

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, October 12, 2018

Marching Festival in Groton
7:00pm: Football hosts Redfield/Doland at Doney Field, Groton

Saturday, October 13, 2018

Oral Interp at Florence High School
9:00am: Volleyball: Girls Varsity Tournament at Redfield.

Measure would quell out-of-state influence in elections

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

BROOKINGS — On Nov. 6, voters will decide if out-of-staters can continue to be involved in South Dakota elections.

Initiated Measure 24 would prohibit contributions to ballot question committees by nonresidents, out-of-state political committees and entities that are not filed with the South Dakota Secretary of State.

IM 24 will help protect the nation's first referendum and initiated measure system from the influence of out-of-state interests, according to Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Groups outside of South Dakota are using the state's low threshold for signature gathering and inexpensive media markets to influence the ballot, Daugaard said, causing voters to rely on 30-second commercials to decide on the worth of a measure that may be 30 pages long.

"People who have a national agenda are hijacking our ballot," Daugaard said.

They'll only be able to hijack it if voters let them, according to Steve Willard, president of the South Dakota Broadcasters Association, who doesn't agree that out-of-state interests have too much influence on the South Dakota ballot.

"That's kind of insulting," Willard said. "I can decide who I listen to."

Daugaard noted that \$9.6 million was spent on six of the seven measures that were on the 2016 ballot with just 3 percent of that money coming from South Dakotans.

Willard said many statewide associations find themselves interested in the passage or defeat of ballot issues. If IM 24 passes, they won't be able to call on their national organization for help.

"That doesn't make sense to me at all," Willard said. "We have to reach out to our national group."

In his ballot explanation, Attorney General Marty Jackley said that if it passes, Initiated Measure 24 will likely face a court challenge on constitutional grounds.

Willard agrees, noting that while most past court rulings have dealt with contributions to political candidates, the First Amendment lawyers who have seen IM 24 have called it "drop-dead unconstitutional."

As an example, Willard said passage of IM 24 would keep out-of-state alumni from having their say if closing a university was on the ballot. He noted that this year's vote on a tobacco tax increase is of direct interest to tobacco companies.

"The solution is worse than the problem," Willard said.

Daugaard looks to the federal government for an example of how to keep unwanted interests from influencing an election without running afoul of the constitution.

"We don't allow foreign governments to influence national elections," said Daugaard who is confident that IM 24 will succeed.

"Most people support the measure, if they understand it," Daugaard said. "South Dakotans object to outsiders imposing their influence" on the ballot.

There's more going on than just keeping out-of-state influence away from the ballot, Willard said.

"At face value, it sounds good," Willard said of IM 24. "I'd rather be known as the state with discerning voters than a state that's scared of out-of-state interests."

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2018 Lake Region Marching Festival Schedule

10:00- Groton Area High School (Exhibition)

10:05- Groton Area Junior High (Exhibition)

10:10- Leola

10:15- Langford

10:20- Ipswich

10:25- Roncalli

10:30- Frederick

10:35- Wilmot

10:40- Northwestern

10:45- Sully Buttes

10:50- Waubay

10:55- Warner

11:00- Great Plains Lutheran

11:05- Redfield

11:10- Milbank MS

11:15- Watertown MS

11:20- Simmons/ Holgate MS

11:25- The SOUND of USD

12:05- The SOUND of USD field performance

12:20- Awards Ceremony at the Groton Area Arena

The SOUND of USD is our featured group. Following the festival, they will perform their field show music in the Arena due to poor conditions on the football field.

**Lake Region
Marching Band Festival
Main Street, Groton, SD
10 a.m. Start**

on GDILIVE.COM

It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Redfield/
Doland**

Pheasants VS



Groton Area Tigers

7:00 p.m., Friday, Oct. 12, 2018
Doney Field, Groton

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Name of band: Groton Area High School Marching Band

School: Groton Area

Band Directors Name: Austin Fordham

Years of teaching in this school: 3

Total Years teaching: 3

Drum Major's name: Ashley Garduno

Name of Song: "Believer" by Imagine Dragons

Number of students in Marching Band: 47

Number of students in the school: 179

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

Our band would like to thank Mrs. Desiree Yeigh for coaching the flag team this year.

Thank You to the City of Groton, Professional Management Services, and the Groton Area School District for making accommodations that help make this event possible.

We would also like thank all of the bands and directors who are here today!

Thank You to our guest judges, and the SOUND of USD for being here today.

Thank You to the Groton Dairy Queen for sponsoring this event! Stop out for a hot or cold treat following the festival to show your appreciation!

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Name of band: Groton Area JH

School: Groton Area

Band Directors Name: Desiree Yeigh

Years of teaching in this school: 4

Total Years teaching: 11

Drum Major's name: None

Name of Song: "Feel It Still"

Number of students in Marching Band: 38

Number of students in the school:

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Groton Area Junior High Band has marched every year in the Groton Homecoming Parade and the Lake Region Marching Festival since it has been held in Groton. They are honored and excited to represent Groton at this festival.

We want to wish everyone good luck today in the festival. A big thank you is extended to all of the band directors for bringing their bands to the festival. Without your help this wouldn't be possible.

Mrs. Yeigh would like to extend a great big thank you to the City of Groton, the Sound of USD, our guest judges, and all of the volunteers that make this wonderful event possible every year!

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Name of band: Leola High School Band

School: Leola

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Nancy Kindelspire

Years of teaching in this school: 17

Total Years teaching: 18

Drum Major's name: none

Name of Song:

Number of students in Marching Band: 40 in grades 7-12

Number of students in the school: 55 in grades 7-12

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

Leola High School Band enjoys the Lake Region Marching Band Festival and has attended every year. In the past they have received the Band of Distinction and the Band of Merit. They also march in the Gypsy Day Parade where they have received Gold Plaques. They would like to thank Austin Fordham and the Groton School for hosting this event.

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Name of band: Langford Area Marching Lions

School: Langford Area High School

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Kelly Wieser

Years of teaching in this school: 23

Total Years teaching: 29

Drum Major's name: Ashley Gustafson

Name of Song: September and I Want You Back

Number of students in Marching Band: 60

Number of students in the school: 75

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Langford Area Marching Lions have a tradition that spans several decades. The band consistently receives Gold awards at NSU's Gypsy Day parade and has been named the Lake Region Marching Festival Band of Merit and Band of Distinction in the past.

The flag captains are Chesney Olson and Madeline Reints. Mrs. Wieser is assisted today by Laurie Darling and student teacher Paul Fellbaum.

JUDGES:

Thank you to our 3 judges

Dr. Todd Cranson- Assistant professor of low Brass, and director of athletic bands at the University of South Dakota

Mr. Jeremy Schutter- Band Director at Aberdeen Central High School

Mr. Jerry Letcher- Director of Low Brass at Northern State University

Other Info

The featured band this year is the SOUND of USD. They will perform in the arena approximately 15 minutes after the conclusion of the parade (around 12:00). Feel free to watch their show after the parade. Awards will be announced after USD performs their show.

This year, awards will be given to the top 2 bands in each class. 1st place- Band of Distinction; 2nd place- Band of Merit. There will also be a people's choice award, which will be determined by a group of judges hidden throughout the parade route. We also have awards for best drumline, best winds, and best auxiliary/guard. We have added a GRAND CHAMPION award this year, which will be awarded to the band with the highest overall score for the day!

Thank you to all of the bands marching in the festival today. Thank you to all of the band directors for your continued support of the Lake Region Marching Festival.

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Name of band: Ipswich Marching Band

School: Ipswich Public School

Division: Combined

Band Directors Name: Becky Nierman

Years of teaching in this school: 13

Total Years teaching: 13

Drum Major's name: Katelyn Geditz

Name of Song: New Rules

Number of students in Marching Band: 71

Number of students in the school: 109

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

This is our 8th year marching in the Lake Region Marching festival. We have always enjoyed the enthusiasm this day brings. We are so proud to be a part of this exciting day. Thank you, Groton School and Community, for your support of this wonderful event.

Other Info

Thank you to the Groton Dairy Queen for sponsoring this event. Show your appreciation by stopping for lunch or a cool treat after the festival.

Support the Groton Table Talks by stopping for concessions. They are offering concessions along the parade route.

Thank you to the City of Groton for preparing Main Street for this festival

There are public restrooms available for use at the City Park, and at the football field.

Thank You to Professional Management Services for setting up the judge's area

Name of band: Aberdeen Roncalli Marching Band

School: Aberdeen Roncalli

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Kimberly Carda

Years of teaching in this school: 22 years

Total Years teaching: 22 years

Drum Major's name: Lizzie Wagner

Name of Song: "Karn Evil 9"

Number of students in Marching Band: 70 (grades 7-12)

Number of students in the school: 188 (grades 7-12)

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Roncalli Band has marched in the Lake Region Marching Festival since the very beginning of the event, and we are excited to be coming back. Thank you, Mr. Fordham and the Groton Area Schools, for hosting the event.

Over the years, the Roncalli Band has worked to establish a tradition of excellence. In 2017, the Roncalli Band received a Gold Award at the Gypsy Day Parade. Later, they competed in the Lake Region Marching Festival and earned 1st place in the combined division as well received the outstanding percussion award and the outstanding winds award. They also traveled to Sioux Falls to perform in the Viking Day parade and earned 1st place overall and received outstanding brass section honors and outstanding percussion honors.

Amanda Imberi and McKayla Carda, both Roncalli graduates and former flag members, assisted with the flag choreography.

Name of band: Frederick High School

School: Frederick

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Liz Labesky

Years of teaching in this school: This year is 25

Total Years teaching: This year is 29

Drum Major's name:

Name of Song: Thrift Shop

Number of students in Marching Band: 40

Number of students in the school: 78

Name of band: Wilmot School Marching Band

School: Wilmot School

Division: Combined 7-12

Band Directors Name: Paulo Daniel Jimenez Cossio

Years of teaching in this school: 1

Total Years teaching: 1

Drum Major's name: N/A

Name of Song: Don't Stop Believing
Notre Dame March
Drum Cadences

Number of students in Marching Band: 21 (2 banner carriers-19 in band)

Number of students in the school: 101 (7-12)

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Name of band: Northwestern Area Marching Wildcats

School: Northwestern Area

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Mrs. Wendy Thorson

Years of teaching in this school: 19

Total Years teaching:21

Drum Major's name:Caitlyn Fischbach and Riley Grandpre

Name of Song: Paint It Black

Number of students in Marching Band: 59

Number of students in the school: K-12 around 230; high school is around 90

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

We have received both Silver and Gold awards at Gypsy Days.

We are marching grades 8-12, but have only rehearsed together 4 times due to scheduling conflicts.

98% of the band is involved in other extra-curricular activites during the marching season—volleyball, football, cross-country, competition cheer, FFA, oral interp, and robotics, and most of them are in more than one!

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Name of band: Sully Buttes Marching Chargers

School: Sully Buttes

Division: *High School* Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Erica Paxton

Years of teaching in this school: 7

Total Years teaching: 7

Drum Major's name: Angela Guthmiller

Name of Song: Sharp Dressed Man

Number of students in Marching Band: 30

Number of students in the school: K-12 = 230 students

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

This is our first year participating in the Lake Region Marching Festival! We are a 7th-12th grade band. We have two 6th grade banner carriers, along with two color guard members. We have performed at our Homecoming and at the Gypsy Days Parade this year.

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Name of band: Waubay High School Band

School: Waubay High School

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Jill Beers

Years of teaching in this school: 34 1/2

Total Years teaching: 36

Drum Major's name: Kylene Olson

Name of Song: Bang Bang

Number of students in Marching Band: 37

Number of students in the school: 74 (7-12)

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Waubay Band is a 7-12 Marching Band. They generally play for all home sporting events and perform two concerts a year. They also perform for Veteran's Day and Memorial Day. Students in the band also play in the ECC North Half Band Festival in March and participate in the Augustana Band Festival. The band is excited to return to the Lake Region Marching Band Festival after being unable to march last year.

Name of band: Warner Marching Monarchs

School: Warner High School

Division: High School

Band Directors Name: Sharon Schwan

Years of teaching in this school: 35

Total Years teaching: 39

Drum Major's name: Sydney Leidholt

Name of Song: Larger Than Life

Number of students in Marching Band: 70

Number of students in the school: 92

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Warner Marching Monarchs have had a bust season. They marched at the Arlington Marching Festival, Chester Marching Festival, Gypsy Day, Homecoming, and are ending their season with the Lake Region Marching Festival here in Groton.

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Name of band: Great Plains Lutheran High School Marching Band

School: Great Plains Lutheran High School

Division: High School

Band Directors Name: Eric Martens

Years of teaching in this school: 13

Total Years teaching: 13

Drum Major's name: Tyler Goens

Name of Song: Gonna Fly Now

Number of students in Marching Band: 52

Number of students in the school: 120

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The GPLHS Band is in its 9th year marching and last year took second place in their class at the Lake Region Marching Band Festival. Great Plains Lutheran is located in Watertown, SD. "We are thankful to Mr. Fordham, the Groton School, and the many people in Groton that support the Lake Region Marching Band Festival."

Name of band: Redfield Pheasant Band

School: Redfield

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Terrence Kenny

Years of teaching in this school: 4th year

Total Years teaching: 4th year

Drum Major's name: Hannah Owens

Name of Song: Timber

Number of students in Marching Band: 58

Number of students in the school: 169

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Name of band : Milbank Middle School

School: Milbank Middle School

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Susan Karels

Years of teaching in this school: 27

Total Years teaching: 27

Drum Major's name: Laura Eilers and Madisen Frerichs

Name of Song: Paint It Black

Number of students in Marching Band: 82

Number of students in the school: 164 (grades 7/8)

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Milbank Middle School bands are glad to be a part of the 16th annual marching band festival. Other marching performances for 2018 were the Milbank Homecoming Parade on September 14 and October 5 they presented a short show during Band Night at the home football game. Thank you to Groton for hosting this event.

Name of band: Watertown Middle School Marching Band

School: Watertown Middle School

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Ms. Todd

Years of teaching in this school: 3

Total Years teaching: 13

Drum Major's name: Kolby Lacher and Gabriel Holien

Name of Song: Crunch Time

Number of students in Marching Band: 170

Number of students in the school: 615

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School: Simmons Middle School & Holgate Middle School

Division: High School Middle School Combined

Band Directors Name: Jim Panerio & Sara Weischedel
Assistant Director: Dennis McDermott

Years of teaching in this school: Mr. Panerio = 25 years
Mrs. Weischedel = 9 years
Mr. McDermott = 4 years

Total Years teaching: Mr. Panerio = 29 years
Mrs. Weischedel = 15 years
Mr. McDermott = 36 years

Name of Song: Armada

Number of students in Marching Band: 66

Number of students in the school: each middle school has approximately 535 students.

Band Biography/Additional Information for Announcer/ Live Stream

The Aberdeen School District begins band in the 6th grade. Between Holgate and Simmons there are 265 students in band at the middle school level. This band is a combination of the two 8th grade bands from the Aberdeen School District. This is their 6th year competing in the Lake Region Marching Festival. The Holgate & Simmons marching band also performed in the Gypsy Day parade in Aberdeen two weeks ago.

THE SOUND of USD

The SOUND of USD is led by drum majors Isaac Westergaard and Hannah Dreeszen. Building on over 120 years of tradition, this year's 100-piece marching band will present their third marching show of the season, music of Fall Out Boy, at the conclusion of today's parade. On the parade route you will hear the USD Fight Song, Get Along Coyotes, Believer from the band Imagine Dragons, and an old marching band classic, The Horse!

The SOUND of USD is under the leadership of Director of Athletic Bands Todd Cranson, Director of Bands John LaCognata, Percussion Instructor Darin Wadley, Guard Instructor Jennifer Baggett, and Graduate Assistant Damon Lamberty.

The SOUND of USD includes students in approximately 30 different majors, and all members receive a participation scholarship for their work with the band. For more information about scholarships and becoming a member of The SOUND of USD, visit us online at usd.edu/music, and be sure to follow The SOUND of USD on Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter.

Tech schools seek revenue source in tobacco tax

By Dana Hess

For the S.D. Newspaper Association

BROOKINGS — Both sides in the debate over an increased tobacco tax say that the measure would have an effect on jobs.

On Nov. 6, voters will decide the fate of Initiated Measure 25, which seeks to raise the tax on tobacco by \$1 per pack of cigarettes as well as increase the tax on other tobacco products.

The first \$20 million raised by the tax increase would be earmarked to reduce tuition and fees at the state's four technical schools. If approved by voters, the tax would start being collected on July 1, 2019.

High tuition costs at South Dakota tech schools are driving some students out of state, exacerbating shortages of skilled workers according to Dick Muth, co-chairman of the IM 25 effort.

"There's an unbelievable shortage of technicians in this state to do all sorts of things," Muth said, noting that tech school tuition in some surrounding states may be half of what South Dakota students are paying.

Jobs are also at the center of the argument against IM 25.

"We anticipate there could be a loss of 400 jobs," said Steve Westra, chairman of South Dakotans Against Higher Taxes. "Many retailers are already struggling."

Those jobs would be lost, according to Westra, as customers seek cheaper cigarettes across the border, on Indian reservations or on the internet.

Westra notes that the tax on a pack of cigarettes in North Dakota is 44 cents. If IM 25 passes, South Dakota's tax on the same pack of cigarettes would be \$2.53.

Westra said there's nothing in IM 25 to keep the Legislature from diverting the increased tobacco tax to other uses.

"It lacks taxpayer protection," Westra said.

"That's just something that's being said by the opposition as a scare tactic," Muth said.

Muth's co-chair, Dana Dykhouse, agrees.

"If the people speak, the Legislature would be very foolish not to follow the wishes of the voters," Dykhouse said.

South Dakotans Against Higher Taxes started running commercials early in the election cycle. Muth and Dykhouse see that as a sign of an early and large investment by tobacco companies.

"The opposition is primarily funded by large tobacco companies," Dykhouse said. "We anticipated that."

Westra doesn't agree with that characterization.

"We've built a pretty solid coalition," Westra said, with members that include South Dakota retailers and petroleum marketers.

Westra notes that both of the state's major political parties have come out against IM 25.

"That, in and of itself, ought to tell you that this is bad policy," Westra said.

The two sides in the debate can't agree on how much will be raised by the increased tobacco tax. IM 25 backers rely on state budget officials' estimate that the increase will raise \$25 million with the first \$20 million earmarked for technical school tuition relief.

Westra's organization estimates the increased tax will raise \$35 million.

"They are taxing more than even what's being requested," Westra said.

Dykhouse sees the funding as the key to sparking a new day in technical education in South Dakota.

"It is a critical need for South Dakota to get workers and train workers in the skills that are needed," Dykhouse said.

According to Westra, enrollment is up at the state's technical schools.

"There's nothing that's preventing these students from attending," Westra said.

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It's Volleyball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Wolsey-
Wessington
Lady Warbirds**
VS



Groton Area Tigers

9:50 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 13, 2018
Redfield

It's Volleyball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Waverly-South
Shore Coyotes**
VS



Groton Area Tigers

11:15 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 13, 2018
on first available court in Redfield



The recent snow has not melted much. The football game is scheduled for today at 7 p.m. and yesterday, they took the brush and swept off the lines. It could be a very slushy night in football.



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Weather Creating Harvest Challenges for Soybean Growers

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Fall 2018's cool, damp weather has put the brakes on many acres of soybean harvest this year.

"This year has been the perfect storm of late season moisture and temperature to cause harvest and seed quality issues," said Sara Bauder, SDSU Extension Agronomy Field Specialist. "We cannot always avoid these problems, but salvaging the best harvest possible and managing for next year should be first priority."

