

Groton Daily Independent

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

Sperry Stump Removal Tyler: 605/216-8431
Over 30 Years of Combined Experience!
TJ: 605/380-7915 **TreeLine Tree Service**

Saturday, October 13, 2018
Oral Interp at Florence High School
9:00am: Volleyball: Girls Varsity Tournament at Redfield.

No. 2 Wolves find success on both sides of the ball in win over (RV) Wayne State

Aberdeen, S.D. – The No. 2 Northern State offensive came alive in the Wolves 3-0 sweep of Wayne State on Friday evening. The Wolves defeated the Wildcats with set scores of 25-22, 25-20, and 25-14, improving to 20-1 overall and 12-1 in the NSIC.

Northern hit .392 in the match, including a match high .457 in the third and final set. The Wolves combined for a match high 54 kills, averaging 18.0 per set, 67 digs, averaging 22.33 per set, four blocks, and two aces. Defensively they forced 14 Wildcat hitting errors in the match, as Wayne State in .211.

Hailey Busch and Morgan Baufield powered the potent Northern State offense in the win with 16 and 14 kills respectively. Baufield hit .500 in the match, while Busch hit .333. Laura Snyder led the team in terms of attack percentage, hitting at a .727 clip with eight kills and no attack errors. Sally Gaul notched nine kills of her own, hitting .240, while Jenna Reiff added seven kills on 16 swings with no attack errors for a .438 hitting percentage.

Jaiden Langlie and Lexi Boesl led the team and the match defensively with 22 and 15 digs respectively. Langlie took the first set into her own hands with a total of 13 digs. Ashley Rozell and Busch followed with nine digs of their own, while Bry Goar tallied seven and Baufield notched four.

Rozell paced the Wolves offense to their highest attack percentage in eight matches, dishing out 49 total assists. The junior averaged 16.33 assists per set, adding one service ace and two blocks. Busch grabbed the other ace for the Wolves, as well as a block assist. Reiff led the team at the net with three assisted blocks, while Snyder notched two and Baufield added one.

Northern returns to action this evening versus Augustana University. First serve is set for 5 p.m. from Wachs Arena for the annual Pink Game.

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Region 1	Seed Points	W-L
Aberdeen Roncalli	41.375	5-3
Groton Area	41.375	5-3
Mobridge-Pollock	41.375	5-3
McLaughlin	38.250	3-5
Sisseton	37.375	1-7
Redfield/Doland	37.250	2-6

It does not get any closer than this - a three-way tie for first in Region 1 11B football. While the official pairings have not yet been released by the SDHSAA, Mr. Tom Woods says that Groton Area will be hosting Mobridge-Pollock in the first round of the football playoffs on Thursday.

According to a tweet from the SDHSAA, "With quite a few tiebreakers, we are working through our #SDFootball18 Playoff Pairings for the First Round of 11B and 9-man games."

Meanwhile last night in Groton, The Groton Area Tigers defeated the Redfield/Doland Pheasants, 21-14. Lucas Hinman scored Groton Area's third touchdown early in the fourth quarter to create a buffer zone for the Tigers in the score, 21-6.

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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



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Today in Weather History

October 13, 1966: Late season thunderstorms brought hail and high winds to southeast South Dakota causing extensive damage to some soybean fields. The greatest damage was in the Garretson area. The strong winds also damaged many utility lines along with many farm structures. Lightning struck a church at Lake Andes, and the resulting fire destroyed it. The storms occurred from late on the 13th to the morning of the 14th.

1983: Severe weather in Falls Church, VA, produced 2-3 tornadoes and caused \$1 million in damages.

2006: The October 2006 Buffalo storm was an unusual early-season lake effect snow storm that hit the Buffalo, New York area and other surrounding areas of the United States and Canada on this day. Downtown Buffalo reported 15 inches from this event. Depew and Alden record 24 inches, the most from this lake effect storm.

2011: Three tornadoes hit central and Eastern Virginia on this day. One of the EF1 tornadoes caused damage to the Sylvania Plantation home that was built in 1746. The storm peeled the roof off the house.

1846 - A great hurricane tracked across Cuba, Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia and Pennsylvania. The hurricane inflicted major damage along its entire path, which was similar to the path of Hurricane Hazel 108 years later. The hurricane caused great damage at Key West FL, and at Philadelphia PA it was the most destructive storm in thirty years. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Four tornadoes struck southeastern Virginia late in the night causing three million dollars damage. Tornadoes at Falls Church VA caused a million dollars damage. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders)

1987 - Fifteen cities in the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. Record lows included 34 degrees at Meridian MS, 28 degrees at Paducah KY, and 26 degrees at Beckley WV. Another surge of arctic air entered the north central U.S. bringing snow to parts of Wyoming and Colorado. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A total of forty-three cities in the eastern U.S. and the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date, including Elkins WV and Marquette MI where the mercury dipped to 18 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Sixteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings warmed into the 80s and low 90s from the Southern and Central Plains to the Southern and Middle Atlantic Coast. Evansville IND and North Platte NE reported record highs of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

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Today



Partly Sunny
then Mostly
Cloudy and
Breezy

High: 46 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 22 °F

Sunday



Mostly Sunny

High: 39 °F

Sunday
Night



Decreasing
Clouds

Low: 15 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 47 °F

Below average temperatures
through Tuesday, recovering
to near **Average** Wednesday.

WINDY

Highs Today: 40s to
Low 50s

Highs Sunday: 30s

Light rain possible
over southern SD
today.

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD
Created: 10/13/2018 5:38 AM
www.weather.gov/abr
@NWSAberdeen

Published on: 10/13/2018 at 5:41AM

A cold front will move across the region this morning, with breezy and gusty northwest winds in its wake. Highs will remain cool and well below normal, with temperatures reaching the 40s to low 50s today. Light rain is possible across southern South Dakota as a weak disturbance moves through the area. The below normal temperatures will continue through Tuesday before a warming trend develops by mid week.

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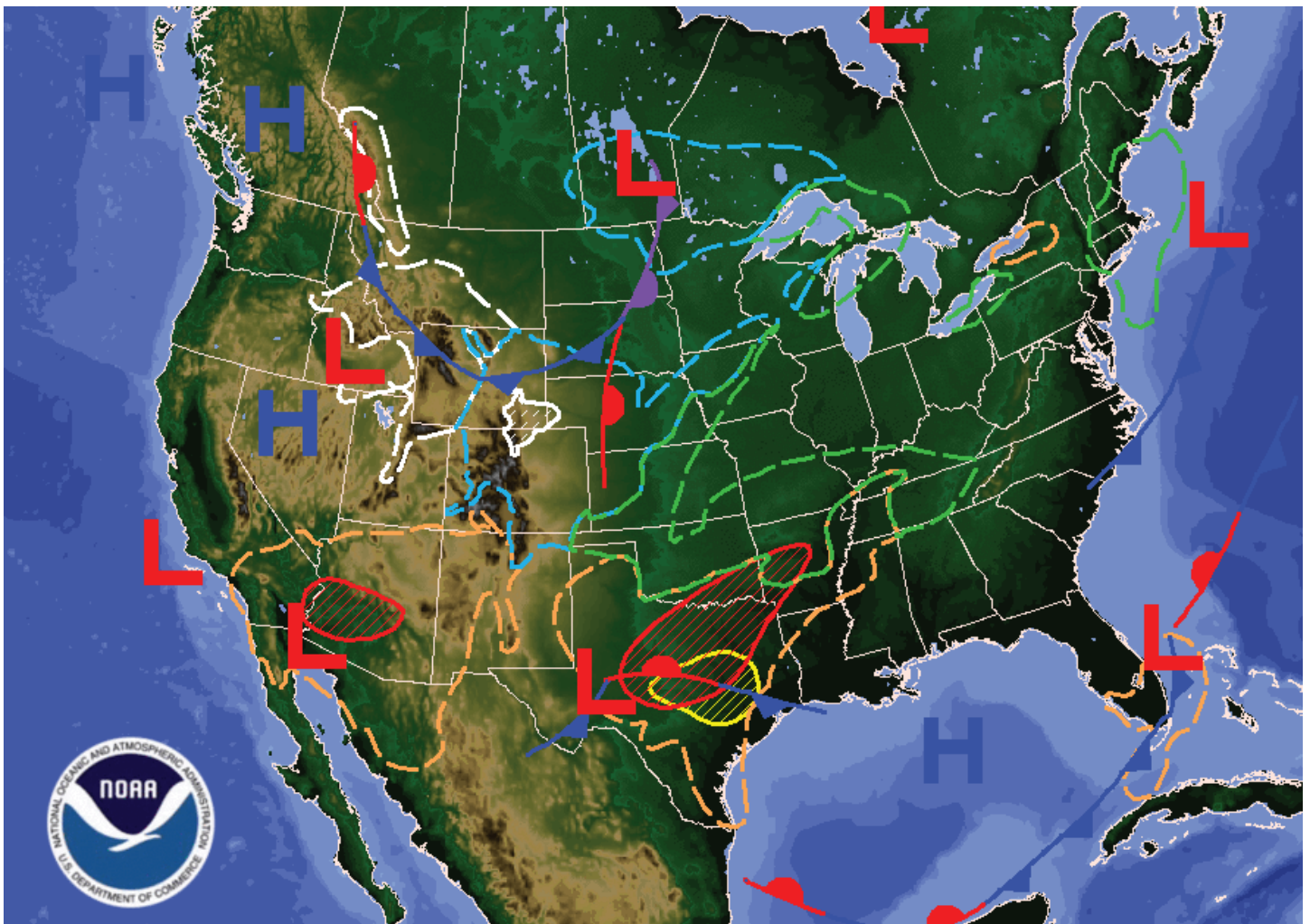
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 47 °F at 4:39 PM
Low Outside Temp: 23 °F at 12:18 AM
High Gust: 19 mph at 9:38 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 87° in 1958
Record Low: 10° in 1909
Average High: 59°F
Average Low: 34°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.87
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.42
Average Precip to date: 19.35
Precip Year to Date: 15.03
Sunset Tonight: 6:52 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:49 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Oct 13, 2018, issued 4:51 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Gallina with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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NOTHING NEW

Some years ago, a group of Navy scientists began to work on ways to change the direction of major storms. If they were able to do this, they reasoned, they could direct them to do great damage to the enemy.

Furthermore, they thought, if they could direct the storms to disrupt the enemy, they would be able to control clouds and form high seas and waves. Also, they believed if they could create low, solid overcast clouds, they would be able to conceal troop movements.

But God used the weather to His advantage long before the military ever entertained the idea. A great story of God using the weather to accomplish His purpose is the story of Jonah.

One day the Lord said to Jonah, Go to Nineveh. But he refused to listen to God and decided to go to Tarshish. However, he never got there. The Lord had a plan for Jonah, and, to accomplish His plan He needed a hurricane. So, He turned one loose and the crew of Jonahs ship became frightened.

Jonah looked at them and said, Its all my fault. Go ahead and throw me overboard. When they did, the sea stopped raging and became calm. But, theres more.

God then ordered a great fish to get involved in His plan. Soon, the great fish swallowed Jonah and took him for a ride. Finally, the great fish spewed him out, and he went to Nineveh. God does not put up with disobedience. If He has to, Hell get all of nature to help Him accomplish His plan.

The Psalmist reminds us that lightning and hail, snow and clouds, and stormy winds...do His bidding.

Prayer: Lord, we only fool ourselves if we think we can escape from Your plan. May we be willing to follow You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 148:8 Lightning and hail, snow and clouds, and stormy winds...do His bidding.

2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

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News from the Associated Press

Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

PREP FOOTBALL

Arlington/Lake Preston 34, Colman-Egan 12
Beresford 41, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 24
Bison 78, Crazy Horse 0
Bon Homme 58, Platte-Geddes 8
Brandon Valley 34, Yankton 9
Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan 55, Sioux Valley 12
Britton-Hecla 47, Great Plains Lutheran 7
Brookings 21, Sioux Falls Lincoln 7
Burke/South Central 30, Alcester-Hudson 12
Canton 48, Wagner 12
Chamberlain 20, Stanley County 7
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 38, Crow Creek 18
Colome 70, Avon 8
Corsica/Stickney 20, Gayville-Volin 18
Custer 26, Lead-Deadwood 13
Dakota Valley 50, Lennox 18
Dell Rapids 34, Flandreau 18
Dell Rapids St. Mary 36, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 6
Deubrook 65, Estelline/Hendricks 34
Deuel 44, Waverly-South Shore 6
Elk Point-Jefferson 43, Vermillion 27
Elkton-Lake Benton 30, Castlewood 26
Florence/Henry 52, Tri-State 14
Garretson 44, Canistota 22
Gregory 36, Miller/Highmore-Harrold 12
Groton Area 21, Redfield/Doland 14
Hamlin 21, Clark/Willow Lake 7
Harrisburg 21, Mitchell 17
Herreid/Selby Area 54, Lemmon/McIntosh 14
Hot Springs 21, Douglas 20
Huron 28, Spearfish 0
Irene-Wakonda 52, Baltic 8
Kadoka Area 58, Hill City 40
Kimball/White Lake 54, Lyman 0
Madison 49, Tri-Valley 18
Menno/Marion 28, Chester 21
Milbank Area 48, Sisseton 0
Mobridge-Pollock 73, McLaughlin 0
Newell 46, Dupree 36
Northwestern 48, Iroquois 0
Parker 34, Hanson 0
Parkston 70, Lower Brule 0
Potter County 34, Sunshine Bible Academy 0

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Red Cloud 69, Little Wound 24
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 62, Rapid City Stevens 7
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 39, Pierre 34
Sioux Falls Washington 56, Rapid City Central 27
St. Thomas More 21, Belle Fourche 20
Sturgis 42, Pine Ridge 22
Sully Buttes 50, Faulkton 12
Tea Area 36, Sioux Falls Christian 16
Timber Lake 42, Philip 28
Tiospa Zina Tribal 66, Standing Rock, N.D. 20
Todd County 51, St. Francis Indian 0
Tripp-Delmont/Armour/Andes Central/Dakota Christian 28, Scotland 8
Viborg-Hurley 54, Howard 52, OT
Wall 58, Edgemont 6
Warner 40, Eureka/Bowdle 0
Watertown 34, Aberdeen Central 20
Webster 46, Dakota Hills 8
West Central 47, McCook Central/Montrose 0
Winner 40, Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 0

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Belle Fourche, 20-25, 25-17, 25-16, 25-12
Mitchell def. Rapid City Central, 25-23, 25-11, 25-11
Rapid City Stevens def. Huron, 16-25, 25-19, 25-12, 25-17
Lakeville North Tournament
Pool Play
Pool 2
Lakeville South, Minn. def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-13, 25-17
Prior Lake, Minn. def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-19, 17-25, 15-12

New leader tackles economic development in Mitchell

By **MARCUS TRAXLER, The Daily Republic**

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — It was a case of right time, right place for Mark Vaux earlier this year.

An Aberdeen native, Vaux has spent more than a decade working in economic development in both North and South Dakota, most recently in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area.

But he was looking for a place where he could take a leading role, live closer to his family and be in a location where the civic and community leaders were pulling in the same direction. And Mitchell caught his eye.

Vaux, 56, was named the executive director of the Mitchell Area Development Corporation and the Mitchell Area Chamber of Commerce on July 27, and he started the new job last month, the Daily Republic reported.

"I just really liked the cohesiveness," he said of the structure of Mitchell's job. "We're all under one roof and we're all working together, between all of the groups that work in this (Chamber) building and through the businesses. That's always a good way to work, when everyone is pulling in the same direction."

As someone who says he relishes working behind the scenes of projects, Vaux previously worked as the executive vice president for the Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corporation for five years. That job primarily entailed business retention and expansion, along with finding funding sources for the organization and recruiting new businesses to the region. The job also included policy, legislation and

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workforce development, but he acknowledged that he's always had the goal of leading a city's economic development work.

"I guess I've always liked the idea of being able to run my own shop, so to speak," he said. "That was part of the appeal. I've always viewed that as an opportunity and challenge I'd like to take on."

Vaux took a unique route to get to his current position in economic development. He had aspirations of working in banking while in college at Northern State University, but later had a law enforcement career and eventually worked for then-U.S. Rep. John Thune. He worked for the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development from 2004 to 2012. One of his emphases was firearm manufacturing, allowing him to work with some of Mitchell's firms in that industry and his predecessor in the new job, Bryan Hisel, who is retiring after more than 30 years in the position.

