

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Groton Area Schedule of Events

### Saturday, December 1, 2018

10:00am: Basketball: Girls 7th/8th Jamboree vs. Langford, Northwestern, Waubay-Summit, Webster MS @ Groton Area High School Arena

10:00am: Wrestling: Boys Varsity Tournament TBA vs. Clark/Willow Lake @ Clark Junior-Senior High School

### Sunday, December 2, 2018

(2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym, GHS Arena  
Grades JK-8 2pm - 4pm; Grades 6-12 4pm - 6pm)

### Monday, December 3, 2018

7:00 pm: City Council Meeting at the Groton Community Center

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



*Check out our portfolio on Facebook at*  
**Schultz-Construction-LLC**  
~ New Construction and Remodeling-  
renovations, additions, and carpentry work  
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## Update on Hunter Schaller

Hunter Update—

At 1 p.m. yesterday Hunter went for surgery for a feeding tube through the stomach, for them to clean out his lungs, and for a trachea. These are all for steps to move forward. Thank, thank you for the unbelievable amount of prayers coming his way!! Please keep them coming!!

- Schaller Family

The Hunter Schaller gofundme page has generated nearly \$11,000 so far. If you would like to donate, [click here](#) to go to the page.

An account has been set up at First State Bank in Groton for Hunter Schaller. Anyone wanting to donate can make checks to "Hunter Schaller Benefit" and mail or drop off at the First State Bank in Groton. Hunter was involved in a motor vehicle accident on November 21st and is in ICU in Sioux Falls.



#allforHunt Fundraiser - Keychains \$10  
All proceeds to go to the family. You can order at the Groton High School office, Professional Management Services, Lori's Pharmacy or BK Custom T's

**HUNTER SCHALLER BENEFIT**  
**December 5th at 4pm**  
**Groton Legion**  
**WALKING TACO WITH DESSERT**  
**Free will donation**

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## Dacotah Prairie Museum Announces Booksigning

by Dr Richard Holm, ThePrairie Doc®

The Dacotah Prairie Museum will be hosting Dr. Richard Holm, The Prairie Doc, on Saturday, December 15 at 10a.m.

Dr Holm will present a talk entitled "The Fear of Death is Dangerous to your Health" and then be available to sign his newly released book "Life's Final Season: A Guide for Aging and Dying with Grace." Books will be available for purchase at this event as well as in the Museum Store anytime. This event is free and open to the public.

Dr. Holm states: "I wrote this book for those who are aging, which means all of us. This book addresses issues to help the well, the sick, those who are dying and those caring for elderly persons in the final season of their lives."

Well into the process of writing his book, Holm at age 67, was diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas. His book tells of surviving his initial battle with the aid of chemo therapy and surgery. However, the storm is not over. The cancer returned. Holm finished a second round of chemo and additional surgery on Halloween Day 2018.

"This is one tale I never thought I would tell," said Holm. "I was a half-marathon-running, spiritually healthy, family man. I had abundant friends, more interests and activities than I could accomplish. I was a person at minimal risk of an early death, or so I thought."

Holm explains his book is more about living than dying, "Some chapters are written specifically to reduce the fear of death, but the intent of this book is that it be a guide to help individuals and caregivers in our quest to age and to eventually face dying with courage, grace, dignity and even enthusiasm."

V.J. Smith, best-selling author and speaker from Brookings, South Dakota recommends Holm's book. "Do you want to read a book that will truly change your life? Then, read this one," he said.

"Not just for the elderly, this book will be life-improving no matter your station in life," said Jim Engelbrecht, M.D., rheumatologist from Rapid City, South Dakota.

A native of De Smet, South Dakota, Holm earned his B.S. in medicine in 1973 from the University of South Dakota and his M.D. from Emory University School of Medicine in 1975. Holm retired after practicing medicine for nearly 40 years in Brookings. He and his wife, Joanie Holm, R.N., C.N.P. have four adult children and continue to live in Brookings where they are active members of the community.

In 2017 Holm was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame and cited as "South Dakota's Voice of Healthcare." He is founder and volunteer host of television show "On Call With the Prairie Doc®," a weekly call-in show offering health information airing on South Dakota Public Broadcasting most Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. central time for more than 16 years. His musings on health, Prairie Doc® Perspectives are currently published as weekly columns in 59 South Dakota newspapers.

## Olive Grove's 3rd Annual Christmas Tour of Homes & Holiday Party

**Saturday,  
Dec. 1, 2018  
Tour of Homes  
4-7 p.m.**

Gary & Linda Thurston  
Alan Strom and Shelly Lerew  
Ron and Dawn Breedlove  
Olde Bank 'n Café  
J. Simon Photography

Coffee, Apple Cider and  
goodies at the clubhouse

**Holiday Party  
4 p.m. to Close**

A variety of snacks served  
Silent Basket Items - Bidding  
closes at 8:30 p.m.  
Live Auction begins at 8:30 p.m.

**\$15 Tickets Available at**  
Lori's Pharmacy, Groton  
Groton Ford  
Hair & Company, Aberdeen

Come on out for a fun evening!  
Support your local golf course!

## Student Council Representatives

2018-2019 Student Council Representatives:

Grade 12: Tylan Glover and Alexis Simon

Grade 11: Anthony Schinkel and Payton Colestock

Grade 10: Erin Unzen and Tanae Lipp

Grade 9: Stella Meier and Alyssa Locke

## State Oral Interp Festival Postponed

Due to the winter storm that is in the forecast for this weekend, The State Oral Interp Festival is being postponed. The National Weather Service has been keeping us updated, but the path and severity of the storm is still uncertain. They are predicting very heavy snow and high winds beginning Friday night and continuing throughout Saturday. Travel will likely become very dangerous, so the decision has been made to postpone the State Interp Festival. We are currently looking into potential dates to reschedule the event and will let you know when a new date and location are determined.

## Pierre man claims \$86,450 Dakota Cash jackpot

PIERRE, S.D. — The Nov. 21 Dakota Cash drawing came up smelling like roses for one South Dakota Lottery player.

Pierre's Patrick Rose is the South Dakota Lottery's latest big winner after claiming a \$86,450 jackpot on Wednesday. Rose purchased his ticket at the Cowboy Country Store, located on Harrison Avenue.

Winning runs in the family for Patrick, as his brother Bill claimed a \$390,000 Lucky For Life prize in January.

Patrick, who is employed by the City of Pierre, stuck with his normal routine to claim his big win. He generally purchases lotto tickets on a daily basis because he finds them to be exciting.

As he was checking his tickets, the wait was worth it when his final ticket proved to be a jackpot winner. His initial reaction was disbelief, and he quickly called his brothers Tommy and Bill to inform them of the win.

Now that he's joined Bill as a big lotto winner in the family, Patrick plans on using his prize to pay off some bills and visit his daughters in Texas.

For his fellow players, Rose offered some sound advice about playing responsibly.

"Don't do it if you can't afford it," Rose said. "It is exciting, but play wisely in moderation"

Dakota Cash is South Dakota's exclusive lotto game. Drawings are held each Wednesday and Saturday.

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## TRY A *New* **HUNGRY UP Deal**

**\$4** Hungry-ish Deal  
Single  
w/Cheese



**\$5** Hungry Deal  
Double  
w/Cheese



**\$6** Hangry Deal  
Triple  
w/Cheese



Includes Fries & Mini Blizzard® TREAT

Royal Blizzard® Treat at an additional charge



Valid only at:  
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11 E Hwy 12  
Groton, SD 57445-2175

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## Today in Weather History

November 30, 1981: A two-day winter storm, beginning as rain, changing to freezing rain and then to snow, completely paralyzed the eastern half of South Dakota, as well as west central Minnesota Monday, November 30 through Tuesday, December 1, 1981. Snow accumulations of between eight and twelve inches were common in South Dakota. Wind with gusts to near 50 mph whipped the snow into blizzard conditions. The Governor of South Dakota closed east-west Interstate 90 to all traffic. Hundreds of motorists were stranded. One person died during snow removal after the storm. Some storm total snowfall amounts included 8 inches at Kennebec, 7 inches at Pierre and Faulkton, 4 inches at Aberdeen, and 2 inches at Watertown. The winter precipitation was caused by a storm center that moved from Kansas Monday through Iowa Monday night and into Wisconsin Tuesday morning, December 1st. The same storm produced heavy snow and blizzard conditions over a large area of the central Plains. Travel was especially difficult because of the snow. Many roads were impassible and motorists were forced to find shelter.

November 30, 1991: The third major winter storm of the season moved from the central plains to eastern South Dakota. The storm generally dropped between 4 and 8 inches of snow over the eastern third of South Dakota from the 28th to the 30th. New snow accumulations of 2 to 5 inches occurred over most of the rest of the state. Some specific snow reports across the area included Aberdeen with 2 inches and Watertown with 3 inches. Five inches fell at Clear Lake and 3 inches fell near Summit. Strong winds developed after the snow fell, producing widespread blowing and drifting snow, especially across the northeast corner of South Dakota.

November 30, 2000: Heavy snow of 6 to 12 inches fell across a large part of northern South Dakota and into western Big Stone County in Minnesota, causing travel problems and school closings. Several accidents also occurred due to the slippery roads. Some snowfall amounts included 6 inches at Milbank and Ortonville; 8 inches at McLaughlin, Ipswich, Summit, and Mellette; 9 inches northwest of Britton, Clear Lake, and Pollock; 10 inches at Leola and Faulkton; 11 inches at Aberdeen and Webster; and 12 inches at Houghton.

November 30, 1925: An extremely rare late November hurricane began to affect the west coast of Florida as it strengthened during the day. The storm made landfall very early on December 1st south of Tampa Bay, weakened to a tropical storm as it crossed central Florida, and exited around St. Augustine. The storm regained Hurricane strength off Jacksonville late on the 1st. Heavy rain continued over northeast Florida on the 2nd. Gale force winds were reported from the Keys to Jacksonville and over 50 people lost their lives, mostly on ships at sea. Damage along the coast south of Jacksonville was heavy and excessive rain and wind seriously damaged citrus and truck crops.

1875 - A severe early season cold wave set November records in the northeastern U.S. The temperature dipped to 5 above zero at New York City, 2 below at Boston MA, and 13 below at Eastport ME. (David Ludlum)

1957 - Lee slope winds enhanced by Hurricane Nina gusted to 82 mph at Honolulu, Hawaii, a record wind gust for that location. Wainiha, on the island of Kauai, was deluged with 20.42 inches of rain, and 35 foot waves pounded some Kauai beaches, even though the eye of the hurricane was never within 120 miles of the islands. (30th-1st) (The Weather Channel)

1967 - A record November snowstorm struck the Washington D.C. area. It produced up to a foot of snow in a 12 hour period. (David Ludlum)






1976 - MacLeod Harbor, AK, reported a precipitation total for November of 70.99 inches, which established a state record for any month of the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1987 - Showers produced heavy rain in the northeastern U.S. Up to three inches of rain drenched the Brandywine Creek Basin of Pennsylvania, and rainfall totals in Vermont ranged up to two inches at Dorsett. Snow fell heavily across Upper Michigan as gale force winds prevailed over Lake Superior. A storm moving into the northwestern U.S. produced gale force winds along the northern and central Pacific coast. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Snow in the Upper Great Lakes Region pushed the precipitation total for the month at Marquette, MI, past their previous November record of 7.67 inches. Santa Anna winds in southern California gusted to 75 mph at Laguna Peak. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
30%		20%		
Chance Freezing Drizzle and Dense Fog then Cloudy	Cloudy	Slight Chance Snow and Breezy	Cloudy then Mostly Cloudy and Blustery	Partly Sunny

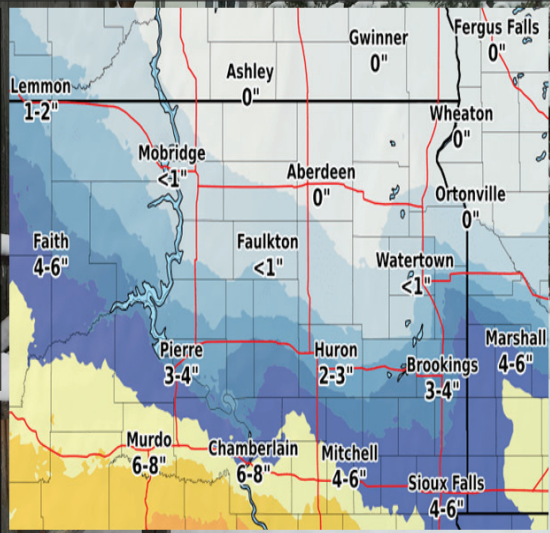
## Expected Snow Totals – Friday Morning Update

### Precipitation

- Starts As Isolated Rain Showers
- Some Light Ice Missouri Valley
- Heavy Snow I-90 Saturday AM through Sunday AM

### Confidence

- Good – Generally Model Tracks & Storm Totals Have Changed Little



### Winds

- East – Gusts 20-30mph

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD



[weather.gov/Aberdeen](http://weather.gov/Aberdeen)



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen

Updated: 11/30/2018 4:23 AM Central

Published on: 11/30/2018 at 4:28AM

Here is the latest forecast for the range of snow expected with this system. Initially we may see some rain showers with some light ice possible tonight mainly across the Missouri valley before snow sets in. Heaviest snow will be in the vicinity of I90. Snow will taper early Sunday morning.

