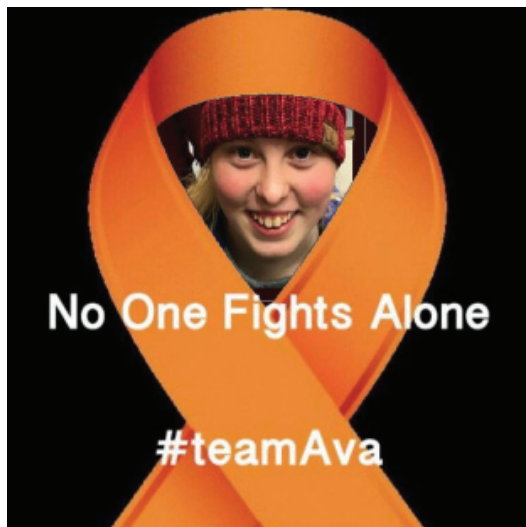


Groton Area Schedule of Events

Friday, February 15, 2019

Debate at Watertown High School (National Qualifier)
5:15pm: Basketball: Boys C Game vs. Milbank @ GHS
Arena followed by JV and Varsity Games)

- 1- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 1- Tunheim celebrate is Saturday
- 2- Stat Sheet from Groton-Langford game
- 4- THINKING ABOUT HEALTH
- 5- GDILIVE.COM tonight
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Weather Pages
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- 2019 Groton Events
- 11 - News from the Associated Press



Ava's celebration of life will be on Saturday at 3pm at the Groton High School Gym

HELP WANTED

Director of Nursing



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

Contact Brynn Pickrel



GROTON

CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER

1106 North Second Street
605.397.2365

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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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Game Statistics Groton Area 58, Langford Area 52

Player	No.	2Pt	2PtA	2Pt%	3Pt	3PtA	3Pt%	FG	FGA	FG%	EFG%	FT	FTA	FT %	Pts
Block	3	2	5	40.0%	0	2	0.0%	2	7	28.6%	28.6%	1	2	50.0%	5
Frey	22	4	12	33.3%	0	1	0.0%	4	13	30.8%	30.8%	2	5	40.0%	10
Larson	23	2	3	66.7%	0	0	0.0%	2	3	66.7%	66.7%	2	3	66.7%	6
Peterson	32	3	9	33.3%	0	4	0.0%	3	13	23.1%	23.1%	0	0	0.0%	6
Reints	24	2	2	100.0%	0	1	0.0%	2	3	66.7%	66.7%	0	0	0.0%	4
West	5	2	6	33.3%	3	8	37.5%	5	14	35.7%	46.4%	3	4	75.0%	16
Widener	10	1	3	33.3%	1	2	50.0%	2	5	40.0%	50.0%	0	0	0.0%	5
Unassigned		0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Langford Varsity Totals		16	40	40.0%	4	18	22.2%	20	58	34.5%	37.9%	8	14	57.1%	52
Groton Varsity Totals		7	30	23.3%	12	21	57.1%	19	51	37.3%	49.0%	8	22	36.4%	58
DeHoet	42	4	9	44.4%	1	3	33.3%	5	12	41.7%	45.8%	4	10	40.0%	15
Diegel	55	0	2	0.0%	4	4	100.0%	4	6	66.7%	100.0%	0	0	0.0%	12
Doeden	22	0	6	0.0%	0	2	0.0%	0	8	0.0%	0.0%	0	1	0.0%	0
Guthmiller	11	1	3	33.3%	3	4	75.0%	4	7	57.1%	78.6%	0	2	0.0%	11
Jones	34	2	6	33.3%	0	0	0.0%	2	6	33.3%	33.3%	1	4	25.0%	5
Kurtz	20	0	3	0.0%	2	5	40.0%	2	8	25.0%	37.5%	3	5	60.0%	9
Larson	24	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Zak	12	0	1	0.0%	2	3	66.7%	2	4	50.0%	75.0%	0	0	0.0%	6
Unassigned		0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0

THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

Maybe the U.S. Is Finally Serious About Lowering Drug Prices

By Trudy Lieberman, Rural Health News Service

David Mitchell is a man with a mission. He is determined to stitch together a movement that will finally smash the power of the pharmaceutical industry and bring pocketbook relief to millions of Americans who need expensive drugs.

Mitchell, a 68-year-old former Washington, D.C., communications executive, was diagnosed eight years ago with multiple myeloma, a blood cancer. Until recently, the disease has been held in check by drugs costing \$325,000 a year. Medicare and a good Medigap policy have covered most of the expense.

