

# Groton Daily Independent

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## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

Removal, Grinding, Chipping, Trimming

**605-725-WOOD**

Mason Dinger: 605-216-6098

Trevor Zeck: 605-216-8910



**DAKOTA TREE  
COMPANY**

## Groton Area Schedule of Events

**Friday, December 21, 2018**

End of 2nd Quarter

1:00pm: Elementary Christmas Concert at Groton Area High School

2:00pm: Early Dismissal Groton Area School District

## Today on GDILIVE.COM

# Elementary Christmas Program

Friday, Dec. 21, 2018  
1 p.m.

### Groton Prairie Mixed

**Team Standings:** Cheetahs 75, Foxes 73 ½, Coyotes 72 ½, Chipmunks 72, Jackelopes 67, Shih Tzus 60

**Men's High Games:** Brad Waage 223, 193, 190, Randy Stanley 207, 191, Doug Jorgensen 187

**Women's High Games:** Sue Stanley 185, Karen Spanier 173, Angie Carlson 173, Darci Spanier 171

**Men's High Series:** Brad Waage 606, Randy Stanley 555, Roger Spanier 514

**Women's High Series:** Karen Spanier 481, Sue Stanley 474, Lori Wiley 469

### Conde National League

**Dec. 17 Team Standings:** Cubs 7, Mets 5, Tigers 4, Pirates 3½, Braves 3½, Giants 1.

**Men's High Games:** Russ Bethke 221, Collin Cady 201, Ryan Bethke 191.

**Men's High Series:** Russ Bethke 588, Butch Farmen 535, Collin Cady 525.

**Women's High Games:** Joyce Walter 207, 176; Kira Cady 177; Nancy Radke 175.

**Women's High Series:** Joyce Walter 546, Kira Cady 497, Nancy Radke 462.

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VISITOR: GHS ( )

NO	PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN		
			FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
53	Hawkins, Kaycie	F	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	15:47
55	Doeden, Jennie	F	2	6	0	0	5	6	1	1	2	4	9	1	2	0	0	16:21
11	Wanner, Eliza	G	3	6	0	2	0	0	1	3	4	2	6	1	6	0	1	8:31
21	Maine, Payton	G	1	6	0	2	0	0	0	6	6	0	2	1	1	0	1	17:37
23	Hanson, Miranda	G	2	9	0	6	0	0	0	2	2	3	4	0	4	0	0	32:00
15	Glover, Tady		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	23:29
25	McInerney, Kenzie		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14:23
31	Locke, Allyssa		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7:55
35	Barse, Caitlynn		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7:55
43	Traphagen, Gracie		5	6	0	0	2	5	3	3	6	4	12	0	3	0	1	16:02
TEAM REBOUNDS									4	17	21						2	
Team Totals			15	39	0	10	7	11	9	33	42	17	37	12	20	0	6	160

Total FG% - 1st: 6/22 0.273 2nd: 9/17 0.529 Game: 0.385 Deadball  
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 0/6 0.000 2nd: 0/4 0.000 Game: 0.000 Rebounds  
 Total FT% - 1st: 1/1 1.000 2nd: 6/10 0.600 Game: 0.636 (2,0)

HOME: Ipswich ( )

NO	PLAYER	P	TOT-FG		3-PT		FT	FTA	REBOUNDS							MIN		
			FG	FGA	FG	FGA			OFF	DEF	TOT	PF	TP	A	TO		BK	S
10	Steger, Aleah	F	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	0	2	0	2	14:32
24	Grabowska, Abigail	F	3	17	0	5	6	9	2	4	6	2	12	1	1	0	2	24:05
4	Heinz, Halle	G	5	12	3	7	4	6	3	3	6	1	17	0	0	0	3	24:05
14	Hammrich, Bailey	G	0	5	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	7:19
30	Loken, Sydney	G	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7:57
12	Kilber, Tessa		3	6	2	3	0	1	0	1	1	3	8	0	1	0	1	15:18
20	Thorson, Ashlee		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7:55
22	Heinz, Kamryn		1	4	0	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	2	17:30
32	Olivier, Chesney		0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	1	15:58
34	Pitz, Bailey		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9:27
40	Grabowska, Lindsey		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7:55
42	Feldman, Halie		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:04
50	Gohl, Olivia		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7:55
TEAM REBOUNDS									6	8	14						0	
Team Totals			15	56	5	21	14	22	12	17	29	14	49	12	7	0	17	160

Total FG% - 1st: 10/30 0.333 2nd: 5/26 0.192 Game: 0.268 Deadball  
 3-PT FG% - 1st: 3/11 0.273 2nd: 2/10 0.200 Game: 0.238 Rebounds  
 Total FT% - 1st: 6/12 0.500 2nd: 8/10 0.800 Game: 0.636 (4,0)

Technical Fouls: GHS (0)  
 : IHS (0)

OFFICIALS :  
 ATTENDANCE : 0

SCORE BY PERIODS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	TOTAL
GHS	7	6	12	10	35
Ipswich	8	21	6	14	49

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## Traphagen comes off the bench to lead Groton Area at Ipswich



**Jennie Doeden tries to get closer to the basket.** (Photo by

Paul Kosel)

It was a game of rallies Thursday at Ipswich with Ipswich coming out the victor in girls' basketball action, 49-35. Ipswich had an eight-point and an 11-point rally in the first half. The game was tied twice and the lead changed hands three times before Ipswich held an 8-7 first quarter lead. The game was tied once more and the lead changed hands two more times early in the second quarter. Ipswich would take a 16-11 lead and turn it into 27-11 in the second quarter to take a 29-13 lead at half time.

Groton Area rallied in the third quarter, scoring 12 straight points to cut Ipswich's lead to six, 31-25, but Ipswich took advantage of Groton Area's turnovers to take a 35-25 lead after three quarters. Groton Area had 20 turnovers with 17 of them being steals by Ipswich and Ipswich had seven turnovers with six of them being steals.

Groton Area had more rebounds, 42-29. Both teams made 14 of 47 field goals but Ipswich made five three-pointers while Groton did not make any. Ipswich was 14 of 22 from the line off of Groton Area's 17 team fouls and Groton Area was seven of 11 of off Ipswich's 14 team fouls.

Gracie Traphagen came off the bench to lead Groton Area in scoring with 12 points followed by Jennie Doeden with nine, Payton Maine, Miranda Hanson and Kaycie Hawkins each had four points and Eliza Wanner added two points.

Halle Heinz led Ipswich with 20 points, scoring 15 of them in the first half. Abigail Grabowska added 12 points, Tessa Kilber eight, Kamryn Heinz four, Aleah Steger three and Baily Hammrich added two free throws.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 24-16. Scoring for Groton Area: Grace Traphagen had eight points in the second quarter, Kenzie McInerney had six, Trista Keith five, Allyssa Locke and Maddie Bjerke each had two and Caitlyn Barse added one.

Ipswich won the eighth grade game, 20-15. Aspen Johnson had six points, Shallyn Foertsch had three and Emma Schinkel and Marly Tollefson each had two points.

Groton Area won the seventh grade game, 20-8. Anna Fjeldheim had six points, and adding four points apiece were Sydney Leight, Emma Schinkel and Carley Guthmiller with Karsyn Jangula adding two points.

Groton Area is now 2-2 on the season and will resume action next year with a double header at Hamlin on January 4.

The broadcast of the Ipswich game was sponsored by the Aberdeen Chrysler Center. Make sure you tell them "thank you" and patronize them as well.

- Paul Kosel

## Homecare Services Caregivers

**Flexible, part time positions available in the Groton area. Home Care Services is looking for friendly dependable people to provide care and companionship for elderly and disabled people in their homes. You will be assisting our clients with personal care needs, meal preparations, light housekeeping, errands and other tasks. If you have a passion for helping others and need a flexible schedule, please call our office at (605) 225-1076 or 1-800-899-2578. (1218.0101)**

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**Emma Schinkel goes to the basket to make a layup in the eighth grade game.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Miranda Hanson tries for a three-pointer.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Tying up this Ipswich player were Ash-ton Bahr, Marlee Tollefson and Shallyn Foertsch in the eighth grade game.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

## Hunter Schaller Update

Hunter is now in the rehab wing of Avera. Here, daily, he is getting speech, physical, and occupational therapies. More times a day than once. He's doing so well! And with doing well, it does become tiring.

I don't think the smiles have left our faces when watching Hunter. Hunter although still not conscious, has improved with assistance in standing up, caught a ball with his left hand when thrown to him and handed it back, and even this morning was fed peaches/pears for his therapy and chewed them and swallowed. Hunter still has the feeding tube but with Hunter's strength and determination he will be eating hopefully here soon. God giving us more than we could of ever imagined this Christmas season.

One of Hunter's nurses wrote this in his book, a quote from Shakespeare- "I cried when I had no shoes but stopped crying when I saw a man without legs. Life is full of blessings, sometimes just don't see the value of it."

A quote that fits perfect for this situation. Often forgetting, that Hunter (we) are the lucky ones.

We hope everyone is staying warm and safe, and enjoying time with the ones they love most! Thank you all for the continued support, prayers, and gifts.

Hopefully I'll get another update here within the next few days until then have a blessed Christmas season!

- Hunter Schaller Family

## Have Travel Plans after Christmas?

A mid-week storm system may impact the north central US after Christmas Day.

**Details are still very uncertain,  
but travelers should begin to pay attention to next week's forecast**

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## Today in Weather History

December 21, 1968: A blizzard visited South Dakota and Minnesota on the 21st and 22nd. Snowfall during the snowstorm was generally 1 to 2 inches in the western part of South Dakota, to 5 to 10 inches in Minnesota, with more than 12 inches in an area from Artichoke Lake in Big Stone County to the southeast in Minnesota, and up to 18 inches in east central and southeast South Dakota. The snowfall, on top of an already-existing 10-inch layer of powdery snow, was whipped by 30-50 mph winds, with some winds over 50 mph in Minnesota, that occasionally reduced visibility to near zero, created snow drifts up to 10 feet or more, stopped almost all forms of traffic, blocked many primary highways for most of Sunday the 22nd, and blocked most of the secondary roads as well as some other roads for nearly a week.

Due to good blizzard warnings and the fact that the blizzard occurred late Saturday through Sunday, the highway patrol reported a minimum of accidents and stranded travelers. Most schools were closed and other activities were curtailed. Many utility lines were down. Record December snowfall amounts were recorded for more than 40 locations in Minnesota. Artichoke Lake in Big Stone County received 16 inches of snow from this storm, by far its largest daily snowfall on record for any month of the year. Clear Lake, in Deuel County, measured 18 inches of snow, which also remains the largest daily snowfall on record for any month in that location. Watertown and Bryant received nine inches from this blizzard, while Castlewood reported seven inches.

December 21, 1929: An exceptional storm produced snow from the Middle Rio Grande Valley of Texas to southern Arkansas. The storm produced 26 inches of snow near Hillsboro, Texas, and 24 inches in 24 hours in Clifton.

1892 - Portland, OR, was buried under a record 27.5 inches of snow. (21st-24th) (The Weather Channel)

1929 - An exceptional storm produced snow from the Middle Rio Grande Valley of Texas to southern Arkansas. The storm produced 26 inches of snow at Hillsboro TX, 18 inches at El Dorado AR, and 14 inches at Bossier LA. (21st-22nd) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1964 - A great warm surge from the Pacific Ocean across Oregon and northern California brought torrential rains on a deep snow cover resulting in record floods. (David Ludlum)

1987 - High winds continued along the eastern slopes of the Rockies. During the morning hours winds gusted to 64 mph at Cheyenne WY, and reached 97 mph near Boulder CO. Gale force winds prevailed across the Great Lakes Region. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)






1988 - Seven cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Charleston SC with a reading of 78 degrees. A storm in the northwestern U.S. produced 22 inches of snow at Idaho City ID in two days, and up to two feet of snow at Happy Camp CA. Ski resorts in Idaho reported three to six feet of snow on the ground. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Forty cities in the north central U.S., including thirteen in Iowa, reported record low temperatures for the date. Havre and Jordan, MT, tied for honors as the cold spot in the nation with morning lows of 43 degrees below zero, and the temperature remained close to 40 degrees below zero through the daylight hours. Dickinson ND reported a morning low of 33 degrees below zero and a wind chill reading of 86 degrees below zero. The high for the date of 16 degrees below zero at Sioux Falls SD was December record for that location. (The National Weather Summary)

1998 - Cold air spread into the southern San Joaquin Valley of California. For the next four nights, temperatures in the agricultural portions of Fresno, Tulare, and Kern counties dropped below 28 degrees for several hours at a time. In some locations, temperatures dipped into the teens. The California citrus industry suffered more than \$600 million in damages due to the extreme cold.

