

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 1 of 40

## Groton Area Schedule of Events

**Tuesday, February 12, 2019**

6:30pm: Basketball: Girls Varsity Game vs. Webster Area High School @ Groton Area High School

**Thursday, February 14, 2019**

LifeTouch Pictures Groton Area Elementary School, Groton Area High School

4:00pm: Basketball: Boys 7th/8th Game vs. Redfield-Doland @ Redfield Jr-Sr High School(7th Grade @ 4pm; 8th Grade @ 5pm)

6:30pm: Basketball: Girls Varsity Game @ Milbank

6:30pm: Basketball: Boys Varsity Game @ Langford

- 1- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ads
- 2- GDILIVE.COM - GBB with Webster
- 3- Roncalli boys hold off Groton rally
- 4- Ava Tunheim Memorial Game
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Weather Pages
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- 2019 Groton Events
- 11- News from the Associated Press

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605.397.2365

## 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.

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

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 2 of 40

It's Girls Basketball Action on [GDILIVE.COM](http://GDILIVE.COM)



**Webster  
Bearcats**

**VS**



**Groton Area Tigers**

**Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019**

**8:00 p.m.**

**at Groton Area Arena**

**Broadcast of this game is sponsored by**

Allied Climate Professionals  
Bahr Spray Foam  
Blocker Construction  
Doug Abeln Seed Company  
James Valley Seed - Doug Jorgensen  
John Sieh Agency  
Locke Electric  
Milbrandt Enterprises, Inc.  
Northeast Chiropractic Clinic  
Professional Management Services, Inc.  
Sanford Health  
Tyson DeHoet Trucking  
Weber Landscaping

## Ava Tunheim Memorial Game

### Roncalli holds off Groton rally to win

In about 36 hours, the Groton Area and Aberdeen Roncalli schools put together a fundraiser and memorial event for Ava Tunheim, Groton's eighth grader that passed away on Sunday from her battle with Leukemia. Between the two schools, T-shirts were printed up and Roncalli made it possible for the gate receipts to given in memory of Ava, which amounted to \$5,515.60. Groton's Father Mike Kelly had a moment of prayer and a few words along with a time of silence. After the pre-game event, the two teams too the court for boys' basketball action.

Roncalli jumped out to a 12-0 lead and upped it to 28-9 early in the second quarter. Groton Area battled back in the second half and closed to within four, 56-52, with about three minutes left in the game. The Cavaliers rebounded and went on for the eight-point win, 61-53.

Treyton Diegel led the Tigers with 15 points followed by Brodyn DeHoet with 14, Kaden Kurtz scored of 11 of his points in the third quarter, Jonathan Doeden had nine points and Jayden Zak added four free throws.

The Cavaliers were led by Isaac VanOrman with 20 points followed by Max Reede with 14, Brady Morgan had 11, Salesi Mounnga had nine, Grayden Imbery and Harrison Reede each had three points and Brandon Fauth added two points.

Groton Area made 20 of 57 field goals for 35 percent while Roncalli was 23 of 52 for 44 percent. In three-pointers, the Tigers were four of 16 for 25 percent with Diegel and Kurtz each making two. Roncalli was eight of 22 in three-pointers for 36 percent.

The Tigers were nine of 12 from the line for 75 percent off of Roncalli's 16 team fouls and Roncalli was eight of 11 for 73 percent off of Groton Area's 11 team fouls. Groton Area had 10 turnovers with nine of them being steals. Roncalli had six turnovers with three of them being steals - one each by DeHoet, Diegel and Doeden.

Groton Area had the edge in rebounds, 31-30, with DeHoet having 11 for Groton Area giving him a double-double on the night and Fauth having eight for Roncalli.

The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by the Aberdeen Chrysler Center. Games are then archived at 397news.com were GDI subscribers can get access to them for later viewing.

Roncalli won the junior varsity game, 43-21. Jayden Zak had 10 points, Chandler Larson six, Jackson Cogley and Tristan Traphagen each had two and Lane Tietz added one.

Roncalli won the C game, 37-19. Jackson Cogley had four points, Jackson Bahr and Wyatt Hearnen each had three, Kannon Coats, Pierce Kettering, Jace Kroll and Jayden Zak each had two points and Tate Larson had one point.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 4 of 40



As Coach Justin Hanson said, "So much more than wins and losses! Groton and Roncalli, be proud of your boys. I sure am!!!" (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Eighth Graders Ashton Bahr, Gracie Traphagen, Shallyn Foertsch and Jacelynne Gleason each read part of a note from Ava's dad, Nathan Tunheim. They are flanked by Father Mike Kelly on the right and the Groton Area and Roncalli cheerleaders in the back. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 5 of 40



Father Mike Kelly from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton, had a moment of prayer and silence at the Roncalli basketball game Monday evening in Aberdeen. He said, "The communities of Groton Area and Aberdeen Roncalli join in yet another athletic event. They put this in perspective reverencing and respecting the life of Ava Tunheim and eighth grade Groton Area student who's fight for life ended Sunday morning - a life treasured and honored, especially by her dad, Nathan; and mom, Allison. We, here tonight, hold up the sanctity of life.

"Let us Pray: Lord God of compassion, lovingly touch our hearts that we may prayerfully ask HOW to cope with hurt and sadness, HOW to receive strength from you, HOW to carry on. We ask this in quietness and silence . . . Amen. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



With the free will offering as well as the money from the gate receipts, a total of \$5,515.60 was raised Monday night at the Roncalli boys' basketball game that will be given in memory of Ava Tunheim. Ava passed away Sunday morning after a long battle with Leukemia. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Eighth Graders Ashton Bahr, Gracie Traphagen, Shallyn Foertsch and Jacelynne Gleason hug each other after reading Nathan Tunheim's letter to the audience. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 6 of 40

## Today in Weather History

February 12, 1905: On this date in weather history, record low temperatures occurred across northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota with lows in the 30s below zero. Sisseton, Aberdeen, and Watertown all had record lows. Sisseton fell to 31 degrees below zero, Watertown saw 35 degrees below zero, and Aberdeen dropped to 36 degrees below zero in 1905. In central South Dakota, Kennebec fell to 34 degrees below zero.

1784: Ice floes were spotted in the Gulf of Mexico after passing out of the Mississippi River in February 1784. Ice blocked the river at New Orleans, Louisiana. The ice in New Orleans is one of two times that this occurred, the other during the Great Arctic Outbreak of 1899. The eruption of Laki in Iceland from June 8, 1783, through February 7, 1784, is the likely cause for the severe winter of 1783 to 1784.

1899: More from the bitter cold outbreak of 1899. Texas and the Eastern Plains experienced their coldest morning of modern record. The mercury dipped to 8 degrees below zero at Fort Worth, Texas and 22 degrees below zero at Kansas City, Missouri. The temperature at Camp Clarke, Nebraska plunged to 47 degrees below zero to establish a record for the state. The all-time record low for Oklahoma City was set. The mercury fell to a frigid 17 degrees below zero and broke the previous record low of 12 below zero, which was set on the previous day. In the eastern U.S., Washington D.C. hit 15 degrees below zero, while Charleston SC received a record four inches of snow. Snow was reported in Fort Myers, Tampa, and Tallahassee in Florida. Click [HERE](#) for more information from the National Centers for Environmental Information.

1958: Snow blanketed northern Florida, with Tallahassee reporting a record 2.8 inches. A ship in the Gulf of Mexico, 25 miles south of Fort Morgan Alabama, reported zero visibility in heavy snow on the afternoon of the 12th.

1899 - Texas and the eastern plains experienced their coldest morning of modern record. The mercury dipped to 8 degrees below zero at Fort Worth TX, and to 22 degrees below zero at Kansas City MO. The temperature at Camp Clarke NE plunged to 47 degrees below zero to establish a record for the state. In the eastern U.S., Washington D.C. hit 15 degrees below zero, while Charleston SC received a record four inches of snow. (David Ludlum)

1958 - Snow blanketed northern Florida, with Tallahassee reporting a record 2.8 inches. A ship in the Gulf of Mexico, 25 miles south of Fort Morgan AL, reported zero visibility in heavy snow on the afternoon of the 12th. (12th-13th) (The Weather Channel)

1960 - A snowstorm in the Deep South produced more than a foot of snow in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm in the eastern U.S. produced high winds from North Carolina to Maine. A storm in the western U.S. produced up to thirty inches of snow in the Sierra Nevada Range of California. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A classic "nor'easter" formed off the Carolina coast and intensified as it moved up the Atlantic coast bringing heavy snow to the northeastern U.S. Totals ranged up to 26 inches at Camden NY and Chester MA. Arctic cold gripped the north central U.S. Duluth MN was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 32 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably mild weather prevailed across Alaska. Morning lows of 29 degrees at Anchorage and 31 degrees at Fairbanks were actually warmer than those in northern Florida. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Strong southerly winds ahead of an arctic cold front pushed temperatures into the 70s as far north as Iowa and Nebraska. Twenty-one cities in the central U.S., seven in Iowa, reported record high temperatures for the date. Lincoln NE reported a record high of 73 degrees, and the afternoon high of 59 degrees at Minneapolis MN smashed their previous record for the date by twelve degrees. Springfield IL reported a record forty-eight consecutive days with above normal temperatures. (The National Weather Summary)

2006 - An intense snow squall off of Lake Michigan cuts visibility to zero along a section of US 31. The resulting whiteout causes 96 cars to pile up. 25 were injured.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 7 of 40

Today



Cold

High: 9 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: -11 °F

Wednesday



Partly Sunny

High: 15 °F

Wednesday  
Night



Cloudy then  
Slight Chance  
Snow

Low: 2 °F

Thursday

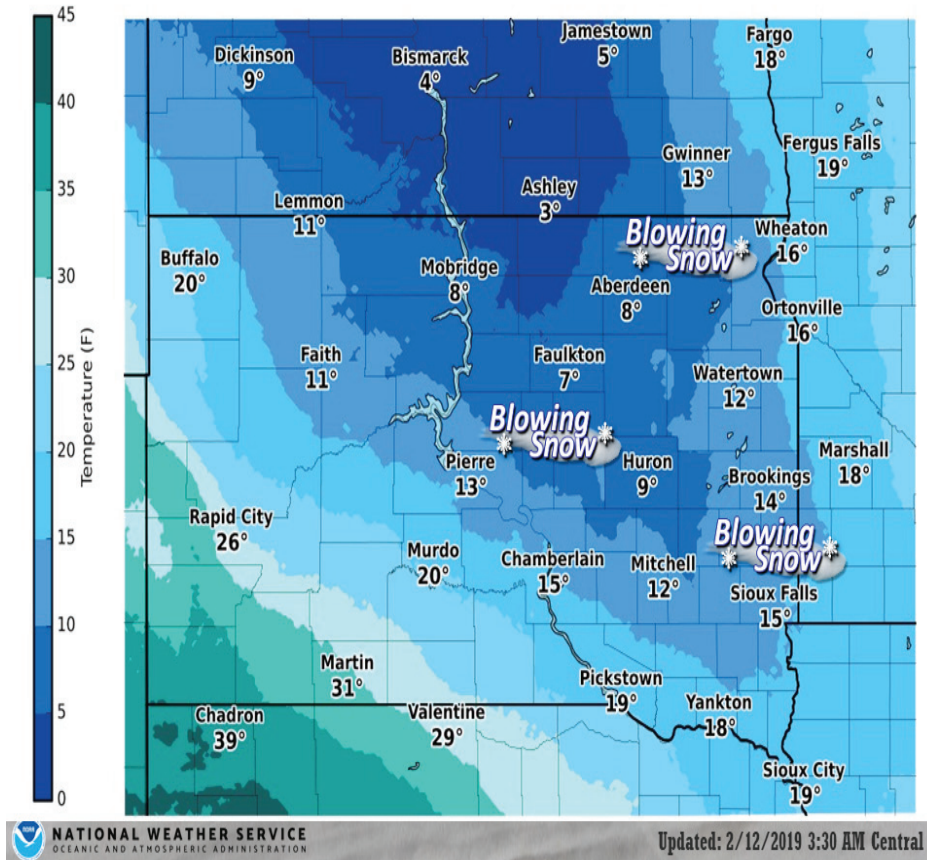


Chance Snow

High: 6 °F

## Afternoon Highs

Valid: February 12, 2019



Published on: 02/12/2019 at 3:38AM

We will finally see a dry day across the region today, but with a continuation of below normal temperatures. Breezy winds will combine with some fresh snow cover to create areas of blowing snow, mainly across the central and eastern portions of the area.