To aid South Dakota soybean growers, Bauder, together with Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist and Connie Strunk, SDSU Extension Plant Pathology Field Specialist, share best practices.

Late harvest

"Although South Dakota has seen late harvest seasons in the past, this year is testing many farmers' patience considering the wet weather of the past few weeks and current climate outlook," Edwards explained.

Edwards references data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center, explaining that October started out very wet, following on the heels of an exceptionally wet September.

"In the Sioux Falls' area, 9.5-inches of rain was reported between September 1 and October 9," Edwards said. "This excessive moisture has made field access impossible and stalled grain drying in field."

Edwards added, "Cool temperatures have further limited evaporation and the ability to dry grain in the field."

Drier weather predicted

Although current forecast models predict drier weather ahead, (as of October 10, 2018), with cool temperatures gradually moving east, Edwards said even if predictions are true, they will not help South Dakota's soybean growers much.

"There is limited ability to warm up substantially at the end of October, as days are shorter and we have lower sun angle than in mid-summer," Edwards said. "The additional moisture in the soils and atmosphere also limits warming and grain drying after the rain ends."

Drying

Bauder said for most, the best case scenario this soybean harvest is to wait out the weather.

"This means, waiting until the precipitation stops and the sun comes out, making soils dry enough for field traffic-ability and hopefully lowering seed moisture content," she said.

Based on multiple factors, many producers have made the decision to store soybeans on-farm. Some of these factors include:

- Farmers holding over old grain

- Many commercial outlets only accepting dry soybeans (less than 13 to 14 percent moisture)

- Increased commercial storage costs in some areas

Current market outlook

"For long-term storage of soybeans (several months up to a year), it is recommended to dry soybeans down to 11 percent moisture," Bauder said. "With drying facilities available on-farm, some producers may choose to harvest wet beans, but others will most likely wait out the damp fall as long as reasonably possible."

Cool & humid conditions not ideal

"Under these cool and humid conditions, seeds will tend to absorb additional moisture from the atmosphere, which will most likely cause many fields to be harvested above 13 percent this year if dry weather is not predicted soon," Bauder said.

As soybean pods mature and turn brown, seed moisture begins to decrease quickly.

In a three-year Iowa State University study, researchers found that soybeans' dry down weight was affected by maturity group selection, planting date, and year.

The study found in the first 12 days after plant maturity begins, soybeans dried rapidly at 3.2 percent per day. Then, after 12 days, dry down was stabilized at approximately 13 percent moisture (Figure 1).

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Grain quality issues

Depending upon how long crops may need to remain in the field, grain quality may become a concern, because certain diseases thrive in current weather conditions, explained Strunk.

"Many fungal soybean diseases, such as Diaporthe pod and stem blight, Frogeye leaf spot, Anthracnose and many other secondary fungi, can impact seed quality," Strunk said.

Strunk said that at this point in the season, soybean growers' main concerns are moisture and storage temperatures to prevent spoilage during storage.

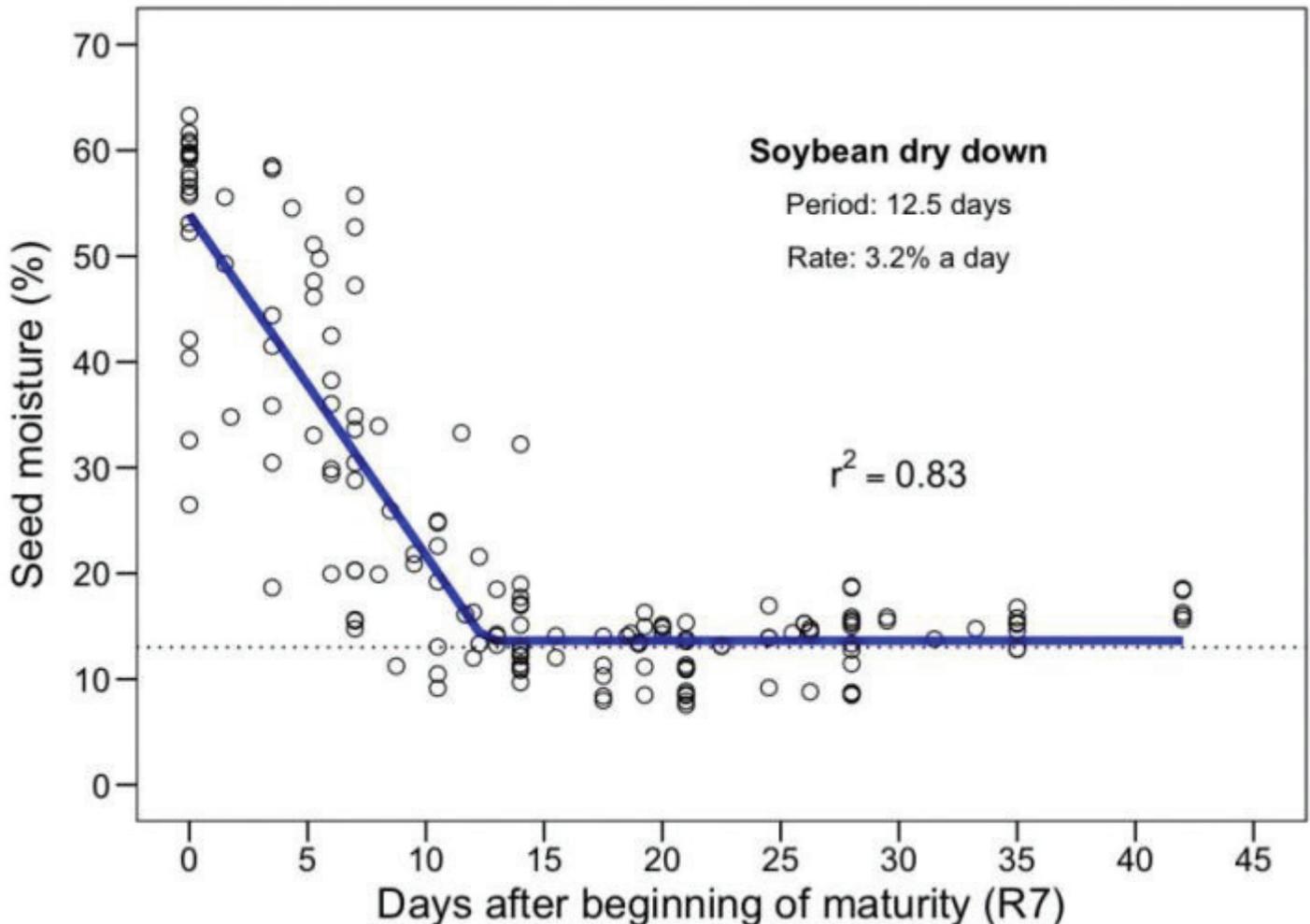
"The best way to protect your crop from seed quality problems is to get it out of the field and dried down as soon as possible," Strunk said. "However, when balancing the forecast and drying costs with potential quality issues, each producer needs to consider what is best for their operation."

Consult nutritionist before feeding infected soybeans

If soybeans are heavily affected by a late season fungi, they may reflect poor seed quality. And, Strunk said that although these soybean fungi are not known for toxicity, a livestock nutritionist should be consulted before adding any soybeans to a feeding ration.

When storing infected grain, Strunk said keeping it dry is key to preventing further colonization and maintain the best seed quality possible.

"We can avoid re-occurrence of some of these late season diseases by implementing crop rotation, planting resistant lines in 2019, utilize a fungicide seed treatment and regularly scouting for disease infestation on stems and pods," Strunk said.



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Noem stops in Groton

Rep. Kristi Noem, a Republican candidate for governor of South Dakota, stopped at the Groton Dairy Queen Thursday forenoon. Several residents stopped out to listen to Noem and to ask questions. The event was broadcast on GDILIVE.COM. You can view it [here](#) - we apologize for the video quality at the beginning, but it does get much better after moving to a different location.

A couple of notes from Noem's talk:

The issue of the over taxation for Brown County farmers was brought up. Noem said that local officials did not properly follow the rules of assessing ag property.

Noem said since she has served in Congress for eight years, she has the connections in Washington, D.C. to assist South Dakotans. In addition, she said Congress cannot solve many problems - the problems have to be solved by the states. Usually, once a governor has termed out in South Dakota, they run for Congress. Noem is going the opposite direction. She has been in Congress for eight years and will now bring that experience back to South Dakota as governor.

Left Photo: LaVonne Helmer (right) has her picture taken with Rep. Kristi Noem. (PHotos by Paul Kosel)

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Today in Weather History

October 12, 1997: High winds upward of 60 mph were recorded throughout western South Dakota.

1918: On October 10, 1918, two men working near a railroad siding northwest of Cloquet, Minnesota saw a passenger train pass by the siding, and soon after that discovered a fire burning through grass and piles of wood. The fire could not be contained, and by October 12, fires had spread through northern Minnesota. In total, 453 lives were lost, and 52,000 people were injured or displaced, 38 communities were destroyed, 250,000 acres were burned.

1962: The Columbus Day Storm of 1962 was a Pacific Northwest windstorm that struck the West Coast of Canada and the Pacific Northwest coast of the United States on this day. It is considered the benchmark of extratropical wind storms. The storm ranks among the most intense to strike the region since at least 1948, likely since the January 9, 1880 "Great Gale" and snowstorm. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the University of Washington.

1979: The lowest barometric pressure ever recorded occurs in the center of Typhoon Tip on this day. A fly reconnaissance mission recorded the low pressure of 870 hPa or 25.69 inHg. At its peak, Typhoon Tip was the most extensive tropical cyclone on record with a wind diameter of 1380 miles.

1836 - A third early season storm produced heavy snow in the northeastern U.S. Bridgewater NY received 18 inches, a foot of snow fell at Madison NY, and for the third time all the mountains of the northeastern U.S. were whitened. (David Ludlum)

1918 - Forest fires ravaged parts of Minnesota from the Duluth area northeastward, claiming the lives of 600 persons. Smoke with a smell of burnt wood spread to Albany NY and Washington D.C. in 24 hours. Smoke was noted at Charleston SC on the 14th, and by the 15th was reported in northeastern Texas. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1962 - The "Columbus Day Big Blow" occurred in the Pacific Northwest. It was probably the most damaging windstorm of record west of the Cascade Mountains. Winds reached hurricane force, with gusts above 100 mph. More than 3.5 billion board feet of timber were blown down, and communications were severely disrupted due to downed power lines. The storm claimed 48 lives, and caused 210 million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Floyd, the only hurricane to make landfall the entire season, moved across the Florida Keys. Floyd produced wind gusts to 59 mph at Duck Key, and up to nine inches of rain in southern Florida. Sixteen cities in the Ohio Valley and the Middle Mississippi Valley reported record low temperatures for the date. Record lows included 27 degrees at Paducah KY, and 24 degrees at Rockford IL and Springfield IL. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date, including International Falls MN with a reading of 17 degrees. The town of Embarass MN reported a morning low of 8 degrees. Snow showers in the northeastern U.S. produced five inches at Corry PA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Temperatures again warmed into the 80s in the Central Plains Region and the Middle Mississippi Valley, with 90s in the south central U.S. Six cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Fort Smith AR with a reading of 92 degrees. Strong winds along a cold front crossing the Great Lakes Region and the Ohio Valley gusted to 61 mph at Johnstown PA. (The National Weather Summary)

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Today



Clearing

High: 46 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 33 °F

Saturday



Partly Sunny
then Partly
Sunny and
Breezy

High: 45 °F

Saturday
Night



Partly Cloudy

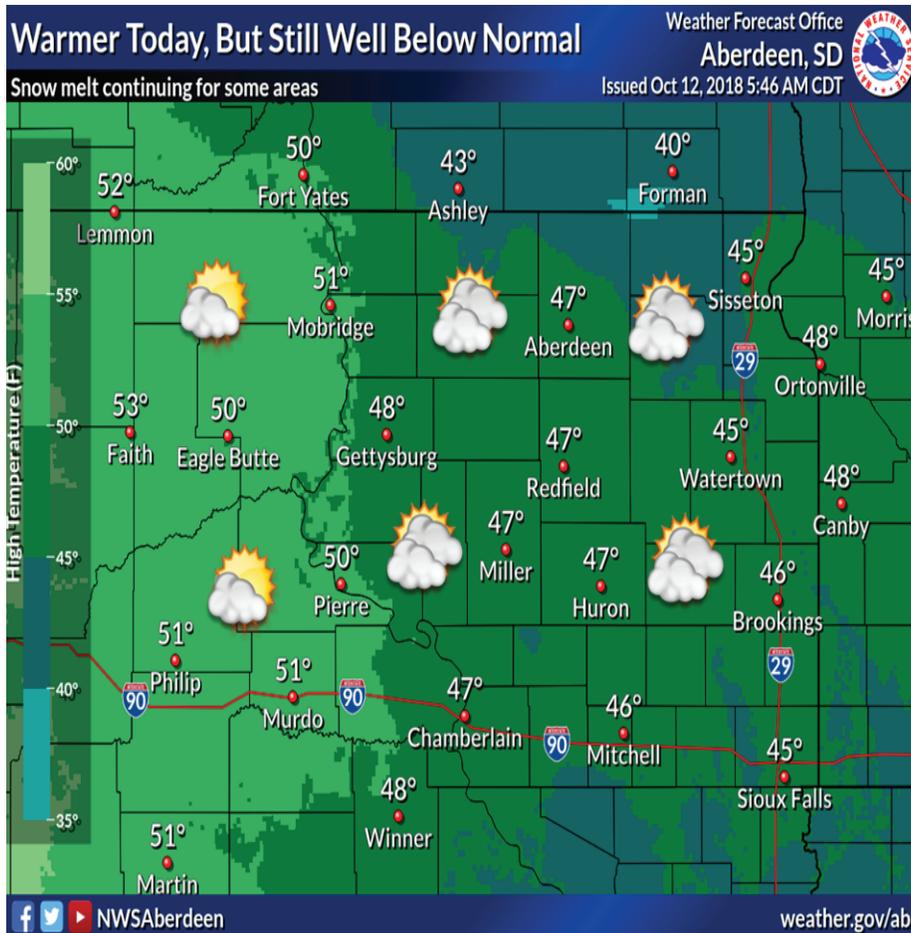
Low: 26 °F

Sunday



Mostly Sunny
then Partly
Sunny and
Breezy

High: 38 °F



After some morning light snow or sprinkles across central South Dakota, expect light southwest breezes to develop today with warmer temperatures moving in. Although, today's highs will still be well below normal with readings only in the 40s to low 50s. We will see more snow melt today for areas that still have snow on the ground from this week's early season snow storm. Windy conditions are forecast on Saturday behind a passing cold front, signaling another blast of colder air which will stick around through the latter half of the weekend.

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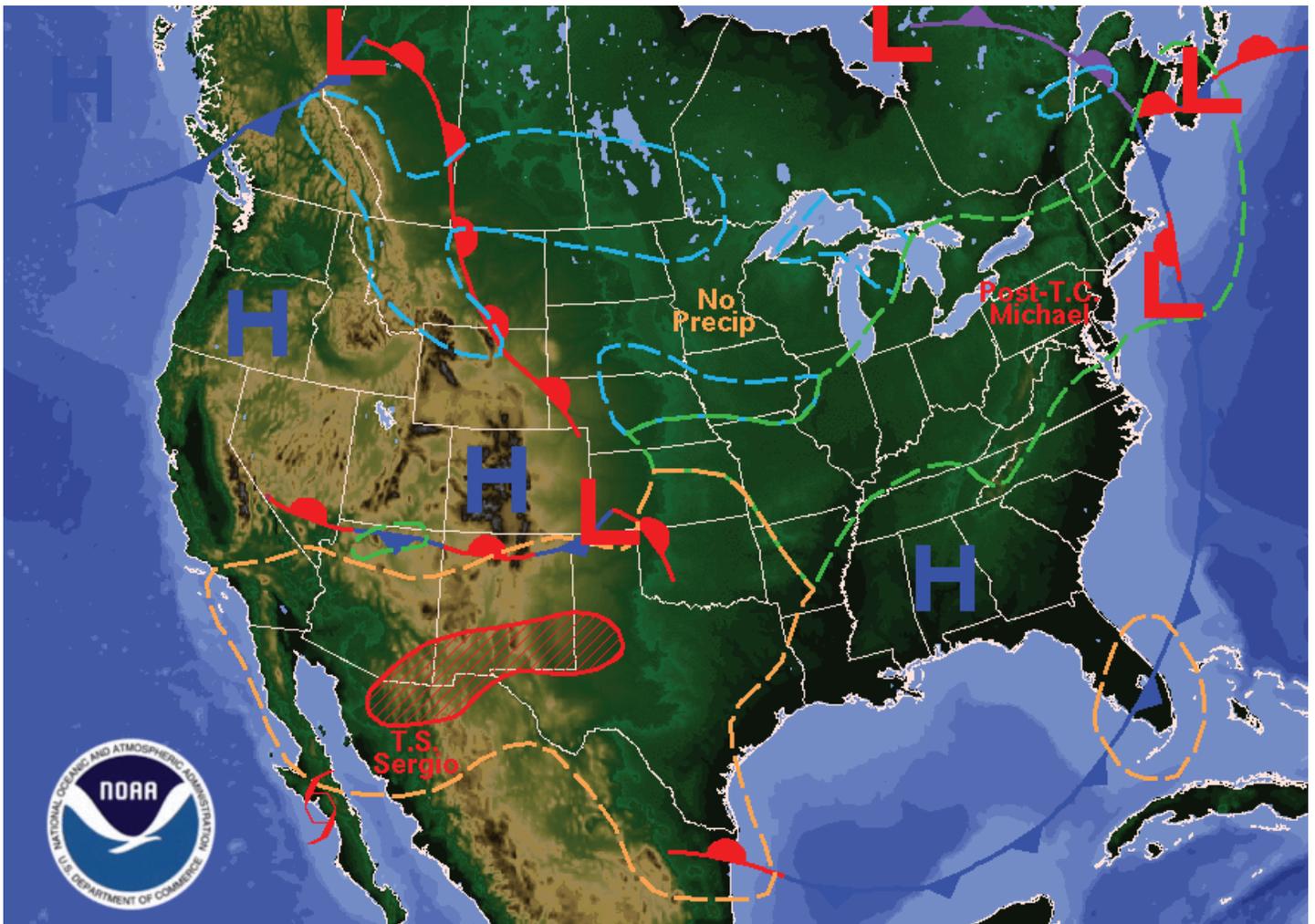
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 38 °F at 4:10 PM
Low Outside Temp: 25 °F at 10:27 PM
High Gust: 24 mph at 12:06 AM
Precip: 0.02

Today's Info

Record High: 89° in 1910
Record Low: 11° in 1917
Average High: 60°F
Average Low: 34°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.80
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.42
Average Precip to date: 19.28
Precip Year to Date: 15.03
Sunset Tonight: 6:54 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:47 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Oct 12, 2018, issued 4:53 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Mcreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

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



THE WAYS OF THE WIND

An army brigade was on a field training exercise in Texas near the Davis Mountains. Without warning, the skies turned dark, and the winds began to blow. Then, a swirling tornado began to travel across the training area. As it passed through the command area, a mangled mass of canvas with a soldier wrapped in the middle of it, dropped right in front of the colonel leading the exercise.

Soldier, barked the officer, what nerve you have. Coming into my area without permission or cause. Have you no respect for your leader?

