response was inspiring.

"People want to help. They just don't know how," Chance said.

The thought to create a legitimate nonprofit came from a national period product company.

Chance reached out to Kotex, Always and DivaCup to ask for their help. Kotex responded, saying they can't help unless it was part of a legitimate nonprofit organization, Chance said.

"I'm like, 'OK, I'm going to do that,'" Chance said.

Since then, she's been meeting with attorneys, researching what forms she needs to fill out and raising money for startup costs. She's already started receiving donations of tampons, pads and bags to make period kits.

Chance didn't realize the amount of homeless or financially unstable people in Sioux Falls until the Bishop Dudley House and other local shelter organizations presented to her school.

The St. Francis House can house 46 women. On an average month, they can go through more than 1,500 tampons, said executive director Julie Becker. While the St. Francis House is a transitional facility, Becker said she has seen some women come in from the street seeking feminine products.

"It's part of the basic life needs we all need," Becker said. "How can you function when you're concerned (about your period)?"

If women don't have adequate products, they must deal with the task of cleaning themselves up, something not easy without access to a shower, laundry machines or another set of clothes.

The Bishop Dudley Hospitality House offers products and laundry services, but even then, it can be difficult for women to schedule laundry, and even a bit embarrassing to ask for tampons or pads.

"It's embarrassing to say, 'I don't have enough money to buy tampons,'" said Amanda Stidd, development coordinator for the Bishop Dudley Hospitality House. "People don't want to say that out loud, but it's a very real issue. A woman can't go without that."

Chance is hoping to get more people talking about the issue while taking care of the people in need.

"Menstruation is kind of a taboo subject," Chance said. "If you don't talk about this, you don't know about this issue, and you don't know about their struggle."

The New Technology student is tackling the task of starting a nonprofit on top of her senior year studies, theater group, real estate class and preparing for life after graduation.

"I thought she'd spend most of her time planning her graduation party, but she's really passionate about helping people," Chance's mother, Stacey Harris, said.

Harris, who owns New You Infrared Sauna and Spa, is donating commissions she would get from her

beauty product counter to her daughter's startup fees. She's also giving discounts to those who send in products for her daughter's cause.

"Tatiana has a huge heart," Harris said. "She's only 17. I'm so proud of her and the woman she's growing into."

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

In TV interview, Kavanaugh denies sexually assaulting anyone

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh declared in a televised interview that he never sexually assaulted anyone in high school or at any other time in his life and didn't even attend a party where one accuser said he assaulted her.

Kavanaugh and his wife, Ashley, sat down for an interview with Fox News Channel's "The Story with Martha MacCallum" after a second woman accused him of sexual misconduct.

It was an extraordinary appearance for a nominee to the nation's highest court, one no such nominee had done before. It took a page from the playbook of the man who picked Kavanaugh for the job, President Donald Trump, using his news organization of choice, often a sort of cheerleader in chief for his administration.

Kavanaugh's first accuser, California college professor Christine Blasey Ford, has said he assaulted her at a party decades ago when they were teenagers. Kavanaugh denied he was "at any such party." He said he did not question that perhaps Ford at some point in her life was sexually assaulted but said "what I know is I've never sexually assaulted anyone."

Kavanaugh said it's possible he may have met Ford at some time, but he said they were not friends and did not travel in the same social circles. He said he did not remember being at a party with her.

"I was not at the party described," Kavanaugh said.

Kavanaugh was asked if there was any chance Ford misunderstood an exchange between them.

"I have never had any sexual or physical activity with Dr. Ford," Kavanaugh said. "I've never sexually assaulted anyone, in high school or otherwise."

The second woman, Colorado resident Deborah Ramirez, has accused Kavanaugh of exposing himself to her at a Yale University dormitory party, putting his penis in her face and causing her to touch it without her consent as she pushed him away.

Kavanaugh said Monday, "I never did any such thing."

"If such a thing had happened, it would have been the talk of campus," Kavanaugh said.

It's rare for nominees to the Supreme Court to give any interviews at all. Russell Wheeler, an expert on the judicial selection process at the Brookings Institution, said he was unaware of a similar media interview by a Supreme Court nominee in the past 100 years.

But there's nothing ordinary about the stakes and circumstances of Kavanaugh's nomination, with Republicans fighting to get him on the court by the end of September and cement a conservative-leaning court for years to come.

Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell say they are determined to get Kavanaugh on the court, calling the allegations against him false and politically motivated. Kavanaugh was defiant as well.

"I'm not going to let false accusations drive us out of this process," Kavanaugh said.

Democrats have accused Republicans of not conducting a thorough review in their rush to get Kavanaugh confirmed. They want the FBI to reopen its background investigation of Kavanaugh and look into the allegations against him.

Ford and Kavanaugh are set to testify Thursday before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

In the Fox interview Kavanaugh got a taste of the personal questions he'll face from senators. MacCallum asked him how long he was a virgin in college, after he volunteered that he never had sex in high school.

"Many years after. I'll leave it at that," Kavanaugh said.

Ashley Kavanaugh was asked whether she wondered if her husband was telling the truth about the allegations against him.

"No, I know Brett. I've known him for 17 years," she said, adding: "I know his heart. This is not consistent with Brett."

Kavanaugh appeared to get emotional at the end of the interview. He said Trump called him in the afternoon to show his support.

"I know he's going to stand by me," Kavanaugh said.

Lawyer: Firing of officer who killed neighbor is premature

By RYAN TARINELLI, Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — The firing of a white Dallas police officer who is charged with manslaughter in the fatal shooting of her black neighbor inside his own apartment was premature and unfair, an attorney for the officer said.

Robert Rogers, who represents the former officer, Amber Guyger, said Monday night that Police Chief U. Renee Hall "bowed to pressure from anti-police groups and took action before all of the facts had been gathered and due process was afforded."

"That's not the way our system of justice should work," Rogers said in his first statement since the shooting.

He called the Sept. 6 shooting that left 26-year-old Botham Jean dead "a tragic mistake" and said "words can never express our sorrow for the pain suffered by those who knew and loved" Jean. Rogers added that Guyger "is completely devastated by what happened."

Court records show Guyger said she thought she had encountered a burglar inside her own home. She was arrested three days later and is currently out on bond.

Guyger's firing came the same day that Jean was being buried in his Caribbean homeland, St. Lucia. Hall dismissed the four-year veteran of the force during a hearing Monday, according to the Police Department.

A statement from police said an internal investigation concluded that on Sept. 9, Guyger "engaged in adverse conduct when she was arrested for Manslaughter." Dallas police spokesman Sgt. Warren Mitchell later said that when an officer has been arrested for a crime, "adverse conduct" is often cited in the officer's termination.

Mitchell said adverse conduct is "conduct which adversely affects the (morale) or efficiency of the Department or which has a tendency to adversely affect, lower, destroy public respect and confidence in the Department or officer."

The Jean family's attorneys, along with protesters, had been calling for Guyger to be fired since the shooting. In a statement, the attorneys said the termination is an initial victory.

"However, we are committed to seeing through the next steps of the process of a proper murder indictment, conviction and appropriate sentencing," they said in the statement.

Dallas County District Attorney Faith Johnson has said the case will be presented to a grand jury, which could decide a more serious charge than manslaughter.

During a conference call with Jean's parents and their lawyers on Sunday, Hall reported she intended to fire Guyger and explained the delay in the action, according to the family's attorneys in their statement.

Days before the firing, Hall said in a statement that she had not taken action against Guyger because she did not want to interfere with the ongoing criminal investigation.

There are conflicting narratives over what led up to the shooting.

Guyger told investigators that she had just ended a shift when she returned in uniform to the South Side Flats apartment complex where she lived.

She said when she put her key in the apartment door, which was unlocked and slightly ajar, it opened, according to the affidavit. Inside, the lights were off, and she saw a figure in the darkness that cast a large silhouette across the room, according to the officer's account.

Guyger said she concluded her apartment was being burglarized and gave verbal commands to the

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person, who ignored them. The affidavit said she then drew her weapon and fired twice.

She called 911. Asked where she was, she returned to the front door to see she was in the wrong unit, according to the affidavit. The 911 tapes have not been released.

But according to an affidavit for a search warrant Jean "confronted the officer at the door."

After the shooting, Guyger's blood was drawn to be tested for alcohol and drugs, according to Hall. Authorities have not released results.

Merritt has called into question Guyger's narrative. The lawyer has said that two independent witnesses have told him they heard knocking on the door in the hallway before the shooting.

He said one witness reported hearing a woman's voice saying, "Let me in! Let me in!"

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings said he agrees with the decision to fire Guyger.

"The swift termination of any officer who engages in misconduct that leads to the loss of innocent life is essential if the Dallas Police Department is to gain and maintain the public trust," Rawlings said in a statement.

Guyger graduated from Sam Houston High School in 2008, according to an official at the Arlington Independent School District. She also attended Tarrant County College, according to an official there, although it is not clear when she went to the school.

Guyger also attended the University of Texas at Arlington in fall of 2012 and spring of 2013, said university spokeswoman Sana Syed. Guyger's intended major was criminology and criminal justice, Syed said.

Dallas police say Guyger was hired in November 2013 and state law enforcement records show she was appointed as a peace officer in May 2014.

Sgt. Michael Mata, president of the Dallas Police Association, said Guyger more recently worked on a team tasked with arresting some of the city's most violent offenders. He said the association — Dallas' largest police employee organization — will be paying Guyger's legal fees.

Bill Cosby's day of reckoning comes in sex assault case

By MARYCLAIRE DALE and MICHAEL R. SISAk, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Bill Cosby faces a good chance of being sent to prison Tuesday, when a judge is expected to sentence the TV star who was convicted of drugging and sexually assaulting a woman.

Cosby, 81, will have the opportunity to speak in court before he is sentenced.

The once-beloved actor and comedian, dubbed "America's Dad" for his role as Dr. Cliff Huxtable on the top-ranked, 1980s-era "Cosby Show," faces anything from probation to 10 years in prison for drugging and molesting Andrea Constand, a Temple University basketball administrator, at his estate near Philadelphia. She went to police a year later, only to have a prosecutor turn down the case.

In the years since Constand first went to police in 2005, more than 60 women have accused Cosby of sexual misconduct, though none of those claims have led to criminal charges.

Cosby is the first celebrity of the #MeToo era to go on trial, and the first to be convicted.

It's a reckoning that accusers and prosecutors say has been decades in the making.

"The victims cannot be un-raped. Unfortunately, all we can do is hold the perpetrator accountable," said Gianna Constand, the trial victim's mother, who testified Monday that her daughter's buoyant personality was forever changed after the attack.

