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Groton Area Schedule of Events

Friday, February 1, 2019

Boys Basketball at Tiospa Zina. (C game at 5:15 p.m. followed by junior varsity and varsity games)

Saturday, February 2, 2019

10:00am: Basketball: Groton Area girls vs. Dakota Valley @ Madison High School main gym. (DAK 12 vs NEC Conference Clash)

10:00am: Wrestling: Boys Varsity Tournament @ Stanley County High School

Skating Rink Hours

Open Monday - Thursday: 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday: 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday: 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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It's Boys' Basketball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Tiospa Zina
Wambdi**
VS



Groton Area Tigers

Friday, Feb. 1, 2019

8:00 p.m.

at Agency Village

In the event we cannot get a signal out of Agency Village, we will still record the game and then upload it to 397news.com when we get back.

Broadcast of this game is sponsored by

Aberdeen
Chrysler Center

901 Auto Plaza Drive
Aberdeen, SD

800.874.9173

www.aberdeenchrysler.com

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Debaters make it to quarterfinals

GHS Sophomores Hailey Monson and Sage Mortenson were Public Forum Debate quarterfinalists at the Lewis and Clark Invitational debate contest. Monson and Mortenson were defeated in the quarter final round by a team from Harrisburg that went on to win the event. Also traveling to Yankton were KaSandra Pappas and Samantha Pappas.

Cook/ Dietary Aide

Flexible schedule
and new wage
scale.

Contact Pam Rohrbach



GROTON
CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

1106 North Second Street
605.397.2365

**HELP
WANTED**



HELP WANTED

Director of Nursing

Current RN licensure in SD
BSN/MSN degree preferred
Sign on bonus available
Full benefits included.

Contact Brynn Pickrel



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CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

1106 North Second Street
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Noem Approves Constitutional Carry Legislation, Nine Other Bills

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem yesterday signed her first bill into law. SB47, which Noem signed today, will further protect the Second Amendment rights of South Dakotans by allowing constitutional carry. The bill will go into effect July 1, 2019.

“More than 230 years ago, the Founding Fathers of our country penned the Constitution that has since laid the framework for centuries of policies. They so firmly believed in the importance of the freedom to bear arms that they enshrined it into the Constitution’s Second Amendment,” said Noem. “This constitutional carry legislation will further protect the Second Amendment rights of South Dakotans.”

Furthermore, Noem signed the following pieces of legislation yesterday:

HB1004 – An act to review parole date calculation provisions

HB1006 – An act to revise the time requirements for parole reports and plans

HB1016 – An act to revise certain provisions of the alcoholic beverages code

HB1030 – An act to allow the Office of School and Public Lands to accept internet bidding for the leasing of state minerals

HB1002 – An act to provide for criminal background checks for certain applicants and employees of the Department of Public Safety

HB1005 – An act to authorize a hearing panel of the Board of Pardons and Paroles to make clemency recommendations

HB1017 – An act to provide for the destruction of certain cigarettes

SB0026 – An act to clarify certain provisions regarding the regulation of limited gaming in Deadwood, South Dakota

SB0013 – An act to revise certain provisions regarding authorization for transportation assistance grants

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Today in Weather History

February 1, 1969: Across central and eastern South Dakota, February 1969 contained a variety of winter weather causing many difficulties. Glazing due to dense fog and drizzle periodically formed on utility lines causing numerous broken power lines. Periodically, strong winds caused widespread blowing and drifting snow resulting in many closed roads. Snowplows would open the streets and often drifting snow would close the roads again. Frequent uses of pusher type snowplows piled banks of snow 20 to 30 feet along the streets, and it became impractical to open roads with this type of snowplow. Several rotary snowplows were flown in from military airbases outside of the state to open some of the roads in the eastern part of the state. Numerous school closings occurred during the month due to snow blocked roads.

February 1, 1989: Four to eight inches of snow fell across western and northern South Dakota. Winds of 25 mph and subzero temperature produced wind chills in the 50 to 80 below zero range. Several schools were closed across the area due to the dangerous wind chills. The storm continued into the 2nd.

1893 - Thunder and lightning accompanied sleet and snow at Saint Louis MO during the evening hours, even though the temperature was just 13 degrees above zero. (The Weather Channel)

1951 - The greatest ice storm of record in the U.S. produced glaze up to four inches thick from Texas to Pennsylvania causing twenty-five deaths, 500 serious injuries, and 100 million dollars damage. Tennessee was hardest hit by the storm. Communications and utilities were interrupted for a week to ten days. (David Ludlum)

1951 - The temperature at Taylor Park Dam plunged to 60 degrees below zero, a record for the state of Colorado. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1985 - Snow, sleet and ice glazed southern Tennessee and northern sections of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The winter storm produced up to eleven inches of sleet and ice in Lauderdale County AL, one of the worst storms of record for the state. All streets in Florence AL were closed for the first time of record. (1st-2nd) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A storm in the Pacific Northwest produced wind gusts to 100 mph at Cape Blanco OR, and up to six inches of rain in the northern coastal mountain ranges. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thirty cities in the eastern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date, including Richmond VA with a reading of 73 degrees. Thunderstorms in southern Louisiana deluged Basile with 12.34 inches of rain. Arctic cold gripped the north central U.S. Wolf Point MT reported a low of 32 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - While arctic cold continued to invade the central U.S., fifty-four cities in the south central and eastern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. Russell KS, the hot spot in the nation with a high of 84 degrees the previous day, reported a morning low of 12 above. Tioga ND reported a wind chill reading of 90 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms associated with an upper level weather disturbance produced severe weather across the eastern half of Texas during the late afternoon and evening. Four persons were injured at Waco TX where thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 80 mph. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 97 mph at Cotulla TX injuring two other persons. Golf ball size hail was reported at Whitney and northeast of Whitsett. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today



Partly Sunny

High: 31 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy
then Patchy
Fog

Low: 9 °F

Saturday



Patchy Fog
then Mostly
Sunny

High: 27 °F

Saturday
Night



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 14 °F

Sunday



Mostly Cloudy
then Slight
Chance
Snow/Sleet

High: 22 °F

Moderating Temperatures



Today

- Partly Sunny & Milder
- Highs 20-50°F



Saturday

- Partly Sunny, Morning Fog
- Highs 23-50°F



Sunday

- Mostly Cloudy and Colder. Highs 18-39°F
- Mixed Precipitation Afternoon & Evening



Published on: 02/01/2019 at 4:04AM

A milder air mass will move into the region, and stick around through Saturday. However, another system will bring mixed precipitation to the forecast area mainly Sunday evening through Monday morning. Temperatures should be above seasonal norms for today and Saturday.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 8 °F at 6:33 PM

Low Outside Temp: -22 °F at 12:15 AM

High Gust: 15 mph at 10:02 AM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 58 in 1931

Record Low: -42 in 1893

Average High: 24°F

Average Low: 3°F

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.47

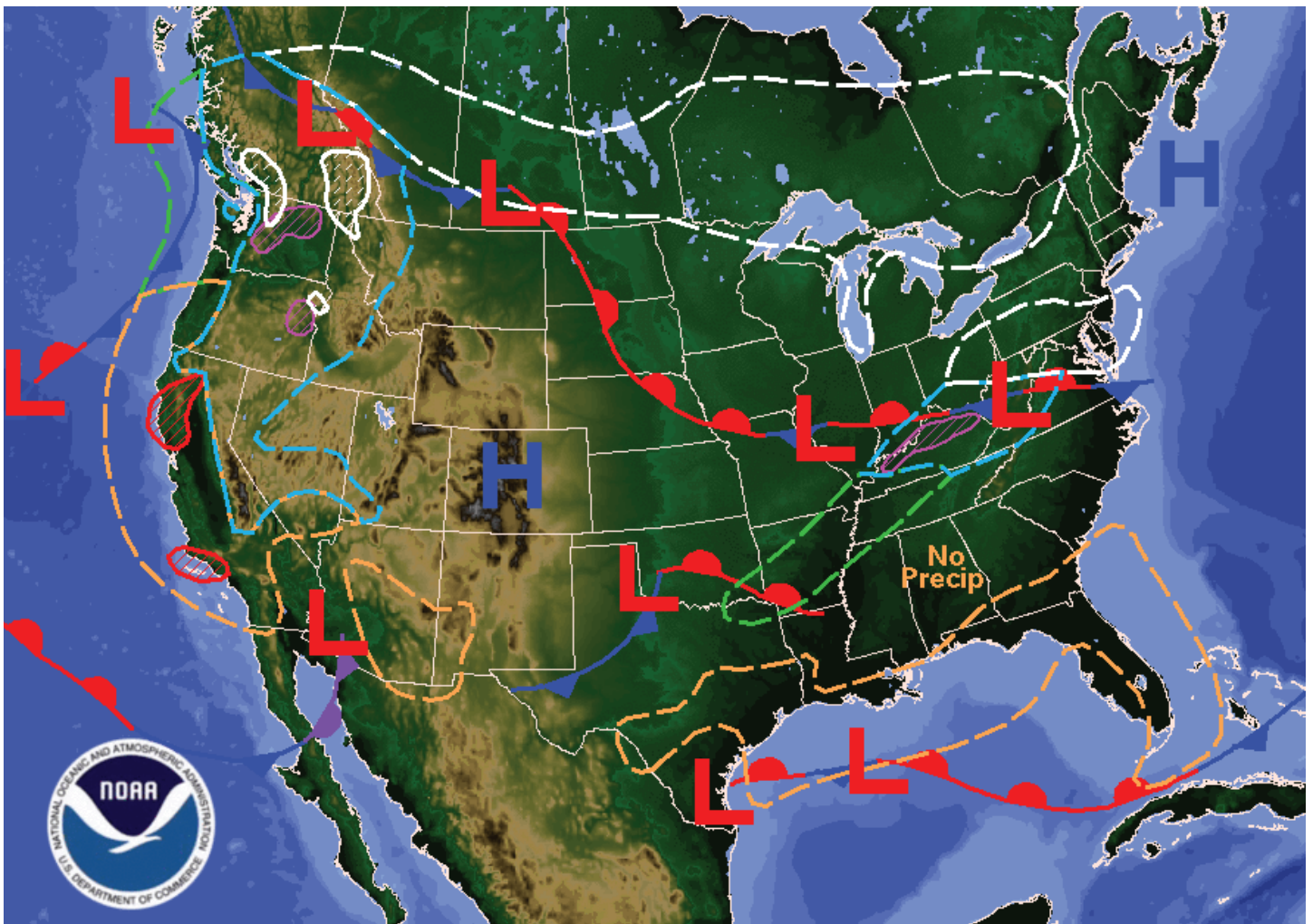
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.47

Precip Year to Date: 0.09

Sunset Tonight: 5:40 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:54 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Feb 01, 2019, issued 4:37 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain

Rain and T'Storms

Rain and Snow

Snow

Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)

Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)

Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)

Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)

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WISDOM

Some have it. Some seek it. Some use it. Some avoid it. Some write it. Some ignore it. Some deride it. Some see it. Some share it. Some chose it. Some lose it.

Wisdom can be an essential part of life. Most people, from the dawn of creation until this very moment, have wanted their share. Not all of them, however, have gone to the right place to find it or looked to the right Person to get it.

Take Eve, for example, in the Garden. It seems as though she had everything she needed. And, a little bit more. But, like many today, she was not satisfied. In fact, in spite of everything she had, she asked for one more thing: to be wise. Being wise is a good thing. Surely, God wants each of us to be wise, to make the right choice every time we come to a Y in the road. But, we must be very, very cautious about our sources of wisdom.

Look at what happened to Eve. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.

God carefully instructed Eve not to eat from that one tree. But, the serpent said, You dont need Gods wisdom. If you follow Him, youre going to miss out on some wonderful things in life. And he was right! She missed the best God had to offer!

Rather than following the wisdom of God, she decided that she wanted wisdom apart from God. And, look what happened. She did receive what she asked for, but the results destroyed her, and Gods perfect plan for all of His creation.

Prayer: Father, You have a plan for each of us as You did Eve. May we be wise enough to seek, find and follow it. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm
- 03/17/2019 Groton American Legion Spring Fundraiser
- 04/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/27/2019 Fireman's Stag
- 05/04/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/27/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program
- 06/13/2019 Transit Fundraiser (Middle Thursday in June)
- 06/14/2019 SDSU Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 06/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 06/21/2019 Best Ball Golf Tourney
- 07/04/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 07/14/2019 Summer Fest
- 08/22/2019 First Day of School
- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2019 Trunk or Treat/Halloween on Main
- 11/09/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course 2019 Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services

News from the Associated Press

Banker loses appeal of contempt ruling, sanctions

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota bank and its president have lost an appeal of a contempt ruling and sanctions against them.

The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the ruling against the First State Bank of Roscoe and John Beyers. He was accused of maneuvering clients into repaying debt that should have been discharged in bankruptcy.