# Groton Daily Independent

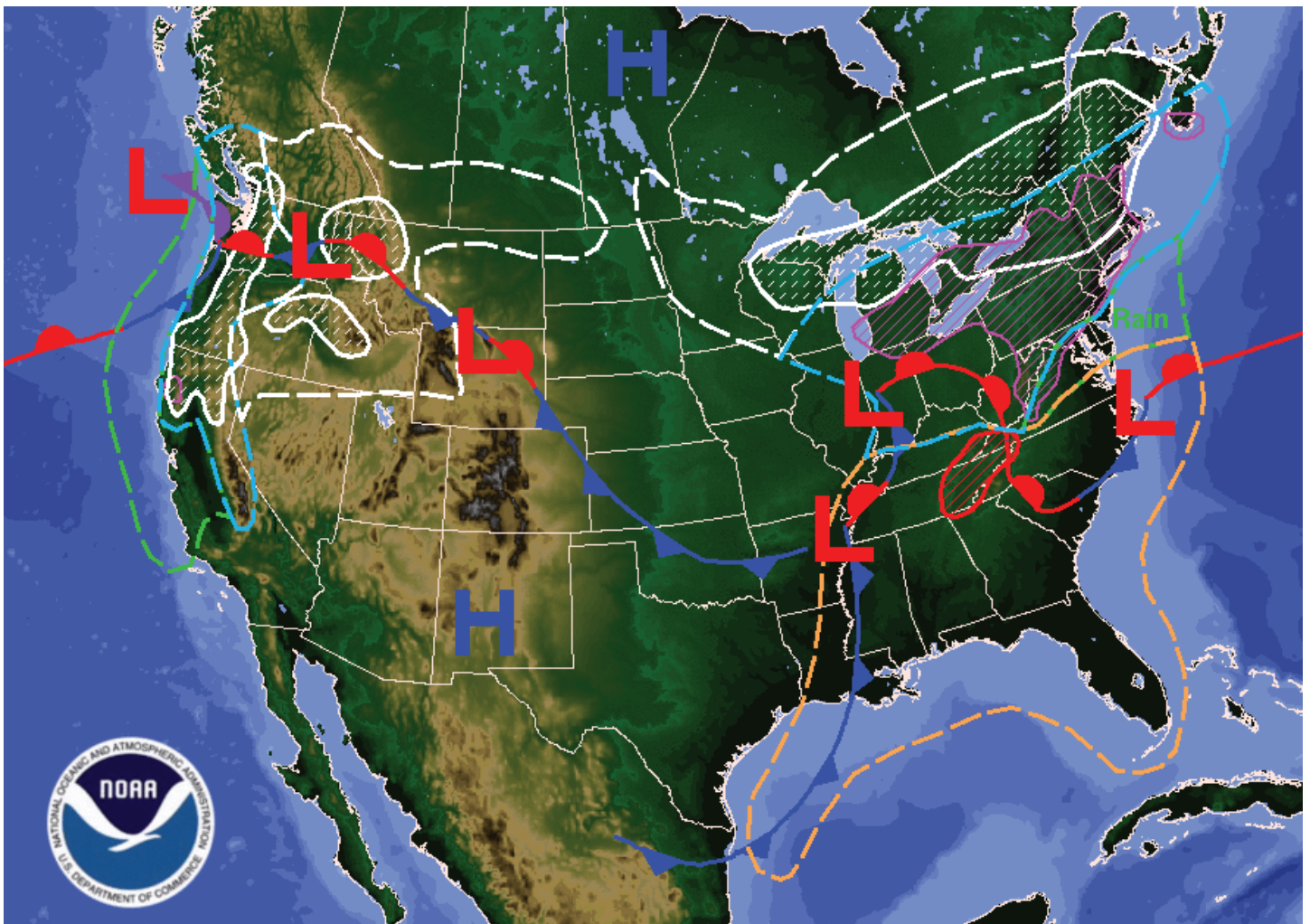
Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 8 of 40

## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 20 °F at 2:13 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: -7 °F at 12:03 AM**  
**High Gust: 24 mph at 12:11 PM**  
**Precip:**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 62° in 1921**  
**Record Low: -36° in 1905**  
**Average High: 27°F**  
**Average Low: 6°F**  
**Average Precip in Feb.: 0.17**  
**Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 0.64**  
**Precip Year to Date: 0.00**  
**Sunset Tonight: 5:56 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:39 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Tue, Feb 12, 2019, issued 4:48 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McCreynolds 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)**



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 9 of 40



## LOOK AT IT THIS WAY.....

One thing is for certain about you, Guido, he said as he looked at my messy desk, you dont have OCD!

What do you mean, I dont have OCD? I asked.

Well, if you had an obsessive-compulsive disorder you would be arranging and rearranging your desk to make it neat and orderly. Then you would do it over and over again. But, its not neat, never has been, and probably never will be. Ill bet that your drawers are the same.

Realizing that he was right, I decided not to argue with him. He was a psychologist, and I was embarrassed.

Many people do arrange and then rearrange things. Some people do things over and over again, and then again, to make sure that everything is perfect, or as close to perfect as it can be. They check and then recheck what they have already checked. Being around people who have habits like that make me feel guilty. They have to do things right!

But there is a vast difference between doing things right and doing the right things. We can waste an entire day arranging and then rearranging food in our homes while our neighbor goes hungry. Or, we may arrange and then rearrange our cramped closets when we know there are people who wear worn out, ragged clothing because they have no other choice. We may be doing things right but we are certainly not doing the right things.

Righteousness in Gods Word is a combination of both behaviors. Not only do we want to do things right - as He commands us to do in His Word - but we must do the right things that will please and honor Him, as we serve others in need spiritually and morally.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to be aware of how we do righteousness. May our lives meet Your expectations. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 1:3 For receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair.

## 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 at the Cemetery, Lunch to follow at the American Legion (Memorial Day)
- 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
- 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
- 11/9/2019 Groton American Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course 2019 Holiday Party
- Santa Claus Day
- Crazy Dayz/Open Houses
- School Events



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 11 of 40

## News from the Associated Press

### Woman injured when stray bullet pierces bathroom mirror

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police say a Sioux Falls woman was injured when a bullet was accidentally shot through a wall from a neighboring apartment.

Authorities say the 27-year-old woman was standing in front of her bathroom mirror when the bullet came through the mirror Sunday. Police weren't sure whether the woman was grazed by the bullet or was injured by the shattered mirror. But, she's expected to be OK.

The Argus Leader reports the neighbor says he was cleaning his gun when it accidentally fired. He's not expected to face charges.

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

### Monday's Scores By The Associated Press

#### BOYS PREP BASKETBAL

Aberdeen Roncalli 61, Groton Area 53  
Arlington 61, Colman-Egan 51  
Baltic 71, Elkton-Lake Benton 61  
Canistota 66, Howard 56  
Flandreau Indian 70, Centerville 38  
Florence/Henry 70, Iroquois 49  
Gayville-Volin 62, Avon 55  
Hamlin 65, Castlewood 60  
Highmore-Harrod 73, Sunshine Bible Academy 47  
Huron 65, Aberdeen Central 49  
Kadoka Area 68, Wall 50  
Kimball/White Lake 72, Burke 56  
Lake Preston 57, Great Plains Lutheran 35  
Leola/Frederick 84, Northwestern 79, OT  
Madison 61, Vermillion 55  
Miller 78, Wessington Springs 42  
Parkston 59, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 49  
Platte-Geddes 65, Scotland 33  
Todd County 72, Stanley County 61  
Viborg-Hurley 63, Elk Point-Jefferson 50  
Warner 52, Faulkton 42  
Waubay/Summit 59, Estelline/Hendricks 49  
Webster 54, Wilmot 50

#### GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 57, Huron 54  
Arlington 47, Colman-Egan 45  
Avon 51, Gayville-Volin 19  
Chester 42, Parker 39  
Deuel 60, Tiospa Zina Tribal 51  
Elk Point-Jefferson 45, Viborg-Hurley 42  
Ethan 54, Corsica/Stickney 45

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 12 of 40

Flandreau Indian 55, Centerville 40  
Garretson 62, Elkton-Lake Benton 19  
Gregory 57, Colome 50  
Hamlin 64, Castlewood 42  
Hanson 50, Bon Homme 45  
Harding County 60, Bison 45  
Highmore-Harold 52, Sunshine Bible Academy 34  
Kimball/White Lake 59, Hitchcock-Tulare 41  
Lake Preston 67, Great Plains Lutheran 65, 30T  
Miller 56, Wessington Springs 21  
Parkston 49, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 34  
Pine Ridge 58, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 51  
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 59, James Valley Christian 29  
Sioux Falls Christian 58, Canton 39  
Sisseton 46, Britton-Hecla 35  
Warner 56, Faulkton 44  
Waverly-South Shore 70, Tri-State, N.D. 35  
Webster 65, Wilmot 49  
White River 73, St. Francis Indian 50

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

## Soybean production sets record in South Dakota in 2018

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Soybean production in South Dakota set a record high last year, while the dry pea crop was a record low.

The federal Agriculture Department in its annual crop production summary says state farmers produced 257 million bushels of soybeans, up 6 percent from the previous year.

Dry pea production is estimated at 399,000 hundredweight, down 24 percent from 2017.

Other crops that saw production increases in South Dakota in 2018 were corn, alfalfa hay, sorghum, oil sunflowers, proso millet and safflower.

Crops that saw decreases included non-oil sunflowers and flaxseed.

## House OKs industrial hemp bill despite Noem's call for delay

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — State representatives overwhelmingly advanced legislation Monday to legalize industrial hemp in South Dakota, just days after Republican Gov. Kristi Noem asked lawmakers to shelve the efforts this session.

The 65-2 House vote came after Noem said in a statement Friday that South Dakota isn't ready for the production of industrial hemp, contending questions remain about enforcement, taxpayer costs and effects on public safety. But House Majority Leader Lee Qualm urged support and said it's time to move forward with hemp.

Qualm said after the vote that he had a "good dialogue" with Noem on Sunday evening about the bill. The Republican from Platte said he would support overriding a potential veto from Noem but didn't think it would come to that.

"She's got some legitimate concerns," Qualm said. "I think it's something that we can address and get fixed."

The 2018 federal farm bill legalized the cultivation of industrial hemp, but Noem's office has noted the crop isn't currently authorized for growth in South Dakota and discouraged farmers from making plans to produce it during the 2019 growing season.

"We need to see federal guidelines when they are issued and then decide if this commodity is as promising as they say it will be," Noem said in the statement.

Democratic Rep. Oren Lesmeister, the bill's sponsor, said on the House floor that if lawmakers wait until next year or later to approve the measure, the state would be so far behind that industries looking to locate in South Dakota wouldn't come. Supporters anticipate that hemp planting wouldn't happen until 2020 under the bill.

J.B. Meyer, president of A.H. Meyer & Sons in Winfred, said legalizing the crop would allow his business to process industrial hemp purchased from suppliers. Delaying the measure would cause the company to lose out on income, he said.

Jarrold Otta, plant manager for Glanbia Nutritionals in Sioux Falls, told a House committee last week that the company has been contacted by two "very large customers" to process hemp protein. Otta said he couldn't disclose the companies but called them "large household names that you would all know."

"Every month we go by with the hemp laws written the way they are is a lost opportunity for our state," said Otta, noting that the company has a facility built to process plant proteins. "Please help us legalize hemp so we can add another product to our portfolio and grow the plant here in this state."

The bill defines industrial hemp as containing no more than 0.3 percent THC. The measure would require prospective growers to get a Department of Agriculture license and pass state and federal background checks.

Applicants who have been convicted of a felony drug crime in the previous 10 years would be disqualified. The bill would allow Agriculture Department employees to enter areas where hemp is grown, stored and processed to take samples and perform inspections.

## **Search for missing 9-year-old girl in South Dakota on hold**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have put on hold the search for a 9-year-old girl who ran away from a residential youth home amid frigid weather more than a week ago in South Dakota.

Pennington County Sheriff Kevin Thom told reporters Monday that authorities are regrouping and trying to decide "how and when" they continue recovery efforts for Serenity Dennard.

The Rapid City Journal reports the sheriff said the investigation remains open until the girl is found.

The search for Serenity had been stalled for two days because of a winter storm before resuming Friday. The girl went missing Feb. 3 in subfreezing temperatures from the Black Hills Children's Home near Rockerville.

The sheriff's office has said if the girl was outside, it's unlikely she survived because she wasn't dressed for the weather. Authorities said their efforts are now focused on finding her body .

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

## **South Dakota House approves reporter shield measure**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota House lawmakers have approved protections for journalists who refuse to disclose information or sources after Gov. Kristi Noem pushed for a reporter shield law in her State of the State address.

Representatives voted 47-20 Monday for the bill, sending it to the Senate. The proposal would block courts, the Legislature and other public bodies in South Dakota from holding in contempt journalists who assert the privilege. It would also make information obtained in violation of the law inadmissible in such proceedings.

Republican Rep. Jon Hansen, the sponsor, says a free press is essential to the transparent and effective functioning of government. GOP Rep. Taffy Howard, who asked lawmakers to oppose the measure, says she believes the Bill of Rights is sufficient.



## Admitted pipeline vandalizer fights racketeering lawsuit

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A Phoenix woman who has publicly admitted to vandalism along the route of the Dakota Access oil pipeline in two states is asking a judge to dismiss her as a defendant in a \$1 billion federal racketeering lawsuit filed by the pipeline developer.

Ruby Montoya was one of millions of people around the world who shared a “common purpose” of stopping the \$3.8 billion pipeline built to move North Dakota oil to Illinois, and Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners has failed to show any link between her and a criminal enterprise, said defense attorney Lauren Regan with the Civil Liberties Defense Center.

“Advocating for the protection of the climate through a reduction in fossil fuel infrastructure is on its face constitutionally protected, and not a basis for a RICO claim,” Regan wrote in a recent court filing.

ETP sued Earth First, BankTrack and Greenpeace in August 2017, alleging they worked to undermine the pipeline project and the company. A judge later dismissed both Earth First and BankTrack as defendants and criticized the lawsuit for being vague. The company added five individuals as defendants in August 2018, including Montoya and Jessica Reznicek.

The two women in July 2017 released a public statement admitted to damaging valves and setting fire to construction equipment along the pipeline route in Iowa and South Dakota.