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## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 36 °F at 3:11 PM

Low Outside Temp: 22 °F at 4:44 AM

High Gust: 15 mph at 1:59 AM

Precip: 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 66° in 1995

Record Low: -27° in 1964

Average High: 31°F

Average Low: 12°F

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.71

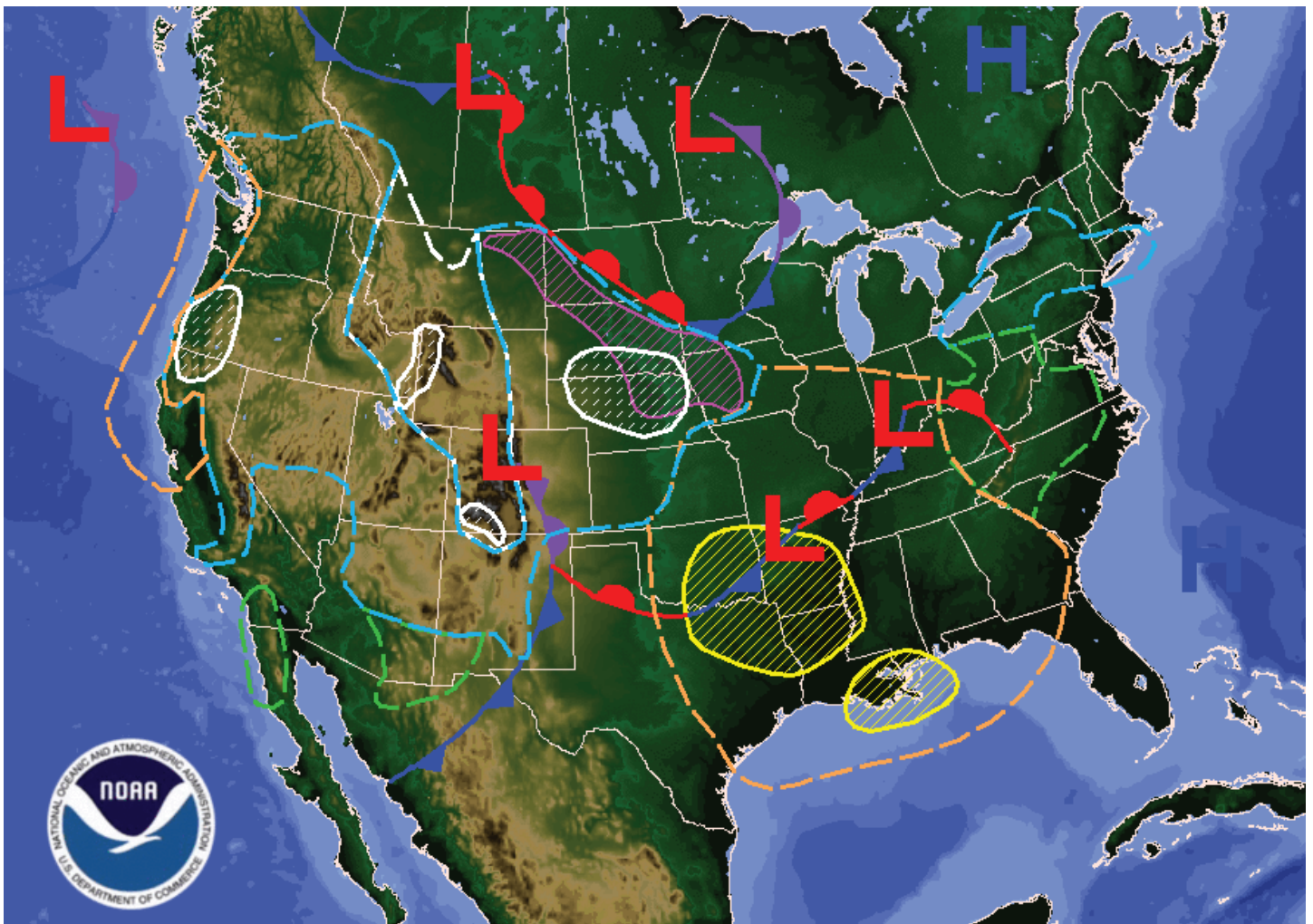
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.76

Average Precip to date: 21.18

Precip Year to Date: 15.81

Sunset Tonight: 4:53 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:53 a.m.



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Nov 30, 2018, issued 4:26 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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



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## DAILY PLANNING GUIDE

Nearly all of us have some method for planning our daily activities. With no plan to follow, our time will likely be wasted and our days meaningless. Often our carefully detailed plans can be completely disrupted by an emergency or unexpected demand. In Psalm 92, however, we find a simple way to open and close each day and bring Gods presence into our lives.

The Psalmist suggests that we begin the day with a proclamation - we are to proclaim the love of God. If we begin each day by proclaiming the love that God has for us, it will remind us that we are safe and secure in His love and that nothing or no one can destroy us. Then, as the day unfolds and when the unexpected occurs, and things seem upside down, we know that He is holding us close to Himself and that He will protect us from that which might harm us. It is in His love that we are safe and secure. As Paul wrote, Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is His love that keeps us close to Him, and no one or nothing can break this bond that comes from Him.

As we end each day, we are advised to praise God for His faithfulness. Indeed, by His grace, He has brought us through another day, and He has proven Himself to be trustworthy. Even when tragedy strikes or the light of His presence is dim, we have the assurance that He is with us.

If things look bad today, we can always look back at our yesterdays and see God at work in our lives and praise Him for His trustworthiness and faithfulness.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for all You have done for us. May we always be aware of Your love and faithfulness. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 92:2 It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening.

## 2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

## News from the Associated Press

### **South Dakota brothers win the lottery in the same year**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Luck seems to run in one South Dakota family.

Brothers Patrick and Bill Rose have both hit the lottery jackpot in the past year. The South Dakota Lottery says Patrick Rose, of Pierre, claimed a Dakota Cash jackpot of \$86,450 last week. That comes 11 months after brother Bill Rose, from Fort Pierre, won a \$390,000 Lucky for Life prize.

Patrick Rose says he buys lotto tickets every day, but was in disbelief when he saw that he won the Nov. 21 jackpot. He says he'll pay off some bills and visit his daughters in Texas.

The Argus Leader says he has some advice for those playing the lottery. Do it wisely in moderation.

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

### **Amish, Mennonite volunteers help Harvey victims in Texas**

By **EMILY FOXHALL**, *Houston Chronicle*

BLOOMINGTON, Texas (AP) — The five young Amish women arranged themselves in a brand new home in this beat-up Texas town and began to sing. The house, built by volunteers, was a vibrant mustard yellow, the talk of the town.

The Houston Chronicle reports the girls harmonized.

"They say I have nothing, but they are so wrong."

Ernest Licerio, 55, watched from his wheelchair. He grew up here. Thirty years ago, he was run over by a train, an accident that left him with one arm and no legs. This house, Licerio said, was the first new thing he owned and something, with Thanksgiving approaching, for which to be grateful.

"It means that there is hope for tomorrow," he said.

It was a Tuesday afternoon, 15 months after Hurricane Harvey ripped through this chemical-plant town, 13 miles southeast of Victoria, and nine days before the second Thanksgiving since the storm.

People such as Licerio needed assistance, desperately. But Harvey, he says, was also a blessing in disguise. It brought strangers, saviors, into his life, like the Amish women serenading him, or the Mennonites who coordinated the work that gave Licerio this new wheelchair-accessible home, where he should be living by Christmas.

"In my heart, I'm rejoicing, though the world may not see."

Bloomington, a struggling town of 2,500, is just the kind of place the Mennonite Disaster Service, a group that organizes volunteers to fix and rebuild homes after disasters, seeks out. They want to help people who might otherwise slip through the cracks. In Bloomington, a place few outsiders have heard of, an estimated 17 percent of residents lived below the poverty line before Harvey, leaving them especially vulnerable to the hurricane's impact.

Victoria County Commissioner Danny Garcia put it this way: Harvey may not have hit Bloomington harder than anywhere else, but, as in the story of the Three Little Pigs, they were the ones with the houses made of straw.

And so the Mennonite volunteers last year set up camp and, except for a break around harvest time, stayed. They brought trailers with tools and showers. They built bunk beds and dormitory partitions in a local church gym. "ITS ALL ABOUT JESUS," the basketball hoop backboard reminds them.

The volunteers come from all over for varying amounts of time, some in weekslong leadership roles, some just lending a hand for a week. Not all are Mennonite, or even the same kind of Mennonite. Any Christians are welcome to be leaders and anyone can volunteer.

Some Mennonites in Bloomington now are from Canada, where they celebrated Thanksgiving in October. The young Amish women came from Indiana. Some described it as a religious calling, a way to give back.

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The group plans to spend two more years here and will be at work on this Thanksgiving. There are also ongoing projects in Rockport and La Grange.

"Bloomington was really kind of overlooked," said Bruce Weber, a 65-year-old from Ontario, who has overseen the site since October. "We just need to continue on the work of people who have been here prior to us."

At first, the outsiders were a strange sight in Bloomington. Some spoke with Canadian accents. Some men wore long beards and women long dresses. But community members embraced them, grateful for what they were doing. "It's almost unbelievable," said Garcia, the commissioner.

As the holidays neared, the group was almost finished building three new houses. Mennonite Disaster Service has worked on nearly 200 homes in town, by their count, including roof work and cleanup, and repairing 20 more.

Before they gathered to sing on that chilly afternoon, some of the two-dozen volunteers did a final cleanup at Licerio's home, which lacked only appliances and furniture.

At a second house, under the guidance of 69-year-old Don O'Neill, volunteers installed laminate flooring and touched-up the wall paint.

A retired educator and carpenter from Alberta, O'Neill was here in what he said was "the spirit of service."

Sixteen-year-old Kayla Graber and 18-year-old Marianna Eicher, working on hands and knees on the dusty floor, said they and seven other young women from their youth group came because they thought it would be fun — and, based on their giggles, it seemed it was.

At home in Indiana, one worked in a bakery and the other a cabinet shop.

"We just enjoy doing it," said Martin Stoll, 68, a grandfather of another of the girls, who was installing a bracket for a closet door in a third home. "They need help. They really need help."

Volunteer Ryan Sprunger, 69, put together the porch railing outside that third house. Sprunger, who is from a different part of Indiana, was almost done with 26 weeks of volunteer-work this year, including in Fort Myers, Florida, and Pine Ridge, South Dakota. The group says 3,335 volunteers this year have been in 32 locations in the United States, Canada and their territories.

Carol White, 74, stirred a pot of chili in an RV that she lives in on the property where Stoll and Sprunger worked. Harvey destroyed the three-bedroom mobile home there that she and her husband once called home.

In the RV, it was hard to get around, even with White's husband out driving a bus for the local school district that afternoon. They lived on limited incomes, but had looked into taking out a loan.

A year ago, they got a phone call: the Mennonites wanted to build them a home.

"It felt like a miracle," White said. "It really did."

White and her husband took the chili to the volunteers that evening. The girls slurped it up in minutes. Licerio offered fruit as thanks for his near-finished home. With light from the setting sun streaming through the windows, the girls sang for him in return.

It was a striking moment: here, in a house built by so many hands, was a group of Amish women who rode for 18 hours to a Texas town in the coastal plains. They came from a place where they did not drive, where they stopped school after 9th grade, where they learned the songs they sang now from their mothers.

Their voices rose in a home being given to a man whom life has tested. He chose the mustard color as a symbol, based on a saying about the strength of the tiny mustard seed that grows into a tree.

"There's a roof up above me and a good place to sleep... Thank you Lord for your blessings on me."

"There's a roof over your head," 63-year-old Marj Weber, who helps manage the projects there with her husband, Bruce, said when the song ended. "That's what they said. There's a blessing on you."

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Information from: Houston Chronicle, <http://www.houstonchronicle.com>

## Report: Number of uninsured kids spikes to 3.9M in US

By KELLI KENNEDY, Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — The number of uninsured children in the United States has increased for the first time in nearly a decade, placing it at 3.9 million in 2017, according to a report Thursday from Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families.

Nationally, the number of uninsured children increased by an estimated 276,000 in 2017, from a historic low of 4.7 percent in 2016 to 5 percent last year. Experts say about 75 percent of the newly uninsured children are clustered in states that did not expand Medicaid such as Florida, Texas and Georgia.

Under President Obama's Affordable Care Act, Florida and other states could take federal funding to help pay for health coverage for nearly 900,000 people, but the Republican-led Legislature in Florida voted against it. The vast majority of states have already expanded Medicaid and increased the number of residents eligible for its coverage.

Joan Alker, executive director for Georgetown's Center for Children and Families, has written the report for the last eight years and said she's never seen the rates of uninsured children go up in all 50 states, which happened last year.

She said that what is perhaps most concerning is that the uninsured rate among children increased despite an improving economy and low unemployment rate that allowed more children to get private coverage through their parents.

The study blamed the increases on the Trump administration's repeated attempts to prompt an overhaul of publicly funded health care. There were major efforts to repeal Obama's Affordable Care Act and cut Medicaid, and the children's CHIP insurance funding also ran out and hung in the balance for months before Congress extended it.

"There was a lot of confusion among families as to whether these public coverage sources were available," Alker said.

At the same time, the Trump administration slashed funding for advertising and enrollment counselors to help sign people up for these health insurance programs. The country's enrollment decline was not just in Medicaid and CHIP, but also in Obamacare or the federal marketplace where parents can purchase private health insurance and often receive a subsidy to help pay for it.

The report noted that many of the children who do not have health insurance are eligible for coverage, but just aren't enrolled.

Ed Haislmaier, a senior research fellow with the conservative think tank The Heritage Foundation, said the figures are statistically insignificant.

He did agree that there were dips in Medicaid enrollment and through the Obamacare marketplace, but noted there's no enrollment cutoff for Medicaid, meaning families can sign up their children year-round.

"It's really more of a fluctuation. There's no policy driver there," he said, saying he didn't think marketing cuts had any impact.

In Florida, the uninsured rate went from 288,000 in 2016 to 325,000 in 2017.

Florida has one of the highest rates of uninsured residents in the country, and also has had the highest number of enrollees purchasing insurance through the Obamacare federal marketplace. However, Medicaid expansion in Florida is likely off the table for this upcoming Legislative session. Incoming Governor-elect Republican Ron DeSantis is against it. His opponent, Democrat Andrew Gillum campaigned heavily on his support to expand Medicaid coverage for more residents.

The report also expressed concern that strict immigration policies and enforcement were making many immigrant families leery of enrolling, even if their children are eligible for health coverage. "We think it's really this national unwelcome mat regarding public coverage," Alker said.

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## Ex-custodian serving jail time for hiding gun in school

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A former custodian at a Sioux Falls high school is serving jail time for hiding a gun in the ceiling of a school restroom.

Twenty-six-year-old Joseph Jay Croal was sentenced to 180 days in jail. Croal got credit for 37 days served. The Argus Leader reports Croal also was ordered to perform 40 hours of community service. He cannot go on any Sioux Falls School District property without advance authorization and an escort.

Croal pleaded guilty in October to possession of a firearm on school premises and making a false report. He was accused of hiding a Ruger handgun in a men's restroom ceiling at the Career and Technical Education Academy in August.

School officials said Croal had been working at CTE since 2016. His employment was ended Aug. 27.

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

## Johnson heads to House with ag, transportation on his mind

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's next congressman is focused on the state's top industry — agriculture — as he heads to Washington, where he will be a Republican seeking headway in the Democratic-controlled U.S. House.

Incoming U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson was in Washington for orientation this week and recently announced members of his leadership team. The former public utilities commissioner and chief of staff to Gov. Dennis Daugaard will be sworn in to his new office in January.

Johnson spoke with The Associated Press this week about joining Congress:

### FOCUS: AGRICULTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

Johnson said he has discussed the farm bill with the House Agriculture Committee's current chairman and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue. Johnson said Wednesday that it could pass during Congress' lame-duck session — House and Senate agricultural leaders have since announced an "agreement in principle" — and he wants to make sure South Dakota priorities are protected. He said that includes defending livestock disaster provisions and maintaining a strong farm safety net.