The hearing is set to conclude Tuesday after testimony from a defense psychologist who believes Cosby is no longer a danger, given his age, and should not be branded a "sexually violent predator."

Defense lawyer Joseph Green Jr. urged the judge ignore the protests and activism surrounding the case, and send Cosby home on house arrest.

"The suggestion that Mr. Cosby is dangerous is not supported by anything other than the frenzy," Green said, as demonstrators gathered outside the suburban Philadelphia courthouse.

Being labeled a sexually violent predator would make him subject to mandatory lifetime counseling and community notification of his whereabouts.

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On Monday, Kristen Dudley, a psychologist for the state of Pennsylvania, testified that Cosby fits the criteria for a sexually violent predator, showing signs of a mental disorder that involves an uncontrollable urge to have non-consensual sex with young women.

Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele said Cosby would no doubt commit similar crimes if given the chance, warning that the former TV star seemingly gets a sexual thrill out of slipping women drugs and assaulting them.

"To say that he's too old to do that — to say that he should get a pass, because it's taken this long to catch up to what he's done?" Steele said, his voice rising. "What they're asking for is a 'get out of jail free' card."

Cosby, he said, has shown repeatedly that he feels no remorse over his actions. And he said the sentence should send a message to others.

"Despite bullying tactics, despite PR teams and other folks trying to change the optics, as one lawyer for the defense put it, the bottom line is that nobody's above the law. Nobody," the district attorney said.

He urged a five- to 10-year prison sentence .

After testifying for several hours at two trials, the first of which ended in a hung jury, Constand spoke in court Monday for just two minutes.

"The jury heard me. Mr. Cosby heard me. Now all I am asking for is justice as the court sees fit," said Andrea Constand, who submitted a much longer victim-impact statement that wasn't read in court.

The AP does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they come forward publicly, which Constand and other accusers have done.

Cosby's side didn't call any character witnesses, and his wife of 54 years, Camille, was not in court.

Cosby became the first black actor to star in a prime-time TV show, "I Spy," in 1965. He remained a Hollywood A-lister for much of the next half-century.

Monday's proceedings took place as another extraordinary #MeToo drama continued to unfold on Capitol Hill, where Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh faces allegations of sexual misconduct from more than three decades ago.

Associated Press writer Claudia Lauer contributed to this report.

UN to caution against populism in high-level week

By EDITH M. LEDERER and JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is expected to paint a grim picture of the state of the world when leaders open their annual meeting on Tuesday, spotlighting the breakdown of trust around the globe and the need to counter unilateralism and reinvigorate international cooperation which is the foundation of the United Nations.

U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq gave a preview Monday of the U.N. chief's address saying he will "also sound the alarm on climate change" and stress that all people must benefit from new technologies "while safeguarding against the dangers from malicious acts in cyberspace to the weaponization of artificial intelligence."

Guterres will also appeal to world leaders "for greater solidarity in advancing peace, human rights and sustainable development," he said.

This year, 133 world leaders have signed up to attend the General Assembly session which ends on Oct. 1, a significant increase from the 114 leaders last year. Virtually all 193 U.N. member nations will be represented, many of the rest by ministers.

Ahead of the meeting, the secretary-general has been speaking out against the rise of populism and — as Haq said — underscoring "the need to reform, renew and reinvigorate multilateralism at a time when it has never been needed more."

Populist leaders attending this year's meeting including U.S. President Donald Trump, Poland's President Andrzej Duda and Italy's Premier Giuseppe Conte along with the foreign ministers of Hungary and Austria.

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U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley told reporters last week that Trump, who champions an "America First" policy, wants to talk about "protecting U.S. sovereignty" when he addresses the assembly shortly after Guterres.

"It is not saying multilateralism can't work," Haley said, "but it's saying sovereignty is a priority over all of that, and we always have to make sure we're doing that — and there are many countries that agree with us."

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi warned at Monday's U.N. "peace summit" honoring the 100th birthday of South African anti-apartheid campaigner Nelson Mandela that "unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise."

He likely had Trump in mind since the U.S. and China have been engaged in a trade war in recent months, with the two sides imposing higher tariffs on imports from each other.

Wang said "the U.N. is the symbol of multilateralism" and he urged the international community to "stand united under the umbrella of multilateralism, uphold the central role of the U.N. in international affairs, and provide more predictability and stability in this turbulent world."

In speeches and close to 350 meetings on the assembly sideline, the conflicts, hotspots and issues contributing to that turbulence will be debated.

The seven-year-old conflict in Syria and the three-year war in Yemen that has sparked the world's worst humanitarian crisis and is now seriously threatening large-scale famine are certain to be in the spotlight along with African hotspots including Libya, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Mali and Congo.

French President Emmanuel Macron is expected to be a key voice joining secretary-general Guterres in speaking out against unilateralism and populism, and supporting multilateralism as key to promoting peace.

Macron is scheduled to address the assembly Monday along with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Jordan's King Abdullah II.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, whose country has been a target of escalating U.S. accusations over its nuclear and missile programs and international terrorist activities, is also on Tuesday's speakers list. Iran vehemently denies any nuclear ambitions or involvement in international terrorism.

In speeches and close to 350 meetings on the assembly sideline, the conflicts, hotspots and issues contributing to that turbulence will be debated.

The United States, which holds the rotating presidency of the U.N. Security Council in September, has scheduled two meetings, one chaired by Trump on Wednesday which was initially to focus on Iran but has now been broadened to the topic of "nonproliferation" of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

The second Thursday chaired by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is on North Korea, the one major issue where there is a glimmer of hope for progress. The 15 council nations have been united in imposing increasingly tough sanctions to try to rein in Pyongyang's nuclear program. But that unity now appears to be at risk over enforcement of sanctions and the broader issues of how to achieve denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and when sanctions should be lifted against North Korea.

Messy domestic politics overshadow Trump's address to UN

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President Donald Trump charged into office on the resonance of his aggressive "America First" agenda, but now, as he returns to the pinnacle of global diplomacy, he can't escape the growing shadows of domestic political troubles.

Between promoting the wisdom of his rapprochement with North Korea's Kim Jong Un and railing against Iran's malign influence across the Middle East, Trump is finding himself forced to confront the salacious and embarrassing as he participates in the U.N. General Assembly.

White House aides had cast Trump's visit to New York in triumphal terms: an opportunity to assert American sovereignty before the multinational body. He was set to be unapologetic about his decisions to engage with the erstwhile pariah North Korea, remove the U.S. from the Iran nuclear accord and object to U.N. aid programs he believes are contrary to American interests.

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Trump is to address the General Assembly on Tuesday morning and will chair a meeting Wednesday of the U.N. Security Council on the topic of counterproliferation. The four days of choreographed foreign affairs were to stand in contrast to a presidency largely defined by disorder.

Appearances on the global stage tend to elevate the stature of presidents both abroad and at home. But even before his arrival for the annual bonanza of world leaders and diplomats, the desired image was muddied by confusion in Washington.

The fate of his second Supreme Court nominee, Brett Kavanaugh, was cast into fresh doubt over the weekend amid a second allegation of sexual misconduct.

Drama also swirled Monday around the status of his deputy attorney general. Rod Rosenstein was reported last week to have floated the idea of secretly recording Trump last year and to have raised the idea of using the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office. The man overseeing special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe and a frequent target of Trump's ire offered to resign and fully expected Monday to be fired. He received a stay of punishment at least until Thursday, when he is to meet with Trump at the White House.

With cable news chyrons flashing breathless updates about both Beltway dramas, news of Trump's foreign policy moves from the U.N. — led by a new trade deal with South Korea — struggled to break through and disappointed White House aides. A similar fate may await Trump when he speaks to the General Assembly.

A year ago, Trump stood at the international rostrum and derided the North Korean leader as "Little Rocket Man" and threatened to "totally destroy North Korea."

"It was a different world," Trump said Monday of his one-time moniker for the North Korean leader. "That was a dangerous time. This is one year later, a much different time."

Trump praised Kim as "very open" and "terrific," despite the sluggish pace of progress toward denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in delivered a personal message to Trump from Kim after their inter-Korean talks last week in Pyongyang.

"You are the only person who can solve this problem," Moon said to Trump, relaying Kim's words.

The president said the location for a second summit with Kim is still to be determined, but officials have said Trump is holding out hope it could take place on American soil. Such a move would present a complex political and logistical challenge for the North Korean leader. Trump has often fondly invoked the Singapore summit, a made-for-TV event that attracted the world's media attention and largely received positive marks from cable pundits — reviews that were not repeated for his summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki the following month.

Trump and Moon on Monday signed a new version of the U.S.-South Korean trade agreement, marking one of Trump's first successes in his effort to renegotiate economic deals on more favorable terms for the U.S. Trump labeled it a "very big deal" and said the new agreement makes significant improvements to reduce the trade deficit between the countries and create opportunities to export American products to South Korea.

In both venues, U.S. officials say, Trump is expected both on Tuesday and Wednesday to offer a contrast between the path of negotiation chosen by North Korea and that of Iran. Trump earlier this year bucked allies and removed the U.S. from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, citing Iran's malign influence in the region and support for groups like Hezbollah. The next round of tough sanctions on Iran is set to go into effect in November.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is in New York to attend U.N. meetings. U.S. officials said Trump is not seeking a meeting with him but is not opposed to talking if Iran requests a session.

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After the hurricane comes the deluge on South Carolina coast

By JEFFREY COLLINS, Associated Press

GEORGETOWN, S.C. (AP) — Eleven days ago, Lee Gantt was at a Hurricane Florence party in her neighborhood in Georgetown, where the story goes that some houses haven't flooded from the Sampit River since they were built before the American Revolution.

She will spend Tuesday with sandbags, watching the nearby river rise from Florence's heavy rains and seeing if the luck finally runs out on her home built on Front Street in 1737.

"We thought this might be coming. We just left everything up above the floor just like from the hurricane. I'm nervous. Can't you see me shaking?" she said, stretching her arms out.

The Sampit is one of five rivers that reach the Atlantic Ocean in and near Georgetown on the South Carolina coast. And Hurricane Florence — which started with record rainfall in North Carolina — is expected to cause record flooding downriver in Georgetown County as its final act. So much water is coming that it is backing up other rivers that aren't even flooding.

The county has recommended almost 8,000 people leave their homes — more than 10 percent of the population. Officials expect floodwaters to top several bridges, nearly cutting Georgetown County in two and leaving only one highway out during the expected crest early Thursday.

The deluge has made its way so slowly down the Lumber, Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers that the state last week released detailed maps on where it expects flooding. Upstream in Horry County, the floodwaters have invaded close to 1,000 homes near Conway as the Waccamaw River was slowly making its way to a crest a full 4 feet (1.2 meters) over its record level set just two years ago after Hurricane Matthew.