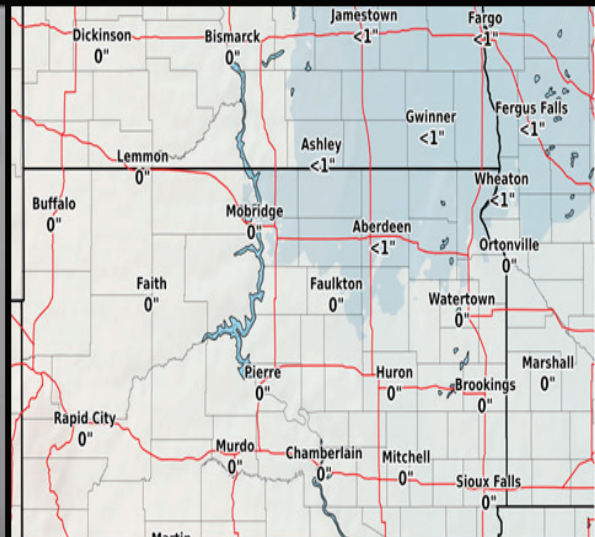
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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Areas Dense Freezing Fog and Patchy Fog then Mostly Cloudy	Chance Winty Mix then Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 39 °F	Low: 23 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 20 °F	High: 31 °F

Fog in Northeastern SD and Western MN this Morning

Slippery Roads Possible



Light Snow Tonight Under an Inch Expected



Updated: 12/21/2018 5:55 AM Central

Published on: 12/21/2018 at 6:00AM

Areas of dense fog expected through the mid-morning in northeastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. The fog will deposit on surfaces including roads, sidewalks, and bridges. Watch for slippery spots. A front crossing the region later this afternoon through tonight will bring light precipitation. Rain will be possible in north central South Dakota this afternoon. As the front moves east, the rain will transition over to light snow tonight.



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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 40 °F at 3:04 PM**

**Low Outside Temp: 21 °F at 9:42 PM**

**High Gust: 29 mph at 12:38 AM**

**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 50° in 1979, 1957**

**Record Low: -31° in 1916**

**Average High: 24°F**

**Average Low: 4°F**

**Average Precip in Dec.: 0.33**

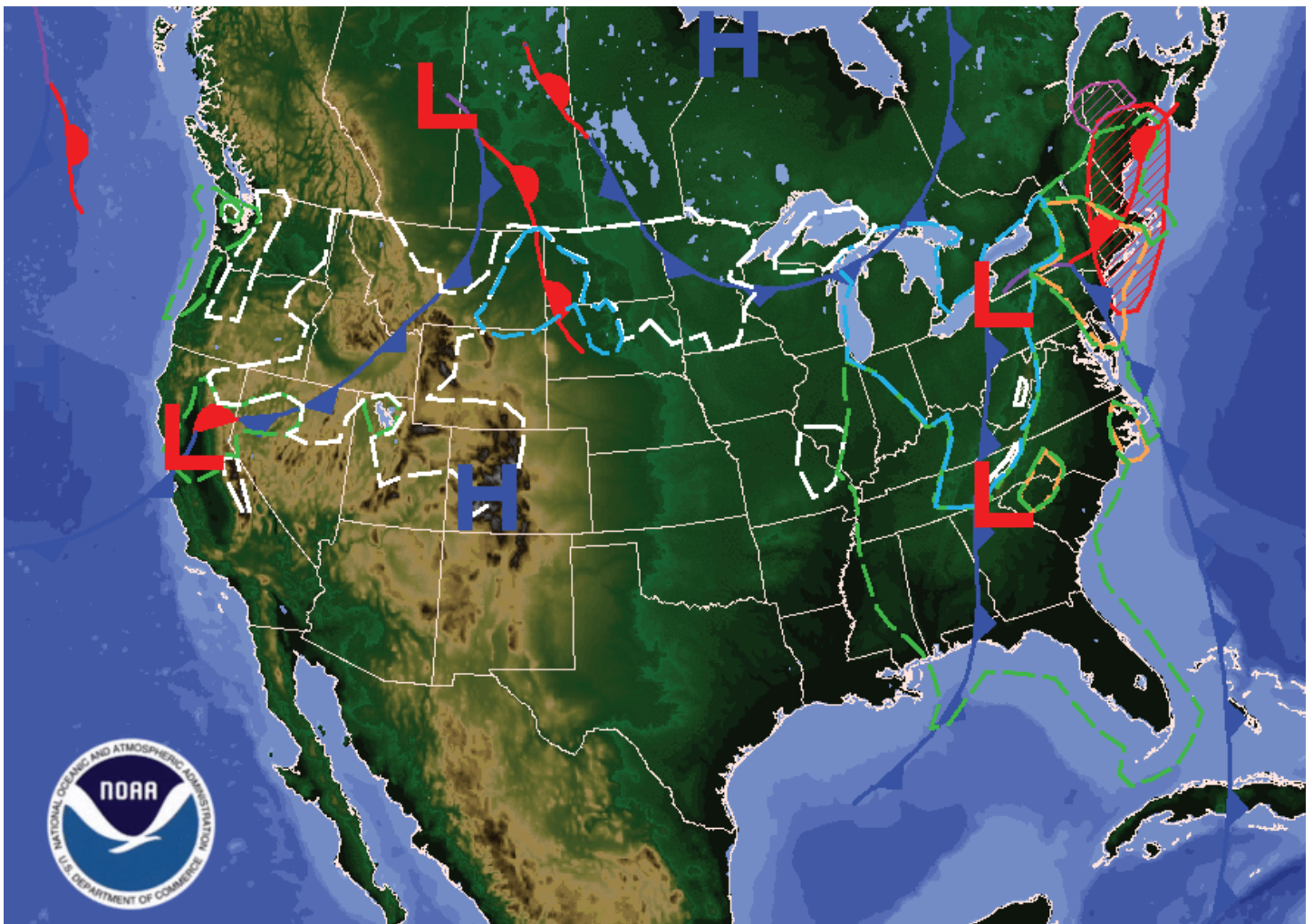
**Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00**

**Average Precip to date: 21.53**

**Precip Year to Date: 15.81**

**Sunset Tonight: 4:53 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:11 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Dec 21, 2018, issued 3:36 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Ziegenfelder with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

**Rain**  
**Rain and T'Storms**  
**Rain and Snow**  
**Snow**

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

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## CHRISTS DAY

On Mothers Day we focus all of our attention on our Mothers, recalling and remembering how much they struggled to raise us. Lovingly we shower gifts on them, purchase cards that describe her many sacrifices for us and the unending care she gave to us. She deserves all of the attention and recognition we can give her.

On Fathers Day, we turn our thoughts to him what he has done for us and express our gratitude for the time he spent with us. We recall his efforts to teach us to throw a ball, catch a pass, cast a fishing line or attend a special event. He, too, deserves all the attention and recognition we can give him.

We also give recognition and attention to our Grandparents, to brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and friends and relatives on their special days.

But what will we do that is really special or unique to show our appreciation and gratitude for Christ on His day this year?

Will there be an envelope under the tree with a special love-offering that recognizes His importance in our lives? Will it match the amount we gave others?

Will we sacrifice some of our time to show Gods love by being with those who would otherwise be alone and lonely on His day?

Will we share a meal with someone who is hungry? Give some clothes to those who are cold and have little? Spend time reading His story to children?

In as much as you have done it to the least of these, you have done it unto Me!

Prayer: Take Your peace from us Father, until and unless we show others Your love on Your day. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Matthew 25:40 And the King will answer and say to them, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.

## 2018 Groton SD Community Events

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

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## News from the Associated Press

### Man housing priest charged with sex crime upsets neighbors

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man who has agreed to take in a former Rapid City priest accused of sexually touching a 13-year-old girl says some of his neighbors are “over-the-top” angry about the situation.

The Rapid City Journal reports that 38-year-old John Praveen was released from jail Thursday afternoon after someone paid for his recently reduced \$10,000 cash-only bond. Brad Blauvelt, who volunteered to house Praveen, says the woman who paid the bond asked to remain anonymous.

Blauvelt says he may ask to take a leave of absence from his job as a network administrator for Rapid City Area Schools so he can stay home and supervise Praveen at all times. He says he has to do something to “calm the neighbors down.”

A judge says Praveen must wear an ankle monitor.

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

### Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

#### BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Roncalli 66, Deuel 25  
Brandon Valley 73, Mitchell 62  
Bridgewater-Emery 55, West Central 50  
Clark/Willow Lake 61, Hamlin 53  
Colome 64, Avon 27  
Dakota Christian 92, James Valley Christian 91  
Edmunds Central 67, McIntosh 39  
Herreid/Selby Area 69, South Border, N.D. 45  
Irene-Wakonda 70, Freeman 56  
Kindred, N.D. 64, Tri-State 39  
Lead-Deadwood 71, Bennett County 26  
Lemmon 55, Grant County, N.D. 49  
Leola/Frederick 70, Potter County 62, OT  
Menno 52, Howard 48  
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 54, Gregory 51  
Newell 68, Dupree 55  
Pierre 70, Brookings 59  
Rapid City Christian 75, Hill City 54  
Rapid City Stevens 90, Spearfish 45  
Redfield/Doland 59, Hitchcock-Tulare 39  
Sioux Falls Washington 50, Marshall, Minn. 46  
Sioux Valley 76, Beresford 51  
Tea Area 78, Garretson 52  
Viborg-Hurley 56, Hanson 41  
Wessington Springs 71, Sunshine Bible Academy 65  
White River 73, Kadoka Area 36  
Winner 60, Bon Homme 35  
Wolsey-Wessington 56, Faulkton 42

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## **GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL**

Aberdeen Christian 40, Iroquois 36  
Aberdeen Roncalli 66, Deuel 25  
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 52, Gayville-Volin 29  
Avon 53, Colome 22  
Baltic 53, Elkton-Lake Benton 39  
Beresford 47, Sioux Valley 27  
Brandon Valley 63, Mitchell 46  
Brookings 57, Pierre 39  
Canistota 67, Centerville 32  
DeSmet 49, Arlington 35  
Deubrook 64, Lake Preston 36  
Dupree 66, Newell 48  
Estelline/Hendricks 54, Dell Rapids St. Mary 37  
Eureka/Bowdle 57, Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D. 56, OT  
Faulkton 53, Wolsey-Wessington 23  
Freeman 60, Irene-Wakonda 35  
Hamlin 72, Clark/Willow Lake 52  
Hanson 59, Viborg-Hurley 37  
Harrisburg 65, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 31  
Herreid/Selby Area 57, Stanley County 30  
Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. 61, Harding County 20  
Hill City 47, Rapid City Christian 29  
Ipswich 49, Groton Area 35  
Kadoka Area 60, White River 51  
Lead-Deadwood 55, Bennett County 30  
Lennox 71, Sioux City, North, Iowa 28  
Lower Brule 52, Philip 42  
McCook Central/Montrose 56, Dell Rapids 53  
McIntosh 53, Edmunds Central 31  
Menno 55, Howard 53  
Milbank 55, Webster 33  
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 55, Gregory 34  
Potter County 40, Leola/Frederick 35  
Rapid City Stevens 45, Spearfish 27  
Redfield/Doland 50, Hitchcock-Tulare 49, OT  
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 48, Sioux Falls Lincoln 32  
Sioux Falls Washington 46, Marshall, Minn. 31  
Sully Buttes 58, Lyman 39  
Sunshine Bible Academy 48, Wessington Springs 46, OT  
Takini 56, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 52  
Tea Area 67, Garretson 64  
Winner 55, Bon Homme 22

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

## Telephone company being sued says wildfire was 'act of God'

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A telephone company being sued by South Dakota landowners over the third-largest wildfire in Black Hills' history says an "act of God" caused the Legion Lake Fire.

Two companies doing business as Mt. Rushmore Telephone Company admit in a legal filing that the 2017 fire occurred, but "deny that they are liable to the Plaintiffs for the same," the Rapid City Journal reported. The response comes after Custer County landowners in August sued Black Hills Power and Mt. Rushmore Telephone Company for negligence, nuisance and trespassing.