In 2016 Mitchell said he began to think about others who had sky-high drug expenses but struggled to pay for them. "I had an epiphany," he told me. "Why can't I do something?"

"Drugs don't work if people can't afford them," he says.

So began his organization, Patients for Affordable Drugs Now, which collects stories about patients having trouble paying for their medicines and is building a patient advocacy community to make their voices heard. His group has collected some 15,000 patient stories, more than 100,000 emails, and has trained patients to be advocates to testify in state legislatures and lobby Congress.

Unlike most other patient groups that work on pharmaceutical issues, Mitchell's group takes no money from the drug industry. He says money comes from foundations, friends, family, and patients, but not from anyone who profits from making pharmaceuticals. This gives his group independence and credibility that others might not have.

Mitchell and I talked about various proposals floating around to deal with the high price of medicines. At the outset, he noted that list prices for drugs are still going up 6 to 9 percent a year, net prices are up 2 to 4 percent, and drug companies are spending record amounts lobbying legislators not to make any significant changes.

Shortly before the president's State of the Union message, the administration proposed to eliminate some of the rebates drug makers pay to insurance companies in the Medicare program. Pharmacy benefit managers, middlemen in the drug supply chain who accept drug company rebates, usually for brand-name drugs under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, would lose legal protections under the proposal.

Drug makers use rebates to secure preferred placement for their drugs on an insurer's formulary tiers.

The Trump administration claims eliminating that practice would save significant amounts for older people who have been paying high out of pocket costs. Whether the rule will be adopted is not clear, nor are the amounts of any projected savings for consumers.

Juliana Keeping, a spokesperson for Patients for Affordable Drugs Now, says the administration's proposal "won't lower sole source drug pricing for biologic drugs because there aren't many biosimilars." Those are drugs extracted from or semi synthesized from biological sources, and biosimilars are almost identical.

Mitchell's organization would prefer to see Medicare use the International Pricing Index to decide how much to pay for Part B drugs – those administered in physicians' offices and in hospital outpatient departments. Medicare has proposed such an index that it says would allow it to pay prices more in line with those in similar countries.

Two other remedies are gathering interest among members of Congress and policy makers. Both have been around a long time, but the new push to do something about the high price of drugs may finally result in some movement toward passage.

One is to allow Medicare to negotiate prices for Part D drugs. Recall that the 2003 law that gave seniors a drug benefit said that Medicare could not negotiate prices with the drug companies. It's a provision that has no doubt helped big PhRMA companies but increasingly has hurt beneficiaries.

The other is to limit patent protection, which would allow low-cost generics to come to market more quickly. That remedy has been kicked around for years, but perhaps public ire over high drug prices will make a difference this time.

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Even though there's a patient backlash against high drug prices right now, we will still see a bruising battle to enact some of the changes Mitchell's group and others are advocating.

"PhRMA companies determine both what their list prices are and the size of the rebates they are willing to pay to obtain market access," says Dr. Peter Bach, a physician and epidemiologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.

The drug industry will fight hard to keep it that way.

If you want to share your story with Mitchell's group write to him at david@p4adnow.org.

What do you do to save drug costs? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

It's Boys' Basketball Action on GDILIVE.COM



Milbank VS
Bulldogs



Groton Area Tigers

Friday, Feb. 15, 2019

8:00 p.m.

at Groton

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

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Today in Weather History

February 15, 1969: Heavy snow along with winds of 15 to 25 mph caused blowing and drifting snow which closed many roads. The heaviest snow fell in the southeast part of the state where up to one and a half feet of snow was reported.

February 15, 1990: Heavy snow developed across southwest South Dakota early on the 15th and moved slowly across the state before ending early on the 16th. A narrow band of 10 to 12 inches accumulated in Central South Dakota from Pierre to near Huron. Lesser amounts of 3 to 6 inches fell north and south of the heavy snow band. Some of the heavier snowfall amounts included, 6 inches at Aberdeen and Sioux Falls, 10 inches Pierre, and 12 inches at Huron.

1982: A "meteorological bomb" exploded in the Atlantic southeast of Newfoundland. The term is used to describe a storm that rapidly intensifies. An intense cyclone off the Atlantic coast capsized a drilling rig killing 84 persons, and sank a Soviet freighter resulting in 33 more deaths. The storm produced 80 mph winds that whipped the water into waves fifty feet high.