Vaux also worked for one year for the city of West Fargo, North Dakota, in economic development and community services, and he previously worked for the Northern State University Foundation.

He estimated it had been about 10 years since he had visited Mitchell, prior to his first interview for the job. It was on his second interview that he took a tour of the city and found himself impressed.

"There's just a lot of good things going on," he said, citing Mitchell's recent completion of the indoor pool project and the growth of both Dakota Wesleyan University and Mitchell Technical Institute facilities.

Vaux said he's seen good cooperation from city and business leadership so far. For example, he noted the community branding effort that was completed a few years ago as being a good way to connect the city through one common image and message.

"For every city, it does come down to what sets you apart, and what will differentiate you from the next town," he said. "It's great that Mitchell has that with its image."

As for his priorities, Vaux said he's working to bring himself up to speed on the city's business opportunities and workforce issues. But he said it will be hard to know what sort of timeline that would require, and he wants to spend a lot of time with the organizing boards of both the MADC and the Chamber to understand where they've come from.

"You're really looking to learn as much as you can as quickly as you can," he said. "But I have to recognize that the whole process will take some time to get running full speed."

He said he's pleased with what he's heard about Mitchell's efforts to invest in downtown infrastructure and believes the pendulum of interest in retail and business is swinging back toward downtowns.

"Downtown is a key component of any community. The communities that do the best job of adapting will have an advantage, and we want to position Mitchell for that," he said.

Vaux is also getting a firsthand look at Mitchell's housing challenges, as he's in the process of purchasing a home. He said another goal will be to address housing needs in tune with the workforce demands.

"Affordable housing means something different to every person in this community," he said.

He said he's interested in the city's efforts to clean up Lake Mitchell, but primarily from a quality of life standpoint.

"At the end of the day, we need to bring new people to the community," Vaux said. "From what I've seen, retention is very good here, and we can only work to make that better."

Vaux and his wife, Dawn, have three adult children and seven grandchildren. On a personal level, Vaux has shown he's a fighter. He's twice beaten cancer, facing a rare form of breast cancer in 2015 and prostate cancer in 2017, which he said has changed his outlook on life.

"You really find out who you are and what you're made of when you go through something like that," he said. "You learn more about life than you could in any educational or any professional setting you could be in. It's so impactful."

Information from: The Daily Republic, <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com>

SD Lottery
By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

04-24-46-61-70, Mega Ball: 7, Megaplier: 3

(four, twenty-four, forty-six, sixty-one, seventy; Mega Ball: seven; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$548 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$314 million

New Hindu temple near Sioux Falls to serve the Dakotas

TEA, S.D. (AP) — A Hindu temple opening this weekend near Sioux Falls will be the first of its kind in the Dakotas, according to its founders.

The Hindu Temple of Siouxland will open Sunday to serve Hindu communities across the region, the Argus Leader reported. Organizers are planning an opening ceremony with ancient Hindu rituals to consecrate the new \$585,000 temple in Tea, a town surrounded by farmland southwest of Sioux Falls.

"Hindu rituals performed on this auspicious day are believed to endow the temple deities with divine power and bless the community in which they reside," organizers said in a release.

More than 400 families in the Sioux Falls area practice Hinduism, in addition to smaller communities scattered across the state in Yankton, Watertown and Brookings, said fundraiser Manohar Velpuri.

But the nearest temples are in Minneapolis and Omaha, Nebraska, Velpuri said.

Organizers have been fundraising for the new temple since 2009, he said. The temple was set to complete in August, but recent rains delayed construction.

Velpuri grew up in India and moved to Brookings to earn his doctorate at South Dakota State University. He moved to Sioux Falls in 2012 and has always wanted a place where his daughter could learn about Hinduism, Velpuri said.

"I always wanted to take her and show her our culture," Velpuri said. "That was the main interest, to have a temple in town, so we can teach our kids."

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

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.

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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 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.

Augustana University to consider NCAA Division I athletics

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Augustana University is exploring a possible move into NCAA Division I athletics, according to the school's president.

University President Stephanie Herseth Sandlin said Wednesday that the Sioux Falls school will consider a move from Division II to Division I, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported.

"We're now looking at it as part of a broader, long-term planning process," Herseth Sandlin said. "And we're not sure that it's the right thing to do. But we do think it's right to take a closer look."

Augustana, which has about 1,800 undergraduate students, last explored a possible reclassification 12 years ago, after South Dakota State University and North Dakota State University moved to D-I athletics, Herseth Sandlin said. The University of South Dakota and the University of North Dakota have since followed.

Herseth Sandlin said that "athletics can be a means to helping Augustana achieve its vision" of expanding opportunities and partnerships for the school and its students.

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Greater visibility could allow Augustana more opportunities to share its story, which could spark an increase in enrollment, she said.

The move would require devoting more resources to the university's athletics programs, which have a current budget of about \$10 million, according to Herseth Sandlin. South Dakota State and North Dakota State have an athletic budget twice as large.

"It's an enormous investment," Herseth Sandlin said. "It would require a lot of financial resources from the Sioux Falls business community and our alumni."

The school hopes to make a decision by the end of the fiscal year, she said.

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Oct. 11

Commissioner should attend or quit board

Trees were budding when George Ferebee lost his Pennington County Commission re-election bid and began periodically skipping board meetings.

The 210 days between the June 5 Republican Primary and Jan. 1, when a new representative will be seated, is a long time for residents from west Rapid City to the Wyoming border to lack effective representation.

After garnering just a third of the votes cast, Ferebee effectively took his ball and went home, or so it appears. At the Oct. 2 meeting, where Commission Chairman Lloyd LaCroix had planned to seek Ferebee's resignation — over his absences and hinky voter registration changes — the District 1 representative again failed to show. At that meeting, the commission voted to approve a school liaison officer for Hill City, which lies in Ferebee's district, illustrating the stakes.

In September, Ferebee briefly attended one board meeting and disappeared during the middle of another. County government and its \$97 million annual budget is big business, and the prospect of 2-2 commission ties gumming the works rightly frustrates remaining representatives.

The hinky voter registration issue, according to Pennington County State's Attorney Mark Vargo, could mean Ferebee already vacated his office over the summer.

On Aug. 14, according to his voter registration card, Ferebee changed his residence from Hill City to Rapid City, apparently in hopes of running for a seat in the Legislature. That change kicked in a state law which says a commissioner automatically vacates an office by moving from the district where he was elected. On Aug. 17, Ferebee signed another voter registration card changing his address back. Ferebee either vacated the office or lied about his move on an official document.

The commission voted Oct. 2 to have Vargo pursue Ferebee's removal over the matter and also to send him a letter requesting he resign.

The commission, however, knows it has no good options.

Outright removal of Ferebee is legally dicey and insults voters who initially elected him. Pursuing his removal over the change of address, meanwhile, has a questionable chance of success within the 80 days remaining until Jan. 1.

If Ferebee resigns or is forced out before Dec. 1, the remaining commissioners must select a placeholder, which hardly seems the best way to break 2-2 ties.

State law, meanwhile, allows a commissioner to miss four consecutive months of meetings before a seat is vacated. Few jobs allow anyone to miss 120 days of work and continue drawing pay without explanation. The Legislature might want to tighten that loophole.

The best option would be for Ferebee to responsibly complete his term. Barring that, he should immediately resign. Ferebee did bring a different perspective to the board. Before June 5, he enthusiastically appealed for re-election, saying he wanted to continue his role as a spending and regulatory watchdog.

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You can't do that if you don't show up.

County board meetings aren't always interesting. They typically deal with zoning, weeds, road repair and gravel bids. Being a county commissioner requires reading through thick informational packets and sitting through many presentations. Most who run for county office can rightly claim they desire to serve rather than to wield power.

When you run for office, you make a pact with voters to finish your term. This is what Ferebee told the Journal before the June 5 election: "For three years and five months now, I have been giving my all to get the Pennington County government out of our pockets and out of our lives. If re-elected, I will continue my relentless efforts to get county spending under control and get the county government off of the backs of the rural residents of Pennington County."

Ferebee owes it to the 3,597 voters who turned out for the latest District 1 race to finish the job or he should immediately quit.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, Yankton, Oct. 9

More than just a 'swimming pool'

Deep down, Yankton's current effort to replace its aging swimming pool has always been about a little more than just building a new pool.

It's also been about reinventing the culture, changing the momentum and reimagining the road forward for this community.

To that end, the mission was conditionally realized Monday night when the Yankton City Commission voted 9-0 to approve a \$14.8 million plan to construct a new aquatic center to replace the Memorial Park pool, a 71-year-old leaking sieve that has been a headache for years and is at the end of its useful life. The plan includes a 20-year property tax opt-out of \$884,043.

The city decided this is the right idea at the right moment, and it gives Yankton a chance to build a top-flight recreational destination that could attract people from a wide area, as well as keep people here from venturing elsewhere for this kind of entertainment. And it also fixes a huge problem that cannot be patched up or dismissed.

However, this also reflects what's happening in Yankton and hints at where this town can go.

For example, during Dive In Yankton's (DIY) closing arguments Monday night, DIY member and former city commissioner Pauline Akland brought up an intriguing financial point. She noted that when a proposal to build a \$6 million aquatic center was considered in 2005, the property tax opt-out sought at the time amounted to an extra \$111.86 (or \$143.24 in 2018 terms) annually for a home with a \$100,000 valuation. By contrast, the current proposal, with a cost of nearly \$15 million, amounts to an extra \$101.61 per \$100,000 valuation. The difference? Yankton's growth has expanded the valuation base, which helps lighten the financial burden for everyone.

This points to the unmistakable importance of economic development to a tax base, whether it's a municipality, a county or a state. The more growth that can be facilitated, the greater the financial benefits for taxpayers, not only in terms of replacing, say, a swimming pool but also in regards to repairing and maintaining infrastructure, for example.

So, the funding plan for the aquatic center reflects the growth that Yankton has experienced in recent years. The community has seen increased business and a burst in needed housing, and in both areas, there is room for more. These developments are producing dividends.

DIY has long characterized the aquatic center project as a "quality of life" issue. This means the project creates something that doesn't just keep people here from going to other towns for other water parks and doesn't simply draw swimmers from elsewhere to here. It also creates another selling point for a community that needs to attract more families in order to fill jobs, bolster the school system and further expand the local economy.

That's called investment, and that's what the aquatic center really is. As DIY president Josh Svatos pointed out again Monday night, this project is an investment in the future. And such investments can produce

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attractive benefits, as the lower assessment cost of this project suggests.

The City Commission's decision could still be referred to a vote, although no one in the past year of meetings and outreach has really stepped forward to oppose the project. But one suspects the sentiment is lurking somewhere — in part because, sometimes, it feels like a reflexive characteristic of Yankton's culture: a simmering resistance to public investment and new growth, no matter what benefits could be reaped or what needs could be met.

And that's a culture that must change.

Monday's decision may be a key to unlocking that door.

Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, Oct. 5

Find common ground between city, county agendas

With overlapping territory and constituencies, there are bound to be policy-related disagreements between the city of Sioux Falls and Minnehaha County. Some are more consequential than others.

We were intrigued by a recent flare-up at a joint jurisdiction meeting between the city council and county commission, where a Sioux Falls couple petitioned to rezone county agricultural land for an events center for weddings and other private gatherings.

Because the proposed site is within three miles of city limits, the project requires approval from both the city and county. That sparked differences of opinion even though the request carried endorsements from county planning staff and both government entities' planning boards.

The biggest naysayer was chief city zoning official Jeff Schmidt, who wants the request denied because the proposed wedding barn would sit in a growth area that the city envisions as fruitful for residential development sometime after 2030.

No such plans currently exist, and county officials were quick to bristle at the property rights of rural residents being encroached upon by the prospect of sprawling Sioux Falls subdivisions.

Commission chairperson Cindy Heiberger pointed out that joint meetings are essentially a courtesy call to make sure no major conflicts arise, but the county is under no obligation to consult with the city on zoning matters.

Clearly, though, cooperation is vital between the two entities on matters such as land use, infrastructure and public safety. Finding common ground in those areas can lead to more efficient public service, particularly with limited resources.

Establishing when that coordination is most needed is a conversation worth having.

Mayor Paul TenHaken cited better cooperation with county governments — not just Minnehaha but Lincoln and Turner — as one of his leadership priorities when he ran for office. There will be ample opportunity for him to make progress in that direction.

Fighting over the establishment of a wedding barn on rural farmland is not a productive battleground, but talks should continue about the city's future planning goals and how they can be reconciled with the realities of self-determination for rural Minnehaha property owners.

With no formal action planned until the next joint meeting, there is a chance for TenHaken and his staff to encourage greater communication and determine when Sioux Falls needs to flex its muscles — and when the county should be left to its own governance.

Having the full city council for the next meeting will also allow valuable input on how to proceed. Rapid regional growth and the "three miles within city limits" threshold ensures that these issues will come up more frequently, and not every rezone request should lead to fireworks at joint sessions.

Picking the right battles could be the key to moving forward, with the understanding larger issues are always looming down the road.

South Dakota expecting record corn and soybean crops

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers are expecting record corn and soybean crops.

The latest estimates from the federal Agriculture Department projects the state's corn crop at 851 million

bushels, up 16 percent from last year.

The soybean crop is forecast at 281 million bushels, also up 16 percent.

The average yield for both crops is expected to be a record.

Sunflower production is forecast to be down 13 percent but sorghum production up 28 percent.

Alfalfa hay production is forecast at up 49 percent from last year's drought-plagued season, with other hay production up 5 percent.

Man facing school threat indictment

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man arrested at a Pine Ridge Indian Reservation school is facing federal charges of making threats and possessing a firearm in a school zone.

An affidavit says Daniel Richardson, Jr. sent a video to an employee at the Red Cloud Indian School Sept. 20 in which he made threats and held up a machete. Richardson was encouraged to make a video for an open house after he made a \$1,000 donation to the school last year.

The Rapid City Journal says the school employee contacted Oglala Sioux tribal police, who told Richardson not to come to the reservation or the school. Richardson was arrested when he showed up on school grounds Sept. 21. Authorities say he had a revolver under the front seat of his pickup truck.

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

Nearly half a million people attend Sturgis Motorcycle Rally

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — Nearly half a million people attended this year's Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The official attendance of 495,000 released Thursday is up from 480,000 in 2017 and the second-highest total in the past 10 years. Officials estimate the economic impact to the state at \$786 million.

The annual event in South Dakota's Black Hills draws people from around the world. This year's 10-day rally was in early August.

The record for attendance is 739,000 people, set during the 75th anniversary rally in 2015.

Next year's rally is set for August 2-11.

Teen boy who died after falling off hood of moving car ID'd

MILBANK, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a Milbank teenager who died after falling off the hood of a moving car in Grant County.

The Highway Patrol says 16-year-old Tanner Schwagel was riding on the hood as the car traveled along a rural road, and his foot got caught on the front bumper and he was dragged beneath the vehicle.

It happened shortly before 10:30 a.m. Sunday, about 5 ½ miles southeast of Milbank. Schwagel died at a Sioux Falls hospital.

The patrol says charges are pending against the 16-year-old boy who was driving the car.

Arrest warrants issued in Buffalo County theft case

GANN VALLEY, S.D. (AP) — Arrest warrants have been issued in Buffalo County for two men accused of stealing thousands of dollars in equipment.

The Daily Republic reports that 22-year-old William Langstraat, of Stickney, and 44-year-old Tyler Naser, of Gann Valley, allegedly stole numerous items from a fencing company. Court documents show the items include an electric generator, log chains, a marine battery and chain binders.

The two men face felony theft-related charges in the case handled by the state Department of Criminal Investigation. They each could face up to 12 years in prison if convicted.

Information from: The Daily Republic, <http://www.mitchellrepublic.com>

Newspaper says Turkey has audio of Saudi writer's slaying

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY and JON GAMBRELL, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — Turkish officials have an audio recording of the alleged killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi from the Apple Watch he wore when he walked into the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul over a week ago, a pro-government Turkish newspaper reported Saturday.

The new claim published by the Sabah newspaper, through which Turkish security officials have leaked much information about the case, puts more pressure on Saudi Arabia to explain what happened to Khashoggi.

The writer, who has written critically about Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, disappeared after he walked into the consulate Oct. 2. The kingdom has maintained the allegations against it are "baseless," though an official early Saturday on Khashoggi's 60th birthday acknowledged for the first time some believe the writer was killed by the kingdom.