Sir, said the soldier, trying to free himself from the ropes and canvas, I had nothing to do with this. I was simply trying to put my tent up when the wind came through and picked me and my tent up, and away we went. And here I am, Sir.

But, I didnt see the wind, soldier, said the officer.

Neither did I, Sir, but I sure felt it, came the reply.

In the Bible, wind is an emblem of the Holy Spirit. And in Psalm 147:18 we read, He sends the winds, and the ice thaws.

On one occasion, Jesus said, The wind blows where it wants to. You can hear the sound of the wind, but you have no idea where it came from nor where it is going. So you cant explain how people are born of the Spirit.

Nor can we explain the work of the Spirit. He is not predictable nor do we understand Him. eHe is a gift of God who works in our lives to save us and empower us to serve.

Prayer: We thank You, Father, for Your Spirit who gives us eternal life and strengthens us in our daily walk. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 147:18b He sends the winds, and the ice thaws.

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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

News from the Associated Press

South Dakota jury clears ex-nonprofit CEO in contracts case

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota jury cleared a former nonprofit executive accused of backdating contracts to try to avoid a potential audit in a case sparked after the organization's financial officer killed his family and himself in 2015.

Stacy Phelps, the former CEO of the American Indian Institute for Innovation, was found not guilty late Thursday night of falsifying evidence and conspiring to offer forged or fraudulent evidence. Prosecutors alleged Phelps backdated the contracts between the nonprofit Institute and an educational cooperative in an attempt to dodge an audit.

Defense attorney Dana Hanna said Native American people in South Dakota have always known Phelps, a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, was innocent of the charges and have been behind him "all the way."

"We've always maintained his innocence, and we proved it," Hanna said. "God is great. That's all I have to say."

Phelps was the second and final person to face trial in a sprawling case known as Gear Up. The first hint of major issues came after the nonprofit's chief financial officer, Scott Westerhuis, shot his wife, his four children and then himself in 2015. Authorities have said they believe Westerhuis and his wife stole more than \$1 million before their deaths.

The killings spurred a financial investigation that led to charges in 2016 against Phelps and two others who worked with Westerhuis at the Institute or Mid-Central Educational Cooperative.

Hanna said during the trial that the evidence showed Phelps didn't commit any crimes. Attorney General Marty Jackley, a prosecutor, unsuccessfully argued that the case was about a "cover-up" of the financial dealings of the nonprofit and Phelps' conduct.

Jackley said after the verdict that Westerhuis' absence complicated the case. But Jackley said he appreciates the jury's service and respects the verdict.

"At the end of the day, our job is to present as much evidence as we can to the jury and let the jury make that just result," Jackley said.

Phelps testified in his own defense, denying that he feared an audit of the nonprofit and saying that he believed the contracts were genuine. Phelps said he had never discussed dodging an audit with Westerhuis and trusted him up until the day he died.

Phelps said he backdated the documents in August 2015 because Westerhuis said he couldn't find the originals. Phelps said Mid-Central's former director, Dan Guericke, had already signed the contracts when they were emailed to him and that he viewed backdating them as a "routine act that Mid-Central asked me to do."

The Institute helped Mid-Central administer a college-readiness grant program called Gear Up, and Phelps and Westerhuis worked for both organizations. Educational cooperatives provide services to member school districts in areas such as special education.

Westerhuis also told him the contracts had to be amended to include language requiring that the Institute get permission from Mid-Central to spend money for a Gear Up summer program, Phelps testified.

Jurors deliberated for about nine hours. During closing arguments Thursday, Hanna deflected blame from Phelps, saying he trusted Westerhuis and got played by him. The Argus Leader reported that Hanna referred to Westerhuis as a "world-class con man," "liar" and "criminal."

Prosecutors pointed out inconsistent answers Phelps gave during a law enforcement interview about the reason Westerhuis asked him to backdate the contracts, and they tried to convince jurors he had a motive for wanting to avoid an audit of the nonprofit he headed.

Phelps, 45, had pleaded not guilty to two counts of falsifying evidence and two counts of conspiring to

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offer forged or fraudulent evidence. He faced a maximum sentence of two years in prison and a \$4,000 fine per count.

Guericke was a co-defendant with Phelps, but instead took a plea deal in September and then testified during Phelps' trial.

A jury in June cleared onetime Mid-Central assistant business manager Stephanie Hubers, who had been accused of receiving about \$55,000 to keep quiet about Westerhuis and his wife's alleged stealing. Hubers was found not guilty of grand theft, grand theft by deception and alternative receiving stolen property charges.

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Christian def. Leola/Frederick, 25-19, 25-18, 23-25, 22-25, 15-6
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-22, 25-17, 25-17
Avon def. Centerville, 25-4, 25-11, 25-14
Baltic def. Sioux Valley, 25-17, 22-25, 26-24, 25-15
Bennett County def. Todd County, 25-10, 25-13, 16-25, 25-12
Bison def. Mott-Regent, N.D., 25-21, 27-25, 16-25, 25-22
Bridgewater-Emery def. Gayville-Volin, 25-21, 25-17, 25-13
Burke def. Gregory, 25-23, 25-12, 25-17
Castlewood def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-21, 25-12, 23-25, 25-23
Chamberlain def. Platte-Geddes, 15-25, 12-25, 25-23, 25-12, 16-14
Chester def. Canistota, 25-13, 25-22, 25-13
Colome def. White River, 23-25, 25-14, 25-18, 25-12
Dakota Valley def. Beresford, 25-20, 25-23, 22-25, 25-20
DeSmet def. Lake Preston, 25-14, 25-22, 25-20
Deubrook def. Estelline/Hendricks, 27-25, 20-25, 25-14, 25-18
Deuel def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-14, 25-21, 25-17
Edgemont def. Hulett, Wyo., 25-14, 25-20, 25-22
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-10, 25-12, 25-14
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Colman-Egan, 25-12, 25-18, 25-27, 25-20
Ethan def. Hanson, 25-21, 25-15, 25-14
Garretson def. Tea Area, 18-25, 25-23, 25-23, 25-22
Great Plains Lutheran def. Wilmot, 27-25, 25-18, 25-22
Herreid/Selby Area def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-12, 25-13, 25-11
Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. def. Lemmon, 25-19, 25-20, 19-25, 25-14
Hill City def. Wall, 25-22, 25-12, 25-14
Ipswich def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-17, 25-19, 24-26, 25-23
James Valley Christian def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-17, 25-12, 25-17
Kadoka Area def. Jones County, 25-10, 25-15, 25-10
Kimball/White Lake def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 24-26, 25-21, 25-21, 25-15
Langford def. Edmunds Central, 25-11, 25-18, 25-20
Lennox def. Viborg-Hurley, 20-25, 25-15, 25-15, 25-20
Menno def. Mitchell Christian, 25-15, 25-6, 25-20
Milbank Area def. Britton-Hecla, 25-12, 25-15, 22-25, 25-13
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. West Central, 25-15, 25-14, 23-25, 25-18
Newell def. Oelrichs, 25-21, 25-23, 25-23
Northwestern def. Potter County, 25-5, 25-10, 25-14

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Parker def. Parkston, 25-22, 25-8, 25-15
Redfield/Doland def. Hamlin, 25-21, 25-17, 25-23
Scotland def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-19, 25-16, 21-25, 25-21
Sioux Falls Christian def. Harrisburg, 25-8, 25-12, 25-14
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Aberdeen Central, 25-16, 25-23, 25-19
Sturgis def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-22, 25-21, 25-23
Sully Buttes def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-18, 25-21, 25-20
Vermillion def. Canton, 20-25, 25-20, 25-22, 17-25, 15-6
Wagner def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-18, 25-6, 26-24
Warner def. Faulkton, 25-23, 25-16, 25-14
Watertown def. Yankton, 25-20, 25-14, 25-11
Waverly-South Shore def. Arlington, 25-18, 25-20, 24-26, 25-20
Webster def. Sisseton, 25-23, 25-16, 20-25, 25-10
Wolsey-Wessington def. Wessington Springs, 25-22, 25-11, 25-20

Tribes write letters opposing Keystone oil pipeline

EAGLE BUTTE, S.D. (AP) — American Indian tribes have written letters to South Dakota's Public Utilities Commission, expressing their opposition to the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the Yankton Sioux Tribe and a grassroots group called Dakota Rural Action wrote letters seeking more information about developer TransCanada's compliance with permit conditions.

The tribes say ground-disturbing activity near the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation and the Rosebud Sioux Reservation prompted the letter. It says that if TransCanada's actions are found to be unlawful, the commission should order that construction be stopped.

The tribe says the pipeline would run through Great Sioux Nation homelands.

A TransCanada spokeswoman has said previously that its site near the reservation is a pipe yard, one of four being prepared in South Dakota before planned construction next year.

Officials release name of teen who fell off vehicle, died

MILBANK, S.D. (AP) — A teenager who died after he fell off the hood of a moving vehicle has been identified as a 16-year-old Milbank boy.

Authorities say Tanner Schwagel was riding on the hood of a Dodge Intrepid on Sunday near Milbank when his foot got caught on the front bumper and he was dragged under the car. He died at a hospital in Sioux Falls.

The 16-year-old who was driving the car was not injured but could face criminal charges. South Dakota's Highway Patrol is investigating the crash.

Even without Uber, South Dakota gets settlement share

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota will get more than a half-million dollars from a judgment against Uber, even though the ride-hailing service isn't currently available in the state.

Uber Technologies Inc. recently agreed to pay \$148 million to all 50 states and the District of Columbia over a massive data breach in 2016. South Dakota will receive \$573,488 as part of the national settlement.

Assistant Attorney General Phil Carlson told the Rapid City Journal that even though Uber isn't operating in the state, there were about 70 drivers with South Dakota addresses whose information was compromised.

The state's share will fund consumer protection efforts within the Attorney General's Office, according to Carlson.

In November 2017, Uber acknowledged that hackers had obtained the personal data of roughly 600,000 GPS-tracked drivers, who are summoned to pick up riders from a cellphone app. The company took a

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year to report the 2016 breach, instead tracking down the hackers and paying a ransom to destroy the information.

South Dakota joined the states in their multi-party lawsuit, claiming that the ride-sharing company was required by law to report such breaches. South Dakota law requires identity hacks to be reported to the state within 60 days.

"We didn't organize it (the lawsuit). We weren't a part of the group that was running the investigation," Carlson said. "We were merely a participating member."

South Dakota sought \$2,000 per deceptive act and \$10,000 per day that Uber failed to notify the public about the breach.

The settlement also laid out further security steps for Uber, including improved privacy protection for drivers and riders, better protection of user data the company stores on third-party platforms and the hiring of an outside security consultant.

Carlson said that Uber "may come to our state at some time in the future." The company's competitor, Lyft, currently operates in Rapid City, Pierre, Aberdeen and Sioux Falls.

Uber spokeswoman Charity Jackson said the company's "goal is to be in South Dakota." Uber has been cleared to operate in South Dakota but hasn't yet entered the marketplace.

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

Authorities ID Sherman man killed in Minnehaha County crash

BALTIC, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Sherman man who died in a two-vehicle crash in Minnehaha County.

The Highway Patrol says 61-year-old Brian Madtson was driving a pickup truck that turned in front of a car at a rural intersection near Baltic on Monday afternoon.

He was pronounced dead at the scene. The 16-year-old girl driving the car suffered minor injuries.

Oil pipeline opponents advance in Pine Ridge president race

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Two men who are opponents of oil pipelines will face off in the Oglala Sioux tribe's president race.

The Rapid City Journal reports that unofficial results from the tribe's primary election Tuesday show Julian Bear Runner and Richard Zephier advancing to the Nov. 6 general election on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. They were the top two vote-getters among seven candidates.

Bear Runner is a military veteran who has worked in law enforcement and emergency medical services. He was involved in protests against the Dakota Access pipeline.

Zephier has worked in education and also in tribal and federal government service. He says he supports the upcoming battle against the Keystone XL pipeline.

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

Public Safety leader taking job at Dakota State University

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The head of South Dakota's Department of Public Safety is leaving to take a job with Dakota State University.

DPS Secretary Trevor Jones says he will be working in the digital forensics lab at the Madison school.

Jones has led the Public Safety department during Gov. Dennis Daugaard's administration, following a 20-year career in law enforcement. Daugaard lauded Jones' leadership, particularly during Missouri River flooding in 2011.

Deputy Secretary Shawnie Rechtenbaugh will serve as interim secretary during the rest of Daugaard's term.

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South Dakota farmers make progress on late-season harvest

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers continue making progress on the late-season harvest, despite a week with just two days considered suitable for fieldwork.

The federal Agriculture Department in its weekly crop report says 4 percent of the sunflower crop, 16 percent of the sorghum, 16 percent of the corn and 28 percent of the soybeans are harvested.

Subsoil moisture is rated 62 percent adequate to surplus, and topsoil moisture is 81 percent in those categories.

Pasture and range conditions are rated 45 percent in good to excellent condition, up slightly over the week.

Florida: Too soon for homeowners to return to disaster zone

By JAY REEVES and BRENDAN FARRINGTON, Associated Press

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (AP) — Linda Marquardt rode out Hurricane Michael with her husband at their home in Mexico Beach. When their house filled with surging ocean water, they fled upstairs. Now their home is full of mud and everywhere they look there's utter devastation in their Florida Panhandle community: fishing boats tossed like toys, roofs lifted off of buildings and pine trees snapped like matchsticks in 155 mph winds.

Row after row of beachfront homes were so obliterated by Michael's surging seas and howling winds that only slabs of concrete in the sand remain, a testament that this was ground zero when the epic Category 4 hurricane slammed ashore at midweek. The destruction in this and other communities dotting the white-sand beaches is being called catastrophic — and it will need billions of dollars to rebuild.

"All of my furniture was floating," said Marquardt, 67. "A river just started coming down the road. It was awful, and now there's just nothing left."

At least six deaths were blamed on Michael, the most powerful hurricane to hit the continental U.S. in over 50 years, and by early Friday it wasn't over yet: a tropical storm long after Wednesday's landfall, Michael stubbornly kept up its punch while barreling up the Southeast, dumping heavy rains and spreading flash flooding misery as far away as Virginia.

High winds, downed trees, streets inundated by rising waters and multiple rescues of motorists from waterlogged cars played out in spots around Virginia and neighboring North Carolina. And while forecasters said Michael was gradually losing its tropical traits, it was a new chapter would begin as an extratropical storm predicted to intensify with gale force winds once it starts cross out into the Atlantic.

In North Carolina's mountains, motorists had to be rescued Thursday from cars trapped by high water. High winds toppled trees and power lines, leaving hundreds of thousands without power. Flash flooding also was reported in the big North Carolina cities of Charlotte and Raleigh. Similar scenes played out in parts of Virginia as the storm raced seaward.

All told, more than 900,000 homes and businesses in Florida, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas were without power.

Meanwhile, thousands of National Guard troops, law enforcement officers and rescue teams still had much to do in the hardest hit area: Florida's Panhandle. Families living along the Panhandle are now faced with a struggle to survive in a perilous landscape of shattered homes and shopping centers, the storm debris spread far and wide.

In one community, Panama City, most homes were still standing, but no property was left undamaged. Downed power lines and twisted street signs lay all around. Aluminum siding was shredded and homes were split by fallen trees. Hundreds of cars had broken windows. The hurricane damaged hospitals and nursing homes in Panama City, and officials worked to evacuate hundreds of patients.

"So many lives have been changed forever. So many families have lost everything," said Florida Gov. Rick Scott, calling it "unimaginable destruction."

An insurance company that produces models for catastrophes estimated Michael caused about \$8 billion in damage. Boston-based Karen Clark & Company released that estimate Thursday, which includes privately insured wind and storm surge damage to residential, commercial and industrial properties and

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vehicles. It doesn't include losses covered by the National Flood Insurance Program.

And Michael also was deadly, both in Florida and beyond.

A man outside Tallahassee, Florida, was killed by a falling tree was the first of "4 storm-related fatalities" announced by the Gadsden County Sheriff's office. An 11-year-old girl in Georgia died when Michael's winds picked up a carport and dropped it through the roof of her grandparents' home. A driver in North Carolina was killed when a tree fell on his car.

Some fear the toll can only rise as rescue teams get around storm debris blocking roads and reach isolated areas.

More than 375,000 people up and down the Gulf Coast were ordered or urged to clear out as Michael closed in. But emergency authorities lamented that many ignored the warnings.

The Coast Guard said it rescued at least 27 people before and after the hurricane's landfall, mostly from coastal homes. Nine people had to be rescued by helicopter from a bathroom of a home in hard-hit Panama City after their roof collapsed, Petty Officer 3rd Class Ronald Hodges said.

In hard-hit Mexico Beach alone, state officials say, 285 people in Mexico Beach defied a mandatory evacuation order ahead of Michael. The task ahead: finding and hopefully safely accounting for all those who stayed behind.

National Guard troops made their way into the ground-zero town and found 20 survivors initially Wednesday night, and more rescue crews are arriving. But the fate of many residents was unknown.

Mishelle McPherson and her ex-husband searched for the elderly mother of a friend. The woman lived in a small cinderblock house about 150 yards (meters) from the Gulf and thought she would be OK. The home was found smashed, with no sign of the woman.

"Do you think her body would be here? Do you think it would have floated away?" McPherson asked.

Associated Press writers Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg, Florida; Gary Fineout in Tallahassee, Florida; Terry Spencer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Jennifer Kay and Freida Frisaro in Miami; Brendan Farrington in St. Marks, Florida; Russ Bynum in Keaton Beach, Florida; Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland, contributed to this story.

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

Pope accepts Washington cardinal's resignation amid scandal

By DAVID CRARY and NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis accepted the resignation Friday of Washington Cardinal Donald Wuerl after he became entangled in two major sexual abuse and cover-up scandals and lost the support of many in his flock.

But in a letter released by Wuerl's office, Francis praised his longtime ally and suggested Wuerl had unfairly become a scapegoat, having made some "mistakes" in handling sex abuse cases, but not having covered them up.

With the resignation, Wuerl becomes the most prominent head to roll in the scandal roiling the Catholic Church after his predecessor as Washington archbishop, Theodore McCarrick, was forced to resign as cardinal over allegations he sexually abused at least two minors and adult seminarians.

A Vatican statement Friday said Francis had accepted Wuerl's resignation, but named no replacement; in his letter, the pope asked him to stay on in a temporary capacity until a new archbishop is found.

The decision came after months in which Wuerl, who turns 78 in November, initially downplayed the scandal, insisted on his own good record, but then progressively came to the conclusion that he could no longer lead the archdiocese.

"The Holy Father's decision to provide new leadership to the Archdiocese can allow all of the faithful, clergy, religious and lay, to focus on healing and the future," Wuerl said in a statement Friday. "Once again for any past errors in judgment I apologize and ask for pardon."

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In his letter accepting the resignation, Francis said he recognized that in asking to retire, Wuerl had put the interests and unity of his flock ahead of his own ambitions, as all shepherds must do.

"You have sufficient elements to justify your actions and distinguish between what it means to cover up crimes or not to deal with problems, and to commit some mistakes," Francis wrote. "However, your nobility has led you not to choose this way of defense. Of this I am proud and thank you."

Wuerl had submitted his resignation to Francis nearly three years ago, when he turned 75, the normal retirement age for bishops. But Francis kept him on, as popes tend to do with able-bodied bishops who share their pastoral priorities.

But a grand jury report issued in August on rampant sex abuse in six Pennsylvania dioceses accused Wuerl of helping to protect some child-molesting priests while he was bishop of Pittsburgh from 1988 to 2006. Simultaneously, Wuerl faced widespread skepticism over his insistence that he knew nothing about years of alleged sexual misconduct by McCarrick.