On transportation, Johnson said he wants to focus on rail traffic and oversight of the Surface Transportation Board to improve the nation's rail system. He said his top choices would be to serve on the Agriculture and Transportation and Infrastructure committees.

### OUT-OF-POWER REPUBLICANS

Johnson is taking over the seat from outgoing Republican Rep. Kristi Noem, who won the governor's race during the November election. Despite Republicans losing the House in the midterm election, Johnson said he hopes to be a relevant policy expert in broadband, transportation and agriculture.

Johnson said he's open to working with Democrats and expects to find more agreement at the committee level. He said agriculture and transportation have "long been areas of a bipartisan progress." But he said he'll be asking his Democratic colleagues not to overreach.

"My willingness to work together is not going to cause me in any way to muzzle myself to legitimate abuses that I see," Johnson said.

### SWEARING-IN PLANS

When Johnson is sworn in as South Dakota's lone congressman on Jan. 3, his wife Jacquelyn and their oldest son, Max, 13, will be watching from the gallery while his two younger sons, 10-year-old Ben and 6-year-old Owen, will be with him on the House floor.

Johnson said his family is enjoying the journey and his children want to learn more about Washington. He said they recently ate breakfast at the National Museum of American History and attended a reception at the National Archives Museum.

"There is just no way that you can look at the Constitution of the United States of America and look at the actual star-spangled banner and not be filled with a sense of reverence for the opportunity that the

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voters have provided," he said. "I think my family appreciates the gravity of that opportunity and they want to do what they can to be supportive."

## REAL LIFE

Johnson's family will stay in Mitchell. He said he's found a one-bedroom apartment within walking distance of Capitol Hill. He said the apartment is "too expensive," but said he expects to pay substantially less than the average freshman member.

"There's no workout center. There are no vending machines. There's no Wi-Fi," he said. "I've never been very big on frills."

Johnson and each rank-and-file House member will make \$174,000 a year.

## LATE-NIGHT BIT

Many Americans' first introduction to Johnson may have been from the "Tonight Show" this week, when host Jimmy Fallon made fun of his name.

Johnson said he thought it was funny and tweeted after the show that it wasn't "exactly the way I wanted to earn recognition." Johnson also said he appreciated others' aversion to Fallon's "sophomoric approach" to humor.

"I take policy very seriously. I don't take myself all that seriously," he told the AP.

## South Dakota man accused of \$500K investment scheme

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man was charged with wire fraud after allegations he ran an investment scheme that caused one client to lose more than \$500,000.

David Astin, 36, was arrested Oct. 22 in Houston, Texas, and transported to South Dakota, where he remains detained at the Pennington County Jail, the Rapid City Journal reported. The Hermosa man was indicted for federal wire fraud more than two years ago, and a warrant was then issued for his arrest.

Astin pleaded not guilty at his initial court appearance in Rapid City on Monday.

Court records allege Astin's investment scheme began in 2012 when he started managing Dr. David Blickensderfer's foreign currency exchange accounts, also known as "forex" accounts. Forex trading involves trading currencies of different countries against each other, according to the court documents.

"Astin began providing false information to Blickensderfer about the balances in Blickensderfer's forex accounts to make Blickensderfer believe his forex accounts were making significant gains when in reality the accounts were losing substantial amounts of money," the indictment stated.

Astin's trading lost nearly \$434,000 and he was paid \$75,500 for his services, according to court documents. He allegedly sent emails and text messages that included false representations of account balances, as well as falsified Forex.com account statements, to hide losses that resulted from his trading.

Blickensderfer was unable to be reached by the newspaper. Astin's attorney declined to comment.

Astin has been ordered to remain in custody because of a serious risk that he wouldn't appear for future court proceedings.

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

## Driver killed after losing control on interstate

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities are investigating whether icy conditions played a role in a crash that killed a man on the interstate near Humboldt.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the 54-year-old man lost control of his car on Interstate 90, traveled into the median and flipped over. The man died at the scene of the crash Wednesday, a day in which icy conditions caused numerous accidents, including another near Beresford in which a semi rolled over on Interstate 29 and blocked traffic.

Treacherous travel is also expected this weekend. A winter storm watch is in effect for much of the region from Friday night through Sunday morning.

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The National Weather Service is expecting 5 to 9 inches of snow in parts of southeast and central South Dakota with up to 11 inches further south.

## **11 years in brother's fatal stabbing, assault**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Rosebud man has been sentenced to 11 years in prison for fatally stabbing his brother and beating another man with brass knuckles.

Twenty-six-year-old Dallas Burning Breast earlier pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and assault. Two other charges were dropped in exchange.

The Rapid City Journal says the charges are the result of two separate incidents. Burning Breast was arguing with his brother, Corey Burning Breast, last March and stabbed him the leg with a large kitchen knife. The wound caused significant bleeding and ended with his brother's death.

In July of 2017, Burning Breast hit a man from behind, knocking him to the ground and beating him with the brass knuckles.

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

## **South Dakota corn, sorghum harvests coming to a close**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The corn and sorghum harvests are coming to a close in South Dakota.

The federal Agriculture Department in its weekly crop report says 90 percent of the corn and 94 percent of the sorghum is harvested. The sunflower harvest has reached three-fourths complete.

Sixty-nine percent of subsoil moisture supplies and 87 percent of topsoil moisture supplies are rated adequate to surplus.

Pasture and range conditions in the state are rated 46 percent in good to excellent condition.

## **Police: Man who died in Rapid City garage fire was homeless**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Police say the man found dead in a Rapid City garage fire was homeless.

The Rapid City Journal reports an autopsy determined 46-year-old Ivan Hollowhorn died of smoke inhalation when fire broke out in the detached garage early Monday. Authorities say Hollowhorn was using the garage for shelter. Investigators believe the fire was an accident.

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

## **Guns, explosives confiscated in Minnehaha County**

HARTFORD, S.D. (AP) — Federal and local authorities say they've seized dozens of guns and explosive devices from a salvage yard in suburban Sioux Falls.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives led a search of the property Tuesday in Hartford. Minnehaha County Sheriff's Capt. Jason Gearman says law enforcement was looking for stolen weapons.

The Argus Leader reports ATF agent Kurt Wheeler says 46 guns and 37 explosive devices were confiscated. He says the guns include rifles, shotguns, pistols and revolvers. The explosives include cardboard tubes with flash powder and a wick.

There have been no arrests.

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

## **Massive, extended data breach at Marriott's Starwood hotels**

BETHESDA, Md. (AP) — The information of as many as 500 million people staying at Starwood hotels has been compromised and Marriott says it's uncovered unauthorized access that's been taking place within its Starwood network since 2014.



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The company said Friday that credit card numbers and expiration dates of some guests may have been taken. For about 327 million people, the information exposed includes some combination of name, mailing address, phone number, email address, passport number, Starwood Preferred Guest account information, date of birth, gender, arrival and departure information, reservation date and communication preferences. For some guests, the information was limited to name and sometimes other data such as mailing address, email address or other information.

Marriott said that there was a breach of its database in September, which had guest information related to reservations at Starwood properties on or before Sept. 10.

Starwood operates hotels under the names: W Hotels, St. Regis, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Westin Hotels & Resorts, Element Hotels, Aloft Hotels, The Luxury Collection, Tribute Portfolio, Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts, Four Points by Sheraton and Design Hotels. Starwood branded timeshare properties are also included.

Marriott International Inc. discovered through the investigation that someone copied and encrypted guest information and tried to remove it.

Marriott and Starwood merged two years ago and attempts to combine the loyalty programs for the hotels have been marred by technical difficulties.

CEO Arne Sorenson said in a prepared statement Friday that Marriott is still trying to phase out Starwood systems.

Marriott has set up a website and call center for anyone who thinks that they are at risk, and on Friday will begin sending emails to those affected.

Shares of Marriott tumbled 6 percent before the opening bell.

## As G-20 summit opens, contentious issues loom on sidelines

By **LUIS ANDRES HENAO, ANGELA CHARLTON and PETER ORSI, Associated Press**

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Heads of state from the world's leading economies were invited to the Group of 20 summit to discuss issues like development, infrastructure and investment. As the gathering officially kicks off Friday, those themes seem like afterthoughts, overshadowed by contentious matters from the U.S.-China trade dispute to the conflict over Ukraine.

Also expected to loom large amid dozens of bilateral meetings in Argentina's capital: the tensions between longtime allies the United States and Europe, the gruesome slaying of a dissident Saudi journalist in the country's Istanbul consulate and how the Saudi crown prince who is alleged to have ordered the killing is received by world leaders.

The United States, Canada and Mexico also are supposed to sign a trade deal replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement that was struck following months of tough negotiations that analysts say left a bitter taste among the partners.

"The G-20 Leaders' Summit is at risk of falling into disarray with the summit being overshadowed by items not on agenda," said Thomas Bernes of the Centre for International Governance Innovation, a Canada-based think tank. "The true test will be whether the other members of the G-20 will act resolutely or whether we will witness the crumbling of the G-20 as a forum for international economic cooperation."

French President Emmanuel Macron, one of the earliest arrivals, called on Thursday for international involvement and "complete clarity" in investigations into the killing of Saudi columnist Jamal Khashoggi, and he said European leaders should discuss it at a meeting Friday.

The summit's host, Argentine President Mauricio Macri, said the matter would be "on the table" during bilateral and possibly broader meetings.

Saudi Arabia has denied that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman played a role, but some leaders may be cool toward him to avoid seeming to legitimize a man who U.S. intelligence agencies concluded ordered the killing. U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has made clear it does not want to torpedo the longstanding U.S. relationship with Riyadh, however.

It is bin Salman's first significant appearance overseas since the killing. Turkish President Recep Tayyip

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Erdogan, who has been sharply critical of Saudi Arabia over the incident, is also in attendance.

"Given the role that Turkey has played in this, given that the murder happened at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, this will be an interesting meeting," said Willis Sparks, director of global macro politics at Eurasia Group. "Just to see how leaders interact with the crown prince will be interesting — how warm they are. I expect Trump to be very warm with him, but European leaders probably are going to be very reluctant to have their pictures taken with him."

Trump met Friday morning with Macri at the presidential palace known as the Casa Rosada, or Pink House. Posing for photos in a gilded salon, Trump spoke about their longtime personal relationship and said they would discuss trade, military purchases and other issues.

An expected high-profile bilateral meeting between Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin planned for Saturday was abruptly canceled by Trump in a tweet citing Russia's seizure of Ukrainian vessels over the weekend. Russian news agencies quoted Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as saying the cancellation means Putin will have more time for "useful meetings."

Trump was still scheduled to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping, but analysts were not optimistic about prospects for a major breakthrough on the two countries' trade disputes a month before U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods are set to ramp up.

The U.S., Canada and Mexico are expected to sign the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement that is replacing NAFTA during a ceremony Friday. There had been speculation that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau might not attend and send his foreign minister to sign instead if Trump did not lift steel and aluminum tariffs, but Trudeau's press secretary confirmed Thursday night that he would be at the ceremony.

Taking the world stage at the G-20 could be welcome relief for some leaders dealing with challenges back home.

Macron has faced mass protests in France over rising fuel taxes that are the biggest challenge yet to his presidency, though his party dominates parliament and he doesn't face re-election until 2022. At the summit he has sought to fashion himself as the anti-Trump — a champion of the Paris climate accord, defender of the postwar system of global trade and crusader against multinational tax evaders.

British Prime Minister Theresa May is fighting for political survival as she tries to pull her country out of the European Union. German Chancellor Angela Merkel is preparing to leave politics after announcing last month she would give up leadership of her party, a post she has held since 2000. Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte heads a populist coalition that is clashing with the EU and suffers internal divisions.

Merkel was supposed to get in to Buenos Aires early Friday, but her arrival was delayed after her plane suffered a technical problem and returned to Germany on Thursday night. Merkel's office said Friday that she and a small delegation, including the finance minister, took a different government plane to Madrid and then boarded a commercial flight to Buenos Aires.

The British Embassy in Argentina said May's visit would be the first by a U.K. prime minister to Buenos Aires. The only other prime minister to visit the country was Tony Blair, who went to Puerto Iguazu in 2001. The two countries have long been at odds over the South Atlantic islands known as the Falklands in Britain and the Malvinas in Argentina.

Michael Shifter, head of the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based think tank, said this G-20 summit was once considered an opportunity for Latin American members Argentina, Brazil and Mexico "to project a regional bloc to shape a global agenda."

But now "the fact that the G-20 is taking place in South America for the first time is almost beside the point," Shifter said, noting that Macri has lowered expectations for the event. "Now a success would be a summit meeting that goes smoothly, without any major disruption."

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

### 1. WORLD LEADERS GO SOUTH

The U.S.-China trade dispute and the conflict over Ukraine could overshadow the usual agenda of issues like development, infrastructure and investment at the Group of 20 summit in Buenos Aires.

### 2. LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

President Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, confessed in a surprise guilty plea that he lied to Congress about a Moscow real estate deal he pursued on Trump's behalf during the 2016 Republican campaign.

### 3. WHITE HOUSE-KREMLIN DIALOGUE SCRATCHED

President Trump kicks off two days of diplomacy at the Group of 20 summit in Argentina after his abrupt decision to cancel a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin eclipsed the proceedings before they even started.

### 4. BLACK SEA CONFLICT INTENSIFIES

Ukrainian officials have upped the ante in the growing confrontation with Russia, announcing a travel ban for most Russian males and searching the home of an influential cleric of the Russian Orthodox Church.

### 5. NO RELIEF FROM WEATHER IN GOLDEN STATE

Heavy rains and mudslides are afflicting some of the same California towns which just suffered through extended wildfires.

### 6. STRANGERS IN THE FAMILY

Over a million local government workers in China are infiltrating families of ethnic minorities spying on locations, events and occasions — from living rooms to weddings — once considered intimate and private.

### 7. A NEW KIND OF FARMHAND

Robot-making startups are working to transform agricultural production, a sector under economic strain due to market pressures to keep food cheap, a rising global population and the uncertainties of climate change.

### 8. THE DANGER FROM THE NORTH

Israeli officials have long warned the threat posed by Gaza's Hamas rulers pales in comparison to that of Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group.

### 9. TRAGIC BEACH DEATHS

Fifty-one pilot whales have died in a mass stranding in New Zealand, less than a week after 154 more whales perished in two other unrelated strandings.

### 10. DALLAS HOLDS 'EM

The Cowboys stifled Drew Brees and the Saints, ending New Orleans' 10-game winning streak with a 13-10 victory.

## Trump barrels into G-20 summit after nixing Putin meeting

By ZEKE MILLER and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — President Trump opened two days of diplomacy at the Group of 20 summit in Argentina on Friday after his abrupt decision to cancel a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin overshadowed the proceedings before they even started.