Regan notes that neither woman has been criminally charged. She also refutes ETP allegations that Montoya was a spokeswoman for the anti-pipeline group Mississippi Stand and was trained in “eco-terrorist techniques” through Earth First.

U.S. District Judge Billy Roy Wilson ruled last year that ETP had failed to make a case that Earth First is an entity that can be sued. The Center for Constitutional Rights had argued that Earth First is a philosophy or movement similar to Black Lives Matter, and thus can’t be sued.

“Plaintiffs cannot seem to grasp the fact that (Earth First) is not an organization and does not have ‘members,’” Regan wrote, maintaining that Mississippi Stand is similarly an entity with no structure or leadership.

Montoya has no connection with any other defendants in the lawsuit other than Reznicek, who has not yet been served with the lawsuit, Regan wrote.

“Plaintiffs have failed to adequately allege Montoya’s membership in or association with plaintiff’s paranoid, farcical and manufactured conspiracy theory,” she said.

ETP’s lawsuit under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act alleges that the defendants disseminated false and misleading information about the project and interfered with its construction through violent and criminal means, damaging the company’s reputation and finances.

Opposition by groups and American Indian tribes who feared environmental harm inspired large protests in southern North Dakota and resulted in 761 arrests over a six-month span beginning in late 2016. The pipeline has been operating since June 2017.

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Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

## Settlement in lawsuit over improperly raised premiums

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Black Hills Federal Credit Union and a Wisconsin-based insurance company have agreed to pay \$3 million to settle a class-action lawsuit claiming they improperly raised insurance premiums on thousands of loans.

A judge is expected to consider the proposed settlement later this month. The agreement would resolve the eight-year-old lawsuit initially filed by a Rapid City couple.

Edward and Kathy Thurman received a home equity loan totaling around \$30,000 from the credit union in 1995 and bought a disability insurance plan offered by CUNA Mutual Insurance Society, the Rapid City Journal reported. The couple sued after the credit union and the insurance company failed to properly inform them that their disability insurance premium was increasing.

The suit gained class action status in 2013 when the Thurmans took the matter to the South Dakota Supreme Court. The couple then hired a computer programmer to analyze more than 500,000 copies of

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 15 of 40

the defendants' financial documents, resulting in an additional 4,461 loans being added to the suit. Kathy Thurman died in 2016, but the lawsuit continued with her widowed husband, Edward, as the lead plaintiff.

Circuit Judge Robert Mandel approved the settlement on Dec. 21, following a 12-hour mediation session. A hearing for final approval of the settlement is scheduled for later this month.

Around \$1.73 million of the \$3 million settlement will be split among the customers associated with the 4,461 affected loans. The remainder will cover lawyers' fees, plaintiffs' costs and a \$30,000 plaintiff's incentive award for Edward Thurman.

The settlement prohibits the parties from defaming each other. The terms do not include any admission by the credit union or the insurance company that the plaintiffs' claims were valid, or that the credit union or life insurance company violated any laws.

The Black Hills Federal Credit Union and the now renamed CMFG Life Insurance Company sent written statements to the Journal denying any wrongdoing, but agreed it was in the best interests of all parties to settle.

The plaintiffs' motion for approval of the settlement said: "CMFG would be foolhardy ever to tell a credit union again that it can switch its customers' credit disability policy in this same manner."

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

## Girl's Basketball Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Sportswriters Association high school girl's poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points and last week's ranking.

### Class AA

1. O'Gorman (23)	16-2	115	1
2. Brandon Valley	14-3	87	3
3. Lincoln	12-5	50	RV
4. Harrisburg	13-4	43	2
5. Brookings	11-4	34	5

Receiving votes: Stevens 14, Washington 2.

### Class A

1. West Central (14)	16-0	106	3
2. Winner (9)	15-0	96	2
3. Lennox	15-2	74	1
4. McCook Central-Montrose		14-2	36 4
5. SF Christian	12-4	13	RV

Receiving votes: Vermillion 11, St. Thomas More 5, Todd County 3, Belle Fourche 1.

### Class B

1. Ethan (23)	16-0	115	1
2. Warner	17-2	81	2
3. De Smet	16-1	68	3
4. Corsica-Stickney	17-1	53	4
5. Faith	17-1	19	5

Receiving votes: Bridgewater-Emery 7, Avon 2.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 16 of 40

## Boy's Basketball Polls

By The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Prep Media Basketball Poll for the week of Feb. 11 is listed below, ranking the top-five teams, the team's record, points received and ranking in the previous poll. First-place votes are listed in parentheses.

### Boys

#### Class AA

1. Lincoln (23)	14-1	115	1
2. O'Gorman	11-5	91	3
3. Brandon Valley	11-4	55	2
4. Yankton	12-4	41	4
5. Roosevelt	10-5	29	5

Receiving votes: Huron 9, Harrisburg 3, Stevens 2.

#### Class A

1. Tea Area (23)	17-1	115	1
2. SF Christian	14-2	91	3
3. St. Thomas More	13-2	63	2
4. Pine Ridge	14-3	50	4
5. Tiospa Zina	15-2	9	RV

Receiving votes: Lennox 8, Sioux Valley 4, Dakota Valley 4, Red Cloud 1.

#### Class B

1. Viborg-Hurley (13)	16-1	95	3
2. White River (5)	14-2	87	1
3. Clark3Willow Lake (5)	13-2	76	2
4. Bridgewater-Emery	14-3	60	4
5. De Smet	13-2	25	RV

Receiving votes: Jones County 1, Timber Lake 1.

## South Dakota ranked for first time in school history

By DOUG FEINBERG, AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — South Dakota has been on the rise since moving up to Division I in 2008.

Now the Coyotes can add an appearance in The Associated Press women's basketball poll to their achievements.

Riding a nine-game winning streak, coach Dawn Plitzuweit's team entered the AP Top 25 at No. 25 on Monday for the first time in school history.

"Certainly it's an exciting day for our team and program, our fans and our university," Plizuweit said. "It speaks volumes to the hard work our young ladies have done to get to this point. It's certainly not the end goal of our program."

The Coyotes (22-3), who are off to their best start as a DI school, have five consecutive 20-win seasons. The team is 74-19 in Plizuweit's three years at the school. She took over a team that won the WNIT title in 2016.

"When you receive a ranking like this it speaks volumes to the young ladies and coaches that have been there before and what they did to build the program." She said

The Coyotes' first game as a ranked team will be on Saturday at Western Illinois. The team was off practice Monday.

"Today we can celebrate it without focusing on being on the court then get back to work," Plizuweit said. "This group is really hungry and on a mission right now to be the best they can be."

South Dakota already has win this season over Iowa State and Missouri when the Tigers were ranked. Here are some other tidbits from the AP Top 25 this week:



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 17 of 40

**FALLING IRISH:** Notre Dame fell out of the first five for the first time in 31 weeks. The Irish were last out of the top group on Nov. 20, 2017, when they were also sixth.

**RISING TO THE SUMMIT:** South Dakota became the third Summit League team ever to be ranked, joining rival South Dakota State and Oral Roberts. South Dakota State had a 11-week run from middle of the 2008-09 season to the final poll that year. Oral Roberts was in for one week in 1983 before the school joined the Summit.

**TOP 25 SHOWDOWNS:** UConn will host South Carolina on Monday night in the final non-conference tuneup for both teams. Oregon State will play at Oregon on Friday night in a huge Pac-12 clash.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

Follow Doug Feinberg on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/DougFeinberg>

## Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press

### Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, Feb. 8

#### Easing state's 'English only' restrictions makes sense

Our state legislature often seems determined to outdo itself each year in making laws that do little to improve the economic situation in South Dakota.

So we've got to hand it to the Senate Transportation Committee for advancing SB 117 to consideration by their full chamber. They haven't allowed impractical nativist bluster to get in the way of moving forward with a tweak to existing law that promises a measure of relief for the woes of our workforce-strapped state.

The bill as currently written would allow the state to administer driver's license written tests in Spanish. If passed, it would extend the exceptions to South Dakota's English-only law regarding "any official public document or record of any official public meeting."

One of that 1995 bill's authors told the Argus Leader in 2017 that the law was never intended to prohibit administering written driving exams in other languages.

"My experience in the Legislature is that there's a lot of legislative consequences that you hadn't anticipated," said retired state senator Mel Olson.

SB 117 would add driver's license tests to the list of exceptions to South Dakota Codified Law 1-27-20, which identifies "the common language of the state" as English.

Existing exceptions include foreign language classes; instruction that helps students with limited English integrate into the education system; situations when criminal justice, public safety and health demand another language; and the conducting of international commerce, tourism and sporting events.

The bill's proponents note that encouraging Spanish-speaking drivers to take the written exam in their first language will cut down on unlicensed drivers, improving road safety.

People who may have taken their exams in a different language in another state can already transfer their driver's licenses to South Dakota. We do not stop foreign-language visitors who may not be able to read the text on some road signs at our state borders.

There's a reason that road signs incorporate less text and more in the way of viscerally recognizable colors and shapes. The less cognitive stress on drivers, the less likely they'll be involved in or cause an accident. The human brain processes graphical information more quickly and efficiently than written language.

So what do we stand to gain by not taking South Dakota off the lonely list of six remaining states which offer the written portion of their driver exams in English only?

The Sioux Falls and Rapid City Chambers of Commerce, along with representatives from the state's construction and health industries, testified to the committee that the language restriction on driver's license testing negatively impacts their ability to fill open job positions.

South Dakota's unemployment rate was at 2.9 percent in December, according to the Federal Reserve.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 18 of 40

That tight labor market means the state needs to do what it can to assist businesses within our borders in their increasingly desperate quest for employees.

More people able to work means businesses can expand, which means even more people can work. Those people can then spend and be taxed on what they spend, contributing to state coffers to fund the programs South Dakota needs.

The state Department of Public Safety argues that the \$66,000 it would cost to implement SB 117 is too high for their department, even though the bill would not go into effect until 2021 to allow budgeting for it in next year's legislative session. They make this argument even though the state can't see gains without making smart investments.

Limiting our money management to pinching every penny does nothing to increase state revenues.

The DPS also insists that "people have equal access" to the driver's test and that they don't "really see that there's an issue." That kind of willful denial of real-life concerns does nothing to improve South Dakota's future.

Sioux Falls senator and bill sponsor Reynold Nesiba rightly chided the department's representatives: "You just heard 14 proponents representing employers saying this is a problem."

SB 117 isn't the only possible answer to the problem it's meant to fix. Another solution senators have discussed is to implement an interpreter system similar to the court's program to accommodate even more languages, instead of only implementing a Spanish-language driver's test.

There are 35,000 Spanish speakers in South Dakota, and that number keeps growing. But so do the numbers of immigrants in our communities whose first language is something other than English.

Whatever solution the legislature ultimately decides on concerning this matter, we're encouraged by this tentative step toward crafting a pragmatic law that addresses a practical and pressing issue.

For this legislature, it's a step in the right direction.

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## Rapid City Journal, Feb. 10

### Leave absentee voting time alone

"The right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties, and we will not see its luster diminished." — Ronald Reagan

Voting is a core element of a democratic society. Protecting American voters' right to make their voices heard should be one of the pillars our elected officials seek most carefully to uphold.

Why, then, are South Dakota legislators trying to cut the allotted time for absentee voting down by more than half?

Currently, South Dakota allows 46 days for absentee voting. House Bill 1178, co-sponsored by Sen. Brock Greenfield and Rep. Karl Perry, if approved, would cut that down to 14 days.

HB 1178 was first read in the state House of Representatives on Jan. 29, and referred to the House State Affairs committee. As of Friday afternoon, its appearance before that committee hadn't yet been scheduled.

First, let's clarify our terms: In South Dakota, "absentee" voting means all votes cast before election day (sometimes colloquially referred to as early voting). So, when you go to your county auditor's office three weeks before Election Day — for whatever reason — that's absentee voting. Sending in a ballot while you're deployed overseas? Absentee voting. Mailing in a ballot while you spend the winter in Arizona, or are away for college? Absentee.

Second, let's look at a little history. Absentee voting in the United States started during the Civil War as a way for soldiers to vote while they were far afield. Known as "excuse-required" absentee voting, it required the voter to provide a valid reason — like military service — why they couldn't make it to the ballot box on Election Day.

But the convenience led some people to start fudging excuses \_\_so instead of states "cracking down," they decided to make it more accessible. Enter "no-excuse" absentee voting in the 1970s. Early in-person voting followed soon after in the '80s.

To reiterate, earlier state legislators took a now-rare approach to legislating by actually listening to their

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 19 of 40

constituents and working to make their lives easier. Now, 37 states offer some form of early or absentee voting.

Now let's look at the reasoning behind this proposed reduction in vote time. Perry, a Republican from Aberdeen, said "Forty-six days for early voting, in my opinion, is too long."

Why? It's longer than the national average of 22 days, apparently.

Greenfield, a Republican from Clark, offered little more by explanation, other than a 46-day lead requires early ballot printing. Sometimes, he said, candidates want to change their mind about running, but they can't because their name is already on the ballot.

Here's our response: So?

Voting laws should be crafted to accommodate and protect voters, not politicians. And we certainly shouldn't be worrying about politicians who may or may not know if they really want to run for office.

Pennington County Auditor-elect Cindy Mohler said county auditors across the state widely oppose this bill. Fourteen days is simply not enough time to mail out an absentee ballot, have the voter fill it out and return it, and be processed by the auditor's office.