The Argus Leader says Brad and Brenda Stabler owed the bank more than \$600,000 when their agriculture business failed. Rather than take a loss on the loan by foreclosing on land and equipment, Beyers was accused of maneuvering them into taking out additional loans worth \$650,000 without permission from the bankruptcy court and concealing them with third-party transactions and transfers.

A bankruptcy judge ordered the bank and Beyers to pay more than \$200,000.

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

Survey suggests solid economic growth ahead for Midwest

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A new report says a January survey of business supply managers is signaling solid economic growth over the next three to six months for nine Midwest and Plains states.

The report issued Friday says the Mid-America Business Conditions Index rose to 56.0 last month from 55.2 in December. The November figure was 54.1.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss oversees the survey, and he says the shortages of skilled workers and international trade tensions remain an impediment to even stronger growth.

The survey results are compiled into a collection of indexes ranging from zero to 100. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth. A score below that suggests decline.

The survey covers Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Midwest awaits spring-like thaw just days after bitter cold

By TAMMY WEBBER and JEFF KAROUB, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — The bitter cold that gripped the Midwest forced commuters to bundle up like polar explorers. By early next week, many of those same people might get by with a light jacket.

Just days after the arctic conditions, forecasts say, the region will seemingly swing into another season, with temperatures climbing by as much as 80 degrees. Experts say the rapid thaw is unprecedented, and it could create problems of its own — bursting pipes, flooding rivers and crumbling roads.

"I don't think there's ever been a case where we've seen (such a big) shift in temperatures" in the winter, said Jeff Masters, meteorology director of the Weather Underground firm. "Past record-cold waves have not dissipated this quickly. ... Here we are going right into spring-like temperatures."

Although many places remained painfully cold Thursday, the deep freeze eased somewhat, and the system marched east. Frigid weather descended on an area spanning from Buffalo to Brooklyn.

In western New York, a storm that dumped up to 20 inches of snow (51 centimeters) gave way to sub-zero temperatures and face-stinging wind chills. In New York City, about 200 firefighters battling a blaze in a commercial building took turns getting warm on buses. The number of deaths that could be blamed on the cold climbed to at least 15.

For the nation's midsection, relief was as close as the weekend.

Rockford, Illinois, was at a record-breaking minus 31 (minus 35 Celsius) on Thursday morning but should be around 50 (10 Celsius) on Monday. Other previously frozen areas could see temperatures of 55 (13

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Celsius) or higher.

The dramatic warm-up will offer a respite from the bone-chilling cold that canceled school, closed businesses and halted trains. But potholes will appear on roads and bridges weakened by the freeze-thaw cycle. The same cycle can crack water mains and homeowners' pipes. Scores of vehicles will be left with flat tires and bent rims.

Joe Buck, who manages Schmit Towing in Minneapolis and spent about 20 hours a day outdoors this week responding to stranded vehicle calls, said he's already taking calls for Monday to deal with a backlog of hundreds of stalled vehicles.

"Sunday is going to be 39 degrees ABOVE zero," said Buck, who has had 18 trucks running around the clock in wind chills that dropped to minus 50.

In Detroit, where some water mains are almost 150 years old, city workers were dealing with dozens of breaks, said Palencia Mobley, deputy director of the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department.

The thawing of the pipes can sometimes inflict greater damage than the initial freeze. Bursts can occur when ice inside starts to melt and water rushes through the pipe or when water in the pipe is pushed to a closed faucet by expanding ice.

Elsewhere, a bridge in the western Michigan community of Newaygo, 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Grand Rapids was closed as the ice-jammed Muskegon River rose above flood stage. Officials in Buffalo, New York, watched for flooding on the Upper Niagara River because of ice.

In other signs that the worst of the deep freeze was ending, Xcel Energy on Thursday lifted a request to its Minnesota natural gas customers to temporarily lower their thermostats to ease concerns about the fuel supply.

Earlier in the day, several cities set record lows. Rockford saw a record low temperature of minus 31 (minus 35 Celsius), on Thursday. Cedar Rapids, Iowa, set a daily record low of minus 30 degrees (minus 34 Celsius).

Chicago's temperature dropped to a low of around minus 21 degrees (minus 30 Celsius) on Thursday, slightly above the city's lowest-ever reading of minus 27 degrees (minus 32 Celsius) in January 1985. Milwaukee's low was minus 25 degrees (minus 31 Celsius), and Minneapolis recorded minus 24 degrees (minus 31 Celsius). Wind chills were lower still.

Masters, from Weather Underground, said the polar vortex was "rotating up into Canada" and not expected to return in the next couple of weeks. If it does return in late February, "it won't be as intense."

Still, memories of the dangerous cold were bound to linger.

In Illinois, at least 144 people visited hospital emergency rooms for cold-related injuries over two days. Most of the injuries were hypothermia or frostbite, according to a spokesman for the state Department of Public Health.

The effect on the overall economy was not expected to be that great.

"It only shows up marginally in the economic data," said Diane Swonk, chief economist at Grant Thornton, who ended up working from home because her offices in Chicago were shut because of weather.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, said one reason the severe cold weather will have less impact is that, unlike a hurricane, people did not lose electric power.

"People may be in their homes, but they can do things such as online shopping," Zandi said. "Life goes on. It is a disruption to daily life, but it is not a big hit to the economy."

Associated Press writers Martin Crutsinger in Washington; David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan; Amy Forliti in Minneapolis; Corey Williams and Ed White in Detroit; Blake Nicholson in Bismarck, North Dakota; and Caryn Rousseau and Michael Tarm in Chicago contributed to this story.

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Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Andes Central/Dakota Christian 73, Wagner 56
Arlington 70, Lake Preston 49
Canistota 60, Parker 50
Castlewood 73, Wolsey-Wessington 61
Centerville 77, Hanson 55
Clark/Willow Lake 65, Deuel 35
Colman-Egan 57, Deubrook 49
Corsica/Stickney 58, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 42
Crazy Horse 68, Takini 52
DeSmet 63, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 30
Edgemont 57, Hay Springs, Neb. 55
Elkton-Lake Benton 64, Estelline/Hendricks 26
Faith 75, Tiospaye Topa 57
Florence/Henry 69, Langford 61, OT
Freeman 61, Alcester-Hudson 48
Howard 71, Mitchell Christian 58
James Valley Christian 77, Iroquois 35
Lemmon 75, McIntosh 40
Lennox 67, Pipestone, Minn. 57
Marty Indian 77, Burke 69
Miller 76, Ipswich 62
Northwestern 57, Aberdeen Christian 53
Platte-Geddes 60, Kimball/White Lake 39
Rapid City Christian 57, Kadoka Area 48
Sioux Falls Lincoln 58, Brookings 56
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 60, Watertown 42
Sioux Falls Washington 71, Pierre 41
Sioux Valley 70, Flandreau 54
Tea Area 81, West Central 37
Timber Lake 76, Dupree 22
Vermillion 76, Bridgewater-Emery 71
Viborg-Hurley 70, Baltic 37
Warner 53, Leola/Frederick 50
White River 91, Wall 49

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Roncalli 64, Sisseton 39
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 43, Wagner 32
Avon 56, Bon Homme 26
Brookings 58, Sioux Falls Lincoln 55
Castlewood 52, Wolsey-Wessington 26
Clark/Willow Lake 70, Deuel 39
Corsica/Stickney 60, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 28
Crazy Horse 48, Takini 40
Crow Creek 70, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 55
Freeman 50, Alcester-Hudson 24
Gregory 76, Stanley County 40

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Hamlin 63, Webster 20
Hanson 39, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 34
Harrisburg 34, Yankton 29
Highmore-Harrold 37, Hitchcock-Tulare 31
Hill City 61, Newell 38
Howard 50, Mitchell Christian 32
Ipswich 50, Miller 36
James Valley Christian 59, Iroquois 22
Lemmon 60, Harding County 32
Lennox 67, Pipestone, Minn. 37
Little Wound 87, McLaughlin 46
Logan Co., Ky. 52, Todd County 35
McCook Central/Montrose 69, Garretson 48
New Underwood 59, Jones County 30
Parker 60, Canistota 53
Philip 52, Lead-Deadwood 48
Pine Ridge 66, Bennett County 13
Redfield/Doland 43, Milbank 29
Scotland 48, Platte-Geddes 39
Sioux Falls Christian 51, Vermillion 36
Sioux Falls Washington 48, Pierre 29
Todd County 85, Chamberlain 43
Viborg-Hurley 68, Baltic 26
Warner 68, Leola/Frederick 19
Waubay/Summit 27, Waverly-South Shore 21
White River 67, Wall 29

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

Daum scores 23 as South Dakota St. beats Oral Roberts 86-80

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Mike Daum had 23 points and nine rebounds to lead all five South Dakota State in double-figures scoring as the Jackrabbits beat Oral Roberts 86-80 on Thursday night.

David Jenkins added 18 points, Skyler Flatten had 14 with eight rebounds and Alex Ariens had 11 points for SDSU. Tevin King scored all his 10 points in the second half and finished with eight rebounds and three steals.

King hit a 3-pointer that gave the Jackrabbits the lead for good and sparked a 16-4 run that made it 40-29 with three minutes left in the first half. Daum scored eight points during that stretch.

SDSU led by as many as 20 points and it was 76-62 with five minutes to play. Oral Roberts hit three 3s during a 13-4 run that trimmed its deficit to five points with 57 seconds left but Flatten answered with a 3-pointer 29 seconds later and the Jackrabbits held on from there.

Kevin Obanor led Oral Roberts (8-16, 4-5) with 17 points, Sam Kearns scored 16 and Emmanuel Nzekwesi added 14 points and nine rebounds.

Daum is 17th in Division I history with 2,826 career points, six behind Otis Birdsong (Houston, 1973-77) on the NCAA's all-time scoring list. Chris Clemons, a senior at Campbell, is 15th with 2,836 — 14 behind Larry Bird.

Long johns to short sleeves: Rapid thaw follows polar blast

By TAMMY WEBBER and JEFF KAROUB, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — In Illinois, temperatures could rise by 80 degrees within days. In Michigan, melting snow and rain and a 17-mile ice jam could lead to flooding. Across the Midwest, the sudden warmth was sure to bring more broken roads and busted water mains.

The polar vortex that brought many cities to a standstill was expected to end with a rapid thaw that experts say could be unprecedented. But the sudden swing from long johns to light jackets and short sleeves could create problems of its own.

"I don't think there's ever been a case where we've seen (such a big) shift in temperatures," in the winter, said Jeff Masters, meteorology director of the Weather Underground firm. "Past record-cold waves have not dissipated this quickly. ... Here we are going right into spring-like temperatures."

On Thursday, the system marched east, spreading arctic conditions over an area from Buffalo to Brooklyn. In western New York, a storm that dumped up to 20 inches of snow (51 centimeters) gave way to subzero temperatures and face-stinging wind chills. In New York City, about 200 firefighters battling a blaze in a commercial building took turns getting warm on buses. The number of deaths that could be blamed on the cold climbed to at least 15.

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The dramatic warm-up will offer a respite from the bone-chilling cold that canceled school, closed businesses and halted trains. But potholes will appear on roads and bridges weakened by the freeze-thaw cycle. The same cycle can crack water mains and homeowners' pipes. Scores of vehicles will be left with flat tires and bent rims.

Joe Buck, who manages Schmit Towing in Minneapolis and spent about 20 hours a day outdoors this week responding to stranded vehicle calls, said he's already taking calls for Monday to deal with a backlog of hundreds of stalled vehicles.

"Sunday is going to be 39 degrees ABOVE zero," said Buck, who has had 18 trucks running around the clock in wind chills that dropped to minus 50.

In Detroit, where some water mains are almost 150 years old, city workers were dealing with dozens of breaks, said Palencia Mobley, deputy director of the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department.

"We'll have all hands on deck. Hopefully, we'll be able to address as many of the issues as possible over the next week," Mobley said.

The thawing of pipes can sometimes inflict greater damage than the initial freeze. Bursts can occur when ice inside starts to melt and water rushes through the pipe, or when water in the pipe is pushed to a closed faucet by expanding ice.

Elsewhere, a bridge in the western Michigan community of Newaygo, 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Grand Rapids was closed as the ice-jammed Muskegon River rose above flood stage. Officials in Buffalo, New York, watched for flooding on the Upper Niagara River because of ice.

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In Michigan, efforts to conserve heat during the extreme cold reduced usage by 10 percent following a fire at a major natural gas facility, officials said. Consumers Energy, the state's largest supplier of natural gas, asked its 1.7 million customers and others to set their thermostats at 65 degrees (18 degrees Celsius) or lower until late Thursday.

"In our 130 years, we've never experienced this kind of demand or these kinds of temperatures," CEO Patti Poppe said.

Masters, from Weather Underground, said the polar vortex was "rotating up into Canada" and not expected to return in the next couple of weeks. If it does return in late February, "it won't be as intense."