Authorities recovered the audio from Khashoggi's iPhone and his iCloud account, the newspaper said. The journalist had given his phones to his fiancée before entering the consulate.

The newspaper also alleged Saudi officials tried to delete the recordings first by incorrectly guessing Khashoggi's PIN on the watch, then later using the journalist's finger. However, Apple Watches do not have a fingerprint ID unlock function like iPhones. The newspaper did not address that in its report.

An Apple Watch can record audio and can sync that later with an iPhone over a Bluetooth connection if it is close by. The newspaper's account did not elaborate on how the Apple Watch synced that information to both the phone and Khashoggi's iCloud account.

Turkish officials have not answered queries from The Associated Press about Khashoggi's Apple Watch.

Turkish officials say they believe a 15-member Saudi "assassination squad" killed Khashoggi at the consulate. They've also alleged that they have video of the slaying, but not explained how they have it.

Turkey may be trying to protect its intelligence sources through leaking this way, analysts say.

"Under normal circumstances, intelligence services would want to protect their sources, whether human or technical," Carrie Cordero, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Center for a New American Security, wrote recently. She formerly worked on intelligence matters for the U.S. government.

She added: "The Turkish government may need to reveal sources it does not want to reveal if the Saudi Arabian government continues to deny involvement despite evidence Turkey has in its possession."

Saudi Arabia has said it had nothing to do with Khashoggi's disappearance, without explaining or offering evidence of how the writer left the consulate and disappeared into Istanbul with his fiancée waiting outside. A Saudi-owned satellite news channel has begun referring to the 15-man team as "tourists," without providing evidence to support the claim. It echoes how Russia has described the men who allegedly carried out the Novichok nerve agent poisonings in Salisbury, England, in March.

Early on Saturday, the state-run Saudi Press Agency published a statement from Saudi Interior Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud again denying the kingdom's involvement. This time, however, it acknowledged for the first time that Saudi Arabia was accused of killing Khashoggi.

"What has been circulating about orders to kill (Khashoggi) are lies and baseless allegations against the government of the kingdom, which is committed to its principles, rules and traditions and is in compliance with international laws and conventions," Prince Abdulaziz said.

Omer Celik, a spokesman for Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party, said that Khashoggi's disappearance will be "investigated strongly." A delegation from Saudi Arabia arrived in Turkey on Friday as part of a joint investigation into the writer's disappearance.

"Such an act is an attack on all the values of the democratic world. It's an act that will never be forgiven or covered up," he said. "This is not an act that Turkey would ever consider legitimate. If there are people who committed this, it will have heavy consequences."

Khashoggi's disappearance has put pressure on President Donald Trump, who has enjoyed close relations with the Saudis since entering office. Trump has promised to personally call Saudi Arabia's King Salman

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soon about "the terrible situation in Turkey."

Speaking to CBS' "60 Minutes" in an interview to be aired Sunday, Trump said of the Saudis: "They deny it. They deny it every way you can imagine."

However, Trump also said: "Could it be them? Yes."

Separately, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke to Khashoggi's fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, who accompanied him to the Saudi consulate, the State Department said Friday. No details of the conversation were released.

In an interview Friday with the AP, Cengiz said Khashoggi was not nervous when he entered the consulate to obtain paperwork required for their marriage.

"He said, 'See you later my darling,' and went in," she told the AP.

In written responses to questions by the AP, Cengiz said Turkish authorities had not told her about any recordings and Khashoggi was officially "still missing."

She said investigators were examining his cellphones, which he had left with her.

Global business leaders also are reassessing their ties with Saudi Arabia, stoking pressure on the Gulf kingdom to explain what happened to Khashoggi.

Khashoggi, who was considered close to the Saudi royal family, had become a critic of the current government and Prince Mohammed, the 33-year-old heir apparent who has shown little tolerance for criticism.

As a contributor to the Post, Khashoggi 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.

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Zeke Miller in Washington and Suzan Fraser in Ankara contributed to this report.

Official: Searchers find body in hurricane-stricken town

By **RUSS BYNUM** and **BRENDAN FARRINGTON**, Associated Press

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Search and rescue teams have found a body in the Florida Panhandle town nearly wiped out by Hurricane Michael, and authorities said there is little doubt the death toll will rise further.

The tally of lives lost across the South stood at 14, including the victim found in the rubble of Mexico Beach.

Miami Fire Chief Joseph Zahralban, leader of a search-and-rescue unit that entered the devastated community, said: "We have one confirmed deceased and are working to determine if there are others."

Zahralban said searchers, who were using a trained dog, were trying to determine if that person had been alone or was part of a family.

He spoke Friday as his team was winding down its two-day search of Mexico Beach, the town of about 1,000 people that was nearly obliterated by Michael's storm surge and devastating 155 mph (249 kph) winds when the Category 4 hurricane made landfall Wednesday.

Michael was one of the most powerful hurricanes to ever make landfall in the U.S., and this Gulf Coast community of about 1,000 people was in its bullseye. While most residents fled ahead of the storm's arrival, others stayed to face the hurricane. Some barely escaped with their lives as homes were pushed off their foundations and whole neighborhoods became submerged.

Hector Morales, a 57-year-old restaurant cook, never even thought of evacuating. His mobile home wasn't on the beach but when it suddenly began floating during the hurricane, he jumped out and swam to a fishing boat and clambered aboard.

"I lost everything," Morales said. "... But I made it."

How many others were not so fortunate was still not clear.

State officials said that by one count, 285 people in Mexico Beach defied mandatory evacuation orders

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and stayed behind. Though it's unclear if any of those got out at the last minute or had successfully ridden out the storm.

Emergency officials said they had completed an initial "hasty search" of the devastation, looking for the living or the dead, and had begun more careful inspections of thousands of ruined buildings. They hope to complete those inspections later Saturday.

They've received thousands of calls asking about missing people, but with cellphone service out across a wide area, they found it impossible to know who among those unaccounted for were safe but just unable to dial out to friends or family.

Meanwhile, Federal Emergency Management Agency chief Brock Long said he expects the death toll will rise.

"We still haven't gotten into the hardest-hit areas," he said, adding with frustration: "Very few people live to tell what it's like to experience storm surge, and unfortunately in this country we seem to not learn the lesson."

By Friday, authorities had begun setting up distribution centers to dole out food and water to victims, who just were coming to grips with the brutal realities of their situation.

"I didn't recognize nothing. Everything's gone. I didn't even know our road was our road," said 25-year-old Tiffany Marie Plushnik, an evacuee who returned to a home in Sandy Creek too damaged to live in.

Elsewhere, President Donald Trump announced plans to visit Florida and hard-hit Georgia early next week but didn't say what day he would arrive.

"We are with you!" he tweeted.

On the Panhandle, Tyndall Air Force Base "took a beating," so much so that Col. Brian Laidlaw told the 3,600 men and women stationed on the base not to come back. Many of the 600 families who live there had followed orders to pack what they could in a single suitcase as they were evacuated before the storm. The hurricane's eyewall passed directly overhead, severely damaging nearly every building and leaving many a complete loss. The elementary school, the flight line, the marina and the runways were devastated.

"I will not recall you and your families until we can guarantee your safety. At this time I can't tell you how long that will take, but I'm on it," Laidlaw wrote. "We need to restore basic utilities, clear our roads of trees and power lines, and assess the structural integrity of our buildings."

Contributors in Florida include Associated Press writers Jay Reeves in Panama City, Brendan Farrington in St. Marks, Gary Fineout in Tallahassee, Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg, Terry Spencer in Fort Lauderdale, and Jennifer Kay and Freida Frisaro in Miami. Others include Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, Darlene Superville in Washington, and Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland.

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

Afghan official: 13 killed in bombing at candidate rally

By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A motorcycle rigged with explosives detonated at an election rally in northeastern Afghanistan on Saturday killing at least 13 people, including civilians and security forces, officials said.

Khalil Aser, spokesman for the provincial police chief in Takhar province, said 32 others were wounded when the explosives-laden motorbike parked near the rally in Rustaq district exploded.

"There are a number of wounded people in critical condition," he said.

The attack took place at about noon before Nazefa Yusoufi Beg, a female candidate running for a seat in parliament in Oct. 20 elections, arrived at the rally, Aser said. It was not immediately clear if she was the target.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but Taliban insurgents are active in the province and have claimed previous attacks there.

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It was not the first attack on a political campaign.

On Tuesday, eight people including candidate Saleh Mohammad Achekzai, were killed when a suicide bomber struck Achekzai's home in Helmand province. He was holding a meeting at the time of the attack in Lashkar Gah, the provincial capital.

On Oct. 2, just days after official campaigning began, a suicide bomber struck an election rally in eastern Nangarhar province, killing at least 14 people and wounding around 40.

Last week, Taliban insurgents issued a statement condemning the elections and warning candidates and Afghan Security Forces that they would be targets if they participate. The Taliban called the polls a U.S.-manipulated event to further their hold on the country.

There are 2,565 candidates vying for seats in the 249-member chamber, including 417 women candidates.

In the run-up to campaigning, five candidates have been killed in separate attacks. Officials from the country's Independent Election Commission said another two candidates have been abducted, with their fates unknown, and three others have been wounded in violence. Afghan security forces accidentally killed three bodyguards of an independent candidate during a raid on a house near his residence in the eastern Kunar province.

In a separate report from eastern Logar province Saturday, at least five civilians were killed when a bomb exploded during a wedding ceremony, said Shah Poor Ahmadzai, the provincial police chief's spokesman.

Ahmadzai said seven others were wounded in the attack late Friday, which took place in Mohammad Agha district.

Mohammad Naser Ghairat, a provincial council member in Logar, said the bomb was planted near the house where the wedding was taking place and targeted the participants of the wedding.

Ahmadzai said initial reports show both the groom and bride were not hurt. An investigation was begun to find out more and the death toll could rise, he said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but Taliban insurgents are active in the province.

Congress heads toward postelection fight over border wall

By LISA MASCARO and MATTHEW DALY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress is heading toward a postelection showdown over President Donald Trump's wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, as GOP leaders signal they're willing to engage in hardball tactics that could spark a partial government shutdown and the president revs up midterm crowds for the wall, a centerpiece of his 2016 campaign and a top White House priority.

Trump is promising voters at rallies across the country that Republicans will bring tougher border security in campaign speeches that echo those that propelled him to office two years ago. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., promised a "big fight" over the border wall money and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has not ruled out a mini-shutdown as GOP leaders look to help Trump "get what he's looking for" on the wall.

"Democrats want to abolish America's borders and allow drugs and gangs to pour into our country," Trump said without evidence Wednesday during a swing through Erie, Pa.

"Right after the election we're doing something very strong on the wall," Trump added Thursday in an interview on "Fox & Friends."

Republicans steered clear of shutdown politics ahead of the Nov. 6 midterm election. They know voters have soured on government dysfunction, hold low views of Congress and are unlikely to reward Republicans — as the party in control of Congress and the White House — if post offices, national parks and other services are shuttered.

GOP leaders struck a deal with Democrats earlier this year to fund most of the government into next year. They presented their case to Trump in a White House meeting in September — complete with photos of the border wall under construction. Trump, who previously warned he would not sign another big budget bill into law without his border funds, quietly signed the legislation before the start of the new budget year Oct. 1.

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Left undone, however, is the portion of the government that funds the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees the border, and a few other agencies. They're now running on stopgap funds set to expire Dec. 7.

The deadline sets the stage for a new round of budget brawls.

"We intend on having a full-fledged discussion about how to complete this mission of securing our border and we will have a big fight about it," Ryan said in a speech at the National Press Club.

Asked if he made a commitment to Trump for a shutdown over wall funds, Ryan said blame would fall to Democrats, who are in the minority in Congress and largely oppose increased funding for the wall. Trump promised during the campaign that Mexico would pay for the wall — a claim Mexico rejects and Republicans routinely ignore.

"We have a commitment to go fight for securing the border and getting these policy objectives achieved," Ryan said.

House Republicans approved \$5 billion for Trump's wall, including physical barriers and technology along the U.S. southern border, in a key committee, although it comes without Democratic support. A bipartisan bill being considered in the Senate allocates \$1.6 billion for the wall, far short of the \$5 billion the White House is seeking as part of a \$25 billion, five-year plan to complete the project.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., upped the stakes Friday by introducing legislation for the full \$25 billion in border funds as he bids for Ryan's job as the speaker retires. McCarthy's toured the southern border this week to make the case for the wall as he seeks to shore up support from conservatives skeptical of his possible leadership promotion.

McConnell predicted a "lively" lame-duck session and didn't close the door on the possibility of a mini-shutdown.

"We've got a lot of work left to do," he said in an AP Newsmakers interview. "That episode, if it occurs, would be in that portion of the government that we haven't funded."

Asked how much money Congress would try to secure for the border wall, McConnell said, "We're going to try to help (Trump) get what he's looking for."

The chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., said Senate Republicans are willing to fight for more than the \$1.6 billion currently being considered, but stopped short of predicting how much money Congress would approve.

"I think it's going to be a big fight . always because of the different views," Shelby said.

The midterm results will play a key role in how the fight over wall funding is resolved. If Republicans lose the House majority, as some analysts predict, they will lose leverage, although the GOP would still be able to force House passage of a wall-funding package in the lame-duck session. Prospects are murkier in the Senate, where 60 votes are required to break a filibuster.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York said "Democrats believe in strong border security," but would not commit to a specific spending figure. "We're going to keep fighting for the strongest, toughest border security," he said.

Follow on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lisamascaro> and <https://twitter.com/MatthewDalyWDC>

Trump's business ties to kingdom run long and deep

By **BERNARD CONDON, STEPHEN BRAUN and TAMI ABDOLLAH, Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — He's booked hotel rooms and meeting spaces to them, sold an entire floor in one of his buildings to them and, in desperate moments in his career, gotten a billionaire from the country to buy his yacht and New York's Plaza Hotel overlooking Central Park.

President Donald Trump's ties to Saudi Arabia run long and deep, and he's often boasted about his business ties with the kingdom.

"I love the Saudis," Trump said when announcing his presidential run at Trump Tower in 2015. "Many are in this building."

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Now those ties are under scrutiny as the president faces calls for a tougher response to the kingdom's government following the disappearance, and possible killing, of one of its biggest critics, journalist and activist Jamal Khashoggi.

"The Saudis are funneling money to him," said former federal ethics chief Walter Shaub, who is advising a watchdog group suing Trump for foreign government ties to his business. That undermines "confidence that he's going to do the right thing when it comes to Khashoggi."

Trump paid his first foreign visit as president to Saudi Arabia last year, praised its new young ruler and boasted of striking a deal to sell \$110 billion of U.S. weapons to the kingdom.

But those close ties are in peril as pressure mounts from Congress for the president to find out whether Khashoggi was killed and dismembered after entering a Saudi consulate in Turkey, as Turkish officials have said without proof.

Trump said Friday that he will soon speak with Saudi Arabia's king about Khashoggi's disappearance. But he also has said he doesn't want to scuttle a lucrative arms deal with the kingdom and noted that Khashoggi, a U.S. resident, is not a citizen. For its part, Saudi Arabia has called allegations it killed Khashoggi "baseless."

The president's links to Saudi billionaires and princes go back years, and appear to have only deepened.

In 1991, as Trump was teetering on personal bankruptcy and scrambling to raise cash, he sold his 282-foot Trump yacht "Princess" to Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin-Talal for \$20 million, a third less than what he reportedly paid for it.

Four years later, the prince came to his rescue again, joining other investors in a \$325 million deal for Trump's money-losing Plaza Hotel.

In 2001, Trump sold the entire 45th floor of the Trump World Tower across from the United Nations in New York for \$12 million, the biggest purchase in that building to that point, according to the brokerage site Streeteasy. The buyer: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Shortly after he announced his run for president, Trump began laying the groundwork for possible new business in the kingdom. He registered eight companies with names tied to the country, such as "THC Jeddah Hotel Advisor LLC" and "DT Jeddah Technical Services," according to a 2016 financial disclosure report to the federal government. Jeddah is a major city in the country.

"Saudi Arabia, I get along with all of them. They buy apartments from me. They spend \$40 million, \$50 million," Trump told a crowd at an Alabama rally on Aug. 21, 2015, the same day he created four of the entities. "Am I supposed to dislike them? I like them very much."

The president's company, the Trump Organization, said shortly after his 2016 election that it had shut down those Saudi companies. The president later pledged to pursue no new foreign deals while in office.