That's a tight window to get a ballot to someone in Arizona, much less someone stationed in the Middle East.

And that's the group of people we're most worried about: our active-duty deployed military members. How does this bill factor in the federal Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act, which mandates 45 days for deployed military absentee voting? Are our legislators unaware of that, or do they simply expect our county auditors to abide by multiple deadlines?

Another group of people this will hit: farmers and ranchers. As one of our readers astutely pointed out, it can be difficult for farmers and ranchers to get away. Broken fences, sick livestock and malfunctioning equipment don't care if it's Election Day.

In Pennington County, thousands of people vote absentee every election. Prior to the November election, nearly 9,000 people had voted by Oct. 24. If this law had been in place, people wouldn't have even been able to start casting absentee ballots until Oct. 24. Think of the added lines and increased time commitment — for voters and county officials. How many voters will this disenfranchise?

Is that what our legislators want?

To all legislators bent on making it hard to vote, we have to ask you to take a long, hard look at why. They say they're willing to compromise and go longer than 14 days, but again, how is 22 days really much better? Voter turnout is already dreadfully low. Shouldn't we be doing everything we can to get more people to the polls than less? Isn't this kind of ill-informed policy-making exactly what turns voters off from feeling like they have a voice?

HB 1178 is a bad bill. We hope the majority of our legislators see that and stop its progress.

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## Madison Daily Leader, Madison, Feb. 5

### Making legislation a little cloudier?

Gov. Noem has emphasized her "four pillars of protection" during her campaign and the first weeks of her term in office. One of the four is "protection from government secrecy."

She has emphasized transparency at all levels of state and local government. So it does seem ironic that state legislators appear to be heading in the other direction.

The rules of South Dakota's legislative session are substantial, but here's a quick summary: a bill is introduced and heard in a committee, allowing for public input, then passed or defeated. It then follows a path of going through both the House and Senate, all open to the public, then to the governor.

Because the session lasts only a couple of months, and there are roughly 500 bills to consider, there is naturally a deadline for introducing a bill. That deadline has passed this year, so everything should be on the table, right?

Not right. Legislators have on occasion introduced "placeholder" bills, in which a bill is introduced before



the deadline with a vague title and very little text.

House Bill 1083 is an example. It is "An Act to revise certain programs to support education in South Dakota." That's it.

But remember, bills can be amended at various stages on its journey through the legislature. In some rare cases, a placeholder bill is even passed by both houses, and the actual language of the bill is added in conference committee, without public input.

We can understand a partially developed bill being introduced by the deadline, then modified and improved along the way. But hiding the intent of a bill to avoid public knowledge or scrutiny is wrong.

In the 2019, there appear to be 44 placeholder bills, more than observers ever remember. We don't know if it's an intentional act of rebellion, or if there are a whole bunch of secrets being held from the public.

Either way, the legislative process has become a bit cloudier this session, and it's not the right way to enact legislation.

## Victim stabbed repeatedly in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police are looking for the suspect who stabbed a person in Sioux Falls. Authorities say a victim was found with multiple stab wounds to different parts of the body about 10:30 p.m. Sunday. The victim was taken to the hospital with serious injuries, but is expected to survive. The assailant is still at large.

## Mark Kelly announces run for McCain Senate seat in Arizona

By JONATHAN J. COOPER, Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Retired astronaut Mark Kelly, who rocketed to the national spotlight when his Congresswoman wife Gabrielle Giffords was shot in a failed assassination attempt, announced Tuesday he's running to finish John McCain's last term in the U.S. Senate.

Kelly is a top Democratic recruit to take on Republican Martha McSally in one of the most closely contested Senate races of the 2020 election.

McSally is a former Republican congresswoman who was appointed to McCain's seat last year after she narrowly lost to Democrat Kyrsten Sinema. McSally leaned heavily on her record as the first woman to fly a combat mission as a fighter pilot, but she was hurt by her embrace of President Donald Trump.

If Kelly is nominated, the race would pit a Navy veteran and astronaut against a trailblazing Air Force pilot in the contest to replace McCain, a legendary Navy flyer who was famously shot down and held captive.

Democrats are eagerly watching the Arizona contest, having already defeated McSally in a Senate race just a few months ago.

Kelly and Giffords have for years pushed Congress to enact gun control measures with little success. They shifted their focus to state legislatures in recent years, helping to strengthen background checks and domestic violence protections, among other modest protections.

Gov. Doug Ducey appointed McSally to the vacant Senate seat after his first appointee, former Sen. Jon Kyl, resigned after only a few months in office. The seat is a top target for Democrats because McSally just lost a Senate race in November and Democrats posted a strong showing in the November election, winning three statewide contests and picking up legislative and congressional seats.

The 2020 election will decide who finishes the last two years of McCain's term. The winner would have to run again for a full six-year term in 2022.

U.S. Rep. Ruben Gallego of Phoenix is also considering a Senate run, which would likely set up a tough fight for the Democratic nomination.

Former Arizona Attorney General Grant Woods, a lifelong Republican who became a Democrat and a fierce critic of Trump, announced last week that he won't run, saying he didn't want to fight in a contested Democratic primary.

## In Texas, Trump backs wall while O'Rourke rallies opponents

By JILL COLVIN and WILL WEISSERT, Associated Press

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — President Donald Trump charged ahead with his pledge to build a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border, skimming over the details of lawmakers' tentative deal that would give him far less than he's been demanding and declaring he's "setting the stage" to deliver on his signature campaign promise.

In the first dueling rallies of the 2020 campaign season, Trump's "Finish the Wall" rally in El Paso went head-to-head Monday night against counterprogramming by Beto O'Rourke, a former Democratic congressman and potential Trump rival in 2020, who argued that walls cause more problems than they solve.

The rallies across the street from each other served as a preview of the heated yearslong fight over the direction of the country. And they made clear that Trump's long-promised border wall is sure to play an outsized role in the presidential race, as both sides use it to try to rally their supporters and highlight their contrasting approaches.

Standing in a packed stadium under a giant American flag and banners saying "FINISH THE WALL," Trump insisted that large portions of the project are already under construction and vowed to fulfill his 2016 campaign promise regardless of what happens in Congress.

"Walls work," said Trump, whose rally was repeatedly interrupted by protesters. "Walls save lives."

O'Rourke, meanwhile, held a countermarch with dozens of local civic, human rights and Hispanic groups in his hometown, followed by a protest rally attended by thousands on a baseball field within shouting distance from the arena where Trump spoke.

"With the eyes of the country upon us, all of us together are going to make our stand here in one of the safest cities in America," O'Rourke said. "Safe not because of walls but in spite of walls."

There was a brief scuffle on a media riser away from the stage, when a man was restrained after he began shoving members of the news media. There were no apparent injuries.

More than a half-hour in his rally, Trump had scarcely mentioned immigration, offering just a passing suggestion that those chanting "Build the Wall" switch to "Finish the Wall." Instead, he mocked O'Rourke, insisting the Texan has "very little going for himself except he's got a great first name" and deriding his crowd size, even though both men drew thousands.

"That may be the end of his presidential bid," Trump quipped, adding: "You're supposed to win in order to run."

The rallies began moments after negotiators on Capitol Hill announced that lawmakers had reached an agreement in principle to fund the government ahead of a midnight Friday deadline to avoid another shutdown.

Republicans tentatively agreed to far less money for Trump's border wall than the White House's \$5.7 billion wish list, settling for a figure of nearly \$1.4 billion, according to congressional aides. The funding measure is through the fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30.

Three people familiar with Congress' tentative border security deal have told The Associated Press that the accord would provide \$1.375 billion to build 55 miles (90 kilometers) of new border barriers — well below the \$5.7 billion that Trump demanded to build over 200 miles (320 kilometers) of wall along the Mexican boundary. The money will be for vertical steel slats called bollards, not a solid wall.

The talks had cratered over the weekend because of Democratic demands to limit immigrant detentions by federal authorities, but lawmakers apparently broke through that impasse Monday evening. Now they will need the support of Trump, who must sign the legislation.

But Trump appeared oblivious to the deal, saying that he'd been informed by aides that negotiators had made some progress but that he had declined to be fully briefed because he wanted to go on stage.

"I had a choice. I could've stayed out there and listened, or I could have come out to the people of El Paso, and Texas, I chose you," Trump said. "So we probably have some good news. But who knows?"

Trump, who has been threatening to declare a national emergency to bypass Congress, added, "Just so you know, we're building the wall anyway."

The countermarch began at a high school about a mile from the baseball field in the shadow of Trump's

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 22 of 40

rally, its participants streaming past part of the border and the towering metal slats lining it. Marchers waved handmade signs reading "Fire the Liar," "Hate Is Not What Makes America Great" and "Make Tacos, Not Walls." They chanted "No wall!" and "Beto! Beto! Beto!"

Many marchers, and those in the crowd at the ballpark, carried flags reading "Beto for President 2020" or black-and-white "Beto for Senate" yard signs from his closer-than-expected November race against Republican Sen. Ted Cruz that had been modified slightly to read "Beto for President." The Democrat said the event wasn't only about him — or Trump — but meant to tell the true story of life in El Paso.

"It is going to be the people of the border," O'Rourke told the crowd before beginning the march, "who will write the next chapter in the history of this great country. Ensuring that our laws and our language and our leaders match our values."

Trump has insisted that large portions of the border wall are already underway. But the work focuses almost entirely on replacing existing barriers. Work on the first extension — 14 miles (23 kilometers) in Texas' Rio Grande Valley — starts this month. The other 83 miles (134 kilometers) that his administration has awarded contracts for are replacement projects.

Trump has repeatedly pointed to El Paso to make his case that a border wall is necessary, claiming that barriers turned the city from one of the nation's most dangerous to one of its safest.

"You know where it made a difference is right here in El Paso," he said Monday, adding: "They're full of crap when they claim it hasn't made a big difference."

But that's not true.

El Paso had a murder rate of less than half the national average in 2005, a year before the most recent expansion of its border fence. That's despite being just across the border from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, a city plagued by drug violence. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report shows that El Paso's annual number of reported violent crimes dropped from nearly 5,000 in 1995 to around 2,700 in 2016. But that corresponded with similar declines in violent crime nationwide and included periods when the city's crime rates increased year over year, despite new fencing and walls.

The Trump campaign released a video showing El Paso residents saying the wall helped reduce crime. But many in the city have bristled at the prospect of becoming a border wall poster child.

Trump advisers have long insisted that, fulfilled or not, the wall is a winning issue for the president, who has already sought to rewrite the "Build the Wall" chants that were a staple of his 2016 campaign to "Finish the Wall."

An AP-NORC poll conducted during last month's shutdown found that more Americans oppose a wall than support it. But nearly 8 in 10 Republicans are in favor, with only about 1 in 10 opposed.

Democrats, meanwhile, are adamant that Trump's insistence on a wall helps them and point to their 2018 midterm election gains in the House as proof that voters want to block Trump's agenda.

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Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Zeke Miller and Kevin Freking in Washington and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

## Budget deal allows far less money than Trump wanted for wall

By ANDREW TAYLOR and ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional negotiators reached agreement to prevent a government shutdown and finance construction of new barriers along the U.S.-Mexico border, overcoming a late-stage hang-up over immigration enforcement issues that had threatened to scuttle the talks.

Republicans were desperate to avoid another bruising shutdown. They tentatively agreed Monday night to far less money for President Donald Trump's border wall than the White House's \$5.7 billion wish list, settling for a figure of nearly \$1.4 billion, according to congressional aides. The funding measure is through the fiscal year, which ends on Sept. 30.

It's not clear whether Trump will support the deal, although GOP negotiators said they were hopeful.

The agreement means 55 miles (88 kilometers) of new fencing — constructed through existing designs



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 23 of 40

such as metal slats instead of a concrete wall — but far less than the 215 miles (345 kilometers) the White House demanded in December. The fencing would be built in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas.

“With the government being shut down, the specter of another shutdown this close, what brought us back together I thought tonight was we didn’t want that to happen” again, said Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala.

Details won’t be officially released until Tuesday, but the pact came in time to alleviate any threat of a second partial government shutdown this weekend. Aides revealed the details under condition of anonymity because the agreement is tentative.

“Our staffs are just working out the details,” said House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y.

The pact also includes increases for new technologies such as advanced screening at border entry points, humanitarian aid sought by Democrats, and additional customs officers.

This weekend, Shelby pulled the plug on the talks over Democratic demands to limit immigrant detentions by federal authorities, frustrating some of his fellow negotiators, but Democrats yielded ground on that issue in a fresh round of talks on Monday.

Asked if Trump would back the deal, Shelby said: “We believe from our dealings with them and the latitude they’ve given us, they will support it. We certainly hope so.”

But Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity, a Trump ally, said the barrier money in the agreement was inadequate. He warned late Monday that “any Republican that supports this garbage compromise, you will have to explain.”

Trump traveled to El Paso, Texas, for a campaign-style rally Monday night focused on immigration and border issues. He has been adamant that Congress approve money for a wall along the Mexican border, though he no longer repeats his 2016 mantra that Mexico will pay for it, and he took to the stage as lawmakers back in Washington were announcing their breakthrough.

“They said that progress is being made with this committee,” Trump told his audience, referring to the congressional bargainers. “Just so you know, we’re building the wall anyway.”

Democrats carried more leverage into the talks after besting Trump on the 35-day shutdown but showed flexibility in hopes on winning Trump’s signature. After yielding on border barriers, Democrats focused on reducing funding for detention beds to curb what they see as unnecessarily harsh enforcement by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE.