Still, memories of the dangerous cold were bound to linger.

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For the latest on the weather: <https://apnews.com/b805fb74a7db4894834ccbafd6ae0703>

Associated Press Writers Martin Crutsinger in Washington; David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan; Amy Forliti in Minneapolis; Corey Williams and Ed White in Detroit; Blake Nicholson in Bismarck, North Dakota; and Caryn Rousseau and Michael Tarm in Chicago contributed to this story.

Johnson named top Republican on House Agriculture subpanel

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson has been named the top Republican on a House Agriculture Committee subpanel.

House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Michael Conaway said in a Thursday statement that Johnson will be the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight and Department Operations.

Johnson says the farm bill implementation will be overseen by the subcommittee. He says the assignment puts South Dakota at the front lines of making sure the farm bill is as "good in practice as it was in promise."

He says the subcommittee also oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Johnson says the decision is unexpected, but that he really worked to get the assignment.

He's serving his first term as South Dakota's lone U.S. representative. Johnson was sworn in to office Jan. 3.

Gov. Kristi Noem signs 'constitutional carry' bill into law

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem has signed a measure allowing people to carry concealed pistols without a permit in South Dakota.

The Republican governor on Thursday approved the measure, making it the first bill Noem has signed into law. Noem says it will further protect the Second Amendment rights of the citizens of South Dakota and the nation.

It's a win for conservatives who have long pushed the proposal, which languished under former Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

It's currently a misdemeanor for someone to carry a concealed pistol or to have one concealed in a vehicle without a permit.

The South Dakota Sheriffs' Association opposed the measure, contending current limitations under the permit process are reasonable.

The law will take effect July 1. South Dakota will join at least 13 states that allow the practice.

SD senators send confidential settlement ban to state House

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A bill that would bar South Dakota government officials from negotiating confidential settlements has passed out of the state Senate.

Senators voted 23-10 Thursday to send the measure to the House. Republican Sen. Arthur Rusch, the sponsor, says taxpayers have the right to know where their money is going and that the public favors transparency.

Republican Sen. Jeffrey Partridge, a bill opponent, says he struggles to see how the measure wouldn't add costs for municipalities because they'd go to trial more often.

The bill would make settlements negotiated by public entities public records. State law currently allows state and local governments to negotiate confidential settlements, which lets payouts and misconduct be kept secret.

A similar measure passed through the Senate last year, but failed in a House committee.

SD Senate panel advances legislator drug testing measure

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota Senate panel has advanced a bill to impose random drug testing on state legislators.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 4-1 Thursday for the measure. Republican Sen. Stace Nelson, the sponsor, says real leaders lead from the front by setting an example.

The bill would require the state Division of Criminal Investigation to set up a random drug test for three to 10 legislators once weekly during the legislative session. If a test shows evidence of drug use, the division would provide the results to the presiding officer of the lawmaker's chamber for referral to a special disciplinary committee.

Some legislative leaders have said they oppose the bill. House Majority Whip Jon Hansen says he would be clean, but still thinks it's bad policy.

Senators later voted to send the bill to another committee.

Former chief sentenced for sexually assaulting girl

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A former Whitewood police chief has been sentenced to spend 10 years in prison for sexually assaulting a girl in two counties.

Ben Koens, of Belle Fourche, recently pleaded guilty in Butte and Lawrence counties to having sexual contact with the girl. In exchange for Koens' guilty pleas, prosecutors dropped rape charges that could have landed him in prison for life.

The Rapid City Journal reports prosecutors say the 69-year-old Koens assaulted the girl in Butte County between August 2015 and May 2018 when she was between the ages of 9 and 12 and in Lawrence County between 2014 and 2015 when she was between 8 and 10 years old.

Koens was fired as police chief in Whitewood in 2011 for undisclosed reasons.

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

Students are heading back to school in the Dakotas

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Students are heading back to school in North Dakota and South Dakota.

Administrators say schools in Fargo and West Fargo will open at the usual time Thursday, but schools in Moorhead, Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton and Thief River Falls are among many starting two hours late. Temperatures dropped to minus 25 (minus 31 Celsius) Thursday morning with forecasters predicted a high of

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minus 2 (minus 16 Celsius).

In South Dakota, schools also resumed classes Thursday with many district delaying the start of classes, including Aberdeen, Mitchell, Wilmot and Worthington. The National Weather Service says the high temperature in Sioux Falls is expected to be 12 degrees (minus 11 Celsius) Thursday with weekend readings in the 30s and even 40s.

New Jersey Democratic Sen. Cory Booker launches 2020 bid

By ELANA SCHOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Sen. Cory Booker on Friday declared his bid for the presidency in 2020 with a sweeping call to unite a deeply polarized nation around a “common purpose.”

The New Jersey Democrat, who is the second black candidate in a primary field that’s already historically diverse, delivered his message of unity amid an era marked by bitter political division. He announced his run on the first day of Black History Month, underscoring his consequential status as America’s potential second black president after Barack Obama.

“I believe that we can build a country where no one is forgotten, no one is left behind; where parents can put food on the table; where there are good-paying jobs with good benefits in every neighborhood; where our criminal justice system keeps us safe, instead of shuffling more children into cages and coffins; where we see the faces of our leaders on television and feel pride, not shame,” Booker said in a video message to supporters, subtly jabbing at President Donald Trump.

“It is not a matter of can we, it’s a matter of do we have the collective will, the American will?” he added. “I believe we do.”

Booker enters what’s shaping up to be a crowded presidential primary, with three of his fellow Democratic senators — Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Kamala Harris of California and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York — already either declared or exploring a run. But he’s spent months telegraphing his intentions to join the race, visiting the early-voting states of Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina to build connections with key powerbrokers. He already has slated trips back to those states later this month.

Booker also will begin reaching out to key constituencies Friday, conducting call-in interviews with three radio shows popular with black and Hispanic listeners. Later on Friday, Booker will be a guest on “The View,” a TV talk show popular with female audiences, where his mother plans to sit in the audience.

A former mayor of Newark, New Jersey’s largest city, Booker won a special Senate election in 2013 to replace Democrat Frank Lautenberg and then won a full Senate term in 2014. He will be able to run for a second full Senate term in 2020 while running for president, thanks to a law that New Jersey’s governor signed in November.

But that doesn’t mean the 49-year-old’s path to the nomination will be easy. As many as five more Democratic senators could soon mount their own primary bids, creating a competition for voters’ attention, and several of Booker’s rival presidential hopefuls bring higher name recognition to a race that may also feature popular former Vice President Joe Biden. Booker also will likely stand alone as an unmarried candidate, though he brings a compelling personal biography that could help elevate his message of bringing Americans together around what he described as “common purpose.”

Booker’s father grew up in a low-income community in North Carolina, and the senator has recalled his family’s later struggle to settle in suburban New Jersey amid discrimination against black homebuyers. The senator has brought a heartfelt and passionate style to his achievements in the Senate, at times fusing his personal spirituality with policy proposals that focus on social justice. Booker played a key role in the bipartisan criminal justice reform bill that Trump supported last year, for example, a deal he helped strike two months after sparring with Republicans during the battle over Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation.

In his announcement video, Booker invoked the fight against slavery and the role of immigration in building the nation’s character.

“The history of our nation is defined by collective action; by interwoven destinies of slaves and abolition-

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ists; of those born here and those who chose America as home; of those who took up arms to defend our country and those who linked arms to challenge and change it," he said.

Born in the nation's capital but raised in New Jersey, Booker made a name for himself as Newark mayor by personally shoveling the snow of residents. He has \$4.1 million left in his campaign coffers that could also be used to assist his presidential run. Rather than opening an exploratory committee to test the waters, Booker took the direct step to open a campaign seeking the Democratic nomination.

Booker is aligning with many other prominent Democratic White House contenders by forswearing all donations from corporate political action committees and federal lobbyists to his campaign, dubbed Cory 2020. A prominent Booker supporter, San Francisco attorney Steve Phillips, says he is working on millions of dollars in committed donations to a so-called super PAC that would boost the senator's candidacy, but Booker's campaign is openly against super PACs playing any role in the presidential race.

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. TRUMP, PELOSI REMAIN FAR APART ON BORDER WALL ISSUE

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has declared there'll be no "wall money" in any compromise border security deal as she and President Donald Trump signaled congressional negotiators may never satisfy his demands.

2. U.S. TO WITHDRAW FROM NUCLEAR ARMS TREATY

The Trump administration is poised to announce it is withdrawing from a treaty that has been a centerpiece of superpower arms control since the Cold War.

3. WHICH OF TRUMP'S CLOSE ASSOCIATES IS HEADED BACK TO COURT

Donald Trump confidant Roger Stone is due back in court in the special counsel's Russia investigation as prosecutors say they have recovered "voluminous and complex" potential evidence in the case.

4. VENEZUELAN OPPOSITION LEADER TELLS POLICE TO LEAVE HIS FAMILY ALONE

Venezuelan opposition leader, Juan Guaido, warned officers from a feared state security unit to stay away from his family after he accused them of showing up at his apartment.

5. MIDWEST AWAITS SPRING-LIKE THAW

Just days after the arctic conditions, forecasts say, the Midwest will seemingly swing into another season, with temperatures climbing by as much as 80 degrees.

6. AP WAS THERE: KHOMEINI RETURNS TO IRAN

On this day, exiled Shiite leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, returned to Iran in 1979, ahead of the Islamic Revolution.

7. TRUMP NOW SAYS HE AND HIS INTEL CHIEFS AGREE

A day after he lashed out at U.S. intelligence agency chiefs over their assessments of global threats, President Donald Trump abruptly reversed course and said he and the intelligence community "are all on the same page."

8. S. KOREAN WOMAN ENSLAVED BY JAPAN'S MILITARY MOURNED

The funeral procession of a woman sexually enslaved by Japanese soldiers as a girl during WWII concluded where Kim Bok-dong had protested for decades against what she called Japanese failure to come to terms with its wartime brutality.

9. CUBAN EVANGELICALS PUSH BACK AGAINST GAY MARRIAGE

A Cuban government push to legalize gay marriage has set off an unprecedented reaction from the island's rapidly growing evangelical churches.

10. NEARLY HALF OF U.S. ADULTS HAVE HEART OR BLOOD VESSEL DISEASE

A new report estimates nearly half of all U.S. adults have some form of heart or blood vessel disease, a medical milestone mostly due to recent guidelines that expanded how many people have high blood pressure.

US poised to announce withdrawal from nuclear arms treaty

By DEB RIECHMANN, ROBERT BURNS AND MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is poised to announce Friday that it is withdrawing from a treaty that has been a centerpiece of superpower arms control since the Cold War and whose demise some analysts worry could fuel a new arms race.

An American withdrawal, which has been expected for months, would follow years of unresolved dispute over Russian compliance with the pact, known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, or INF, treaty. It was the first arms control measure to ban an entire class of weapons: ground-launched cruise missiles with a range between 500 kilometers (310 miles) and 5,500 kilometers (3,400 miles). Russia denies that it has been in violation.

U.S. officials also have expressed worry that China, which is not party to the 1987 treaty, is gaining a significant military advantage in Asia by deploying large numbers of missiles with ranges beyond the treaty's limit. Leaving the INF treaty would allow the Trump administration to counter the Chinese, but it's unclear how it would do that.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in early December that Washington would give Moscow 60 days to return to compliance before it gave formal notice of withdrawal, with actual withdrawal taking place six months later. The 60-day deadline expires on Saturday, and the administration is expected to say as early as Friday that efforts to work out a compliance deal have failed and that it would suspend its compliance with the treaty's terms.

The State Department said Pompeo would make a public statement on Friday morning, but it did not mention the topic.

During remarks made at a news conference in Bucharest, Secretary General Stoltenberg, said there are no signs of getting a compliance deal with Russia.

"So we must prepare for a world without the INF Treaty," he said.

Technically, a U.S. withdrawal would take effect six months after this week's notification, leaving a small window for saving the treaty. However, in talks this week in Beijing, the U.S. and Russia reported no breakthrough in their dispute, leaving little reason to think either side would change its stance on whether a Russian cruise missile violates the pact.

A Russian deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov, was quoted by the Russian state news agency Tass as saying after the Beijing talks Thursday, "Unfortunately, there is no progress. The position of the American side is very tough and like an ultimatum." He said he expects Washington now to suspend its obligations under the treaty, although he added that Moscow remains ready to "search for solutions" that could keep the treaty in force.

U.S. withdrawal raises the prospect of further deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations, which already are arguably at the lowest point in decades, and debate among U.S. allies in Europe over whether Russia's alleged violations warrant a countermeasure such as deployment of an equivalent American missile in Europe. The U.S. has no nuclear-capable missiles based in Europe; the last of that type and range were withdrawn in line with the INF treaty.