Investigators say the December 2017 fire began when a tree fell onto a power line in Custer State Park. Flames spread into Wind Cave National Park and onto private property, ultimately scorching 84 square miles (218 square kilometers).

Landowners argue the telecommunications company damaged the tree's root system while digging a utility trench, making it susceptible to collapse. But the telephone company said that the fire was the "result of an act of God," according to a response filed by Hanson Communications, Inc. and Fort Randall Telephone Company, doing business as Mt. Rushmore Telephone Company.

Black Hills Energy also contested its liability in a filing and argued the landowners failed to mitigate their damages. Attorneys for both sides didn't immediately return requests for comment from the newspaper.

Evan Gallentine, a plaintiff whose home is east of the state park, told the newspaper in an interview before filing the lawsuit that the wildfire cost him more than 1,000 acres of pasture, fencing and winter hay to feed cattle.

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

## Noem to appoint DSU dean as state Education secretary

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov.-elect Kristi Noem is naming a Dakota State University dean to serve as interim state Education secretary.

The incoming Republican governor said Thursday that Ben Jones will be appointed to lead the Department of Education. Jones, of Sioux Falls, currently serves as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Dakota State University in Madison.

Noem says Jones is an "experienced voice and trusted leader" in South Dakota education. She says they will seek together to improve K-12 outcomes and make education programs better apply to the modern workforce.

Jones says he plans to work with Noem to support teachers, boost civic knowledge and cultivate a culture of performance.

Noem will be sworn in Jan. 5.

## Rural bankers survey climbs back up to growth level

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A monthly survey of rural bankers in parts of 10 Plains and Western states suggests the regional economy is growing.

The overall index of the Creighton University Rural Mainstreet survey for December climbed back above growth neutral to hit 54.2, compared with 49.9 in November.

Any score above 50 suggests a growing economy in the months ahead, while a score below 50 indicates a shrinking economy.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss says the surveys over the past several months indicate the regional economy is expanding outside of agriculture.

The survey's confidence index slumped to 44.3 from November's 47.0, and Goss says tariffs, trade tensions and weak agriculture commodity prices harmed the economic outlook of bank CEOs.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

## Black Hills medieval enthusiasts connect to reenact history

By ALEX PORTAL, Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — There are a lot of small towns, cities, and communities in the Black Hills, but there's only one shire, the Shire of Noiregarde. However, there are no hobbits in this shire, no wizards, no dragons — only "SCAdians," the name applied to members of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA).

The SCA is a group devoted to recreating the arts and skills of pre-17th century European life. It began in California in 1966 as little more than a themed graduation party, the Black Hills Pioneer reported. In the 52 years since, the SCA has boomed into a massive network of like-minded medieval enthusiasts, hosting more than a thousand events spanning five continents every year.

"They started building armor out of carpet and using old Freon tanks for helms," Pat Haley, of Spearfish, said. "And now we've got people that make a living manufacturing armor for the SCA."

In 2002, Haley and a small group of friends founded the Shire of Noiregarde, a local branch of the SCA in the Black Hills.

Members are encouraged to create a persona when joining the SCA; however, the level of thought or backstory one chooses to put into that persona is entirely up to the individual. Members of the SCA are people who find some aspect of medieval times interesting, whether that's the food and drink of the period, the fashion, the art and culture, or the warfare, which became something of an art in those times, as well.

"We're trying to recreate history, so we're a historical reenactment thing," Haley said.

Haley said that since the SCA was started, its main focus has been medieval history, specifically Europe between the years 800-1600 AD. As the organization has evolved, it has grown to accept a much wider definition of "medieval history" to include cultures that didn't even have contact with Europe for the majority of the given timeframe.

"There's a guy that fights, and he dresses Native American," Haley said as an example. "He's wearing SCA (safety) minimums ... otherwise, it's skin, which hurts I guarantee you, but that's how he fights."

Haley explained that SCA fighting is very different from live action role playing (larping). SCAdians study the fighting techniques and battle tactics of the period, and apply that knowledge to live exhibition tournaments, while wearing actual period appropriate armor.

"We study period manuals," he said. "For example, in rapier we study Capo Ferro, Giganti, di Grassi, all these guys who wrote manuals in the 1500s about how to fence."

Larping, on the other hand, is more unstructured.

"I've never done larping, so I may get crucified for saying the wrong thing, but larping is something that has nothing to do with reality," Haley said. "Usually they're in stuff that looks like armor and hitting each other with padded swords, and they'll throw a bean bag at you and call it a fire ball."

Though most "fighting" takes place at demonstrations or crowning tournaments, which are held annually to determine the King and Queen for the upcoming year, several times a year multiple "Kingdoms" will come together for what are affectionately called "wars."

"It developed into things like we have now such as Pennsic War," Haley said. "Where you've got 10,000 people show up for two weeks, camp out, dress in period, cook in period, and fight in as close to period without people really dying as we can."

There are 20 kingdoms in the "Knowne World" of the SCA. Each kingdom is divided up into local chapters or "shires." Unlike the feudal structure of medieval times, each local chapter has a roster of officers that are voted on by its members.

"It's fun to play," Haley said. "When you go to an event, and His Majesty comes in and you're like, 'Oh, your Majesty; all rise for His Majesty,' and everybody stands and bows. ... It's just fun to play the game."

## Fire at Sioux Falls Catholic church extinguished quickly

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a fire in a sanctuary at a Sioux Falls church was extinguished within five minutes after crews arrived on scene.

Sioux Falls Fire Rescue officials a member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church reported smoke coming from inside the church about 3:30 p.m. Wednesday. Besides the initial fire, crews also put out some small fires that had extended into the attic space of the church.

Crews remained on scene throughout the night to monitor the situation. The building does not have a sprinkler system.

No injuries were reported. The fire remains under investigation.

## London's Gatwick Airport resumes flights after drone chaos

By GREGORY KATZ, Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Flights resumed at London's Gatwick Airport on Friday after drones sparked about 36 hours of travel chaos including the shutdown of the airfield, leaving tens of thousands of passengers stranded or delayed during the busy holiday season.

The airport said in a statement that Gatwick's runway is "now available and aircraft are arriving and departing.

"We are, however, expecting knock-on delays and cancellations to flights," it said. "If you are due to travel from Gatwick today, we strongly recommend that you check the status of your flight with your airline before departing for the airport."

Airlines also advised customers to check their flight status before going to Gatwick because numerous cancellations and delays are expected. By late morning, some 145 of Gatwick's scheduled 837 Friday flights had been canceled.

The prospect of a deadly collision between what police described as industrial-grade drones and an airliner led authorities to stop all flights in and out of Gatwick, Britain's second-busiest airport by passenger numbers, on Thursday. The drones were first spotted Wednesday evening.

The Gatwick statement suggests authorities are concerned the drones may be seen again, which would likely lead to a fresh closure of the runway. There were repeated sightings Thursday, and authorities decided any flight operations would be unsafe.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said there had been about 40 sightings of "a small number of drones" while the airport was shut down. He told the BBC the drone disruption at Gatwick was "unprecedented anywhere in the world."

The last confirmed drone sighting was at 10 p.m. Thursday.

Grayling refused to say what security protection had been added overnight but said the airport is considered safe for flights even though the drone operator has not been apprehended.

Grayling cited additional "military capabilities" and "a range of measures" that had been put in place but would not provide details.

The British military has joined police and aviation authorities in the search for the culprit or culprits behind the drone intrusion, which police said was designed to cause maximum disruption over the holiday period.

Officials say shooting down a drone remains a "tactical option" but there are concerns that any weapon used to attack the drone could inadvertently hurt people on the ground.

The airport, about 30 miles (45 kilometers) south of central London, sees more than 43 million passengers a year. About 110,000 had been scheduled to pass through on Thursday, one of the busiest days of the year.

The runway closure has had a spillover impact on the international air travel system, and thousands of passengers remain short of their destinations.

Many holiday plans were disrupted and travelers stuck at Gatwick described freezing conditions as hundreds slept on benches and floors. Many passengers and their families complained they weren't being kept informed about re-routed flights.



Authorities haven't released details about the drones being used except to characterize them as meeting "industrial specifications."

The motive for the drone use isn't clear. Police say there is no indication it is "terror related."

Frank Griffiths contributed to this report.

## AP Explains: Nissan's ex-chair spending Christmas in custody

By MARI YAMAGUCHI, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Nissan Motor Co. former chairman Carlos Ghosn, charged with financial improprieties and detained in Tokyo for more than a month, has also been accused of a breach of trust that caused a multi-million-dollar financial loss for Nissan.

Speculation that he could leave on bail surged on Thursday after a court rejected prosecutors' request for extended detention. The fresh allegation dashes his hope for a quick release, forcing him to spend Christmas at Tokyo's main detention center. A look at what is going on and what could happen next:

Q: WHAT IS THE NEW ALLEGATION?

A: Prosecutors on Friday accused Ghosn of a breach of trust causing Nissan a financial loss of more than 1.8 billion yen (\$16 million). The allegations represent a third potential charge in Ghosn's case. Prosecutors say Ghosn allegedly manipulated a contract to shift a loss from a private investment during the Lehman crisis onto Nissan's books. He also allegedly had Nissan transfer \$14.7 million to another company owned by someone who helped him in that manipulation in a breach of the company's trust, prosecutors say. The latest allegation does not affect Greg Kelly, another Nissan board member charged with underreporting Ghosn's income by about 5 billion yen (\$44 million) in 2011-2015.

Q: HOW MUCH LONGER WILL HE BE IN FOR?

A: Adding an allegation to an existing case is called "saitaiho" in Japanese, or to re-arrest, even when a suspect is already in custody. Japanese police and prosecutors routinely add new allegations to lengthen a defendant's time behind bars, since each allegation may add up to 20 days. The tactic is criticized from inside and outside Japan as "hostage justice." Friday's new allegation would allow prosecutors two days before seeking a likely court approval of extending Ghosn's detention up to 20 more days, meaning he would have to stay in the Tokyo Detention House until Jan. 11, way past Christmas and New Year holidays, most likely without turkey or pumpkin pie. But his right-hand man, Kelly, may be released as early as Christmas, with a request for bail filed Friday by Kelly's lawyer pending court approval.

Q: WHAT ARE CHARGES HE ALREADY FACES?

A: So far, Ghosn and Kelly are charged with underreporting Ghosn's pay by about 5 billion yen (\$44 million), in violation of the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act. They also face a second allegation of underreporting another 4 billion yen (\$36 million) for 2016-2018, for which their first 10-day detention expired on Thursday. Prosecutors have been criticized for separating the same allegations into two parts as a tactic to double their detention time.

Q: HOW COMMON ARE LONG DETENTIONS IN JAPAN?

A: Ghosn's more than a month in detention is still short compared to some past high-profile cases. Critics say defendants who refuse to admit to the allegations tend to be detained longer. In 2002, parliamentarian Muneo Suzuki was detained for 437 days over bribery charges before he was released on bail. In 2009, a senior health ministry bureaucrat, Atsuko Muraki, was detained for 164 days in alleged violation of postal services law. She was later acquitted. In 2006, an internet startup maverick Takafumi Horie, charged with fraudulent accounting, was detained for 95 days.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

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## Government careens toward shutdown after Trump's wall demand

By LISA MASCARO, MATTHEW DALY and CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government was careening toward a partial shutdown Friday after President Donald Trump's quest for a border wall left Congress without a clear plan to keep the government running past a midnight deadline.

The Senate was being called back to session to consider a package approved by House Republicans late Thursday that includes the \$5.7 billion Trump wants for the border with Mexico. It is almost certain to be rejected by the Senate. Senators already passed their own bipartisan package earlier in the week to keep the government running with border security at existing levels, \$1.3 billion, but no money for the wall. Both bills would extend funding through Feb. 8.

The White House said Trump will not travel to Florida on Friday as planned for the Christmas holiday if the government is shutting down. More than 800,000 federal workers will be facing furloughs or forced to work without pay if a resolution is not reached before funding expires at midnight Friday.

"The president's been clear from the beginning, he wants something that gives border security and he's not going to sign something that doesn't have that," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters.

At issue is funding for nine of 15 Cabinet-level departments and dozens of agencies, including the departments of Homeland Security, Transportation, Interior, Agriculture, State and Justice, as well as national parks and forests.