The agreement yielded curbed funding, overall, for ICE detention beds, which Democrats promised would mean the agency would hold fewer detainees than the roughly 49,000 detainees held on Feb. 10, the most recent date for which figures were available. Democrats claimed the number of beds would be ratcheted down to 40,520.

But a proposal to cap at 16,500 the number of detainees caught in areas away from the border — a limit Democrats say was aimed at preventing overreach by the agency — ran into its own Republican wall.

Democrats dropped the demand in the Monday round of talks, and the mood in the Capitol improved markedly.

Trump met Monday afternoon with top advisers in the Oval Office to discuss the negotiations. He softened his rhetoric on the wall but ratcheted it up when alluding to the detention beds issue.

“We can call it anything. We’ll call it barriers, we’ll call it whatever they want,” Trump said. “But now it turns out not only don’t they want to give us money for a wall, they don’t want to give us the space to detain murderers, criminals, drug dealers, human smugglers.”

The recent shutdown left more than 800,000 government workers without paychecks, forced postponement of the State of the Union address and sent Trump’s poll numbers tumbling. As support in his own party began to splinter, Trump surrendered after the shutdown hit 35 days, agreeing to the current temporary reopening without getting money for the wall.

The president’s supporters have suggested that Trump could use executive powers to divert money from the federal budget for wall construction, though he could face challenges in Congress or the courts.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 24 of 40

The negotiations hit a rough patch Sunday amid a dispute over curbing ICE, the federal agency that Republicans see as an emblem of tough immigration policies and Democrats accuse of often going too far.

According to ICE figures, 66 percent of the nearly 159,000 immigrants it reported detaining last year were previously convicted of crimes. Reflecting the two administration's differing priorities, in 2016 under President Barack Obama, around 110,000 immigrants were detained and 86 percent had criminal records.

Few convictions that immigrants detained last year had on their records were for violent crimes. The most common were for driving while intoxicated, drugs, previous immigration convictions and traffic offenses.

The border debate got most of the attention, but it's just part of a major spending measure to fund a bevy of Cabinet departments. A collapse of the negotiations would have imperiled another upcoming round of budget talks that are required to prevent steep spending cuts to the Pentagon and domestic agencies.

Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey and Lisa Mascaro in Washington and Jill Colvin in El Paso, Texas, contributed to this report.

## Refugee footballer freed by Thailand returns to Australia

By ROD McGUIRK, Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — A refugee soccer player thanked Australians on his return home Tuesday hours after the threat of extradition to Bahrain was lifted and three months after he was detained in Thailand.

Hundreds of supporters carrying welcome signs and singing "You'll Never Walk Alone" were waiting at Melbourne Airport when Hakeem al-Araibi arrived on a commercial flight direct from Bangkok.

"I would like to say thanks to Australia," Al-Araibi told the cheering crowd. "It's amazing to see all of the people here and all of the Australian people and all of the media who supported me."

Thailand had come under great pressure from Australia's government, sporting bodies and human rights groups to send Hakeem al-Araibi back to Australia, where he has refugee status and plays semi-professional soccer.

Former Australia national team captain Craig Foster, who has been leading the campaign for al-Araibi's release, said he could not sleep until he received word from the Australian embassy in Bangkok that the 25-year-old's flight had left.

Foster was by al-Araibi's side with an arm around the footballer as they faced the crowd.

"So this is the man, probably the most famous young man in Australia right now," Foster said. "Something of this magnitude doesn't happen without an incredible team behind, and there's been an amazing coalition of people, right from around the world."

Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who wrote twice to his Thai counterpart Prayuth Chan-ocha in a bid to secure al-Araibi's freedom, thanked Australians as well as Thai authorities.

"I want to thank all Australians for their support in achieving this outcome," Morrison tweeted.

"We are grateful to the Thai government and thank them for the way they have engaged with us to enable Hakeem to return to Australia," he added.

Two Australian expert cave divers who had helped rescue 12 boys and their soccer coach from a flooded Thai cave in July also wrote to the Thai prime minister last week pleading for al-Araibi's release.

Anesthetist Richard Harris and his dive buddy Craig Challen, a retired veterinarian, were last month named joint winners of Australian of the Year Award trophies, one of Australia's most prestigious awards.

"The issue had just gained more and more prominence and Richard and I both realized that we're in a position to hopefully give the issue a little bit of a nudge and contribute in our own little way," Challen told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Thai prosecutors on Monday submitted a request to a court to withdraw the case to extradite al-Araibi to Bahrain, where he faces a 10-year prison sentence for an arson attack that damaged a police station. He has denied those charges and says the case is politically motivated.

Prosecutors made the decision after Thailand's foreign ministry sent their department a letter Monday

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 25 of 40

indicating that Bahrain had withdrawn its request for al-Araibi, a Thai official said.

Officials in Bahrain, an island kingdom off the coast of Saudi Arabia that's home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, said the country "reaffirms its right to pursue all necessary legal actions against" al-Araibi.

Al-Araibi, a former Bahraini national team player, says he fled Bahrain due to political repression and that he fears torture if he returns.

He was detained at the request of Bahrain relayed through Interpol upon his arrival in Bangkok in November while on a honeymoon with his wife.

Thailand's foreign ministry said last week that al-Araibi was detained because Australian authorities had forwarded them an Interpol Red Notice that Bahrain was seeking his arrest. Australian police acknowledged doing so, but there have been questions raised about why the Red Notice appeared to have been issued just before al-Araibi departed, and whether Bahraini authorities had been tipped off about his travel plans.

With al-Araibi now free, attention has quickly shifted to who is to blame for his predicament in Thailand.

Opposition foreign affairs spokeswoman Penny Wong said senators will quiz Australian bureaucrats at committee hearings next week about why the system had failed al-Araibi.

"I'd encourage the government to be upfront about this," Wong said. "I think the Australian community does want to know how this occurred and we do need to consider whether the system is fit-for-purpose."

Guy Goodwin-Gill, a University of New South Wales expert on international law, said both Australia and Interpol had mishandled al-Araibi's case.

Australian Federal Police should not have advised Thailand that someone subject to a Red Notice was traveling. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade should have advised al-Araibi not to travel until the Red Notice was revoked, Goodwin-Gill said.

Interpol should exercise more oversight and review the circumstances of cases with a political element, he said.

It was not clear whether Australia had informed Bahrain that al-Araibi was flying, although Bahrain requested the Red Notice on the same day that al-Araibi received his Thai visa, Goodwin-Gill said.

Foster called for an investigation of Interpol.

"This concept of countries using the Red Notice in order to try to refool people that they want to return for nefarious reasons has to now become a very serious issue and it is something that we'll be taking up in the coming months," Foster said.

## AP FACT CHECK: Trump on the wall, and a ban on cows?

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Let Democrats have their way, President Donald Trump suggested, and the United States will become a country without border security, airplanes or cows.

Trump warned of a variety of dire consequences from the Democratic playbook as he rallied Monday night in the border city of El Paso, Texas, in a hall where banners proclaimed "Finish the Wall" even though he barely has a start on the one he promised.

Both at the White House and in El Paso, he presented the border wall as a work in progress, hailing the start of a "big, big portion" with much more coming soon. It was a hefty exaggeration from a president who has yet to see an extra mile of barrier completed since he took office.

With another government shutdown looming — a tentative agreement reached by lawmakers Monday could avert it — and illegal immigration still at the heart of the budget dispute, Trump is pulling out the stops to portray his proposed wall as an answer to crime and drugs. As he's done repeatedly, Trump also defied the record in claiming that the wall that Congress has refused to pay for is rapidly coming together anyway.

In the course of the evening, he also took a swipe at the Green New Deal, a sweeping plan put forward by a group of Democrats last week to transform the U.S. economy to combat climate change and create thousands of jobs in renewable energy. This is where gaseous cows come into it.

A look at his remarks:



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 26 of 40

TRUMP, on the effects of the Green New Deal: "You're not allowed to own cows anymore." He added that the plan would "shut down American energy" and "a little thing called air travel."

THE FACTS: The Democratic plan would do none of those things. Trump chose to ignore the actual provisions of the plan, which calls for a drastic drop in emissions from methane-generating cows, air travel and more but would not ban cattle ownership or flights.

Instead, Trump took his cue from a FAQ that was distributed by the office of Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York last week, then clumsily disavowed by her and replaced with a more accurate summary of the plan.

The first version described measures beyond those contained in the plan and made the impolitic statement: "We set a goal to get to net-zero, rather than zero emissions, in 10 years because we aren't sure that we'll be able to fully get rid of farting cows and airplanes that fast."

TRUMP, on the effect of a border wall on crime in El Paso: "When that wall went up, it's a whole different ball game. ... I don't care whether a mayor is a Republican or a Democrat. They're full of crap when they say it hasn't made a big difference. I heard the same thing from the fake news. They said, 'Oh crime, it actually stayed the same.' It didn't stay the same. It went way down. ... Thanks to a powerful border wall in El Paso, Texas, it's one of America's safest cities now." — rally remarks.

THE FACT: Trump falsely suggests a dramatic drop in crime in El Paso due to a border wall. In fact, the city's murder rate was less than half the national average in 2005, the year before the start of its border fence. It's true that the FBI's Uniform Crime Report shows that El Paso's annual number of reported violent crimes dropped from nearly 5,000 in 1995 to around 2,700 in 2016. But that corresponded with similar declines in violent crime nationwide and included periods when the city's crime rates increased year over year, despite new fencing and walls.

Before the wall project started, El Paso had been rated one of the three safest major U.S. cities going back to 1997.

TRUMP, on his proposed wall: "We've built a lot of it." — rally remarks.

TRUMP: "We've actually started a big, big portion of the wall today at a very important location, and it's going to go up pretty quickly over the next nine months. That whole area will be finished. It's fully funded ... and we're going to have a lot of wall being built over the next period of time." — White House remarks.

THE FACTS: There's less going on here than his words convey. Construction is getting started on merely 14 miles (23 kilometers) of extended barrier, approved by Congress about a year ago in an appropriation that also authorized money to renovate and strengthen some existing fencing. The extension will be in Texas' Rio Grande Valley. That's not a "big, big portion" of the grand project he promised in his campaign and countless times since — a wall that, combined with existing fencing and natural barriers, would seal the nearly 2,000-mile (3,200-kilometre) border with Mexico.

The recent fight with Democrats in Congress has been over his demand for a \$5.7 billion down payment on the wall. That money would pay for a little over 200 miles (320 kilometers) of new barrier. Democrats have refused to approve anything close to that for extended barrier construction.

Trump also promised in the campaign that he would make Mexico pay for the wall, which it refused to do. He inherited over 650 miles (1,050 kilometers) of border barrier from previous administrations.

TRUMP, on preparations for his rally: "We have a line that is very long already. I mean, you see what's going on. And I understand our competitor's got a line, too, but it's a tiny little line." — at the White House.

THE FACTS: That's not true. His comment came about four hours before his El Paso rally and a competing one nearby, led by Beto O'Rourke, a prospective Democratic presidential contender. The gathering for both events was small at the time. People were standing around in a dusty wind, not so much lined up.

TRUMP, addressing El Paso rally: "He has 200 people, 300 people, not too good. ... That may be the end of his presidential bid."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 27 of 40

THE FACTS: That's not true, either. O'Rourke's march and rally drew thousands. Police did not give an estimate, but his crowd filled up nearly all of a baseball field from the stage at the infield to the edge of outfield and was tightly packed.

TRUMP: "Drugs pouring through the border kills tens of thousands of innocent Americans a year, including heroin, meth, cocaine, fentanyl, so many others — they come through the southern border. We have a drug problem over the last 6, 7, 10 years like we have never had before. We can have such a big cut in the numbers, the percentages, if we get the wall built." — rally remarks.

THE FACTS: His assertion that a wall would stop most drugs from "pouring" into the U.S. runs counter to his government's findings on how the illegal substances get in. Most of it is smuggled through official border crossings, not remote stretches of the border.

The Drug Enforcement Administration says "only a small percentage" of heroin seized by U.S. authorities comes across on territory between ports of entry. The same is true of drugs generally, with the exception of marijuana.

In a 2018 report, the agency said the most common trafficking technique by transnational criminal organizations is to hide drugs in passenger vehicles or tractor-trailers as they drive into the U.S. through entry ports, where they are stopped and subject to inspection. They also employ buses, cargo trains and tunnels, the report says, citing other smuggling methods that also would not be choked off by a border wall.

TRUMP: "Illegal immigration hurts all Americans, including millions of legal immigrants, by driving down wages, draining public resources and claiming countless innocent lives." — rally remarks.

THE FACTS: These assertions are unsupported by research, which Trump appeared to acknowledge obliquely by making a crack about "phony stats."

The weight of research on wages suggests that immigrants have not suppressed them, although it's not cut and dried. What's clear is that macro forces that go beyond immigration are at work in the sluggishness of wage growth: the decline in unionization, an intensified push to maximize corporate profits, growing health insurance costs that supplant wages and the rise of a lower-wage global labor force that in an intertwined worldwide economy can hinder pay growth for Americans.

On public resources, the National Academy of Sciences concluded: "An immigrant and a native-born person with similar characteristics will likely have the same fiscal impact." The academy found that because state and local governments supply most of the money for public schools, immigrants often receive more in benefits than they pay in taxes. But education produces children who grow into adults who get jobs, buy cars, buy houses and pay taxes and thereby contribute to economic growth. And succeeding generations of immigrant families become net contributors to government budgets, according to the study.