The prospect of U.S. withdrawal from the INF pact has stirred concern globally. The mayor of Des Moines, Iowa, Frank Cownie, is among dozens of local officials and lawmakers in the U.S., Canada, Europe and elsewhere who signed a letter this week to President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin expressing worry at the "unraveling" of the INF treaty and other arms constraints.

"Withdrawing from treaties takes a step in the wrong direction," Cownie said in a telephone interview. "It's wasn't just Des Moines, Iowa. It's people from all around this country that are concerned about the future of our cities, of our country, of this planet."

The American ambassador to NATO, Kay Bailey Hutchison, set the rhetorical stage for Washington's withdrawal announcement by asserting Thursday that Russia has been in violation for years, including in Ukraine. She said in a tweet and a video message about the INF treaty that Russia is to blame for its

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demise.

"Russia consistently refuses to acknowledge its violation and continues to push disinformation and false narratives regarding its illegal missile," she said. "When only one party respects an arms control treaty while the other side flaunts it, it leaves one side vulnerable, no one is safer, and (it) discredits the very idea of arms control."

Nuclear weapons experts at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said in a statement this week that while Russia's violation of the INF treaty is a serious problem, U.S. withdrawal under current circumstances would be counterproductive.

"Leaving the INF treaty will unleash a new missile competition between the United States and Russia," they said.

Kingston Reif, director for disarmament at the Arms Control Association, said Thursday the Trump administration has failed to exhaust diplomatic options to save the treaty. What's more, "it has no strategy to prevent Russia from building and fielding even more intermediate-range missiles in the absence of the agreement."

Reif said the period between now and August, when the U.S. withdrawal would take effect, offers a last chance to save the treaty, but he sees little prospect of that happening. He argues that Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, is "unlikely to miss the opportunity to kill an agreement he has long despised."

Associated Press writer Lynn Berry contributed to this report.

Khomeini launched a revolution from a sleepy French village

By ELAINE GANLEY, Associated Press

NEAUPHLE-LE-CHATEAU, France (AP) — From a sleepy village outside Paris, the man who would become the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran sat cross-legged beneath an apple tree, delivering messages daily to hundreds of followers clamoring to glimpse the glowering cleric in the black turban.

For several months in late 1978 and early 1979, the humble site became a megaphone for the pronouncements of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that were sent back home to Iranians seeking to overturn 2,500 years of monarchical rule.

Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi had expelled Khomeini from Iran in 1964, and he spent most of his time in Najaf, Iraq, a pilgrimage city for Iranians and other Shiite Muslims. But Iraq, reportedly under pressure from the shah, forced the cleric to flee to France in 1978.

Khomeini's entourage in Neauphle-Le-Chateau had only the simplest of tools in those pre-internet days. With telephones and cassette tape recorders, they turned the exiled cleric's cottage and garden into a media hub.

"The fate of the Iranian revolution depended on what came out of Mr. Khomeini's mouth," said Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, who was among the ayatollah's closest aides and later became the first president of the new Iran.

Bani-Sadr was a student in Paris with family ties to Khomeini when he was contacted by the cleric's son seeking help in arranging a French exile.

Khomeini arrived at Paris' Orly airport on Oct. 6, 1978, spent a few days in the southern suburb of Cachan, where Bani-Sadr then lived, before relocating to Neauphle-le-Chateau, 25 miles west of Paris.

Today, a large plaque honoring Khomeini's four months in the village stands at the entrance to the unkempt garden that along with the cottage served as his operational headquarters before his triumphal return to Iran on Feb. 1, 1979 .

The house where his team worked has been razed. But the apple tree, spindly and leafless, still stands, adorned with a plastic Iranian flag and surrounded by a red-and-white chain.

This week, workers were setting up a tent for an Iranian Embassy ceremony on Sunday to commemorate the brief but critical period in Khomeini's life.

Bani-Sadr, in an interview with The Associated Press, said it was far from certain for Khomeini that a

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revolution was at hand.

"For me, it was absolutely sure, but not for Khomeini and not for lots of others inside Iran," Bani-Sadr said. He added that Khomeini's son, Ahmed, who was in France with his father and other family members, asked him almost daily, "Are you sure the shah will go and the regime will be toppled?"

Khomeini's inner circle included Bani-Sadr, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, Ibramhim Yazdi and three mullahs. Each was in charge of a task, including dealing with the media whose coverage boosted Khomeini's profile.

Bani-Sadr said he and a group of friends fashioned or vetted the messages Khomeini delivered — based on what they were told Iranians wanted to hear. Tape recordings of his statements were sold in Europe and delivered to Iran. Other messages went out by telephone, read to supporters in various Iranian towns, where they were disseminated.

The activity in Neauphle-le-Chateau put the French government in a bind. Khomeini had entered France like all Iranians at the time, on a passport allowing for a three-month stay. But his activism was increasingly distressing to France, which like other Western countries, was a firm ally of the Iranian monarchy.

Then-President Valery Giscard d'Estaing sent a diplomat to Neauphle-le-Chateau and later an emissary to Tehran to meet with the shah. The French offered to expel Khomeini, but the shah said no, apparently not wanting the cleric to end up anywhere near Iran. The French emissary concluded that the shah's days on the throne were numbered anyway, according to diplomats and press reports.

Jean-Claude Cousseran, the first secretary at the French Embassy in Tehran at the time, denied that France was opportunistically playing both sides or was in the dark about the weight Khomeini carried within Iran.

"There was no ignorance. Everyone knew who Khomeini was, starting with the Americans, starting with the shah," he said. But diplomats kept asking "what will happen next week. ... It's not easy to predict a revolution."

Added Francois Nicoullaud, ambassador to Iran from 2000 to 2005: "From the start, there was no Machiavellian plan."

Cousseran pointed out Khomeini had full telephone access to Iran.

"That means Iran never forbade calls between Khomeini and his friends," a tactic that would have shut down a lot of the cleric's media operation.

Scores of grateful Iranians brought flowers to the French Embassy, but with what Cousseran viewed as a subtle message that "you will protect him." The Tehran street where the embassy sits was renamed Neauphle-le-Chateau.

The shah, who was secretly ill with cancer, flew out of Iran on Jan. 16, 1979, on an aircraft that he himself piloted.

That paved the way for Khomeini's return weeks later.

There are conflicting reports as to whether Khomeini's entourage chartered the Air France Boeing 747 that brought him home, or whether, as a French diplomat at the time said in a documentary, that France decided "to take a risk" and arrange for the plane.

Either way, supporters and journalists scrambled to get on the flight, paying the airfare for a coveted seat.

"We always said it was the journalists who paid the return voyage of the ayatollah," said Associated Press photographer Michel Lipchitz, who was on the flight.

During the flight, Khomeini was out of sight, keeping to the upper deck lounge of the jumbo jet and praying, Lipchitz said.

Khomeini arrived to a hero's welcome in Tehran on Feb. 1.

"It was a moment worth 1,000 years of life," Bani-Sadr said. "Extraordinary. Extraordinary."

The plaque in the garden of Neauphle-le-Chateau, inscribed in French and Farsi, says the village name "is forever registered in the history of French-Iranian relations."

But the Iran's Islamist government quickly toughened, and France soon was vilified as "the little Satan" when it began taking in members of the Iranian opposition, said Nicoullaud, the former ambassador. Among those exiles were members of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, a politically active opposition group that

is active to this day and still despised by Iran.

Bani-Sadr, who had become president in Iran, fell from favor. He said he protested to Khomeini the many executions that were carried out, and fled to Paris in July 1981 in an air force plane piloted by a dissident with the then-head of Mujahedeen, Massoud Rajavi.

Now, Bani-Sadr feels betrayed by Khomeini, saying that the cleric "changed in Iran. He restored a dictatorship."

Of the inner circle in Neauphle-le-Chateau, Bani-Sadr is the only survivor. Ghotbzadeh was executed and Yazdi died in exile in Turkey.

Still, Bani-Sadr is hopeful.

"A revolution is the beginning, not the end," he said.

Trump, Pelosi remain far apart on the border wall issue

By ALAN FRAM and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has declared that there'll be no "wall money" in any compromise border security deal as she and President Donald Trump signaled that congressional negotiators may never satisfy his demands for his cherished Southwest border proposal.

Trump, who in recent weeks has expressed indifference to whether the term "wall" or something else is used, clung with renewed tenacity to the word that became his campaign mantra, declaring, "A wall is a wall." Yet in a series of tweets and statements, he issued conflicting messages about what he'd need to declare victory and suggested that merely repairing existing structures along the boundary could be a major component of a triumph.

Amid signs that Trump's leverage in Congress is atrophying, he seemed to aim one tweet at his conservative followers. He wrote that Democrats "are not going to give money to build the DESPERATELY needed WALL. I've got you covered. Wall is already being built, I don't expect much help!"

Pelosi, D-Calif., left the door open for an accord that could finance some barriers, citing what she said was already existing "Normandy fencing" that blocks vehicles.

"If the president wants to call that a wall, he can call that a wall," she told reporters Thursday. She added: "Is there a place for enhanced fencing? Normandy fencing would work."

Yet Pelosi's other remark — "There's not going to be any wall money in the legislation" — underscored the linguistic battle underway. It also showed that Democrats see no reason to let Trump claim a win in a cause that stirs his hard-right voters and enrages liberals.

Trump's political muscle weakened following Democrats' capture of House control in the November election. It waned further after his surrender last week in ending a record 35-day partial government shutdown without getting a penny of the \$5.7 billion he'd demanded to start building the wall.

In another sign of his flagging hold over lawmakers, the GOP-controlled Senate backed legislation on a 68-23 vote Thursday that opposes withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria and Afghanistan.

When Trump folded on the shutdown, he agreed to reopen government until Feb. 15, giving lawmakers more time to craft a bipartisan border security compromise.

If there's no deal by then, Trump has threatened to revive the shutdown or declare a national emergency, which he claims would let him shift billions from unrelated military construction projects to erecting his wall. He criticized Democrats' negotiating stance so far, telling reporters in the Oval Office that Pelosi is "just playing games" and saying GOP bargainers are "wasting their time."

Democrats remain united against those tactics. Republican opposition seems nearly as strong, and GOP leaders are becoming increasingly assertive about publicly telegraphing those feelings to Trump.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, told reporters that "there are a lot of us that are trying to dissuade" Trump from declaring a national emergency should border security talks deadlock. Cornyn, a close adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, said he has "absolute confidence" that such a declaration would be challenged in court, tying up the money, and said Congress might even vote to defy him.

"The president needs to know that before he heads down that path," Cornyn said.

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No. 2 Senate GOP leader John Thune of South Dakota told reporters that “a lot of folks are uncomfortable” with an emergency declaration. He stopped short of ruling out a challenge by the Senate, calling the question “hypothetical.”

Earlier this week, McConnell, R-Ky., a longtime opponent of shutdowns, called the move “government dysfunction which should be embarrassing to everyone on a bipartisan basis.”

Lawmakers caution that if Trump declares an emergency, future Democratic presidents might do the same for issues they favor that Congress derails. Some are reluctant to cede Congress’ constitutional power to control spending to any president, and many say there is no real border emergency.

Democrats offered further details of their border security plan Thursday, unveiling a measure that would provide no wall funds.

It would significantly boost spending for scanners at ports of entry, humanitarian aid for apprehended migrants, and new aircraft and ships to police the U.S.-Mexico border. It would freeze the number of border patrol agents and block any wall construction in wildlife refuges along the border.

Without a border security accord, lawmakers could avert another shutdown by once again temporarily financing dozens of federal agencies, perhaps for months.

Trump has been unpredictable in the shutdown debate, mixing softer rhetoric about a multifaceted approach to border security with campaign-style bluster about the wall. Lawmakers negotiating the bill are aware that he could quash an agreement at any time, plunging them back into crisis.

“Obviously, it makes it more challenging,” Cornyn told reporters. “You keep talking and try to understand where he is and try to work it out.”

Associated Press writer Colleen Long contributed to this report.

Schultz faces hometown protests as he eyes 2020 bid

By GENE JOHNSON, Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — “Grande ego. Venti mistake”: That was the message protesters had for former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz as he returned to his hometown of Seattle on Thursday after announcing that he’s mulling an independent run for president.

Several dozen protesters gathered outside a downtown theater before Schultz appeared to promote his new book. They included Democrats who fret his candidacy would hand President Donald Trump another term, and green-and-gold-bedecked basketball fans who haven’t forgiven him for selling the Seattle SuperSonics to a group that moved the team to Oklahoma City more than a decade ago.

“The way he dealt with the Sonics shows a huge fault in his character,” said Farheen Siddiqui, 26, who wore a team jersey to the protest. “He acted like a child who was not getting his way.”

The 65-year-old billionaire and Democratic donor, who stepped down as Starbucks chairman last June, has been on a tour of talk shows and news interviews the past few days, coinciding with the release of his latest book, “From the Ground Up: A Journey to Reimagine the Promise of America.”