Many agencies, including the Pentagon and the departments of Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services, are funded for the year and would continue to operate as usual. The U.S. Postal Service, busy delivering packages for the holiday season, would not be affected by any government shutdown because it's an independent agency.

The shutdown crisis could be one of the final acts of the House GOP majority before relinquishing control to Democrats in January. Congress had been on track to fund the government but lurched when Trump, after a rare lashing from conservative supporters, declared Thursday he would not sign a bill without the funding. Conservatives want to keep fighting. They warn that "caving" on Trump's repeated wall promises could hurt his 2020 re-election chances, and other Republicans' as well.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., warned senators they may need to return to Washington for a vote Friday. Many senators already left town for the holidays.

"Now we find compromise," House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said. "We have time right now to get it done."

Late Thursday, the GOP-led House voted largely along party lines, 217-185, to attach the border wall money to the Senate's bill after GOP leaders framed the vote as a slap-back to Nancy Pelosi. She is poised to become House speaker on Jan. 3 and had warned Trump in a televised Oval Office meeting last week that he wouldn't have the votes for the wall.

House Republicans also tacked on nearly \$8 billion in disaster aid for coastal hurricanes and California wildfires.

Some Republican senators cheered on the House, but prospects in the Senate are grim amid strong opposition from Democrats. Even though Republicans have a slim majority, 60 votes are needed to approve the bill there.

One possibility Friday is that the Senate strips the border wall out of the bill but keeps the disaster funds and sends it back to the House. House lawmakers said they were being told to stay in town for more possible votes.

With Pelosi's backing, the Senate-passed bill likely has enough support for House approval with votes mostly from Democratic lawmakers, who are still the minority, and some Republicans.

Others were not so sure. "I don't see how we avoid a shutdown," said retiring Rep. Dennis Ross, R-Fla.

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., the chairman of the conservative Freedom Caucus, said he was not convinced after a White House meeting with GOP leaders that Trump would sign the Senate bill.

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"I looked him in the eyes today, and he was serious about not folding without a fight," Meadows said. Trump's sudden rejection of the Senate-approved legislation, after days of mixed messages, sent Republican leaders scrambling for options days before Christmas.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, exiting the hastily called meeting with Trump at the White House, said Thursday, "We're going to go back and work on adding border security to this, also keeping the government open, because we do want to see an agreement."

By afternoon, Trump shifted his terminology, saying he's not necessarily demanding a border wall but "steel slats" — which is similar to the border security fencing already provided for in the bill.

"We don't use the word 'wall' necessarily, but it has to be something special to do the job," Trump said at a farm bill signing at the White House. The nuance could provide Trump a way to try to proclaim victory since the Senate bill includes money for fencing, but not the wall.

Democratic leaders have made clear they will not budge on their opposition to the border wall that Trump campaigned on saying Mexico would pay for it. Mexico has refused.

"The Trump temper tantrum will shut down the government, but it will not get him his wall," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer. Democrats favor border security, Schumer said, but he denounced the wall as "ineffective, unnecessary and exorbitantly expensive."

Ryan and McCarthy had endured complaints during a private morning meeting earlier Thursday from rank-and-file Republicans in the Capitol that they were closing out their majority without a fight on a major issue.

Trump interrupted the basement session with a phone call to Ryan, and then the president lashed out at Republican leaders on Twitter.

Ryan had promised a "big fight" after November's midterm elections, but as Republicans lost House control, negotiations over the year-end spending bill have largely been between Trump and Democrats.

"I was promised the Wall and Border Security by leadership," Trump tweeted.

Trump has bounced back and forth with mixed messages. Just last week he said he would be "proud" to shut down the government over the wall. Earlier this week he appeared to shelve shutdown threats, with the White House saying he was open to reviewing whatever bill Congress could send him.

"Republicans are in a state of disarray," said Pelosi. "Wall funding is a nonstarter."

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Associated Press writers Alan Fram and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

## **Pope to priestly sex abusers: Turn yourselves in**

**By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press**

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis vowed Friday that the Catholic Church will "never again" cover up clergy sex abuse and demanded that priests who have raped and molested children turn themselves in.

Francis dedicated his annual Christmas speech to the Vatican bureaucracy to abuse, evidence that a year of devastating revelations of sexual misconduct and cover-up has shaken his papacy and caused a crisis of confidence in the Catholic hierarchy.

Francis acknowledged that the church in the past had failed to treat the problem seriously, blaming leaders who out of inexperience or short-sightedness acted "irresponsibly" by refusing to believe victims. But he vowed that going forward the church would "never again" cover up or dismiss cases.

"Let it be clear that before these abominations the church will spare no effort to do all that is necessary to bring to justice whosoever has committed such crimes," he said.

Francis urged victims to come forward, thanked the media for giving them a voice and issued a stark warning to abusers: "Convert and hand yourself over to human justice, and prepare for divine justice."

Francis' remarks capped a dreadful year for the Catholic Church, one that began with his own botched handling of a sprawling sex abuse scandal in Chile and ended with the U.S. hierarchy in a free-fall of credibility as state prosecutors have begun uncovering decades of cover-up.

Francis has summoned church leaders from around the globe for a February abuse prevention summit,

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in an indication that he has come to realize that the problem is far greater and far more global than he had understood at the start of his pontificate five years ago.

Francis' demand that abusers turn themselves in to face "human justice" was significant, and echoed his previous demands for mafia bosses and corrupt politicians to convert.

Vatican guidelines currently only call for bishops to report priestly abusers to police in those countries where civil law requires it — a technicality that survivors and their advocates have long blasted as a convenient dodge to the church's moral obligation to protect children regardless of what the law requires.

Francis warned the Vatican bureaucrats who run the 1.2 billion strong Church that the scandal now undermines the credibility of the entire Catholic enterprise and that from now on the church and all its pastors must embark on a continuous path of purification.

He prayed for help so that the Church can discern true cases from false ones, and accusations from slander.

"This is no easy task, since the guilty are capable of skillfully covering their tracks," and choosing victims who will keep silent.

It was perhaps a veiled reference to ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the disgraced retired archbishop of Washington who is now facing a canonical trial on allegations he groped a teenage altar boy in the 1970s.

The McCarrick revelations have fueled the crisis in confidence in the U.S. and Vatican hierarchy since it was apparently an open secret that he slept with seminarians but nevertheless was allowed to rise to the heights of church power.

Francis' reference to the difficulty in distinguishing allegation from slander was also perhaps a reference to his own failure to believe Chilean victims of a notorious predator priest.

During Francis' disastrous trip to Chile in January, he dismissed survivors' allegations of cover-up as "slander," sparking outrage in Chile and beyond. Francis eventually did an about-face, apologized to the victims and acknowledged he had made "grave errors in judgment" about the case.

Going forward, he urged those who have been victims of sexual abuse, abuse of power and abuse of conscience to speak out.

"The church asks that people not be silent, but bring it objectively to light, since the greater scandal in this matter is that of cloaking the truth," he said.

The cardinals and bishops of the Curia listened attentively, including the dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, who has long been blamed for the Vatican's refusal to acknowledge the depth of the problem during the quarter-century pontificate of St. John Paul II.

Sodano, who was John Paul's deputy, made no mention of the scandal that has convulsed the church this year. In his introductory remarks Friday to the pope, he instead thanked Francis for his pastoral visits in Rome, Italy and around the world, for having canonized Pope Paul VI and for having issued a new teaching document.

In previous years, Francis has used his Christmas greetings to issue blistering criticisms of the failings of the Curia, accusing them of suffering from "spiritual Alzheimer's" and taking part in the "terrorism of gossip."

His remarks this year had a more global outlook, noting that all around there are priests who "without batting an eye" are ready to betray all that the church stands for and enter into a "web of corruption" by abusing those in their care.

"Often behind their boundless amiability, impeccably activity and angelic faces, they shamelessly conceal a vicious wolf ready to devour innocent souls," he said.

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## 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. WHY US DEFENSE SECRETARY MATTIS STEPPED DOWN

Jim Mattis resigned after clashing with President Donald Trump over the abrupt withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria and after two years of deep disagreements over America's role in the world.

### 2. TRUMP'S DEMAND FOR WALL PUSHES GOV'T CLOSER TO SHUTDOWN

The federal government was careening toward a partial shutdown after Trump's quest for a border wall left Congress without a clear plan to keep the government running.

### 3. 'WHO CALLED WHO 'ARROGANT AND SELFISH'

China lashed out at the U.S. after it charged two Chinese citizens with stealing trade secrets and other sensitive information from American government agencies and corporations.

### 4. NEW ALLEGATION FILED AGAINST NISSAN'S GHOSN

Japanese prosecutors added a new allegation of breach of trust against Nissan's former chairman, dashing his hopes for posting bail quickly.

### 5. AFTER YEAR OF THE WOMAN, 2020 BUZZ SO FAR FOCUSES ON THE MEN

A year defined by the political power of women is ending with men enjoying much of the attention as Beto O'Rourke, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders are emerging as early favorites in the opening phase of the 2020 campaign.

### 6. WHO IS BEING OPTIMISTIC ABOUT NORTH KOREAN DENUCLEARIZATION

The Trump administration's special envoy for North Korea expressed optimism about the diplomatic push to resolve the nuclear crisis.

### 7. TOYS R US CLOSURE HITS TOYS FOR TOTS HARD

The toy giant's decision to close its stores this year left some huge holes for the annual charity drive to fill.

### 8. RESORTS OFFER PERKS FOR HANDING OVER PHONES

A growing number of hotels are offering perks, like snorkeling tours and s'mores, to guests who manage to give up their phones for a few hours.

### 9. ALBINO ORANGUTAN RETURNED TO JUNGLE

Alba, the world's only known albino orangutan was released into a remote Borneo jungle more than a year after conservation officials found her starving and dehydrated in an Indonesian village.

### 10. GYMNASTICS MAKES MOVES ON FREE-SPIRITED PARKOUR

The funky street sport that has spread globally from the suburbs of Paris is talked about as a possible new Olympic discipline but is also the focus of a heated custody battle as its popularity and marketing potential grow.

## Officials: American troops to be pulled from Afghanistan

By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon is developing plans to withdraw up to half of the 14,000 American troops serving in Afghanistan, U.S. officials said Thursday, marking a sharp change in the Trump administration's policy aimed at forcing the Taliban to the peace table after more than 17 years of war.

One official said the troops could be out by summer, but no final decision has been made.

President Donald Trump has long pushed to pull troops out of Afghanistan, considering the war a lost cause. But earlier this year, he was persuaded by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and others military leaders to keep troops on the ground to pressure the Taliban and battle a stubborn Islamic State insurgency. Officials said the latest White House push for withdrawal was another key factor in Mattis' decision to resign Thursday.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

U.S. troops stormed into Afghanistan in November 2001 in an invasion triggered by the Sept. 11 attacks. Since then, America has lost more than 2,400 soldiers and spent more than \$900 billion in its longest

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war. Three U.S. presidents have pledged to bring peace to Afghanistan, either by adding or withdrawing troops, by engaging the Taliban or shunning them, and by struggling to combat widespread corruption in the government.

The U.S. and NATO formally concluded their combat mission in 2014, but American and allied troops remain, conducting strikes on the Islamic State group and the Taliban and working to train and build the Afghan military.

Taliban insurgents, however, control nearly half of Afghanistan and are more powerful than at any time since a 2001 U.S.-led invasion. They carry out near-daily attacks, mainly targeting security forces and government officials.

In recent months, however, there has been a renewed effort to make progress on peace talks with the Taliban. Officials now worry that any move to withdraw U.S. troops this year could dampen those prospects and simply encourage the Taliban to wait it out until they can take advantage of the gaps when the forces leave.

## **Analysis: As advisers leave, Trump's guardrails come off**

**By JULIE PACE and ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Last year, during one particularly frenetic stretch in Donald Trump's presidency, a top Republican senator said there were three men guarding the country from chaos: Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, White House chief of staff John Kelly and then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

Within weeks, not one will be left in the administration.

Mattis will be the last to go, and his abrupt resignation Thursday marks the end of the "contain and control" phase of Trump's administration — one where generals, business leaders and establishment Republicans struggled to guide the president and curb his most disruptive impulses. They were branded in Washington as the "troika of sanity," the "axis of adults" and the "committee to save America."