Wuerl has not been charged with any wrongdoing but was named numerous times in the grand jury report, which details instances in which he allowed priests accused of misconduct to be reassigned or reinstated.

In one case cited in the report, Wuerl — acting on a doctor's recommendation — enabled priest William O'Malley to return to active ministry as a canonical consultant in 1998 despite allegations of abuse lodged against him in the past and his own admission that he was sexually interested in adolescents. Years later, according to the report, six more people alleged that they were sexually assaulted by O'Malley, in some cases after he had been reinstated.

In another case, Wuerl returned a priest to active ministry in 1995 despite having received multiple complaints that the priest, George Zirwas, had molested boys in the late 1980s.

Wuerl apologized for the damage inflicted on the victims but also defended his efforts to combat clergy sex abuse.

His defenders have cited a case that surfaced in 1988, when a 19-year-old former seminarian, Tim Bendig, filed a lawsuit accusing a priest, Anthony Cipolla, of molesting him. Wuerl initially questioned Bendig's account but later accepted it and moved to oust Cipolla from the priesthood. The Vatican's highest court ordered Wuerl to restore Cipolla to priestly ministry, but Wuerl resisted and, after two years of legal procedures, prevailed in preventing Cipolla's return.

"No bishop or cardinal in the nation has had a more consistent and courageous record than Donald Wuerl in addressing priestly sexual abuse," contends Bill Donahue, president of the Catholic League.

Wuerl's archdiocese issued a series of similar plaudits on Friday, coinciding with the Vatican announcement. They included a letter from the archdiocesan chancellor Kim Vitti Fiorentino, who lamented that Wuerl's "pioneering leadership in the enhancement, implementation and enforcement of historically innovative child protection policies was overshadowed by the (Pennsylvania grand jury) report's flaws and its interpretation by the media."

A joint statement by Washington auxiliary bishops also praised Wuerl for his service and pastoral care and said his decision to step down was a "clear manifestation of his love and concern for the people of the archdiocese."

The Rev. Thomas Reese, a Jesuit priest who writes for Religion News Service, described Wuerl as an ideological moderate.

"He was totally enthusiastic about John Paul II, and then Pope Benedict, and now he's totally enthusiastic about Pope Francis," Reese said. "There are not many people in the church who are totally enthusiastic about all three of them."

Numerous conservative Catholic activists and commentators, though, considered him too tolerant of the LGBT community and too liberal on some other issues. They resented his pivotal role a decade ago in resisting a push by some of his fellow bishops to deny Communion to Catholic politicians who support the right to abortion.

Survivor advocate David Clohessy of the group SNAP said Wuerl's "long-overdue" resignation might give

solace to victims. But he said it would likely do little to deter others in the hierarchy from covering up for abusers.

"But if archaic, predatory-friendly laws were reformed and if more prosecutors showed real courage, these complicit clerics might face criminal charges, and that might make a real difference," he said in a statement.

Wuerl was born in Pittsburgh, attended Catholic University in Washington and received a doctorate in theology from the University of Saint Thomas in Rome. He joined the priesthood in 1966, was ordained a bishop by Pope John Paul II in 1986, and served briefly as auxiliary bishop in Seattle before going to Pittsburgh.

Crary reported from New York.

Georgia girl, 11, dies as Michael hurls debris through roof

By KATE BRUMBACK, Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — By all accounts, Sarah Radney was safe inside her grandparents' home when Hurricane Michael roared into southwest Georgia.

If the family feared anything, it was probably falling trees — not a carport next to the house.

In what could only be described as a freak accident, authorities say Michael's powerful winds lifted the portable structure high into the air and slammed it back down on the house. When it landed, one of the legs tore through the roof, fatally striking the 11-year-old girl in the head.

Michael dropped from a Category 4 hurricane to a Category 1 as it arrived in Georgia, and later weakened to a tropical storm. Still, it caused havoc in parts of the state, spinning off tornadoes and leaving downed trees, damaged buildings and power outages behind as it marched toward the Carolinas.

Sarah had the week off from school for fall break and she and her 12-year-old brother had been staying at their grandparents' house near a lake in Seminole County since Monday. They were supposed to return home Thursday morning.

At home in Cairo about 45 miles (70 kilometers) away, Sarah's father and stepmother, Roy and Amber Radney, kept in touch with her grandparents through frequent phone calls as the storm winds gusted around them.

Roy Radney was outside Wednesday evening when the call came that something had come through the roof and hit Sarah and his mother. Sarah had been struck in the face, couldn't breathe and quickly fell unconscious.

About 45 minutes later, Amber Radney called her father-in-law and learned Sarah was gone.

Emergency responders weren't able to reach the home until after midnight because power lines and trees blocked the roads. When they finally made it, they took Sarah's grandmother to a hospital, where she was treated for a punctured lung, a broken rib and flesh wounds, Amber Radney said.

The youngest of four until her father remarried and had two more daughters, Sarah loved being around her big family and made everything more fun, Roy and Amber Radney said in phone interviews with The Associated Press on Thursday.

"We couldn't ever get her to spend the night nowhere because she always wanted to be home with her family," Roy Radney said. "She was 11 years old, but she liked to have fun like a 5-year-old."

Sarah loved to perform, her father said. When she started sixth grade this year, she began playing the trumpet in the school band and had recently been in a play with the drama club.

Amber Radney said one of her favorite memories is of making a video of Sarah dancing to Outkast's "Hey Ya!" in a park about two years ago.

"She was so beautiful and she smiled so much that day," Amber Radney said. "She lit up everything."

Other parts of Georgia also were hit hard by the storm. National Weather Service meteorologist Ryan Willis said there were two confirmed tornado touchdowns in the state: one in southwest Atlanta and another in Crawford County in central Georgia.

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Willis said the Atlanta-area tornado was an EF0, the lowest intensity rating for a tornado, with sustained winds of 65 to 85 mph (105 to 137 kph). The damage there consisted mostly of fallen trees.

Willis said that a team was still working in Crawford County to assess the damage and intensity of the tornado.

In Roberta, in Crawford County, Hill Bentley said he saw spinning clouds that looked like a tornado Wednesday.

"I told my wife, Judy, 'Come on out, you want to see what a tornado looks like?'"

Bentley's home wasn't hit, but his friend Bradley Lewis wasn't so lucky. Dozens of fallen pines littered Lewis' front and back yards, and his roof and back porch were damaged. Luckily, he was not injured.

"Kaboom! Like the world moved or something," Lewis said of the moment when the trees snapped while he sheltered inside.

Associated Press writers Jeff Martin in Roberta, Georgia, and Ben Nadler in Atlanta contributed to this report.

Washington Post: Turkey has proof Saudi writer was killed

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey's government has told U.S. officials it has audio and video proof that missing Saudi Arabian writer Jamal Khashoggi was killed and dismembered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, the Washington Post reported Friday.

The newspaper, for which Khashoggi is a columnist, cited anonymous officials as saying the recordings show a Saudi security team detained the writer when he went to the consulate on Oct. 2 to pick up a document for his upcoming wedding.

The Associated Press was not immediately able to confirm the report, and Turkish officials would not comment.

A delegation from Saudi Arabia arrived in Turkey Friday as part of an investigation into the writer's disappearance, Turkey's state-run news agency Anadolu said.

Saudi Arabia has called the allegation it abducted or harmed Khashoggi "baseless." However, it has offered no evidence to support its claim he left the consulate and vanished despite his fiance waiting outside.

Anadolu Agency said the delegation would hold talks with Turkish officials over the weekend. It did not provide further details.

On Thursday, Turkish presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said Turkey and Saudi Arabia would form a "joint working group" to look into Khashoggi's disappearance.

The 59-year-old journalist, who was considered close to the Saudi royal family, had become a critic of the current government and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the 33-year-old heir apparent who has introduced reforms but shown little tolerance for criticism.

Khashoggi had been living in self-imposed exile in the United States since last year. As a contributor to the Washington Post, he has written extensively about Saudi Arabia, including criticism of its war in Yemen, its recent diplomatic spat with Canada and its arrest of women's rights activists after the lifting of a ban on women driving.

Those policies are all seen as initiatives of the crown prince, who has also presided over a roundup of activists and businessmen.

China says in 'communication' amid report of Trump-Xi meet

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN and JOE McDONALD, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China said Friday it is in contact with the United States amid reports of a planned meeting between President Xi Jinping and President Donald Trump next month following a dive in the U.S. stock market blamed partly on a growing trade war between the world's two largest economies.

Foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang offered no specifics, but said that "I have also seen the relevant

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reports.”

“China and the U.S. maintain communication on dialogues and exchanges at all levels,” Lu told reporters at a daily briefing.

The reported meeting would take place during the G-20 summit in Argentina in late November.

The Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post both cited officials saying Trump has decided to proceed with the meeting with Xi. Trump’s top economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, told CNBC Thursday that, “There’s some movement toward” a meeting at the G-20.

“They have lots to talk about. So we’ll see,” Kudlow said.

Global indexes gained Friday after their recent sharp declines, on word of the possible presidential meeting, along with strong Chinese export data.

Japan’s Nikkei 225 index gained 0.5 percent to 22,694.66 after sinking early in the day and following a nearly 4 percent loss on Thursday.

Hong Kong’s Hang Seng surged 2.1 percent to 25,801.49. The Shanghai Composite index advanced 0.9 percent to 2,606.91. Shares recovered in Taiwan and rose throughout Southeast Asia.

Wall Street was set for an optimistic open after two days of steep losses. S&P 500 futures gained 0.8 percent to 2,766.80. Dow futures rose 0.8 percent to 25,378.00.

That followed a swoon that wiped more than 1,300 points from the Dow over two days and dragged the S&P 500 down more than 5 percent.

Reports that U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has advised against labeling China as a currency manipulator — a status that could trigger penalties — were also seen as easing tensions.

Yet the prospects remain highly uncertain as to whether the U.S. is preparing to consider lifting penalty tariffs on about \$250 billion of Chinese products, triggering retaliation by China.

The trade feud has been fueled by U.S. accusations that China coerces foreign companies into handing over technology in return for access to the Chinese market, as well as by China’s trade surplus with the U.S.

That surplus widened to a record \$34.1 billion in September as exports to the American market rose 13 percent from a year earlier to \$46.7 billion, down slightly from August’s 13.4 percent growth. Imports of American goods increased 9 percent to \$12.6 billion, down from August’s 11.1 percent growth.

Chinese exports to the United States have at least temporarily defied forecasts they would weaken after being hit by punitive U.S. tariffs of up to 25 percent.

September marked the second straight record Chinese monthly trade surplus with the United States after August’s \$31 billion.

Export numbers have been buoyed by producers rushing to fill orders before American tariffs rose, but they also benefit from “robust U.S. demand” and a weaker Chinese currency, which makes their goods cheaper abroad, Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics said in a report.

The Chinese yuan has lost nearly 10 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar this year. That prompted suggestions Beijing might weaken the exchange rate to help exporters, but that might hurt China’s economy by encouraging an outflow of capital. The central bank has tightened controls on currency trading to head off further declines.

China-U.S. relations have also been roiled by Beijing’s heated objections to U.S. support for Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy it claims as its own territory, as well as China’s claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, where the U.S. says a Chinese destroyer came aggressively close to a U.S. Navy ship late last month, forcing it to maneuver to prevent a collision.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence also accused Beijing last week of seeking to interfere in the U.S. midterm elections to be held next month.

Trump has made similar accusations, although security experts say they didn’t know of any Chinese influence operations comparable to Russian activities during the 2016 presidential election.

Associated Press writer Annabelle Liang in Singapore contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. "IT WAS AWFUL, AND NOW THERE'S JUST NOTHING LEFT"

The destruction of many Florida communities dotting the white-sand beaches is being called catastrophic as the storm barrels up the Southeast, dumping heavy rains and spreading flash flooding misery as far away as Virginia.

2. US-SAUDI RELATIONS FRAYED BY WRITER'S DISAPPEARANCE

Washington's close relationship with Riyadh is imperiled over the mysterious disappearance inside the Saudi consulate in Turkey of a columnist for The Washington Post.

3. GLOBAL MARKET BLUES EASE WITH POSSIBLE SINO-AMERICAN SUMMIT

China says it is in communication with the U.S. amid reports of a planned meeting between President Xi Jinping and President Donald Trump following a dive in the U.S. stock market blamed partly on a growing trade war between the world's two largest economies.

4. CHURCH'S ABUSE SCANDAL COSTS KEY US CLERIC HIS JOB

Pope Francis accepts resignation of Washington Cardinal Donald Wuerl after he became entangled in two major sexual abuse and cover-up scandals.

5. AMERICAN PASTOR FACING TERROR-RELATED CHARGES

The trial of Andrew Brunson, at the heart of a diplomatic dispute between Turkey and the United States, has resumed, with observers waiting to see if Turkey will release him amid threats of further U.S. sanctions.

6. RAPPER TAKES CENTER STAGE IN THE OVAL OFFICE

Kanye West put on a jaw-dropping performance, including the use of the F-word, during a meeting with President Trump.

7. ISLAMIC STATE GROUP REGROUPS IN BLOODY ASSAULTS

Nearly defeated on the battlefields of its would-be caliphate, IS has reverted to being a shadowy insurgent network targeting civilian populations with guerrilla-style attacks and inciting sectarian strife.

8. MURDERED SALVADORAN ARCHBISHOP TO BE CANONIZED

Pope Francis will officially make Oscar Romero a saint nearly three decades after he was martyred by an assassin's bullet for speaking out against the military dictatorship.

9. A LITTLE LESS POMP AND CEREMONY

Britain gets its second royal wedding of the year as lesser known Princess Eugenie weds a tequila brand ambassador on the grounds of Windsor Castle.

10. HOOPS AROUND THE WORLD

The NBA has been going overseas to play preseason or regular season games for 40 years, and the global footprint of the league continues to expand.

US-Saudi relations imperiled by journalist's disappearance

By DEB RIECHMANN and JONATHAN LEMIRE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sword dancers. Gleaming palaces. Military jets streaming red, white and blue trails. President Donald Trump soaked up the grandeur of Saudi Arabia on his first foreign stop as president last year and envisioned huge benefits for the United States in building closer ties with the repressive and oil-rich desert kingdom.

Now, the White House relationship with Riyadh is imperiled over the mysterious disappearance of a Saudi writer, and the situation is creating friction between the Trump administration and members of Congress demanding to know if the columnist for The Washington Post was killed inside the Saudi consulate in Turkey.

Trump said he has talked to officials at the highest level of the kingdom and is "demanding everything" to explain how Jamal Khashoggi, an activist who had been critical of Saudi leaders, vanished after he walked into the consulate in Istanbul to get documents he needed to get married.

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Turkish authorities claim Khashoggi, who resided in the United States, was killed by members of an elite Saudi "assassination squad." The kingdom describes the allegation as "baseless." But if Saudi Arabia is found to be complicit in his disappearance or death, the warm U.S.-Saudi relationship — and even hopes for Middle East peace — could be upended.

Trump has backed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's ambitious campaign to modernize the conservative kingdom and its economy. Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who exchanges phone and text messages with the young crown prince, was instrumental in last year's deal to sell \$110 billion in U.S. weapons to the kingdom.

But even before Khashoggi vanished, concerns were mounting in Congress over Saudi Arabia's policies and the crown prince's aggressive steps to silence his critics. And now there are calls on Capitol Hill for the U.S. to halt arms sales to the kingdom, and Khashoggi's disappearance could galvanize more opposition from lawmakers and pressure Trump to rethink his relations with Saudi Arabia.

Trump on Thursday pronounced U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia "excellent" and said he doesn't want to scuttle arms deals with Riyadh because it means tens of millions of dollars pouring into the U.S. economy. He said the kingdom would simply buy the weapons from Russia or China instead.

"If it turns out to be as bad as it might be, there are certainly other ways of handling this situation," he said without elaborating.

Much of how the U.S. responds will depend on whether evidence surfaces that proves Saudi Arabia is responsible for Khashoggi's death.

Trump will have to craft a "calibrated response," said Jon Alterman, who directs the Middle East program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "He doesn't like that approach. The president likes complete wins."

The close ties between the Trump White House and the kingdom were in part forged by a friendship between two young princes: Last spring, Kushner and the crown prince met formally for the first time as a late-season snow fell outside the White House.

The two men — both in their 30s, both trusted aides of older, familial leaders — struck a bond. As their countries' chief negotiators on Israeli-Palestinian peace, Kushner and the Saudi prince were both looking to make a name for themselves on the world stage and consulted with each other frequently over the following months.

Kushner championed Crown Prince Mohammed to the president and senior foreign policy officials, some of whom expressed wariness at the embrace of MBS, as he is known in diplomatic circles.

The two men's relationship also played a key role in Riyadh becoming the unlikely first stop on Trump's maiden international trip in May 2017. Trump, despite endorsing a travel ban on Muslims during his campaign, became the first U.S. president to make his official first trip to an Islamic nation.

Relations between the two countries are complex because they are entwined on energy, military, economic and intelligence issues. The Trump administration has aggressively courted the Saudis for support of its Middle East agenda to counter Iranian influence, fight extremism and forge peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

"We want to have a relationship with Saudi Arabia. They're a strategic partner. They're a mortal enemy of the Iranians. They're helping us on terrorism," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a Trump supporter and top member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"Having said all that, if this did happen — and it's increasingly likely that something bad happened to this man at the hands of the Saudi government — that shows contempt for us. That's disrespectful to us. It puts people like me in a box who've been one of the leading champions of the relationship."

It's not just Graham who's in a box. It's also Trump, who has long-standing business ties to Saudi Arabia.

Jeff Prescott, who was senior director for the Middle East at the National Security Council during the Obama administration, said that a reassessment of the U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia is overdue and that Trump should raise U.S. complaints with Saudi leaders.

"What the Trump administration has given Saudi Arabia is a green light to pursue any policy," said Prescott, now executive director of National Security Action, a group of former officials opposed to the

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Trump administration. "The key question is whether Republicans will have the courage to force the administration to have a reckoning of the relationship."

He said Kushner's project to forge peace between Israel and the Palestinians also could be in jeopardy. "There is no question that a rift with Saudi Arabia — or even relations strained by pressure from Congress — would make an already bleak prospect even less likely," Prescott said.

In Congress, there is a push for sanctions under a human rights law, and lawmakers are questioning American support for the Saudi-led bombing campaign against Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen. The U.S. has raised concerns previously about heavy civilian casualties caused by the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., voiced doubt there would be support in Congress for another arms sale to Saudi Arabia — though lawmakers haven't blocked sales before. He also called for at least a temporary halt in U.S. military support for the Saudi bombing campaign in Yemen. Murphy tweeted that if Saudi Arabia is found complicit in Khashoggi's death, it should be viewed as a "fundamental break in our relationship with Saudi Arabia."

—
Lemire reported from New York.

China trade surplus with US widens to record \$34.1B

By JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China's trade surplus with the United States widened to a record \$34.1 billion in September as exports to the American market rose by 13 percent over a year earlier despite a worsening tariff war.

Exports to the United States rose to \$46.7 billion, down from August's 13.4 percent growth, customs data showed Friday. Imports of American goods increased 9 percent to \$12.6 billion, down from 11.1 percent.

Chinese exports to the United States have at least temporarily defied forecasts they would weaken after being hit by punitive tariffs of up to 25 percent in a fight over American complaints about Beijing's technology policy.

"Exports continued to defy U.S. tariffs last month but imports struggled in the face of cooling domestic demand," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics in a report. "We expect both to soften in the coming quarters."