In a statement this week, the company said it has explored business opportunities in many countries but that it does "not have any plans for expansion into Saudi Arabia."

Since Trump took the oath of office, the Saudi government and lobbying groups for it have been lucrative customers for Trump's hotels.

A public relations firm working for the kingdom spent nearly \$270,000 on lodging and catering at his Washington hotel near the Oval Office through March of last year, according to filings to the Justice Department. A spokesman for the firm told The Wall Street Journal that the Trump hotel payments came as part of a Saudi-backed lobbying campaign against a bill that allowed Americans to sue foreign governments for responsibility in the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Attorneys general for Maryland and the District of Columbia cited the payments by the Saudi lobbying firm as an example of foreign gifts to the president that could violate the Constitution's ban on such "emoluments" from foreign interests.

The Saudi government was also a prime customer at the Trump International Hotel in New York early this year, according to a Washington Post report.

The newspaper cited an internal letter from the hotel's general manager, who wrote that a "last-minute" visit in March by a group from Saudi Arabia accompanying Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman

had boosted room rentals at the hotel by 13 percent for the first three months of the year, after two years of decline.

Saudi Arabia has also helped on one of Trump's key policy promises, and helped the president's friends along the way.

Last year, the kingdom announced plans to invest \$20 billion in a private U.S.-focused infrastructure fund managed by Blackstone Group, an investment firm led by CEO Stephen Schwarzman. Blackstone stock rose on the news. Earlier this year, Trump unveiled a \$200 billion federal plan to fix the nation's airports, roads, highways and ports, tapping private companies for help and selling off some government owned infrastructure.

Schwarzman, who celebrated his 70th birthday at the president's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, accompanied Trump on his visit to Saudi Arabia.

Officials broach idea of charging for National Mall protests

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Park Service is exploring whether to require protest organizers to pay for the cost of providing law enforcement and other support services for demonstrations held in the nation's capital.

The proposed rule also could shrink a significant portion of the sidewalk outside the White House that is accessible to pedestrians, leaving a five-foot wide sliver. The public has until the close of Monday to comment on the proposal.

More than 7,600 comments have been submitted so far, the vast majority in opposition, including many who consider it an effort by the Trump administration to deter some of the major protests that have marked his presidency.

"Requiring these burdensome fees will dissuade Americans from demonstrating," wrote Gayle Copeland of San Antonio, Texas. "This new rule is not reflective of American values or history to peacefully protest."

The National Park Service issues about 750 permits a year for demonstrations within the National Mall and at nearby parks. The agency said its proposed rule is designed to provide greater clarity about how and where demonstration can occur in a manner that protects historically important public land.

There have been several large demonstrations on or near the National Mall since President Donald Trump assumed office. The Women's March in January 2017 brought protesters from throughout the country to Washington, and that has been followed by protests of the president's actions on climate change and guns, to name a few.

National Park Service Spokesman Brent Everitt said the agency will always support the First Amendment right of free speech and assembly. But citing an event preceding the Trump presidency, he noted that the cost of providing law enforcement and other support services for Occupy DC in 2012 came to about \$480,000. The protesters sought to bring attention to social and economic inequality in the wake of the financial crisis and set up a makeshift tent camp that raised health concerns.

"We want to know the public's views on whether this is an appropriate expenditure of National Park Service funds, or whether we should also attempt to recover costs for supporting these kinds of events if the group seeking the permit for the event has the ability to cover those costs," Everitt said.

Everitt said the National Park Service is not recommending charging a fee for demonstrations, but raising the question of whether it should.

The ACLU's chapter in the District of Columbia said many of the changes the National Park Service is considering would be unconstitutional if adopted. Arthur Spitzer, the group's legal co-director, said that if cost recovery requirements had been in effect in 1963, the historic march featuring the Rev. Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech probably couldn't have happened.

"The National Park Service cannot seek to balance its budget on the backs of people seeking to exercise their constitutional rights," Spitzer said.

Spitzer said the ACLU's Washington chapter supports some of the changes the administration is consid-

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ering, such as adding to the list of areas where large numbers of people can demonstrate in the nation's capital without permits. It says these venues are often more convenient for demonstrators and have plenty of room to accommodate hundreds of people without disruption.

Spitzer said a proposal to shrink pedestrian access in front of the White House along Pennsylvania Avenue would violate a court order. He said it's also inconsistent with the Secret Service's plans to install a taller, stronger fence with special anti-climbing features. The new fence is designed to allow the public access to the historic site while also meeting modern-day security standards. Under the proposed rule, about 80 percent of the White House sidewalk would be closed off, leaving a five-foot portion for "pedestrian access."

A spokeswoman for the National Park Service said the proposed change to the sidewalk came at the request of the Secret Service.

Associated Press news researcher Monika Mathur contributed to this report.

No winning Mega Millions ticket, jackpot now \$654 million

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — No winning lottery ticket was sold for the Mega Millions drawing Friday night, meaning the jackpot climbs to \$654 million.

Mega Millions officials say no tickets matched all six numbers to claim the estimated \$548 million grand prize. The numbers were 4, 24, 46, 61, 70 and Mega Ball 7.

The next drawing will be Tuesday. The estimated jackpot for that drawing would be the fourth largest lottery prize in U.S. history.

The jackpot has been growing since July, when a group of California office workers won \$543 million.

It costs \$2 to play the game, but the odds of instant wealth aren't good. The chance of matching all six numbers and winning the jackpot is one in 302.5 million.

Mega Millions is played in 44 states as well as Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Hurricane survivors wander debris, search for the missing

By RUSS BYNUM, Associated Press

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Tom Garcia watched in terror as fingers of water pushed inland across the beach and began filling up his home.

His wife handed him a drill and Garcia used screws to pin his front and back door shut. But soon the storm surge from Hurricane Michael was up to his chest. His dogs sat on his bed as it floated. He said it took all of his strength to hold his sliding door shut as the waters outside the glass rose higher than those flooding the house.

"It was life or death," Garcia said through tears Friday as he walked amid the destruction in Mexico Beach.

Michael was one of the most powerful hurricanes to ever make landfall in the U.S., and this Gulf Coast community of about 1,000 people was in its bullseye Wednesday. While most residents fled ahead of the storm's arrival, others stayed to face the hurricane.

They barely escaped as homes were smashed from their foundations, neighborhoods got submerged, and broken boards, sheet metal and other debris flew through the air.

Hector Morales, a 57-year-old restaurant cook, never even thought about evacuating. He grew up in Puerto Rico, where he said "you learn how to survive a storm."

His mobile home isn't on the beach. But the canal lined with boat docks behind his home quickly overflowed as the hurricane came inland. Soon, Morales said, his mobile home started floating.

"The water kept coming so fast, it started coming in from everywhere," he said as he sat outside on a broken set of stairs lying atop a mattress and other storm debris. "I had about 3 feet of water in my house. That's when I decided to jump."

He got through a window of his home on to the top of his car outside when Morales saw two neighbors wading through the rushing surge. He swam out and grabbed a utility pole, then reached out and helped

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steady the wading couple. They fought their way onto a fishing boat that had been tied to a palm tree and climbed inside.

Morales left his neighbors in a bathroom below the boat's deck, while he sat in the captain's chair. He said they stayed in the boat for six hours before the winds calmed and the surge receded.

"I lost everything — my clothes, wallet, credit cards," he said. "But I made it."

Bill Shockey, 86, refused when his daughter pleaded with him to leave Mexico Beach. He said he didn't want to leave behind his collection of "Gone with the Wind" dishes and antique dolls. So he stashed those valuables up high in a closet before heading to his daughter's newly built two-story home next door.

With a pocket full of cigars and his cat named Andy, Shockey watched the hurricane roll in from an upstairs bedroom. The wind shredded the roof of his single-story home. Water rose nearly to the top of his garage door. A neighbor's home across the street got shoved off its foundation.

Was he scared? "Worried, I think, is more like it," Shockey said.

His daughter's home took in some floodwaters downstairs, but was otherwise unscathed. Shockey's own home of 24 years didn't fare so well, though his collectibles survived.

"It's a wipe out," he said, adding that he plans to sell his property rather than rebuild. "Whenever they want, I'm going to move in with my son in Georgia."

For years, Hal Summers has managed Killer Seafood, a Mexico Beach restaurant known for its tuna tacos. Michael destroyed the eatery as well as Summers' townhome on the beach. Summers rode out the storm at his parent's house nearby. They had evacuated, but an elderly friend was staying there and Summers promised to watch him.

Summers knew they had to get out when, about 30 minutes after the storm made landfall, water surging into the home's kitchen rose up to his neck. He opened the front door and fell in deeper when he tried to step onto front stairs that had washed away.

Summers said his parents recently added a large, outdoor bathroom onto their home and he saw the door was open. The large sink was still above the water. He grabbed a bench that was floating by, and shoved it into the open bathroom to give them something to stand on. Then he helped the elderly man inside.

"I knew we could sit on the sink or we could stand on the sink if we had to," Summers said. "I had to hold the door shut or it would just keep flooding. There was a little crack and I could just see everything flying. I thought, 'Oh my God.'"

They never had to stand on the bathroom sink. Finally, the flooding receded.

While Garcia and his wife survived the hurricane's wrath, he was out Friday searching for his daughter and mother. Kristen Garcia, 32, and her 90-year-old grandmother, Jadwiga Garcia, were staying in a second-floor beachfront apartment Wednesday as the storm came ashore.

Garcia said his daughter called him to say the apartment was flooding and they had taken shelter in the bathroom. He hadn't seen them in the two days since the storm passed, and hadn't been able to gain access to their apartment.

He had tears in his eyes recalling their last conversation.

"She said, 'Dad, get down here,'" Garcia said. "I said, 'It's too late.'"

Trump vows to unearth truth about Khashoggi disappearance

By ZEKE MILLER and SUZAN FRASER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump declared Friday the U.S. will uncover the truth about what happened to journalist and U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi, whose possible murder at Saudi hands after disappearing in Istanbul has captured worldwide attention. Trump promised to personally call Saudi Arabia's King Salman soon about "the terrible situation in Turkey."

"We're going to find out what happened," Trump pledged when questioned by reporters in Cincinnati where he was headlining a political rally.

Khashoggi, a forceful critic of the Saudi government, went missing more than a week ago after entering a Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and Turkish officials have said they believe he was murdered there. U.S.

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officials say they are seeking answers from the Saudi government and are not yet accepting the Turkish government's conclusions.

The Saudis have called accusations that they are responsible for Khashoggi's disappearance "baseless." Widely broadcast video shows the 59-year-old writer and Washington Post contributor entering the consulate on Tuesday of last week, but there is none showing him leaving.

Separately, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke to Khashoggi's fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, the State Department said Friday. No details of the conversation were released.

In an interview Friday with The Associated Press, Cengiz said Khashoggi was not nervous when he entered the Saudi consulate to obtain paperwork required for their marriage.

"He said, 'See you later my darling,' and went in," she told the AP.

Citing anonymous sources, the Post reported Friday that Turkey's government has told U.S. officials it has audio and video proof that Khashoggi was killed and dismembered. The AP has not been able to confirm that report. In written responses to questions by the AP, Cengiz said Turkish authorities had not told her about any recordings and Khashoggi was officially "still missing."

She said investigators were examining his cellphones, which he had left with her.

Saudi Arabia says Khashoggi left the consulate. He hasn't been seen since, though his fiancée was waiting outside.

Both Turkey and Saudi Arabia are important U.S. allies in the region. Trump said Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin will evaluate whether to attend a Saudi investor conference later this month.

"The answer is for now I am," Mnuchin told reporters in Bali, Indonesia, where he was attending a global financial meeting. "If more information comes out in the next week I will take that into account," he said.

On Thursday, Trump had said U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia were "excellent" and he was reluctant to scuttle highly lucrative U.S. weapons deals with Riyadh. A number of members of Congress have pressed the Trump administration to impose sanctions on the country in response to the Khashoggi affair.

A delegation from Saudi Arabia arrived in Turkey on Friday as part of an investigation into the writer's disappearance. In a statement posted on Twitter, the Saudis welcomed the joint effort and said the kingdom was keen "to sustain the security and safety of its citizenry, wherever they might happen to be."

Cengiz said she and the journalist would have been married this week and had planned a life together split between Istanbul and the United States, where Khashoggi had been living in self-imposed exile since last year.

She had appealed for help to Trump, who earlier this week said he would invite her to the White House.

Cengiz didn't respond to a question about that, but earlier on Friday she urged Trump on Twitter to use his clout to find out what happened.

"What about Jamal Khashoggi?" she wrote in response to a tweet by Trump in which he said he said he had been "working very hard" to free an American evangelical pastor who has been held for two years in Turkey. Andrew Brunson was released late Friday.

Amid growing concern over Khashoggi's fate, French President Emmanuel Macron said his country wanted to know "the whole truth" about the writer's disappearance, calling the early details about the case "very worrying."

Macron said "I'm waiting for the truth and complete clarity to be made" since the matter is "very serious." He spoke Friday in Yerevan, Armenia, to French broadcasters RFI and France 24.

In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said Berlin was also "very concerned" about the writer's disappearance and called on Saudi Arabia to "participate fully" in clearing up reports that he had been killed.

Global business leaders began reassessing their ties with Saudi Arabia, stoking pressure on the Gulf kingdom to explain what happened to Khashoggi.

Khashoggi, 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 has shown little tolerance for criticism.

As a contributor to The Washington Post, Khashoggi has written extensively about Saudi Arabia, includ-

ing 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.

Fraser reported from Ankara.

Prospect of Trump-Xi talks raises hope for thaw in trade war

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN and MARTIN CRUTSINGER, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — With China and the United States opening the door to a meeting next month between Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump, hopes are rising for a potential easing of tensions in the trade war between the world's two largest economies.

Worries about the increased tariffs the two sides have imposed on each other's goods contributed to a dizzying bout of volatility in financial markets this week. The higher tariffs raise costs for companies in both countries, and economists say that if they remain in place indefinitely, they could depress economic growth.

A Xi-Trump meeting, if it happens, would take place during a summit of leaders of the Group of 20 biggest global economies in Argentina in late November.

"I don't think any decision has been made in regards to a meeting," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told reporters Saturday in Bali, Indonesia, where he's attending global finance meetings.

Still, Larry Kudlow, Trump's top economic adviser, said in Washington on Friday that preparations for the talks were under way.

"It looks like there will be a meeting in Buenos Aires at the G-20," Kudlow said in an interview with CNBC. "We are looking at it. The Chinese are looking at it. Preparations are being made. I can't say 100 percent certainty, but there is no question everybody is looking at it."

Kudlow said that so far, the administration viewed China's negotiating offers as "rather unsatisfactory" but that "maybe talks between the two heads of state will bear fruit."

Asked if China would need to make specific concessions for such a meeting to take place, Mnuchin said, "To the extent that we can make progress toward a meeting I would encourage that and that's something we're having discussions about, but for the moment there's no preconditions. The president will decide on that."

The trade feud has been fueled by U.S. accusations that China engages in cyber-theft and coerces foreign companies into handing over technology in return for access to the Chinese market, as well as by Trump's anger over China's trade surplus with the U.S. It is far from clear that the U.S. might be preparing to consider lifting penalty tariffs on about \$250 billion of Chinese products.

Mnuchin repeated the Trump administration's determination to achieve a more balanced trading relationship that does not require foreign companies to form joint ventures to transfer technology to gain market access.

Lu Kang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, offered no specifics Friday but said, "I have also seen the relevant reports."

The Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post have cited officials as saying Trump has decided to proceed with a meeting with Xi.

Global indexes bounced back sharply Friday after their recent plunges, 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 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.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 305 points, or 1.2 percent, in late-morning

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trading, and the Nasdaq composite surged 138 points, or 1.9 percent. Later, both stock indexes gave up much of their gains.

Friday's volatility followed a swoon over the previous two days that erased 1,300 points from the Dow and dragged the S&P 500 down more than 5 percent.

Reports that Mnuchin has advised against labeling China a currency manipulator — a status that could trigger penalties — were also seen as easing tensions. The Chinese currency has been falling in value against the dollar in recent months, raising concerns that Beijing is devaluing its currency to make Chinese goods more competitive against U.S. products.

In his comments in Bali, Mnuchin did not say what the forthcoming Treasury report, set to come out next week, will conclude about China's currency practices. In the past, Treasury has placed China on a watch-list but found that Beijing did not meet the threshold to be labeled a currency manipulator.