But as Trump careens toward his third year in office, their efforts are in tatters and most are out of a job.

The early consequences of the new era were already apparent at year's end, with Trump on the verge of a government shutdown over the advice of GOP leaders and ordering the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria over Mattis' objections. A similar pull-back in Afghanistan appeared to be in the works. The financial markets, spooked by uncertainty from a nearly yearlong trade war, tanked.

"We are headed toward a series of grave policy errors which will endanger our nation, damage our alliances & empower our adversaries," Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., tweeted after Mattis' resignation.

The shrinking circle around Trump is now increasingly dominated by a small cadre of longtime Trump loyalists and family members, ex-Fox News talent and former GOP lawmakers who were backbenchers on Capitol Hill before being elevated by the president. Attracting top flight talent will only get more difficult as more investigations envelope the White House once Democrats take over the House in January.

To some of Trump's most ardent supporters, the exodus leaves the president with a team that is more in line with his hardline campaign promises. They viewed some of his early advisers as obstacles to enacting the unabashed nationalist agenda they believe Trump had been elected to implement.

Mattis wrote in his resignation letter that Trump deserved a Pentagon chief "whose views are better aligned with yours." It was not readily apparent who that might be, as Trump's decision in Syria drew widespread bipartisan condemnation this week.

Soon after Trump entered the White House, aides seeking to restrain the brash and inexperienced president's foreign policy decisions recognized that those best adept at advising him were or had recently been in uniform. Trump, who never served himself but attended a military academy as a youth, granted them outsized respect.

Mattis was one of three generals who filled the top ranks of Trump's staff, along with Kelly and H.R. McMaster, who spent a year as national security adviser. Mattis' appointment required a congressional waiver to laws meant to preserve the civilian nature of the Department of Defense.

Mattis and outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Joseph Dunford became almost weekly dinner guests

## Trump administration departures

Notable resignations and terminations since President Donald Trump took office in 2017.



**James Mattis**  
Defense secretary  
Dec. 20

**Ryan Zinke**  
Interior secretary  
Dec. 15



**John Kelly**  
White House chief of staff  
Dec. 8

**Mira Ricardel**  
Deputy national security adviser  
Nov. 15

**Jeff Sessions**  
Attorney General  
Nov. 7

**Nikki Haley**  
U.S. ambassador to the U.N.  
Oct. 9

**Don McGahn**  
White House counsel  
Aug. 29

**Marc Short**  
White House director of legislative affairs  
July 12

**Scott Pruitt**  
EPA Administrator  
July 5

**Kelly Sadler**  
White House communications aide  
June 5

**Tom Bossert**  
White House homeland security adviser  
April 10

**Michael Anton**  
National security council spokesman  
April 8

**David Shulkin**  
Veterans Affairs secretary  
March 28



**H.R. McMaster**  
National security adviser  
March 22

**Andrew McCabe**  
FBI deputy director  
March 16

**Rex Tillerson**  
Secretary of state  
March 13

**John McEntee**  
Special assistant to the president  
March 12

**Gary Cohn**  
National Economic Council director  
March 6

**Hope Hicks**  
White House communications director  
Feb. 28

**Rob Porter**  
White House staff secretary  
Feb. 7

**Omarosa Manigault Newman**  
Office of Public Liaison  
Dec. 13, 2017

**Dina Powell**  
Deputy national security adviser  
Dec. 8, 2017

**Tom Price**  
Health and human services secretary  
Sept. 29, 2017

**Keith Schiller**  
Oval Office operations director  
Sept. 19, 2017



**Sebastian Gorka**  
Counterterrorism adviser  
Aug. 25, 2017

**Steve Bannon**  
White House chief strategist  
Aug. 18, 2017

**Anthony Scaramucci**  
Communications director  
July 31, 2017

**Reince Priebus**  
White House chief of staff  
July 28, 2017

**Sean Spicer**  
White House press secretary  
July 21, 2017

**Michael Dubke**  
Communications director  
May 30, 2017

**James Comey**  
FBI director  
May 9, 2017

**K.T. McFarland**  
Deputy national security adviser  
April 10, 2017

**Katie Walsh**  
Deputy chief of staff  
March 30, 2017

**Michael Flynn**  
National security adviser  
Feb. 13, 2017

**Sally Yates**  
Acting attorney general  
Jan. 30, 2017

SOURCES: AP reports; White House

Dates reflect when announcements were made or disclosed in news accounts.

AP

of the president early in his administration, particularly before first lady Melania Trump moved to Washington late last spring. The seemingly informal briefings for the president were in fact carefully orchestrated persuasion sessions designed to ease the president into abandoning some of his disruptive campaign rhetoric and accepting the advice of his senior national security advisers.

But Mattis' departure highlights how those early efforts delayed Trump's disruption, rather than averting it. His decision to depart follows a clash with the president over withdrawing troops from Syria, where a small military force has been fighting Islamic State extremists. The president is also said to be seeking to draw down American forces in Afghanistan, another move the Pentagon disagrees with.

Trump's split with Mattis followed a pattern of public breakdowns with advisers who served as guardrails in the administration.

Trump initially hailed Tillerson, the ExxonMobil chief executive, as out of "central casting" when as was tapped as secretary of state, before being unceremoniously discarded by the president earlier this year. Earlier this month, Tillerson described Trump as "pretty undisciplined, doesn't like to read doesn't like to

read, doesn't read briefing reports, doesn't like to get into the details of a lot of things, but rather just kind of says, 'This is what I believe.'"

Kelly suffered a similar fate. Hired to bring order to the Oval Office, the retired Marine ultimately found he, too, could not control Trump, who subjected Kelly to a series of public humiliations. Kelly is slated to leave in two weeks.

Trump treated Mattis with respect in announcing his departure via tweet, though he cast the move as a retirement rather than a resignation.

It was Mattis who made clear in his letter that he was leaving over a dispute with the president. Still, he said he would remain on through February to allow Trump time to nominate and confirm a successor, expressing concern about high-level turnover at the Pentagon at a critical juncture.

Indeed: The last of the committee to save America was trying to mitigate the damage one last time.

Editor's note: Julie Pace has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2007. Follow her at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

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## **Mattis resigning as Pentagon chief after Trump disagreements**

**By ZEKE MILLER and LOLITA BALDOR, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis resigned Thursday after clashing with President Donald Trump over the abrupt withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria and after two years of deep disagreements over America's role in the world.

Mattis, perhaps the most respected foreign policy official in Trump's administration, will leave by the end of February after two tumultuous years struggling to soften and moderate the president's hardline and sometimes sharply changing policies. He told Trump in a letter that he was leaving because "you have a right to have a Secretary of Defense whose views are better aligned with yours."

Mattis went to the White House with his resignation letter in hand to meet with the president and spoke to Trump for about 45 minutes, according to a senior U.S. official familiar with the incident but speaking on conditions of anonymity to discuss a private meeting.

There was no confrontation between the two men, the official said, and there was no one issue that caused the resignation. However, the official said, Syria likely was the last straw for Mattis.

His departure was immediately lamented by foreign policy hands and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, who viewed the retired Marine general as a sober voice of experience in the ear of a president who had never held political office or served in the military. Even Trump allies expressed fear over Mattis' decision to quit, believing him to be an important moderating force on the president.

"Just read Gen. Mattis resignation letter," tweeted Florida Sen. Marco Rubio. "It makes it abundantly clear that we are headed toward a series of grave policy errors which will endanger our nation, damage our alliances & empower our adversaries."

Mattis did not mention the dispute over Syria in his letter or proposed deep cuts to U.S. forces in Afghanistan, another significant policy dispute. He noted his "core belief" that American strength is "inextricably linked" with the nation's alliances with other countries, a position seemingly at odds with the "America First" policy of the president.

The defense secretary also said China and Russia want to spread their "authoritarian model" and promote their interests at the expense of America and its allies. "That is why we must use all the tools of American power to provide for the common defense," he wrote.

The announcement came a day after Trump surprised U.S. allies and members of Congress by announcing the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Syria, and as he continues to consider cutting in half the American deployment in Afghanistan by this summer. The news coincided with domestic turmoil as well, Trump's fight with Congress over a border wall and a looming partial government shutdown.

Trump's decision to pull troops out of Syria has been sharply criticized for abandoning America's Kurdish



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allies, who may well face a Turkish assault once U.S. troops leave, and had been staunchly opposed by the Pentagon.

Mattis, in his resignation letter, emphasized the importance of standing up for U.S. allies — an implicit criticism of the president's decision on this issue and others.

"While the U.S. remains the indispensable nation in the free world, we cannot protect our interests or serve that role effectively without maintaining strong alliances and showing respect to those allies," Mattis wrote.

Last year, Republican Sen. Bob Corker — a frequent Trump critic — said Mattis, along with White House chief of staff John Kelly and then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, were helping "separate our country from chaos."

Tillerson was fired early this year. Kelly is to leave the White House in the coming days.

"This is scary," reacted Senate Intelligence committee Vice Chairman Mark Warner, D-Va., on Twitter. "Secretary Mattis has been an island of stability amidst the chaos of the Trump administration."

"Jim Mattis did a superb job as Secretary of Defense. But he cannot be expected to stand behind a President who disrespects our allies and ingratiates himself to our adversaries," said William Cohen, who served as defense secretary under Bill Clinton and knows Mattis well.

Mattis' departure has long been rumored, but officials close to him have insisted that the battle-hardened retired Marine would hang on, determined to bring military calm and judgment to the administration's often chaotic national security decisions and to soften some of Trump's sharper tones with allies.

Opponents of Mattis, however, have seen him as an unwanted check on Trump.

Mattis went to the White House Thursday afternoon to resign after failing to persuade the president in a tense Oval Office meeting to change his decision on withdrawing troops from Syria, according to two people with knowledge of the conversation but not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Another U.S. official said that Mattis' decision was his own, and not a "forced resignation." The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

Trump said a replacement would be chosen soon.

"The president's national security team's job is to give him advice and it's the president's job to make a decision," said press secretary Sarah Sanders.

At the start of the Trump administration, the president had gushed about his respect for Mattis, repeatedly calling him "Mad Dog," despite Mattis' own public insistence that the moniker was never his. Instead, his nickname for years was CHAOS, which stood for "Colonel Has An Outstanding Suggestion," and reflected Mattis' more cerebral nature.

The two quickly clashed on major policy decisions.

During his first conversations with Trump about the Pentagon job, Mattis made it clear that he disagreed with his new boss in two areas: He said torture doesn't work, despite Trump's assertion during the campaign that it did, and he voiced staunch support for traditional U.S. international alliances, including NATO, which Trump repeatedly criticized.

Mattis was credited by some in the administration for blocking an executive order that would have reopened CIA interrogation "black sites." Trump has said the Pentagon chief convinced him it wasn't necessary to bring back banned torture techniques like waterboarding.

En route to his first visit to Iraq as defense secretary, Mattis bluntly rebuffed Trump's assertion that America might take Iraqi oil as compensation for U.S. efforts in the war-torn country.

The two also were divided on the future of the Afghanistan war, with Trump complaining from the first about its cost and arguing for withdrawal. Mattis and others ultimately persuaded Trump to pour additional resources and troops into the conflict to press toward a resolution.

U.S. officials say there now is active planning in the Pentagon that would pull as many as half the 14,000 U.S. troops out of Afghanistan by summer. They say no final decision has been made.

Trump also chafed at the Pentagon's slow response to his order to ban transgender people from serving in the military. That effort has stalled due to multiple legal challenges.

More recently, Trump bypassed Mattis' choice for the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Gen.

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David Goldfein, the Air Force chief, was Mattis' top choice, but Trump chose Gen. Mark Milley, the chief of the Army.

The Pentagon has appeared to be caught off guard by a number of Trump policy declarations, often made through Twitter. Those include plans that ultimately fizzled to have a big military parade this month and the more recent decision to send thousands of active duty troops to the Southwest border.

Mattis has determinedly kept a low public profile, striving to stay out of the news and out of Trump's line of fire.

Those close to him have repeatedly insisted that he would not quit, and would have to either be fired or die in the job. But others have noted that a two-year stint as defense chief is a normal and respectable length of service.

Born in Pullman, Washington, Mattis enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1969, later earning a history degree from Central Washington University. He was commissioned as an officer in 1972. As a lieutenant colonel, he led an assault battalion into Kuwait during the first U.S. war with Iraq in 1991.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Mattis commanded the Marines who launched an early amphibious assault into Afghanistan and established a U.S. foothold in the Taliban heartland. As the first wave of Marines moved toward Kandahar, Mattis declared, "The Marines have landed, and now we own a piece of Afghanistan."