On the loss of lives, plenty of research challenges the assumption that people in the country illegally drive up violent crime. In one such study, sociologists Michael Light and Ty Miller reviewed crime in every state and the District of Columbia from 1990 to 2014. They found that a rising number of immigrants in the country illegally corresponded with a drop, not a rise, in reported crime.

TRUMP: "We're going to El Paso. ... We're going there to keep our country safe, and we don't want murderers and drug dealers and gang members, MS-13, and some of the worst people in the world coming into our country. ... We need a wall." — remarks at White House.

THE FACTS: Trump suggests that weak border enforcement is contributing to vicious crime committed by MS-13, a gang held responsible for murders in cities across the U.S. But sealing the border completely would not eliminate the gang. It was founded in the U.S. in the 1980s by Salvadoran immigrants and has sunk roots in the country. Some of its members are U.S. citizens and not subject to deportation or border enforcement.

The government has not said recently how many members it thinks are citizens and immigrants. In notable raids on MS-13 in 2015 and 2016, most of the people caught were found to be U.S. citizens.

Associated Press writers Will Weissert in El Paso, Texas, Elliot Spagat in San Diego and Kevin Freking and Michael Balsamo in Washington contributed to this report.

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## Iconic Palestinian robe fashions a new political symbol

By ISABEL DEBRE, Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The traditional brightly embroidered dress of Palestinian women known as the “thobe” was not the type of garment one would expect to become a pop political symbol.

Now it’s gaining prominence as a softer expression of Palestinian nationalism, competing even with the classic keffiyeh — the headscarf donned by young stone-throwing Palestinian men protesting Israel’s occupation.

The robe, adorned with elaborate hand-stitched embroidery, requires months of grueling labor. Some thobes fetch thousands of dollars. The traditional textiles call to mind a bygone era of Palestinian peasant women sewing on a break from the fields.

Last month, Rashida Tlaib proudly wore her mother’s thobe to her historic swearing-in as the first female Palestinian American member of Congress, inspiring masses of women around the world, especially in the Palestinian territories, to tweet photos of themselves in their ancestral robes.

“The historic thobe conjures an ideal of pure and untouched Palestine, before the occupation,” said Rachel Dedman, curator of a recent exhibit at the Palestinian Museum focused on the evolution of Palestinian embroidery. “It’s more explicitly tied to history and heritage than politics. That’s what makes it a brilliant symbol.”

The Palestinian thobe traces its history to the early 19th century, when embroidery was confined to the villages.

Richly decorated dresses marked milestones in women’s lives: onset of puberty, marriage, motherhood. The designs varied from village to village — special three-dimensional stitching for the upper class of Bethlehem, big pockets for the nomadic Bedouin women, orange branch motifs for the orchard-famous city of Jaffa, said Maha Saca, director of the Palestinian Heritage Center in Bethlehem.

Thobe patterns also expressed women’s different social positions: red for brides, blue for widows, blue with multi-colored stitches for widows considering remarriage.

While Arab women across the region have worn hand-made dresses for centuries, the thobe has taken on a distinctly Palestinian character, particularly since the establishment of Israel in 1948. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians either fled or were expelled from their homes during the war surrounding Israel’s creation. Many took only their dresses with them into the diaspora, Saca added.

The war, which Palestinians call their “nakba,” or catastrophe, transformed the thobe.

“Suddenly, in the face of dispossession and cultural appropriation by Israelis, embroidery became an urgent task,” Dedman said. “The dress was taken up and politicized.”

Over decades of conflict that has claimed thousands of lives on both sides, Palestinian nationalism has taken on many forms.

In the early days of Israel’s establishment, it was associated with calls for Israel’s destruction and deadly attacks. Armed struggle later gave way to calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem — lands captured by Israel in 1967. Peace talks have been interrupted by spasms of violence, and for the past decade, a deep freeze in negotiations.

Today, the internationally recognized autonomy government of the Palestinian Authority, which administers parts of the West Bank, continues to seek a two-state solution with Israel. The Hamas militant group, which seized the Gaza Strip in 2007, still seeks Israel’s destruction, while many Palestinians, particularly the younger generation, now talk of a single binational state with Israel in which they would enjoy full equal rights.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 29 of 40

Along the way, the thobe has grown in popularity and evolved, with dress designs reflecting history's many dramas.

During the first Palestinian intifada, or uprising, in the 1980s, the thobe bloomed with guns, doves and flowers. When Israeli soldiers confiscated Palestinian flags at protests, women wove forbidden national maps and colors into their dresses, according to the Palestinian museum exhibit.

Now, Palestinian women of all social classes wear thobes to assert national pride at weddings and special occasions.

"It's a way of defending our national identity," Saca said.

The care, toil, and skill that go into making a thobe prevent the garment from becoming everyday streetwear — or protest-wear. But cheaper, mass-produced versions of the dress have sprouted up.

"A woman typically has one thobe to wear on occasions throughout her life — it's very expensive and impractical," said Maysoun Abed, director of a thobe exhibit in the West Bank city of Al-Bireh, near Ramallah. "But demand for the thobe still runs high as a way of expressing patriotism."

Although the robe shares potent patriotic subtext and roots in peasant life with the black-and-white checkered kaffiyeh — made famous by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat — the thobe is infused with nostalgic, almost mythical associations.

"Embroidery evokes the timeless connection of Palestinians to the land," Dedman said. "It's a soft image, referencing a deep past with which people have positive associations."

Young Palestinian women, especially those in the diaspora, are adapting the ancestral dresses to modern tastes and trends. Girls are asking for shorter and less embroidered versions, said Rajaa Ghazawneh, a thobe designer in the West Bank town of al-Bireh.

Natalie Tahhan, a designer based in east Jerusalem, produces capes from digital prints that replicate traditional embroidery stitches, "connecting tradition with what is new and stylish."

Tlaib's now-viral Palestinian thobe, which the Michigan Democrat called "an unapologetic display of the fabric of the people in this country" and said it evoked memories of her mother's West Bank village, rekindled enthusiasm worldwide about the dress.

"Rashida has become a model for Palestinian women everywhere — a strong woman proud of her national identity who can reach high," said Saca.

Tahhan agreed, saying that "Tlaib's thobe spread a beautiful picture of Palestine, when usually the media only show the wars."

For Palestinian women born abroad, and refugees barred from visiting their ancestral homes in what is now Israel, thobes are a tangible connection to the land and a way of keeping their culture alive.

"These dresses are our link between the past and future," Saca said.

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Associated Press writer Mohammed Daraghmeh in Ramallah, West Bank, contributed to this report.

## 17 killed in fire at shoddy New Delhi hotel, 4 others hurt

By SHONAL GANGULY, Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — A fire engulfed a shoddily built budget hotel in central New Delhi early Tuesday, killing 17 people and injuring at least four others, including a woman from Myanmar who leaped from an upper floor to escape the flames, Indian authorities said.

Three of those killed were members of a family who had traveled to India's capital from Kerala in southern India to attend a wedding, family friend Arvind Vishwanathan said outside a hospital mortuary.

Most of the deaths at the Arpit Palace Hotel in Karol Bagh, an area in India's capital city popular with tourists because of its shops and budget hotels, were due to suffocation, said Satyendar Kumar Jain, the Delhi government minister of health and urban development, as he toured the site after the fire was extinguished.

The hotel developer had a permit from the fire department to build up to four stories — the standard height in central Delhi. But the building appeared to have six floors, including a basement and a kitchen

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 30 of 40

built on top of the roof, Jain said.

"Carelessness on the part of authorities is evident. We are going to investigate, and the wrongdoer will be punished," he said.

Hotel guest Sivanand Chand, 43, said he was jolted awake around 4 a.m., struggling to breathe.

"When I got out of my room, I could hear 'help, help!' from adjoining rooms," Chand said.

The hallway was dark and thick with smoke, so Chand turned back into his room and opened a window. He saw flames rising fast.

"In 15 minutes, the whole room was black," he said.

A video shot by a worker at a nearby hotel showed flames consuming the top of the building, which authorities said contained an unauthorized makeshift kitchen formed from sheets of fiberglass.

Chand said rescue efforts were delayed because the first fire trucks arrived with manual ladders that weren't tall enough to reach his floor.

He and some other guests were eventually evacuated through his window by a hydraulic lift.

Some 100 firefighters and 25 fire engines responded to the fire, which engulfed all but the ground floor of the hotel, fire officer Vijay Paul said.

About three dozen people were rescued, Paul said.

It was not immediately clear how many guests and staff were inside the hotel, which had 43 guest rooms, according to its website.

Rescuers had to break windows to evacuate people because wood paneling in the corridors and stairwells fed the flames, said fire official Atul Garg.

"That is the escape route. People have to come out of the room and take the staircase but the staircase itself was on fire, so how they will go out?" Garg said.

In a video Garg shared with The Associated Press, firefighters can be seen carrying victims slumped over their shoulders through an unlit, charred stairwell.

Authorities were still investigating what sparked the blaze, Deputy Police Commissioner Mandeep Singh Randhawa said.

Among those injured was a woman from Myanmar who sustained spinal injuries after jumping from an upper floor, according to Deputy Fire Chief Sunil Choudhary. She was being treated at a local hospital, he said, declining to provide her name.

The other injured people were also taken to hospitals, but their conditions were not immediately known.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a tweet that he was deeply saddened by the loss of lives. "I convey my condolences to the families of those who lost their lives. May the injured recover soon."

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Editorial assistant Chonchui Ngashangva contributed to this report.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

### 1. BUDGET DEAL ALLOWS FOR REDUCED WALL FUNDING

Republicans tentatively agree to far less money for Trump's border wall than his \$5.7 billion request, settling for a figure of nearly \$1.4 billion, congressional aides say.

### 2. 2 PARKLAND MOMS NOW DIVIDED OVER GUNS

Two women photographed in an anguished embrace during the Parkland school massacre in Florida last year are now at odds — like the nation itself — over gun control.

### 3. IRANIAN-AMERICANS NURTURE NEW GENERATIONS AFTER REVOLUTION

In the four decades since the Islamic Revolution prompted many to flee Iran, they have put down roots and are finding ways to pass their culture to their American children and grandchildren.

### 4. WHERE THERE IS AN EXTREMIST RESURGENCE

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 31 of 40

In Nigeria, with elections just ahead, the Islamic State West Africa Province — a Boko Haram offshoot — has become IS' largest presence outside the Middle East with more than 3,000 fighters.

## 5. TOP PENTAGON OFFICIAL IN IRAQ TO DISCUSS US TROOP PRESENCE

Pat Shanahan, the acting secretary defense, wants to hear firsthand about the state of Iraq's fight against remnants of the Islamic State group.

## 6. 'I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANKS TO AUSTRALIA'

Refugee soccer player Hakeem al-Araibi returns home after the threat of extradition to Bahrain is lifted and three months after he was detained in Thailand.

## 7. WHO IS BEING LAID TO REST

Former Michigan Rep. John Dingell, America's longest-serving member of Congress, will be eulogized as former Vice President Joe Biden and other dignitaries are expected to attend.

## 8. ICONIC PALESTINIAN ROBE FASHIONS A NEW POLITICAL SYMBOL

The "thobe" becomes a softer nationalist symbol, championed by the first Palestinian U.S. congresswoman — Rashida Tlaib.

## 9. 'THEY ARE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY'

Harrison Ford offers an emphatic plea for protecting the world's oceans, calling out Trump and others who "deny or denigrate science."

## 10. THESE LITTLE MEN ARE BIG-TIME SCORERS

Campbell's 5-foot-9 Chris Clemons is leading the country in scoring at 29.1 points per game, headlining a crop of big-time undersized scorers in college basketball.

## Rep. Omar apologizes for tweets about support for Israel

By LAURIE KELLMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Freshman Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar has "unequivocally" apologized for tweets suggesting that members of Congress support Israel because they are being paid to do so, which drew bipartisan criticism and a rebuke from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The Minnesota Democrat said she had no intention of offending anyone, including Jewish Americans.

"We have to always be willing to step back and think through criticism, just as I expect people to hear me when others attack me about my identity," Omar tweeted. "This is why I unequivocally apologize."

The statement on Monday was the latest reckoning among Democrats of intense differences in their ranks over the U.S.-Israeli relationship, highlighted by criticism from Omar and Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Michigan. They are the first Muslim women to serve in Congress. Pelosi and other Democrats, including leaders and chairmen, laid down a marker making clear that Omar had overstepped.

In a pair of tweets over the weekend, Omar criticized the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC. "It's all about the Benjamins baby," she wrote, invoking slang about \$100 bills.

Asked on Twitter who she thought was paying members of Congress to support Israel, Omar responded, "AIPAC!"

That sparked Pelosi's first public rebuke of a freshman lawmaker who had helped flip the House from Republican control and is part of a record number of women in Congress.

"Congresswoman Omar's use of anti-Semitic tropes and prejudicial accusations about Israel's supporters is deeply offensive," Pelosi said in a statement issued by her office and signed by other Democratic leaders after a bipartisan backlash against the Minnesota Democrat. "We condemn these remarks, and we call upon Congresswoman Omar to immediately apologize for these hurtful comments."

It also was a stark exposure of an increasingly tense split among Democrats over U.S.-Israeli policy ahead of the 2020 elections. None of the Democratic presidential hopefuls weighed in publicly as their party's House leaders chastised Omar.