Mnuchin met Thursday with Yi Gang, head of China's central bank.

"I expressed my concerns about the weakness of the currency," Mnuchin said.

He said that in the discussions he had with the Chinese, they had made clear that they didn't see a further weakening of the Chinese yuan as being in their interests.

Concerns have been raised that China, the largest foreign holder of U.S. Treasuries, might start dumping its holdings as a way to pressure the United States in the trade dispute. But Mnuchin said this possibility didn't concern him because it would be contrary to Beijing's economic interests to start dumping its Treasury holdings.

"That would be very costly for them," Mnuchin said.

China's surplus with the United States 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.

Beijing's 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. 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 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 prevent further declines.

Crutsinger reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Joe McDonald in Beijing and Annabelle Liang in Singapore and Elaine Kurtenbach in Bali, Indonesia, contributed to this report.

Melania Trump says she loves Trump, ignores cheating rumors

By DINO HAZELL, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Melania Trump says she loves President Donald Trump and has "much more important things to think about" than allegations he cheated on her with a porn star, a Playboy Playmate or anyone else.

Mrs. Trump, who was interviewed by ABC while touring Africa last week, said people are just spreading rumors about her marriage.

"I know people like to speculate and media like to speculate about our marriage and circulate the gossip," she said. "But I understand the gossip sells newspapers, magazines ... and, unfortunately, we live in this kind of world today."

She insisted allegations of her husband's infidelities are not a concern.

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Trump, who during the 2016 presidential campaign was heard on an old "Access Hollywood" tape talking about groping and trying to have sex with women, has been accused of having multiple affairs. Porn star Stormy Daniels and ex-Playboy Playmate Karen McDougal have said they had sex with him years ago.

Trump has denied the trysts with Daniels and McDougal but has acknowledged reimbursing his lawyer for a \$130,000 hush money payment to Daniels. Mrs. Trump has generally kept quiet on the subject.

Asked in the ABC interview if she loves her husband, Mrs. Trump said, "Yes, we are fine. Yes."

She played down a suggestion the repeated rumors of his philandering had put a strain on their marriage. "It is not concern and focus of mine," she said. "I'm a mother and a first lady, and I have much more important things to think about and to do."

But when asked if the repeated rumors had hurt her, she paused. Then she reiterated the "media world is speculating."

"Yeah, it's not always pleasant, of course," she said. "But I know what is right and what is wrong and what is true and not true."

Portions of Mrs. Trump's interview aired Friday on "Good Morning America." ABC News aired more from the interview during an hourlong special broadcast Friday night, during which she explained why she wore a jacket that said "I really don't care, do u?" on a trip to the border to visit migrant children who had been separated from their parents.

She noted that she wore the jacket getting on and off the plane, but not during her visits with children, and said it was a message to "people and the left-wing media who are criticizing me."

Mrs. Trump said the jacket was a statement that the criticism will not stop her from doing "what I feel is right."

She said she purposely wore the jacket on the flight back to Washington after seeing "how the media was obsessed about it."

"It was kind of a message, yes," the first lady said.

In another portion of the interview, which aired earlier this week, Mrs. Trump says she could be "the most bullied person" in the world and women who make accusations of sexual assault need to "show the evidence."

Donald Trump, on the 2005 "Access Hollywood" tape that became public late in the 2016 campaign, says when he's attracted to beautiful women, "I just start kissing them. It's like a magnet." He said when you're a star, women let you.

"Grab them by the p---," Trump adds. "You can do anything."

Trump's former personal lawyer Michael Cohen pleaded guilty in August to campaign finance violations alleging he, Trump and the National Enquirer tabloid were involved in buying the silence of Daniels and McDougal after they alleged affairs with Trump.

AP Media Writer David Bauder in New York and Associated Press writer Darlene Superville in contributed to this report.

Official: Searchers find body in hurricane-stricken town

By **RUSS BYNUM** and **BRENDAN FARRINGTON**, Associated Press

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Search-and-rescue teams found at least one body in Mexico Beach, the ground-zero town nearly obliterated by Hurricane Michael, an official said Friday as the scale of the storm's fury became ever clearer.

The death toll across the South stood at 14 including the victim discovered in Mexico Beach.

Miami Fire Chief Joseph Zahralban, leader of a search-and-rescue unit that went into the flattened town, said: "We have one confirmed deceased and are working to determine if there are others." Zahralban said searchers were trying to determine if that person had been alone or was part of a family.

Zahralban spoke as his team — which included a dog — was winding down its two-day search of Mexico Beach, the town of about 1,000 people that was nearly wiped off the map when Michael blew ashore

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there Wednesday with devastating 155 mph (249 kph) winds.

Blocks and blocks of homes were demolished, reduced to splintered lumber or mere concrete slabs by the most powerful hurricane to hit the continental U.S. in nearly 50 years.

As the catastrophic damage across the Florida Panhandle came into view 48 hours after the hurricane struck, there was little doubt the death toll would rise.

How high it might go was unclear. But authorities scrapped plans to set up a temporary morgue, suggesting they had yet to see mass casualties.

State officials said that by one count, 285 people in Mexico Beach defied mandatory evacuation orders and stayed behind. Some of them successfully rode out the storm. It was unclear how many of the others might have gotten out at the last minute.

Emergency officials said they have received thousands of calls asking about missing people. But with cellphone service out across vast swaths of the Florida Panhandle, officials said it is possible that some of those unaccounted for are safe and just haven't been able to contact friends or family.

Across the ravaged region, meanwhile, authorities set up distribution centers to hand out food and water to victims. Some supplies were brought in by trucks, while others had to be delivered by helicopter because of debris still blocking roads.

Residents began to come to grips with the destruction and face up to the uncertainty that lies ahead.

"I didn't recognize nothing. Everything's gone. I didn't even know our road was our road," said 25-year-old Tiffany Marie Plushnik, an evacuee who returned to find her home in Sandy Creek too damaged to live in.

When she went back to the hotel where she took shelter from the storm, she found out she could no longer stay there either because of mold. "We've got to figure something out. We're starting from scratch, all of us," Plushnik said.

President Donald Trump announced plans to visit Florida and hard-hit Georgia early next week but didn't say what day he would arrive.

"We are with you!" he tweeted.

Shell-shocked survivors who barely escaped with their lives told of terrifying winds, surging floodwaters and homes cracking apart.

Emergency officials said they had completed an initial "hasty search" of the stricken area, looking for the living or the dead, and had begun more careful inspections of thousands of ruined buildings. They said nearly 200 people had been rescued.

Gov. Rick Scott said state officials still "do not know enough" about the fate of those who stayed behind in the region.

"We are not completely done. We are still getting down there," the governor added.

Federal Emergency Management Agency chief Brock Long said he expects to see the death toll rise.

"We still haven't gotten into the hardest-hit areas," he said, adding with frustration: "Very few people live to tell what it's like to experience storm surge, and unfortunately in this country we seem to not learn the lesson."

Long expressed worry that people have suffered "hurricane amnesia."

"When state and local officials tell you to get out, dang it, do it. Get out," he said.

On the Panhandle, Tyndall Air Force Base "took a beating," so much so that Col. Brian Laidlaw told the 3,600 men and women stationed on the base not to come back. Many of the 600 families who live there had followed orders to pack what they could in a single suitcase as they were evacuated ahead of the storm.

The hurricane's eyewall passed directly overhead, severely damaging nearly every building and leaving many a complete loss. The elementary school, the flight line, the marina and the runways were devastated.

"I will not recall you and your families until we can guarantee your safety. At this time I can't tell you how long that will take, but I'm on it," Laidlaw wrote. "We need to restore basic utilities, clear our roads of trees and power lines, and assess the structural integrity of our buildings."

Contributors in Florida include Associated Press writers Jay Reeves in Panama City, Brendan Farrington in

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St. Marks, Gary Fineout in Tallahassee, Tamara Lush in St. Petersburg, Terry Spencer in Fort Lauderdale, and Jennifer Kay and Freida Frisaro in Miami. Others include Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina, Darlene Superville in Washington, and Seth Borenstein in Kensington, Maryland.

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

'It was life or death': Face-to-face with Michael's fury

By RUSS BYNUM, Associated Press

MEXICO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Tom Garcia watched in terror as fingers of water pushed inland across the beach and began filling up his home.

His wife handed him a drill and Garcia used screws to pin his front and back door shut. But soon the storm surge from Hurricane Michael was up to his chest. His dogs sat on his bed as it floated. He said it took all of his strength to hold his sliding door shut as the waters outside the glass rose higher than those flooding the house.

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Hector Morales, a 57-year-old restaurant cook, never even thought about evacuating. He grew up in Puerto Rico, where he said "you learn how to survive a storm."

His mobile home isn't on the beach. But the canal lined with boat docks behind his home quickly overflowed as the hurricane came inland. Soon, Morales said, his mobile home started floating.

"The water kept coming so fast, it started coming in from everywhere," he said as he sat outside on a broken set of stairs lying atop a mattress and other storm debris. "I had about 3 feet of water in my house. That's when I decided to jump."

He got through a window of his home on to the top of his car outside when Morales saw two neighbors wading through the rushing surge. He swam out and grabbed a utility pole, then reached out and helped steady the wading couple. They fought their way onto a fishing boat that had been tied to a palm tree and climbed inside.

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Bill Shockey, 86, refused when his daughter pleaded with him to leave Mexico Beach. He said he didn't want to leave behind his collection of "Gone with the Wind" dishes and antique dolls. So he stashed those valuables up high in a closet before heading to his daughter's newly built two-story home next door.

With a pocket full of cigars and his cat named Andy, Shockey watched the hurricane roll in from an upstairs bedroom. The wind shredded the roof of his single-story home. Water rose nearly to the top of his garage door. A neighbor's home across the street got shoved off its foundation.

Was he scared? "Worried, I think, is more like it," Shockey said.

His daughter's home took in some floodwaters downstairs, but was otherwise unscathed. Shockey's own home of 24 years didn't fare so well, though his collectibles survived.

"It's a wipe out," he said, adding that he plans to sell his property rather than rebuild. "Whenever they want, I'm going to move in with my son in Georgia."

For years, Hal Summers has managed Killer Seafood, a Mexico Beach restaurant known for its tuna tacos. Michael destroyed the eatery as well as Summers' townhome on the beach. Summers rode out the storm at his parent's house nearby. They had evacuated, but an elderly friend was staying there and Summers promised to watch him.

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Summers knew they had to get out when, about 30 minutes after the storm made landfall, water surging into the home's kitchen rose up to his neck. He opened the front door and fell in deeper when he tried to step onto front stairs that had washed away.

Summers said his parents recently added a large, outdoor bathroom onto their home and he saw the door was open. The large sink was still above the water. He grabbed a bench that was floating by, and shoved it into the open bathroom to give them something to stand on. Then he helped the elderly man inside.

"I knew we could sit on the sink or we could stand on the sink if we had to," Summers said. "I had to hold the door shut or it would just keep flooding. There was a little crack and I could just see everything flying. I thought, 'Oh my God.'"

They never had to stand on the bathroom sink. Finally, the flooding receded.

While Garcia and his wife survived the hurricane's wrath, he was out Friday searching for his daughter and mother. Kristen Garcia, 32, and her 90-year-old grandmother, Jadwiga Garcia, were staying in a second-floor beachfront apartment Wednesday as the storm came ashore.

Garcia said his daughter called him to say the apartment was flooding and they had taken shelter in the bathroom. He hadn't seen them in the two days since the storm passed, and hadn't been able to gain access to their apartment.

He had tears in his eyes recalling their last conversation.

"She said, 'Dad, get down here,'" Garcia said. "I said, 'It's too late.'"

Matthew Shepard's murder still haunts Wyoming after 20 years

By MEAD GRUVER, Associated Press

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP) — When two roofing workers beat a young gay man to death in Wyoming in 1998, the gruesome crime quickly reverberated around the U.S. and turned the sandy-haired college student into a powerful symbol of the quest for acceptance and equal rights.

But two decades after Matthew Shepard was bludgeoned, tied to a rail fence and left to die on the cold high prairie, the emotions stirred by his slaying linger in Wyoming, which still struggles with its tarnished identity and resists changes sought by the LGBTQ community.

"We're nowhere near done," said Sara Burlingame, executive director of the Cheyenne-based LGBTQ advocacy group Wyoming Equality. The group's work today "is the same thing that was there 20 years ago."

As recently as Tuesday, days before the anniversary of Shepard's death, about 200 people attended a forum in Laramie questioning the prevailing view that he was murdered because of his sexual orientation. Wyoming Equality protested by holding a dance at a civic center down the street, using the slogan "When They Go Low ... We Go Dance."

The acrimony over Shepard's legacy runs high here, just as it did when anti-gay and gay-rights protesters squared off at his funeral in Casper. Even now, people associate Laramie with the murder.

"Once people find out I'm from Laramie, Wyoming, they still zero in on this hate crime," said Trudy McCracken, who spoke at the forum and was Laramie's mayor at the time of the slaying.

Wyoming remains "deeply defensive" about the idea that Shepard was targeted because he was gay, Burlingame said.

Known as the Equality State, Wyoming got its nickname for being the first to let women vote. Today it has fewer women in its Legislature than any other state and remains hesitant to adopt policies to counter anti-gay bias and violence.

It is among just five states — along with Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana and South Carolina — that have not passed laws focused on crimes motivated by the victim's identity, such as their sexual orientation. President Barack Obama signed a federal hate crime prevention act named after Shepard in 2009, a law that Shepard's mother, Judy Shepard, said has been helpful.

Laramie did not pass an ordinance barring discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity until 2015. The University of Wyoming created its diversity office only last year.

Attorneys for Wyoming in 2014 argued in defense of the state's definition of marriage as only between

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a man and a woman, a case later rendered moot by higher court rulings.

Attitudes against homosexuality persist in Wyoming, but LGBTQ acceptance has advanced, said Jason Marsden, executive director of the Denver-based Matthew Shepard Foundation.

"Twenty years on, it's a heck of a lot closer to being a place where people can enjoy their lives more or less equally," said Marsden, who was a newspaper reporter and friend of Shepard's at the time of his killing.

The convicted killers, Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson, are each serving two consecutive life sentences.

Henderson, now 41, said the U.S. should have laws that protect everyone, no matter who they are.

"As tragic as it is, and as unfortunate as it is, and as hard as it is for Matthew's family, and for my family, for all of us, to go through, it opened up all of us to be better people and really think about who we are," Henderson said of Shepard's death in a prison interview Tuesday with The Associated Press.

Still, he insisted, neither he nor McKinney was motivated by anti-gay hatred when they offered Shepard a ride home from a bar. Instead, he said, they were out to rob him of money and possibly drugs when they drove him to the edge of town on the night of Oct. 6, 1998.

He described himself as a follower of others, including the more charismatic McKinney, and was afraid to lose face by doing more to prevent the crime or just going home.

As Henderson drove, McKinney began pistol-whipping Shepard and took his wallet. Henderson tied Shepard to the fence after McKinney told him to do it, he said. Then they left Shepard in the frigid darkness.

The next day, a mountain biker found him. He died less than a week later, on Oct. 12, 1998, at age 21.

Henderson's remarks don't change the facts of the case, which include McKinney's confession to police, Marsden said.

McKinney repeatedly used homosexual slurs in his confession, Marsden said. McKinney's lawyers also wanted to argue that Shepard caused McKinney to explode in a rage by putting his hand on McKinney's leg. The judge prohibited the "gay panic" defense.

Because of overcrowding at Wyoming's maximum-security prison in Rawlins, Henderson and McKinney have served their time in multiple states. McKinney is now in a Mississippi prison and not agreeing to interview requests, according to the Wyoming Department of Corrections.

Henderson, who pleaded guilty to avoid a possible death sentence, is serving his time at a medium-security prison in Torrington, a quiet farming-and-ranching town a few miles from the Nebraska line. He helps imprisoned hospice patients and trains shelter dogs so they can be adopted.

"I think about Matthew every single day of my life. I think about him and every single one of those days that I've had that he hasn't had, his family hasn't had, his friends haven't had. I'm so, so ashamed I was ever part of this," Henderson said.

One gay rights activist argues that Henderson has paid his dues for what he described as being "in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"I think he has atoned. I think he has a contribution to make to society," said Malcolm Lazin, executive director of the Philadelphia-based LGBT group Equality Forum and a former federal prosecutor.