2000: Amarillo, Texas set unusual temperature records today. The high of 82 degrees smashed the old daily high of 76 degrees set in 1921. The morning low of 41 degrees broke the old high-low record for the date of 40 degrees, which was also set in 1921.

1895 - A big Gulf snowstorm produced six inches at Brownsville TX and Mobile AL, 15 inches at Galveston TX, and 24 inches of snow at Rayne LA in 24 hours. Snow fell at the very mouth of the Mississippi River. Houston TX received 22 inches of snow, and nine inches blanketed New Orleans LA. (David Ludlum)

1936 - The temperature at Parshall ND plunged to 60 degrees below zero to establish a state record. On the 6th of July that same year the temperature at Steele ND hit 121 degrees, also a state record. (David Ludlum)

1982 - An intense cyclone off the Atlantic coast capsized a drilling rig killing 84 persons, and sank a Soviet freighter resulting in 33 more deaths. The cyclone produced 80 mph winds which whipped the water into waves fifty feet high. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm crossing the central U.S. produced severe thunderstorms which spawned tornadoes in Louisiana and Mississippi. Tornadoes injured four persons at Pierre Pass LA, three persons at Tangipahoa LA, two persons at Lexie MS and two persons at Nicholson MS. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 100 mph killed one person south of Sulphur LA. Jackson MS was drenched with 1.5 inches of rain in ten minutes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure brought heavy snow to parts of Michigan, with eleven inches reported at Rogers City. A cold front crossing the Northern Rockies produced wind gusts to 74 mph at Livingston MT, and created blizzard conditions in Idaho. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thirty-seven cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Atlanta GA was a February record. Highs of 79 degrees at Chattanooga TN, 84 degrees at Columbia SC and 85 degrees at New Orleans LA equalled February records. (The National Weather Summary)

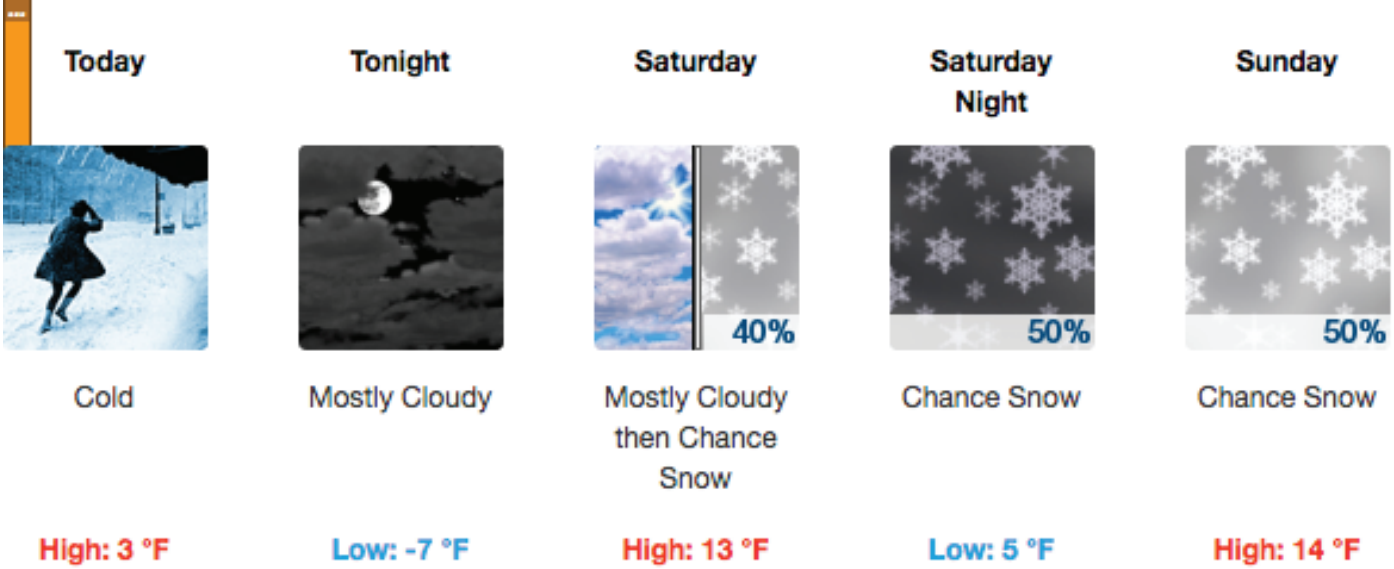
1990 - Snow, sleet and freezing rain along an arctic cold front prevailed from the north central U.S. to the Northern Atlantic Coast Region. High winds created near blizzard conditions in southern Wyoming, closing Interstate 80, while up to eleven inches of snow fell across central Minnesota.