Trump was greeted warmly at the Casa Rosada by Argentine President Mauricio Macri, a longtime business acquaintance. Posing for photos in the gilded Salón Blanco, Trump spoke about their longtime personal relationship and said they would discuss trade, military purchases and other issues.

"We've known each other a long while," Trump said, noting he worked with Macri's father on real estate developments. The businessman-turned-politician joked that when he and Macri first met they'd never have imagined their future roles on the world stage.

Macri is hosting the summit as he struggles with problems at home. He is trying to halt economic turmoil

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that has caused the steep depreciation of the Argentine peso.

Trump, who arrived in Buenos Aires late Thursday, barreled into the two-day meeting by announcing via Twitter that he was canceling on Putin over Russia's seizure of Ukrainian vessels. His agenda Friday also includes meetings with the leaders of Japan and India, the signing of a revamped trade deal with Canada and Mexico, as well as a number of heavily choreographed group activities for the gathering of leaders of rich and developing nations.

Trump tweeted after his arrival: "Arrived in Argentina with a very busy two days planned. Important meetings scheduled throughout. Our great Country is extremely well represented. Will be very productive!"

The signing of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement, or USMCA as Trump refers to it, comes a day before Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto's successor is set to be sworn in to office.

After the three countries' leaders sign the pact, it must be ratified by their respective legislatures. That could prove to be a difficult task in the United States, especially now that Democrats — instead of Trump's Republicans — will control the House of Representatives come January. Already Democrats and their allies in the labor movement are demanding changes to the agreement.

With his "America First" approach, general distaste for multinational deals and habit of insulting allies, Trump typically gets a mixed reception at global gatherings. Coming into this G-20, he faces a series of diplomatic challenges — most notably whether he can strike an agreement with Chinese President Xi Jinping to ease trade tensions that have rattled financial markets.

Trump's working dinner with Xi is set for Saturday evening. The American president was originally supposed to see Putin that day as well.

The president canceled on Putin not long after his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, revealed he had lied to Congress to cover up that he was negotiating a real estate deal in Moscow on Trump's behalf during the Republican presidential primary in 2016. The news ensured any meeting with Putin would have put a spotlight on the special counsel's investigation into whether the Trump campaign colluded with Moscow during the campaign. Trump has denied any wrongdoing.

Trump showed that the Russia investigation was testing his ability to stay focused on summit business after he blasted the investigation in a fresh tweet on Friday, again calling it a "Witch Hunt!"

Trump's Friday schedule also includes an informal meeting with Australia's new prime minister.

One looming question is whether Trump will have a run-in with Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman amid global dismay over the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. U.S. intelligence officials have concluded that the Saudi crown prince must have at least known of the plot to kill Khashoggi, who was critical of the Saudi royal family. Lawmakers in both parties have called on Trump to at least avoid the young heir apparent as punishment.

But Trump publicly announced his decision to effectively give the prince a pass in the name of "America First," making vastly exaggerated claims of Saudi military contracts and investments in the United States. The president also views Saudi Arabia as a vital counterbalance to Iranian influence in the Middle East.

Asked Thursday why the two had no meeting scheduled, Trump said: "I would have met with him but we didn't set that one up."

Trump has repeatedly rankled allies and has played a largely disruptive role on the world stage. He has slapped tariffs on the European Union, pulled the U.S. out of the landmark Paris Climate Accord and the Iran nuclear deal and suggested he might be willing to pull the U.S. out of NATO if member countries don't significantly boost their defense spending.

## Trump's ex-lawyer Cohen admits lying about Russian deal

By ERIC TUCKER, LARRY NEUMEISTER and CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen confessed in a surprise guilty plea that he lied to Congress about a Moscow real estate deal he pursued on Trump's behalf during the heat of the 2016 Republican campaign. He said he lied to be consistent with Trump's "political messaging."

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The plea agreement made clear that prosecutors believe that while Trump insisted repeatedly throughout the campaign that he had no business dealings in Russia, his lawyer was continuing to pursue the Trump Tower Moscow project weeks after his boss had clinched the Republican nomination for president and well beyond the point that had been previously acknowledged.

Cohen said he discussed the proposal with Trump on multiple occasions and with members of the president's family, according to documents filed by special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian interference in the presidential election and possible coordination with the Trump campaign. Cohen acknowledged considering traveling to Moscow to discuss the project.

There is no clear link in the court filings between Cohen's lies and Mueller's central question of whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia. And nothing said in court on Thursday, or in associated court filings, addressed whether Trump or his aides had directed Cohen to mislead Congress.

Still, the case underscores how Trump's business entity, the Trump Organization, was negotiating business in Moscow when investigators believe Russians were meddling on his behalf in the 2016 election, and that associates of the president were mining Russian connections during the race.

Trump, who's in Argentina for the Group of 20 summit, on Friday blasted the investigation in which Cohen pleaded guilty. In a tweet, Trump recalled "happily living my life" as a developer before running for president after seeing the "Country going in the wrong direction (to put it mildly)."

"Against all odds," he continued, "I decide to run for President & continue to run my business-very legal & very cool, talked about it on the campaign trail. Lightly looked at doing a building somewhere in Russia. Put up zero money, zero guarantees and didn't do the project. Witch Hunt!"

The Cohen revelation comes as Mueller's investigation is showing fresh signs of aggressive activity. Earlier this week, Mueller's team accused Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, of lying after his own guilty plea, which Manafort denies. The special counsel continues to investigate whether campaign associates had advance knowledge of hacked emails becoming public. Another potential target, Jerome Corsi, has rejected a plea offer and faces a possible indictment. Last week, Trump for the first time provided Mueller with responses to written questions.

Cohen is the first person charged by Mueller with lying to Congress, an indication the special counsel is prepared to treat that offense as seriously as lying to federal agents and a warning shot to dozens of others who have appeared before lawmakers.

Cohen told two congressional committees last year that the talks about the tower project ended in January 2016, a lie he said was an act of loyalty to Trump. In fact, the negotiations continued until June 2016, Cohen acknowledged.

His court appearance Thursday marked the latest step in his evolution from trusted Trump consigliere to prime antagonist. Prosecutors say Cohen is cooperating with Mueller and has met with his team at least seven times. It is the second time the lawyer's legal woes have entangled Trump, coming months after Cohen said the Republican president directed him to make hush money payments to two women who said they had sex with Trump.

Trump on Thursday called Cohen a "weak person" who was lying to get a lighter sentence and stressed that the real estate deal at issue was never a secret and never executed. His lawyer Rudy Giuliani said that Cohen was a "proven liar" and that Trump's business organization had voluntarily given Mueller the documents cited in the guilty plea "because there was nothing to hide."

"There would be nothing wrong if I did do it," Trump said of pursuing the project. "I was running my business while I was campaigning. There was a good chance that I wouldn't have won, in which case I would have gone back into the business, and why should I lose lots of opportunities?"

He said the primary reason he didn't pursue it was "I was focused on running for president."

About an hour later, Trump canceled a planned meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Group of 20 summit.

During the campaign, while publicly espousing a conciliatory relationship with Putin, Trump was repeatedly dismissive of claims that he had connections to the Kremlin, an issue that flared as especially sensitive

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in the summer of 2016 after the Democratic National Committee and a cybersecurity company asserted that Moscow was behind a punishing cyberattack on the party's network.

"I have a great company. I built an unbelievable company, but if you look there you'll see there's nothing in Russia," Trump said at a July 2016 news conference.

"But zero, I mean I will tell you right now, zero, I have nothing to do with Russia," he said.

Mueller's team included a question about Russian real estate deals in a list of queries presented earlier this year to Trump's lawyers, but it was not immediately clear whether it was among the questions Trump answered last week. If he did answer questions on the topic, Trump could have problems if the responses deviate from prosecutors' factual narrative.

The Cohen case in New York is the first charge filed by the special counsel since the appointment of Matthew Whitaker, who has spoken critically about the investigation, as acting attorney general with oversight of the probe. Whitaker was advised of the plea ahead of time, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

The nine-page charging document traces behind-the-scenes communication about a project that had first been discussed more than 20 years ago. It almost became reality in October 2015 when an obscure Russian real estate developer signed a letter of intent sent by Cohen for a 15-floor hotel, condominium and retail complex in Moscow.

Cohen looped in Trump's adult children Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump, copying them on emails about it in late 2015, according to a person close to the Trump Organization. In one email, Ivanka Trump even suggested an architect for the building, the person said. The company's email traffic about the project ends in January 2016, said the person, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

On Jan. 14, 2016, just weeks before the Republican party caucuses in Iowa, Cohen emailed the office of Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov asking for help getting the Trump Tower Moscow project off the ground. He later had a 20-minute phone call with one of Peskov's assistants and asked for help "in securing land to build the proposed tower and financing the construction," prosecutors say.

The dialogue continued over the next several months with the Republican primaries in full swing.

In early May, prosecutors say, Cohen and Felix Sater, an executive who worked on and off for the Trump Organization, discussed having Trump visit Russia after the Republican National Convention. They also discussed the possibility of Cohen meeting in June with Putin and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

On June 9, 2016, Trump Jr., Manafort and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, met with a Kremlin-connected lawyer at Trump Tower in New York about getting "dirt" on Democrat Hillary Clinton. Around that time, prosecutors say, Sater sent Cohen several messages about the project and Cohen said he wouldn't be traveling then to Russia.

On June 14, the DNC announced that its computer networks were penetrated by Russian hackers.

Cohen and prosecutors referred to Trump as "Individual 1" throughout Thursday's proceedings. Cohen said he lied out of loyalty to "Individual 1."

Cohen said he also lied about his contacts with Russian officials and lied when he said he never agreed to travel to Russia in connection with the project and never discussed with Trump plans to travel to Moscow to support the project.

Thursday's charges were handled by Mueller, not the federal prosecutors in New York who handled Cohen's previous guilty plea in August to other federal charges involving his taxi businesses, bank fraud and campaign work for Trump. Cohen is to be sentenced Dec. 12. Guidelines call for little to no prison time on the new charge.

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Neumeister reported from New York. Associated Press writers Jim Mustian in New York and Stephen Braun in Washington contributed to this report.

## China's Uighurs assigned 'relatives' who report to the state

By **DAKE KANG** and **YANAN WANG**, Associated Press

ISTANBUL (AP) — The two women in the photograph were smiling, but Halmurat Idris knew something was terribly wrong.

One was his 39-year-old sister; standing at her side was an elderly woman Idris did not know. Their grins were tight-lipped, mirthless. Her sister had posted the picture on a social media account along with a caption punctuated by a smiley-face.

"Look, I have a Han Chinese mother now!" his sister wrote.

Idris knew instantly: The old woman was a spy, sent by the Chinese government to infiltrate his family.

There are many like her. According to the ruling Communist Party's official newspaper, as of the end of September, 1.1 million local government workers have been deployed to ethnic minorities' living rooms, dining areas and Muslim prayer spaces, not to mention at weddings, funerals and other occasions once considered intimate and private.

All this is taking place in China's far west region of Xinjiang, home to the predominantly Muslim, Turkic-speaking Uighurs, who have long reported discrimination at the hands of the country's majority Han Chinese.

While government notices about the "Pair Up and Become Family" program portray it as an affectionate cultural exchange, Uighurs living in exile in Turkey said their loved ones saw the campaign as a chilling intrusion into the only place that they once felt safe.

They believe the program is aimed at coercing Uighurs into living secular lives like the Han majority. Anything diverging from the party's prescribed lifestyle can be viewed by authorities as a sign of potential extremism — from suddenly giving up smoking or alcohol, to having an "abnormal" beard or an overly religious name.

Under Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Uighur homeland has been blanketed with stifling surveillance, from armed checkpoints on street corners to facial-recognition-equipped CCTV cameras steadily surveying passers-by. Now, Uighurs say, they must live under the watchful eye of the ruling Communist Party even inside their own homes.

"The government is trying to destroy that last protected space in which Uighurs have been able to maintain their identity," said Joanne Smith Finley, an ethnographer at England's Newcastle University.

The Associated Press spoke to five Uighurs living in Istanbul who shared the experiences of their family members in Xinjiang who have had to host Han Chinese civil servants. These accounts are based on prior communications with their family members, the majority of whom have since cut off contact because Uighurs can be punished for speaking to people abroad.

The Uighurs abroad said their loved ones were constantly on edge in their own homes, knowing that any misstep — a misplaced Quran, a carelessly spoken word — could lead to detention or worse. In the presence of these faux relatives, their family members could not pray or wear religious garbs, and the cadres were privy to their every move.

The thought of it — and the sight of his sister, the old woman and their false smiles — made Idris queasy.

"I wanted to throw up," said the 49-year-old petroleum engineer, shaking his head in disgust.

"The moment I saw the old woman, I thought, 'Ugh, this person is our enemy.' If your enemy became your mother, think about it — how would you feel?"

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Tensions between Muslim minorities and Han Chinese have bubbled over in recent years, resulting in violent attacks pegged to Uighur separatists and a fierce government crackdown on broadly defined "extremism" that has placed as many as 1 million Muslims in internment camps, according to estimates by experts and a human rights group.

Uighurs say the omnipresent threat of being sent to one of these centers, which are described as political indoctrination camps by former detainees, looms large in their relatives' minds when they are forced to welcome party members into their homes.

Last December, Xinjiang authorities organized a "Becoming Family Week" which placed more than 1 mil-

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lion cadres in minority households. Government reports on the program gushed about the warm “family reunions,” as public servants and Uighurs shared meals and even beds.

Another notice showed photos of visitors helping Uighur children with their homework and cooking meals for their “families.” The caption beneath a photo of three women lying in bed, clad in pajamas, said the cadre was “sleeping with her relatives in their cozy room.”

A different photo showed two women “studying the 19th Party Congress and walking together into the new era” — a nod to when Xi’s name was enshrined in the party constitution alongside the likes of Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong.

Becoming Family Week turned out to be a test run for a standardized homestay program. The Xinjiang United Front Work Department said in February that government workers should live with their assigned families every two months, for five days at a time.

The United Front, a Communist Party agency, indicates in the notice that the program is mandatory for cadres. Likewise, Idris and other interviewees said their families understood that they would be deemed extremists if they refused to take part.

Cadres, who are generally civilians working in the public sector, are directed to attend important family events such as the naming of newborns, circumcisions, weddings and funerals of close relatives. They must have a firm grasp of each family member’s ideological state, social activities, religion, income, their challenges and needs, as well as basic details on immediate relatives, the notice said.

Families were to be paid a daily rate of 20 to 50 yuan (\$2.80 to \$7.80) to cover the cost of meals shared with their newfound relatives. Some families might be paired with two or three cadres at a time, according to the notice, and the regularly mandated house calls could be supplanted with trips to the local party office.

A February piece on the Communist Party’s official news site said: “The vast majority of party cadres are not only living inside villagers’ homes, but also living inside the hearts of the masses.”