Omar's fellow freshmen felt the strain. Some, such as Jewish Reps. Elaine Luria of Virginia and Max Rose of New York, explicitly denounced her remarks. Rep. Deb Haaland, D-N.M., said: "Anti-Semitism or xenophobia is never acceptable. I'm glad Rep. Omar has apologized."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 32 of 40

Senior Democrats dealt the new lawmaker a swift schooling.

"There is an expectation of leaders — particularly those with a demonstrated commitment to the cause of justice and equality — that they would be extremely careful not to tread into the waters of anti-Semitism or any other form of prejudice or hate," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler of New York said in a statement. "Rep. Omar failed that test of leadership with these comments."

Republicans called on Democrats to strip Omar of her seat on the House Foreign Relations Committee, but Chairman Eliot Engel stopped just short of that. He said in a statement that he expects his committee members to discuss policies on merits. And though he did not name Omar, he left little doubt that his statement was a response to her tweets.

"It's shocking to hear a Member of Congress invoke the anti-Semitic trope of 'Jewish money,'" Engel said.

Asked on Air Force One en route to El Paso, Texas, about the controversy, President Donald Trump said the freshman congresswoman "should be ashamed of herself" for the tweets.

"I think it was a terrible statement, and I don't think her apology was adequate," he said. Asked what she should have said, Trump replied: "She knows what to say."

AIPAC is a nonprofit organization that works to influence U.S. policy toward Israel. While it is barred from directly donating to candidates, it encourages its more than 100,000 members to do so and to be politically active.

One way the organization has made a mark on Congress is through expense-paid junkets to Israel, which are paid for by an affiliated nonprofit that does not have to disclose its donors. The popular weeklong excursions for members of Congress, their families and some senior staff can cost upward of \$12,000 per person and are intended to "educate political leaders and influencers about the importance of the U.S. - Israel relationship through firsthand experiences."

The nonprofit responded Sunday night: "We are proud that we are engaged in the democratic process to strengthen the US-Israel relationship. Our bipartisan efforts are reflective of American values and interests. We will not be deterred in any way by ill-informed and illegitimate attacks on this important work."

Omar supports a movement known as BDS, for "boycott, divestment and sanctions" aimed at Israel. And it's not the first time she's fought accusations of anti-Semitism. She insists her rejection of the Israeli government refers to its stance toward Palestinians and is not directed at Jewish people.

Omar has expressed regret for tweeting in 2012: "Israel has hypnotized the world, may Allah awaken the people and help them see the evil doings of Israel." She said the statement came in the context of Israel's treatment of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

"It's now apparent to me that I spent lots of energy putting my 2012 tweet in context and little energy in disavowing the anti-Semitic trope I unknowingly used, which is unfortunate and offensive," she tweeted last month.

The controversy over Omar's remarks stretched beyond Capitol Hill to the crowded Democratic presidential race.

Less than a week earlier, all but one high-profile Democratic senator eyeing the White House in 2020 voted against a Middle East policy measure that included a provision cracking down on BDS activism against the Israeli government.

Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar supported the Middle East bill, while her potential presidential rivals — Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Kamala Harris of California, Cory Booker of New Jersey, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Sherrod Brown of Ohio — all opposed it. Several of those Democrats had raised concerns that the bill's bid to rein in anti-Israel boycott efforts risked violating the constitutional rights of activists, although all the senators are opposed to the Palestinian-led push itself.

Among the yellow notes of support posted on Omar's office nameplate on Capitol Hill on Monday was one that read, "Mazel Tov."

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Associated Press writers Elana Schor and Brian Slodysko and photographer Andrew Harnik contributed to this report.

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Follow Kellman on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/APLaurieKellman>

## Islamic militants' deadly resurgence threatens Nigeria polls

By HARUNA UMAR and CARA ANNA, Associated Press

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP) — Baba Inuwa was pleased to move back to his vegetable farm in Nigeria's northeast, encouraged by the military's offensive against Boko Haram, the country's homegrown Islamic extremist rebels and by President Muhammadu Buhari's claim that the insurgency had been crushed.

"We thought all was over and Boko Haram can never return," Inuwa said. He joined thousands of others in leaving displacement camps to return to their homes.

But then last month the extremists rolled into Inuwa's hometown, Baga, firing into the air, hoisting flags and claiming it as their own. Suddenly residents were on the move again, fleeing with little more than the clothes on their backs. On a punishing two-day march through the arid Sahel, some pregnant women miscarried and other elderly people died.

Nigeria's government now acknowledges an extremist resurgence, this time by a Boko Haram offshoot, the Islamic State West Africa Province, the IS group's largest presence outside the Middle East, estimated to have more than 3,000 fighters. Their near-daily attacks have many traumatized Nigerians questioning whether they can vote for Buhari as he seeks a second term.

Others question how the elections can be held in the troubled northeast region. The National Assembly has approved a record \$147 million for election security but some polling workers in remote areas have rejected their posts in fear of being attacked. The opposition objects that voting will be held in government-controlled camps, which in "liberated" communities are the safest locations.

Buhari, a former military dictator, returned to power in 2015 with an election victory in which he promised to tackle insecurity, corruption and the economy in Africa's most populous country with 190 million people. While he still has support in most states of his native north, enthusiasm has dimmed as it becomes clear that the decade-old extremist insurgency — killing more than 27,000, abducting hundreds of schoolgirls, displacing millions — is far from over.

Up against Atiku Abubakar, a fellow northern Muslim and former vice president, Buhari could end up like former President Goodluck Jonathan, who lost in 2015 after his failure to stop extremism.

At first, Nigeria's military appeared to deliver on Buhari's inaugural vow to eliminate Boko Haram, pushing fighters out of many communities. Residents were urged to return home.

But late last year the Islamic State-linked extremists roared back, attacking military bases, resupplying and causing a rare government admission of dozens of soldier deaths. Shaken, officials said the extremists had begun using drones, indicating links with ISIS fighters fleeing collapsing strongholds in Syria and Iraq.

"ISIS now has a strong foothold in West Africa, with Nigeria in the forefront of the battle," Information Minister Lai Mohammed declared last week. The fighters are more worrying than Boko Haram and at least triple its size, the U.S. Africa Command chief has said.

Some 59,000 people have fled attacks since November, the U.N. migration agency says. The now-deserted border town of Rann was hit twice last month, with humanitarian centers vandalized or burned. Aid workers fled. Five hid in a septic tank and survived.

As many as 39 attacks were recorded in Borno and Yobe states last month, the U.N. refugee agency says.

In early January the extremists captured Baga, near shrinking Lake Chad. They overran the nearby military camp and announced that people who wished to stay in peace could do so. Many residents, remembering past attacks, didn't buy it.

"We felt all was not well," Inuwa, the farmer, told The Associated Press. He now shelters again in Maiduguri, Borno state's capital, which already hosts more than 1 million displaced people.

The extremists still hold Baga, he said, citing residents who went back to retrieve their valuables. Fighters searched them at the edge of town before allowing them to enter.

Inuwa said he was not impressed with the president's performance on security but might support him anyway: "I'd rather vote for him so that he can build upon the foundation he has already laid."

Another Baga resident, Abba Mustapha, said the extremists' arrival met little resistance, reflecting concerns about government support for troops.

"We were running for our dear lives and the soldiers who were armed to protect us were even ahead of us fleeing," he told AP.

Now Mustapha is back in Maiduguri, seeking aid and finding little. Frustration is high. The spike in arrivals was so sudden that some people last month slept on the streets, finding no space in camps.

Falmata Modu said she was happy she grabbed her voter card when she fled Baga. She voted for Buhari in 2015. Not this time.

"I still cannot overcome the pain of running with some of my grandchildren who were crying for water and asking why we were in the bush," she said. "It is sad that I could not answer."

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Anna reported from Johannesburg. Associated Press writer Carley Petesch in Dakar, Senegal contributed.

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## 2 Parkland moms now divided over guns

By **KELLI KENNEDY, Associated Press**

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — It's an image that has become emblematic of the Parkland school massacre : two terrified moms outside Marjory Stoneman Douglas High, one of them a tall, weeping blonde with the black smudge of Ash Wednesday on her forehead, the other a petite redhead crying in despair on her shoulder.

But the bond in that widely seen photograph didn't survive long. The two women soon found themselves at odds — like the nation itself — over gun control.

The redhead was Cathi Rush, who was desperately waiting on Feb. 14, 2018, to find out whether her 14-year-old son Brandon was OK. The blonde was Mechelle Boyle, whose three children did not attend the high school and were safe. The women comforted each other in a moment of anguish captured in a searing Associated Press photograph.

"My heart just started breaking," Boyle recalled in an exclusive interview with the AP as the anniversary approached. "Oh, my God, she doesn't know if her son is alive or dead. She's here crying and can't reach him."

Brandon made it out alive. But on that day, Rush was desperately trying to get in touch with him, knowing only from a few texts that the freshman was hiding under a table. She hadn't heard from him in nearly an hour as she stood there amid crying parents, the wail of sirens and the chop of helicopters.

Overcome with agony, Rush fell to the ground, screaming. Boyle, a longtime acquaintance, pulled her up and into an embrace — the image that was snapped by AP stringer Joel Auerbach and would appear on websites, front pages and broadcasts around the world as details emerged of the 17 students and staff members killed.

"In that moment it was just two moms comforting each other, scared for their kids. Not only for their kids, but their kids' friends, their kids' teachers," said Rush, a single mother of three.

After the photo came out, Boyle turned down all interview requests from the media until now, saying she didn't lose a child and didn't feel she had anything to say.

Rush, 47, appeared on CNN a few days after the rampage, saying she hated the image and felt the photographer had intruded on a private moment. She has since come to embrace the image.

She had the photo printed on sweatshirts that the family wore to the March for Our Lives rally in Washington and carried a big banner bearing the image. She made it her Facebook profile picture for a time, hoping it would spur change.

Rush, a school nurse, wants to see stronger gun control laws. She attended a few meetings of the organization Moms Demand Action but found the activism only traumatized her.

Boyle, too, turned to Moms Demand Action and has attended every school board meeting since the shooting. The 42-year-old owns a gun and served eight years in the military. She supports gun rights but

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 35 of 40

has also worked to pass stricter gun control laws in some cases, saying it "made no sense to me" that the gunman was able to buy an AR-15 rifle at age 18.

"The terror that we felt — I see it on my face every time I look at the picture," Boyle said through tears. "I don't ever want any parents to feel that ... watching them grieve and bury their children."

Before the tragedy, the two women were never close but always friendly. Their kids had gone to the same elementary school. Rush's ex-husband coached Boyle's son's soccer team.

A year after the shooting, they are no longer in contact. Rush declined to be interviewed with Boyle, saying she disagreed with her on gun control and politics.

Boyle said that she texted Rush a couple of times last year to check in, but that they haven't kept in touch on social media or in real life.

"She was very upset at me because I was a little more pro-gun than her, and she wasn't very happy about that," Boyle said. "I definitely pushed for laws, and I definitely said we need stronger laws, but I guess for whatever reason we really didn't stay friends on Facebook or anything."

Rush, a fiery woman with a wry sense of humor, said shooting didn't unite the community, as some said or hoped; it did the opposite. "This community has fractured into two factions now," she said — those who are trying to turn schools into "fortresses" and those who want to crack down on guns.

"And they fight like you wouldn't believe on Facebook," Rush said. "It's gross. It's disgusting."

Find all The Associated Press' coverage marking one year since the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, at <https://apnews.com/ParklandFloridaschoolshooting> .

## Iranian-Americans nurture new generations after revolution

By AMY TAXIN, Associated Press

IRVINE, Calif. (AP) — Mino Sharifan came to the United States from Iran in the 1970s for graduate school, and like many others, wound up settling in America, starting a career and raising her family while a revolution upended her homeland and fractured relations with the U.S.

The two countries remain bitter adversaries. In his State of the Union address last week, President Donald Trump said Iran does "bad, bad things" and "threatens genocide against the Jewish people"; Iran's foreign minister countered that the U.S. has backed "dictators, butchers and extremists."

It's against that tense backdrop that Sharifan and others from her generation seek to build a connection to their Iranian heritage and culture among their American children and grandchildren. Now 67, Sharifan oversees the Persian collection and programming for a library in Orange County, south of Los Angeles, that hosts a weekly story time for Iranian-American children that she began six years ago.

At a recent gathering, a dozen young children sat cross-legged on the floor, listening to a parent volunteer read the Farsi-language version of the storybook about "Elmer" the patchwork elephant. One girl performed a Persian dance for the group, and the children twirled scarves and sang in Farsi.

"For younger kids to see kids their age coming to the library and speak Farsi, it's a good feeling for them and it makes me happy," Sharifan said. "For us coming from another country, (a) sense of belonging to the group is very important."

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran overthrew the shah, a close U.S. ally, and installed Shiite clerics in power and a government headed by the anti-American Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Tens of thousands of Iranians fled to the United States.

Today, there are nearly a half-million people in the U.S. with Iranian ancestry. More than 40 percent live in California, according to U.S. Census Bureau data. The biggest community is in Los Angeles, which has led some to adopt the nickname "Tehrangeles." Beyond Southern California, other significant populations live in the New York and Washington metropolitan areas, and in Florida and Texas.

Many who came to the United States after the revolution thought they would someday return to Iran but decided to stay amid icy relations between the countries. Many were upper-class and highly educated in Iran and pursued careers as doctors, entrepreneurs and professionals in America.