But in North Carolina, Gov. Roy Cooper said it was time to start concentrating on recovery. "Florence is gone but the storm's devastation is still with us," Cooper said at a news conference.

About 400 roads across North Carolina remained closed due to the storm that's claimed at least 46 lives since slamming into the coast Sept. 14. Crews have reopened the major highways closed in the storm. Interstate 95 was reopened to all traffic Sunday night for the first time since the floods, and Cooper said Monday that a previously closed portion of Interstate 40 had reopened sooner than expected.

Power outages and the number of people in shelters also were declining. Around 5,000 people were without power, down from a peak of about 800,000, and about 2,200 people were in shelters, compared with a high of around 20,000, the governor said.

In Washington, lawmakers considered almost \$1.7 billion in new money for disaster relief and recovery. And the economic research firm Moody's Analytics estimated that Florence has caused around \$44 billion in damage and lost output, one of the 10 costliest U.S. hurricanes. The worst disaster, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, cost \$192.2 billion in today's dollars. Last year's Hurricane Harvey cost \$133.5 billion.

Down in Georgetown County, it is a disaster nearly two weeks in the making. Georgetown County spent days under hurricane warnings before Hurricane Florence made landfall about 110 miles (175 kilometers) up the coast near Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina.

The worst of the storm stayed well north, causing only minor flooding in Georgetown and some downed limbs.

"We had a hurricane party," Gantt said. "Now I don't know what to do."

Several blocks up Front Street, the main business district was busy, but with people leaving. All along the sidewalk were piles of artwork, antiques, and boxes as owners emptied out their inventory to take to higher ground.

Tomlinson department store sent an empty truck normally used to stock stores and employees rushed to fill it with everything. The store has never flooded, but predictions call for up to 5 feet (1.5 meters) of water by Thursday. "The anticipation has been nerve-wracking. Though, I'm glad we had the time to do this," said district manager Kevin Plexico.

Georgetown was positioning ambulances and firetrucks in the busy, tourist section along the beaches in case the floods cut off the U.S. Highway 17 bridges as expected. National Guard troops were prepared to float more equipment across the river if needed. Exhausted emergency officials said they have lived

nothing but Florence for more than two weeks.

"The work has been done," Georgetown Mayor Brendon Barber said. "We just need to pray."

Associated Press writers Gary D. Robertson and Alex Derosier in Raleigh; Meg Kinnard in Columbia, South Carolina; Sarah Rankin in Richmond, Virginia; and Sarah Brumfield in Washington contributed to this report.

For the latest on Hurricane Florence, visit <https://www.apnews.com/tag/Hurricanes>

With newfound aggressiveness, GOP ramps up Kavanaugh fight

By ALAN FRAM and LISA MASCARO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Brett Kavanaugh says he won't let "false accusations drive me out of this process" as he, President Donald Trump and top Republicans mount an aggressive drive to rally the public and GOP senators behind his shaky Supreme Court nomination.

Trump and Republican leaders accused Democrats on Monday of a smear campaign by using accusations by two women of sexual misconduct by Kavanaugh in the 1980s to try scuttling his Senate confirmation. There were no immediate indications that the emergence of a second accuser had fatally wounded Kavanaugh's prospects, but the nominee took the unusual step of defending himself in a television interview that underscored the GOP's new-found combativeness.

Kavanaugh, 53, said on the conservative-friendly Fox News Channel that he wasn't questioning that his initial accuser, psychology professor Christine Blasey Ford, may have been sexually assaulted in her life. But he added, "What I know is I've never sexually assaulted anyone," a remarkable assertion for a nominee to the nation's highest court.

Kavanaugh's TV appearance came three days before a crucial Senate Judiciary Committee hearing at which he and his chief accuser, Christine Blasey Ford, were slated to testify. That session loomed as a do-or-die wild card for Kavanaugh in which a split-second facial expression, a tear or a choice of words could prove decisive.

On Monday, Trump called the accusations among "the single most unfair, unjust things to happen to a candidate for anything." Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., angrily accused Democrats of slinging "all the mud they could manufacture" and promised a full Senate vote soon, but specified no date.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York retorted that if McConnell believed the allegations were a smear, "why don't you call for an FBI investigation?" He accused Republicans of "a rush job to avoid the truth."

The similar wording and arguments that Republicans used suggested a concerted effort to undermine the women's claims and portray an image of unity among GOP senators while pressing toward a confirmation vote.

Despite the forceful rhetoric by Kavanaugh and his GOP supporters, it remained unclear how three moderate Republicans — Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, Arizona's Jeff Flake and Alaska's Lisa Murkowski — would react to the latest accusation. With the GOP's Senate control hanging on a razor-thin 51-49 margin, defections by any two Republican senators would seal his fate if all Democrats vote "no."

Collins said she remained undecided about Kavanaugh, a judge on the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals.

Proceeding with Kavanaugh seems to give Republicans their best shot at filling the Supreme Court vacancy — and giving the court an increasingly conservative tilt — before November's elections, when GOP Senate control is in play.

Even if Republicans lose their Senate majority, they could still have time to confirm a nominee in a lame-duck session, but the GOP hasn't indicated that is under consideration. Delaying Kavanaugh's confirmation could allow time for doubts about him to take root or any fresh accusations to emerge.

Pushing forward with Kavanaugh has its own risks, besides an embarrassing defeat for Trump and the GOP. His nomination and the claims of sexual misconduct have stirred up women and liberal voters whose

antipathy to Republicans has already been heightened by Trump's policies and his own fraught history of alleged sexual transgressions.

During the Fox interview, Kavanaugh said that while there were high school parties with beer and he wasn't perfect, "I'm a good person. I've led a good life." He said he'd never done anything like the episodes his accusers have described and said he didn't have sexual intercourse until "many years" after high school.

"I'm not going to let false accusations drive me out of this process. I have faith in God and I have faith in the fairness of the American people," he said.

On Sunday, The New Yorker magazine reported that Deborah Ramirez described a 1980s, alcohol-heavy Yale dormitory party at which she said Kavanaugh exposed himself, placed his penis in her face and caused her to touch it without her consent. Ford has said Kavanaugh tried removing her clothes and covered her mouth to prevent screams after he pinned her on a bed during a high school party.

With increasing intensity, Republicans have attacked the credibility of Ford's and now Ramirez' accounts. They note that neither the accusers nor news organizations have found people willing to provide corroboration, even though both women have named people who they said were present at the alleged incidents.

Ramirez, who told The New Yorker that she'd been drinking at the time, was initially reluctant to speak publicly "partly because her memories contained gaps," the magazine said. After "six days of carefully assessing her memories and consulting with her attorney," she felt confident enough to go public, the report said.

Dozens of people protesting Kavanaugh were arrested outside Collins' Capitol Hill office. Away from Washington, there were walkouts in support of Ford and Ramirez by dozens of liberal groups in a campaign promoted on Twitter under the hashtag #BelieveSurvivors.

Also jumping into the fray was the attorney who represents porn actress Stormy Daniels in her legal fight with Trump. Lawyer Michael Avenatti said he was representing a woman with information about high school-era parties attended by Kavanaugh and urged the Senate to investigate.

Associated Press writers Mary Clare Jalonick, Catherine Lucey, Jonathan Lemire, Kevin Freking, Padmananda Rama and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Rosenstein's job to be topic of Thursday meeting with Trump

By **ZEKE MILLER** and **ERIC TUCKER**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a long weekend spent wondering if he should resign or would be fired, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein still has his job — for now.

President Donald Trump gave Rosenstein a three-day reprieve pending their face-to-face White House showdown on Thursday. That's when the man who oversees the Trump-Russia investigation will respond to reports that he had discussed secretly recording the president and possibly using constitutional procedures to remove him from office.

The revelation that Rosenstein last year had broached the idea of taping the president touched off a dramatic weekend of conversations with the White House in which he offered to one official to resign and confided to another that he was considering doing so, according to two people familiar with the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Even as he took issue with the reports, Rosenstein arrived at the White House on Monday expecting to be fired, according to another person who spoke on condition of anonymity. Instead, after he met with chief of staff John Kelly and spoke by phone to Trump himself, questions about his future were effectively tabled until the personal meeting on Thursday.

The position of deputy attorney general is ordinarily a relatively low-visibility one in Washington, but Rosenstein has assumed outsized significance given his appointment of special counsel Robert Mueller to investigate potential ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

Any firing or resignation spells immediate uncertainty for an investigation that Rosenstein oversees and would place that responsibility in the hands of a replacement who Democrats fear would be less respect-

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ful of Mueller's independence and mandate. Even some congressional Republicans and Trump aides have warned for months against firing Rosenstein for fear that it could lead to impeachment.

The commotion about Rosenstein's future adds to the turmoil roiling the administration, just six weeks before midterm elections with control of Congress at stake. In addition to dealing with the Mueller investigation, the White House is also struggling to win confirmation of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations.

The Trump-Rosenstein meeting will be on the same day as an extraordinary Senate committee hearing featuring Kavanaugh and a woman who has accused him of sexually assaulting her when they were in high school.

Questions about Rosenstein's future, long simmering, took on new life Friday with a New York Times report that in May 2017 discussions with FBI and Justice Department officials he suggested the idea of secretly recording Trump — remarks his defenders insist were merely sarcastic — and of invoking the Constitution to have the Cabinet consider removing him from office.

Rosenstein was summoned to the White House on Friday evening for a conversation with chief of staff Kelly after which he issued a denial meant to be even sharper in tone than the one the Justice Department sent out hours earlier.

In conversations over the weekend, he offered to Kelly to resign, though the terms were unclear. He also told White House Counsel Don McGahn that he was considering doing so. McGahn told Rosenstein they should discuss the issue Monday, said the person who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversation.

He met again with Kelly on Monday and spoke by phone with Trump, also attending a pre-scheduled meeting at the White House in place of the Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who was traveling. Rosenstein was captured by photographers leaving the White House after his meetings Monday and was led out by Kelly, later returning to the White House.

"At the request of Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, he and President Trump had an extended conversation to discuss the recent news stories," White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement. "Because the President is at the United Nations General Assembly and has a full schedule with leaders from around the world, they will meet on Thursday when the President returns to Washington, D.C."

It's unclear what will happen Thursday.

Despite his "You're Fired!" tagline from his "The Apprentice" reality show days, the president has shown himself reluctant to directly fire aides himself. While his White House has been marked with unprecedented staff turnover, Trump has often left the task to deputies, including Kelly.

He dispatched his former bodyguard to fire FBI Director James Comey — though Comey was out of town. In other cases, Trump has publicly and privately shamed staffers, pushing them to resign.