Overseas Uighurs said the “visits” to their relatives’ homes often lasted longer than five days, and they were closely monitored the whole time. The cadres would ask their family members where they were going and who they were meeting whenever they wanted to leave the house.

“They couldn’t pray,” said Abduzahir Yunus, a 23-year-old Uighur originally from Urumqi, Xinjiang’s capital. “Praying or even having a Quran at home could endanger the whole family.”

Yunus, who now lives in Istanbul, said his father used to lament to him about being visited three to four times a week by the administrator of his neighborhood committee, a middle-aged Han Chinese man. The surprise house calls began in 2016, and it was “impossible to say no,” Yunus said. They often coincided with times traditionally designated for prayer.

“Their aim is to assimilate us,” Yunus said. “They want us to eat like them, sleep like them and dress like them.”

After Yunus’s parents and older brother were detained, only Yunus’s sister-in-law and 5-year-old brother remained in the house. Around the beginning of 2018, the Han Chinese man started staying with them full-time.

Uighurs said they were particularly repulsed by the thought of male visitors living under the same roof as their female relatives and children — a practice contrary to their faith. Women and kids are sometimes the only ones left at home after male family members are sent to internment camps.

In recent years, the government has even encouraged Uighurs and Han Chinese to tie the knot.

Starting in 2014, Han-Uighur spouses in one county were eligible to receive 10,000 yuan (\$1,442) annually for up to five years following the registration of their marriage license.

Such marriages are highly publicized. The party committee in Luopu county celebrated the marriage of a Uighur woman and a “young lad” from Henan in an official social media account in October 2017. The man, Wang Linkai, had been recruited through a program that brought university graduates to work in the southern Xinjiang city of Hotan.

“They will let ethnic unity forever bloom in their hearts,” the party committee’s post said. “Let ethnic unity become one’s own flesh and blood.”



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Not all "Become Family" pairings involve Han Chinese visitors. A Uighur cadre named Gu Li said she regularly pays visits to a Uighur household, staying three to five days at a time.

"We've already started calling each other family," she said in a telephone interview from Xinjiang. "China's 56 ethnic groups are all one family."

Gu said civil servants of many ethnicities — Uighur, Han and Kazakh — participate in the program.

All government employees in the region are required to conduct such visits in order to better understand villagers' needs, according to Gu: "Because we're always sitting in our offices, we don't know what they really need. Only through penetrating the masses can we truly serve them."

As with many of the government's other initiatives in Xinjiang, the "Pair Up and Become Family" program is presented as a way to rescue Muslim minorities from poverty. Public servants show up at homes bearing bags of rice and gallons of cooking oil, and their duties include helping with chores and farm work.

Xu Jing, an employee at Turpan city's environmental bureau, recounted her shock after entering her assigned relative's home. Xu said the only light in the residence came from a small window, and she realized that Xasiyet Hoshur wasn't lying when she said she lived on 3,000 yuan (\$433) a year.

"But it's OK, everything is getting better," Xu wrote in her reflection, published on Turpan's government site. Hoshur's daughter was attending university on a 5,000 yuan (\$722) national scholarship.

On the one hand, China maintains that employment and living standards are key to warding off the temptations of religious extremism. On the other hand, official descriptions of the visitation and homestay program are laden with suggestions that the ethnic minority families are uncivilized and that their way of life needs to be corrected.

One notice, first highlighted by University of Washington ethnographer Darren Byler, focused on a Uighur family's use of a raised, cloth-covered platform for eating and working. In traditional Uighur culture, this setup is preferable to a table, but the testimonial published by the Xinjiang Communist Youth League said frequent use of the platform was "inconvenient" and "unhealthy."

The post quoted a cadre saying: "Even though we already purchased a TV and rice oil for our relatives, after living with our relatives for a few days, we still insisted on using our own money to buy our relatives a table and lamp."

In the People's Daily, a Uighur baker in Kashgar named Ablimit Ablipiz was quoted praising the party for improving his habits. "Ever since these cadres started living in my home, we've picked up a lot of know-how about food safety and hygiene," Ablipiz said.

Uighurs must also conform culturally. Over the Lunar New Year, an important Chinese holiday not traditionally celebrated by Uighurs, cadres encouraged households to hang lanterns and sing "red songs," ballads honoring the party's revolutionary history. Byler said families could not ask whether the meat was halal and acceptable to Muslims when they had to make or eat dumplings for the festival.

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Thousands of miles away, in Turkey, Uighur relatives in exile watch what is happening with dread.

Earlier this year, Ablikim Abliz studied a photo of his uncle's family gathered around a table. Clad in thick winter jackets, his uncle and the smiling Han Chinese man beside him both held chubby-faced children in their laps.

His uncle had posted the photo to his WeChat page along with the caption "Han Chinese brother."

The 58-year-old Abliz said his entire extended family in China has been sent to internment camps. When he saw his uncle's photo, his first reaction was relief. If his uncle had been assigned a Han family member, Abliz thought, that meant he was safe.

But the consolation was short-lived. A friend who tried to visit his uncle in Turpan this summer told Abliz that his uncle's front door was boarded up and sealed with police tape. Abliz has not been able to reach any of his family members since.

As for Idris, he fears that his sister is living under immense pressure with her Han Chinese "mother." Shortly after her sister's first post about her new relatives, a friend responded on WeChat: "I also have one! You guys better be careful!"

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The same friend later posted photos of herself and a Han Chinese woman doing a Chinese fan dance, playing the drums and wearing traditional Han clothing.

His sister would never have volunteered for such a program, Idris said. She and his younger sister had been trying to get passports to bring their children to Turkey and reunite with Idris, but their applications were not accepted.

Last summer, both of his sisters deleted him on WeChat. A few months later, his aunt deleted him, too. For more than a year, Idris has not been able to communicate with his relatives. He wonders, with growing unease, how they're getting along with their new "family."

## **In a twist, Trump fights to keep some Palestinian aid alive**

**By MATTHEW LEE, AP Diplomatic Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — For two years, the Trump administration has unabashedly slashed U.S. aid to the Palestinians. Now, amid signs it may finally roll out its long-awaited Middle East peace plan, the administration is scrambling to save what little remaining Palestinian assistance it provides.

The striking turnabout is the result of the belated realization that an obscure new law will likely force the U.S. to terminate all aid to the Palestinian Authority, including security assistance supported by Israel, by the end of January. Eliminating such aid, which totaled \$61 million this year even as other assistance was being cut, would deal a blow to Palestinian-Israeli security cooperation that both sides value. The law would also require the Jerusalem offices of the U.S. Agency for International Development to close.

To avert that possibility and remove a potentially lethal complication to the promised peace plan, the administration is rushing to find a solution. It will dispatch Army Lt. Gen. Eric Wendt, who serves as U.S. security coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority, to Congress in the coming days to urge lawmakers to come up with a fix to the law, known as the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act of 2018, to allow the aid to continue.

Congressional aides said they expect Wendt and other officials to start making the case next week in the hope of securing a fix in the short time it has left in session this year. The House and Senate are set to adjourn on Dec. 13 and Dec. 14, respectively. If that fails, officials said they expect to redouble their efforts when the new Congress convenes in January.

The State Department, to whom Wendt reports, declined to comment on the effort but acknowledged the problem.

"We are studying the potential impact of ATCA," the department said in an emailed response to queries about the matter from The Associated Press. "At this time, no changes have been made to U.S. security assistance to the Palestinian Authority or other ongoing programming."

ATCA made its way through Congress and was signed by President Donald Trump in early October with little fanfare. The White House perfunctorily announced the Oct. 3 signing in a two-paragraph statement that said only that the law "allows certain assets that are seized or frozen by the United States to be used to satisfy judgments against a terrorist party for claims based on an act of terrorism."

But for the Palestinians and potentially others the law has more severe consequences. Under ATCA, the Palestinian Authority would be disqualified from receiving any U.S. aid unless it agrees to pay court judgments of sometimes up to hundreds of millions of dollars on behalf of American victims of Palestinian attacks. The deadline for accepting that condition is 120 days from Trump's signing, or January 31, 2019.

The Palestinians say they will do no such thing and accuse the administration of acting in bad faith. They note that the administration has already cut hundreds of millions of dollars in aid for health, education, development and good governance programs, closed the PLO office in Washington, recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital over their fervent objections and moved the U.S. embassy there from Tel Aviv. In addition, the administration has downgraded its main diplomatic mission to the Palestinians by folding it into the embassy to Israel.

"Palestinian-U.S. security cooperation is based on the fact that we are against terrorism and fighting it," said Nabil Shaath, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's adviser for international affairs. "Therefore,

nobody can say that such an act can be implemented on us.”

In this case, however, the administration is siding with the Palestinians in seeking a way around the requirements of the law. So are some pro-Israel members of Congress who have supported the administration’s policy toward Israel and the Palestinians in the past, according to aides.

Legal experts who have studied ATCA say the easiest fix would be to have Congress amend the law to allow the president or secretary of state to waive the aid cut-off on national security grounds.

“A waiver or some sort of work around is going to be very important for this administration or any future administration that wants to pursue Israeli-Palestinian peace,” said Scott Anderson, an international lawyer and former American diplomat who is now a fellow at The Brookings Institution in Washington. “Cutting off the ability to supply that kind of security assistance would be short-sighted to say the least.”

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Associated Press writer Joe Federman in Jerusalem contributed to this report.

## **Fear that uproar over gene-edited babies could block science**

**By LAURAN NEERGAARD, AP Medical Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scientists working on the frontiers of medicine fear the uproar over the reported births of gene-edited babies in China could jeopardize promising research into how to alter heredity to fend off a variety of disorders.

Researchers are rapidly learning how to edit DNA to fight such conditions as Huntington’s, Tay-Sachs and hereditary heart disease, conducting legally permissible experiments in lab animals and petri dishes without taking the ultimate step of actually creating babies. Now they worry about a backlash against their work, too.

“The alarmists who claimed that scientists won’t behave responsibly in the development of the next generation of gene editing now have ammunition,” said a dismayed Kyle Orwig, a reproductive specialist at the University of Pittsburgh who hopes to eventually alter sperm production to treat infertility.

He said there is a clear public demand for the kind of research he is doing: “Families contact me all the time,” men who can’t produce sperm and aren’t helped by today’s reproductive care.

A Chinese researcher sent a shock wave through the scientific community this week when he claimed to have altered the DNA of embryos in hopes of making them resistant to the AIDS virus. He reported the birth of twin girls and said there may be another pregnancy resulting from his work.

International guidelines for years have said gene editing that can change human heredity — through altered eggs, sperm or embryos — should not be tested in human pregnancies until scientists learn if the practice is safe. One fear is that such experiments could inadvertently damage genes that could then be passed on to future generations.

China has ordered a halt to the seemingly underground experiments by researcher He Jiankui and his team.

“This is what we’re afraid of: Not legitimate scientists — it’s crazy people that would just try it without even worrying about consequences,” said Shoukhrat Mitalipov of the Oregon Health & Science University, who is conducting laboratory-only experiments on how to repair gene defects in human embryos.

If the outcry results in more restrictions being added to the current patchwork of rules on what can be studied and how, the field “will be, probably, thrown back for decades,” he added.

The challenge, said Pittsburgh’s Orwig, is to “convince the community that this is one bad apple but it doesn’t reflect what most people are doing.”

There are multiple kinds of gene editing. Experiments to try to fix damaged genes in children and adults with diseases such as sickle cell are fairly straightforward because that drug-like approach would affect only the patient and not his or her offspring.

Far more contentious is gene editing of the “germline,” or changing genes in such a way that they will be passed through generations. The big ethical question is whether such tinkering should be restricted to genes that can cause otherwise untreatable disorders, or whether medicine should be free to create

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“designer babies” with specific traits, such as high IQ.

“I do think the public is probably open to pretty clearly therapeutic uses of this kind of thing, to prevent transmission of disease. But there’s significant discomfort, if not complete opposition, to enhancement uses,” said Josephine Johnston, an expert on biomedical ethics and policy at the Hastings Center, a bioethics research institute based in Garrison, New York.

In a poll last summer, the Pew Research Center found most Americans — about 7 in 10 — said changing an unborn baby’s DNA to treat a serious disease the child would otherwise be born with would be appropriate. But support dropped sharply when people were told that that would involve studies with embryos.

And just 19 percent thought gene editing for such things as enhancing intelligence would be appropriate, Pew found.

How to prove that gene editing is safe enough to legitimately try in human pregnancies is a conundrum, said University of Pennsylvania bioethicist Jonathan Moreno. “No regulator follows that child over a lifetime, much less their progeny,” he noted.

Another question for ethicists: Even if it were deemed safe, is gene editing of embryos really needed given today’s options? Already, families who can afford pricey in vitro fertilization can pay extra to have the embryos genetically tested — and implant only those free of well-known dangerous mutations.

But such preimplantation diagnosis isn’t an answer for everyone, Johnston cautioned. IVF doesn’t always produce enough embryos for couples to choose among. And as testing uncovers more and more disorders, people will have to understand “there’s not going to be a perfect embryo,” she said.

In Pittsburgh, Orwig sees sperm as offering possibly a more practical first step toward germline editing. Some male infertility is caused by genetic defects that prevent testicular stem cells from properly producing sperm. His team studies infertile men to find culprit genes.

Among his plans: gene-edit stem cells, and implant the repaired ones in infertile mice to see if they produce sperm that lead to healthy baby mice.

The technique could be adjusted so that the genetic change isn’t necessarily passed on to the next generation, he said.

Young women undergoing certain cancer treatment already can store ovarian tissue in hopes of future pregnancy, and Orwig said one day it should be possible to remove, say, a mutation in that tissue that otherwise could spread a family’s breast cancer-causing BRCA mutation.

Meanwhile, careful animal work with sperm could “lay the foundation for how one would do it in humans,” he said. “When societal views change and policies change, we’ll be ready.”

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AP Science Writer Malcolm Ritter in New York contributed to this report.

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## Behind Cohen plea: Trump’s longtime dream of a Moscow tower

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump for decades dreamed of building a Trump Tower in the heart of Moscow, a plan that flared and fizzled several times over the years, most recently when his presidential campaign was gaining momentum.

That last plan led Trump’s longtime lawyer Michael Cohen to plead guilty Thursday to a charge brought by the special prosecutor looking into possible Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Cohen admitted he lied to Congress about key details in the negotiations for the Moscow tower, most notably that those talks stretched much deeper into the presidential campaign than previously thought, to June of 2016.

Trump, speaking to reporters Thursday, disputed Cohen’s timeline and suggested his former fixer was telling prosecutors what they wanted to hear to save his own skin. As for why the most recent deal failed, Trump said he made the decision himself for one main reason.