He said he doesn’t intend to decide whether to run for president for several months, but the reaction from prominent Democrats has been swift. The party chairwoman in Washington state, top advisers to former President Barack Obama and the most powerful political action committee in Democratic politics are among those who have criticized him, saying an independent bid would likely split the opposition to Trump and make his re-election more likely.

The protesters outside his talk Thursday chanted: “Pick a party.” Some carried signs decorated like Starbucks cups that read “Compost your campaign” and “Grande ego. Venti mistake” — a reference to the Italian names for drink sizes at the coffee chain.

At an appearance in Arizona on Wednesday Schultz said he would “not do anything to be a so-called spoiler” who hands the 2020 race to Trump.

In Seattle, where 92 percent of voters cast ballots against Trump in 2016, helping get him re-elected might be even less popular than selling off a beloved sports franchise.

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Chris Petzold, a Democratic activist from the Seattle suburb of Issaquah, organized the protest Thursday. She said she remains sad about the Sonics departure, but the protest isn't about that.

"Now is not the time to risk getting another four years with Donald Trump as president," Petzold said. "If you want to fix it, why not fix it from within the system, instead of being your arrogant billionaire self? He's just buying his way into this."

Schultz has repeatedly said he doesn't want to be responsible for Trump's re-election, but that he believes there is a way to unite a significant portion of the public that identifies with neither major party.

In an opinion piece published Wednesday in The Seattle Times, Schultz acknowledged that he has a "complicated" relationship with Seattle, a city he first fell in love with during a visit to Pike Place Market in 1981. It's the city where he grew a small coffee-roasting company into an inescapable global chain, where he and his wife raised their two children, and where the couple still lives.

Along the way he made Starbucks one of the first U.S. companies to offer stock options and health insurance even to part-time employees; more recently, it partnered with Arizona State University to cover tuition for workers who want to earn their bachelor's degrees online.

In 2001, Schultz led a group of investors in buying the Sonics and the WNBA's Seattle Storm for \$200 million. Due partly to an unfavorable lease deal and the small size of KeyArena, where the team played, the Sonics were losing millions of dollars a year.

After being rebuffed by the Legislature in his efforts to win public funding to remodel the venue, Schultz sold the team for \$350 million to the group that moved it to Oklahoma City and renamed it the Thunder. The Sonics were Seattle's oldest professional sports franchise and the first Seattle team to win a national title since the Seattle Metropolitans won hockey's Stanley Cup in 1917.

In his Seattle Times piece, Schultz apologized.

"I was so focused on getting myself and others out of a money-losing situation that I made a bad choice and failed to follow a principle that helped me grow Starbucks, which is to try to balance profit with humanity," he wrote. "Selling the Sonics is the biggest regret of my professional life. ... I do not expect my actions to be forgiven or forgotten."

Some Sonics fans considered the apology long overdue — not to mention suspect, given that it coincided with the announcement of his presidential musings.

Schultz's politics aren't necessarily going to win him many fans in his liberal hometown, either.

In Seattle, voters rarely see a tax increase they don't like; Schultz has called for entitlement reform and branded the calls of Sen. Elizabeth Warren and other Democrats for big tax increases on the ultra-rich "ridiculous."

Seattle was one of the first U.S. cities to approve a \$15-an-hour minimum wage; Schultz opposed it, fearing it would cost jobs. The law remains popular, and economists say it has raised pay without any real impact on employment.

Schultz's consideration of a presidential run even drew a rebuke from a fellow Seattle billionaire, early Amazon investor and outspoken liberal Nick Hanauer.

"What Howard calls 'centrism' is just trickle-down economics_tax cuts for the rich, de-regulation for the powerful, and wage suppression for everyone else," Hanauer tweeted.

Steely huntsman at helm of embattled US Embassy in Caracas

By JOSHUA GOODMAN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — In the normally genteel world of high diplomacy, the top U.S. envoy to Venezuela cuts an unusual figure. Born in a small South Carolina town, James Story is an avid hunter and proud collector of memorabilia featuring iconic revolutionaries like Vladimir Lenin and Ernesto "Che" Guevara.

Now the 48-year-old career diplomat at the helm of the U.S. Embassy in Caracas is on the mission of his life: keeping himself and a core group of committed American diplomats safe as the Trump administration ratchets up pressure on President Nicolas Maduro to force him to cede power.

The U.S. has led a chorus of more than 20 nations that have recognized Juan Guaidó, the leader of

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the opposition-led National Assembly, as the rightful leader of Venezuela after he declared himself interim president before a rally of tens of thousands of supporters last week. In response, Maduro broke off diplomatic relations with the U.S., initially giving American diplomats 72 hours to leave the country.

The standoff has thrust the Trump administration into a bizarre, diplomatic Twilight Zone. While working hand-in-glove with Guaido to build a parallel government, the U.S. still depends on Maduro's de-facto authority for the safety of American diplomats and more mundane affairs. The Trump administration's refusal to obey Maduro's order has also raised concerns that his government would forcibly expel the remaining diplomats, or cut off electricity to the U.S. Embassy, as one prominent socialist has already threatened.

Managing it all is Story — universally known as Jimmy — who begins each of his 16-hour marathon work days with a motivational message laying out the latest U.S. policy moves to his staff, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss U.S. planning on the Venezuela crisis with the media.

Story declined to comment for this report because he's not authorized to talk to the press at this politically-sensitive crossroads.

However, many others who have worked with him said his affable demeanor masks a steely toughness ideally suited for the current crisis.

"He can deftly sip cocktails with the diplomats but his heart is still somewhere duck-hunting in an early morning blind," said John Feeley, the former U.S. ambassador to Panama and Story's former boss at the State Department.

Already, Story has managed to walk things back from the brink, negotiating immunity and privileges for an additional 30 days for the handful of U.S. diplomats still in Venezuela. Maduro has tried to frame the agreement, which hasn't been made public, as the first step in exchanging interest sections, much like the U.S. and Cuba did for decades.

Kimberly Breier, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for Western hemisphere affairs, called Story an outstanding leader who puts people's safety and welfare first.

"He has managed a challenging situation skillfully and with creativity and perseverance," Breier said. "His presence on the ground in Caracas, and that of our embassy, is critical to advancing our interests and working with the Venezuelan people for a peaceful return to democracy and an end to this crisis."

Story was posted to Caracas to serve as the deputy to Chargé d' Affaires Todd Robinson. But by the time he arrived in July 2018 Robinson had been expelled during a previous diplomatic spat, leaving it to Story to restore some civility to a U.S.-Venezuela relationship that has been rocky ever since the start of the late Hugo Chavez's Bolivarian revolution two decades ago. The two countries haven't exchanged ambassadors in almost a decade.

By all accounts, his down-home Southern charm has opened doors.

In a rare feat for U.S. diplomats in Venezuela, who are usually ensconced in the hilltop U.S. Embassy compound liaising with opposition politicians, Story has managed to establish a rapport with a number of powerful Venezuelan government officials, all the while gingerly sidestepping the political minefield running through anti-Maduro Miami that has made engagement a risky endeavor for any U.S. official. He also won the respect of his staff by joining the embassy's softball team within days of arrival.

Chief among his interlocutors is Rafael Lacava, governor of the central state of Carobobo, who presented him with a painting of two joined fists in the colors of the U.S. and Venezuelan flags that now hangs in the entrance to Story's official residence in Caracas. Other mementos from a long career that took him to Mexico, Colombia and Brazil, as well as several jobs overseeing anti-narcotics policy in the region, include framed doodles by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that he acquired when both were working at the U.N. Security Council.

"Gaining the trust of others is more art than skill," said Feeley, who is now a political consultant for Spanish-language TV network Univision. "Jimmy understood he had to operate in the reality he had, not the one he wished he had."

Story even appears to have won the begrudging respect of Maduro.

"How are you Jimmy?," Maduro said in broken English on state TV Monday night as he welcomed back

to Caracas a group of Venezuelan diplomats he had recalled from the U.S. "I Bolivarian President Maduro. I'm still here, in Miraflores Palace, Jimmy."

Goodman on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APjoshgoodman>

US expected to announce treaty withdrawal as soon as Friday

By DEB RIECHMANN, ROBERT BURNS AND MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is poised to announce Friday that it is withdrawing from a treaty that has been a centerpiece of superpower arms control since the Cold War and whose demise some analysts worry could fuel a new arms race.

An American withdrawal, which has been expected for months, would follow years of unresolved dispute over Russian compliance with the pact, known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, or INF, treaty. It was the first arms control measure to ban an entire class of weapons: ground-launched cruise missiles with a range between 500 kilometers (310 miles) and 5,000 kilometers (3,100 miles). Russia denies that it has been in violation.

U.S. officials also have expressed worry that China, which is not party to the 1987 treaty, is gaining a significant military advantage in Asia by deploying large numbers of missiles with ranges beyond the treaty's limit. Leaving the INF treaty would allow the Trump administration to counter the Chinese, but it's unclear how it would do that.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in early December that Washington would give Moscow 60 days to return to compliance before it gave formal notice of withdrawal, with actual withdrawal taking place six months later. The 60-day deadline expires on Saturday, and the administration is expected to say as early as Friday that efforts to work out a compliance deal have failed and that it would suspend its compliance with the treaty's terms.

The State Department said Pompeo would make a public statement on Friday morning, but it did not mention the topic.

In a tweet Thursday, the chief spokeswoman for NATO, Oana Lungescu, said there are no signs of getting a compliance deal with Russia.

"So we must prepare for a world without the Treaty," she wrote.

Technically, a U.S. withdrawal would take effect six months after this week's notification, leaving a small window for saving the treaty. However, in talks this week in Beijing, the U.S. and Russia reported no breakthrough in their dispute, leaving little reason to think either side would change its stance on whether a Russian cruise missile violates the pact.

A Russian deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov, was quoted by the Russian state news agency Tass as saying after the Beijing talks Thursday, "Unfortunately, there is no progress. The position of the American side is very tough and like an ultimatum." He said he expects Washington now to suspend its obligations under the treaty, although he added that Moscow remains ready to "search for solutions" that could keep the treaty in force.

U.S. withdrawal raises the prospect of further deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations, which already are arguably at the lowest point in decades, and debate among U.S. allies in Europe over whether Russia's alleged violations warrant a countermeasure such as deployment of an equivalent American missile in Europe. The U.S. has no nuclear-capable missiles based in Europe; the last of that type and range were withdrawn in line with the INF treaty.

The prospect of U.S. withdrawal from the INF pact has stirred concern globally. The mayor of Des Moines, Iowa, Frank Cownie, is among dozens of local officials and lawmakers in the U.S., Canada, Europe and elsewhere who signed a letter this week to President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin expressing worry at the "unraveling" of the INF treaty and other arms constraints.

"Withdrawing from treaties takes a step in the wrong direction," Cownie said in a telephone interview. "It's wasn't just Des Moines, Iowa. It's people from all around this country that are concerned about the

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future of our cities, of our country, of this planet.”

The American ambassador to NATO, Kay Bailey Hutchison, set the rhetorical stage for Washington’s withdrawal announcement by asserting Thursday that Russia has been in violation for years, including in Ukraine. She said in a tweet and a video message about the INF treaty that Russia is to blame for its demise.

“Russia consistently refuses to acknowledge its violation and continues to push disinformation and false narratives regarding its illegal missile,” she said. “When only one party respects an arms control treaty while the other side flaunts it, it leaves one side vulnerable, no one is safer, and (it) discredits the very idea of arms control.”

Nuclear weapons experts at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said in a statement this week that while Russia’s violation of the INF treaty is a serious problem, U.S. withdrawal under current circumstances would be counterproductive.

“Leaving the INF treaty will unleash a new missile competition between the United States and Russia,” they said.

Kingston Reif, director for disarmament at the Arms Control Association, said Thursday the Trump administration has failed to exhaust diplomatic options to save the treaty. What’s more, “it has no strategy to prevent Russia from building and fielding even more intermediate-range missiles in the absence of the agreement.”

Reif said the period between now and August, when the U.S. withdrawal would take effect, offers a last chance to save the treaty, but he sees little prospect of that happening. He argues that Trump’s national security adviser, John Bolton, is “unlikely to miss the opportunity to kill an agreement he has long despised.”

Associated Press writer Lynn Berry contributed to this report.

Venezuela opposition leader to police: Leave my family alone

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO and FABIOLA SANCHEZ, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — The Venezuelan opposition leader challenging Nicolas Maduro’s claim to the presidency warned officers from a feared state security unit Thursday to stay away from his family after he accused them of showing up at his apartment in a tense brush with the very force he is trying to persuade to switch allegiance and back him.

A visibly flustered but determined Juan Guaido told a crowd gathered at a university that members of a special police unit known for its brutal tactics had gone to his high-rise apartment in a middle-class neighborhood of Caracas while his 20-month-old daughter was inside.