Trump, who on Friday said that he would remove a "lingering stench" from the Justice Department, did not publicly reveal any plans over the weekend.

On Monday, he said he hoped Thursday's meeting would help him figure out "what's going on."

Over the weekend, he appeared undecided on Rosenstein's fate, asking confidants, both inside and outside the White House, how to respond to the situation. Some urged him to fire Rosenstein. Others suggested restraint while checking whether the report was correct or if it was planted by some adversary.

Though Trump has mostly spared Rosenstein from some of the harsher and more personal attacks he has directed at Attorney General Jeff Sessions, he has occasionally lashed out with angry tirades at the deputy, including after FBI raids in April targeting the president's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen.

Rosenstein appointed Mueller in May 2017 after Sessions, who ordinarily would have overseen the Russia investigation, recused himself because of his close involvement in the Trump campaign.

The move came one week after Rosenstein laid the groundwork for Comey's firing by writing a memo criticizing Comey's handling of the FBI investigation into Hillary Clinton's email server. The White House initially cited that memo as justification for Comey's firing, though Trump himself has said he was thinking about "this Russia thing" when he made his move.

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Were Rosenstein to be forced out, Solicitor General Noel Francisco, the highest-ranking Senate-confirmed official below him in the Justice Department, would take control of the Mueller investigation.

Former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, whose private memos document comments allegedly made by Rosenstein, said Monday he was concerned that a Rosenstein departure would put the investigation at risk.

"There is nothing more important to the integrity of law enforcement and the rule of law than protecting the investigation of special counsel Mueller," McCabe said in a statement. "I sacrificed personally and professionally to help put the investigation on a proper course and subsequently made every effort to protect it."

Miller reported from the United Nations. Associated Press writers Ken Thomas, Michael Balsamo, Chad Day, Jill Colvin and Jon Lemire contributed to this report.

UN to caution against populism in high-level week

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is expected to paint a grim picture of the state of the world when leaders open their annual meeting on Tuesday, spotlighting the breakdown of trust around the globe and the need to counter unilateralism and reinvigorate international cooperation which is the foundation of the United Nations.

U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq gave a preview Monday of Guterres' address saying he will "also sound the alarm on climate change" and stress that all people must benefit from new technologies — but be protected from the dangers, ranging from "malicious acts in cyberspace to the weaponization of artificial intelligence."

Guterres will appeal "for greater solidarity in advancing peace, human rights and sustainable development," he said.

This year, 133 world leaders are expected, up from 114 last year.

Flyers introduce odd-looking mascot, soak in the comments

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Philadelphia Flyers have introduced an odd-looking new team mascot — a 7-foot fuzzy creature named Gritty with a wild, orange beard.

The character's debut triggered an outpouring of comments online, including "Good luck sleeping tonight, Flyers fans" and comparisons to ZZ Top and the Muppets. Twitter users created memes with Gritty taking the place of horror-movie villains and splicing his head onto other disturbing images.

The cross-state rival Pittsburgh Penguins tweeted, "lol ok" — to which Gritty responded, "Sleep with one eye open tonight, bird."

The reaction seemed to be exactly what the Flyers were going for. Gritty's final tweet of the day included the message, "Goodnight, internet," and a photo of the crazed-looking mascot squeezing what looked to be Champagne out of a squirt bottle.

More AP NHL: <https://apnews.com/tag/NHL> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

EU, Iran set financial "vehicle" to ease trade between them

By EDITH M. LEDERER, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Five world powers and Iran agreed late Monday to establish a financial facility in the European Union to facilitate payments for Iranian imports and exports including oil, a key move sought by Tehran following the U.S. pullout from the 2015 nuclear deal and its re-imposition of sanctions.

Foreign ministers from Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China and Iran said in a joint statement that the so-called "Special Purpose Vehicle" will "assist and reassure economic operators pursuing legitimate business with Iran."

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The nuclear agreement is meant to prevent Tehran from developing nuclear weapons, but U.S. President Donald Trump announced in May he was unilaterally pulling out because he felt it wasn't strong enough and didn't cover other issues of concern to the U.S. and its allies, such as Iran's military influence in the Middle East and ballistic missile program. The U.S. has also accused Iran of promoting international terrorism, which Tehran vehemently denies.

Iran's economy is already suffering from the sanctions that Washington re-imposed after walking away from the nuclear agreement, and the U.S. has threatened to punish companies from other nations that continue doing business with Iran.

In sharp contrast, the five other world powers who signed the nuclear deal remain strongly committed to it, and the new financial facility is almost certain to anger the Trump administration.

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told reporters after the closed-door ministerial meeting that the financial facility is also aimed at preserving the nuclear agreement. The EU and Iran say the deal is working, and the joint statement notes that the International Atomic Energy Agency has now certified 12 times that Iran is in compliance with its obligations.

"In practical terms," Mogherini said, "this will mean that EU member states will set up a legal entity to facilitate legitimate financial transactions with Iran and this will allow European companies to continue to trade with Iran in accordance with European Union law and could be open to other partners in the world."

She said the agreement follows extensive exchanges and announced that a meeting of technical experts will be held to "operationalize" the new financial facility.

The joint statement said the six countries that signed the 2015 nuclear agreement "reconfirmed their commitment to its full and effective implementation in good faith and in a constructive atmosphere." They called the agreement "a key element of the global non-proliferation architecture and a significant achievement of multilateral diplomacy."

The participants reaffirmed their joint statement on July 6, "in particular to pursue concrete and effective measures to secure payment channels with Iran."

Mandela's widow urges world: put egos aside and end violence

By EDITH M. LEDERER and JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Nelson Mandela's widow challenged world leaders celebrating his life on Monday to put their egos and partisan politics aside and honor his legacy by ending the "senseless violence" plaguing too much of the world.

"History will judge you should you stagnate too long in inaction," Graca Machel told a U.N. "peace summit" commemorating the 100th anniversary of Mandela's birth. "Humankind will hold you accountable should you allow suffering to continue on your watch."

With peace a scarce commodity, Machel's challenge was echoed by U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and other leaders who acknowledged the world is far from achieving Mandela's ideals which also include human rights and global cooperation.

"Today, with human rights under growing pressure around the world, we would be well served by reflecting on the example of this outstanding man," Guterres said. "We need to face the forces that threaten us with the wisdom, courage and fortitude that Nelson Mandela embodied."

The tributes to Mandela began with a rare U.N. honor — the unveiling of a \$1.8 million statue of the South African anti-apartheid campaigner who became the world's most famous political prisoner, played a key role in ending white-minority rule, and became president in the country's first democratic election. The statue is a gift to the United Nations from South Africa.

Mandela's arms are outstretched in the statue, as if to embrace people everywhere. But after the cover was pulled off, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, with help from Guterres, placed a small South African flag in his lapel.

The day-long summit, with nearly 160 scheduled speakers, set the stage for Tuesday's opening of the General Assembly's annual meeting of world leaders, where conflicts from Syria to South Sudan, rising

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unilateralism, and tackling a warming planet and growing inequality are among issues expected to be in the spotlight.

With a bang of the gavel by General Assembly President Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, the leaders on Monday adopted a political declaration resolving "to move beyond words" to promote peace and prevent, contain and end conflicts. "Dialogue is key, and courage is needed to take the first steps to build trust and gain momentum," it said.

Garces said Mandela "represents a light of hope for a world still torn apart by conflicts and suffering."

Like others, she warned of the rise of populism and unilateralism and its threat to the 193-member United Nations.

"Drifting away from multilateralism means jeopardizing the future of our species and our planet," Garces said. "The world needs a social contract based on shared responsibility, and the only forum that we have to achieve this global compact is the United Nations."

The appeal for collective action to tackle the world's many conflicts, hotspots and challenges is being tested by the "America First" agenda of U.S. President Donald Trump and populist governments in Italy, Hungary, Austria and elsewhere as well as Britain's impending divorce from the European Union.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi warned that "unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise" and urged the international community to "stand united under the umbrella of multilateralism."

The Trump administration and China have been engaged in a trade war in recent months, with the two sides imposing higher tariffs on imports from each other.

Wang said "the U.N. is the symbol of multilateralism" and "an important guardian of world peace." During Mandela's time, he said, it was the "strong moral pressure" of the U.N. and the international community "that accelerated the disintegration of apartheid."

"The international community must stand united under the umbrella of multilateralism, uphold the central role of the U.N. in international affairs and provide more predictability and stability in this turbulent world," Wang said.

Addressing the Mandela event, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani never mentioned the United States — which has accused Tehran of promoting international terrorism, a charge it vehemently denies.

But Rouhani appeared to be taking aim at Trump and his pledge to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexican border when he said Mandela was a model for the "historical reality that great statesmen tend to build bridges instead of walls."

Alluding to the Trump administration, Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez said recent announcements about military expenditures are "alarming" and are pushing the world into a new arms race "to the detriment of the enormous resources that are needed to build a world of peace."

South Africa's Ramaphosa said his country's "deepest hope" is that the summit, "in the name of one of our greatest exemplars of humanity, serves as a new dawn for the United Nations."

"We hope we will rediscover the strength of will to save successive generations from war, and to overcome the hatred of our past and the narrow interests that blind us to the vision of a common future that is peaceful and prosperous," he said. "We hope we will prove ourselves worthy as the bearers of the legacy of Nelson Mandela."

Trump leads aggressive, all-out GOP drive to save Kavanaugh

By ALAN FRAM and LISA MASCARO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans mounted a combative, coordinated drive Monday to salvage Brett Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination as they fought to keep a second woman's allegation of long-ago sexual misconduct from derailing his confirmation. President Donald Trump leapt to his defense, the top Senate Republican accused Democrats of a "smear campaign" and an emotional Kavanaugh pledged to fight for his nomination and proclaimed, "I've never sexually assaulted anyone."

That declaration, remarkable for a nominee to the nation's highest court, came as Republicans embraced their newly aggressive stance and Kavanaugh's prospects dangled precariously. The similar tones and

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wording they used in defending him suggested a concerted effort to undermine the women's claims and portray an image of unity among GOP senators while pressing toward a confirmation vote.

In the run-up to an appearance by Kavanaugh and his main accuser at a dramatic Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Trump called the accusations "totally political" and among "the single most unfair, unjust things to happen to a candidate for anything." On Twitter Monday night, Trump accused Democrats of working hard to destroy a wonderful man ... with an array of False Accusations the likes of which have never been seen before!

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., angrily accused Democrats of slinging "all the mud they could manufacture" and promised a full Senate vote soon, but specified no date.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., retorted that if McConnell believed the allegations were a smear, "Why don't you call for an FBI investigation?" Schumer accused Republicans of "a rush job to avoid the truth."