September marked the second straight record Chinese monthly trade surplus with the United States after August's \$31 billion.

Export numbers have been buoyed by producers rushing to fill orders before American tariffs rose, but they also benefit from "robust U.S. demand" and a weaker Chinese currency, which makes their goods cheaper abroad, said Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics in a report.

The yuan has lost nearly 10 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar this year. That prompted suggestions Beijing might weaken the exchange rate to help exporters, but that might hurt China's economy by encouraging an outflow of capital. The central bank has tightened controls on currency trading to head off further declines.

China's overall export growth accelerated, temporarily defying forecasts of a slowdown as the global economy and consumer demand cool.

Exports rose 14.5 percent over a year earlier to \$226.7 billion, up from August's 12.2 percent growth. Imports grew 14.3 percent to \$195 billion, down from the previous month's 20.9 percent rate.

Exports to the 28-nation European Union, China's biggest trading partner, rose 11.6 percent to \$37.4 billion. The Chinese trade surplus with Europe was \$12.7 billion.

Chinese leaders have rejected pressure to scale back plans for state-led development of global champions in robotics and other technologies.

Washington, Europe and other trading partners complain those violate Beijing's free-trade commitments and U.S. officials worry they might erode American industrial leadership. But communist leaders see their industry plans as the path to prosperity and global influence.

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As tensions mounted, Beijing agreed in May to narrow its trade gap with the United States by purchasing more American soybeans, natural gas and other exports. Chinese leaders scrapped that deal after Trump's first tariff hikes hit.

Communist officials have ordered companies to stop buying American soybeans — the biggest U.S. export to China — and find alternative suppliers and export markets for other goods.

"Prospects for significant progress toward de-escalation of their trade conflict are low in the short term," said Kuijs.

Chinese exporters of lower-value goods such as handbags and surgical gloves say U.S. orders have fallen off. But sellers of factory machinery and other more advanced exports express confidence they can keep their market share.

With global growth cooling and U.S. threats of more tariff hikes, "the recent resilience of exports is unlikely to be sustained," said Evans-Pritchard.

General Administration of Customs of China (in Chinese): www.customs.gov.cn

Saudi crown prince's carefully managed rise hides dark side

By JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — In a kingdom once ruled by an ever-aging rotation of elderly monarchs, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman stands out as the youthful face of a youthful nation. But behind the carefully calibrated public-relations campaign pushing images of the smiling prince meeting with the world's top leaders and business executives lurks a darker side.

Last year, at age 31, Mohammed became the kingdom's crown prince, next in line to the throne now held by his octogenarian father, King Salman. While pushing for women to drive, he has overseen the arrest of women's rights activists. While calling for foreign investment, he has imprisoned businessmen, royals and others in a crackdown on corruption that soon resembled a shakedown of the kingdom's most powerful people.

As Saudi defense minister from the age of 29, he pursued a war in Yemen against Shiite rebels that began a month after he took the helm and wears on today.

What the crown prince chooses next likely will affect the world's largest oil producer for decades to come. And as the disappearance and feared death of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul may show, the young prince will brook no dissent in reshaping the kingdom in his image.

"I don't want to waste my time," he told Time Magazine in a cover story this year. "I am young."

Khashoggi, a U.S. resident who wrote several columns for The Washington Post critical of Prince Mohammed, disappeared Oct. 2 on a visit to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Turkish officials have offered no evidence, but say they fear the writer was killed and dismembered by a Saudi team of 15 men — an operation that, if carried out, would have to have been authorized by the top of the Al Saud monarchy. The kingdom describes the allegation as "baseless," but has provided no proof that Khashoggi ever left the consulate.

For decades in Saudi Arabia, succession passed down among the dozens of sons of the kingdom's founder, King Abdul-Aziz. And, over time, the sons have grown older and older upon reaching the throne.

When King Salman took power in January of 2015 and quickly appointed Prince Mohammed as defense minister, it took the kingdom by surprise, especially given the importance of the position and the prince's age.

He was little-known among the many grandchildren of Saudi Arabia's patriarch, a young man educated only in the kingdom who stuck close to his father, who previously served as the governor of Riyadh, the Saudi capital.

As defense minister, he entered office facing a crisis in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country, which lies south of the kingdom. Shiite rebels known as Houthis had overrun the country's capital, Sanaa, unseating the deeply unpopular government of Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi.

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When Hadi fled and it appeared the country's port city of Aden would fall to the rebels, Saudi Arabia launched a coalition war against the Houthis — a conflict that soon became a stalemate.

The United Nations estimates 10,000 people have been killed in Yemen's conflict, and activists say that number is likely far higher. It has exacerbated what the U.N. calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with hunger and cholera stalking civilians, worsened by the kingdom's blockade of ports.

Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition has faced widespread criticism for its airstrikes hitting clinics and marketplaces, which have killed civilians. The Houthis, as well, have indiscriminately used landmines and arrested political opponents.

The coalition says Iran has funneled weapons to the Houthis ranging from small arms to the ballistic missiles now regularly fired into the kingdom, which Iran denies.

For Prince Mohammed, the conflict remains part of what he sees as an existential struggle between Saudi Arabia and Iran for the future of the Middle East. Asked about Western concerns over civilian casualties, he offers this: "Mistakes happen in all wars."

"We don't need to have a new Hezbollah in the Arabian Peninsula. This is a red line not only for Saudi Arabia but for the whole world," the prince recently told Bloomberg, referring to the Iran-allied Shiite militant group and political party dominant in Lebanon.

The prince also found himself involved in the bizarre resignation-by-television address of Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, who announced he would step down during a visit to the kingdom in November 2017, fueling suspicion he was coerced into doing so.

Prince Mohammed's harsh rhetoric extends to likening Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to Nazi Germany's Adolf Hitler. He's also hinted Saudi Arabia would be willing to fight Iran in other ways, leading Tehran to link the kingdom to an attack on a military parade in Ahvaz last month that killed at least 24 people and wounded more than 60. Both Arab separatists and the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the assault.

"We won't wait for the battle to be in Saudi Arabia," the prince told the Saudi-owned broadcasting company MBC last year. "Instead, we will work so that the battle is for them in Iran, not in Saudi Arabia."

His aggressive posture against Iran has won the support of U.S. President Donald Trump and his administration, which pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal struck by President Barack Obama, whom the kingdom deeply distrusted.

Before becoming crown prince, Prince Mohammed visited the White House and forged a close relationship with Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner. The two are believed to be working on the administration's peace plans for Israel and the Palestinians.

Trump made Riyadh his first stop overseas as president, a visit complete with Arab pageantry and opulence. Behind the scenes, many analysts believe Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates saw a greenlight to move ahead with the ongoing boycott of Qatar, a small Arabian Peninsula nation, over a political dispute.

Trump initially seemed to favor the boycott of Qatar, which is home to al-Udeid Air Base, the forward headquarters of the U.S. military's Central Command.

Trump's first Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, sought in vain to pressure the Saudis into resolving the spat and complained privately that the ties between the White House and Prince Mohammed were hurting the effort, officials said at the time. Tillerson's dismissal in March and the arrival of Mike Pompeo as Trump's top diplomat markedly reduced the State Department's heat on Saudi Arabia about the detentions of human rights activists, including women, and the conflict in Yemen.

Despite the mounting civilian casualties in Yemen, Pompeo certified to Congress in September that Saudi Arabia was taking steps to reduce and limit them, drawing severe condemnations from lawmakers and human rights groups.

Saudi Arabia soon embarked on the prince's ambitious proposal to allow women in the ultraconservative Wahhabi nation to drive. The resulting pictures of women in long black abayas behind the wheel represented a public-relations coup for the image-shaping firms employed by the kingdom, as did footage of

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women attending soccer matches and movie theaters for the first time in decades.

But before women started their engines, a new crackdown emerged: The kingdom rounded up and imprisoned women's rights activists, including reportedly grabbing one woman who was in the neighboring United Arab Emirates.

Prince Mohammed has wowed the business world with promises of an initial public offering for the state oil behemoth Saudi Arabian Oil Co., known as Saudi Aramco, suggesting it would have a \$2 trillion valuation. Stocks markets around the world have pitched having the IPO on their exchanges, but it has been repeatedly delayed.

The young prince has traveled across the U.S. as part of his business pitch, meeting leaders like former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos, who owns The Washington Post.

Prince Mohammed also hosted a major business summit at Riyadh's Ritz Carlton, complete with a humanoid robot named Sophia being awarded Saudi citizenship.

Only weeks later, the hotel turned into a luxury prison as part of a mass arrest of businessmen, royals and others orchestrated by Prince Mohammed in a move described as targeting corruption. Those released agreed to sign over some of their assets, however, giving it the feel of a shakedown.

"If I have the power and the king has the power to take action against influential people, then you are already fundamentally strong," Prince Mohammed told CBS earlier this year.

For now, the anger over Khashoggi's disappearance appears to have galvanized international criticism of the young prince, about whom the columnist wrote critically for the Post.

Trump, already angry over rising global oil prices, has said he wants answers from Saudi Arabia and suggested Khashoggi's fiancée could visit the White House.

Prominent American lawmakers also are indignant — though U.S.-Saudi relations have survived even the 15 of the 19 Sept. 11 hijackers being from the kingdom.

The opaqueness of the Al Saud royal family makes it difficult to see what effect the controversy is having on support for Prince Mohammed at home. State television continues to air footage of him attending meetings and greeting officials as if all is normal.

And as the son of the king, analysts say he has the full protection of the throne's powers.

Once asked if anything could stop him, the prince gave a two-word reply: "Only death."

Associated Press writer Matthew Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellap . His work can be found at <http://apne.ws/2galNpz> .

Harrowing tales of survival from town ravaged by storm

By JAY REEVES and TAMARA LUSH, Associated Press

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Residents of Mexico Beach that stayed during the storm are emerging from the debris with harrowing tales. Others, who evacuated, are coming to grips with the fact that much of their community was destroyed by Hurricane Michael.

Hit head-on by the storm, numerous homes in this Gulf Coast resort town of about 1,190 people were shattered or ripped from their foundations. Boats were tossed like toys. The streets closest to the water looked as if a bomb had gone off.

What the 9-foot (2.7-meter) storm surge didn't destroy, the 155 mph (250 kph) winds finished off.

Now, rescuers and residents are struggling to get into the ground-zero town to assess the damage and search for the hundreds of people believed to have stayed behind.

Linda Marquardt, 67, rode out the storm with her husband at their home in Mexico Beach. When the house filled with storm surge water, they fled upstairs.

"All of my furniture was floating," she said Thursday. "A river just started coming down the road. It was awful, and now there's just nothing left."

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She said their home is full of mud.

"We'll have to bulldoze and start over."

Drone footage of Mexico Beach showed a stunning landscape of devastation. Few structures were unscathed.

John Humphress, a storm chaser and drone pilot, arrived around 5 p.m. Wednesday, a few hours after Michael slammed into the coastline. He had one word to describe what he saw: "apocalyptic."

State officials said 285 people in Mexico Beach had refused to leave ahead of the hurricane despite a mandatory evacuation order.

A National Guard team went into the area and found 20 survivors Wednesday night, and more crews pushed into the stricken zone on Thursday. The fate of many other residents was unknown, authorities said.

Dawn Vickers, her teenage son, and her mother, didn't evacuate. They were joined during the storm by a friend who lived on a houseboat. At one particularly violent point in the storm, Vickers looked out the window and thought a tree was moving — but it was really her house, ripped off the foundation.

It was floating in the storm surge.

An Associated Press reporter found Vickers and her family sitting next to a convenience store with blown-out windows Thursday.

"Our house would have probably been in the canal if it hadn't gotten caught on some trees that fell," said 17-year-old Ryder Vickers, adding that the home split in two, like an egg.

Once the water receded, they climbed out a window, onto another house and over a boat, but because Dawn Vickers' mother Patsy has a lung disease, they couldn't go far. The four spent the night in one half of the waterlogged home.

"I've never been so scared in my life," said Dawn Vickers. "We were all praying, 'Just please get us through this.' I thought we were going to die."

Mishelle McPherson and her ex-husband looked for the elderly mother of a friend on Thursday. The woman lived in a small cinderblock house about 150 yards (140 meters) from the Gulf and thought she would be OK.

Her home was reduced to crumbled blocks and pieces of floor tile.

"Aggy! Aggy!" McPherson yelled. The only sound that came back was the echo from the half-demolished building and the pounding of the surf.

"Do you think her body would be here? Do you think it would have floated away?" she asked.

As she walked down the street, McPherson pointed out pieces of what had been the woman's house: "That's the blade from her ceiling fan. That's her floor tile."

On Thursday, residents who evacuated tried to return.

The Rev. Eddie LaFountain, pastor at First Baptist Church in Mexico Beach, was one of them. He described the place as a "good family resort town" that attracts visitors seeking peace and quiet rather than the spring break-like atmosphere of other communities along the 200-mile (320-kilometer) Florida Panhandle.

More than a third of the population of Mexico Beach is 65 or older, according to the U.S. Census, and nearly half of the housing is for seasonal or recreational use.

Most of the full-time residents, LaFountain said, have some connection to the hospitality industry. Some operate vacation home rentals, while others work jobs cleaning and maintaining the homes. Others own or work in restaurants, rent out kayaks or run charter fishing boats. LaFountain himself has a lawn-mowing business.

Despite the widespread destruction, LaFountain said he believes most people will rebuild.

"I think the people here have a great heart and a lot of resilience. We call them stubborn and hard-headed. I think they will be back," LaFountain said in a phone interview while driving back to Mexico Beach.

Mexico Beach is on the west end of what is sometimes called Florida's Forgotten Coast, so named because it is not heavily developed like many of the state's other shoreline areas, with their lavish homes and high-rise condos and hotels.

U.S. Route 98 runs right along the coast, where a few beachside restaurants offer oysters and other seafood, cocktails and a view of the Gulf of Mexico.

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Bob Tenbrunsel's home in Mexico Beach was damaged but not destroyed. On Thursday, he rode around town in the back of a pickup truck, surveying the damage. It was upsetting to see all of the places that he loved destroyed: Toucan's Bar and Grill, Killer Seafood, Cathey's Hardware and Tackle.

"This place will never be the same."

Tamara Lush reported from St. Petersburg, Florida; Brendan Farrington from Tallahassee, Florida; and Curt Anderson from Miami.

Can we talk? Trump's riding high _ and he's got a lot to say

By JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Can we talk? Donald Trump would like to chat.

And, boy, is he ever.

Riding high after Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh's successful confirmation, the president has been on a rollicking press tour of late.

He's inviting reporters up to his private cabin on Air Force One. He's calling in to his favorite shows. And he's turning closed White House events into major media moments.

On Thursday alone, Trump held four separate press availabilities, including one that featured a profanity-laced Oval Office performance by Kanye West, the rapper and producer who has emerged as Trump's top Hollywood fan. And that's not counting the more than 45 minutes he spent on the phone calling in to "Fox & Friends."

The president's inclination to chat comes as Trump has been enjoying a spate of good news for his administration.

While the Russia investigation still looms and polls still predict major Republican losses in the House in next month's midterm elections, Trump has been logging a series of wins, including appointing a second Supreme Court Justice to the bench and reaching an updated North American trade deal with Canada and Mexico. The stream of negative headlines that have been a constant presence through most of Trump's administration, has abated — at least for a time.

"I think he's having a lot of fun right now," said former campaign adviser Barry Bennett.

"There hasn't been a bad story in over week," Bennett marveled.

Said White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders: "The President is his best messenger and it's always a great thing when the American people can hear directly from him."

Trump's recent media blitz began on Saturday, when it was clear that Kavanaugh had the votes to be confirmed after a bruising fight in the Senate. The president was en route to Topeka, Kansas, for a rally as the final vote was happening, and he invited the small group of reporters aboard up Air Force One up to his private cabin to watch history unfold.

When the vote was cast, Trump delivered a double thumbs-up from his desk and declared it all "very, very good."

Trump had already spoken with reporters as he departed the White House that day, and he stopped to chat again after he landed, to share details of the congratulatory call he'd made to Kavanaugh and his family.

After an hour-plus rally that night, Trump was back at it, calling up one of his favorite hosts, Fox News Channel's Jeanine Pirro, as he drove back to the airport in the presidential limo. He continued the conversation on the dark tarmac, under the shadow of his plane.

After a brief respite for golf on Sunday, Trump was back at it Monday, taking reporters' questions both as he left the White House and again as he returned from a speech to police chiefs in Florida, weighing in on everything from the employment status of Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein to Taylor Swift's foray into politics to endorse two Democratic candidates.

He said he now likes her music "about 25 percent less."

Later that night, Trump presided over a ceremonial swearing-in for Kavanaugh at the White House, where he railed against Democrats for trying to scuttle his choice,

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On Tuesday, Trump began his day with a surprise press availability announcing that U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley would be leaving her post at the end of the year. After holding forth for nearly 20 minutes, it seemed Trump had, for the moment, exhausted reporters' questions.

"Any other questions?" he asked to rare silence.

But that was just the beginning. Trump's day also included an Oval Office interview with New York Magazine, a 15 minute question-and-answer session with reporters on the South Lawn as he departed the White House for a rally in Iowa, and another conversation with reporters aboard Air Force One.

Trump also recorded an interview with the local NBC affiliate before taking the stage at his rally, which lasted well over an hour.

On Wednesday, as Hurricane Michael was about to make landfall, Trump began his day with a storm briefing, during which he also took questions on topics including a missing Saudi journalist and potential replacements for Haley. He also took questions at a bill signing and after landing in Pennsylvania for another rally, where he said the Federal Reserve had "gone crazy."

After his rally and interviews with the Washington Examiner and a local television station, Trump headed home.

But he wasn't done for the night. There was one last call, at 11 p.m., to Fox News Channel's Shannon Bream.

Less than 12 hours later, Trump was back at it, spending more than 45 minutes on the phone answering questions from his favorite hosts at "Fox & Friends."

Yet to come: Chatting at two bill signings, including one attended by Kid Rock and other musicians, a forum on drug trafficking, and that epic pre-lunch appearance with Kanye West.

As Trump headed to lunch with his guests, he was anything but talked out: "We're going to have lunch," he said. "We're going to talk."

Follow Colvin on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

Asian markets mixed on strong Chinese trade data

By ANNABELLE LIANG, Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Asian stocks were mixed on Friday as better-than-expected Chinese trade data gave some markets a breather from worries about the impact of punitive tariffs.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 racked up more losses after falling almost 4 percent in the previous day. The index dropped 0.5 percent to 22,488.86. The Kospi in South Korea recovered 0.8 percent to 2,146.87. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index added 0.5 percent to 25,395.17. The Shanghai Composite fell 0.1 percent to 2,580.24. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dropped 0.2 percent to 5,871.60. Shares rose in Taiwan, Thailand and Indonesia but were flat in Singapore.

WALL STREET: U.S. indexes tumbled for the second consecutive day, on worries that rising interest rates and trade tensions could hurt global growth. The yield on the 10-year Treasury Note fell, hitting bank stocks. Technology and retail companies continued to stumble. The benchmark S&P 500 index started the day with gains, but ultimately lost 2.1 percent to 2,728.37, its lowest close in three months and sixth straight loss. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 2.1 percent to 25,052.83. The Nasdaq composite gave up 1.3 percent to 7,329.06. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks fell 1.9 percent to 1,545.38.