Two years later, he helped lead the invasion into Iraq in 2003 as the two-star commander of the 1st Marine Division. As a four-star, he led Central Command from 2010 until his retirement in 2013.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Robert Burns contributed.

## China calls US arrogant and selfish after hacking indictment

By YANAN WANG, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China called the U.S. arrogant and selfish on Friday after two Chinese citizens were charged with stealing American trade secrets and other sensitive information on behalf of Beijing's main intelligence agency.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said "the Chinese government has never participated in or supported anyone in stealing trade secrets in any way."

She accused the U.S. of undermining the development of other countries in order to defend its own hegemony.

"The U.S. is a world superpower, and it's quite arrogant and selfish," she said during a regular press briefing.

The U.S. Justice Department announced Thursday the indictment of Chinese nationals Zhu Hua and Zhang Shilong for allegedly carrying out an extensive cyberespionage campaign against government agencies and major corporations.

Besides the alleged U.S. infiltration, Zhu and Hua are also accused of breaching computers linked to companies in at least 11 other countries, including Japan, the United Kingdom and India.

More than 90 percent of Justice Department economic espionage cases over the past seven years involve China, said Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, and more than two-thirds of trade secrets cases are connected to the country.

"China's state-sponsored actors are the most active perpetrators of economic espionage," FBI Director Chris Wray said in announcing the case. "While we welcome fair competition, we cannot and will not tolerate illegal hacking, stealing or cheating."

Hua, the Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, said: "They believe that a lie repeated a thousand times will become the truth, but I want to tell them that a lie is still a lie even after it has been repeated ten thousand times."

In a written statement issued earlier Friday, she said the U.S. was "fabricating facts."

The whereabouts of Zhu and Zhang are unclear. China does not have an extradition treaty with the U.S.

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"There is some cooperation under the framework of Interpol, but if the Chinese government doesn't agree with the U.S. charges, there is no way to extradite the accused," said Li Fangping, a Beijing-based criminal lawyer.

Li said that if Zhu and Zhang travel to other countries that have signed treaties with the U.S., they could be detained for possible extradition, as was the case with Chinese tech executive Meng Wanzhou's recent arrest in Canada.

The indictment says the pair worked for the Huaying Haitai Science and Technology Development Company in Tianjin and acted in association with the Chinese Ministry of State Security's bureau in the northeastern port city.

A public company registry says that Huaying Haitai's work includes the development of computer software, consulting and business related to a variety of technical equipment.

Among the cyberespionage maneuvers detailed in the indictment is the alleged use of a phishing technique which sent emails that appeared to be coming from legitimate email addresses but were in fact from members of "Advanced Persistent Threat 10," the China-based hacking group to which Zhu and Zhang purportedly belong.

James Gong, a cybersecurity senior associate at the Herbert Smith Freehills law firm in Beijing, said the mere announcement of charges is likely to affect public perception of China.

"The allegation itself will give rise to some suspicion, at least, among the international public, that these hacking activities are actually supported by the Chinese state," he said.

Associated Press writers Michael Balsamo and Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this story.

## 'The toughest year': US immigration changes dominated 2018

By MATT SEDENSKY and JULIE WATSON, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Children torn from their parents, refugees turned away, tear gas fired on asylum-seekers, and a president who says he's making good on promises to protect the nation's borders. In a breathless 2018, they were just a handful of headlines on immigration, one of the year's most dominant issues.

Combined with a relentless stream of administrative memos and changes in regulation and enforcement, it represented a government bombardment on virtually every type of immigration — a bold follow-up to the opening salvo of President Donald Trump's first year in office.

For those who champion Trump and believe that cracking down on immigration translates to better lives for Americans, it has been a year of fulfillment of campaign promises. For those who've watched in horror, it harkened back to other points in the country's history, when fear of new arrivals led the U.S. to refuse entry to various groups and when open discrimination of certain ethnicities prevailed.

"This is our generation's sort of existential moment," said Frank Sharry, head of pro-immigration group America's Voice. "Are we going to continue to be a nation that practices 'e pluribus unum' and welcomes people from around the world to make this country better? Or are we going to shut the door?"

Throughout 2018, the answer has largely been the latter.

Even as roundups and deportations persist in targeting those who enter the U.S. illegally, the Trump administration has pushed beyond that to redefine what legal immigration looks like, too. It has slowed down or altogether halted many seeking to come to the country for a job offer or through their relationship to a citizen, and narrowed the chances of finding a home here as a refugee or asylum seeker. Jarring visuals of children in detention centers and other enforcement actions have dissuaded some from seeking to come here at all.

"There has been this constant chip, chip, chipping away at the legal immigration system using every tool of the executive branch," said Doug Rand, who worked in the Obama administration before helping found Boundless Immigration, which helps people navigate the immigration system.

The year neared its close with the administration saying those seeking asylum would be forced to wait

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in Mexico, a major shift that immediately spurred questions of legality from opponents. Meantime, the possibility of a government shutdown loomed as Trump and Democrats once again butted heads over funding to build a wall along the border with Mexico.

Even without it, though, the policies he's pursued have effectively put up a virtual wall.

"That is far more effective than a border wall ever would be," said Sarah Pierce, a policy analyst with the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute.

Even top-tier computer programmers, architects, engineers and other professionals with job offers in the U.S. saw their applications for H1-B visas under much more scrutiny; a means of expediting processing of those visas was ended under Trump, and bids for work authorization have been met by what employers and immigration attorneys say seem like endless requests for evidence to prove seemingly straightforward facts.

Still, the odds of those professionals eventually gaining clearance to enter the U.S. are better than for many others.

Trump's so-called "travel ban," the first iteration of which was unveiled in the president's first week in office, was upheld in June by the U.S. Supreme Court, stopping most visas for residents of mostly Muslim Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, as well as North Korea and Venezuela. Though the policy allows for waivers, initial data showed few such applications were actually approved, effectively shutting the door to most from those nations.

It's had very real consequences for people like Soolmaz Dadgari, an Iranian who came to the U.S. in 2017 so her 4-year-old daughter, Arina, could take part in an experimental study to treat a rare genetic disorder. Dadgari's husband has been unable to get a visa to join them, and sanctions make it hard for him to send money. She alone cares for a child who can't walk or talk and requires 24-hour help, as well as another 11-year-old daughter.

Dadgari has considered returning home but knows she needs to remain for her daughter's treatment. Still, the situation has affected the way she views the U.S., which she had always regarded as the best place in the world.

"I have no hope," she said.

Even as wars, persecution and famine have continued around the world, the U.S. capped refugee admissions at 45,000 for the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, the lowest ceiling since the State Department began tracking the figure in 1980. Far fewer were actually admitted in that time frame: about 21,000 refugees. The number is likely to fall further, with the cap for the current fiscal year set at 30,000.

Meantime, tens of thousands fleeing violence in Central America sought asylum in the U.S. this year. The Trump administration responded by narrowing who is eligible, declaring that neither those escaping gang violence or domestic abuse nor those who cross the border illegally qualify. Both changes have been blocked by federal courts.

Some seeking refuge in the U.S. are stuck in untenable positions.

Ivis Muñoz, 26, decided to join a caravan leaving Honduras in mid-October. A gang member had shot him in the thigh and threatened to kill him. Muñoz planned to seek asylum in the U.S. but learned along his journey that he was unlikely to be accepted.

His first night in Tijuana, Mexico, he slept on the beach until rocks rained down on him and other migrants and a man shouted in the darkness: "Go back to your country!" Now he's a few hours east in Mexicali, his aching leg full of bullet fragments, overwhelmed and scared by his reality.

"I don't know what to do," said Munoz, a coffee farmer from the Honduran town of Atima. "I want to go to the United States, though I'm scared they'll send me back. I'm afraid to be in Honduras, but I don't feel safe here either."

At every turn, there were policy changes. One proposed rule would restrict visas or legal permanent residence for those receiving certain government benefits for low-income people, such as food stamps. Hundreds of immigrant enlistees in the Army were discharged or had their contracts cancelled, though some were later reinstated. Even some U.S. citizens were targeted by a "denaturalization task force" looking for naturalized Americans with past infractions.

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More than any other shifts in policy, the Trump administration's move to separate apprehended migrant children from their parents shook people around the world. Though Trump eventually ended widespread use of the practice, the scars remain for those affected.

Evelin Roxana Meyer of La Union, Honduras, thought 2018 would be the year things turned around for her family. They've struggled to pay off a loan for the grocery store they run out of their home, so her husband, Douglas, and son, Eduardo, set off for the United States in hopes of finding work. Instead, the two were picked up by Border Patrol agents and separated.

The father was deported, but it took weeks before the parents knew where Eduardo was taken. He spent four months in detention, turning 12 alone at a facility in Brownsville, Texas. The once-affectionate boy returned home angry in September. He rarely goes out, spending most of his time in his room watching TV. He's refused to go to school and will have to repeat the sixth grade. He talks back to his parents and hits his little sister, whom he used to be close to. The family doesn't know what to do to help him.

"This was the toughest year of all," said 38-year-old Meyer.

Polling finds a big majority of Americans still view the country's openness to immigrants as essential to the nation's identity. But the profound shift in government policies on the subject threatens that idea of the U.S. as a welcoming land of opportunity for all.

Christina Greer, a political science professor at Fordham University, sees Trump's immigration overhaul as the continuation of a tug-of-war that's played out since the nation's founding, between what many see as bedrock American ideals and a pattern of nevertheless being hostile to newcomers.

"The country, unfortunately, has had an incongruence with the myth of America versus the reality of America," said Greer, who authored "Black Ethnicity: Race, Immigration, and the Pursuit of the American Dream." "Trump's really fine with blowing up the myth."

Sharry thinks the country's reputation suffers when its leaders close the doors to others: "They've put a million people on the road to deportation. They've ripped thousands of kids from their parents. They've gutted refugee protection at our border. They're building and expanding detention centers. They're trying to scare low-income immigrants from using health and other services. They've taken aim at legal immigration. They've slashed refugee admissions. That's a pretty relentless assault on a core principal of the American experiment."

Others see it far differently.

Neil Gouveia came to the U.S. from Guyana as a 7-year-old. His family waited years to earn visas, then waited again to become citizens. His parents made the difficult choice to leave behind his 9-year-old sister, who had cerebral palsy and wasn't granted a visa.

Gouveia considered himself a typical "liberal New Yorker" until 2016, when he was drawn to Trump for what he believed was his strength on national security. Gouveia is gay and said the mass shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, particularly shook him.

He wasn't offended when Trump referred to parts of the world as "shithole countries," and doesn't see anything inherently wrong in separating immigrant children from the adults they arrive with. He thinks, ultimately, it will all lead to greater dialogue and better policies. And he still believes America stands as a beacon for much of the world.

"At the end of the day, people will say what they want to say about America, but there's hardly anyone who still wouldn't want to come here," said Gouveia, 39, a collegiate fundraiser. "They still know it's like winning the lottery."

Daniel Stein heads the Federation for American Immigration Reform, which supports restrictive immigration measures. He agrees the year's immigration imagery has had "a huge political impact on the psyche of the nation," but argues it has moved more people to his side of the debate. And to those who see the year as an extended assault on a cornerstone American value, he's unmoved.

"They have a vivid imagination," Stein said. "We have one of the world's most generous immigration programs."

That's little comfort to Buena Ventura Martin Godinez, a 29-year-old mother of two who carried her 9-month-old son across the border in May, fleeing threats from violent gangsters in her hometown of San

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Juan Atitan, Guatemala. She was caught in Arizona and held for a week at a detention center with her baby. When her husband followed two weeks later with their 7-year-old daughter, they weren't so lucky.

The girl was sent to a facility in Michigan and kept there for six weeks; the father went to an Atlanta jail, where he still awaits deportation. Her family fractured, Godinez now regrets the day she ever headed to the U.S.

"I came looking for a better life ... and everything went wrong," she said from the five-room house in Homestead, Florida, that she and her two children share with nine others. "I thought that it was true that it is a country that gives opportunities. But it is not."

Godinez notices changes in her children. Her daughter, always so sweet and obedient, cries incessantly and struggles in school. Her son keeps falling ill, his temperament now trademarked by screaming, crying and sighing.