Trump has made clear he won't order an FBI probe. McConnell said Thursday's Judiciary Committee hearing would proceed, and No. 2 Senate GOP leader, John Cornyn of Texas, said the panel could vote on sending Kavanaugh's nomination to the full Senate as early as Friday.

There were no immediate signs that the emergence of a second accuser had fatally wounded Kavanaugh's candidacy. Hoping to head that off, he and his GOP supporters went on offense, including the release of a letter he sent the Judiciary panel accusing his opponents of launching "smears, pure and simple."

Later, Kavanaugh and his wife sat for an interview on the conservative-friendly Fox News Channel, an extraordinary step for a Supreme Court nominee. Kavanaugh, 53, is currently a judge on the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals.

Kavanaugh said he wasn't questioning "that perhaps Dr. Ford at some point in her life was sexually assaulted by someone at some place, but what I know is I've never sexually assaulted anyone."

Kavanaugh said while there were high school parties with beer and he wasn't perfect, "I'm a good person. I've led a good life." He said that he'd never done anything like the episodes his accusers have described and that he didn't have sexual intercourse until "many years" after high school.

"I'm not going to let false accusations drive me out of this process. I have faith in God, and I have faith in the fairness of the American people," he said.

On Sunday, The New Yorker magazine reported that Deborah Ramirez described a 1980s, alcohol-heavy Yale dormitory party at which she said Kavanaugh exposed himself, placed his penis in her face and caused her to touch it without her consent. Ford has said Kavanaugh tried removing her clothes and covered her mouth to prevent screams after he pinned her on a bed during a high school party.

Despite the forceful rhetoric by Kavanaugh and his GOP supporters, it remained unclear how three moderate Republican senators — Maine's Susan Collins, Arizona's Jeff Flake and Alaska's Lisa Murkowski — would react to the latest accusation. With the GOP's Senate control hanging on a razor-thin 51-49 margin, defections by any two Republican senators would seal his fate if all Democrats vote "no."

Collins said Monday she remained undecided about Kavanaugh.

Proceeding with Kavanaugh seems to give Republicans their best shot at filling the Supreme Court vacancy — and giving the court an increasingly conservative tilt — before November's elections, when GOP Senate control is in play.

Even if Republicans lose their Senate majority, they could still have time to confirm a nominee in a post-election lame duck session, but the GOP hasn't indicated that is under consideration. Delaying Kavanaugh's confirmation could allow time for doubts about him to take root or any fresh accusations to emerge.

Pushing forward with Kavanaugh has its own risks, besides an embarrassing defeat for Trump and the GOP. His nomination and the claims of sexual misconduct have stirred up women and liberal voters whose antipathy to Republicans has already been heightened by Trump's policies and his own fraught history of alleged sexual transgressions.

Dozens of people protesting Kavanaugh were arrested outside Collins' Capitol Hill office. Many wore black "Be A Hero" shirts and chanted slogans including "We will not be silenced."

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Away from Washington, there were walkouts in support of Ford and Ramirez by dozens of liberal groups. The campaign was promoted on Twitter under the hashtag #BelieveSurvivors, and several Democrats in Congress — including members of the Senate Judiciary Committee vetting Kavanaugh — posted photos in support.

With increasing intensity, Republicans have attacked the credibility of Ford's and now Ramirez' accounts. They note that neither the accusers nor news organizations have found people willing to provide corroboration, even though both women have named people who they said were present at the alleged incidents.

Ramirez, who told *The New Yorker* that she'd been drinking at the time, was initially reluctant to speak publicly "partly because her memories contained gaps," the magazine said. After "six days of carefully assessing her memories and consulting with her attorney," she felt confident enough to go public, the report said.

The Associated Press tried reaching Ramirez at her home in Boulder, Colorado. A sign on her front door indicated she would have no comment.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway held a conference call with supporters during which she said there was a "vast left-wing conspiracy" to prevent Kavanaugh from winning confirmation, according to a participant who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the private call.

Also jumping into the fray was the attorney who represents porn actress Stormy Daniels in her legal fight with Trump. Lawyer Michael Avenatti said he was representing a woman with information about high school-era parties attended by Kavanaugh and urged the Senate to investigate.

Avenatti, who has said he's considering a 2020 Democratic presidential bid, told the AP that he will disclose his client's identity in the coming days and that she is prepared to testify before the committee, as well as provide names of corroborating witnesses.

Associated Press writers Mary Clare Jalonick, Ken Thomas, Catherine Lucey, Jonathan Lemire, Kevin Freking, Padmananda Rama and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

Rosenstein still has his job _ at least till Trump showdown

By ERIC TUCKER and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a long weekend spent wondering if he should resign or would be fired, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein still has his job — for now.

President Donald Trump gave Rosenstein a three-day reprieve pending their face-to-face White House showdown Thursday. That's when the man who oversees the Trump-Russia investigation will respond to reports that he had discussed secretly recording the president and possibly using constitutional procedures to remove him from office.

The revelation that Rosenstein last year had broached the idea of taping the president touched off a dramatic weekend of conversations with the White House in which he offered to one official to resign and confided to another that he was considering doing so, according to two people familiar with the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

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The position of deputy attorney general is ordinarily a relatively low-visibility one in Washington, but Rosenstein has assumed outsized significance given his appointment of special counsel Robert Mueller to investigate potential ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

Any firing or resignation spells immediate uncertainty for an investigation that Rosenstein oversees and would place that responsibility in the hands of a replacement who Democrats fear would be less respectful of Mueller's independence and mandate. Even some congressional Republicans and Trump aides have warned for months against firing Rosenstein for fear that it could lead to impeachment.

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The commotion about Rosenstein's future adds to the turmoil roiling the administration, just six weeks before midterm elections with control of Congress at stake. In addition to dealing with the Mueller investigation, the White House is also struggling to win confirmation of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations.

The Trump-Rosenstein meeting will be on the same day as an extraordinary Senate committee hearing featuring Kavanaugh and a woman who has accused him of sexually assaulting her when they were in high school.

Questions about Rosenstein's future, long simmering, took on new life Friday with a New York Times report that, in May 2017 discussions with FBI and Justice Department officials, he suggested the idea of secretly recording Trump — remarks his defenders insist were merely sarcastic — and of invoking the Constitution to have the Cabinet consider removing him from office.

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Rosenstein appointed Mueller in May 2017 after Sessions, who ordinarily would have overseen the Russia investigation, recused himself because of his close involvement in the Trump campaign.

The move came one week after Rosenstein laid the groundwork for Comey's firing by writing a memo criticizing Comey's handling of the FBI investigation into Hillary Clinton's email server. The White House initially cited that memo as justification for Comey's firing, though Trump himself has said he was thinking about "this Russia thing" when he made his move.

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers in both parties said Mueller's work needed to be insulated from the political storm, but Democratic Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chair Mark Warner said the legislation to protect

Mueller should be passed "right away."

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, a White House ally, said it's up to Trump to show Mueller's work could continue unimpeded. "If the president does fire Mr. Rosenstein, I think that the burden's on him to assure the country that Mueller would be allowed to do his job," Graham said.

Were Rosenstein to be forced out, Solicitor General Noel Francisco, the highest-ranking Senate-confirmed official below him in the Justice Department, would take control of the Mueller investigation.

Former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, whose private memos document comments allegedly made by Rosenstein, said Monday he was concerned that a Rosenstein departure would put the investigation at risk.

"There is nothing more important to the integrity of law enforcement and the rule of law than protecting the investigation of special counsel Mueller," McCabe said in a statement. "I sacrificed personally and professionally to help put the investigation on a proper course and subsequently made every effort to protect it."

Miller reported from the United Nations. Associated Press writers Ken Thomas, Michael Balsamo, Chad Day, Jill Colvin, Mary Clare Jalonick, Lisa Mascaro and Jonathan Lemire contributed to this report.

Kavanaugh says he won't let 'false accusations' push him out

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh declared in a televised interview Monday that he never sexually assaulted anyone in high school or at any other time in his life.

Kavanaugh and his wife, Ashley, sat down for an interview with Fox News Channel's "The Story with Martha MacCallum" after a second woman accused him of sexual misconduct.

Christine Blasey Ford has accused Kavanaugh of assaulting her at a party when they were teenagers. Kavanaugh denied he was "at any such party." He said he did not question that perhaps Ford at some point in her life was sexually assaulted, "but what I know is I've never sexually assaulted anyone."

Kavanaugh said it's possible he may have met Ford at some time, but he said they were not friends and did not travel in the same social circles. He said he did not remember being at a party with her.

"I was not at the party described," Kavanaugh said.

Kavanaugh was asked if there was any chance Ford misunderstood an exchange between them.

"I have never had any sexual or physical activity with Dr. Ford," Kavanaugh said. "I've never sexually assaulted anyone, in high school or otherwise."

The second woman, Deborah Ramirez, has accused Kavanaugh of exposing himself to her at a Yale dormitory party, putting his penis in her face and causing her to touch it without her consent as she pushed him away.

Kavanaugh said Monday, "I never did any such thing."

"If such a thing had happened, it would have been the talk of campus," Kavanaugh said.

It's rare for nominees to the Supreme Court to give interviews. Russell Wheeler, an expert on the judicial selection process at the Brookings Institution, said he is unaware of a similar media interview by a Supreme Court nominee in the past 100 years.

But there's nothing ordinary about the stakes and circumstances of Kavanaugh's nomination, with Republicans fighting to get him on the court by the end of September and cement a conservative-leaning court for years to come.

President Donald Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell say they are determined to get Kavanaugh on the court, calling the allegations against him false and politically motivated. Kavanaugh was defiant as well.

"I'm not going to let false accusations drive us out of this process," Kavanaugh said.

Democrats have accused Republicans of not conducting a thorough review in their rush to get Kavanaugh confirmed. They want the FBI to reopen its background investigation of Kavanaugh and look into the

allegations against him.

Ford and Kavanaugh are set to testify Thursday before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

In the Fox interview Kavanaugh got a taste of the personal questions he'll face from senators. MacCallum asked him how long he was a virgin in college, after he volunteered that he never had sex in high school.

"Many years after. I'll leave it at that," Kavanaugh said.

Ashley Kavanaugh was asked whether she wondered if her husband was telling the truth about the allegations against him. "No, I know Brett. I've known him for 17 years," she said, adding: "I know his heart. This is not consistent with Brett."

Kavanaugh appeared to get emotional at the end of the interview. He said Trump called him in the afternoon to show his support.

"I know he's going to stand by me," Kavanaugh said.