CHINESE TRADE: Official data released on Friday showed that China's trade balance strengthened to \$31.7 billion in September from \$27.9 billion in the previous month. This surpassed market expectations of \$19.7 billion. Year-on-year exports grew, and imports were not far off from what was predicted.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "There's a semblance of sanity returning to the markets, but we are no nearer a significant recovery," Stephen Innes of OANDA said in a commentary. News reports that U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin was advised against labeling China as a currency manipulator — a status that could trigger penalties — "has eased tension although we are not out of the weeds just yet," he said. The U.S. Treasury will soon release a currency report that some analysts suggest might change the official

stance on China's exchange rate policy.

ENERGY: U.S. crude added 32 cents to \$71.29. The contract dropped 3 percent to close at \$70.97 in New York. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 41 cents to \$80.67. It dropped 3.4 percent to \$80.26 in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar strengthened to 112.33 Japanese yen from 112.13 yen late Thursday. The euro rose to \$1.1602 from \$1.1586.

AP Business Writers Marley Jay in New York and Alex Veiga in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Manhattan DA drops part of Weinstein case

By MICHAEL R. SISK and TOM HAYS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City prosecutors abandoned part of their sexual assault case against Harvey Weinstein on Thursday after evidence surfaced that a police detective dead set on putting the Hollywood mogul behind bars had coached a witness to stay silent about evidence that cast doubt on the allegations of one of his earliest accusers.

The behind-the-scenes drama spilled into court, with Weinstein looking on, as the Manhattan District Attorney's office elected to drop the lone charge stemming from Lucia Evans' allegations that he forced her to perform oral sex on him in 2004, when she was a college student and aspiring actress.

Weinstein, 66, still faces charges over allegations that he raped an unidentified woman in his hotel room in 2013 and performed a forcible sex act on a different woman in 2006. He has pleaded not guilty and denies all allegations of non-consensual sex. He is free on \$1 million bail and is due back in court Dec. 20.

Prosecutor Joan Illuzzi-Orbon insisted the rest of the case is strong and said that the district attorney's office was looking into the possibility of bringing additional charges against the 66-year-old Weinstein.

"In short, your honor, we are moving full steam ahead," she said.

Prosecutors said in a letter unsealed Thursday that they learned weeks ago that a woman who was with Evans the night she met Weinstein had given the police detective a contradictory account of what happened, but the detective had instructed her to keep quiet, telling her that "less is more."

The woman, prosecutors said, told the detective in February that Weinstein had offered them money to flash their breasts during the restaurant encounter. They initially declined but Evans later told her she had gone ahead and exposed herself to the film producer in a hallway.

The woman also told the detective — identified by Weinstein's lawyer as Nicholas DiGaudio — that sometime after Evans' office meeting with Weinstein, she had suggested what happened was consensual. Weinstein had promised to get her an acting job if she agreed to perform oral sex and she agreed.

According to the witness, who was not named in the court filing, Evans had been drinking and "appeared to be upset, embarrassed and shaking" when she told the story.

Evans was among the first women to publicly accuse Weinstein of sexual assault.

In an expose published in *The New Yorker* one year ago Wednesday, Evans accused Weinstein of forcing her to perform oral sex when they met alone in his office in 2004 to discuss her fledgling acting career. At the time, Evans was a 21-year-old college student. She said she had initially met Weinstein at a restaurant in Manhattan earlier that summer.

Prosecutors also disclosed that they had discovered a draft email that Evans had written three years ago to a man who is now her husband that "describes details of the sexual assault that differ from the account" she provided to investigators.

Evans' lawyer, Carrie Goldberg, furiously said outside court that her client had been abandoned by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. for no reason.

"Let me be clear: the decision to throw away my client's sexual assault charges says nothing about Weinstein's guilt or innocence. Nor does it reflect on Lucia's consistent allegation that she was sexually assaulted with force by Harvey Weinstein," she said in a written statement. "It only speaks volumes about

the Manhattan DA's office and its mishandling of my client's case."

She insisted Evans has told the truth and disputed that she either showed Weinstein her breasts or misled investigators.

Weinstein's lawyer, Benjamin Brafman, told the judge he believed Evans had lied both to the grand jury and to The New Yorker about her encounter with Weinstein.

"The integrity of these proceedings has been compromised," he said. Outside court, he suggested that Evans should be prosecuted criminally for perjury.

"This is an attack on the fundamental integrity of the grand jury process. If you have a person willing to commit perjury in the grand jury, that is as serious as the crime of sexual assault because it undermines the fairness of the process for all of us."

Goldberg said Evans told the grand jury the truth.

"The DA is aware of robust evidence, including witnesses, that seriously undermine the witness' credibility and recollection of events. Yet, the DA consented to dismissal prior to investigating this evidence," she wrote on Twitter.

The New Yorker, in a statement, said that it stands by its reporting and fact-checking process and that "any assertion by lawyers for Harvey Weinstein that The New Yorker had information that contradicted Lucia Evans's account is patently incorrect."

Police said Thursday that DiGaudio, who had been outspoken in the media about wanting Weinstein charged, is being investigated by the department and no longer has an active role in the Weinstein probe.

"We take these allegations seriously," Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea said.

A message left on a phone used by the detective in the past wasn't immediately returned. The union representing New York City police detectives also didn't immediately return a message.

Images of Weinstein in handcuffs were seen by many women as a cathartic moment in the #MeToo reckoning. The collapse of part of the case against him could mean trouble for the prosecutor.

Vance has already been fiercely criticized for declining to prosecute Weinstein when an Italian model accused him of grabbing her breasts in 2015. At the time, Vance cited a lack of supporting evidence, despite the existence of a clandestinely made recording of Weinstein discussing the episode with the woman.

In the months after The New York Times and The New Yorker began publishing stories about Weinstein's interactions with women, activists pressured Vance to bring charges as dozens of people came forward with claims of sexual misconduct against him.

New York Police officials poured on the pressure, too, saying publicly that they believed they had gathered ample evidence to make an arrest.

The Associated Press does not identify alleged victims of sexual assaults unless they come forward publicly, as Evans has done.

Follow Mike Sisak at www.twitter.com/mikesisak and Tom Hays at <https://twitter.com/APtomhays>

What a relief: Dodgers next up for Brewers' lights-out 'pen

By GENARO C. ARMAS, AP Sports Writer

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Build an early lead, get five good innings out of the starter and bring in the bullpen. The Milwaukee Brewers used that formula to win 11 straight games going into the NL Championship Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Clayton Kershaw could be the ace that finally puts a stop to the streak.

The three-time NL Cy Young Award winner will start for Los Angeles in Game 1 on Friday night at Miller Park.

"We know we're not going to get a ton of opportunities" against Kershaw and Dodgers starting pitching, outfielder Ryan Braun said. "So we've talked about the importance of cashing in on the opportunities we do get."

Once the Brewers take a lead, they're hard to beat. Good luck getting to their lights-out bullpen.

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Milwaukee's 3.47 ERA in relief was second in the NL only to the Chicago Cubs. The bullpen went 2-0 with a save and a 1.17 ERA in the three-game Division Series sweep Colorado.

Corey Knebel can come in as soon as the fifth, usually lights-out left-hander Josh Hader in just about situation and Jeremy Jeffress in the late innings. All three relievers are capable of closing.

Knebel and Hader are making their postseason debuts, while Jeffress' playoff experience before this year was limited to just one inning in 2016 with Texas.

"I thought it was going to be a lot different," Knebel said Thursday of the playoffs. "The first time I came in, I felt the same surprisingly. ... Hey's it's just another game. That's all it is. You just want to keep playing ball."

The spotlight probably won't faze the Dodgers, who are in a third straight NLCS for the first time in franchise history. The strategy at the plate doesn't change, either, just because Milwaukee's relievers are so good.

Knebel, Hader and Jeffress, along with righty Joakim Soria, appeared in all three games against Colorado spread out over four days.

The NLCS is best-of-seven, with the first four games over five days, so bullpen usage could differ.

"When you're talking about a seven-game series," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said, "having those guys go to their pen and taxing them and beating the starter, there's still a lot of value in that."

Chasing the starter will require building an early lead that might require the Brewers to dip into his bullpen earlier or more often than planned.

"If they go bullpen game, like they did against the Rockies, it's a seven-game set," Dodgers infielder Max Muncy said. "It's more games you're putting stress on the bullpen."

Other notes and things to watch:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Pressure in the NLCS? Maybe not for the Dodgers, who lost Game 7 of the World Series to the Houston Astros a year ago. Now that's pressure.

"We want to finish off what we didn't finish off last year. That's been their focus since after that Game 7," Roberts said. "We're in a position right now where we can give ourselves an opportunity to get back there."

MVP WATCH

Outfielder Christian Yelich, making his postseason debut, hit .250 with a homer and two RBIs with two steals in the NLDS. The smooth-hitting left-hander went on a tear in the second half, hitting .367 after the All-Star break with 25 homers to help lift the Brewers to the NL Central crown.

When the series shifts to Dodger Stadium next week, the southern California native will be playing in a park where he used to watch games as a child.

START IT UP

No bullpen day to open up the series for the Brewers. Milwaukee is going with left-hander Gio Gonzalez to oppose Kershaw in Game 1 on Friday night. For Gonzalez, it has been quite a rebound since being acquired in a deal with the Washington Nationals, going 3-0 with a 2.13 ERA in five starts with Milwaukee.

"So to sit here, and I'm pitching Game 1 of the second round, I think it's remarkable, pretty incredible," Gonzalez said, "and hopefully I get to tell my kids about this one day."

An 11-year veteran, Gonzalez is 4-1 with a 1.89 ERA in six career starts against the Dodgers.

CY KERSHAW

One of the toughest left-handers in baseball, Kershaw (9-5, 2.73) hasn't been quite as good in his career in the NLCS. He is 2-4 with a 4.65 ERA in five career starts in this round.

BACK WHERE IT STARTED

The NLCS will begin in the park where All-Star Manny Machado made his Dodgers' debut. After Machado was acquired at the All-Star break from the Orioles, the Dodgers opened up the second half of the season at Miller Park.

Machado has hit .273 with 13 homers and 42 RBIs in 66 games with the Dodgers.

"It made it a lot easier knowing I was just another piece to this ballclub," Machado said. "This ballclub could have made it just as easily without me."

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING: Widespread catastrophic damage in Florida

MIAMI (AP) — Tropical Storm Michael has sped off toward the Atlantic Ocean, but there will be nothing quick about Florida's recovery from the hurricane, where rows upon rows of homes have been smashed to pieces. The storm also has brought flash flooding to hurricane-weary parts of the Carolinas and Virginia.

BY THE NUMBERS

— Hurricane history: first Category 4 hurricane to make landfall in Florida's Panhandle since record-keeping began in 1851.

— Top winds: 155 mph (250 kph), strong enough to completely destroy homes and cause weekslong power outages.

— Powerful pressure: 919 millibars minimum pressure in the eye, the third most intense hurricane landfall in the U.S. in recorded history.

— High water: estimated peak storm surge of 9 feet (2.75 meters) and 14 feet (4.25 meters) from Mexico Beach east through Apalachee Bay, according to the National Hurricane Center

— Storm riders: Roughly 375,000 people in Florida warned to evacuate; many refused, including 285 people in Mexico Beach where Michael made landfall.

— Rescued: 47 helped out of hard-hit areas along Florida's coastline, and 20 people in flooded neighborhoods in North Carolina.

— Staying safe: nearly 6,700 people took refuge in 54 shelters in Florida.

— Power outages: Roughly a million customers in Georgia, Florida, Alabama and South Carolina lost power.

— Food and water: 2 million ready-to-eat meals, 1 million gallons (3.75 million liters) of water and 40,000 10-pound (4.5-kilogram) bags of ice ready for distribution in Florida.

— The human cost: Falling trees have killed a man in Gadsden County, Florida; a man in Iredell County, North Carolina; and an 11-year-old girl in Seminole County, Georgia, was killed when a carport blew through the roof of her home.

— Damage estimates: Boston-based Karen Clark & Company, an insurance company that produces models for catastrophes, is estimating Hurricane Michael caused about \$8 billion in insured losses. It includes the privately insured wind and storm surge damage to residential, commercial and industrial properties and automobiles. The figure does not include losses covered by the National Flood Insurance Program.

IMAGES of DESTRUCTION

Images captured by Associated Press journalists show the devastation left in Hurricane Michael's wake.

MEXICO BEACH

One of the hardest-hit spots in Florida is Mexico Beach, where Michael crashed ashore. In a beach town home about 1,000 people, entire blocks of homes have been reduced to nothing but concrete slabs in the sand or piles of splintered lumber.

HOSPITALS EVACUATED

The largest hospitals in Panama City shut down and evacuated hundreds of patients due to heavy hurricane damage. Bay Medical Sacred Heart was moving about 200 patients from buildings with blown-out windows, a cracked exterior wall and a collapsed roof. State officials say Florida's largest psychiatric hospital has been "entirely cut off." Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee has been running on emergency generators. A helicopter dropped water and food at the facility on Thursday after a tree downed during the storm caused a water line to break.

BASE CLOSURE

Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida is closed while officials assess what they're calling "widespread catastrophic damage." No injuries were reported, but there's roof damage to "nearly every home" on the base.

NO EXTENSION

A federal judge rejected a push by Democrats to extend Florida's voter registration deadline, which

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was Tuesday, by a week. Florida Secretary of State Ken Detzner told local election supervisors that if their offices were closed due to the hurricane, they could accept paper applications when their offices reopen.

SNAPSHOTS OF SURVIVORS

People in the crosshairs had to make last-minute preparations for the monstrous storm's arrival — and for how to cope in its aftermath.

STORMY WEATHER

Michael isn't alone. The National Hurricane Center says Hurricane Leslie and Tropical Storm Nadine are no threat to land over the open Atlantic Ocean, but Tropical Storm Sergio in the Pacific is blowing toward Mexico's Baja California Peninsula.

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

'Changed Forever': Florida Panhandle devastated by Michael

By JAY REEVES and BRENDAN FARRINGTON, Associated Press

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (AP) — The devastation inflicted by Hurricane Michael came into focus Thursday with rows upon rows of homes found smashed to pieces, and rescue crews struggling to enter stricken areas in hopes of accounting for hundreds of people who may have stayed behind.

At least three deaths were blamed on Michael, the most powerful hurricane to hit the continental U.S. in over 50 years, and it wasn't done yet: Though reduced to a tropical storm, it brought flash flooding to North Carolina and Virginia, soaking areas still recovering from Hurricane Florence.

Under a clear blue sky, families living along the Florida Panhandle emerged from shelters and hotels to a perilous landscape of shattered homes and shopping centers, wailing sirens and hovering helicopters.

Gov. Rick Scott said the Panhandle awoke to "unimaginable destruction."

"So many lives have been changed forever. So many families have lost everything," he said.

The full extent of Michael's fury was only slowly becoming clear, with some of the hardest-hit areas difficult to reach with roads blocked by debris or water. An 80-mile (130-kilometer) stretch of Interstate 10, the main east-west route, was closed.

Video from a drone revealed some of the worst damage in Mexico Beach, where the hurricane crashed ashore Wednesday as a Category 4 monster with 155 mph (250 kph) winds and a storm surge of 9 feet (2.7 meters).

Entire blocks of homes near the beach were obliterated, leaving concrete slabs in the sand. Rows and rows of other homes were rendered piles of splintered lumber. Entire roofs were torn away in the town of about 1,000 people, now a scene of utter devastation.

State officials said 285 people in Mexico Beach had defied a mandatory evacuation order ahead of Michael. More than 375,000 people up and down the Gulf Coast were ordered or urged to clear out as Michael closed in. But emergency authorities lamented that many ignored the warnings.

National Guard troops made their way into the ground-zero town and found 20 survivors Wednesday night, and more rescue crews arrived Thursday. But the fate of many residents was unknown.

Mishelle McPherson and her ex-husband searched for the elderly mother of a friend. The woman lived in a small cinderblock house about 150 yards (meters) from the Gulf and thought she would be OK. The home was found smashed, with no sign of the woman.

"Do you think her body would be here? Do you think it would have floated away?" McPherson asked.

Linda Marquardt, 67, rode out the storm with her husband at their home in Mexico Beach. When the house filled with storm surge water, they fled upstairs. "All of my furniture was floating," she said. "A river just started coming down the road. It was awful, and now there's just nothing left."

As thousands of National Guard troops, law enforcement officers and medical teams spread out, the governor pleaded with people in the devastated areas to stay away because of hazards such as fallen trees and power lines.

"I know you just want to go home. You want to check on things and begin the recovery process," Scott

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said. But "we have to make sure things are safe."

More than 900,000 homes and businesses in Florida, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas were without power.

The Coast Guard said it rescued at least 27 people before and after the hurricane's landfall, mostly from coastal homes. Nine people had to be rescued by helicopter from a bathroom of a home in hard-hit Panama City after their roof collapsed, Petty Officer 3rd Class Ronald Hodges said.

In Panama City, most homes were still standing, but no property was left undamaged. Downed power lines and twisted street signs lay all around. Roofs had been peeled off. Aluminum siding was shredded and homes were split by fallen trees. Hundreds of cars had broken windows. Pine trees were stripped and snapped off about 20 feet (7 meters) high.

In neighboring Panama City Beach, Bay County Sheriff Tommy Ford reported widespread looting of homes and businesses. He imposed a curfew and asked for 50 members of the National Guard for protection.

The hurricane also damaged hospitals and nursing homes in the Panama City area, and officials worked to evacuate hundreds of patients. The damage at Bay Medical Sacred Heart included blown-out windows and a cracked exterior wall though no patients were hurt.

The state mental hospital in Chattahoochee, which has a section for the criminally insane, was cut off by land, and food and supplies were being flown in, authorities said. All phone communication was cut off to the complex of nearly 1,000 residents and more than 300 staff, leaving emergency radios as their only link out.

A man outside Tallahassee, Florida, was killed by a falling tree, and an 11-year-old girl in Georgia died when the winds picked up a carport and dropped it on her home. One of the carport's legs punctured the roof and hit her in the head. A driver in North Carolina was killed when a tree fell on his car.

As the storm charged north, it spun off possible tornadoes and downed power lines and trees in Georgia. Forecasters said it could drop up to 7 inches (18 centimeters) of rain over the Carolinas and Virginia before pushing out to sea in coming hours. Street flooding was reported in Roanoke and other southwestern Virginia cities that reported motorists caught in flooding had to be rescued.

In North Carolina's mountains, drivers also had to be plucked from cars in high water. Michael's winds also toppled trees and power lines, leaving hundreds of thousands without power and flash flooding also was reported in North Carolina's two largest cities, Charlotte and Raleigh.

Forecasters said Michael was still a potent tropical storm Thursday evening, centered about 5 miles (8 kilometers) northwest of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, and packing top sustained winds of 50 mph (80 kph). It was racing to the northeast at 24 mph (39 kph) amid warnings it could spread damaging winds and more flash flooding in the region before moving offshore.

Associated Press writers Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg, Florida; Gary Fineout in Tallahassee, Florida; Terry Spencer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Jennifer Kay and Freida Frisaro in Miami; Brendan Farrington in St. Marks, Florida; Russ Bynum in Keaton Beach, Florida; Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland, contributed to this story.

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

GOP, home to Trump and tea party, decries Dems' 'mob rule'

By ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and Senate Republicans are forecasting nightmarish Democratic "mob rule" to amp up GOP voters for next month's critical midterm elections, flipping the script from complaints that it's Trump and the tea party movement who've boosted rowdy and divisive tactics to dangerous levels.

Less than a month from voting in which GOP control of Congress is dangling precariously, Republicans are linking comments and actions by Democratic politicians, raucous protesters opposing Brett Kavanaugh

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ugh's Supreme Court nomination and even a gunman who shot targeted GOP lawmakers. The message to Republican voters: Democrats are employing radical tactics that are only growing worse.