"This is the worst year I ever had," she said.

Watson reported from San Diego. Associated Press writer Gisela Salomon contributed reporting from Miami.

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## Longtime Clippers fan Crystal will be analyst for 1 game

By **JOE REEDY, AP Sports Writer**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Los Angeles Clippers announcer Ralph Lawler was approached two months ago with a special request. A longtime season-ticket holder asked team president Gillian Zucker if he could call a game on television with Lawler and honor his 40 seasons with the club.

Lawler apprehensively said yes, until he found out it wasn't just any season-ticket holder. It happens to be one that has hosted the Academy Awards nine times.

Billy Crystal, who has been the team's most well-known fan through the good times and bad, will be the analyst for the Jan. 31 game against the Lakers.

"They told me he really wants to do it," Lawler said before the Clippers faced Dallas on Thursday night. "He has been a fan forever and he wants to take his time to pay his respects for my longtime service to the club."

Crystal has been a season-ticket holder since 1985, when the team played at the old LA Sports Arena. Lawler said the two have spent a lot of time over the years talking basketball and that it will be a fun experience doing it on television.

"It will be a big game and the building will be electric. He's done the Academy Awards for nine years so he can handle our broadcast," Lawler said.

Crystal isn't the only guest analyst who will work with Lawler this season. Mike Fratello, Hubie Brown and Bill Walton — who are all former partners of Lawler — will return for some games.

"Ralph is a fantastic broadcaster and a wonderful man," Crystal told the Clippers' website. "I'm looking forward to calling a game with him. He's a Hall of Famer in my book."

More AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/NBA> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Veteran draws millions in donations for Trump's border wall

By **TERRY TANG, Associated Press**

An online fundraiser started by an Air Force veteran to pay for construction of President Donald Trump's U.S.-Mexico border wall was up to millions of dollars Thursday, bringing further attention to an issue that could lead to a government shutdown.

Brian Kolfage launched the GoFundMe page Sunday, and it had generated \$9.7 million in donations as of Thursday evening. The site states a fundraising goal of \$1 billion.

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In a statement posted on the crowdsourcing page, Kolfage says the wall could be built if everyone who voted for Trump pledged \$80 each.

"As a veteran who has given so much, three limbs, I feel deeply invested to this nation to ensure future generations have everything we have today," Kolfage wrote.

A triple amputee injured in the Iraq War in 2004, Kolfage said he has contacted the Trump administration about where to send the money once the fundraiser ends.

Trump announced Thursday he would not sign a bill to keep funding the government because it fails to provide billions for his border wall. It was his second reversal in a matter of days after conservative allies and pundits accused him of backing down on a central campaign promise. His decision has thrown Congress into disarray and risks a federal shutdown this weekend.

Kolfage, who is listed on GoFundMe as being based in Miramar Beach, Florida, said in an email that he was not immediately available to comment.

The reception toward Kolfage's fundraising is far from the reaction when Arizona lawmakers similarly tried to raise money for border fencing several years ago.

Legislators approved a bill in 2011 to establish a website to raise \$50 million for border fencing. The effort, however, flopped, bringing in around \$265,000.

Kolfage's page inspired at least one opposing fundraising page. A GoFundMe fundraiser was created Wednesday to raise money for "ladders to get over Trump's wall." The site posted a goal of \$100 million and garnered more than \$20,000 in donations as of Thursday afternoon. All the money will go toward a nonprofit that provides education and legal services to refugees and immigrant families.

This story has been corrected to show that Kolfage said each Trump voter should pledge \$80 and that Kolfage is listed as being in Miramar Beach, not Miramar.

## Democrats to start presidential primary debates in June 2019

By **BILL BARROW**, Associated Press

Democrats will hold at least a dozen presidential primary debates starting in June 2019 and running through April 2020, with party Chairman Tom Perez promising rules that will give everyone in a potentially large field a fair shot at voters' attention.

Making public his first in a series of decisions on the 2020 debate calendar, Perez said Thursday that the national party will sponsor six debates in 2019 and six more in 2020. That could be extended if the nomination process drags deep into the spring.

Exact dates, locations, media partners and qualifying thresholds will be announced in early 2019. But Perez says early voting states of Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina won't host debates until 2020.

The first two debates in June and July will have two rounds, possibly over two nights, to accommodate what is expected to be an unwieldy field. Candidates will be assigned at random, Perez said, to avoid the party picking and choosing who is a top-tier contender, as Republicans did during their 2016 primary debates.

"Democrats want to put our eventual nominee in the strongest position possible to defeat Donald Trump," Perez said. He said officials have "listened to voices across our party about how we can make the primary process better" and set rules that "will help every candidate feel like they got a fair shake."

National figures like former Vice President Joe Biden and Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Bernie Sanders of Vermont, Kamala Harris of California and Cory Booker of New Jersey likely would have no trouble qualifying for the debate stage regardless of the rules.

But for upstart candidates, from governors and mayors to little-known members of Congress, getting a slot in the initial debates could be a make-or-break opportunity. One such candidate, Rep. John Delaney of Maryland, has already invested considerable time and money in Iowa and New Hampshire. In a state-

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ment Thursday, he called it “encouraging that the DNC is really embracing a fair process.”

Perez’s announcement Thursday comes after months of discussions among party officials, television networks and previous presidential campaigns. Mary Beth Cahill, who ran Sen. John Kerry’s 2004 presidential campaign, has led the process for Perez.

From the outset, Perez and Cahill stated a determination to avoid charges of favoritism that dogged Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton in 2016, in part because of the debate schedule established by then-Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

In the last election cycle, Wasserman Schultz did not commit to an initial six debates until May 2015; the first debate wasn’t held until that October. Democrats had a total of nine debates in that primary fight, not counting additional forums.

Perez also has used Republicans’ 2016 experience as a guide. Then GOP-Chairman Reince Priebus sanctioned 12 debates for a field of 18 candidates, beginning in August. Some early debates featured two stages on the same night, but the GOP divided the field into essentially a varsity lineup and a junior varsity group of longshots.

“Drawing lots strikes me as the fairest way to ensure everyone gets a fair shake,” Perez said.

Perez committed to using qualifying thresholds beyond polling for at least the June and July debates. As an example, he cited grassroots fundraising. Party officials involved in debate discussions have also mentioned metrics such as the number of field offices in the early voting states.

Top Democrats also said that the two-stage approach and expansive qualifying thresholds could conceivably be extended to later debates if the field remains too large for one stage.

Perez did not say precisely how many candidates he believes is too large for one stage, though he referred to “a double-digit field” when discussing the June and July sessions. Details of the debates ultimately must be hammered out with the co-sponsoring television networks that pay for the events, but Perez and other Democratic officials have said the networks appear amenable to the party’s ideas.

The party will not bar candidates from participating in other forums, Perez said, referring to events that may feature multiple candidates but not have them on stage at the same time to interact with one another.

Perez said that while the traditional first four states will not host debates in 2019, he would not restrict early debates in states like California that are holding March primaries with mail ballots going out even as Iowans are gathering for the first caucus.

\_\_\_ Follow Bill Barrow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP>

## **APNewsBreak: US miscalculated benefit of better train brakes**

**By MATTHEW BROWN, Associated Press**

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — President Donald Trump’s administration miscalculated the potential benefits of putting better brakes on trains that haul explosive fuels when it scrapped an Obama-era rule over cost concerns, The Associated Press has found.

A government analysis used to justify the cancellation omitted up to \$117 million in estimated future damages from train derailments that could be avoided by using electronic brakes. Revelation of the error stoked renewed criticism Thursday from the rule’s supporters, who called the analysis biased.

Department of Transportation officials acknowledged the mistake after it was discovered by the AP during a review of federal documents. They said a correction will be published to the federal register.

But transportation spokesman Bobby Fraser said the decision not to require the brakes would stand under a Congressional act that said the costs couldn’t exceed the rule’s benefits.

“This was an unintentional error,” Fraser. “With the correction, in all scenarios costs still outweigh benefits.”

Safety advocates, transportation union leaders and Democratic lawmakers oppose the administration’s decision to kill the brake rule, which was included in a package of rail safety measures enacted in 2015 under President Barack Obama following dozens of accidents by trains hauling oil and ethanol in the U.S. and Canada.

The deadliest happened in Canada in 2013, when an unattended train carrying crude oil rolled down an



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incline, came off the tracks in the town of Lac-Megantic and exploded into a massive ball of fire, killing 47 people and obliterating much of the Quebec community's downtown.

There have been other fiery crashes and fuel spills in Alabama, Oregon, Montana, Virginia, West Virginia, North Dakota, Illinois and elsewhere.

Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley said the administration should reconsider the brake rule in light of its miscalculation.

"The omission of \$117 million from the rule's anticipated benefits is further proof that the Trump administration is willing to cut corners to put industry profits ahead of the American people's safety," said Merkley, a Democrat. He called for "a new cost-benefit analysis that is full and transparent."

After the brake rule was enacted, lobbyists for the railroad and oil industries pushed to cancel it, citing the high cost of installing so-called electronic pneumatic brakes and questioning their effectiveness.

But supporters of the brakes said the issue should be reconsidered given the miscalculation and concerns about other benefits that may have been ignored, including reducing the frequency of runaway trains and severity of train-on-train collisions, said Robert Duff, a senior adviser to Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat.

"This is not theoretical risk. We've actually seen these derailments," Duff said.

Unlike other systems where brakes are applied sequentially along the length of a train, electronic pneumatic brakes, or ECP, work on all cars simultaneously. That can reduce the distance and time a train needs to stop and cause fewer cars to derail.

"These ECP brakes are very important for oil trains," said Steven Ditmeyer, a rail safety expert and former senior official at the Federal Railroad Administration. "It makes a great deal of sense: All the brakes get applied immediately, and there would be fewer cars in the pileup."

Under Obama, the Transportation Department determined the brakes would cost up to \$664 million over 20 years and save between \$470 million and \$1.1 billion from accidents that would be avoided.

The Trump administration reduced the range of benefits to between \$131 million and \$374 million.

Transportation Department economists said in their analysis that the change was prompted in part by a reduction in oil train traffic in recent years. Even as ethanol shipments on U.S. railroads have continued to grow, reaching about 500,000 carloads annually, crude shipments peaked in 2014 and fell to about 200,000 carloads last year.

But in making their cost-benefit calculations, government economists left out the most common type of derailments in which spilled and burning fuel causes property damage but no mass casualties, the AP found. Equipping fuel trains with electronic brakes would reduce damages from those derailments by an estimated \$48 million to \$117 million, according to Department of Transportation estimates that were left out of the administration's final tally.

Including the omitted benefits reduces the net cost of the requirement to as low as \$63 million under one scenario laid out by the agency. Other scenarios put the net cost at more than \$200 million.

Transportation spokesman Fraser said that would not have changed September's decision to cancel the electronic brake requirement because of the cost.

The Association of American Railroads declined comment on the agency's cost benefit calculations. Spokeswoman Jessica Kahanek said the move to rescind the Obama rule was in line with the requirements set forth by Congress, which passed a 2015 measure saying the Department of Transportation must repeal the braking requirement if expected costs exceed benefits.

The biggest share of oil now moved by rail goes from the Bakken oil patch of North Dakota and Montana to the West Coast, where fears of an accident were realized two years ago when 16 tank cars carrying Bakken oil derailed, igniting a fire that burned for 14 hours along the banks of the Columbia River near Mosier, Oregon.

The accident was caused by track problems. An investigation by the Federal Railroad Administration concluded electronic brakes would have made it less severe.

John Risch, national legislative director for the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers, said electronic brakes also would have prevented the deaths at Lac-Megantic.

He added that the omission of benefits from the government's findings further tilted a study that was otherwise flawed.

"It flies in the face of earlier, much more comprehensive studies," Risch said. "We are using a 120-year-old technology with mechanical brakes. They've come to the peak of what you can do with them."

\_\_\_ Follow Matthew Brown at <https://twitter.com/matthewbrownap>

## Pentagon scrambles on Syria exit amid withdrawal outrage

By **ROBERT BURNS** and **LOLITA BALDOR**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Military leaders were scrambling Thursday to devise a swift but safe departure of troops from Syria, as outraged lawmakers appealed to President Donald Trump to reverse an abrupt withdrawal order that rattled Washington's allies and was a key factor in the resignation of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis later in the day.