Cosby prosecutor asks for 5 to 10 years in prison

By MARYCLAIRE DALE and MICHAEL R. SISK, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) — Declaring Bill Cosby doesn't deserve a free pass because of his advanced age, prosecutors on Monday asked a judge to sentence the comedian to five to 10 years in prison for drugging and sexually assaulting a woman, while the defense argued that he is too old and helpless to do time behind bars.

"What does an 81-year-old man do in prison?" defense attorney Joseph Green asked on Day 1 of the sentencing hearing for Cosby, who is legally blind and dependent on others. "How does he fight off the people who are trying to extort him, or walk to the mess hall?"

Green suggested that Cosby instead receive something akin to house arrest.

Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele said that he has no doubt Cosby would commit another such offense if given the opportunity, warning that the TV star seemingly gets a sexual thrill out of slipping women drugs and assaulting them.

"So to say that he's too old to do that — to say that he should get a pass, because it's taken this long to catch up to what he's done?" Steele said, his voice rising. "What they're asking for is a 'get out of jail free' card."

And he said the sentence should send a message to others.

"Despite bullying tactics, despite PR teams and other folks trying to change the optics, as one lawyer for the defense put it, the bottom line is that nobody's above the law. Nobody," the district attorney said.

Judge Steven O'Neill is expected to sentence Cosby on Tuesday. The TV star once known as America's Dad for his starring role in "The Cosby Show" could become the first celebrity of the #MeToo era to be sent to prison.

Cosby was convicted in April of violating former Temple University women's basketball administrator Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia mansion in 2004.

After testifying for several hours at two trials, the first of which ended in a hung jury, Constand spoke in court Monday for just two minutes.

"The jury heard me. Mr. Cosby heard me. Now all I am asking for is justice as the court sees fit," said Constand, who submitted a much longer victim-impact statement that wasn't read in court.

Steele quoted Constand in her statement as saying that Cosby took "my beautiful, healthy, young spirit and crushed it."

The three charges on which Cosby was convicted carry up to 10 years in prison each, but both sides agreed to merge them together for sentencing because they stemmed from the same encounter. State sentencing guidelines call for about one to four years behind bars on the combined charge.

The judge is also expected to decide whether to declare Cosby a "sexually violent predator" — a scarlet letter that would make him subject to mandatory lifetime counseling and community notification of his whereabouts.

On Monday, Kristen Dudley, a psychologist for the state of Pennsylvania, testified that Cosby fits the

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criteria for a sexually violent predator, showing signs of a mental disorder that involves an uncontrollable urge to violate helpless women. A psychologist for Cosby's side is set to testify Tuesday.

Cosby's lawyers argued that the state law on classifying sexual predators is unconstitutional. They contended also that Cosby is unlikely to commit another crime because of his age and health and because there have been no complaints that he molested anyone in the 14 years since his encounter with Constand.

"The suggestion that Mr. Cosby is dangerous is not supported by anything other than the frenzy," Green said, alluding to protesters outside the courthouse and public debate about the case.

Constand's mother, Gianna, also took the stand Monday and attributed her health problems to Cosby-related stress. She accused Cosby of "ruining many lives."

"I can only hope and pray that some sense of peace and faith can be restored back on our family," she said. "The victims cannot be un-raped. Unfortunately, all we can do is hold the perpetrator accountable."

Cosby's side didn't call any character witnesses and touched only on his life and fame, noting how he had been poor, dropped out of high school and served in the Navy before soaring to stardom.

He will be given the opportunity to speak in court before he is sentenced.

Monday's proceedings took place as another extraordinary #MeToo drama continued to unfold on Capitol Hill, where Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh faces allegations of sexual misconduct from more than three decades ago.

Cosby, looking grim, walked into the courthouse Monday morning on the arm of his longtime spokesman as protesters shouted at him. His wife of 54 years, Camille, was not in court. Several of the jurors who convicted him watched the hearing on a monitor in an overflow courtroom.

Cosby spokesman Andrew Wyatt told reporters in the afternoon that the entertainer was in "great, great" spirits.

"We tell him to stay strong and stay focused, and he's focused on Mrs. Cosby, and that's what matters in his family," Wyatt said. "He's a great guy. He's still America's Dad, and they won't ever take that away. You can't take away the legacy."

In the years since Constand first went to police in 2005, more than 60 women have accused Cosby of sexual misconduct, though none of those claims have led to criminal charges. At least two of those women, including former model Janice Dickinson, were in the courtroom for the start of the sentencing.

Prosecutors had hoped to have some of the other accusers address the court at the hearing. But the district attorney's office told The Associated Press that that would not happen.

A few hours before the hearing, Constand tweeted Ephesians 4:26, a Bible verse about letting go of anger: "Be wrathful, but do not sin; do not let the sun set while you are still angry; do not give the Devil an opportunity."

Cosby, who grew up in public housing in Philadelphia, became the first black actor to star in a prime-time TV show, "I Spy," in 1965. He remained a Hollywood A-lister for much of the next half-century, hitting his peak in the 1980s with the top-rated "Cosby Show" as the warm, wisecracking dad, Dr. Cliff Huxtable.

The AP does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they come forward publicly, which Constand and other accusers have done.

Associated Press reporter Claudia Lauer in Norristown contributed to this story.

For more coverage, visit: <https://apnews.com/tag/BillCosby>

10 days after Hurricane Florence, fresh chaos in S. Carolina

By JEFFREY COLLINS, Associated Press

YAUHANNAH, S.C. (AP) — More than a week ago, pastor Willie Lowrimore and some of his congregants stacked sandbags around their South Carolina church to protect it from the fury of Hurricane Florence.

They moved the pews to higher ground and watched anxiously for days as the nearly black, reeking water from the swollen Waccamaw River rose, even though the hurricane was long gone. Finally, before

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dawn Monday, the water seeped around and over the sandbags, flooding the sanctuary.

"I'm going to go one day at a time," Lowrimore said as he sat in a rocking chair listening to the river rush by, ruining the church he built almost 20 years ago. "Put it in the Lord's hands. My hands aren't big enough."

Ten days after Florence came ashore, the storm caused fresh chaos Monday in Yauhannah and elsewhere across South Carolina, where rivers kept rising and thousands more people were told to be ready to evacuate.

Authorities urged up to 8,000 people in Georgetown County, on the South Carolina coast, to be prepared to flee from potential flood zones. A "record event" of up to 10 feet (3 meters) of flooding was expected to begin Tuesday near parts of the Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers, county spokeswoman Jackie Broach-Akers said.

Places along the waterfront in Georgetown were predicted to flood for the first time since record keeping began before the American Revolution.

"We are still getting phone calls from people who don't know what is going on," said Georgetown County Emergency Management Director Sam Hodge.

In North Carolina, where Florence made landfall, Gov. Roy Cooper said the state was moving from an emergency response mode to full-time recovery from the storm.

"Florence is gone, but the storm's devastation is still with us," Cooper said at a news conference.

About 400 roads across the state remained closed due to the storm that has claimed at least 46 lives since slamming into the coast Sept. 14.

But there was some good news: Interstate 95 was reopened to all traffic Sunday night for the first time since the floods, and Cooper announced Monday that a previously closed portion of Interstate 40 had reopened sooner than expected.

Power outages and the number of people in shelters were also declining. Around 5,000 people were without power, down from a peak of about 800,000. About 2,200 people were in shelters, compared with a high of around 20,000, the governor said.

On Monday, Republican education leaders in North Carolina announced planned legislation to assure teachers at still-shuttered schools they will get paid without using vacation time. The proposal was part of broader disaster funding that the General Assembly will consider in an anticipated special session.

The full impact of Hurricane Florence on North Carolina's public high schools and grade schools was still unclear.

North Carolina Public Schools spokesman Drew Elliot said the unofficial estimate was that 1.2 million of more than 1.5 million public school students in the state missed classes because of the storm. Officials sent a survey to schools to get a better sense of Florence's full effect and hope to have better data by the end of the week, Elliot said.

In Washington, lawmakers considered almost \$1.7 billion in new money for disaster relief and recovery, even as they face a deadline this week to fund the government before the Oct. 1 start of the new budget year.

The chairman of the House Appropriations Committee said the money would be available as grants to states to help rebuild housing and public works and to assist businesses. GOP Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen of New Jersey called it "a first round" and said lawmakers were ready to act quickly if the federal disaster relief agency also needs more money.

The economic research firm Moody's Analytics estimated that Florence has caused around \$44 billion in damage and lost output, which would make it one of the 10 costliest U.S. hurricanes. The worst disaster, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, cost \$192.2 billion in today's dollars. Last year's Hurricane Harvey cost \$133.5 billion.

Associated Press writers Gary D. Robertson and Alex Derosier in Raleigh; Meg Kinnard in Columbia, South Carolina; Sarah Rankin in Richmond, Virginia; and Sarah Brumfield in Washington contributed to this report.

For the latest on Hurricane Florence, visit <https://www.apnews.com/tag/Hurricanes>

'Rocket Man' to 'Terrific': Trump lauds Kim in UN return

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President Donald Trump raised hopes at the United Nations on Monday that a second meeting with North Korea's Kim Jong Un could occur "quite soon," striking a conciliatory tone one year after he used his debut at the U.N. to deride the autocrat as "Little Rocket Man" and threaten to "totally destroy North Korea."

Trump praised Kim as "very open" and "terrific," despite the glacial pace of progress toward denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.

U.S. officials defended Trump's strategy of engagement with the erstwhile pariah state as the president embarked on a week of meetings with world leaders. The softer tone toward North Korea — once threatened with "fire and fury" — has been replaced by rosy optimism, with Trump reserving tough rhetoric for another potential nuclear aspirant and strategic foe: Iran.

"It was a different world," Trump said Monday of his one-time moniker for the North Korean leader. "That was a dangerous time. This is one year later, a much different time."

Trump began his second visit to the U.N. with a brief meeting on the global drug trade before sitting down with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who delivered a personal message to Trump from Kim after their inter-Korean talks last week in Pyongyang.

"You are the only person who can solve this problem," Moon said to Trump, relaying Kim's words.

Trump, for his part, said: "We are in no rush. We are in no hurry" to bring about a nuclear agreement. U.S. officials are insisting that economic sanctions remain in place against the North until it eliminates its nuclear program.

Trump said Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has been tasked with bringing about the second summit, despite an assessment by U.S. officials that the North has not followed through on its commitments to take steps toward denuclearization. Pompeo defended Trump's decision to seek another meeting despite the slow progress.

"We've been at this the other way an awfully long time and failed," he said, adding: "We tried to do details. We tried to do step for step. We tried to do trade for trade. Each of those failed."

"We're bringing the two senior leaders, the individuals who can actually make the decisions that will move this process forward," in hopes they can make a breakthrough, he said.