"Only one side was happy to play host to this toxic fringe behavior," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Thursday in the latest GOP attack. "Only one side's leaders are now openly calling for more of it. They haven't seen enough. They want more. And I'm afraid this is only Phase One of the meltdown."

While the demonstrations were intense and some Republicans reported personal threats, liberal protesters' tactics were broadly in line with those used by groups on the left and right during particularly passionate moments in Washington. The confrontational style harkened back to protests by the conservative tea party, which included angry face-offs with lawmakers and a massive Capitol demonstration far larger than last week's rallies.

It's not unusual for Republicans and Democrats alike to sharpen their rhetoric as elections approach in hopes of drawing loyal voters to the polls. But the GOP shift to disparaging descriptions of their opponents as unruly and sinister is a marked change from their messaging before the Kavanaugh battle, when they'd hoped to focus on the strong economy and the mammoth tax cut they pushed through Congress last December.

Both parties have detected a surge in engagement among GOP and conservative voters since the nation's attention was grabbed by the confirmation battle over Kavanaugh, including allegations of sexual misconduct that he denied. While no one knows if that energy will last until Election Day, Democratic voters driven by an animus toward Trump until now were far more motivated.

Top Republicans have acknowledged that television scenes of anti-Kavanaugh protesters berating senators and interrupting Senate debate have helped them.

"It's turned our base on fire," McConnell said about the battle, which he's called a political gift. Focusing on the "mob" has also let Republicans raise the subject without explicitly reminding voters about Kavanaugh himself, who polling showed was viewed unfavorably by the public.

So far, Republicans have shown no signs of abandoning that focus.

"The Democrats are willing to do anything, to hurt anyone, to get the power they so desperately crave," Trump said at a rally in Minnesota last week. He added, "They want to destroy."

Democrats argue that the party of Trump and the conservative tea party has nerve to decry such behavior. "The last time I looked, the mocker-in-chief is in the White House," said Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii. Trump drew fresh ire last week when he ridiculed Christine Blasey Ford, the first of Kavanaugh's three women accusers.

Democrats say Trump's rhetoric since launching his 2016 campaign has been provocative, pugnacious and at times racist. They cite numerous comments about Mexicans, Muslims, African countries. They also noted his statement that there were "very fine people on both sides" after an anti-Nazi demonstrator was killed by a white supremacist at a violent 2017 rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.

No. 2 Senate Democratic leader Dick Durbin of Illinois said Thursday that his response to GOP accusations of Democratic mob tactics "is to say three words: 'Lock her up.'"

Crowds at Trump campaign rallies have long chanted that about 2016 Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. They've aimed it in recent days at Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., who some Republicans have accused of leaking Ford's letter claiming sexual assault by Kavanaugh. Feinstein has denied the leak.

Grass roots tea party activists opposed to President Barack Obama's health care bill noisily disrupted lawmakers' town hall meetings across the country in summer 2009, booing and accusing Democrats of lying. One man in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, told a lawmaker that God will "judge you and the rest of your damned cronies on the Hill," while a Boston woman demanded to know, "Why do you continue to support a Nazi policy?"

That September, tens of thousands of tea party demonstrators ringed the Capitol to protest the health care law and what they considered a wasteful, oversized federal government. That crowd, which dwarfed the hundreds or several thousand anti-Kavanaugh demonstrators, vented anger at times, shouting "Liar,

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liar" and waving signs including one saying, "Bury Obama Care with Kennedy," a reference to Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., who had recently died.

Black lawmakers said they were targeted by racial epithets and spat upon during a smaller rally by several thousand tea party supporters in March 2010, as Congress was voting on the health care legislation.

In remarks Thursday, McConnell described last week's anti-Kavanaugh protesters as "literally storming the steps of the Capitol and the Supreme Court," confronting Republicans at restaurants and airports and shouting from visitors' galleries during Senate debates. Republicans have said some received death threats and were stalked at their homes.

McConnell criticized Clinton, who said on CNN this week that "civility can start again" after Democrats capture the House or Senate in next month's elections.

He also criticized former Attorney General Eric Holder. In a video purportedly shot at a recent campaign event in Georgia, Holder says, "When they go low, we kick them," paraphrasing former first lady Michelle Obama, who famously said during the 2016 campaign, "When they go low, we go high."

McConnell noted that these activities followed last year's shooting of GOP lawmakers at a morning baseball practice by "a politically crazed gunman."

Gunman James Hodgkinson, killed at the scene by officers, was infuriated by Trump's election. His social media posts suggest he targeted Republicans because of his political views.

AP researcher Rhonda Shafner and reporters Steve Peoples and Kevin Freking contributed.

High-flying tech stocks at forefront of Wall Street's slump

By ALEX VEIGA, AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Technology and internet stocks have led the way for much of Wall Street's bull market run, propelling the stocks of big names like Apple, Amazon and Google's parent company sharply higher along the way.

Now those high-flying stocks are at the forefront of a wave of selling as investors fret about the possible impact of a recent surge in interest rates.

Those jitters gave the Nasdaq composite index, which as a high concentration of technology companies, its biggest loss in more than two years Wednesday. It extended its slide Thursday and has fallen 9.6 percent since it set a record high in late August.

Apple, Microsoft, and Netflix have posted steep declines. Amazon and Google-parent Alphabet, respectively the second- and fourth-most valuable U.S. companies, have fallen more than 10 percent from their recent peaks. Facebook, the sixth-largest company, has shed 29 percent since late July.

"The sell-off was perhaps a little overdone," said Lindsey Bell, investment strategist at CFRA. "A lot of it may have been investors just kind of taking profits in some of the high-flyers of the year that also have high valuations."

The yield on the 10-year Treasury jumped from 3.05 percent early last week to more than 3.20 percent Wednesday, a seven-year high. It dipped to 3.15 percent Thursday.

Interest rates tend to follow increases in bond yields, eroding profits for companies, which have to pay higher interest-rate costs to borrow money. They also make bonds more attractive investments relative to stocks.

Technology and internet-based companies are known for their high profit margins, and many have reported explosive growth in recent years, with corresponding gains in their stock prices. That's made them particularly vulnerable to higher interest rates, because it makes the stocks' already high valuations look even more stretched.

Investors have other reasons to worry about the tech sector stocks. Those include the potential impact that the U.S.-China trade dispute may have on big tech companies, which tend to do a lot of business in China.

In addition, the big-name tech stocks have been faring so well for so long that investors have been bet-

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ting on even bigger things to come from the companies. Those wagers might take longer to pay off, or worse, fizzle completely if a slowing economy or recession undermines their future growth.

Facebook and Google, for instance, might not be able to entice as many new users to their free digital services, and the advertising that generates most of their revenue might shrivel anyway.

For Amazon, it might mean consumers curtail their spending on merchandise in its e-commerce site and decide they really don't need an internet-connected speaker like the Echo, after all. And Netflix might have more difficulty attracting subscribers, or even start seeing more cancellations to its online streaming service if households feel squeezed.

There's another cloud hanging over Netflix's stock, too. The company is scheduled to report its third-quarter results Tuesday. After it missed its target for subscriber growth during the spring, investors may be bailing out of its stock for fear the trend continued during the summer months, when it's traditionally more challenging to get people to sign up for a video service because of vacation schedules and good weather outdoors.

The margin of error for these companies is extremely thin because the dramatic run-up in their stocks has driven a key stock benchmark — price-to-earnings ratio — to astronomical levels. None more so than Netflix, with investors still paying the equivalent of \$147 for every \$1 in earnings, even after its stock has tumbled 12 percent during the past week.

Even with the recent sell-off, Netflix's stock is still worth nearly three times more than it was just three years ago and seven times more than it was five years ago.

Long-established technology companies like Apple and Microsoft, which now pay dividends because they aren't growing as quickly as they once did, have also been caught in the downdraft. That's despite Microsoft still making software that powers most of the personal computers in the world and Apple's iPhones and other gadgets still attracting legions of loyal fans willing to pay premium prices for the products.

Apple's popularity shows in its profits. If analysts' estimates prove accurate, Apple earned \$13.3 billion from July through September, or about \$6 million every hour. The company is scheduled to report its earnings on Oct. 30.

"We're still optimistic going into third-quarter earnings, with regard to technology," Bell said.

AP Business Writers Stan Choe in New York and Michael Liedtke in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Lochte's lawyer to AP: Swimmer counseled for alcohol use

By BETH HARRIS, AP Sports Writer

Ryan Lochte is undergoing counseling for alcohol use, but the 12-time Olympic medalist is not in a treatment facility and is training in his bid to make the 2020 Tokyo Games, the swimmer's lawyer said Thursday.

The decision to pursue counseling has nothing to do with incidents in California and Florida last week, attorney Jeff Ostrow told The Associated Press. Asked if Lochte plans to give up alcohol, he said, "Ryan will make that decision."

Ostrow said the 34-year-old swimmer wants his family and fans to be proud of him, and he doesn't want to repeat the "poor decisions" that have plagued him in recent years.

"He is not in a treatment facility. He's been evaluated by professionals who know the best about this and they have said this is not what he needs to do," Ostrow said by phone from South Florida. "He's following the protocols that have been recommended. He's going to be great."

A week ago, in Newport Beach, California, Lochte reportedly tried to kick down his hotel room door hours after attending an event for his swimsuit sponsor TYR. No police report was filed.

"Ryan didn't do anything crazy while he was out there," Ostrow said.

Later that same night, back in his home state of Florida, Lochte was cited for careless driving after rear-ending another car.

"He 100 percent was not drinking," Ostrow said. "It was after a long day of flying back from west to east. If alcohol was involved, everyone would know it."

"He's not an alcoholic where he's drinking every day and it's impacting his ability to function as a father and athlete," the attorney said. "But there was a pattern of poor decision-making at the same time there was alcohol. Ryan wanted to put an end to that."

Lochte is currently serving a 14-month ban for receiving an intravenous injection in May. He posted a photo of himself receiving a vitamin injection on Instagram, triggering a U.S. Anti-Doping Agency investigation that found the swimmer didn't take a banned substance. Intravenous injections, however, are allowed only if an athlete has been granted an exemption from USADA. Lochte did not have such an exemption.

"I should have known better," Lochte said in a video interview from the TYR launch event last week. "I wasn't taking anything illegal."

Ostrow acknowledged that Lochte "looks foolish probably not knowing the rule."

Lochte's reputation has taken other hits for issues out of the pool, notably in 2016 when he claimed he was robbed at gunpoint at a Rio de Janeiro gas station after celebrating the end of the Olympic swimming competition. Rio police said Lochte's robbery story was false. Charges of "falsely communicating a crime to authorities" were eventually dropped by a Brazilian court.

Lochte was suspended 10 months as a result by USA Swimming and lost several sponsors.

"Everyone thinks I'm in a gutter, literally," Lochte said with a laugh in the video.

His personal life seemed to rebound with the birth of son Caiden in June 2017. He and former Playboy model Kayla Rae Reid wed in a Florida courthouse in January and followed up with a lavish ceremony in Southern California last month.

"I've got knocked down so many times," Lochte said in the video. "There's only one way to go and that's up from now on. I'm in a good place right now, my son is getting bigger, my family, they're growing."

Lochte's former rival, Michael Phelps, struggled with alcohol issues in the past. The 23-time Olympic gold medalist was twice arrested for drunken driving. He checked into a rehab clinic after the second incident and said he had considered taking his own life.

Lochte's 12 Olympic medals make him the second-most decorated Olympic swimmer behind Phelps. Lochte remains a popular draw, with his autograph sessions typically drawing overflow crowds.

"Ryan isn't rock bottom," Ostrow said. "He's not in a bad place other than his public perception."

Lochte's current suspension kept him from competing at U.S. nationals in July, when swimmers qualified for the Pan Pacific championships in August and next year's world championships.

The ban runs through July 2019, leaving him to race against training partners or in unsanctioned events as his only options for now. Still, he vows he will return to competition and be a threat to make a fifth Olympic team in 2020.

"When I do come back into the swimming, I'm going to turn some heads," Lochte said in the video. "I'm not going to let this whole IV situation or the whole legal thing keep me down. I'm going to pull together and I'm going to rise above it."

O'Rourke's improbable Senate run still needs Latinos to win

By PAUL J. WEBER, Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Beto O'Rourke's improbable U.S. Senate campaign has challenged expectations of what was thought possible by a Democrat in Texas. But with just weeks before Election Day doubts remain over whether he can pull off another crucial feat: getting a surge of Latinos to the polls.

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz is aiming to survive one of the most expensive Senate races of 2018 by rallying his base of white conservatives. His campaign has made no conspicuous courtship of Latino voters, including no Spanish-language television ads or a Spanish version of his campaign website. And, save for a dramatic about-face this summer on the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" immigration policies of separating children from parents, Cruz has maintained a tough line on immigration.

O'Rourke's path to an upset, meanwhile, partly hinges on bringing out Hispanics who typically don't show up to the polls, especially in a midterm election. Texas ranks near the bottom in voter turnout, and while the state's booming Hispanic population is on pace to outnumber whites as early as 2022, voters

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with Spanish surnames accounted for fewer than 1 in 5 votes in 2016. Uptick in Latino turnout has been steady but modest, and in the last midterms, exit polls showed that about 44 percent of Hispanic voters went for Republican Gov. Greg Abbott.

On Thursday, a new poll from Quinnipiac University put Cruz up by 9 points and getting about 4 in 10 Hispanic voters. Other polls have shown a tighter race, but in any case, O'Rourke must pull in a broader electorate than his rival to become the first Texas Democrat elected to the U.S. Senate in 30 years.

"Donald Trump won. We're discouraged. A lot of people are discouraged," said Orlando Valdez, 19, a student at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where the majority of people on the 30,000-student campus are Hispanic. He lined up too late to make it inside a packed auditorium to see O'Rourke, who railed against building a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border and condemned efforts to deport so-called "Dreamers."

"That shows us, as a community, that it's really hard for us to come back out because Donald Trump won." But he believes O'Rourke is making inroads.

San Antonio is a home field for Democrats. But even here, there is fresh anxiety. Last month, a Hispanic Republican stunned Democrats by winning a special election for a state Senate seat in a district that Hillary Clinton carried by 12 points. It was a blow for Democrats in the hometown of Julian Castro, the city's former mayor who has not ruled out a presidential run in 2020.

O'Rourke was served a reality check after finishing second in Texas' March primaries to a little-known and barely funded Hispanic challenger in more than 20 counties along and near the border with Mexico. It was a reminder of how many voters still didn't know O'Rourke, whose district is on the Texas border and is bilingual.

Cruz is Texas' first Hispanic senator and his father's story of emigrating from Cuba is a bedrock of his campaign. He says plenty of Latinos are already with him.

"The Hispanic community, our community, is conservative," Cruz told reporters after a rally outside Austin this summer. "The Hispanic community, the values that resonate in our community are faith, family, patriotism."

Hispanics are the nation's second-fastest growing demographic in the U.S. behind Asians, and GOP strategists have braced for turmoil on the border having a fallout on the midterm elections. When more than 1,000 Latinos gathered in Phoenix in June for the annual conference of the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, the Trump administration sent no representative, the first time in at least 24 years that an administration skipped the event.

Of the roughly 400,000 newly registered voters in Texas since the March primaries, slightly more than 1 in 4 have Hispanic surnames, according to Texas elections officials.

"Any increase in turnout is going to pay a huge dividend for Beto. With the white vote, you're losing the white vote," said Matt Barreto, the co-founder of Latino Decisions. "Their best opportunity is to increase turnout in the black and Latino community."

Asked about Hispanic outreach in San Antonio, O'Rourke said there was still work to do.

"Until everyone has been reached out to, until everyone has been heard, until everyone has been reflected in this campaign, then we have not done our job," he said.

Follow Paul J. Weber on Twitter: www.twitter.com/pauljweber

US, Russian astronauts land safely after rocket failure

By **DMITRY LOVETSKY** and **VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV**, Associated Press

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan (AP) — The problem came two minutes into the flight: The rocket carrying an American and a Russian to the International Space Station failed Thursday, triggering an emergency that sent their capsule into a steep, harrowing fall back to Earth.

The crew landed safely on the steppes of Kazakhstan, but the aborted mission dealt another blow to the troubled Russian space program that currently serves as the only way to deliver astronauts to the orbiting outpost. It also was the first such accident for Russia's manned program in over three decades.

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NASA astronaut Nick Hague and Roscosmos' Alexei Ovchinin had a brief period of weightlessness when the capsule separated from the malfunctioning Soyuz rocket at an altitude of about 50 kilometers (31 miles), then endured gravitational forces of 6-7 times more than is felt on Earth as they came down at a sharper-than-normal angle.

About a half-hour later, the capsule parachuted onto a barren area about 20 kilometers (12 miles) east of the city of Dzhezkazgan in Kazakhstan.

"Thank God the crew is alive," said Dmitry Peskov, the spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

All Russian manned launches were suspended pending an investigation into the failure, said Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov.

New NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine, who watched the launch at the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome with his Russian counterpart, said Hague and Ovchinin were in good condition. He added that a "thorough investigation" will be conducted.

Hague, 43, and Ovchinin, 47, lifted off at 2:40 p.m. (0840 GMT; 4:40 a.m. EDT). The astronauts were to dock at the space station six hours later and join an American, a Russian and a German on board.

But the three-stage Soyuz rocket suffered an unspecified failure of its second stage two minutes after launch. Russian news reports indicated that one of its four first-stage engines might have failed to jettison in sync with others, resulting in the second stage's shutdown and activating the automatic emergency rescue system.

For the crew in the capsule, events would have happened very quickly, NASA's deputy chief astronaut Reid Wiseman told reporters at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. An emergency light would have come on and, an instant later, the abort motors would fire to pull the capsule away from the rocket.

Wiseman said the only thing that went through his mind was "I hope they get down safe."

Search and rescue teams scrambled to recover the crew, and paratroopers were dropped to the site. Dzhezkazgan is about 450 kilometers (280 miles) northeast of Baikonur, and spacecraft returning from the space station normally land in that area.

Back at Baikonur, Bridenstine acknowledged in a NASA TV interview that "for a period of time, we didn't know what the situation was."

Hague's wife and parents anxiously awaited word at Baikonur, accompanied the whole time by a NASA astronaut who was in the same class as Hague. They all behaved admirably, according to Bridenstine, adding that Hague's wife, Catie, is an Air Force officer like her husband and also a public affairs officer.

"It was a tough day, no doubt, but at the end of the day, the training paid off for everybody," he said.

Still, Bridenstine said: "We are thrilled that even though it was a launch failure, all of the safety systems worked."

The astronauts were returned to Baikonur for medical checks and to see their families. They were spending the night there before heading to Star City, Russia's training center outside Moscow.

It was to be the first space mission for Hague, who joined NASA's astronaut corps in 2013 and might have to wait awhile for another shot. Ovchinin spent six months on the orbiting outpost in 2016.

Oleg Orlov, the head of Russia's main space medicine center, said the crew was trained to endure higher-than-usual gravity loads and were tightly strapped into their custom-made seats to help withstand the pressure.

Flight controllers kept the three space station residents informed, assuring them, "The boys have landed."

"Glad our friends are fine," space station commander Alexander Gerst, a European Space Agency astronaut from Germany, tweeted from orbit. "Spaceflight is hard. And we must keep trying for the benefit of humankind."

There was no immediate word on whether the space station crew might need to extend its own six-month mission. Two spacewalks planned for later this month were off indefinitely. Hague was supposed to be one of the spacewalkers.