Marsden pointed out that only Wyoming's governor could commute Henderson's sentence, a prospect that he called "super unlikely." Burlingame of the Wyoming Equality group said she believes in redemption but doubts Henderson has really atoned for the crime.

She said her organization will continue its "unapologetic advocacy," reaching out to churches, businesses, legislators and regular citizens about their policies and attitudes.

"For the last 20 years, the work of Wyoming Equality has really been this race, that we want to get to every LGBT person out there," Burlingame said. "But we're also trying to get to the next Aarons and the next Russells."

Associated Press writers Brady McCombs in Laramie and David Crary in New York contributed to this report.

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US pastor released from house arrest, flown out of Turkey

By ZEYNEP BILGINSOY, Associated Press

IZMIR, Turkey (AP) — An American pastor flew out of Turkey on Friday after a Turkish court convicted him of terror links but freed him from house arrest, removing a major irritant in fraught ties between two NATO allies still strained by disagreements over Syria, Iran and a host of other issues.

The court near the western city of Izmir sentenced North Carolina native Andrew Brunson to just over three years in prison for allegedly helping terror groups, but let him go because the 50-year-old evangelical pastor had already spent nearly two years in detention. An earlier charge of espionage was dropped.

Hours later, Brunson was transported to Izmir's airport and was flown out of Turkey, where he had lived for more than two decades. He was to be flown to the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, then on to Washington, where he was to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday.

"I love Jesus. I love Turkey," an emotional Brunson, who had maintained he was innocent of all charges, told the court during Friday's hearing. He tearfully hugged his wife Norine Lyn as he awaited the court decision.

"PASTOR BRUNSON JUST RELEASED. WILL BE HOME SOON!" Trump tweeted after the American was driven out of a Turkish prison in a convoy. Later, after Brunson was airborne, Trump told reporters the pastor had "suffered greatly" but was in "very good shape," and that he would meet with him at the Oval Office on Saturday.

Trump predicted at a campaign rally in Ohio that Brunson will be "going to be in great shape."

Brunson's release was a diplomatic triumph for Trump, who is counting on the support of evangelical Christians for Republican candidates ahead of congressional elections in November.

It could also benefit Turkey, allowing the government to focus on an escalating diplomatic crisis over Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi contributor to The Washington Post who went missing more than a week ago and is feared dead after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Turkish officials suspect Khashoggi was killed in the consulate; Saudi officials deny it.

Additionally, Turkey could now hope that the U.S. will lift tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminum imports, injecting some confidence into an economy rattled by high inflation and a mountain of foreign currency debt.

Friday's ruling followed witness testimony that seemed to partly undermine the prosecutor's allegations and highlighted concerns that Turkey had been using the U.S. citizen as diplomatic leverage. Turkey bristled at suggestions that its judicial system is a foreign policy instrument, and has accused the U.S. of trying to bend Turkish courts to its will with tariffs in August that helped to send the Turkish currency into freefall.

Brunson's release doesn't resolve disagreements over U.S. support for Kurdish fighters in Syria, as well as a plan by Turkey to buy Russian missiles. Turkey is also frustrated by the refusal of the U.S. to extradite Fethullah Gulen, a Pennsylvania-based Muslim cleric accused by Turkey of engineering a 2016 coup attempt.

The court dropped an espionage charge against Brunson, who had faced up to 35 years in jail if convicted of all the charges against him. He was among tens of thousands of people, mostly Turks, who were caught up in a government crackdown after the failed coup.

He was accused of committing crimes on behalf of Gulen as well as Kurdish militants who have been fighting the Turkish state for decades.

Earlier, the court called two witnesses following tips from witness Levent Kalkan, who at the previous hearing had accused Brunson of aiding terror groups. The new witnesses did not confirm Kalkan's accusations. Another witness for the prosecution said she did not know Brunson.

Brunson again denied accusations that his church aided Kurdish militants, saying he had handed over a list of Syrian refugees whom the congregation had helped and adding that Turkish authorities would have identified any terrorists.

"We helped everyone, Kurds, Arabs, without showing any discrimination," he said.

The pastor, who is originally from Black Mountain, North Carolina, was imprisoned for nearly two years

after being detained in October 2016. He was formally arrested in December of that year and placed under house arrest on July 25 for health reasons.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had resisted U.S. demands for Brunson's release, insisting that the courts are independent. But he had previously suggested a possible swap involving Brunson and Gulen, who denied he organized the coup attempt.

Other witnesses had not yet testified in Brunson's case and evidence was still not complete, suggesting a rushed effort to resolve the case.

Brunson led a small congregation in the Izmir Resurrection Church. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, with top representative Tony Perkins monitoring the trial, had listed him as a "prisoner of conscience."

While supporters in the United States celebrated Brunson's release, his case overshadowed the predicament of a Turkish-American scientist from NASA and several Turkish workers for the U.S. diplomatic mission who were arrested in Turkey.

Associated Press journalists Mehmet Guzel in Izmir and Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey contributed.

'I love the Saudis': Trump business ties to kingdom run deep

By BERNARD CONDON, STEPHEN BRAUN and TAMI ABDOLLAH, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — He's booked hotel rooms and meeting spaces to them, sold an entire floor in one of his buildings to them and, in desperate moments in his career, gotten a billionaire from the country to buy his yacht and New York's Plaza Hotel overlooking Central Park.

President Donald Trump's ties to Saudi Arabia run long and deep, and he's often boasted about his business ties with the kingdom.

"I love the Saudis," Trump said when announcing his presidential run at Trump Tower in 2015. "Many are in this building."

Now those ties are under scrutiny as the president faces calls for a tougher response to the kingdom's government following the disappearance, and possible killing, of one of its biggest critics, journalist and activist Jamal Khashoggi.

"The Saudis are funneling money to him," said former federal ethics chief Walter Shaub, who is advising a watchdog group suing Trump for foreign government ties to his business. That undermines "confidence that he's going to do the right thing when it comes to Khashoggi."

Trump paid his first foreign visit as president to Saudi Arabia last year, praised its new young ruler and boasted of striking a deal to sell \$110 billion of U.S. weapons to the kingdom.

But those close ties are in peril as pressure mounts from Congress for the president to find out whether Khashoggi was killed and dismembered after entering a Saudi consulate in Turkey, as Turkish officials have said without proof.

Trump said Friday that he will soon speak with Saudi Arabia's king about Khashoggi's disappearance. But he also has said he doesn't want to scuttle a lucrative arms deal with the kingdom and noted that Khashoggi, a U.S. resident, is not a citizen. For its part, Saudi Arabia has called allegations it killed Khashoggi "baseless."

The president's links to Saudi billionaires and princes go back years, and appear to have only deepened.

In 1991, as Trump was teetering on personal bankruptcy and scrambling to raise cash, he sold his 282-foot Trump yacht "Princess" to Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin-Talal for \$20 million, a third less than what he reportedly paid for it.

Four years later, the prince came to his rescue again, joining other investors in a \$325 million deal for Trump's money-losing Plaza Hotel.

In 2001, Trump sold the entire 45th floor of the Trump World Tower across from the United Nations in New York for \$12 million, the biggest purchase in that building to that point, according to the brokerage site Streeteasy. The buyer: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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Shortly after he announced his run for president, Trump began laying the groundwork for possible new business in the kingdom. He registered eight companies with names tied to the country, such as "THC Jeddah Hotel Advisor LLC" and "DT Jeddah Technical Services," according to a 2016 financial disclosure report to the federal government. Jeddah is a major city in the country.

"Saudi Arabia, I get along with all of them. They buy apartments from me. They spend \$40 million, \$50 million," Trump told a crowd at an Alabama rally on Aug. 21, 2015, the same day he created four of the entities. "Am I supposed to dislike them? I like them very much."

The president's company, the Trump Organization, said shortly after his 2016 election that it had shut down those Saudi companies. The president later pledged to pursue no new foreign deals while in office.

In a statement this week, the company said it has explored business opportunities in many countries but that it does "not have any plans for expansion into Saudi Arabia."

Since Trump took the oath of office, the Saudi government and lobbying groups for it have been lucrative customers for Trump's hotels.

A public relations firm working for the kingdom spent nearly \$270,000 on lodging and catering at his Washington hotel near the Oval Office through March of last year, according to filings to the Justice Department. A spokesman for the firm told The Wall Street Journal that the Trump hotel payments came as part of a Saudi-backed lobbying campaign against a bill that allowed Americans to sue foreign governments for responsibility in the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Attorneys general for Maryland and the District of Columbia cited the payments by the Saudi lobbying firm as an example of foreign gifts to the president that could violate the Constitution's ban on such "emoluments" from foreign interests.

The Saudi government was also a prime customer at the Trump International Hotel in New York early this year, according to a Washington Post report.

The newspaper cited an internal letter from the hotel's general manager, who wrote that a "last-minute" visit in March by a group from Saudi Arabia accompanying Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had boosted room rentals at the hotel by 13 percent for the first three months of the year, after two years of decline.

Saudi Arabia has also helped on one of Trump's key policy promises, and helped the president's friends along the way.

Last year, the kingdom announced plans to invest \$20 billion in a private U.S.-focused infrastructure fund managed by Blackstone Group, an investment firm led by CEO Stephen Schwarzman. Blackstone stock rose on the news. Earlier this year, Trump unveiled a \$200 billion federal plan to fix the nation's airports, roads, highways and ports, tapping private companies for help and selling off some government owned infrastructure.

Schwarzman, who celebrated his 70th birthday at the president's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, accompanied Trump on his visit to Saudi Arabia.

Storm's fury differed in neighboring towns on Florida coast

By RUSS BYNUM, Associated Press

PORT ST. JOE, Fla. (AP) — The piano was washed into a ditch across the street. The dining room table became lodged against a neighbor's tree. And the storm surge that gutted Rex and Nancy Buzzett's home of 44 years scattered their other belongings as far as two blocks.

"It busted through the windows, and once it did that, it floats the furniture up," said Rex Buzzett, a former city commissioner in this Gulf Coast town of 5,000. "The furniture rolls around in there like being in a washing machine and bangs out everywhere, trying to get out. The results are there behind me."

The Buzzetts returned home Thursday to find Hurricane Michael had sent about 9 feet (3 meters) of water smashing into their house and their neighbors' homes, which face the Gulf of Mexico across a narrow coastal highway. Windows shattered and brick walls crumbled, and most everything inside their home came spilling out.

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Despite its monstrous wingspan — tropical storm-force winds reached out 175 miles (274 kilometers) and hurricane-force winds 45 miles (72 kilometers) from the center — Michael largely spared neighboring Apalachicola.

Though just 20 miles (32 kilometers) farther from the storm's center, Apalachicola's historic 19th-century homes survived largely unscathed — though some businesses near the water flooded, tree limbs littered the streets and yards, and a few burly oak trees toppled.

"It uprooted these huge trees, but that big house doesn't have a speck of damage on it," Judi Stokowski said as she cruised around Apalachicola on Thursday in the six-seat golf cart she uses for guided tours.

Stokowski's 120-year-old home escaped damage. Her golf cart weathered Michael outdoors and started right up after the storm passed. Her gift shop, where she sells T-shirts and rubber alligators, wasn't so fortunate. Clothing, handbags and costume jewelry got soaked by thigh-high storm surge that swamped the business district and left the streets thick with mud.

"It is what it is," Stokowski said. "I'm just glad my house is all right."

As for why Apalachicola fared better, meteorologists noted that Port St. Joe was closer to the eyewall and exposed to higher winds. And because of the shape of the coastline and the storm's track, Apalachicola may have been more protected from the open Gulf.

Even homes on neighboring St. George Island, which sits in the Gulf, separated from the mainland by a 3-mile (5-kilometer) causeway, stood up to Michael's fury. They largely stayed dry, mostly because they are on stilts.

Josh Cadwallader and his mother came home to the island to find their home missing pieces of wood from its front steps and porch, but otherwise dry and intact.

The beach town was littered with shingles, strips of metal siding and soggy insulation. But there was little destruction.

"It's all built to take it," Cadwallader said. "You've got to have a house that can withstand it."

In Port St. Joe, where the homes of the Buzzetts and their neighbors are built low to the ground, the couple gathered up framed photos and a few shirts and set them on the trunk of an uprooted tree to dry out. Other photographs were piled into a laundry basket.

Two guitars survived because they were stashed in their cases upstairs. The Buzzetts and their grown son had evacuated to a relative's home on higher ground nearby.

"We're just thankful we're here and safe," said Nancy Buzzett.

Boarded-up windows and sandbags didn't save their home. But after four decades of living on the waterfront, the Buzzetts don't plan to live anywhere else.

"We'll rebuild on this spot, but we'll have to bulldoze everything," Rex Buzzett said. "We'll build up higher. But how high?"

Pennsylvania AG: Cardinal faces no penalties by resigning

By CLAUDIA LAUER, NICOLE WINFIELD and DAVID CRARY, Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pennsylvania (AP) — Amid unfolding sex-abuse scandals, Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Cardinal Donald Wuerl as archbishop of Washington. But the pope's gentle words and lack of condemnation angered those who feel top Catholic leaders continue to shirk responsibility for the global crisis.

Among those frustrated by the pope's announcement Friday was Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, who oversaw a grand jury report issued in August on rampant sex abuse in six Pennsylvania dioceses. The report accused Wuerl of helping to protect some child-molesting priests while he was bishop of Pittsburgh from 1988 to 2006.

"It is unacceptable that then-Bishop Wuerl ... oversaw and participated in the systematic cover-up that he did when leading the Pittsburgh Diocese and that he is now able to retire seemingly with no consequences for his actions," Shapiro said. "We can't rely on the church to fix itself."

Shapiro spoke at a news conference after urging the state Senate to pass legislation allowing sex-abuse

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victims to sue in old cases they now can't pursue because of the statute of limitations.

Wuerl had offered his resignation as archbishop in late 2015, after he turned 75. Pope Francis accepted the offer Friday, but asked Wuerl to stay on temporarily until a replacement is found and suggested he had unfairly become a scapegoat and victim of the mounting outrage over the abuse scandal.

"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 to Wuerl. "However, your nobility has led you not to choose this way of defense. Of this I am proud and thank you."

Wuerl, who turns 78 in November, initially played down the grand jury report and defended his own record, but eventually concluded he should 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."

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

Wuerl, even as he drew criticism in the grand jury report, also faced widespread skepticism over his insistence that he knew nothing about years of alleged sexual misconduct by McCarrick.

Wuerl was named prominently in the 11-page denunciation of an alleged McCarrick cover-up that was written by the Vatican's former ambassador to the U.S., Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano. He accused a long line of U.S. and Vatican churchmen of turning a blind eye to McCarrick's penchant for sleeping with seminarians.

Francis' praise for Wuerl alarmed advocates for abuse survivors, who said it was evidence of the clerical culture Francis himself denounces in which the church hierarchy consistently protects its own.

The pope "needs to fire and publicly admonish any bishop that has enabled perpetrators by concealing their crimes from law enforcement and the public," said Becky Ianni of SNAP, a network of abuse survivors.

She said Francis should turn over all Vatican records on child sex crimes to secular authorities, and also demand that every cardinal and bishop post the names of all the accused clergy on diocesan websites.

Patty Fortney-Julius, one of five sisters from central Pennsylvania who have accused their now-dead parish priest of sexually abusing them as children, also voiced frustrations.

"If the pope truly wants a pure faith and Catholics that can walk in on Sunday morning with their head held high ... then they will open up every secret archive in the world, and that's the bottom line," she said at Josh Shapiro's news conference. "You can't speak out of both sides of your mouth. Scripture doesn't teach that, so the Catholic Church shouldn't teach that, especially from the pope's pulpit."

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 the Rev. William O'Malley to return to active ministry 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, the Rev. George Zirwas, had molested boys in the late 1980s.

Wuerl's 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.

Wuerl's archdiocese issued a series of plaudits Friday, coinciding with the Vatican announcement. They

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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."

In a letter to the Washington faithful, which Wuerl asked to be read aloud at Mass this weekend, the cardinal addressed survivors of abuse.

"I am sorry and ask for healing for all those who were so deeply wounded at the hands of the church's ministers," he wrote. "I also beg forgiveness on behalf of church leadership from the victims who were again wounded when they saw these priests and bishops both moved and promoted."

That message failed to impress one of Wuerl's conservative critics, Michael Hitchborn of the Lepanto Institute.