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"It was very simple," he said. "I was very focused on running for president."

Trump's plans for a Trump Tower in Moscow went back as far as 1996 when the future president paid a visit to the Russian capital to check out building sites on land being developed by a U.S. company.

That idea fell through, along with plans to revamp the dilapidated Hotel Moskva next to the Kremlin, but the real estate mogul raised the prospect of a "super-luxury residential tower" bearing his name on other sites he visited on his three-day stay in the city.

"Moscow is going to be huge," Trump told Playboy magazine in a 1997 interview.

Trump revived the idea in 2013 during his visit to Moscow as owner of the Miss Universe pageant. Trump later said he had discussed the idea with Aras and Emin Agalarov, a father-and-son Russian development team close to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Trump reportedly scouted a potential site, but the idea again faded.

The tower idea came back yet again in October 2015, when Andrey Rozov, an obscure Russian real estate developer, signed a letter of intent sent by Cohen to advance the construction of a Trump World Tower that would feature 250 luxury condos, no fewer than 15 floors of hotel rooms, commercial and office space, a fitness center and an Ivanka Trump spa.

It was a potentially lucrative deal for Trump's company, handing it \$4 million in upfront fees plus possibly millions more from a cut on everything from food and banquet fees to spa charges. His share on the first \$100 million in condo sales alone would reach another \$5 million.

Rozov's signed letter was sent back to Cohen by Felix Sater, another Trump world figure who had worked on and off for the Trump Organization and operated as a government informant following a 1998 conviction in a stock fraud case.

Sater sent Cohen an email expressing optimism: "Let's make this happen and build a Trump Moscow. And possibly fix relations between the countries by showing everyone that commerce and business are much better and more practical than politics."

Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump were copied in on emails about the project in late 2015, according to a person close to the Trump Organization. In one email, Ivanka Trump even suggested an architect for the building, the person said, noting the Trump Organization provided the emails to congressional committees. The company's email traffic about the project ends in January 2016, said the person, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly about the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Like the previous failed projects, the Rozov-helmed effort soon ran aground. According to Cohen's testimony in 2017 and his plea agreement, negotiations with Rozov's group stalled, and the two Trump associates turned to aides to Russian President Vladimir Putin to move the project forward.

Cohen told congressional investigators last year that he had sent an email in January 2016 to Dmitry Peskov, Putin's spokesman. Cohen told the committee he never heard back from Peskov and the tower deal collapsed by the end of that month.

But according to Cohen's new statement to prosecutors, the tower deal remained viable as late as June 2016, after Trump had vanquished his Republican presidential rivals and was mounting his general election campaign against Hillary Clinton. Cohen said he kept Trump, named as "Individual 1" in the plea, updated about the deal's progress, and also "briefed family members of Individual 1 within the company about the project."

Cohen said in his plea that he also spoke by phone with an assistant to Peskov — identified in the plea as "Russian Official 1" — in January 2016 and outlined the project and "requested assistance in moving the project forward."

According to the plea, Cohen later discussed traveling to Moscow to jump-start the deal. In May 2016, a month after Trump had emerged the winner of the GOP primaries, Sater — identified as "Individual 2" — told Cohen that Peskov wanted to meet him in mid-June at an international business forum in St. Petersburg and "possibly introduce you" to Putin or Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

BuzzFeed News reported Thursday that Trump's company considered giving the Moscow tower's penthouse apartment to Putin. Sater told BuzzFeed: "My idea was to give a \$50 million penthouse to Putin and charge \$250 million more for the rest of the units. All the oligarchs would line up to live in the same

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building as Putin.”

Sater and Cohen continued to email about the foundering project well into June 2016, soon after a much-scrutinized meeting at Trump Tower in New York between Trump’s son Don Jr., son-in-law Jared Kushner, campaign chairman Paul Manafort and several Russian attendees, purportedly to discuss the possibility of “dirt” on Hillary Clinton.

On June 14, Cohen met Sater in the tower lobby and told him his potential trip to St. Petersburg was off.

Thursday, Trump suggested his consideration of a Moscow tower was all part of being a businessman who was also running for president.

“I decided ultimately not to do it,” he said. “There would be nothing wrong if I did do it.”

“There was a good chance that I wouldn’t have won, in which case I would have gone back into the business, and why should I lose lots of opportunities?”

Associated Press writer Chad Day in Washington contributed to this report.

## Trump’s ex-lawyer admits lies about Russian real estate deal

By ERIC TUCKER, LARRY NEUMEISTER and CHAD DAY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump’s former lawyer, Michael Cohen, confessed in a surprise guilty plea Thursday that he lied to Congress about a Moscow real estate deal he pursued on Trump’s behalf during the heat of the 2016 Republican campaign. He said he lied to be consistent with Trump’s “political messaging.”

The plea agreement made clear that prosecutors believe that while Trump insisted repeatedly throughout the campaign that he had no business dealings in Russia, his lawyer was continuing to pursue the Trump Tower Moscow project weeks after his boss had clinched the Republican nomination for president and well beyond the point that had been previously acknowledged.

Cohen said he discussed the proposal with Trump on multiple occasions and with members of the president’s family, according to documents filed by special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian interference in the presidential election and possible coordination with the Trump campaign. Cohen acknowledged considering traveling to Moscow to discuss the project.

There is no clear link in the court filings between Cohen’s lies and Mueller’s central question of whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia. And nothing said in court, or in associated court filings, addressed whether Trump or his aides had directed Cohen to mislead Congress.

Still, the case underscores how Trump’s business entity, the Trump Organization, was negotiating business in Moscow at the same time investigators believe Russians were meddling on his behalf in the 2016 election, and that associates of the president were mining Russian connections during the race.

The Cohen revelation comes as Mueller’s investigation is showing fresh signs of aggressive activity. Earlier this week, Mueller’s team accused Trump’s former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, of lying after his own guilty plea. The special counsel continues to investigate whether campaign associates had advance knowledge of hacked emails becoming public. Another potential target, Jerome Corsi, has rejected a plea offer and faces a possible indictment. Last week, Trump for the first time provided Mueller with responses to written questions.

Cohen is the first person charged by Mueller with lying to Congress, an indication the special counsel is prepared to treat that offense as seriously as lying to federal agents and a warning shot to dozens of others who have appeared before lawmakers.

Cohen told two congressional committees last year that the talks about the tower project ended in January 2016, a lie he said was an act of loyalty to Trump. In fact, the negotiations continued until June 2016, Cohen acknowledged.

His court appearance Thursday marked the latest step in his evolution from trusted Trump consigliere to prime antagonist. Prosecutors say Cohen is cooperating with Mueller and has met with his team at least

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seven times. It is the second time the lawyer's legal woes have entangled Trump, coming months after Cohen said the president directed him to make hush money payments to two women who said they had sex with Trump.

Trump on Thursday called Cohen a "weak person" who was lying to get a lighter sentence and stressed that the real estate deal at issue was never a secret and never executed. His lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, said that Cohen was a "proven liar" and that Trump's business organization had voluntarily given Mueller the documents cited in the guilty plea "because there was nothing to hide."

"There would be nothing wrong if I did do it," Trump said of pursuing the project. "I was running my business while I was campaigning. There was a good chance that I wouldn't have won, in which case I would have gone back into the business, and why should I lose lots of opportunities?"

He said the primary reason he didn't pursue it was "I was focused on running for president."

About an hour later, Trump canceled a planned meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Group of 20 nations.

During the campaign, while publicly espousing a conciliatory relationship with Putin, Trump was repeatedly dismissive of claims that he had connections to the Kremlin, an issue that flared as especially sensitive in the summer of 2016 after the Democratic National Committee and a cybersecurity company asserted that Moscow was behind a punishing cyberattack on the party's network.

"I have a great company. I built an unbelievable company, but if you look there you'll see there's nothing in Russia," Trump said at a July 2016 news conference.

"But zero, I mean I will tell you right now, zero, I have nothing to do with Russia," he said.

Mueller's team included a question about Russian real estate deals in a list of queries presented earlier this year to Trump's lawyers, but it was not immediately clear whether it was among the questions Trump answered last week. If he did answer questions on the topic, Trump could have problems if the responses deviate from prosecutors' factual narrative.

The Cohen case in New York is the first charge filed by the special counsel since the appointment of Matthew Whitaker, who has spoken critically about the investigation, as acting attorney general with oversight of the probe. Whitaker was advised of the plea ahead of time, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

The nine-page charging document traces behind-the-scenes communication about a project that had first been discussed more than 20 years ago. It almost became reality in October 2015 when an obscure Russian real estate developer signed a letter of intent sent by Cohen for a 15-floor hotel, condominium and retail complex in Moscow.

Cohen looped in Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump, copying them on emails about it in late 2015, according to a person close to the Trump Organization. In one email, Ivanka Trump even suggested an architect for the building, the person said. The company's email traffic about the project ends in January 2016, said the person, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

On Jan. 14, 2016, just weeks before the Republican party caucuses in Iowa, Cohen emailed the office of Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov asking for help getting the Trump Tower Moscow project off the ground. He later had a 20-minute phone call with one of Peskov's assistants and asked for help "in securing land to build the proposed tower and financing the construction," prosecutors say.

The dialogue continued over the next several months with the Republican primaries in full swing.

In early May, prosecutors say, Cohen and Felix Sater, an executive who worked on and off for the Trump Organization, discussed having Trump visit Russia after the Republican National Convention. They also discussed the possibility of Cohen meeting in June with Putin and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

On June 9, 2016, Trump Jr., Manafort and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, met with a Kremlin-connected lawyer at Trump Tower in New York about getting "dirt" on Democrat Hillary Clinton. Around that time, prosecutors say, Sater sent Cohen several messages about the project and Cohen said he wouldn't be traveling then to Russia.

On June 14, the DNC announced that its computer networks were penetrated by Russian hackers.

Cohen and prosecutors referred to Trump as "Individual 1" throughout Thursday's proceedings. Cohen

said he lied out of loyalty to "Individual 1."

Cohen said he also lied about his contacts with Russian officials, and lied when he said he never agreed to travel to Russia in connection with the project and never discussed with Trump plans to travel to Moscow to support the project.

Thursday's charges were handled by Mueller, not the federal prosecutors in New York who handled Cohen's previous guilty plea in August to other federal charges involving his taxi businesses, bank fraud and campaign work for Trump. Cohen is to be sentenced Dec. 12. Guidelines call for little to no prison time on the new charge.

Neumeister reported from New York. Associated Press writers Jim Mustian in New York and Stephen Braun in Washington contributed to this report.

## Warnings grow over unsanitary conditions in Tijuana shelter

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN, Associated Press

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP) — Aid workers and humanitarian organizations expressed concerns Thursday about unsanitary conditions at the sports complex in Tijuana where more than 6,000 Central American migrants are packed into a space adequate for half that many people and where lice infestations and respiratory infections are rampant.

As a chill rain fell, the dust that coated everyone and everything in the open-air stadium turned to mud Thursday, making the already miserable conditions worse. On one side of the complex, a mud pit grew where people took outdoor showers next to a line of foul-smelling portable toilets.

The one large wedding-style tent pitched in the middle of a sports field and several smaller ones with a capacity for just a few hundred people were far from adequate for the swelling number of migrants who keep arriving daily. The vast majority of the migrants were camped in makeshift enclosures made of lashed blankets and sheets of plastic or flimsy tents. Another 200 people slept on sidewalks because they couldn't find space in the complex or decided it was more comfortable outside.

"The truth is there is no room there inside. We asked yesterday," said Astrid Yajaira of Sonsonante, El Salvador, who spent the night with three friends on a sidewalk in front of a warehouse across the street from the stadium. She had a sore throat and had hoped to find shelter inside.

The United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, said it was "deeply concerned" for the well-being of more than 1,000 migrant children waiting in Tijuana or still moving north through Mexico. According to local officials, of the more than 6,150 migrants at the shelter as of Wednesday, 1,068 were children.

"These children have limited access to many of the essential services they need for their well-being, including nutrition, education, psychosocial support and health care," UNICEF said in a statement Wednesday. Making the situation worse, the agency's workers had to remove the coloring books, crayons and few other materials they had for children late Wednesday, because the agency lost its space on a baseball field to the arrival of more migrants.

Mexico's National Human Rights Commission also urged the government to act Thursday, noting that the sports complex was only planned to house 3,500 migrants and now had nearly twice that many.

"It's unmanageable," said Edgar Corzo, who heads the commission's migrant rights division. The overcrowding "can produce all kinds of infections, all kinds of things can spread and we have four cases of chicken pox. They are contained but it's a risk."

As night fell, authorities began moving about 200 migrants to a new shelter farther from the border.

Miguel Angel Luna Biffano, a health volunteer with the Nazarene Church Compassion Ministries, which has been accompanying the caravan since the migrants crossed into southern Mexico, said his aid group was dealing with lice and nit infestations as well as many respiratory infections. In the tropical south they had mostly treated dehydration and feet damaged and blistered from walking hundreds of miles.

"The overcrowding here causes them to get into places where they shouldn't like under the bleachers" where it's filthy, Luna said. "There's overcrowding and very few hygiene norms. ... With the water and the



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cold there are going to be too many infections, a lot of fevers. There is going to be a need for antibiotics.”

On Wednesday, a group of migrant volunteers joined municipal workers in bagging up garbage.

Wearing latex gloves, Darwin Doanin Bardales said he had offered to help because the unsanitary conditions were a health risk.

“If we let this garbage pile up, it will make us sicker than we already are,” the 19-year-old Honduran said. “There are a lot of us who are already infected with cough, colds. ... If we let the garbage pile up it will put the children at risk, and all of us here.”

Before the rain began, the Tijuana government distributed sheets of plastic to help the migrants prepare their makeshift shelters of intricately hung blankets and tarps. Tijuana officials have said they are working to open a new shelter, but they haven’t said when or where, though it was likely to be much further from the border.

As rain pelted the area on Thursday, Alex Mendes gingerly picked up his small sopping wet tent and moved it to one side. He spread a large sheet of black plastic under it and then proceeded to completely wrap the tent in hopes that would keep him from another wet, sleepless night.

“It’s a day’s work but I don’t want to get wet,” the 29-year-old Honduran said of the 150 pesos (\$7.50) he spent on the plastic.

Mendes, who had just started working as a waiter in a local restaurant a day earlier, proudly showed his new Mexican humanitarian visa that allows him to work legally. At first he was happy to hear the city planned to open a new shelter, until he was told it wouldn’t be nearby. “I’ll stay here for work,” he said.

Luna, the health volunteer, said opening another shelter could help, but he wasn’t sure how many of the migrants would go, especially if, as it’s been rumored, it is located far from the border.

“The thing is, they don’t like to separate from the larger group and the border here,” he said, noting that the migrants feared being tricked and deported. “They prefer to suffer to be here.”