NASA said it's dusting off its plans for operating the space station without a crew, just in case the Russian investigation drags into next year.

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Kenny Todd, a space station manager, said from Houston that the space station crew can stay on board until January. That's just a month beyond their expected mid-December return. Their Soyuz capsule is good for about 200 days in orbit.

If the Russian rockets remain grounded until it's time for the crew to come home, flight controllers could operate the station without anyone on board, Todd said.

It could operate like that for a long time, barring a major equipment failure, he added. But it will need to be staffed before SpaceX or Boeing launches its crew capsules next year, Todd said. Given that the space station is a \$100 billion asset, Todd says it needs to have someone on board for the arrival of the commercial demo missions, for safety reasons.

While the Russian program has been dogged by a string of problems with other kinds of launches in recent years, Thursday's incident marked its first manned launch failure since September 1983, when a Soyuz exploded on the launch pad.

Borisov said Russia will fully share all relevant information with the U.S., which pays up to \$82 million per ride to the space station.

"I hope that the American side will treat it with understanding," he said.

NASA's Bridenstine emphasized that collaboration with Roscosmos remains important.

Relations between Moscow and Washington have sunk to post-Cold War lows over conflicts in Ukraine and Syria, and allegations of Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential vote, but they have kept co-operating in space.

The Russian Soyuz spacecraft is currently the only vehicle for ferrying crews to the space station following the retirement of the U.S. space shuttle fleet. Russia stands to lose that monopoly with the arrival of SpaceX's Dragon and Boeing's Starliner crew capsules.

In August, the space station crew found a hole in a Soyuz capsule docked to the orbiting outpost that caused a brief loss of air pressure before being patched. Roscosmos chief Dmitry Rogozin raised wide concern by saying the leak was a drill hole that was made intentionally during manufacturing or in orbit. He didn't say if he suspected any of the station's crew.

In the 1983 launch failure, cosmonauts Vladimir Titov and Gennady Strekalov jettisoned and landed safely near the launch pad after the Soyuz explosion.

"It's an unpleasant situation," Titov told the Tass news agency Thursday. "We went through it, and it was very bad."

He added that it will take about a week for the crew to fully recover.

In 1975, the failure of a Soyuz upper stage sent Vasily Lazarev and Oleg Makarov into a fiery fall to Earth from an altitude of 190 kilometers, subjecting them to enormous G-forces that caused them to black out and temporarily lose sight. They landed on a snowy mountain slope and spent two nights in the cold before rescue crews reached them.

Russia has continued to rely on Soviet-designed rockets for commercial satellites, as well as crews and cargo to the space station.

While Russian rockets earned a reputation for reliability in the past, the recent launch failures have cast doubt on Russia's ability to maintain its high standards.

Glitches found in Russia's Proton and Soyuz rockets in 2016 were traced to manufacturing flaws. Roscosmos sent more than 70 rocket engines back to production lines to replace faulty components, a move that resulted in a yearlong break in Proton launches and badly dented Russia's niche in the global market for commercial launches.

Isachenkov reported from Moscow. Associated Press writer Jim Heintz in Moscow and Marcia Dunn in Cape Canaveral contributed.

Study: DNA websites cast broad net for identifying people

By MALCOLM RITTER, AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — About 60 percent of the U.S. population with European heritage may be identifiable from their DNA by searching consumer websites, even if they've never made their own genetic information available, a study estimates.

And that number will grow as more and more people upload their DNA profiles to websites that use genetic analysis to find relatives, said the authors of the study released Thursday by the journal Science.

The use of such databases for criminal investigations made headlines in April, when authorities announced they'd used a genetic genealogy website to connect some crime-scene DNA to a man they then accused of being the so-called Golden State Killer, a serial rapist and murderer.

In general, such searches begin on a site by finding a relative linked to a DNA sample. Then sleuths can use other information like published family trees, public records and lists of survivors in obituaries, plus whatever they know about the person whose DNA began the process. They can build their own speculative family trees. Eventually, that can point to someone whose DNA is then found to match the original sample.

With DNA databases "you need just a minute fraction of the population to really identify many more people," said Yaniv Erlich of Columbia University, an author of the study.

Each person in a DNA database acts "as a beacon that illuminates hundreds of distant relatives," said Erlich, who is also chief scientific officer of the MyHeritage website.

His paper focused on Americans of European descent because such people are over-represented in DNA databases, which makes it easier to find relatives.

The researchers started with the 1.28 million participants on the MyHeritage site at the time they did the work. Most had a northern European genetic background. For each, they looked for relatives more distant than first cousins elsewhere in the database.

About 60 percent of the time, they found someone whose genetic similarity was at least equal to that of a third cousin, similar to the degree of relatedness that led to the Golden State Killer suspect. Third cousins share great-great-grandparents.

With some basic assumptions about what kind of data would be available for a criminal suspect, the researchers calculated they could pare down the possible identity of the initial person to just 16 or 17 people. That's limited enough that police could zero in with further investigation, Erlich said.

Erlich and his co-authors suggested that such searches could cast a broader net in the near future. A database with DNA profiles of just 2 percent of a population is enough to match nearly everybody with somebody who's as closely related as a third cousin, researchers said. From that, they calculated that the genetic profiles of about 3 million Americans of European descent could deliver the equivalent of a third cousin for more than 90 percent of that ethnic grouping.

Websites are getting very close to that, said Erlich, noting that MyHeritage now has more than 1.75 million participants. He said the website does not allow forensic searches.

Two DNA experts unconnected to the study said third and fourth cousins can both lead to identifications.

"Because the average person has so many of these distant cousins, it becomes reasonably probable that one or more of them is in a publicly searchable database, even if only a small fraction of the U.S. population is included," Graham Coop and Michael Edge of the University of California, Davis, wrote in a statement to The Associated Press.

"The fact that most suspects could be identified in this way is predictable" from mathematical calculations, and the new paper provides a convincing demonstration, they said.

However, the work raises important policy questions, they said. Should anyone other than law enforcement be allowed to conduct such searches? And under what circumstances should they be permitted?

"How should we react to the fact that the decisions of our fourth cousins, whom one may never have met, affect one's privacy?" they asked.

In an interview, Edge noted that when people add their DNA profiles to a publicly searchable genealogy site, "they're not necessarily thinking about the genetic privacy of their distant relatives."

Amy McGuire, a professor of biomedical ethics at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, said that police searches using DNA and genealogy websites have sometimes pointed to an incorrect person.

"You would hope ... the victim of the false lead can be easily cleared" by providing DNA, she said. "But you still have some invasion into that person's personal life by being investigated."

Some people would say that's worth it to aid the cause of justice, but others "would find that very distressing," she added.

McGuire said there's an active legal debate about whether police should be able to "go on a fishing expedition" using DNA genealogy websites without a warrant.

She recently published a survey that suggests most people support letting police search genetic genealogy databases. But support was much higher for investigations involving violent crimes and crimes against children than for nonviolent crimes.

Follow Malcolm Ritter at @MalcolmRitter His recent work can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/RitterAP>

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Social Security checks will grow in 2019 as inflation rises

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Tens of millions of Social Security recipients and other retirees will get a 2.8 percent boost in benefits next year as inflation edges higher. It's the biggest increase most retired baby boomers have gotten.

Following a stretch of low inflation, the cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, for 2019 is the highest in seven years. It amounts to \$39 a month for the average retired worker, according to estimates released Thursday by the Social Security Administration.

The COLA affects household budgets for about one in five Americans, including Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans and federal retirees. That's about 70 million people, enough to send ripples through the economy.

Unlike most private pensions, Social Security has featured inflation protection since 1975. Beneficiaries also gain from compounding since COLAs become part of their underlying benefit, the base for future cost-of-living increases.

Nonetheless many retirees and their advocates say the annual adjustment is too meager and doesn't reflect higher health care costs for older people. Federal budget hawks take the opposite view, arguing that increases should be smaller to reflect consumers' penny-pinching responses when costs go up.

With the COLA, the estimated average monthly Social Security payment for a retired worker will be \$1,461 a month next year.

"For more recent retirees, the 2019 COLA will be the largest increase they have gotten to date," said policy analyst Mary Johnson, of the nonpartisan Senior Citizens League.

But retiree Danette Deakin, of Bolivar, Missouri, said she feels as though her cost-of-living adjustment is already earmarked for rising expenses.

Her Medigap insurance for costs not covered by Medicare is going up, and so is her prescription drug plan. She expects her Medicare Part B premium for outpatient care will also up.

"It isn't enough of an increase that it takes care of all of the increases from health care, plus rent — our rent gets increased every year," said Deakin, 70, who worked in the finance department at a boat dealership.

Health care costs eat up about one-third of her income, she estimated.

"I appreciate the COLA adjustment, and in no way am I complaining," Deakin added. "It's just that every single thing you can talk about goes up. It doesn't go down."

By law, the COLA is based on a broad index of consumer prices. Advocates for seniors claim the general index doesn't accurately capture the rising prices they face, especially for health care and housing. They

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want the government to switch to an index that reflects the spending patterns of older people.

"What the COLA should be based on is still a very real issue," said William Arnone, CEO of the National Academy of Social Insurance, a research organization not involved in lobbying. "Older people spend their money in categories that are going up at a higher rate than overall inflation."

The COLA is now based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, or CPI-W, which measures price changes for food, housing, clothing, transportation, energy, medical care, recreation and education.

Advocates for the elderly would prefer the CPI-E, an experimental measure from the government that reflects costs for households headed by a person age 62 or older. It usually outpaces general inflation, though not always.

COLAs can be small or zero, as was the case in several recent years. People often blame the president when that happens. However, the White House can't dictate the COLA, which is calculated by nonpolitical experts.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly vowed not to cut Social Security or Medicare. But the government is running \$1 trillion deficits, partly as a result of the Republican tax cut bill Trump signed. Mounting deficits will revive pressure to cut Social Security, advocates for the elderly fear.

"The revenue loss in the tax bill contributes to much higher deficits and debt, and that is where the threats begin to come in," said David Certner, policy director for AARP. "Social Security, and in particular the COLAs, have been the target."

Former President Barack Obama floated — but ultimately dropped — a proposal called chained CPI, which would have slowed annual COLAs to reflect penny-pinching by consumers. Behind it is the idea that when the price of a particular good or service rises, people often respond by buying less or switching to a lower-cost alternative.

Because of compounding, smaller COLAs would have a dramatic effect over time on the federal budget and Social Security finances. But if inflation continues to rise, proposals to scale back cost-of-living adjustments carry greater political risk.

Beyond federal budget woes, Social Security faces its own long-term financial problems and won't be able to pay full benefits starting in 2034.

Social Security is financed by a 12.4 percent tax on wages, with half paid by workers and the other half paid by employers. Next year, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax will increase from \$128,400 to \$132,900.

About 177 million workers pay Social Security taxes. Of those, nearly 12 million workers will pay more in taxes because of the increase in taxable wages, according to the Social Security Administration.

In addition to retirees, other Social Security beneficiaries include disabled workers and surviving spouses and children. Low-income disabled and elderly people receiving Supplemental Security Income also get a COLA.

Higher rates: Sign of economic strength or a risk? Try both

By JOSH BOAK, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — This week's dizzying sell-offs in the financial markets have been a rude reminder that the U.S. economy is no longer relying on ultra-low interest rates to fuel growth.

Borrowing costs are rising for companies, homebuyers and the U.S. government — all of which could eventually dampen economic growth.

Yet the climb in interest rates also reflects an economy that's still managing to accelerate on the energy of an expansion in its 10th year — the second-longest such streak on record. The pace of growth has picked up this year in part because of President Donald Trump's tax cuts, which have also increased the federal budget deficit and contributed to the higher rates now spreading through the economy.

For the moment, Trump is content to blame the Federal Reserve and its gradual rate hikes for the stock market fall. On Thursday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbled 2.1 percent — or 546 points, after

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having sunk 831 points on Wednesday.

Fed officials last month raised its key short-term rate for the third time this year, and a fourth hike is likely before year's end.

Jerome Powell, whom Trump elevated to the Fed's chairmanship, is trying to keep inflation in check and unwind the central bank's programs that were launched to rescue the economy after the 2008 financial crisis. Much of the Fed's efforts after the crisis depended on keeping borrowing rates, for consumers and businesses, at record lows for seven years.

But Trump now sees the Fed's gradual return of rates to normal levels as disrupting the stock market and an economic boom that he argues would otherwise endure for many years.

"I think the Fed is out of control," the president told reporters Thursday. "I think the Fed is far too stringent, and they're making a mistake and it's not right. Despite that, we're doing very well, but it's not necessary in my opinion. And I think I know about it better than they do."

Economists generally view the recent rate increases as a natural response to improved growth. The unemployment rate has reached a 49-year low of 3.7 percent. Most private forecasts expect the economy to expand roughly 3 percent this year, up from 2.3 percent a year ago.

Against that backdrop, a rise in borrowing rates may not be cause for alarm.

"Higher interest rates need not be a threat — they can and should be taken as a sign of economic strength," said Carl Tannenbaum, chief economist for Northern Trust.

With growth accelerating, demand for credit typically also increases. And that additional demand for debt generally causes borrowing rates to climb.

Some of that greater demand has come from the federal government as the budget deficit has jumped \$232 billion so far this fiscal year, largely on the need to finance the president's tax cuts. The rate charged on 10-year U.S. Treasury notes has surged from 2.46 percent at the start of 2018 to nearly 3.16 percent.

"The big difference between now and a year ago is tax reform," Tannenbaum said. "We all anticipated it would have a very powerful short-term impact on economic activity."

But faster growth can produce some pain for the stock market and homebuyers as rates adjust upward. Should rates surge too much, they could trigger a recession as companies and consumers struggle to repay debt. For now, most economists foresee no downturn in the near future.

The Fed is trying to steer growth forward while avoiding an acceleration in inflation. But by raising its short-term rates, it's restricting a pool of credit that has bolstered the multi-year stock rally. The resulting higher rates have led many investors to unload shares.

Over the past week, U.S. and global markets have sold off at a speed that has jolted market watchers. The president's escalating series of tariffs against imports from China are contributing to the concerns.

"In the past few days, a handful of companies exposed to trade with China have discussed how the tariffs are starting to adversely impact their business through both higher costs and slower demand," Mark Haefele, chief investment officer at UBS Global Wealth Management, said in a note to clients.

Trump's top economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, tried Thursday to ease concerns about the tariffs by saying the administration is having discussions for a meeting between Trump and President Xi Jinping of China at the upcoming G-20 summit in Argentina.

Stocks are far from the only market being hurt by higher interest rates. Homebuyers also stand to feel some pain.

The average 30-year fixed rate mortgage jumped this week to 4.9 percent, the highest level in seven years, according to mortgage buyer Freddie Mac. Higher rates increase the costs for would-be homebuyers and could stymie home sales, which could also depress consumer spending.

Sales of existing homes have already tumbled 1.5 percent in the past 12 months, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Danielle Hale, chief economist at realtor.com, predicted that average rates will reach 5 percent and said first-time buyers might pull back from the market.

"They might have to pause and reassess, and it might impact their budget enough that they step out of the housing market and wait and save more money for a down payment," Hale said.

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AP White House reporter Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Oct. 12, the 285th day of 2018. There are 80 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 12, 1973, President Richard Nixon nominated House minority leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan to succeed Spiro T. Agnew as vice president.

On this date:

In 1492 (according to the Old Style calendar), Christopher Columbus' expedition arrived in the present-day Bahamas.

In 1792, the first recorded U.S. celebration of Columbus Day was held to mark the tricentennial of Christopher Columbus' landing.

In 1870, General Robert E. Lee died in Lexington, Va., at age 63.

In 1942, during World War II, American naval forces defeated the Japanese in the Battle of Cape Esperance. Attorney General Francis Biddle announced during a Columbus Day celebration at Carnegie Hall in New York that Italian nationals in the United States would no longer be considered enemy aliens.

In 1971, the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar" opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre on Broadway.

In 1984, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher escaped an attempt on her life when an Irish Republican Army bomb exploded at a hotel in Brighton, England, killing five people.

In 1986, the superpower meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, ended in stalemate, with President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev unable to agree on arms control or a date for a full-fledged summit in the United States.

In 1997, singer John Denver was killed in the crash of his privately built aircraft in Monterey Bay, California; he was 53.

In 2000, 17 sailors were killed in a suicide bomb attack on the destroyer USS Cole in Yemen.

In 2001, NBC announced that an assistant to anchorman Tom Brokaw had contracted the skin form of anthrax after opening a "threatening" letter to her boss containing powder.

In 2002, bombs blamed on al-Qaida-linked militants destroyed a nightclub on the Indonesian island of Bali, killing 202 people, including 88 Australians and seven Americans.

In 2007, Former Vice President Al Gore and the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change won the Nobel Peace Prize for sounding the alarm over global warming.

Ten years ago: Global finance ministers meeting in Washington kept searching for ways to tackle the unfolding financial crisis; in Paris, nations in Europe's single-currency zone agreed to temporarily guarantee bank refinancing and pledged to prevent bank failures. North Korea said it would resume dismantling its main nuclear facilities, hours after the United States removed the communist country from a list of states that sponsored terrorism. A Soyuz spacecraft carrying Richard Garriott, the sixth paying space traveler, along with another American and a Russian crew member lifted off from Kazakhstan for the international space station. The Arizona Cardinals became the first team in NFL history to block a punt to score the winning TD in overtime in their 30-24 victory over the Dallas Cowboys.

Five years ago: Cyclone Phailin struck the east coast of India, destroying hundreds of thousands of homes and causing hundreds of millions of dollars in crop damage; some four dozen people are believed to have died. Belgian authorities nabbed alleged pirate kingpin Mohamed Abdi Hassan on his arrival in Brussels (he'd been lured from Somalia with promises of work on a documentary about piracy). Anibal Sanchez and four Detroit Tigers relievers came within two outs of the first combined no-hitter in postseason history, striking out 17 to beat the Boston Red Sox 1-0 in the AL championship series opener. The St. Louis Cardinals defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers 1-0 for a 2-0 lead in the NL championship series.

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One year ago: The Trump administration said it would "immediately" halt payments to insurers under the Obama-era health care law. President Donald Trump lashed out at hurricane-devastated Puerto Rico, saying the federal government can't keep sending help "forever" and suggesting that the U.S. territory was to blame for its financial struggles.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Antonia Rey is 91. Former Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, is 86. Singer Sam Moore (formerly of Sam and Dave) is 83. Broadcast journalist Chris Wallace is 71. Actress-singer Susan Anton is 68. Pop/rock singer/songwriter Jane Siberry is 63. Actor Hiroyuki Sanada is 58. Actor Carlos Bernard is 56. Jazz musician Chris Botti (BOH'-tee) is 56. Rhythm-and-blues singer Claude McKnight (Take 6) is 56. Rock singer Bob Schneider is 53. Actor Hugh Jackman is 50. Actor Adam Rich is 50. Rhythm-and-blues singer Garfield Bright (Shai) is 49. Country musician Martie Maguire (Courtyard Hounds, The Dixie Chicks) is 49. Actor Kirk Cameron is 48. Olympic gold medal skier Bode Miller is 41. Rock singer Jordan Pundik (New Found Glory) is 39. Actor Brian J. Smith is 37. Actor Tyler Blackburn is 32. Actor Marcus T. Paulk is 32. Actor Josh Hutcherson is 26.

Thought for Today: "Everyone's quick to blame the alien." — Aeschylus (ES'-kuh-luhs), Greek poet and dramatist (524 B.C.-456 B.C.).