“I hold you responsible for anything that might happen to my baby,” the 35-year-old lawmaker said as his wife stood beside him.

He rushed home and emerged an hour later holding his smiling daughter, named for Francisco de Miranda, a Venezuelan patriot who paved the way for Venezuela’s independence, and described how four agents from the police’s Special Action Force had arrived at the building and asked security guards stationed there for his wife.

“Children are sacred,” he admonished the agents as a crowd of supporters applauded. “Wives are sacred. So don’t cross that red line.”

In a statement on Twitter, Venezuela’s police denied that special agents had gone to Guaido’s home, dismissing the claim as “totally FALSE.”

Guaido is at the center of Venezuela’s political upheaval as he presses forward with establishing a transitional government after swearing himself in as the nation’s rightful president in a move denounced by Maduro as a U.S.-backed coup.

In a country where the socialist leader’s foes often end up behind bars, Guaido has thus far managed to avoid arrest, but in recent days authorities have let it be known that even as his powerful international support grows Guaido isn’t untouchable.

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On Tuesday, the government-stacked Supreme Court barred Guaido from leaving the country and froze his bank accounts while chief prosecutor Tarek William Saab, a Maduro ally, conducts an investigation into his anti-government activities.

"Once more they are playing the intimidation game," Guaido said. "They're not going to succeed in intimidating this Venezuelan family."

Even while denouncing the special police force, Guaido appealed to them and the military to abandon Maduro and abide by the constitution, which he contends instructs him as leader of the opposition-controlled National Assembly to take the presidency. The opposition and a large segment of the international community consider Maduro's reelection fraudulent, in part because the president's most popular adversaries were barred from running.

"You have time to put yourselves on the right side of history," Guaido said.

U.S. officials who have warned Maduro will face "serious consequences" if he harms Guaido denounced the incident as a disgraceful intimidation tactic.

"Regime resorts to targeting a 20-month-old baby," Kimberly Breier, the current U.S. assistant secretary of state for the region, wrote on Twitter. "Shame on you Maduro."

Later Thursday, Guaido told The Associated Press that he will defy a government ban on humanitarian aid by sending large convoys of medicine into the country with the help of neighboring nations. He said the move will be a "new test" for Venezuela's military.

"In a few weeks they will have to choose if they let much needed aid into the country. or if they side with Nicolas Maduro," said Guaido.

Guaido explained that aid for Venezuela will include life-saving medicines that are scarce in Venezuela and will be transported by vehicles arriving at several border points, after it is shipped into "friendly ports" in neighboring countries.

"We are not just taking aid from the United States," Guaido explained. "But in the next few days we will announce a global coalition to send aid to Venezuela."

A swift end to the tumult appears unlikely as both Guaido and Maduro dig in for a protracted conflict with geopolitical dimensions.

Maduro has been crisscrossing Venezuela overseeing military exercises and vowing to defend his socialist government no matter the cost. The military's top leadership is backing Maduro, though analysts warn that rank-and-file troops frustrated by their country's economic and humanitarian crisis may not share their unwavering loyalty.

Venezuelan officials said Thursday that authorities had taken down a "terrorist" group backed by political opponents plotting to assassinate Maduro. Interior Minister Nestor Reverol said retired National Guard Col. Oswaldo Garcia Palomo was among those detained. Garcia Palomo has been an outspoken critic of Maduro for months and had openly declared his intentions to amass a military force in exile to remove Maduro from power.

Reverol said security forces seized two rifles and 500 armbands bearing the letters "OC," which he said stands for "Operation Constitution." He accused Colombian intelligence, the CIA and exiled Venezuelan lawmaker Julio Borges of being behind the alleged plot.

"We are continuing the investigation and don't discount future arrests," he added.

The government called for a mass rally Thursday to denounce U.S. sanctions against Venezuela's state-owned oil company that could starve Maduro's government of billions in export revenue but turnout was no more than a few hundred people.

Maduro has retained the support of powerful allies, including Russia and China, but he is growing increasingly isolated as more nations back Guaido.

The European Parliament called on the European Union's 28 member states Thursday to recognize Guaido. The regional bloc has not yet defined its position on the crisis amid differing opinions among members, though several nations have said they will recognize Guaido if Maduro doesn't announce a new election by week's end.

The bloc did not come out in support of Guaido after a meeting of foreign ministers in Bucharest, Ro-

mania, to discuss the crisis, but EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini announced the establishment of a 90-day international conduct group with EU and Latin American states to “promote common understanding aiming at a peaceful and democratic outcome.”

The EU legislature also approved a resolution that condemned the continued violence and the detention of journalists who sought to cover events there.

In recent days journalists from at least three foreign publications have been detained. Spain’s state-run EFE news agency said three of its journalists were freed Thursday after being detained overnight in Venezuela’s capital. Two French journalists were also freed from detention, and two Chilean journalists were ordered deported.

Guaido reappeared Thursday night to address dozens of neighbors and thank them for not letting state security forces intimidate the community. He is urging Venezuelans to take to the streets again Saturday for a mass protest demanding that humanitarian aid enter the country, something the Maduro government has regularly refused, denying that a crisis is underway.

— Armario reported from Bogota, Colombia. Associated Press journalists Scott Smith and Joshua Goodman in Caracas contributed to this report.

AP Interview: Venezuela’s Guaido vows to defy ban on aid

By MANUEL RUEDA and CLBYBURN SAINT JOHN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido said he will defy a government ban on humanitarian aid by sending large convoys of medicine into the country with the help of neighboring nations.

In an interview Thursday, Guaido told The Associated Press that the move will be a “new test” for Venezuela’s military, whose top brass has sided with socialist President Nicolas Maduro since protests against his rule broke out last week.

“In a few weeks they will have to choose if they let much needed aid into the country . or if they side with Nicolas Maduro,” said Guaido, who recently offered an amnesty to members of the military in another effort to encourage them to defect from the Maduro administration.

Guaido explained that aid for Venezuela will include life-saving medicines that are scarce in Venezuela and will be transported by vehicles arriving at several border points, after it is shipped into “friendly ports” in neighboring countries.

“We are not just taking aid from the United States,” Guaido said. “But in the next few days we will announce a global coalition to send aid to Venezuela.”

The 35-year-old president of Venezuela’s Congress declared himself to be Venezuela’s legitimate leader last week and set up a transitional government that has been backed by the United States, Canada and most South American countries.

Guaido argues that Maduro was re-elected in a sham election last year, and is invoking two articles of Venezuela’s constitution that he says allow him as the leader of the national assembly to assume the presidency and call elections when the current president is holding power illegitimately.

Maduro has described Guaido’s challenge as a “vile” coup attempt and still has control of most of the Venezuelan government, including its cash cow, the state owned oil company.

Earlier this week, the United States announced sanctions that will bar Venezuelan oil imports and could cost the Maduro administration up to \$11 billion over the next year.

Guaido backed the sanctions on Thursday and described them as a means to stop Venezuela’s wealth from being looted by the Maduro government which he described as a corrupt “dictatorship.”

“It’s not just the United States doing this,” Guaido said. “Our parliament and acting presidency asked for the protection of our country’s assets.”

Guaido’s claim to the Venezuelan presidency has been backed by protests in which at least 35 people

have been killed and more than 900 have been arrested, according to human rights groups.

Guido said that he still sees transparent elections as the best way out of Venezuela's spiraling political crisis, but realizes that Maduro will not easily grant them unless he is pressured to do so by economic sanctions, street protests and Venezuela's military.

"We have to erode the pillars that support this dictatorship," he said.

But he added that the opposition will have to continue to apply pressure mechanisms until Maduro's "usurpation of power has ceased."

Knicks deal Porzingis to Dallas, say he requested a trade

By **BRIAN MAHONEY, AP Basketball Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Knicks were having their doubts, wondering if Kristaps Porzingis truly wanted to be part of the franchise.

On Thursday, they say he made it clear he didn't.

Once that happened, they decided to trade the All-Star forward who was thought to be one of the key players for their future.

"When he came in today, it was clear to us that it was time to pull the trigger on something," Knicks President Steve Mills said.

That was a seven-player swap with the Dallas Mavericks that also netted New York two future first-round draft picks and possibly enough room to afford two top free agents this summer.

Porzingis has been sidelined for nearly a year after tearing his left ACL. The Knicks said recently he would undergo testing during the middle of February that could have determined if he would be able to return this season.

If it does, it will be in Dallas, where he can form an intriguing international frontcourt with rookie Luka Doncic. Both played professionally in Spain before coming to the NBA as top-five picks.

"He's big, he can shoot, he can rebound. He can do a lot of things," said Doncic, who was with the Mavericks at their game in Detroit. "I think he can be one of the best players in this league."

The Knicks acquired Dennis Smith Jr., DeAndre Jordan and Wesley Matthews in the deal, while also sending guards Tim Hardaway Jr., Trey Burke and Courtney Lee to Dallas. New York general manager Scott Perry said the Knicks would get an unprotected pick in 2021 and the other pick would be in 2023.

"We feel like we did the right thing," Mills said. "When you're trying to think about how you want to build your team for the long term, you don't want to commit a max (contract) to a player who clearly says to you he doesn't want to be here," Mills said.

The 7-foot-3 Porzingis was the No. 4 pick in 2015 and averaged 17.8 points and 7.1 rebounds in New York, where he was expected to be the Knicks' franchise player for years. But they declined to give him a contract extension before this season — they say he was in agreement with that decision — and now by trading him and Hardaway seem instead to be gearing up to pursue players in free agency, with nearly \$70 million in cap space.

Hardaway has two more years and about \$37 million left on his contract, and moving that was necessary if the Knicks were going to find a way to open the most cap space possible.

New York (10-40) has the worst record in the NBA and is headed toward landing a high pick in the draft. Then the Knicks will be set up to be big spenders in a free agent market that could include Kevin Durant, Kawhi Leonard, Kyrie Irving and more.

But they won't have Porzingis, who they once believed was the kind of talent who could help attract those players. The Latvian has 3-point range on offense and shot-blocking skills on defense, and had made his first All-Star team just before tearing his ACL after a dunk against Milwaukee on Feb. 6.

He had been frustrated with the franchise before, skipping his exit meeting after his second season before returning to Europe for the summer. But Knicks coach David Fizdale had said Porzingis was frequently around the team even while he couldn't play, taking part in meetings and some activities on the court.

However, Mills and Perry saw otherwise, noticing how often Porzingis was in the gym and how long he

stayed when he did come.

He was there Thursday, and after a meeting the Knicks had their answers.

"We wanted a confirmation from him whether he was completely in or out," Mills said, "and he made it clear to us when he came in to meet with us that no longer wanted to be part of our group."

The most valuable player in the deal from the Knicks' standpoint is likely Smith, the point guard they passed on with the No. 8 pick in 2017 when they instead took Frank Ntilikina. The Mavericks took Smith one pick later, and he posted the second triple-double of his career Wednesday when Dallas won at Madison Square Garden.

Jordan is a former U.S. Olympian and top defensive center. The Knicks said they wanted to keep Jordan and Matthews, believing they could help their younger players.

AP Basketball Writer Tim Reynolds and AP Sports Writer Noah Trister contributed to this report.

20 charged in Chinese birth tourism crackdown

By AMY TAXIN, Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP) — Dongyuan Li's business was called "You Win USA," and authorities say she coached pregnant Chinese women on how to get into the United States to deliver babies who would automatically enjoy all the benefits of American citizenship.

Over two years, the now-41-year-old raked in millions through her business, where mothers-to-be paid between \$40,000 and \$80,000 each to come to California, stay in an upscale apartment and give birth, authorities said.

Li, who was arrested Thursday, is one of 20 people charged in the first federal crackdown on birth tourism businesses that prosecutors said brought hundreds of pregnant women to the United States.

Jing Dong, 42, and Michael Wei Yueh Liu, 53, who allegedly operated "USA Happy Baby," also were arrested.

All three pleaded not guilty Thursday to charges including conspiracy, visa fraud and money laundering, according to Thom Mrozek, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Los Angeles. Trials were scheduled for March 26.

More than a dozen others, including the operator of a third such business, also face charges but are believed to have returned to China, prosecutors said.

While it isn't illegal to visit the United States while pregnant, authorities said the businesses — which were raided by federal agents in 2015 — touted the benefits of having U.S. citizen babies, who could get free public education and years later help their parents immigrate.

They also allegedly had women hide their pregnancies while seeking travel visas and lie about their plans, with one You Win USA customer telling consular officials she was going to visit a Trump hotel in Hawaii.

U.S. authorities said the businesses also posed a national security risk since their customers, some who worked for the Chinese government, secured American citizenship for children who can move back to the United States and once they're 21 and then sponsor their parents for green cards.