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Associated Press writers Jorge Barrera and Sofia Ortega in Mexico City contributed to this report.

## **Official: No one arrested in border clash will be prosecuted**

**By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press**

SAN DIEGO (AP) — No criminal charges will be filed against any of the 42 people associated with a caravan of Central American migrants who were arrested in a clash that ended with U.S. authorities firing tear gas into Mexico to counter rock throwers, The Associated Press has learned.

The decision not to prosecute came despite President Donald Trump’s vow that the U.S. will not tolerate lawlessness and after extensive preparations were made for the caravan, including deployment of thousands of active-duty troops to the border.

Charges were not filed because the administration generally doesn’t separate families and because Customs and Border Protection didn’t collect enough evidence needed to build cases, including the names of arresting officers, according to a U.S. official familiar with the matter who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Customs and Border Protection acknowledged that no charges were filed but declined to say why.

Administration officials have portrayed the caravan as a lawless, violent mob, saying there are some 600 people in the group who have a criminal history. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said in a tweet after the Sunday clash that the actions by the migrants were “dangerous and not consistent with peacefully seeking asylum.”

“The perpetrators will be prosecuted,” she said then.

Sunday’s incident occurred at the border in Tijuana, where thousands of caravan members have been arriving in recent weeks after fleeing poverty and violence in Central America.

Many plan to seek asylum in the U.S. but may have to wait months because the U.S. government only processes about 100 of those cases a day at the San Ysidro border crossing in San Diego.

Hundreds of people marched toward the San Ysidro crossing where they were stopped by Mexican po-

lice. They fanned out on both sides of the crossing and many slipped through an opening in the border fence or tried to climb over.

U.S. authorities say assailants threw a "hail of rocks" at agents, striking four who escaped serious injury. That prompted Border Patrol agents to launch tear gas and pepper spray balls to quell the unrest.

Rodney Scott, chief of the Border Patrol's San Diego sector, has said those arrested Sunday for illegal entry included 27 men, with the other 15 being women and children.

Customs and Border Protection, the Border Patrol's parent agency, referred only two cases to the Justice Department for prosecution and charges were not filed because the accused had medical problems that prevented them from being held in San Diego's detention center, according to the U.S. official.

Many others were not referred to the Justice Department because they were children or parents accompanying children, the official said. In June, Trump retreated on the administration's "zero-tolerance" policy on prosecuting illegal entries by generally exempting people who enter the country in families.

The other adults were not prosecuted because Customs and Border Protection didn't have enough information to pursue charges, including the name of the arresting officers, according to the official, who said it was a chaotic scene.

U.S. authorities are working on a new system to better record evidence if similar circumstances arise in the future, the official said.

The fate of the 42 immigrants remains unclear but Customs and Border Protection said they will face deportation.

"Depending on their country of citizenship and their case's final disposition, the Border Patrol may turn those people over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement," said spokesman Ralph DeSio.

Lauren Mack, a spokeswoman for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said the agency could not provide information about the immigration status of the 42 arrested without names because it doesn't track people affiliated with the caravan.

Central Americans are typically turned over to ICE, which flies them back home. Asylum seekers are often released in the U.S. pending the outcome of their cases in immigration court.

## Witness contradicts police account of shooting of black teen

By DON BABWIN, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — A man who witnessed a Chicago officer fatally shoot black teenager Laquan McDonald testified Thursday that police waved him away without questioning him that October 2014 night and didn't even bother to take down his name.

Jose Torres, testifying in the trial of three officers accused of lying to protect the white officer who shot McDonald, offered an account that contradicts what the officers wrote in their reports. Torres said he decided to come forward with his version of events after he heard a spokesman for the police union on television telling reporters that McDonald "was lunging" at Officer Jason Van Dyke with the small knife the 17-year-old was carrying in his right hand.

"I told my wife at that moment, 'They're lying,'" he testified. "I told her I had to say something. ... It's eating away at me (and) or the next few days, I couldn't sleep."

Torres' testimony that McDonald was not lunging at Van Dyke matches video that was played repeatedly at Van Dyke's trial last month in which the officer was convicted of second-degree murder.

Prosecutors are trying to show that after the shooting, former Detective David March, former Officer Joseph Walsh and Officer Thomas Gaffney began working to cover up what happened. March, Walsh and Gaffney are charged with conspiracy, official misconduct and obstruction of justice.

But under withering cross examination by attorneys for two of the officers, Torres was forced to acknowledge that some of the things he previously said matches the officers' reports but not the dashcam video of the shooting.

For example, days after the shooting, Torres told investigators that it appeared to him that McDonald was trying to get up after being shot. Torres testified Thursday that he could not remember making that

statement.

Torres also testified in Van Dyke's trial and repeated much of that testimony Thursday.

Torres, who was driving his adult son to a hospital the night of the shooting, said it was clear to him that police wanted him to leave after he watched Van Dyke fire 16 bullets, many of them after McDonald had crumpled to the ground.

Days later, he said, he contacted the independent review board that investigates shootings involving Chicago police and met with investigators to tell of what he'd seen, including that McDonald appeared to be walking away from Van Dyke when he was shot.

The bench trial in which a judge will decide whether the three are guilty is set to resume Tuesday afternoon.

For the AP's complete coverage of the case: <https://www.apnews.com/LaquanMcDonald>

## Repeat outbreaks pressure produce industry to step up safety

By CANDICE CHOI, AP Food & Health Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After repeated food poisoning outbreaks linked to romaine lettuce, the produce industry is confronting the failure of its own safety measures in preventing contaminations.

The E. coli outbreak announced just before Thanksgiving follows one in the spring that sickened more than 200 people and killed five, and another last year that sickened 25 and killed one. No deaths have been reported in the latest outbreak, but the dozens of illnesses highlight the challenge of eliminating risk for vegetables grown in open fields and eaten raw, the role of nearby cattle operations that produce huge volumes of manure and the delay of stricter federal food safety regulations.

A contested aspect of the regulation, for example, would require testing irrigation water for E. coli. The Food and Drug Administration put the measure on hold when the produce industry said such tests wouldn't necessarily help prevent outbreaks. Additional regulations on sanitation for workers and equipment — other potential sources of contamination — only recently started being implemented.

FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said he thinks the combination of rules, once fully in place, will make vegetables safer to eat.

"I don't think any one element of this is going to be the magic bullet," Gottlieb said.

Health officials say improved detection may make outbreaks seem more frequent. Still, that is intensifying pressure on growers and regulators to prevent, catch and contain contamination.

### PREVENTION

It's not yet known how romaine got contaminated in the latest outbreak.

The spring outbreak was traced to romaine from Yuma, Arizona. Irrigation water tainted with manure was identified as a likely culprit, and investigators noted the presence of a large animal feeding operation nearby.

Subsequently, an industry agreement in Arizona and California was adjusted to expand buffer zones between vegetable fields and livestock. The industry says the change was in place for lettuce now being grown in Yuma, which hasn't been implicated in the latest outbreak. But Trevor Suslow of the Produce Marketing Association said there isn't consensus about the exact distances that might effectively prevent contamination.

He noted specific buffer zones aren't required by the new federal rules on produce safety.

"They look to the industry to determine what is the appropriate distance," Suslow said.

Growers in Yuma also started treating irrigation water that would touch plant leaves with chlorine to kill potential contaminants, Suslow said. But he said such treatment raises concerns about soil and human health.

Meanwhile, the proximity of produce fields to cattle operations is likely to continue posing a problem. Travis Forgues of the milk producer Organic Valley noted consolidation in the dairy industry is leading to bigger livestock operations that produce massive volumes of manure.

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## TESTING

Already, the industry agreement in Arizona and California requires leafy green growers to test water for generic E. coli.

But James Rogers, director of food safety research at Consumer Reports, said it's important to make water testing a federal requirement. Since romaine is often chopped up and bagged, a single contaminated batch from one farm that skips testing could make a lot of people sick, he said.

Teressa Lopez of the Arizona Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement also said federal regulation can ensure greater compliance, even though the industry agreement has stricter measures.

Despite industry measures implemented after a spinach outbreak more than a decade ago, health officials noted this month there have been 28 E. coli outbreaks linked to leafy greens since 2009.

The produce industry says the failure to prevent the Yuma outbreak could also reflect the limitations of testing water for generic E. coli.

Elizabeth Bihn, a food science expert at Cornell University, said the tests look for the amount of fecal matter in water. The problem is, "some feces has pathogens in it, some feces doesn't," said Bihn, who is part of a federal program helping farmers comply with the new produce regulations.

Testing for specific E. coli strains that are harmful is more difficult, and it doesn't rule out the possibility of other harmful bacteria, Bihn said.

## CONTAINING

Whole-genome sequencing is making it easier to detect outbreaks, which is pressuring the produce industry.

The FDA warned against all romaine last week because it said it was able to identify it as a likely source early enough. The agency narrowed its warning to romaine from California's Central Coast after the produce industry agreed to label romaine with harvest dates and regions, so people know what's OK to eat.

The labeling is voluntary, and the industry said it will evaluate whether to extend it to other leafy greens. Gottlieb said improving traceability would allow targeted health alerts that don't hurt the entire industry. The FDA recently hired a former Walmart executive who used blockchain technology to improve traceability in the retailer's supply chain.

Stephen Basore, director of food safety at a Florida romaine grower, said he expects more regulations and self-imposed industry guidelines.

"Anytime there is an issue, the immediate response is saying our protocols aren't enough," he said.

AP reporter Josh Replogle contributed from Florida.

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

## Some of those 'missing' after California fire are just fine

By JOCELYN GECKER, Associated Press

Dixie Singh is No. 158 on the official list of people missing after Northern California's catastrophic wildfire. That came as news to her.

"I am the only Dixie Singh I've ever heard of. And I am alive," the 86-year-old woman said Wednesday.

Singh's story illustrates the confusion and uncertainty that persist three weeks after the nation's deadliest wildfire in a century ripped through a string of communities with astonishing speed and destruction. But it also offers hope that others listed as unaccounted for will turn up and not be added to the already staggering death toll of 88.

As of Thursday, the number of names on the daily list put out by the Butte County Sheriff's office was 197, down from a high of 1,300 two weeks ago.

The Associated Press found Singh through a public records search that listed a cellphone number for her friend Allan Bates, 84, who was equally puzzled over why she was considered missing when he answered

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his phone.

"Huh? You're looking for Dixie? You want to talk to her? She's right next to me," he said.

The inferno Nov. 8 all but leveled the town of Paradise, home to 27,000, and ravaged neighboring communities, forcing thousands to flee. As authorities continue combing the charred ruins for human remains and collecting DNA samples from relatives, they are trying to determine who on the list is truly missing.

Many survivors have scattered to other towns or cities and did not think to tell authorities or relatives that they were safe. Many are elderly and may not have cellphones. Some, like Singh, had no idea they were on the ever-evolving roster posted nightly on the sheriff's website.

Singh and Bates fled their home in Paradise, driving down flaming roads as they heard explosions and got stuck in traffic.

"Hell could not have been any worse. It was terrible, terrible, terrible," said Singh, speaking from an apartment the couple is now renting in nearby Chico. Both said they had told friends and family members that they made it out safely, and Singh did not know why her name had been put on the list.

Another person not missing is Terumi Newton, No. 109.

Her former daughter-in-law, Marge Newton, lives 800 miles (1,300 kilometers) away in Birch Bay, Washington, and had been exchanging regular phone calls with investigators and law enforcement officials on the ground.

After weeks of searching, she got a call Wednesday saying her 82-year-old former mother-in-law was safe. The call was not from sheriff's authorities but from a Red Cross worker who told her the elderly woman had checked in at a shelter at a church in Chico on the day the fire swept through.

"She signed in on the 8th, on the same day of the evacuation, but nobody forwarded the list to the sheriff's office," said Newton, who expressed frustration at the oversight but also empathy for first responders dealing with a disaster of such magnitude. Overall, she felt relief, she said.

"Now, I can call off my search," she said. "In the end, people on that list are safe and well, and that's what matters."

Newton was not on the updated list released Thursday.

Sheriff's authorities have faced criticism over spotty communication with outside agencies aiding the relief effort but insist they are constantly cross-checking names of survivors.

"We've interfaced with the Red Cross," Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said last week. "Not only are they checking it, we double-check with them. That's an ongoing process because people come in and they go out."

Honea has repeatedly called the list "fluid" and "dynamic." If someone calls in and reports a friend or relative who lived in Paradise can't be reached, the person is added to the list and remains there until tracked down by authorities.

Sometimes a name is removed, only to be added again when someone else inquires about that person. Sometimes a name is misspelled and appears twice under different spellings.

That was the case with Mirella Harrison of Paradise, who first appeared on the list Nov. 15 as Marilla Harrison. Over the next 11 days, her name also appeared as Mallela and Marrcela. Sometimes she was listed twice with correct and incorrect spellings.

Her brother, Bill Engfelt, couldn't reach her and reported her missing.

Someone from the sheriff's office called him every day to check in but had no answers. Engfelt, who lives in San Diego, bought a plane ticket to Sacramento and planned to drive to Paradise and distribute flyers with her picture and give authorities a DNA swab on the chance his sister's remains were found.

But then on Monday, he learned she was safe. She was in a hotel room in Vacaville, 120 miles (190 kilometers) south of Paradise.

"She should have called me days ago," Engfelt said. The confirmation came not through official channels but from his sister's real estate agent, one of many people Engfelt called as he tried to find her.

Confusion is common in the aftermath of disasters. In last year's Northern California wine country wildfires, Sonoma County authorities at one point listed more than 2,000 people as missing but slowly whittled

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down the number. In the end, 44 people died in the series of fires in several California counties.

The enormity of the disaster this time is far greater. The Camp Fire destroyed nearly 19,000 structures, compared with 5,600 in Napa and Sonoma Counties last year. It spread across 240 square miles (620 square kilometers), an area five times the size of San Francisco.

Many people searching for loved ones have found help through social media, like Delisa Gaeta, one of many who posted messages to a Facebook group called Camp Fire Missing Persons.

"I went to that Facebook page and yelled out, 'Is Dale Wingett still alive?' and people just grabbed on," said Gaeta, who also called the sheriff's office to report her foster father missing.

For 2½ weeks, she heard nothing and was starting to think the worst. On Monday, good news arrived via Facebook message from a friend who forwarded her a story in the Redding Record Searchlight newspaper. It had a photograph of a man named Dale Wingett, smiling as he filled his plate at a Thanksgiving buffet for survivors at a Holiday Inn in Redding.

"I couldn't believe it. There he was at the Holiday Inn eating turkey!" said Gaeta, 55, of Santa Clara.

Only the day before, Sunday, the sheriff's office called her to say officials still had no information on Wingett's whereabouts but could confirm that his house burned down.