1990 - Heavy snow also blanketed the Northern Atlantic Coast States, with ten inches reported at Buffalo NY and Mount Washington NH. Freezing rain over southern New England knocked out electricity to more than 10,000 homes in the western suburbs of Boston MA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2004 - Up to 11 inches of snow fell in areas south of Nashville, TN, causing power outages and producing hazardous driving conditions. The Weather Doctor

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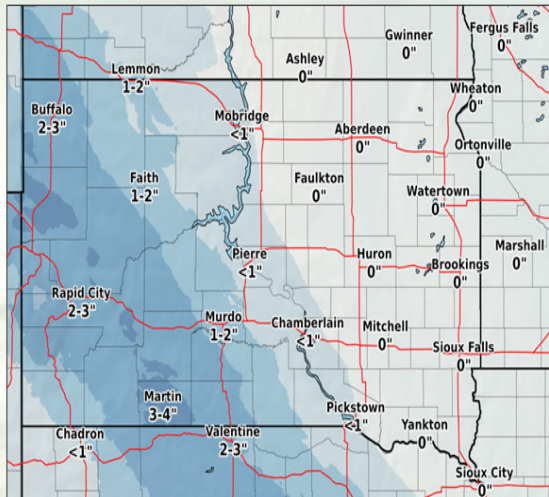
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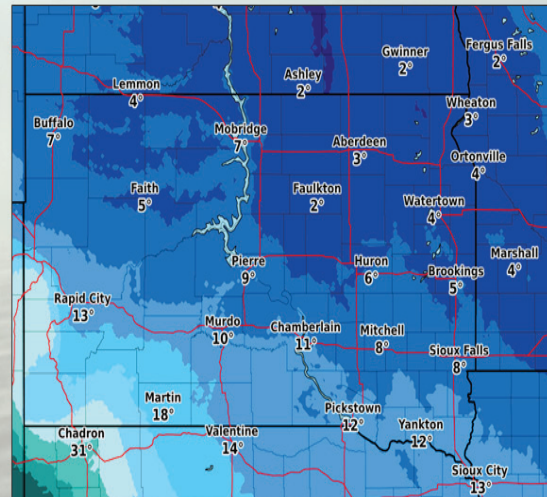
Cold Temperatures Continue Today

Light, accumulating snow along and west of the Missouri Valley today through tonight

Snowfall Amounts through Tonight



High Temperatures Today



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 2/15/2019 6:00 AM Central

Published on: 02/15/2019 at 6:02AM

Cold temperatures will continue today with highs only in the single digits above zero. Light snow will gradually spread into the Missouri valley today with minor accumulations expected. Another storm system will impact the region for the weekend with a prolonged period of light to moderate snowfall expected.