"I see this as a grave national security concern and vulnerability," said Mark Zito, assistant special agent-in-charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's homeland security investigations. "Are some of them doing it for security because the United States is more stable? Absolutely. But will those governments take advantage of this? Yes, they will."

Messages left for Li and Dong's attorneys were not immediately returned. Derek Tung, Liu's attorney, said the growing interest among Chinese women to give birth to American babies drew attention to a phenomenon long employed by citizens of other countries.

His client had nothing to do with getting women visas from China but worked almost as a subcontractor to provide housing once they arrived, he said. "My client is merely the provider. The people who are in China are the ones in charge of everything," he said.

Birth tourism businesses have long operated in California and other states and cater to couples from

China, Russia, Nigeria and elsewhere.

In the past, operators sometimes ran into trouble with local code enforcement officials when neighbors in residential areas complained about crowding or excess trash, but they didn't face federal scrutiny.

In 2015, federal agents in California raided roughly three dozen sites connected with the three businesses. More than 20 people were designated as material witnesses but some later fled to China and were charged with violating federal court orders, and a lawyer who helped them leave the country was convicted of obstruction of justice.

This week, a federal grand jury indicted four people who allegedly ran the birth tourism businesses until the 2015 raids, including Wen Rui Deng, 65, who is believed to be in China and accused of operating "Star Baby Care."

That business dated to at least 2010 but advertised having brought 8,000 women to the United States — half of them from China — and claimed to have been running since 1999, prosecutors said.

Each business brought hundreds of customers to give birth in the United States and some didn't pay all of the medical costs tied to their care, prosecutors said. One couple paid the indigent rate for their hospital bills — a total of \$4,080 — even though they had more than \$225,000 in a U.S. bank account they had used to shop at luxury stores including Louis Vuitton, according to court papers.

Li, who operated You Win USA and paid in full for a \$2.1 million home in Irvine, California and a new Mercedes-Benz, told an undercover federal agent who was posing as a pregnant Chinese citizen that her company would train her to interview for a visa and pass customs, according to court filings.

At one point, the papers said, she also sent a text message to her husband about the business, saying "After all, this is not legal!"

Associated Press writer Christopher Weber contributed from Los Angeles.

US border agency says it's made biggest-ever fentanyl bust

By ANITA SNOW, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials announced Thursday their biggest fentanyl bust ever, saying they captured nearly 254 pounds (114 kilograms) of the synthetic drug that is fueling a national epidemic of fatal opioid overdoses from a secret compartment inside a load of Mexican produce heading into Arizona.

The drug was found hidden Saturday morning in a compartment under the rear floor of a tractor-trailer after a scan during a secondary inspection indicated "some anomalies" in the load, and the agency's police dog team alerted officers to the presence of drugs, Nogales CBP Port Director Michael Humphries said.

Most of the seized fentanyl with an overall street value of about \$3.5 million was in white powder form, but about 2 pounds of it (1 kilogram) was contained in pills. Agents also seized nearly 395 pounds (179 kilograms) of methamphetamine with a street value of \$1.18 million, Humphries said.

"The size of a few grains of salt of fentanyl, which is a dangerous opioid, can kill a person very quickly," Humphries said. The seizure, he said, had prevented an immeasurable number of doses of the drug "that could have harmed so many families."

President Donald Trump praised the bust in a tweet Thursday, writing: "Our great U.S. Border Patrol Agents made the biggest Fentanyl bust in our Country's history. Thanks, as always, for a job well done!"

The Drug Enforcement Administration said the previous largest U.S. seizure of fentanyl had been in August 2017 when it captured 145 pounds (66 kilograms) of the drug in a Queens, New York, apartment that was linked to the Sinaloa Cartel. Before that, the largest recorded fentanyl seizure was 88 pounds (40 kilograms) nabbed from a pickup truck in Bartow County, Georgia.

Mexican traffickers have been increasingly smuggling the drug into the United States, mostly hidden in passenger vehicles and tractor-trailers trying to head through ports of entry in the Nogales, Arizona, and San Diego areas.

Doug Coleman, the DEA's special agent in charge for the Phoenix division, expressed admiration for the

size of the recent bust, emphasizing that it was not the product of any intelligence from his agency but rather "pure, old fashioned police work" by the agent who pulled the truck over.

"It was totally a cold hit" based on the agent's hunch, Coleman said.

Fentanyl has caused a surge in fatal overdoses around the U.S., including the 2016 accidental death of pop music legend Prince, who consumed the opioid in counterfeit pills that looked like the narcotic analgesic Vicodin.

U.S. law enforcement officials say the illicit version of the painkiller is now seen mostly as a white powder that can be mixed with heroin for an extra kick as well as blue pills that are counterfeits of prescription drugs like oxycodone.

The legal prescription form of the drug is used mostly to provide relief to cancer patients suffering unbearable pain at the end of their lives.

DEA officials have said that while 85 percent of the illicit fentanyl entering the United States from Mexico is seized at San Diego-area border crossings, an increasing amount is being detected on the border with Arizona, a state where the Sinaloa cartel controls the drug trade and fatal fentanyl overdoses are rising.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says in a recent report that fentanyl is now the drug most often involved in fatal overdoses across the country, accounting for more than 18,000, or almost 29 percent, of the 63,000 overdose fatalities in 2016.

PG&E must deal with problem that bankruptcy won't end: fires

By BRIAN MELLEY, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Big corporations forced into bankruptcy by liability lawsuits often take the offending product off the market and try to move on. That's what happened with the Dalkon Shield birth control device, asbestos and silicone breast implants.

But when the nation's biggest utility, Pacific Gas & Electric, comes out of bankruptcy, it will face the same danger that put it in financial peril in the first place: wildfires.

As the case makes its way through the courts, the industry and the public will be watching closely to see what steps PG&E takes to control its legal exposure to future blazes in an era in which climate change is likely to make such disasters more common.

Will PG&E invest more in preventive maintenance to keep power lines from starting fires, adopting more aggressive tree-trimming and brush-clearing practices? Will it fortify its equipment better? Will it shut off the power in certain areas when the fire risk is high?

"Where other companies have been able to say, 'We're going to deal with hazards we caused in the past through bankruptcy,' PG&E somehow has to find a solution to the fact that California is going to have drought conditions for a very long time," said Jared Ellias, a law professor at the University of California Hastings School of Law in San Francisco. "How do you solve the liability crisis that they face?"

PG&E is the nation's first utility forced into bankruptcy by potentially massive legal bills from wildfires. It filed for Chapter 11 reorganization this week to deal with potentially tens of billions of dollars in claims over several of California's devastating blazes in 2017 and 2018.

The company faced 750 lawsuits from fire victims and expected hundreds more, Stephen Karotkin, an attorney for PG&E, said at a court hearing Thursday.

One was the nation's deadliest, most destructive wildfire in a century: the blaze in November that leveled the Northern California town of Paradise, killed at least 86 people and destroyed nearly 15,000 homes. The cause is still under investigation, though PG&E had reported problems with equipment near where the fire started.

PG&E was found responsible for 17 other fires that tore through Northern California since 2017.

The bankruptcy could lead to smaller payouts for fire victims, whose claims will most likely be heard by a judge, a step that could reduce the risk of excessive jury verdicts.

Attorneys for wildfire victims urged a bankruptcy judge at Thursday's hearing to prioritize their claims and move fast. Some victims are facing the prospect of homelessness if they don't receive a settlement

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soon, attorney Frank Pitre said.

PG&E wants to establish a trust fund for all the lawsuits that would expedite payments to victims, Karotkin said. The bankruptcy was not a "strategic ploy to avoid PG&E's responsibility for the devastating damage and loss of life" from wildfires, he said.

The judge approved \$1.5 billion in financing that the utility said it needed to keep operating.

The bankruptcy also could lead to higher bills for customers of PG&E, which supplies natural gas and electricity to 16 million people in Northern and central California.

The case could be an early glimpse of the financial pressures utilities could face as a result of climate change.

In the past, utilities have sought protection in bankruptcy court because of such things as nuclear reactors that didn't pay off or costly fluctuations in the electricity market.

"This time around, you have a whole different problem," said David Wiggs, who was chairman and CEO at the Texas-based El Paso Electric Co. in 1992 when it became the second utility since the Depression to declare bankruptcy. "Claims of fire damage are not normal. That is a lot of liability that is not your normal utility expense."

Under California law, a public utility is liable if its equipment caused a fire, even if the company wasn't shown to be negligent. Some of the lawsuits, however, have accused PG&E of inadequate maintenance and other failings.

PG&E will have to develop a business plan that shows it is not likely to end up in bankruptcy court again. How it does that is not clear at this point, but it may have to address how to minimize liability from future fires in a warming world.

Some possible solutions have been proposed in a separate criminal case where the company is on probation over a 2010 gas line explosion in the San Francisco Bay Area that killed eight people and destroyed 38 homes.

The federal judge overseeing that case criticized the company's wildfire safety record and proposed earlier this year that it remove or trim all trees that could fall onto its power lines in high winds and shut off the electricity when fire is a risk, regardless of the inconvenience to customers or loss of profit.

PG&E has said that is unrealistic, it could cost \$150 billion and that lives could be endangered if it cuts power.

As PG&E spends the next two to three years reorganizing, other utilities are likely to be watching.

"They're on notice," said Robert Rasmussen, a law professor at the University of Southern California. "I think a lot of these fires are caused by extreme conditions that are brought on by climate change. I'm sure they're struggling with what to do."

Associated Press writer Sudhin Thanawala and video journalist Haven Daley in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Survivors question brevity of FBI report on Vegas massacre

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and KEN RITTER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a gunman killed 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School seven years ago, the FBI released 1,500 pages of documents from its investigation.

Its report on the 2017 massacre in Las Vegas was just three pages.

The brevity prompted disbelief and disappointment from survivors and relatives of victims. Even President Donald Trump said he was surprised, though he said he understood the FBI had not determined a motive in the Vegas shooting.

"There's disappointment that there's no answers — a reason a man would go into a hotel and kill innocent, beautiful souls," said Lisa Fine of Sacramento, California, who survived the attack that killed 58 people and injured nearly 900 others when shots were fired from a hotel window into a concert crowd. Fine recalled bullets whizzing past while she ran to safety.

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"Would answers help us avoid this in the future? So that no one else has to be in a mass shooting? We're all talking about prevention," she said.

Close to 16 months after the massacre, the FBI's long-awaited report — released Tuesday — did little to shed light on the investigation and left its main question about motive unanswered.

"They were unable to find a real reason, other than that obviously he was sick, and they didn't know it," Trump said in an interview with The Daily Caller. "So, I was a little surprised and a lot disappointed that they weren't able to find the reason, because you'd like to find a reason for that and stop it."

The report compiled by the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit found that gunman Stephen Paddock sought notoriety in the attack, but it cited no "single or clear motivating factor" to explain why he opened fire from his suite in a high-rise casino hotel on 22,000 people attending the open-air concert.

Aaron Rouse, special agent in charge of the FBI's Las Vegas office, defended his agency's handling of the investigation — calling it a "herculean" effort.

More than 1,000 FBI employees worked on the investigation, he said, adding that it would be a "mis-characterization" to deem the FBI's inability to identify a specific motive as a failure.

"Everything that could be done to figure out why has been done," Rouse said.

Sandra Breault, FBI spokeswoman in Las Vegas, did not immediately respond Thursday to messages about the president's comments.

Jack Levin, author of several books on serial killings and professor emeritus of sociology and criminology at Northeastern University in Boston, said he doubted authorities had any reason to withhold information about Paddock.

But he said he would have liked the FBI report to detail whether a catastrophic loss might have triggered Paddock to undertake the attack.

"I've studied hundreds of cases, and in almost every case there has been a catastrophic loss," Levin said. "Loss of a job, loss of lots of money, becoming deeply in debt, losing a relationship or a loved one, separation from important friends, an eviction."

Mary Ellen O'Toole, who retired as an FBI profiler in 2009, said agents typically compile long reports after extensive analysis to help law enforcement and the public understand the investigation and what can be done to prevent future attacks.

"People really want more information in cases like this," she said. "They want to know what we missed, who knew something and what was the motivation so this doesn't happen anymore."

The FBI said it enlisted experts who spent months examining several factors that might have prompted the rampage.

The report said the gunman was inspired in part by his father's reputation as a bank robber who was once on the FBI's most wanted list.

In many ways, Paddock was similar to other shooters the FBI has studied — motivated by a complex merging of developmental issues, stress and interpersonal relationships. Paddock's physical and mental health had been declining before the shooting. His wealth had diminished, and the 64-year-old struggled with aging, the FBI said.

Trump, who met with victims at a hospital in the days after the massacre, said the FBI "worked very hard on the case" but "they just were unable to find anything."

"A very sick person, who just, people never saw that coming." Trump said.

O'Toole now heads the George Mason University forensic science program in Fairfax, Virginia. She said FBI profilers often work like consultants for police departments in major investigations.