Gaeta said her mind is now at ease, but she is still trying to find Wingett and talk with him.

"It's not over until I can speak to him and know if there is anything I can do to help," she said.

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Associated Press writers Juliet Linderman, Janie Har and Sudhin Thanawala in San Francisco and Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento, California, contributed to this report.

## Trump, Pelosi spark a new power relationship in Washington

By LISA MASCARO, JONATHAN LEMIRE and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — They haven't spoken in days, not since President Donald Trump called to congratulate Nancy Pelosi on Democrats' election night win.

But they don't really need to. Trump and Pelosi go way back, from the time she first showed up at Trump Tower fundraising for the Democrats long before he would become president or she the House speaker. Two big-name heirs to big-city honchos — Trump and Pelosi each had fathers who were political power players in their home towns — they've rubbed elbows on the Manhattan social scene for years.

And despite daily barbs in Washington, he's always "Mr. President" to her, and she's one prominent politician he has not labeled with a derisive nickname.

Not quite friends, nor enemies, theirs is now perhaps the most important relationship in Washington. If anything is to come of the new era of divided government, with a Republican president and Democratic control of the House, it will happen in the deal-making space between two of the country's most polarizing politicians.

The day after their election night phone call, Trump and Pelosi did speak again, indirectly, across Pennsylvania Avenue.

"I really respected what Nancy said last night about bipartisanship and getting together and uniting," Trump said in a press conference at the White House. "That's what we should be doing."

Pressed after his unusual public lobbying for Pelosi to become House speaker, Trump insisted he was sincere.

"A lot of people thought I was being sarcastic or I was kidding. I wasn't. I think she deserves it," he said. "I also believe that Nancy Pelosi and I could work together and get a lot of things done."

Pelosi sent word back a few minutes later from her own press conference at the Capitol, which she delayed for nearly an hour as the president conducted his.

"Last night, I had a conversation with President Trump about how we could work together," Pelosi said, noting that "building infrastructure" was one of the items they discussed.

"He talked about it during his campaign and really didn't come through with it in his first two years in office," she nudged. "I hope that we can do that because we want to create jobs from sea to shining sea."

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Despite all the campaign trail trash talk, both Trump and Pelosi have incentive to make some deals. The president could use a domestic policy win heading into his own re-election in 2020, alongside his regular railing against illegal immigration, the "witch hunt" of the Russia investigation or other issues that emerge from his tweets.

Democrats, too, need to show Americans they can do more than resist the Trump White House. It's no surprise that two of the top Democratic priorities in the new Congress, infrastructure investment and lowering health care costs, dovetail with promises Trump made to voters, but has not yet fulfilled.

"I do think there's opportunities to pass legislation," said former White House legislative director Marc Short.

Trump has long viewed Pelosi as both a foil and a possible partner, and she sees in him the one who can sign legislation into law.

The president has told confidants that he respects Pelosi's deal-making prowess and her ability to hang on to power in the face of a series of challenges from the left wing of the party, according to four White House officials and Republicans close to the White House. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations and requested anonymity.

He told one ally this month that he respected Pelosi "as a fighter" and that he viewed her as someone with whom he could negotiate.

"The president respects her," said Short.

Short described the interaction between Pelosi and Trump during a 2017 meeting with other congressional leaders at the White House to prevent a government shutdown. "They were throwing pros and cons back at each other," he said.

"The question I can't answer is to what extent will Democrats give Pelosi political bandwidth" to strike deals, Short said. He pointed to potential areas of agreement like infrastructure, drug prices and prison reform.

But part of Trump's push for Pelosi to return to power was more nakedly political. Pelosi has long been a popular Republican target, spurring countless fundraising efforts and attack ads. And Trump has told advisers that, if needed, he would make her the face of the opposition in Democratic party until the 2020 presidential field sorts itself out.

Pelosi's name draws some of the biggest jeers at his rallies and he believes that "she could be Hillary" in terms of a Clinton-like figure to rally Republicans against, according to one of the advisers familiar with the president's private conversations.

At the same time, Trump has not publicly branded Pelosi with a mocking nickname. She's no "Cryin'" Chuck Schumer, as he calls the top Senate Democrat, or "Little" Adam Schiff at the Intelligence Committee or "Low IQ" Rep. Maxine Waters of California, who will chair the Financial Services Committee.

On whether Trump likes Pelosi as ally or adversary, Short said, "I don't think those are mutually exclusive."

Pelosi, perhaps more than her Republican counterparts — outgoing Speaker Paul Ryan or Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell — became an early observer, and adapter, to the Trump style of governing.

When Trump and Democrats were trying to broker an immigration deal in September 2017, she suggested he could tweet his assurances to the young Dreamers. And he did.

Around the same time when Trump and congressional leaders convened at the White House to avoid a federal government shutdown, Republicans and Trump's own Cabinet team pressed for their preferred solution. But Pelosi kept asking a simple question: How many Republican votes could they bring to the table? When it was clear they could not bring enough for passage, Trump intervened and agreed with Democrats — Chuck and Nancy, as he came to call them.

Votes, Pelosi explained later, were the "currency of the realm." Trump, as a businessman, she said, got it.

Pelosi is poised to become House speaker again if she wins her election in January. Asked this week how Trump might react to having a woman in power, Pelosi recalled the first time she held the office, when George W. Bush was president, in 2007.

Bush would call her "No. 3," she said, a reference to the speaker's spot in the presidential succession

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line, after the president and the vice president.

"He treated me and the office I hold with great respect," she said. "I would expect nothing less than that from this President of the United States."

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## 'Roma' named best film by New York film critics

By JAKE COYLE, AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In what may be the just the first of many such sweeps, Alfonso Cuarón's masterful, memory-drenched drama "Roma" dominated the New York Film Critics Circle Awards on Thursday, winning best film, best director and best cinematography.

The overwhelming show of support for "Roma" by the critics group wasn't a surprise. Cuarón's film has been hailed as a masterpiece since winning the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival. It's widely expected to contend for best picture, among other categories, at the Academy Awards, and Netflix has put its full weight behind an awards campaign. Cuarón made the black-and-white 1970s-set film based on his own upbringing in Mexico City, serving as his own cinematographer.

The critics voted Ethan Hawke best actor for Paul Schrader's "First Reformed," and named Schrader's script best screenplay. Those wins provided yet another boost to Schrader's anguished tale of a doubt-riddled pastor (Hawke), which took the same awards at Monday's Gotham Awards.

While the selections of critics groups like the New York Film Critics Circle and the Los Angeles Film Critics Association often deviate from awards-season favorites, their prestige and early timing can bring less heralded films and performers into the Oscar conversation. That may have happened with the group's pick for best actress: Regina Hall, star of Andrew Bujalski's indie comedy "Support the Girls," about the waitress staff of a Texas sports bar. Hall bested the likes of Lady Gaga ("A Star Is Born") and Olivia Colman ("The Favourite").

Supporting acting prizes went to more widely acknowledged contenders: Regina King for her performance as the matriarch of Barry Jenkins' James Baldwin adaptation "If Beale Street Could Talk"; and Richard E. Grant as Melissa McCarthy's debauched conspirator in the literary forgery drama "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"

Leaving the bigger categories to "Roma," the critics voted Pawel Pawlikowski's "Ida" follow-up "Cold War" best foreign language film. Best documentary went to "Minding the Gap," Bing Liu's directorial debut about a trio of skateboarding friends in Rockford, Illinois. Bo Burnham's tender coming-of-age tale "Eighth Grade" took best first film.

And fresh off its glowing reviews, "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" was chosen as best animated film over Pixar's "Incredibles 2."

The critics also added special awards for the retiring chief curator of the Museum of the Moving Image, David Schwartz, and Kino Classics' DVD box set "Pioneers: First Women Filmmakers."

## Asia shares mixed ahead of Trump-Xi meeting at G-20 summit

By ELAINE KURTENBACH, AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Share prices were mixed Friday in Asia ahead of the planned meeting by Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping at the Group of 20 summit this weekend.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.4 percent to 22,348.56 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong added 0.7 percent to 26,633.88. The Shanghai composite index added 0.2 percent to 2,573.41 and India's Sensex gained 0.5 percent to 36,365.55. South Korea's Kospi fell 0.2 percent to 2,109.99 while the S&P ASX/200 in Australia dropped 1.2 percent to 5,691.70. Shares rose in Taiwan and Singapore but fell in Indonesia.

G-20 SUMMIT: The working dinner meeting between Trump and Xi carries the potential for a breakthrough in a bruising trade war that has the U.S. and China imposing punitive tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of



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each other's exports. Or not. Analysts are not optimistic about prospects for improvement a month before U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods are due to ramp up.

**ANALYST'S VIEWPOINT:** "As investors shift their attention to the upcoming G-20 Trump-Xi meeting this weekend, Trump has hinted that he is very close to 'doing something with China' on trade," Mizuho Bank said in a market note. "Though a comprehensive agreement is still unlikely, agreeing on a framework for future talks together with a delay in implementation of a 25 percent tariff hike on \$200 billion of Chinese imports" would "constitute a good outcome."

**CHINESE MANUFACTURING:** A measure of China's factory activity slipped to its lowest level in more than two years in November, adding to pressure on Beijing amid the tariff battle with Trump. The China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing said Friday its monthly purchasing managers' index declined to 50 from October's 50.2 on a 100-point scale on which numbers above 50 indicate activity is increasing. It blamed weak domestic demand for the latest decline. But investors often see such news as a signal more market-boosting stimulus may be coming.

**KOREAN RATE HIKE:** South Korea's central bank lifted its benchmark rate by a quarter of a percent to 1.75%, in line with expectations. The first increase by the Bank of Korea in a year, it reflects concern over rising household debt and property prices.

**WALL STREET:** U.S. stocks finished lower Thursday after an afternoon rally faded. Banks and technology companies fell after the market pulled off a huge rally the day before when Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell suggested in a speech that the Fed might be almost done raising interest rates, and is willing to stop raising rates at least temporarily so it can assess the effects of the last few years of increases. The S&P 500 index shed 0.2 percent to 2,737.76. The Dow Jones Industrial Average ended 0.1 percent lower at 25,338.84. The Nasdaq composite slid 0.3 percent to 7,273.08 and the Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks lost 0.3 percent to 1,525.39.

**ENERGY:** Benchmark U.S. crude added 21 cents to \$51.66 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 2.3 percent to finish at \$51.45 a barrel on Thursday. Brent crude gained 35 cents to \$60.26 per barrel. It edged up 1.3 percent to \$59.51 a barrel in London.

**CURRENCIES:** The dollar slid to 113.40 yen from 113.48 yen on Thursday. The euro edged up to \$1.1395 from \$1.1391.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Nov. 30, the 334th day of 2018. There are 31 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 30, 1874, British statesman Sir Winston Churchill was born at Blenheim Palace.

On this date:

In 1782, the United States and Britain signed preliminary peace articles in Paris for ending the Revolutionary War; the Treaty of Paris was signed in Sept. 1783.

In 1835, Samuel Langhorne Clemens — better known as Mark Twain — was born in Florida, Missouri.

In 1900, Irish writer Oscar Wilde died in Paris at age 46.

In 1939, the Winter War began as Soviet troops invaded Finland. (The conflict ended the following March with a Soviet victory.)

In 1960, the last DeSoto was built by Chrysler, which had decided to retire the brand after 32 years.

In 1966, the former British colony of Barbados became independent.

In 1981, the United States and the Soviet Union opened negotiations in Geneva aimed at reducing nuclear weapons in Europe.

In 1982, the Michael Jackson album "Thriller" was released by Epic Records. The motion picture "Gandhi," starring Ben Kingsley as the Indian nationalist leader, had its world premiere in New Delhi.

In 1988, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Co. was declared the winner of the corporate free-for-all to take

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over RJR Nabisco Inc. with a bid of \$24.53 billion.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed the Brady Bill, which required a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases and background checks of prospective buyers.

In 2000, Al Gore's lawyers battled for his political survival in the Florida and U.S. Supreme Courts; meanwhile, GOP lawmakers in Tallahassee moved to award the presidency to George W. Bush in case the courts did not by appointing their own slate of electors.

In 2004, "Jeopardy!" fans saw Ken Jennings end his 74-game winning streak as he lost to real estate agent Nancy Zerg.

Ten years ago: Space shuttle Endeavour returned to Earth after a nearly 16-day mission to repair and upgrade the international space station. The world's most comprehensive legalized heroin program became permanent with overwhelming approval from Swiss voters who simultaneously rejected the decriminalization of marijuana.

Five years ago: Paul Walker, 40, the star of the "Fast & Furious" movie series, died with his friend, Roger W. Rodas, who was at the wheel of a Porsche sports car that crashed and burned north of Los Angeles. Paul Crouch, 79, an American televangelist who'd built what has been called the world's largest Christian broadcasting network, died in Orange, California.

One year ago: House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi called on veteran Democratic congressman John Conyers to resign in the face of multiple accusations of sexual misconduct. (Conyers resigned five days later.) A jury found a Mexican man not guilty in the killing of a woman on a San Francisco pier, a shooting that touched off a fierce national immigration debate. (Jose Ines Garcia Zarate, who had been deported five times, did not deny shooting Kate Steinle but said it was an accident. He was found guilty of being a felon in possession of a firearm.) Rapper DMX pleaded guilty to tax fraud, admitting he concealed millions of dollars in revenue to dodge \$1.7 million in taxes. (The rapper was sentenced in March to a year in prison.) Actor Jim Nabors, best known as TV's "Gomer Pyle," died at the age of 87.

Today's Birthdays: G. Gordon Liddy is 88. Country singer-recording executive Jimmy Bowen is 81. Movie director Ridley Scott is 81. Movie writer-director Terrence Malick is 75. Rock musician Roger Glover (Deep Purple) is 73. Playwright David Mamet (MA'-meht) is 71. Actor Mandy Patinkin is 66. Musician Shuggie Otis is 65. Country singer Jeannie Kendall is 64. Singer Billy Idol is 63. Historian Michael Beschloss is 63. Rock musician John Ashton (The Psychedelic Furs) is 61. Comedian Colin Mochrie is 61. Former football and baseball player Bo Jackson is 56. Rapper Jalil (Whodini) is 55. Actor-director Ben Stiller is 53. Rock musician Mike Stone is 49. Music producer Steve Aoki is 41. Singer Clay Aiken is 40. Actor Billy Lush is 37. Actress Elisha Cuthbert is 36. Actress Kaley Cuoco (KWOH'-koh) is 33. Model Chrissy Teigen is 33. Actress Christel Khalil is 31. Actress Rebecca Rittenhouse is 30. Actress Adelaide Clemens is 29.

Thought for Today: "The real problem is what to do with the problem solvers after the problems are solved." — Gay Talese, American author and journalist.