In recent years, Iranian-Americans also have taken on a more visible role in politics, winning seats for

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 36 of 40

state office in California, Florida and elsewhere. In Beverly Hills, which has a sizable Iranian-American community, Iran-born engineer and entrepreneur Jimmy Delshad served as mayor.

That doesn't mean the road has been easy. Many Iranian immigrants recall being taunted as children after Americans at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran were taken hostage and held for 444 days. Today, many are separated from their relatives overseas by the Trump administration's travel ban, which has made some Americans of Iranian heritage feel their standing is in question despite their citizenship status and longstanding ties to the U.S.

"In economic terms, it has been a pretty successful community, however, we have been dogged by 40 years of bad relations between the United States and Iran," said Persis Karim, chair of San Francisco State University's Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies. "People feel like their place in the U.S. has kind of continuously been under question, or not completely at ease, because of this bigger relationship between these two countries."

After the revolution, many Iranian immigrants sought to distance themselves from the upheaval in their homeland by calling themselves Persian. The second generation, Karim said, has identified more often as Iranian-American to show pride in their heritage and their U.S. citizenship.

But these newer generations have grappled with the sense that no matter how American they become, they are perceived as different by American society, said Neda Magbouleh, a sociology professor at University of Toronto, Mississauga, who was born and raised in the United States and wrote a book about Iranian-Americans' experiences.

"The kind of exilic identity that first generation Iranian-Americans have had has been something that has not necessarily translated to second generation use," she said. "They're products of an environment that has been incredibly hostile to the Middle East more broadly, to Iran more specifically."

"The second generation has in many ways seen itself as a racial minority," she said.

The Iranian-American community is itself diverse and includes Jews, Muslims, Zoroastrians and others with diverse views and a shared tie to Iranian culture. Many are quick to distinguish between the governments of Tehran and Washington and the people of both countries, who they see as mutually friendly.

And many see a common need to expose the new generation to Iranian culture.

In the Southern California city of Irvine, an Iranian community organization offers weekend language and dance classes. At the library, families bring their children to mark key moments throughout the year, such as the springtime Persian New Year celebration Nowruz.

In Berkeley, just outside San Francisco, a preschool has grown to include a private elementary school program that immerses children in Farsi, Arabic and Hebrew. Yalda Modabber, executive director of Golestan Education, said she started the preschool more than a decade ago when she wanted to teach Farsi to her first child. She recently expanded to elementary school grades at the urging of parents who wanted their children to continue the instruction.

Aliah Najmabadi, 40, has sent her two older sons to the Berkeley preschool. Born in the U.S., Najmabadi said her Iranian father came to the country to study in the early 1970s and met her mother, a South Dakotan of Norwegian descent.

While she grew up speaking English, Najmabadi said she was surrounded by the Persian culture and language when her father's family came over from Iran in the years after the revolution, and she wanted to learn more.

She went on to study Farsi, but said she still struggles to understand everything her Iranian grandmother says. Now, her 8-year-old son helps translate, she said, and her father — who sometimes questioned her desire to learn the language — has been moved emotionally.

"Once my son started speaking fluently, he was floored. His heart melted," Najmabadi said of her father. "As people get older in the community, I think it is really important for my kids to know the language."



## Bezos probe concludes mistress' brother was Enquirer source

By ZEKE MILLER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Private investigators working for Jeff Bezos have concluded that the brother of the Amazon CEO's mistress leaked the couple's intimate text messages to the National Enquirer, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Monday.

The person wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to AP on condition of anonymity.

The findings add to the intrigue surrounding the clash between the pro-Trump tabloid and the world's richest man. Bezos' investigators have suggested the Enquirer's coverage of his affair was driven by dirty politics. Trump has been highly critical of Bezos over his ownership of The Washington Post and Amazon, and the Post's coverage of the White House.

The brother, Michael Sanchez, is a supporter of President Donald Trump and an acquaintance of Trump allies Roger Stone and Carter Page. He is also the manager of his sister, Lauren Sanchez, a former TV anchor. The investigators have not said how they believe Michael Sanchez came into possession of his sister's intimate messages.

Michael Sanchez did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment on Monday. In a Jan. 31 tweet, he said without evidence that Bezos' longtime security consultant, Gavin de Becker, who is leading the private investigation, "spreads fake, unhinged conservative conspiracy theories."

An attorney for the tabloid's parent company did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

On Sunday, an attorney for the head of American Media, which owns the Enquirer, said that the information for the story had been provided by a "reliable source" well-known to Bezos and Lauren Sanchez. The source had provided information to the company for at least seven years, Elkan Abramowitz, an attorney for American Media Inc. chief executive David Pecker, said on ABC's "This Week."

He was asked if Sanchez was the source and he said: "I'm not permitted to tell you or confirm or deny who the source is."

But the Daily Beast, citing people inside American Media, Inc., reported that Sanchez was the Enquirer's source.

Bezos ordered the investigation after the Enquirer published a story about the affair last month. The investigators have since turned over the results of their probe to attorney Richard Ben-Veniste for review and possible referral to law enforcement. Ben-Veniste had served as special prosecutor during the Watergate scandal.

Bezos has said AMI threatened to publish explicit photos of him unless he stopped investigating how the Enquirer obtained his private exchanges, and publicly declared that the Enquirer's coverage of him was not politically motivated.

Federal prosecutors are also looking into whether the Enquirer violated a cooperation and non-prosecution agreement that recently spared the tabloid and top executives from charges for paying hush money to a Playboy model who claimed she had an affair with Trump, two people familiar with the matter told the AP. The people weren't authorized to discuss the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity.

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Associated Press writers Michael R. Sisak and Jim Mustian in New York contributed to this report.

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This story corrects the spelling of the last name of the attorney representing American Media's CEO.

## Denver teachers go on strike in latest US educator walkout

By COLLEEN SLEVIN, Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Striking teachers picketed outside of schools and marched through Denver's streets Monday as car horns blared in support of the latest U.S. walkout amid a swell of educator activism in at least a half-dozen states over the last year.

Just over half of the 4,725 teachers called in absent for Denver's first strike in 25 years. Some students crossed picket lines to get to class as schools remained open with administrators and substitute teachers.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 38 of 40

In one school, students danced and chanted in the hallways as they walked out to demonstrate to support their teachers. Other students joined hundreds of teachers and union members in a march past City Hall.

Science teacher Abraham Cespedes said Denver educators were empowered by recent teacher activism elsewhere around the country. "By us doing this we finally became united," he said.

The strike affecting about 71,000 students in Denver comes about a year after West Virginia teachers launched the national "Red4Ed" movement with a nine-day strike in which they won 5 percent pay raises.

There have since been walkouts in Washington state, Arizona, Kentucky and Oklahoma. Most recently, Los Angeles teachers staged a six-day strike last month. That walkout ended when teachers received a 6-percent raise and promises of smaller class sizes and the addition of more nurses and counselors.

The head of the National Education Association, the country's largest teachers union, told several thousand cheering Denver teachers and supporters Monday they will prevail.

"You are unique here in Denver because you are just saying, 'Can I just know what I'm being paid?'" Lily Eskelsen Garcia declared at a rally outside the state Capitol.

The dispute is over the school district's incentive-based pay system. The city's school district gives bonuses ranging from \$1,500 to \$3,000 a year to teachers who work with students from low-income families, in schools that are designated high priority or in positions that are considered hard to staff, such as special education or speech language pathology.

The union is pushing to lower or eliminate some of those bonuses to free up more money for overall teacher pay.

The district sees the disputed bonuses as key to boosting the academic performance of poor and minority students. Teachers say the reliance on bonuses leads to high turnover, which they say hurts students, and that spending money on smaller class sizes and adding support staff, like counselors, is the best way to help disadvantaged students.

Some teachers became ineligible for bonuses after their schools lost their official low-income status because parts of the city are undergoing gentrification.

The district has proposed raising starting pay from \$43,255 to \$45,500 a year. That's \$300 a year less than the union's proposal, which would add \$50 million a year to teacher base pay, according to union officials.

At a news conference, district Superintendent Susana Cordova said negotiations will resume on Tuesday, an announcement confirmed by the union.

"It is a problem for our kids not to have their teachers in class," Cordova said. "I want to get this done now. So I'm very happy that we will be back at the table."

State House Majority Leader Alec Garnett, a Democrat, said the strike underscores the need for lawmakers to fix conflicting laws that restrict state public school spending by hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

The state says a walkout will cost about \$400,000 a day and would consume 1 to 2 percent of the district's annual operating budget in about a week.

The strike happened after Gov. Jared Polis's administration decided last week not to get involved, believing administrators and teachers were close to an agreement.

However, Polis, a Democrat, said the state could intervene and suspend the strike for up to 180 days if the walkout drags on. The state does not have the power to impose any deal on either side. But it can try to help both sides reach a deal and can require them participate in a fact-finding process

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Associated Press writers James Anderson and Kathleen Foody in Denver contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Feb. 12, the 43rd day of 2019. There are 322 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 12, 1999, the Senate voted to acquit President Bill Clinton of perjury and obstruction of justice.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 39 of 40

On this date:

In 1809, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, was born in a log cabin in Hardin (now LaRue) County, Kentucky.

In 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded.

In 1912, Pu Yi (poo yee), the last emperor of China, abdicated, marking the end of the Qing Dynasty.

In 1914, groundbreaking took place for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. (A year later on this date, the cornerstone was laid.)

In 1924, George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York.

In 1959, the redesigned Lincoln penny — with an image of the Lincoln Memorial replacing two ears of wheat on the reverse side — went into circulation.

In 1963, a Northwest Orient Airlines Boeing 720 broke up during severe turbulence and crashed into the Florida Everglades, killing all 43 people aboard.

In 1973, Operation Homecoming began as the first release of American prisoners of war from the Vietnam conflict took place.

In 1980, the FBI announced that about \$5,800 of the \$200,000 ransom paid to hijacker "D.B. Cooper" before he parachuted from a Northwest Orient jetliner in 1971 had been found by an 8-year-old boy on a riverbank of the Columbia River in Washington state.

In 1993, in a crime that shocked and outraged Britons, two 10-year-old boys lured 2-year-old James Bulger from his mother at a shopping mall near Liverpool, England, and beat him to death.

In 2000, Charles M. Schulz, creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip, died in Santa Rosa, Calif. at age 77.

In 2008, General Motors reported losing \$38.7 billion in 2007, a record annual loss in automotive history, and offered buyouts to 74,000 hourly workers. Uno became the first beagle named Westminster's best in show.

Ten years ago: Saying he'd made a "mistake" by agreeing to serve, Republican Sen. Judd Gregg of New Hampshire abruptly withdrew his nomination as President Barack Obama's commerce secretary. A Colgan Air commuter plane crashed into a suburban Buffalo, N.Y., home, killing all 49 aboard and a person in the house. (The victims included Alison Des Forges, 66, a noted expert on the 1994 Rwanda genocide, and Gerry Niewood, 64, and Coleman Mellett, 34, members of Chuck Mangione's band.)

Five years ago: Legislation to raise the U.S. federal debt limit and prevent a crippling government default cleared Congress. Tina Maze of Slovenia and Dominique Gisin of Switzerland tied for gold in the Olympic women's downhill at Sochi; it was the first gold-medal tie in Olympic alpine skiing history. Actor-comedian Sid Caesar, 91, died in Beverly Hills, California.

One year ago: In a retreat from promises to balance the budget, President Donald Trump unveiled a \$4.4 trillion plan that envisioned steep cuts to America's social safety net but mounting military spending; the outline acknowledged that the 2017 Republican tax overhaul would add billions to the deficit. Two Baltimore police detectives were convicted of robbery, racketeering and conspiracy at a trial that was part of a federal probe of corruption among rogue members of the city's police force. The National Portrait Gallery unveiled portraits of former President Barack Obama and his wife, painted by African-American artists chosen by the Obamas. American snowboarder Jamie Anderson won gold in the women's slopestyle event at the Winter Olympics in South Korea as winds whipped ice pellets across the jumps; most riders fell or abandoned their runs. Wild-haired comedian Marty Allen died in Las Vegas; he was 95.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Franco Zeffirelli is 96. Movie director Costa-Gavras is 86. Basketball Hall of Famer Bill Russell is 85. Actor Joe Don Baker is 83. Author Judy Blume is 81. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak is 77. Country singer Moe Bandy is 75. Actress Maud Adams is 74. Actor Cliff DeYoung is 73. Actor Michael Ironside is 69. Rock musician Steve Hackett is 69. Rock singer Michael McDonald is 67. Actress Joanna Kerns is 66. Actor Zach Grenier is 65. Actor-talk show host Arsenio Hall is 63. Actor John Michael Higgins is 56. Actor Raphael Sbarge is 55. Actress Christine Elise is 54. Actor Josh Brolin is 51. Singer Chynna Phillips is 51. Rock musician Jim Creeggan (Barenaked Ladies) is 49. Rhythm-and-blues musician Keri Lewis is 48. Actor Jesse Spencer is 40. Rapper Gucci Mane is 39. Actress Sarah Lancaster

# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 217 ~ 40 of 40**

is 39. Actress Christina Ricci is 39. NFL quarterback Robert Griffin III is 29. Actress Jennifer Stone is 26. Actresses Baylie and Rylie Cregut (TV: "Raising Hope") are nine.

Thought for Today: "Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way."  
— Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).