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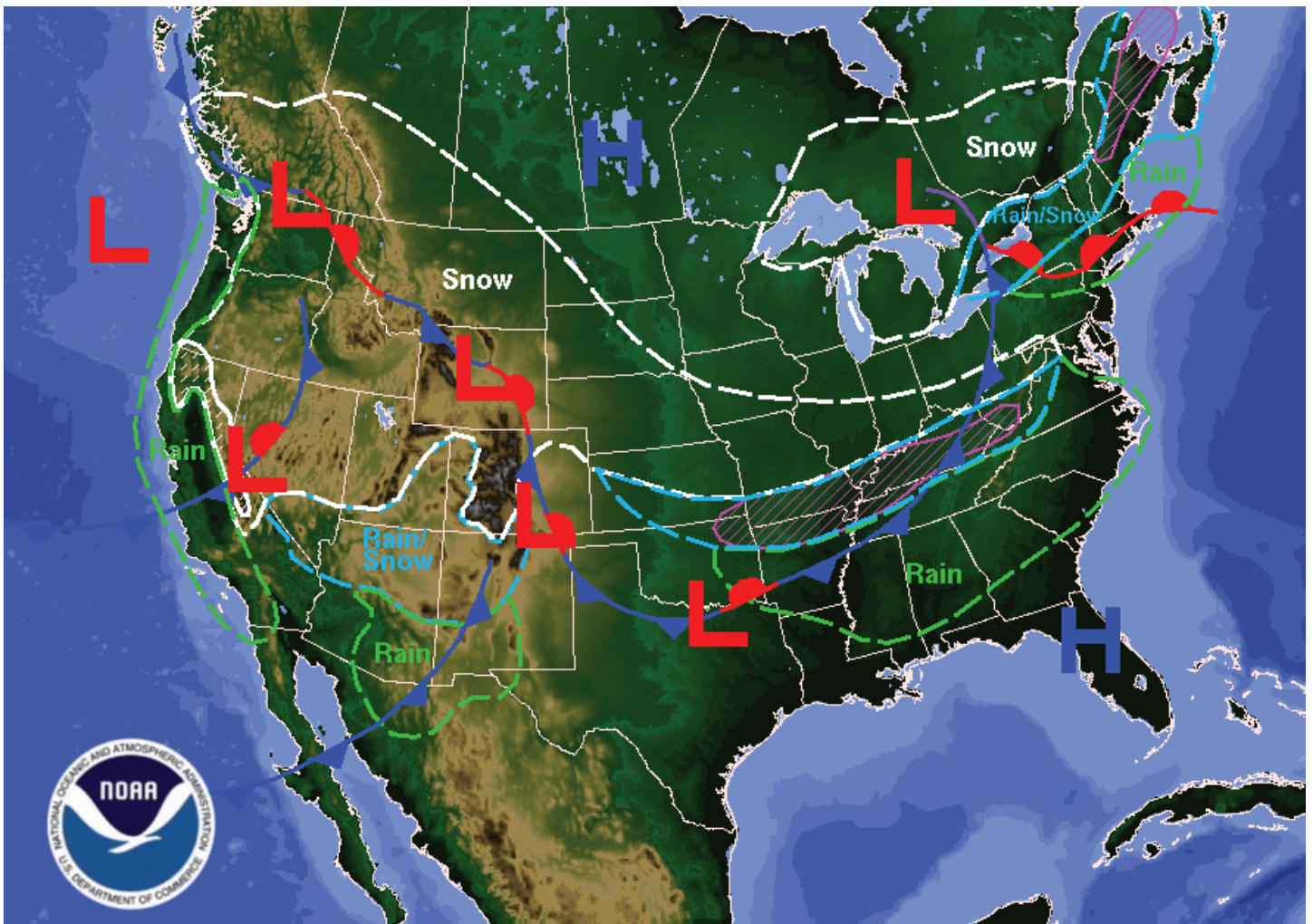
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 9 °F at 1:06 AM
Low Outside Temp: -12 °F at 10:09 PM
High Gust: 27 mph at 7:20 AM
Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 65° in 1921
Record Low: -35° in 1939
Average High: 28°F
Average Low: 7°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.23
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.70
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 6:01 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:34 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Fri, Feb 15, 2019, issued 3:24 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Hamrick 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)



HOW TO RECOGNIZE A FOOL

No one that I know wants to be called a fool. But, this term is used fifty times in Proverbs. Obviously, God must want us to know who qualifies for this title, and how those who are fools can develop a new identity.

To begin with, the word used here for fool has nothing to do with ones mental capacity. It would not be God-like to call someone a fool if they had no control over their thoughts and behavior. Instead, it has to do with a persons chosen outlook on life. This persons view is set, and nothing or no one will ever be able to change it.

This fool is one who has no desire to invest any time in searching for wisdom. Its thought to be a product that can be purchased online or in a bookstore. Solomon clarified this when he wrote, Why does a fool offer the sage a fee, when he has no mind to learn. We cant buy wisdom!

Since this is true, only reliable and dependable wisdom comes from God. Therefore, it must then be spiritual and not mental. A fool has no reverence or respect for truth. Unfortunately, the fool is very comfortable with things as they are. This person refuses to fear the Lord and rejects His counsel. The fool is satisfied to live life without God.

Whatever we know of God, think of God, understand about God, and believe about God, comes to us from God as He reveals Himself to us. Atheists deny God, and agnostics say they are searching for proof of God. Until a person is willing and open to see God as He has revealed Himself in His world, His Word, and His Son, he will remain a fool.

Prayer: Lord, open the eyes of those who refuse to see, and the ears of those who refuse to hear Your Wisdom. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

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News from the Associated Press

Manslaughter defendant wants evidence thrown out

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls man accused of fatally shooting his friend last year says blood and urine samples collected from him should be thrown out because they were obtained without a warrant.