The letter "apologizes for the actions of others, but offers not even a shred of ownership of the pain, humiliation, and horror inflicted upon those he was responsible for," Hitchborn said.

A more nuanced response came from John Gehring, the Catholic program director at Faith in Public Life, a Washington-based clergy network.

"Cardinal Wuerl did many good things over the years. He also made mistakes and failed," Gehring tweeted. "But it was the right decision to resign. DC Catholics need a fresh start."

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.

Winfield reported from Rome. Cray reported from New York.

Still no US ambassadors in Saudi Arabia, Turkey amid crisis

By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The disappearance of journalist and U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi after visiting a Saudi consulate in Turkey has thrown the large number of diplomatic vacancies under President Donald Trump into the spotlight — notably in Turkey and Saudi Arabia. It's a gap the administration says it has been trying to fix but with limited success.

Khashoggi's case and the fact that there are no American ambassadors in either Ankara or Riyadh have prompted concerns about dozens of unfilled senior State Department positions almost two years into Trump's presidency. And, those concerns have sparked an increasingly bitter battle with Congress over who is to blame.

Aside from Saudi Arabia and Turkey, Trump has yet to nominate candidates for ambassadorial posts in 20 nations, including Australia, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, Pakistan, South Africa, Singapore and Sweden. At the same time, 46 ambassadorial nominees are still awaiting Senate confirmation, prompting angry complaints from the administration and pushback from Democratic lawmakers.

A number of ambassador positions to international organizations also remain unfilled as do 13 senior positions at the State Department headquarters, for which five have no nominee.

It's unclear if high-profile issues like Khashoggi's disappearance suffer from neglect in the absence of an ambassador. Indeed, Turkey freed American pastor Andrew Brunson on Friday after repeated complaints and sanctions from Washington. But the management of day-to-day diplomatic relations can languish without a personal representative of the president present.

The difference between having an ambassador in country or having only a charge d'affaires running an embassy is a matter of degree but can be substantial, according to Ronald Neumann, the president of the American Academy of Diplomacy. Non-ambassadors can have trouble getting access to senior officials and may not be viewed as the legitimate voice of the president or his administration.

"It's a lot harder when you're not the presidential appointee and you don't have Senate confirmation,"

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he said. "An ambassador is the personal representative of the president. A charge is the representative of the State Department."

In addition to problems with access, some countries may resent not having an ambassador posted to their capital, Neumann said.

"Countries may get grouchy without an ambassador and that may affect relations," he said. "Without an ambassador, there is a greater chance of misunderstanding and greater chance you aren't able to persuade them to do something we want."

"There are real, direct impacts of not having these people confirmed," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said earlier this month, making the case for the Senate to act quickly. Those remarks set off a war of words with Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who was singled out by Pompeo for blame.

"I want every single American to know that what Sen. Menendez and members of the Senate are doing to hold back American diplomacy rests squarely on their shoulders," Pompeo said. He later maintained that Senate Democrats are blocking more than a dozen nominees "because of politics" and are "putting our nation at risk."

Menendez fired back, accusing Pompeo of politicizing the process and blaming confirmation delays on the unsuitability of candidates for certain posts and the Republican leadership for not calling votes on the others. He also slammed the administration for failing to nominate candidates for critical posts.

"We cannot confirm nominees who have not been nominated," he noted wryly, adding that some nominees had been or are currently being blocked by Republicans.

Two cases in point: The nominee for the top U.S. diplomat for Asia, a career foreign service officer, was forced to withdraw earlier this year after Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., said he would do everything in his power to stop the nomination. The career diplomat nominated to be ambassador to Colombia is being blocked by Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah.

Pompeo responded by again blaming Menendez for holding up more than 60 nominees and using them as a "political football." "We need our team on the field to conduct America's foreign policy," he said.

Perhaps as a result of the sparring, the Senate late Thursday did vote to confirm several ambassadorial nominees, including those to Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Suriname and Somalia.

Tech stock rally helps snap losing streak as rough week ends

By MARLEY JAY, AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks rebounded Friday, clawing back some of the week's steep losses, but the turbulent trading of the last few days left no doubt that the relative calm the markets enjoyed all summer had been shattered.

Major U.S. indexes ended the week down about 4 percent, their worst weekly loss in six months. An index measuring the performance of small-company stocks had its worst week since early 2016.

Big technology and consumer-focused companies led the recovery Friday. Longtime favorites of many investors, they had plunged in the last few days.

A major factor cited by market watchers for the pullback was a sharp increase in interest rates, which can slow the economy and make bonds more attractive to investors relative to stocks.

Apple climbed 3.6 percent to \$222.11 and Microsoft gained 3.5 percent to \$109.57. Amazon jumped 4 percent to \$1,788.41. Those are the three most valuable companies in the U.S., and they suffered startling declines the last few days: on Wednesday each took its biggest loss in more than two years. That made for a dramatic end to three months of calm on the U.S. market.

The S&P 500 index rose 38.76 points, or 1.4 percent, to 2,767.13 to end a six-day losing streak. The benchmark index tumbled 4.1 percent this week, and it's down 5.6 percent since from its latest record high, set Sept. 20. Thanks in part to the big gain for technology companies, the Nasdaq composite jumped 167.83 points, or 2.3 percent, to 7,496.89.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose as much as 414 points early on, then gave it all up and turned

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slightly lower. It rebounded and finished with a gain of 287.16 points, or 1.1 percent, at 25,339.99.

The market's recent skid started last week, when strong economic data and positive comments from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell helped set off a wave of selling in the bond market as investors bet that the U.S. economy would keep growing at a healthy pace. That pushed bond prices lower and sent yields up to seven-year highs.

That drove interest rates sharply higher, which worried stock investors who felt that a big increase could stifle economic growth. The big swings in the market Friday suggest those fears haven't gone away. The VIX, a measurement of how much volatility investors expect, hasn't been this high in six months.

"What seems to have driven this is a fear interest rates were going to rise more quickly because the Fed was being too aggressive or the economy was going to overheat," said David Kelly, chief global strategist for JPMorgan Funds. Kelly said he doesn't think either of those fears is justified, as the Fed isn't raising interest rates that rapidly and economic growth hasn't sped up recently.

Small companies didn't fare as well. The Russell 2000 index rose just 1.30 points, or 0.1 percent, to 1,546.68 to wrap up its largest loss in one week since January 2016. High-dividend stocks like utilities and real estate investment trusts also rose less than the rest of the market. They held up relatively well over the past few days. Investors view them as relatively safe, steady assets that look better when growth is uncertain and the rest of the market is in turmoil.

U.S. automakers Ford and General Motors continued to slump. GM shed 1.6 percent to \$31.79, its lowest in almost two years. Ford, trading at its lowest in almost nine years, dipped 1.9 percent to \$8.64. Both have plunged this year as they deal with slowing sales and the Trump administration's tariffs on steel and aluminum, which are sending their manufacturing costs higher.

The stocks have fallen further in recent days following reports Ford might cut jobs. In late September, Ford CEO Jim Hackett said the steel and aluminum duties would cost the company \$1 billion through 2019.

Investors are also growing more concerned that U.S.-China trade tensions are impairing global economic growth. The International Monetary Fund cut its forecast for global economic growth this week because of trade tensions and increased interest rates.

Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist for CFRA, said he thought stocks fell too far, but there could be more turmoil ahead for the markets. While stocks had done well in spite of the rising trade tensions between China and the U.S., investors seem more worried now.

"Everybody has been pretty much dismissing the effect of the trade war on U.S. equities, and now they're beginning to think 'wait a minute, maybe there could be a problem,'" he said. "I don't think the reasons for the decline have been resolved."

Bond prices edged lower. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.15 percent from 3.13 percent. At the beginning of the year it stood at 2.46 percent.

U.S. crude oil added 0.5 percent to \$71.34 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, the international standard, picked up 0.2 percent to \$80.43 a barrel in London.

Wholesale gasoline rose 0.5 percent to \$1.94 a gallon. Heating oil fell 0.5 percent to \$2.32 a gallon. Natural gas lost 1.9 percent to \$3.16 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Asian stocks also rebounded. Japan's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.5 percent after sinking early in the day and following a nearly 4 percent loss on Thursday. Hong Kong's Hang Seng surged 2.1 percent and the Kospi in South Korea rose 1.5 percent.

European stocks finished mostly lower. The French CAC 40 dipped 0.2 percent and so did the FTSE 100 in Britain. The DAX in Germany slipped 0.1 percent.

After a big jump Thursday, gold lost 0.5 percent to \$1,222 an ounce. Silver rose 0.2 percent to \$14.64 an ounce. Copper slipped 0.1 percent to \$2.80 a pound.

The dollar slipped to 112.01 yen from 111.94 yen. The euro fell to \$1.1563 from \$1.1594.

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Associated Press Writer Annabelle Liang contributed from Singapore.

NASA official: Tense moments but calm crew in aborted launch

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — NASA's chief heard one reassuring sound over the radio link after the aborted launch of a Soyuz capsule with an American and a Russian aboard.

It was U.S. astronaut Nick Hague calmly relaying information in Russian to flight controllers.

"My reaction was, 'things aren't going well and he's not speaking English,'" NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine told reporters Friday, after Hague and Roscosmos' Alexei Ovchinin returned to the Star City training center outside Moscow from their abruptly shortened mission.

"So, in other words, he was calm, he was cool, he was collected, he was doing what he was trained to do," said Bridenstine, who was at the Baikonur Cosmodrome to watch the launch.

Two minutes after Hague and Ovchinin blasted off Thursday for the International Space Station, their rocket failed, triggering an emergency landing. Their capsule fell from an altitude of about 50 kilometers (31 miles) at a sharper-than-normal angle, building up gravitational forces at 6-7 times those on Earth.

It was the first such accident for Russia's manned program in over three decades, although there also have been launch failures in recent years involving unmanned vehicles. An investigation is underway, and Bridenstine said he doesn't expect the next mission taking a crew to the space station in December to be delayed.

He recalled the tense moment when he heard Hague reporting the G-forces in Russian to Mission Control, followed by a break in communications and the loss of flight data.

"There was the time when I heard 6.7G, and that was the first time I realized that's not right," he said. "And then of course data was lost, communications was lost for a period of time, and then everybody went to their respective corners attempting to find out what the truth is. And when we learned that the crew was safe and descending it was a moment to behold. A lot of people very, very happy."

Hague's calm voice showed he was well-trained for the emergency, although there was still a nervous atmosphere at Baikonur, Bridenstine said.

"That's the scary moment, you know, when you know that the Gs are not where they should be and then communications stops and I'm sure that they are going through their procedures and doing their thing and the question is what's the ultimate G-load ... and how does that affect the crew," he said. "And during that time we weren't getting a lot of feedback, but again that's appropriate because they were busy and we were OK with that."

About 34 minutes elapsed from the time the rocket failed to when the capsule finally parachuted to a landing on the steppes of Kazakhstan, where rescue crews swiftly picked up the pair.

Bridenstine praised the Soyuz emergency rescue system, saying it functioned like a "miracle."

"Even when a failure occurs, because of the engineering and the design and the great work done by folks in Russia, the crew can be safe," he said. "That's an amazing capability and we can't understate how important it is. Not every mission that fails ends up so successfully."

Hague also expressed his gratitude.

"Thank you all for your support & heartfelt prayers," he tweeted from Star City. "Operational teams were outstanding in ensuring our safety & returning us to family & friends."

Sergei Krikalyov, the head of Roscosmos' manned programs, said the launch went awry after one of the rocket's four boosters failed to jettison about two minutes into the flight, damaging the main stage and triggering the emergency.

Experts are now trying to determine what specific glitch prevented the booster's separation.

"We will need to look and analyze the specific cause — whether it was a cable, a pyro or a nut," Krikalyov said, adding that Roscosmos hopes to be able to sort out the problem and carry out the next Soyuz launch in December.

Roscosmos promised to share all relevant information with NASA, which pays up to \$82 million per Soyuz seat to the space station.

"I have no anticipation right now that the launch in December for the next crew will be delayed," Briden-

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stine said. "The investigation is ongoing, Russia has been very supportive of sharing data with the United States and we're grateful for that. And at this point I'm confident that we'll launch in December."

The current space station crew of an American, a Russian and a German was scheduled to return to Earth in December after a six-month mission. A Soyuz capsule attached to the station that they use to ride back to Earth is designed for 200 days in space, meaning that their stay in orbit could only be extended briefly.

"We don't have an opportunity to extend it for a long time," Krikalyov said.

In August, the space station crew found a hole had been drilled in the Soyuz capsule that caused a brief loss of air pressure before being patched.

Krikalyov pledged that the Russian space agency will do its best not to leave the orbiting outpost unoccupied.

"The station could fly in an unmanned mode, but will do all we can to avoid it," he said. "The conservation of the station is possible, but it's undesirable."

Russia currently operates the only spacecraft for ferrying crews to the station following the retirement of the U.S. space shuttle fleet, but it stands to lose that monopoly in the coming years with the arrival of commercial U.S. crew capsules — SpaceX's Dragon and Boeing's Starliner.

"We're getting really close already," Bridenstine said. "We are anxiously anticipating early next year the test of two separate commercial crew vehicles that will fly to the International Space Station — SpaceX and Boeing."

He said that the launch failure underlined the need for multiple launch systems to complement one another.

"In other words, if there is a hiccup in one country's system, there is another country's system capable of maintaining the operation until the first country is ready to go again," he said. "This demonstrates how important it is to have collaboration and to not be dependent on one system or another system."

But he also underlined the need for continuing U.S.-Russian cooperation in space, voicing hope that it wouldn't be affected by politics.

"We can both do more in space together than we can ever do alone," Bridenstine said. "When it comes to space and exploration and discovery and science, our two nations have always kept those activities separate from the disputes that we have terrestrially."

Associated Press writer Nataliya Vasilyeva contributed.

The lessons after threats drive a black legislator to quit

By LISA RATHKE, Associated Press

BENNINGTON, Vt. (AP) — Voters in this very liberal, very white state made Kiah Morris a pioneer when in 2014 they elected her as its first black female legislator. Two years later, another Vermont surfaced: racist threats that eventually forced her to leave office in fear and frustration.

After she won the Democratic primary for re-election to the state legislature in 2016, someone tweeted a cartoon caricature of a black person at her, along with a vulgar phrase rendered in ebonics. The tweeter threatened to come to rallies and stalk her, Morris said. She won a protective order against him but once that expired, the harassment continued, she said.

The harassment escalated into a break-in while the family was home, vandalism and death threats seen by her young son. Even after she announced she wouldn't seek re-election, despite running unopposed, a group of youths pounded on her windows and doors at night, forcing her and her husband, convalescing after heart surgery, to leave town.

Finally, in late September, she resigned.

"There's obviously online harassment that can happen, and that's a part of our social media world right now, but then when things started happening in everyday life, that's when it becomes really worrisome and terrifying," she said in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

Amid the racial and ideological polarization consuming the country, the Morris case highlights the dangers politicians of color face. And it reinforces that even liberal bubbles like Vermont shouldn't get too confident

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or comfortable in their cloaks of inclusivity.

No one should have to endure what Morris did, said Vermont House Speaker Mitzi Johnson, a white Democrat.

"This is deep racism coming out, and there are Vermonters hunting down other Vermonters here. This is awful for our state," she said. "Rather than shake our heads and say, 'Oh, what a shame,' we all need to buckle down and figure out what steps we can take, what steps each of us can take, however large or small, to erode some of the system that allow racism to continue."

The sheriff of New Jersey's most populous county resigned last month after a recording surfaced in which he made derogatory remarks about blacks and the state's first Sikh attorney general. In August, a Georgia man was sentenced to prison for racist threats against two U.S. senators, including black South Carolina Republican Sen. Tim Scott.

"Racism and racial animus is a chronic illness of this country. It's not something that just comes in waves in certain places. It's always there simmering," said Gloria Browne-Marshall, a professor of constitutional law at New York's John Jay College of Criminal Justice and author of the book "Race, Law and American Society: 1607 to Present."

Vermont was the first state to abolish slavery and in 2000 became the first to legally recognize same-sex civil unions, a precursor to gay marriage. It has elected Green Party and Socialist candidates. Even its Republican governor would be considered left of center in a conservative state.

But Vermont is also 94.4 percent white, according to census statistics. The black population is just 1.4 percent, or about 8,700 people.

In recent years, like elsewhere in the country, racism has bubbled up, including white supremacist flyers posted this year on college campuses.