Defense officials said U.S. airstrikes would continue until all the approximately 2,000 U.S. troops are out of Syria, but it was unclear whether the air campaign would then end. Officials said it might depend on whether France and other coalition partners keep ground troops in Syria after the Americans leave. A continued presence of allied troops working with local Syrians might compel the U.S. to contribute air cover.

The Pentagon, roiled first by the surprise withdrawal order from Trump and then the abrupt resignation of Mattis, offered no information about how the withdrawal will happen or how long it will take, apparently because they don't know.

Two officials speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal planning said Gen. Joseph Votel, head of U.S. Central Command, will submit a comprehensive withdrawal plan to top Pentagon officials in coming days.

One official said military commanders are concerned that the pullout will leave their Syrian Kurdish allies in the lurch.

Turkey, which considers the Kurds a security threat, has said it intends to send its army into Syria to clear them out. Until now, Turkey had to consider the presence of U.S. troops; once they are gone, a bloody clash seems inevitable.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said on Thursday that Mattis had told him he is worried about the Kurds and this is not the right time to leave.

"I won't get into conversations between Mattis and the president, but I will tell you what he told me: He thought that the time was not right to leave," Graham said at a Capitol Hill news conference.

Mattis believes that "the day we leave it's going to be open season on every Kurd who's supported us," he said.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, who have partnered with U.S. troops for years as the key force against IS militants, said in a strongly worded statement laced with bitterness that the fight against IS was at a "decisive" stage that requires even more support from the U.S.-led coalition.

"The war against terrorism has not ended and (the Islamic State group) has not been defeated," the statement said.

Graham said Mattis also expressed concern about the more than 700 Islamic State fighters being held by the SDF, saying they could be released and end up back on the battlefield.

The militants still hold a string of villages and towns along the Euphrates River in eastern Syria, where they have resisted weeks of attacks by the U.S.-supported Syrian Democratic Forces to drive them out. The pocket is home to about 15,000 people, among them 2,000 IS fighters, according to U.S. military estimates.

From the start of his administration, Trump had made no secret of his desire to pull out of Syria. But the timing of his announcement Wednesday remains a puzzle. His national security adviser, John Bolton, Mattis and other top leaders argued against the pullout, but were unable to change Trump's mind.

Graham and Democratic Sens. Bob Menendez of New Jersey and Jack Reed of Rhode Island say they have growing support for a resolution urging the president to change his strategy. Graham, who usually

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is a strong Trump supporter, has savaged the pullout decision as wrong-headed, ill-timed and a gift to America's adversaries.

"I can't explain this decision," Graham told reporters. "I'm not going to suggest motivations that are anything other than a frustrated president. But I can promise this: that if you follow through with this everything that happened in Iraq is going to happen in Syria. It's going to be worse, not better. It's going to make it harder to make the Taliban reconcile." His Taliban reference was to U.S. efforts to promote peace in Afghanistan.

On Thursday, Trump defended his decision, saying on Twitter: "Getting out of Syria was no surprise. I've been campaigning on it for years, and six months ago, when I very publicly wanted to do it, I agreed to stay longer."

He added: "Does the USA want to be the Policeman of the Middle East, getting NOTHING but spending precious lives and trillions of dollars protecting others who, in almost all cases, do not appreciate what we are doing? Do we want to be there forever?"

Mattis and other senior administration officials have argued publicly for months that it would be in the best interests of the United States to remain in Syria long enough to ensure a lasting defeat of the Islamic State militants, who have been greatly diminished but not eliminated. Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said the Pentagon estimates that 35,000 to 40,000 local security forces are needed to ensure stability in northeastern Syria. As of December, Dunford said, only about 20 percent of those forces have been trained.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who is known to have opposed leaving Syria now, defended the Trump decision Thursday.

"The president made an enormous commitment to take down the caliphate, and that has been achieved," he said. "We now have the battle, it's a long-time battle, which is the counterterrorism battle, not only against ISIS, but against al-Qaeda and others ..., all the terrorist groups. President Trump remains just as committed today as he was yesterday and the day before."

Trump pushed back against Graham in a tweet, writing: "So hard to believe that Lindsey Graham would be against saving soldier lives & billions of \$\$\$\$. Why are we fighting for our enemy, Syria, by staying & killing ISIS for them Russia, Iran & other locals?"

It's true that Syrian President Bashar Assad considers the Islamic State militants a threat, and that Assad has been supported by Iran and Russia in his civil war against a range of opposition fighters. The stated purpose of the U.S. military presence, however, was not to defend Assad but to defeat the Islamic State while pressing for a U.N.-brokered diplomatic solution to the civil war.

\_\_\_ Associated Press writer Matthew Lee contributed to this report.

## Asian stocks sink for 2nd day after Wall Street slide

By **JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer**

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stocks fell further Friday after Wall Street slid on recession fears, putting markets in Shanghai, Tokyo and Sydney on track to end 2018 down more than 10 percent.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index fell 1.9 percent and the Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.9 percent. The Chinese market is 2018's worst performer, down nearly 25 percent for the year.

Stocks usually end the year with a flourish. But investors worry global economic growth is cooling and the U.S. could slip into a recession in the next few years.

U.S. markets are cooling after "years of outperformance" and working off "overvaluation in some areas" such as major tech companies, said Shane Oliver of AMP Capital in a report.

China and other emerging Asian markets "fell much earlier and harder and so far are holding above their October lows," said Oliver.

The Nikkei declined to 20,015.67 points, putting its loss for the year at nearly 13 percent, while the Shanghai index declined to 2,512.54. Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 retreated 1.2 percent to 5,440.70 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng gave up 0.8 percent to 25,426.24.

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Seoul's Kospi retreated 0.3 percent to 2,052.01 and benchmarks in Taiwan, New Zealand and Southeast Asia also declined.

Wall Street is headed for its worst December since the Great Depression.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 464 points on Thursday, bringing its losses to more than 1,700 since last Friday.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index is down 16 percent from its late-September peak. The technology-heavy Nasdaq composite is down 19.5 percent from its record high in August.

The market is swooning even as the U.S. economy is on track to expand at the fastest pace in 13 years. Markets tend to move, however, on what investors anticipate will happen further out.

Among other threats: the trade dispute between the U.S. and China, and rising U.S. interest rates, which act as a brake on economic growth by making it more expensive for businesses and individuals to borrow money.

The S&P 500 index lost 1.6 percent to 2,467.42. The Dow fell 2 percent to 22,859.60.

The Nasdaq fell 1.6 percent to 6,528.41. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies dropped 23.23 points, or 1.7 percent, to 1,326.

This week's U.S. sell-off came after the Federal Reserve raised interest rates for the fourth time this year and signaled more increases are likely next year. Investors were disappointed Chairman Jerome Powell failed to indicate a bigger slowdown in the pace of rate hikes.

On Thursday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told Fox Business the market reaction to the Fed was "completely overblown."

In Asia, investors were disappointed Chinese President Xi Jinping announced no initiatives to boost cooling economic growth in a speech Tuesday.

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude rebounded 65 cents to \$46.55 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. That came after the contract plunged \$2.29 on Thursday to close at \$45.88.

Brent crude, used to price international oils, rose 79 cents to \$55.14 per barrel in London. It fell \$2.89 the previous session to \$54.35.

In currency trading, the dollar edged down to 111.21 yen from Thursday's 111.24 yen. The euro gained to \$1.1454 from \$1.1447.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Dec. 21, the 355th day of 2018. There are 10 days left in the year. Winter arrives at 5:23 p.m. Eastern time.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 21, 1891, the first basketball game, devised by James Naismith, is believed to have been played at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. (The final score of this experimental game: 1-0.)

On this date:

In 1620, Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower went ashore for the first time at present-day Plymouth, Massachusetts.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union forces led by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman concluded their "March to the Sea" as they captured Savannah, Georgia.

In 1913, the first newspaper crossword puzzle, billed as a "Word-Cross Puzzle," was published in the New York World.

In 1937, Walt Disney's first animated feature, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," had its world premiere at the Carthay Circle Theater in Los Angeles. The first Dr. Seuss book, "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," was published by Vanguard Press.

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In 1945, U.S. Army Gen. George S. Patton, 60, died in Heidelberg, Germany, 12 days after being seriously injured in a car accident.

In 1967, Louis Washkansky, the first human heart transplant recipient, died at a hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, 18 days after receiving the donor organ. The satirical comedy-drama "The Graduate," starring Anne Bancroft and Dustin Hoffman, was released by Embassy Pictures.

In 1968, Apollo 8 was launched on a mission to orbit the moon.

In 1969, Vince Lombardi coached his last football game as his team, the Washington Redskins, lost to the Dallas Cowboys, 20-10.

In 1976, the Liberian-registered tanker Argo Merchant broke apart near Nantucket Island off Massachusetts almost a week after running aground, spilling 7.5 million gallons of oil into the North Atlantic.

In 1988, 270 people were killed when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard a Pam Am Boeing 747 over Lockerbie, Scotland, sending wreckage crashing to the ground.

In 1991, eleven of the 12 former Soviet republics proclaimed the birth of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the death of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In 2002, President George W. Bush received a smallpox vaccination, fulfilling a promise he'd made when he ordered inoculations for about a-half million U.S. troops.

Ten years ago: A multi-faith ceremony was held to mark the reopening of Mumbai, India's Oberoi hotel three weeks after it was targeted in a militant rampage. Detroit became the first 0-15 team when it was routed 42-7 by the New Orleans Saints. Playwright Dale Wasserman, who'd written the book for the Tony-winning musical "Man of La Mancha," died in Paradise Valley, Ariz. at age 94.

Five years ago: Director of National Intelligence James Clapper declassified more documents outlining how the National Security Agency was first authorized to start collecting bulk phone and Internet records in the hunt for al-Qaida terrorists and how a court eventually gained oversight of the program. Gunfire hit three U.S. military aircraft trying to evacuate American citizens in a remote region of South Sudan that had become a battleground between the country's military and renegade troops. Edgar M. Bronfman Sr., 84, the billionaire businessman and longtime president of the World Jewish Congress, died in New York.

One year ago: The U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to denounce President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, largely ignoring Trump's threat to cut off aid to any country that went against him. Vice President Mike Pence arrived in Afghanistan for a secret meeting with Afghan leaders and a visit with U.S. troops. Papa John's announced that founder John Schnatter would step down as CEO; the company had apologized for his comments criticizing the NFL leadership over protests by players who knelt during the national anthem.

Today's Birthdays: Talk show host Phil Donahue is 83. Actress Jane Fonda is 81. Actor Larry Bryggman is 80. Singer Carla Thomas is 76. Musician Albert Lee is 75. Conductor Michael Tilson Thomas is 74. Actor Josh Mostel is 72. Actor Samuel L. Jackson is 70. Rock singer Nick Gilder is 68. Movie producer Jeffrey Katzenberg is 68. Actor Dennis Boutsikaris is 66. Singer Betty Wright is 65. International Tennis Hall of Famer Chris Evert is 64. Actress Jane Kaczmarek is 63. Country singer Lee Roy Parnell is 62. Entertainer Jim Rose is 62. Former child actress Lisa Gerritsen is 61. Actor-comedian Ray Romano is 61. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin is 56. Country singer Christy Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 56. Rock musician Murph (The Lemonheads; Dinosaur Jr.) is 54. Actor-comedian Andy Dick is 53. Rock musician Gabrielle Glaser is 53. Actress Michelle Hurd is 52. Actor Kiefer Sutherland is 52. Actress Karri Turner is 52. Actress Khristyne Haje is 50. Country singer Brad Warren (The Warren Brothers) is 50. Actress Julie Delpy is 49. Country singer-musician Rhea (rehn) Boyer (Carolina Rain) is 48. Contemporary Christian singer Natalie Grant is 47. Actor Glenn Fitzgerald is 47. Singer-musician Brett Scallions is 47. World Golf Hall of Famer Karrie Webb is 44. Rock singer Lukas Rossi (Rock Star Supernova) is 42. Actress Rutina Wesley is 40. Rock musician Anna Bulbrook (Airborne Toxic Event) is 36. Country singer Luke Stricklin is 36. Actor Steven Yeun is 35. Actress Kaitlyn Dever is 22.

Thought for Today: "Winter comes but once a year, And when it comes it brings the doctor good cheer." — Ogden Nash, American humorist (1902-1971).