Trump said the location for the second summit is still to be determined, but officials have said the U.S. leader is holding out hope it could take place on American soil. Such a move would itself present a complex political and logistical challenge for the North Korean leader. His trip to Singapore in June for the inaugural summit was anything but trivial.

Trump has often fondly invoked the Singapore summit, a made-for-TV event that attracted the world's media attention and largely received positive marks from cable pundits — reviews that were not repeated for his summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki the following month.

Trump and Moon on Monday signed a new version of the U.S.-South Korean trade agreement, marking one of Trump's first successes in his effort to renegotiate economic deals on more favorable terms for the U.S. Trump labeled it a "very big deal" and says the new agreement makes significant improvements to reduce the trade deficit between the countries and create new opportunities to export American products to South Korea. He says U.S. automobiles, pharmaceuticals and agricultural products will gain better access to Korean markets.

Even so, some U.S. officials worry that South Korea's eagerness to restore relations with the North — known as its "sunshine policy" — could reduce sanctions pressure on Kim's government, hampering efforts to negotiate a nuclear accord.

The nuclear threat also was on the agenda at Trump's first meeting in New York, a dinner with Japanese

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Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Sunday night. Abe stands first among world leaders in cultivating a close relationship with the president through displays of flattery that he has used to advance his efforts to influence the unpredictable American leader.

Trump is set to address the U.N. General Assembly Tuesday morning and will chair a meeting of the Security Council Wednesday on counter-proliferation. In both venues, U.S. officials say, he is expected to offer a contrast between the path of negotiation chosen by North Korea and that of Iran.

Trump earlier this year bucked allies and removed the U.S. from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, citing Iran's malign influence in the region and support for terrorist groups like Hezbollah. The next round of tough sanctions on Iran is set to go into effect in November.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is in New York to attend U.N. meetings. U.S. officials said Trump is not seeking a meeting with the Iranian leader, but is not opposed to talking if Iran requests a session.

Rouhani, appearing on NBC on Monday, cited the threat of more U.S. sanctions in stating, "There is no such program for a meeting."

In keeping with his "America First" pronouncements, Trump's return tour to the annual diplomatic summit was eclipsed before it began by domestic political crises. The fate of Trump's second Supreme Court nominee was cast into doubt over the weekend amid new allegations of sexual misconduct. Drama also swirled Monday around the status of his deputy attorney general.

Rod Rosenstein was revealed last week to have floated the idea of secretly recording Trump last year and to have raised the idea of using the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office. Rosenstein has denied the reports. Trump said he will meet with Rosenstein on Thursday upon his return to Washington.

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As Trump arrives at UN, world leaders honor Mandela

By MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — World leaders kicked off their annual gathering at the United Nations on Monday by honoring a global icon of peace and reconciliation — drawing some pointed contrast with a U.S. president who has shaken up the international order with his assertion of "America First."

A statue of Nelson Mandela, who led South Africa's transition from the apartheid system of white minority rule over the majority black population, was unveiled at U.N. headquarters in New York, and delegates addressed a "peace summit" to elevate his memory in this year's centennial of his birth.

"Few people in the history of our world have left such an incredible mark on humanity," U.N. General Assembly President Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces said at the dedication ceremony of the life-sized sculpture of the prisoner-turned-president.

Shortly afterward, President Donald Trump arrived in the building, making a brief appearance at a separate event on fighting the global scourge of illegal drugs. Some 130 U.N. member states signed a U.S.-sponsored declaration to step up action against the narcotics trade that has left 31 million people around the world requiring treatment and is causing 450,000 deaths every year from overdoses or drug-related health issues.

"Today we commit to fighting the drug epidemic together," said Trump, whose administration is facing a rising tide of opioid addiction in the United States. He said the U.S. was taking "aggressive action" by securing its border, supporting law enforcement and devoting record funding to tackling the opioid crisis.

There were only three speakers at the U.S.-led event that wrapped up within 15 minutes.

The peace summit was running much longer, with dozens of leaders from both rich and poor nations taking turns to hail the legacy of Mandela, who after his release from nearly three decades in prison became South Africa's first black president in its first multiracial elections in 1994.

Among those offering accolades was Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who said Mandela had "sowed seeds of amity and compassion." He appeared to draw a tacit, negative comparison with Trump.

"This is a historical reality that great statesmen tend to build bridges instead of walls," Rouhani said.

Trump campaigned for office on a promise to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Iran is a bitter adversary of Washington, and those tensions have spiked since Trump pulled the U.S. out of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers that had provided it with sanctions relief. The U.N. meetings take place against the backdrop of Iranian accusations that an unidentified U.S.-allied regional country supported a deadly attack on an Iranian military parade that killed at least 25 people this past weekend.

But close U.S. allies are also continuing to express unease with Trump's approach to international affairs. His administration has upended U.S. support of multilateral cooperation on everything from fighting climate change to participation in a U.N. human rights council it considers to be anti-Israel.

Speaking to reporters, France's top diplomat, Jean-Yves Le Drian, decried what he called Trump's "mix of unilateralism and isolationism," but added that's no reason to snub Trump or lock him out of world events.

This week, "is an important moment where each is expected to show whether they are playing together or playing lone horseman, whether they are seeking solutions or sticking to slogans," Le Drian said.

Trump is making his second appearance at the U.N. since taking office in 2017. He will address the General Assembly on Tuesday, when in an annual ritual of diplomacy, heads of government take turns addressing that forum on pressing global issues. He's expected to redouble his commitment to "America First," while shining a spotlight on the threat that he says Iran poses to the Middle East and beyond through its support for terrorism.

But Trump has so far struck a far less ominous tone on than he did at his debut at the U.N. a year ago, when he stoked a long-distance slanging match with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that fueled fears of war. On that occasion, Trump called Kim "rocket man" and threatened to "totally destroy" North Korea if it used its nuclear weapons against the U.S. or its allies. Kim branded Trump as "senile."

Now Trump looks to Pyongyang as a diplomatic opportunity. He said Monday he will likely hold a second summit with Kim "quite soon," to seek progress in achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula that he and Kim committed to at a summit in Singapore in June.

Trump also offered some conciliatory remarks about the world body he has often disparaged, saying, "the United Nations has tremendous potential and that potential is being met slowly but surely."

Associated Press writers Edith M. Lederer, Jennifer Peltz and Angela Charlton contributed.

Implant, intense rehab help 3 paralyzed for years take steps

By LAURAN NEERGAARD, AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three people whose legs were paralyzed for years can stand and take steps again thanks to an electrical implant that zaps the injured spinal cord — along with months of intense rehab, researchers reported Monday.

The milestone, reported by two teams of scientists working separately, isn't a cure. The patients walk only with assistance — holding onto a rolling walker or with other help to keep their balance. Switch off the spinal stimulator and they no longer can voluntarily move their legs.

But during one physical therapy session at the Mayo Clinic, 29-year-old Jered Chinnock moved back and forth enough to cover about the length of a football field.

"The walking side of it isn't something where I just leave my wheelchair behind and away I go," Chinnock, of Tomah, Wisconsin, told The Associated Press. But, "there is the hopeful side of, maybe I'll gain that — where I can leave the wheelchair behind, even if it is to walk to the refrigerator."

The work is part of a quest to help people with spinal cord injuries regain function, and specialists say while it's only been attempted in a few people, it's a promising approach that needs more study.

"I'm really excited about this," said Johns Hopkins University rehabilitation expert Dr. Cristina Sadowsky, who wasn't involved in the new research. It tapped into "residual connections that are not being used" after a spinal cord injury.

Still, "not everybody who has a similar injury will respond the same," cautioned Sadowsky, who directs spinal cord therapy at Baltimore's Kennedy Krieger Institute.

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Severe spinal cord injuries leave the brain's "get moving" instructions unable to reach the nerves that activate muscles. Researchers have tried other technologies, such as encasing patients in robotic-like exoskeletons or implanting muscle stimulators, to help move paralyzed limbs.

With the new approach, the three patients are taking steps under their own power — intentionally moving, according to the reports published Monday by Nature Medicine and the New England Journal of Medicine.

How does it work? One theory: Circuits of nerves below the injury site are dormant, but still living. Applying electrical current, in customized patterns, could wake up some of those circuits and, with rigorous rehab to revive the rusty connections, eventually enable them to receive simple commands.

"Recovery can happen if you have the right circumstances," said University of Louisville professor Susan Harkema, who co-authored the New England Journal study. The spinal cord "relearns to do things, not as well as it did before, but it can function."

"This study gives hope to people who are faced with paralysis that functional control may be possible," said Dr. Kendall Lee, a Mayo neurosurgeon who treated Chinnock and co-authored the Nature Medicine report.

Four years ago, Harkema's team made headlines when a few patients implanted with spinal stimulators — originally developed to treat pain — were able to wiggle their toes, move their legs and briefly stand. But they didn't walk.

Lee and Kristin Zhao, who directs Mayo's assistive and restorative laboratory, decided to repeat the experiment — and Chinnock's success surprised them.

He'd been paralyzed in a 2013 snowmobile accident, with no movement or sensation below his mid-back. He underwent 43 weeks of intense physical therapy and stimulator adjustments. At first, trainers positioned his knees and hips to help him stand, swing his legs and shift his weight on a treadmill.

But eventually, watching in a mirror, he learned to move his legs and propel himself forward with a walker, albeit with a trainer behind in case he loses his balance.

He can tell his therapists when he's going to start, stop or speed up, Zhao said: "It's very much a thoughtful, intentional movement."

Meanwhile in Louisville, Harkema's team was working with four more paralyzed volunteers eager to test the approach — and this time, two eventually walked with assistance. In one training session in the lab, Jeff Marquis, 35, of Louisville made it almost the length of a football field without stopping for a rest.

"One day we were walking and they were helping me as usual and then they stopped helping me and I took maybe three or four steps in sequence," Kelly Thomas, 23, of Lecanto, Florida, recalled in a video provided by Louisville researchers. "My eyes got teary and I was like, 'Oh my god, that just happened, I just took steps.'"

It's not clear why the other two Louisville, Kentucky participants weren't able to take independent steps. But that report illustrates an important caution about safety: One fractured a hip during a rehab treadmill exercise even while carefully supported and upright. The approach will need larger and longer studies not just to see if it can help other patients but to delineate risks. It's also not known how much such care would cost, as researchers work to improve the stimulators.

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

Agency says two-headed snake may go to educational facility

WAYNESBORO, Va. (AP) — A wildlife and conservation research hospital says a two-headed snake recently found near the nation's capital may be sent to an educational facility.

The Wildlife Center of Virginia says the two-headed Eastern Copperhead was found in a northern Virginia neighborhood last week. It says a state herpetologist brought the snake to the hospital Thursday for an examination.