"In a state that wants to promote itself as this liberal bastion, the majority of people outraged should have been there protecting" Morris, Browne-Marshall said.

Morris said she was dissatisfied with the response by Bennington police when she reported the acts against her and her family; the police chief has defended his department's handling of the complaints.

She's grateful that the attorney general's office and Vermont State Police are now investigating.

When independent U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, who despite a liberal pedigree has struggled to connect with black voters, learned that Morris was not seeking re-election because of the threats, he called the situation outrageous and, in a statement to The Burlington Free Press, said it is "not what Vermont is about."

"In the state of Vermont, no elected official, candidate or person should be fearful of their safety because of the color of their skin or their point of view," he wrote. "This corrosion of political discourse is destructive to our democracy, and we cannot let it take hold."

Morris said that she has received other support from Vermonters, but said the hard part is learning the system is not set up to protect her.

"I cannot be the legislator that I want to be. I cannot speak my truth in the way that needs to have been said," she said. "I cannot do those things and be secure and be assured of the safety for myself and my family. And that is really unfortunate."

Purging long-forgotten online accounts: Worth the trouble?

By BARBARA ORTUTAY, AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The internet is riddled with long-forgotten accounts on social media, dating apps and various shopping sites used once or twice. Sure, you should delete all those unused logins and passwords. And eat your vegetables. And go to the gym.

But is it even possible to delete your zombie online footprints — or worth your time to do so?

Earlier this month, a little-used social network notified its few users that it will soon shut down. No, not Google Plus; that came five days later, following the disclosure of a bug that exposed data on a half-million people. The earlier shutdown involved Path, created by a former Facebook employee in 2010 as an alternative to Facebook. Then there's Ello sending you monthly emails to remind you that this plucky

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but little-known social network still exists somehow.

It might not seem like a big deal to have these accounts linger. But with hacking in the news constantly, including a breach affecting nearly 30 million Facebook accounts, you might not want all that data sitting around.

You might not have a choice if it's a service you use regularly. But for those you no longer use, consider a purge. Plus, it might feel good to get your online life in order, the way organizing a closet does.

Take dating apps such as Tinder, long after you found a steady partner or gave up on finding one. You might have deleted Tinder from your phone, but the ghost of your Tinder account is still out there — just not getting any matches, as Tinder shows only "active" users to potential mates.

Or consider Yahoo. Long after many people stopped using it, Yahoo in 2016 suffered the biggest publicly disclosed hack in history, exposing the names, email addresses, birth dates and other information from 3 billion active and dormant accounts. This sort of information is a goldmine for malicious actors looking to steal identities and gain access to financial accounts.

Trouble is, cleaning up your digital past isn't easy.

For one, finding all the old accounts can be a pain. For some of us, it might not even be possible to recall every dating site and every would-be Twitter that never was, not to mention shopping or event ticketing sites you bought one thing from and forgot about.

Then, you'll have to figure out which of your many email accounts you used to log in to a service, then recover passwords and answer annoying security questions — assuming you even remember what your favorite movie or fruit was at the time. Only then might you discover that you can't even delete your account. Yahoo, for instance, didn't allow users to delete accounts or change personally identifying information they shared, such as their birthday, until pressured to do so after the breach.

Even without these hurdles, real life gets in the way. There are probably good reasons you still haven't organized your closet, either.

Perhaps a better approach is to focus on the most sensitive accounts. It might not matter than a news site still has your log in, if you never gave it a credit card or other personal details (of course, if you reused your bank password you might be at risk).

Rich Mogull, CEO of data security firm Securosis, said people should think about what information they had provided to services they no longer use and whether that information could be damaging should private posts and messages inadvertently become public.

Dating sites, in particular, can be a trove of potentially damaging information. Once you're in a relationship, delete those accounts.

It's wise to set aside a time each year — maybe after you do your taxes or right after the holidays — to manage old accounts, said Theresa Payton, who runs the security consulting company Fortalice Solutions and served under President George W. Bush as White House chief information officer.

For starters, visit haveibeenpwned.com. This popular tool lets you enter your email addresses and check if it has been compromised in a data breach. Ideally, the attacked company should have notified you already, but that's not guaranteed. Change passwords and close accounts you don't need.

You might also check justdeleteme.xyz, which Payton said could help navigate the "complexities of saying goodbye." The site has a list of common and obscure services. Looking through it might remind you of some of the services you've used back in the days. Click on a service for details on how to delete your account.

You might discover that some services simply won't let you go. That could be an oversight from a startup prioritizing other features over a deletion tool. Or, it could be intentional to keep users coming back. There's not much you can do beyond deleting as many posts, photos and other personal data as you can.

What to do with accounts of people who have died is a whole other story. That said, the prospect of the Grim Reaper — and what sorts of information about you may be exposed after you shed this mortal coil — might just be the motivation you need to clean up your online trail.

Find Barbara Ortutay on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BarbaraOrtutay>

Manhattan DA drops part of Harvey Weinstein case

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and TOM HAYS, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Prosecutors in New York City abandoned part of their sexual assault case against Harvey Weinstein on Thursday after evidence surfaced that a lead police detective coached a witness to keep quiet when she raised doubts about the veracity of one of the allegations.

Weinstein, 66, looked on as a judge agreed to dismiss the lone charge related to Lucia Evans, who helped spark the #MeToo movement a year ago when she told The New Yorker that the Hollywood mogul had forced her to perform oral sex in 2004 when she was a college student and fledgling actress.

Weinstein's lawyer, Benjamin Brafman, unsuccessfully urged Judge James Burke to deep-six the whole case, telling him: "The integrity of these proceedings has been compromised."

The bulk of the prosecution case remains intact, with Weinstein still facing five charges over allegations that he raped an unidentified woman in his Manhattan hotel room in 2013 and performed a forcible sex act on a different woman in 2006. A conviction on the most serious charges could put him in prison for the rest of his life.

Weinstein denies all allegations of nonconsensual sex.

The turn of events, which had been simmering for weeks in closed-door meetings and sealed court documents, enraged Evans' lawyer, who took to the courthouse steps to blast Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. for walking away from her client. Evans told the truth and never misled investigators, lawyer Carrie Goldberg said.

"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," Goldberg said outside the courthouse. "It only speaks volumes about the Manhattan DA's office and its mishandling of my client's case."

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

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

Det. Nicholas DiGaudio, who was one of two investigators who escorted Weinstein out of a police station and into court after his May arrest, is now embroiled in an internal police department investigation and has been thrown off the case. Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea said Thursday that the department takes seriously the allegations against him.

Prosecutors said in a letter unsealed after Thursday's hearing that they learned weeks ago that a woman who was with Evans the night she first met Weinstein at a restaurant had given DiGaudio a contradictory account of what happened, but that the detective had urged her to keep quiet, telling her "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 the woman said that Evans later told her she had gone ahead and exposed herself to the film producer in a hallway. Goldberg disputed that.

The woman also told the detective that sometime after an office meeting where Evans alleged Weinstein forced her to perform oral sex, she suggested what happened was consensual, according to the letter. Weinstein had promised to get her an acting job if she agreed to perform oral sex, and she agreed, it said.

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

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.

A message left on a phone DiGaudio used in the past wasn't returned. The union for New York City police detectives didn't return a message.

Brafman said he believed Evans had lied both to the grand jury and to The New Yorker about her encounter with Weinstein and suggested she be prosecuted for perjury.

"This is an attack on the fundamental integrity of the grand jury process," Brafman said. "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 developments in Weinstein's case on Thursday capped a tough six-day stretch for the #MeToo movement, bookended by Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation amid decades-old allegations that he had committed sexual misconduct. But victim advocates didn't see it as a setback.

"This is so much larger than any singular case," Kristen Houser of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center said. "Weinstein may have been the snowball that started the avalanche, but the ability of any one perpetrator being held accountable or getting away with it doesn't alter the national outrage."

The New Yorker, in a statement, said 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."

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.

DiGaudio and other police officials poured on the pressure, 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.

Weinstein is free on \$1 million bail and is due back in court Dec. 20.

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

Princess Eugenie weds her beau at Windsor Castle

By GREGORY KATZ and MARTIN BENEDYK, Associated Press

WINDSOR, England (AP) — Britain's Princess Eugenie married tequila brand ambassador Jack Brooksbank in a star-studded royal wedding Friday at St. George's Chapel on the grounds of Windsor Castle.

It was the second wedding extravaganza of the year for the royal family, which seems to be riding a wave of popularity as the younger generation comes to the fore and the widely-respected Queen Elizabeth II cuts back slightly on her public appearances.

The 28-year-old bride, the queen's granddaughter, is ninth in line to the British throne. She wore a long-sleeved gown with a fitted top, a peplum and a long train by British-based designers Peter Pilotto and Christopher De Vos and a diamond-and-emerald tiara loaned to her by the queen.

The 92-year-old queen and her husband, Prince Philip, attended the wedding, along with other senior royals, including Prince Charles; Prince William and his wife Kate, the duchess of Cambridge; and Prince Harry with Meghan, the duchess of Sussex.

There had been doubts about whether the 97-year-old Philip would be well enough to attend, but he seemed to be in good form during a rare public appearance. Prince Charles' wife, Camilla, missed the wedding because of other commitments.

Eugenie's sister, Princess Beatrice, served as maid of honor — she read a selection from F. Scott Fitzger-

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ald's "The Great Gatsby" during the service.

They are the daughters of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson, who are divorced but enjoy an amicable relationship.

The A-list guests included Hollywood stars Demi Moore and Liv Tyler, fashion luminaries Kate Moss, Cara Delevingne and Naomi Campbell and pop singer Robbie Williams, whose daughter was a bridesmaid.

Eugenie's dress was cut in a deep V in the front and the back, a feature requested by the bride that revealed a vertical scar from her surgery at age 12 to correct scoliosis. She has said previously it's important for people to show their scars.

Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, wore a fuchsia dress by Alexander McQueen and a hat by Philip Treacy — Britain's premier milliner. Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, wore a navy dress and coat by Givenchy.

There were occasional blue skies on a generally cloudy, gusty day as the royal standard flew atop the Windsor Castle complex, indicating the queen was in residence. The strong winds forced many women to hold on to their elaborate hats as they approached the chapel.

Eugenie works at a contemporary art gallery. The couple, who had dated for seven years, got engaged in January when Brooksbank, 32, proposed during a trip to Nicaragua. They married in the same venue used in May by Harry and Meghan.

William and Kate's 5-year-old son, Prince George, served as a page boy, and their daughter, 3-year-old Princess Charlotte, was one of six bridesmaids. There was no sign of 5-month-old Prince Louis, William and Kate's youngest child.

The bride's parents left the chapel together smiling as the newlyweds embarked on a horse-drawn carriage ride through parts of Windsor.

The queen hosted a champagne luncheon for the guests just after the ceremony, with a second reception planned for the evening.

Before the event, Eugenie told ITV, which broadcast the hour-long service in Britain, that she was both excited and a bit on edge.

"It's nerve-wracking and a bit scary and all the things that come with getting married, but at the end of the day you get to marry the person you love," she said.

The couple invited 1,200 members of the public to come onto the castle grounds for a closer glimpse of proceedings. There were also crowds of well-wishers on the streets outside the imposing castle, the site of Harry's marriage to Meghan Markle in May.

"I'm a royal superfan, so when her majesty organizes a big event for her granddaughter, I can't stay at home," said Joseph Afrane, 54. "Whether it's rain or sunshine, I have to come down and support her majesty."

Katz reported from London.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Oct. 13, the 286th day of 2018. There are 79 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 13, 1999, the Senate rejected the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, with 48 senators voting in favor and 51 against, far short of the 67 needed for ratification.

On this date:

In A.D. 54, Roman Emperor Claudius I died, poisoned apparently at the behest of his wife, Agrippina (ag-rih-PEE'-nuh).

In 1775, the United States Navy had its origins as the Continental Congress ordered the construction of a naval fleet.

In 1792, the cornerstone of the executive mansion, later known as the White House, was laid by Presi-

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dent George Washington during a ceremony in the District of Columbia.

In 1845, Texas voters ratified a state constitution.

In 1932, President Herbert Hoover and Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes laid the cornerstone for the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington.

In 1943, Italy declared war on Germany, its one-time Axis partner.

In 1944, during World War II, American troops entered Aachen, Germany.

In 1962, "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?," by Edward Albee, opened on Broadway.

In 1972, a Uruguayan chartered flight carrying 45 people crashed in the Andes; survivors resorted to feeding off the remains of some of the dead in order to stay alive until they were rescued more than two months later.

In 1981, voters in Egypt participated in a referendum to elect Vice President Hosni Mubarak (HAHS'-nee moo-BAH'-rahk) the new president, one week after the assassination of Anwar Sadat.

In 1999, in Boulder, Colorado, the JonBenet Ramsey grand jury was dismissed after 13 months of work with prosecutors saying there wasn't enough evidence to charge anyone in the 6-year-old beauty queen's 1996 slaying.

In 2010, rescuers in Chile using a missile-like escape capsule pulled 33 men one by one to fresh air and freedom 69 days after they were trapped in a collapsed mine a half-mile underground.

Ten years ago: On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average gained a shocking 936 points after eight days of losses. American Paul Krugman won the Nobel prize in economics for his work on international trade patterns. Las Vegas gaming executive Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal, who inspired the film "Casino," died in Miami Beach at age 79.

Five years ago: Gunmen abducted six Red Cross workers and a Syrian Red Crescent volunteer after stopping their convoy in northwestern Syria. (Four of the seven were released by the next day.) The Boston Red Sox beat the Detroit Tigers 6-5 to even the AL championship series at 1-all. Dennis Kimetto broke the course mark in capturing the Chicago Marathon in 2 hours, 3 minutes, 45 seconds, leading a 1-2-3 finish for Kenyan men.

One year ago: President Donald Trump accused Iran of violating the 2015 nuclear accord, but did not pull the U.S. out of the deal or re-impose nuclear sanctions. (Trump would pull the U.S. out of the deal the following May and restore harsh sanctions.) Attorneys general in nearly 20 states filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration over the decision to end a federal subsidy under the Affordable Care Act that lowered out-of-pocket medical costs for consumers with modest incomes. Speaking to Christian conservatives in Washington, President Donald Trump promised a return to traditional American values and vowed to return "Merry Christmas" to the national discourse.

Today's Birthdays: Gospel singer Shirley Caesar is 81. Actress Melinda Dillon is 79. Singer-musician Paul Simon is 77. Actress Pamela Tiffin is 76. Musician Robert Lamm (Chicago) is 74. Country singer Lacy J. Dalton is 72. Actor Demond Wilson is 72. Singer-musician Sammy Hagar is 71. Pop singer John Ford Coley is 70. Actor John Lone is 66. Model Beverly Johnson is 66. Producer-writer Chris Carter is 62. Actor Reggie Theus (THEE'-us) is 61. Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., is 60. Singer Marie Osmond is 59. Rock singer Joey Belladonna is 58. Former White House press secretary Ari Fleischer is 58. NBA coach Doc Rivers is 57. Actress T'Keyah Crystal Keymah (tuh-KEE'-ah KRYS'-tal kee-MAH') is 56. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Jerry Rice is 56. Actress Kelly Preston is 56. Country singer John Wiggins is 56. Actor Christopher Judge is 54. Actor Matt Walsh is 54. Actor Reginald Ballard is 53. Actress Kate Walsh is 51. Rhythm-and-blues musician Jeff Allen (Mint Condition) is 50. Actress Tisha Campbell-Martin is 50. Classical singer Carlos Marin (Il Divo) is 50. Olympic silver medal figure skater Nancy Kerrigan is 49. Country singer Rhett Akins is 49. Classical crossover singer Paul Potts is 48. TV personality Billy Bush is 47. Actor Sacha Baron Cohen is 47. Rock musician Jan Van Sichem Jr. (K's Choice) is 46. Rhythm-and-blues singers Brandon and Brian Casey (Jagged Edge) are 43. Actress Kiele Sanchez is 42. Former NBA All-Star Paul Pierce is 41. DJ Vice is 40. Singer Ashanti (ah-SHAHN'-tee) is 38. Christian rock singer Jon Micah Sumrall (Kutless) is 38. Olympic gold medal swimmer Ian Thorpe is 36. Actor Caleb McLaughlin (TV: "Stranger Things") is 17.

Thought for Today: "Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when

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you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't." — Pete Seeger, American folk singer and activist (1919-2014).