She cautioned that while she didn't know the specific details of the arrangement following the Las Vegas shooting, police may have told the FBI what specific information they wanted agents to investigate and report on.

Las Vegas police have declined to comment on the FBI report. The department closed its investigation in August with the release of a 187-page report — also without identifying a reason for Paddock's rampage.

In response to a court order in a public records lawsuit, Las Vegas police previously released thousands

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of pages of police reports, witness statements and hundreds of hours of officer body camera and surveillance video footage.

"People have a hard time understanding motive," O'Toole said. "They think of money or sex. We're seeing more and more these motives are personalized like a desire to be infamous or to be internationally known."

Paddock broke out a window in his 32nd-floor suite at the Mandalay Bay casino-hotel and fired more than 1,000 rounds in 11 minutes into a crowd of music fans below.

He had 23 assault-style weapons, including 14 fitted with rapid-fire "bump stock" devices, which the Trump administration has banned, beginning in March. Authorities said Paddock's guns had been legally purchased.

Paddock did not leave a manifesto or suicide note, and federal agents believe he had planned to fatally shoot himself after the attack, according to the report.

"Bottom line is he didn't want people to know" his motive, Rouse said.

Levin said he thinks Paddock wanted most to be remembered.

"People say we don't know Paddock's motive," Levin said. "But I think his motive was to go down in infamy. That's a motive that's shared by lots of killers."

Ritter reported from Las Vegas. Associated Press writer Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

Trump plans to meet Xi after US-China talks end with no deal

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and PAUL WISEMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday talked up China's commitment to buy more American soybeans. But the tough issues dividing the world's two biggest economies remained unsettled after two days of meetings between U.S. and Chinese negotiators.

Trump said he expects to meet with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, to try to reach a final resolution to the six-month trade standoff.

"If we come to an agreement, there is a lot of work that has to be done," U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told reporters, summarizing what he said were two days and an evening of "very intense, detailed and specific discussions."

"It's my judgment that we made headway," he said, declining to outline specific areas where he thought the two sides had made progress. Lighthizer reiterated that a March 2 deadline stands and said it would be up to Trump to decide how to proceed at that point if a comprehensive trade deal with China remained out of reach.

March 2 is the point at which the U.S. would escalate import taxes on \$200 billion in Chinese goods if there was no deal. The penalties are scheduled to jump from 10 percent to 25 percent.

"He'll make that decision when we get there," Lighthizer said of Trump. He spoke after the talks concluded and Trump met in the Oval Office with the Chinese delegation. "The most important thing now is to continue the work."

Trump spoke glowingly of a Chinese commitment to buy vast quantities of U.S. soybeans. But he acknowledged that he and Xi would have to reach a final agreement on the far more contentious technology issues, and said that might require more than one meeting with Xi.

"There are some points we don't agree to, but we will agree," the president told reporters. "I think when Xi and I meet, every point will be agreed to."

Timothy Keeler, former chief of staff at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, said he thinks a U.S.-China deal is possible. But "I don't think it's possible in the next four weeks," said Keeler, now partner at the law firm Mayer Brown. "That's why I tend to think both sides will do something and find a way to keep talking."

The White House had no details on when a presidential-level meeting might take place. Trump is expected to travel to Asia in late February for another meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, though the

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White House has not announced a date and location for those talks.

The U.S.-China trade hostilities escalated after Trump took office, weakening both economies, shaking financial markets and clouding the outlook for global trade. Analysts have held out little hope the two countries can reach a comprehensive deal over the next month.

At the heart of the conflict is the U.S. demand that Beijing stop taking predatory actions — from intellectual theft to the forced handover of technology by U.S. companies — in a drive to become a global power in such fields as robotics and electric cars. The Trump administration also complains that Beijing unfairly subsidizes its own tech companies.

China has denied that it deploys any such tactics.

Lighthizer, who has taken a hard line on Chinese trade practices, led the U.S. delegation. Vice Premier Liu He headed the Chinese side.

Philip Levy, senior fellow at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and an economic adviser in President George W. Bush's White House, said the idea of a climactic one-on-one meeting with Xi "plays very much to President Trump's vision of himself as a master negotiator."

But the summit will raise the stakes, put pressure on Trump not to walk away empty-handed and make it more likely the U.S. will agree to less than it originally hoped to get from the Chinese, setting the stage for continued conflict over trade.

"It's unlikely that we're going to get a lasting peace," Levy said.

Asian stocks mixed as China-US talks end with no deal

By ANNABELLE LIANG, Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Asian markets were mixed on Friday as trade talks ended in Washington with no deal but the promise of a second meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Gains were limited by a private survey showing that Chinese manufacturing slowed to the lowest level in almost three years.

KEEPING SCORE: Hong Kong's Hang Seng index lost 0.2 percent to 27,885.90 while the Shanghai Composite index jumped 0.8 percent to 2,604.57. Japan's Nikkei 225 index rose 0.2 percent to 20,803.38 after the country's unemployment rate unexpectedly fell to 2.4 percent in December, from 2.5 percent the month before. South Korea's Kospi edged 0.1 percent higher to 2,209.08. Australia's S&P ASX 200 was flat at 5,865.30. Shares rebounded in the Philippines and were higher in Singapore and Indonesia. Markets in Taiwan were closed.

WALL STREET: Corporate earnings helped U.S. indexes seal a strong performance in January. Facebook reported that it earned \$6.9 billion in the fourth quarter, 61 percent higher than a year earlier. After the close of regular trading, Amazon said its quarterly profits topped \$3 billion for the first time, though its forecast for the current quarter was tepid. The S&P 500 index added 0.9 percent to 2,704.10. It rose 7.9 percent in January, its best monthly gain since October 2015. The Dow Jones Industrial Average eased 0.1 percent to 24,999.67 while the Nasdaq composite jumped 1.4 percent to 7,281.74. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks added 0.8 percent to 1,499.42.

CHINA-U.S. TRADE: American and Chinese negotiators wrapped up two days of talks Thursday without a deal but with an upbeat outlook. U.S. President Donald Trump said China has agreed to buy more American soybeans, but he expects to meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping to seek agreement on other contentious issues. "There are some points we don't agree to, but we will agree," Trump said. "I think when Xi and I meet, every point will be agreed to." A tariffs cease-fire between the U.S. and China is set to be lifted on March 2, and the U.S. is expected to raise import taxes from 10 percent to 25 percent for \$200 billion in Chinese goods.

CHINESE MANUFACTURING: A private survey released on Friday suggested that manufacturing in China slowed in January. China's Caixin Manufacturing PMI was 48.3 in January, down from 49.7 in December. This was its lowest reading since February 2016. Readings below 50 indicate contraction on the index's 100-point scale. The survey said that Chinese production and new orders slipped further in January while

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export orders climbed, fueling fears that the world's second largest economy was experiencing a slowdown.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "The high-level China-U.S. trade talks did not result in any negative headlines. Expectations for a sweeping deal were low to begin with and the market is probably relieved that trade tensions are no longer escalating," DBS Group Research strategists Neel Gopalakrishnan and Eugene Leow said in a commentary.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude gave up 8 cents to \$53.71 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 44 cents to settle at \$53.79 per barrel on Thursday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 3 cents to \$60.87 per barrel. The contract dropped 70 cents to \$60.84 per barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar was trading at 108.85 yen, down from 108.89 yen late Thursday. The euro eased to \$1.1442 from \$1.1445.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Feb. 1, the 32nd day of 2019. There are 333 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 1, 1960, four black college students began a sit-in protest at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, where they'd been refused service.

On this date:

In 1790, the U.S. Supreme Court convened for the first time in New York. (However, since only three of the six justices were present, the court recessed until the next day.)

In 1862, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," a poem by Julia Ward Howe, was published in the Atlantic Monthly.

In 1942, during World War II, the Voice of America broadcast its first program to Europe, relaying it through the facilities of the British Broadcasting Corp. in London.

In 1943, during World War II, one of America's most highly decorated military units, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, made up almost exclusively of Japanese-Americans, was authorized.

In 1946, Norwegian statesman Trygve Lie (TRIHG'-vuh lee) was chosen to be the first secretary-general of the United Nations.

In 1959, men in Switzerland rejected giving women the right to vote by a more than 2-1 referendum margin. (Swiss women gained the right to vote in 1971.)

In 1968, during the Vietnam War, South Vietnam's police chief (Nguyen Ngoc Loan) executed a Viet Cong officer with a pistol shot to the head in a scene captured by news photographers. Richard M. Nixon announced his bid for the Republican presidential nomination.

In 1979, Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (hoh-MAY'-nee) received a tumultuous welcome in Tehran as he ended nearly 15 years of exile.

In 1982, "Late Night with David Letterman" premiered on NBC.

In 1993, Gary Bettman took office as the National Hockey League's first commissioner, succeeding the NHL's final president, Gil Stein.

In 1994, Jeff Gillooly, Tonya Harding's ex-husband, pleaded guilty in Portland, Ore., to racketeering for his part in the attack on figure skater Nancy Kerrigan in exchange for a 24-month sentence (he ended up serving six) and a \$100,000 fine.

In 2003, the space shuttle Columbia broke up during re-entry, killing all seven of its crew members: commander Rick Husband; pilot William McCool; payload commander Michael Anderson; mission specialists Kalpana Chawla, David Brown and Laurel Clark; and payload specialist Ilan Ramon (ee-LAHN' rah-MOHN'), the first Israeli in space.

Ten years ago: The Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Arizona Cardinals 27-23 to win Super Bowl XLIII (43). Rafael Nadal held off Roger Federer to win the Australian Open, 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (3), 3-6, 6-2. Olympic great

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Michael Phelps acknowledged "bad judgment" after a photo in a British newspaper showed him inhaling from a marijuana pipe. Australian firefighter Dave Tree was photographed giving water to an injured koala found in burned brushland in Victoria state; the rescued female koala, dubbed "Sam," became an Internet sensation, but ended up being euthanized in Aug. 2009.

Five years ago: The United Nations' secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, pressed the U.S. and Russia to help ensure that peace talks aimed at stemming Syria's civil war would resume soon after a week of peace talks ended in Geneva with no concrete progress. Ray Guy became the first punter elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame; joining the long-time Oakland Raider were two first-time eligible players, linebacker Derrick Brooks and offensive tackle Walter Jones, as well as defensive end Michael Strahan, receiver Andre Reed, defensive back Aeneas Williams and defensive end Claude Humphrey. Peyton Manning won his fifth Associated Press NFL Most Valuable Player award in a landslide. Academy Award-winning actor Maximilian Schell, 83, died in Innsbruck, Austria.

One year ago: Republican State Rep. Don Shooter was expelled from the Arizona House because of a lengthy pattern of sexual misconduct, making him the first state lawmaker in the U.S. to be booted out since the #MeToo movement emerged. Sheriff's officials in Los Angeles said new witnesses had emerged in the 1981 drowning death of actress Natalie Wood, prompting investigators to name her former husband, Robert Wagner, a "person of interest" in what they considered a "suspicious death." (Detectives later said the evidence hadn't reached the threshold for a murder investigation and that they had no plans to file criminal charges.) A judge ordered a Wisconsin girl, Morgan Geyser, to be committed to a mental hospital for 40 years for stabbing a classmate when she was 12 years old to curry favor with the fictional horror character Slender Man.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Stuart Whitman is 91. Folk singer Bob Shane (The Kingston Trio) is 85. Singer Don Everly is 82. Actor Garrett Morris is 82. Bluegrass singer Del McCoury is 80. TV personality-singer Joy Philbin is 78. Comedian-actor-director Terry Jones is 77. Political commentator Fred Barnes is 76. Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., is 75. Rock musician Mike Campbell (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers) is 69. Blues singer-musician Sonny Landreth is 68. Actor-writer-producer Bill Mummy (MOO'-mee) is 65. Rock singer Exene Cervenka is 63. Actor Linus Roache is 55. Princess Stephanie of Monaco is 54. Country musician Dwayne Dupuy (Ricochet) is 54. Actress Sherilyn Fenn is 54. Lisa Marie Presley is 51. Comedian-actor Pauly Shore is 51. Actor Brian Krause is 50. Jazz musician Joshua Redman is 50. Rock musician Patrick Wilson (Weezer) is 50. Actor Michael C. Hall is 48. Rock musician Ron Welty is 48. Rapper Big Boi (Outkast) is 44. Roots rocker Jason Isbell is 40. Country singer Julie Roberts is 40. Actor Jarrett Lennon is 37. Rock singer-musician Andrew VanWyngarden is 36. TV personality Lauren Conrad is 33. Actress-singer Heather Morris is 32. Actress and mixed martial artist Ronda Rousey is 32. Rock singer Harry Styles (One Direction) is 25.

Thought for Today: "To forgive is wisdom, to forget is genius." — Joyce Cary, Anglo-Irish author (1888-1957).