A hospital release says the two heads were found to have two tracheas and two esophagi, but share one

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heart and set of lungs. The Charlotte Observer reports state biologists believe both heads are capable of biting and distributing venom.

State herpetologist J.D. Kleopfer says in a Facebook post that two-headed snakes are extremely rare because "they just don't live that long." He says he hopes to donate the snake to a zoo.

Michael Kors ups the glamour, buys Versace for \$2 billion

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Kors is buying the Italian fashion house Gianni Versace in a deal worth more than \$2 billion (1.83 billion euros), continuing its hard charge into the world of high-end fashion.

The deal announced Tuesday follows the New York handbag maker's \$1.35 billion acquisition last year of the shoemaker Jimmy Choo.

Michael Kors Holdings Ltd., like others in the fashion industry, is trying to fire up sales by tacking on big name brands like the globally revered Versace

Tapestry, once known as Coach, owns Stuart Weitzman and last year it acquired Kate Spade.

By all accounts, Kors has successfully melded Jimmy Choo into its portfolio, putting up big sales in the most recent quarter.

China official says talks impossible with 'US holding knife'

By JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China cannot hold talks with Washington on ending their escalating trade dispute while the United States "holds a knife" to Beijing's neck by imposing tariff hikes, a Chinese official said Tuesday.

The warning came after the Chinese government released a report that accused President Donald Trump of bullying other countries. It dampened hopes for progress toward a settlement of their war over Beijing's technology policy.

Trump went ahead Monday with a tax hike on \$200 billion of Chinese imports. Beijing retaliated by imposing penalties on \$60 billion of U.S. products.

The conflict stems from U.S. complaints Beijing steals or pressures foreign companies to hand over technology. American officials say Chinese plans for state-led development of global competitors in robotics and other technologies violate its market-opening obligations and might erode U.S. industrial leadership.

Beijing is open to negotiations but whether they proceed is up to Washington, said a deputy commerce minister, Wang Shouwen. Wang led the Chinese delegation to the last round of talks in Washington in August, which ended without progress.

"Now that the United States has adopted such large-scale restrictive measures and holds a knife to another's neck, how can negotiations proceed?" said Wang at a news conference. "It would not be negotiations of equality."

With no settlement in sight, forecasters say the conflict between the two biggest economies could trim global growth by 0.5 percentage points through 2020.

Business groups say American companies report Chinese regulators also are stepping up pressure on them by slowing down customs clearance and increasing environmental and other inspections.

In its report Tuesday, the Chinese government tried to reinforce its position that it is defending free trade, despite complaints by the United States, Europe and other trading partners about market barriers and industrial policy.

It said Beijing has tried to protect the multilateral global trading system and accused Trump of abandoning "mutual respect" required for international relations.

The report gave no indication of possible Chinese concessions or room for compromise. Businesspeople who have met Chinese economic planners say they appear unwilling even to discuss technology policy the ruling Communist Party sees as a route to prosperity and global influence.

"The sharp criticism suggests that China might prefer to wait out the current U.S. administration, rather than embarking on potentially futile negotiations," said Cheng Wei Liang of Mizuho Bank in a report.

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"It is increasingly likely that both sides will not resume negotiations for some time, at least until there is a noticeable shift in the political mood on either side."

Asian stocks lower on US-China trade worries

By JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stock markets were mostly lower Tuesday after a Chinese government report accusing the Trump administration of bullying other countries dampened hopes for a settlement in their escalating tariff war.

KEEPING SCORE: The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.8 percent to 2,775.91 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 shed 0.1 percent to 6,180.10. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 advanced 0.1 percent to 23,900.57 while Hong Kong and Seoul were closed for holidays. Benchmarks in New Zealand, Malaysia and the Philippines retreated while Taiwan and Singapore advanced.

WALL STREET: Industrial companies and bank sank after news reports that China pulled out of possible talks proposed by Washington on ending their fight over Beijing's technology policy. The Standard & Poor's 500 index lost 0.4 percent to 2,919.37. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.7 percent to 26,562.05. Both the S&P 500 and Dow set record highs last week. General Electric dropped 3.5 percent and 3M declined 1.3 percent.

TRADE FIGHT: China issued a report accusing Washington of abandoning "mutual respect" required for international relations and "trade bullyism" toward other governments. At the same time, both governments imposed new tariffs on each other's goods in their war over U.S. complaints that Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology.

ANALYST'S TAKE: The criticism of Washington "suggests that China might prefer to wait out the current U.S. administration, rather than embarking on potentially futile negotiations," said Cheng Wei Liang of Mizuho Bank in a report. "It is increasingly likely that both sides will not resume negotiations for some time, at least until there is a noticeable shift in the political mood on either side."

U.S.-SOUTH KOREA TRADE: South Korean markets were closed for a public holiday, limiting immediate reaction to the signing by President Donald Trump and President Moon Jae-in of a new version of the U.S.-South Korean trade agreement. It marked one of Trump's first successes renegotiating deals on more favorable terms for the U.S. Trump said the new agreement will help reduce the U.S. trade deficit and create new opportunities to export U.S. automobiles, pharmaceuticals and agricultural products to South Korea.

OIL BOOST: Oil prices jumped after a weekend meeting of OPEC and its allies ended with no decision to increase output despite U.S. President Donald Trump's call for lower prices. Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries met with non-members including Russia. The committee said it saw a "healthy balance between supply and demand." The price rise is notably caused by a recent drop in Iran's supply because of U.S. sanctions.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude gained 13 cents to \$72.21 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract advanced \$1.30 on Monday to close at \$72.08. Brent crude, used to price international oils, rose 13 cents to \$80.59 per barrel in London. It jumped \$2.29 the previous session to \$80.53.

CURRENCY: The dollar gained to 112.81 yen from Monday's 112.79 yen. The euro declined to \$1.1740 from \$1.1749.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 25, the 268th day of 2018. There are 97 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 25, 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in as the first female justice on the Supreme Court.

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On this date:

In 1513, Spanish explorer Vasco Nunez de Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and sighted the Pacific Ocean.

In 1690, one of the earliest American newspapers, Publick Occurrences, published its first — and last — edition in Boston.

In 1775, American Revolutionary War hero Ethan Allen was captured by the British as he led an attack on Montreal. (Allen was released by the British in 1778.)

In 1789, the first United States Congress adopted 12 amendments to the Constitution and sent them to the states for ratification. (Ten of the amendments became the Bill of Rights.)

In 1911, ground was broken for Boston's Fenway Park.

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson collapsed after a speech in Pueblo, Colo., during a national speaking tour in support of the Treaty of Versailles (vehr-SY').

In 1956, the first trans-Atlantic telephone cable officially went into service with a three-way ceremonial call between New York, Ottawa and London.

In 1957, nine black students who'd been forced to withdraw from Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, because of unruly white crowds were escorted to class by members of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division.

In 1974, Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Tommy John underwent an experimental graft reconstruction of the ulnar collateral ligament in the elbow of his throwing arm to repair a career-ending injury; the procedure, which proved successful, is now referred to as "Tommy John surgery."

In 1978, 144 people were killed when a Pacific Southwest Airlines Boeing 727 and a private plane collided over San Diego.

In 1992, NASA's Mars Observer blasted off on a \$980 million mission to the red planet (the probe disappeared just before entering Martian orbit in August 1993).

In 1997, President Bill Clinton pulled open the door of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, as he welcomed nine blacks who had faced hate-filled mobs 40 years earlier.

Ten years ago: Republican John McCain and Democrat Barack Obama sat down with President George W. Bush at the White House to discuss a multibillion-dollar Wall Street bailout plan, but the session, which also included top congressional leaders, devolved into what the McCain campaign described afterward as a "contentious shouting match." Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin defended her remark that the close proximity of Russia to her home state of Alaska gave her foreign policy experience, explaining in a CBS interview that "we have trade missions back and forth." Anti-apartheid activist Kgalema Motlanthe (KHAH'-lee-mah moo-KAN'-tay) became the third president of South Africa since the end of white rule. After a 43-year wait, Paul McCartney performed his first concert in Israel, saying he was on a mission of peace for Israel and the Palestinians.

Five years ago: Nearly a dozen of Syria's powerful rebel factions, including one linked to al-Qaida, formally broke with the main opposition group in exile and called for Islamic law in the country, dealing a severe blow to the Western-backed coalition. Skipper Jimmy Spithill and Oracle Team USA won the America's Cup with one of the greatest comebacks in sports history, speeding past Dean Barker and Emirates Team New Zealand in the winner-take-all Race 19 on San Francisco Bay.

One year ago: Former congressman Anthony Weiner was sentenced to 21 months behind bars for illicit online contact with a 15-year-old girl. North Korea's top diplomat said his country had the right to shoot down U.S. warplanes, after President Donald Trump's weekend tweet suggesting that the North's Kim Jong Un "won't be around much longer." Britain's Prince Harry and girlfriend Meghan Markle made their first public appearance as a couple, attending a wheelchair tennis event at the Invictus Games for wounded veterans in Toronto.

Today's Birthdays: Broadcast journalist Barbara Walters is 89. Folk singer Ian Tyson is 85. Polka bandleader Jimmy Sturr is 77. Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates is 75. Actor Josh Taylor is 75. Actor Robert Walden is 75. Actor-producer Michael Douglas is 74. Model Cheryl Tiegs is 71. Actress Mimi Kennedy is

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70. Movie director Pedro Almodovar is 69. Actor-director Anson Williams is 69. Actor Mark Hamill is 67. Basketball Hall of Famer Bob McAdoo is 67. Actor Colin Fries is 66. Actor Michael Madsen is 60. Actress Heather Locklear is 57. Actress Aida Turturro is 56. Actor Tate Donovan is 55. TV personality Keely Shaye Smith is 55. Actress Maria Doyle Kennedy is 54. Basketball Hall of Famer Scottie Pippen is 53. Actor Jason Flemyng is 52. Actor Will Smith is 50. Actor Hal Sparks is 49. Actress Catherine Zeta-Jones is 49. Rock musician Mike Luce (Drowning Pool) is 47. Actress Bridgette Wilson-Sampras is 45. Actress Clea DuVall is 41. Actor Robbie Jones is 41. Actor Joel David Moore is 41. Actor Chris Owen is 38. Rapper T. I. is 38. Actor Van Hansis is 37. Actor Lee Norris is 37. Actor/rapper Donald Glover (AKA Childish Gambino) is 35. Actor Zach Woods is 34. Actor Jordan Gavaris is 29. Olympic silver medal figure skater Mao Asada is 28. Actress Emmy Clarke is 27.

Thought for Today: "History is too serious to be left to historians." — Iain Macleod, British politician (1913-1970).