The evidence was collected from Stasek Alexandr Stefanyuk following his arrest last September. He's charged with manslaughter in the death of 21-year-old Darias Jae Tiger. Authorities say Stefanyuk was hanging out with friends and showing them a shotgun he had recently acquired when he discharged a round and hit Tiger in the back.

The Argus Leader says the 18-year-old Stefanyuk is also charged with possessing methamphetamine. A motion to suppress the blood and urine evidence says the tests were the result of a "warrantless, unconsented, and unconstitutional search."

A hearing on the motion is scheduled Friday.

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

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL(equals)

Brandon Valley 58, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 56
Colman-Egan 67, Castlewood 61
Colome 65, Marty Indian 64
Custer 69, Lead-Deadwood 50
Douglas 70, Spearfish 68
Flandreau 69, Flandreau Indian 37
Freeman 64, Gayville-Volin 56
Groton Area 58, Langford 52
Hanson 59, Corsica/Stickney 46
Harding County 68, Newell 46
Irene-Wakonda 77, Canistota 66
Kimball/White Lake 74, Andes Central/Dakota Christian 52
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 48, Iroquois 43
Pine Ridge 87, Todd County 54
Rapid City Christian 54, New Underwood 28
Rapid City Stevens 54, Rapid City Central 26
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 58, Mitchell Christian 43
Sioux Falls Christian 65, Harrisburg 61
Sioux Valley 88, Garretson 53
St. Francis Indian 74, Oelrichs 61
Wagner 71, Burke 63
White River 73, Stanley County 57
Winner 60, Chamberlain 52

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL(equals)

Aberdeen Roncalli 59, Britton-Hecla 20
Belle Fourche 59, New Underwood 54, OT
Beresford 59, Wagner 41
Burke 43, Gregory 34

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Chamberlain 64, Philip 42
Colman-Egan 63, Lake Preston 27
Colome 75, Marty Indian 53
Dell Rapids 58, Madison 43
Douglas 72, Spearfish 64, OT
Flandreau 69, Flandreau Indian 37
Freeman 57, Gayville-Volin 23
Garretson 48, Sioux Valley 30
Hanson 59, Kimball/White Lake 26
Hitchcock-Tulare 48, Wolsey-Wessington 43
Kadoka Area 62, Bennett County 25
Lead-Deadwood 42, Custer 31
Lemmon 48, McIntosh 39
Lower Brule 79, Little Wound 65
Menno 67, Freeman Academy/Marion 37
Miller 52, Highmore-Harrold 35
Mitchell 55, Yankton 52
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 51, Parkston 43
Newell 50, Harding County 30
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 57, Mitchell Christian 24
Tea Area 75, Parker 41
Tiospa Zina Tribal 54, Webster 44
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 54, Scotland 41
Wall 51, Hill City 43
POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS(equals)
Huron vs. Brookings, ccd.

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

Hahn scores 22 to lift Omaha past S. Dakota St. 85-84

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Mitch Hahn drove toward the baseline, pulled up and hit a fadeaway jumper from the corner at the buzzer Thursday night to give Nebraska-Omaha an 85-84 upset of South Dakota State, the two-time defending Summit League champs.

Hahn finished with a team-high 22 points and Zach Jackson had 17 points and six rebounds for Nebraska Omaha (15-9, 9-2 Summit League), which earned its fourth consecutive home victory. KJ Robinson added 17 points. Matt Pile had 17 points and nine rebounds for the hosts.

JT Gibson, whose 14 points per game coming into the contest was second on the Mavericks, scored only 7 points (0 of 13).

The Mavericks were in trouble after the first half, heading into halftime trailing 43-30 and trailed by 16 points early in the second half. But the home team behind a season-high 55 second half points.

David Jenkins Jr. had 34 points for the Jackrabbits (20-7, 10-2), whose nine-game win streak ended with the loss. Mike Daum added 29 points and 12 rebounds. Skyler Flatten had 10 points.

The Mavericks evened the season series against the Jackrabbits with the win. South Dakota State defeated Nebraska Omaha 83-73 on Jan. 26. Nebraska Omaha matches up against Purdue Fort Wayne at home on Saturday. South Dakota State takes on North Dakota State on the road on Saturday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

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Racketeering lawsuit by Dakota Access developer dismissed

By BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A federal judge on Thursday dismissed a \$1 billion racketeering lawsuit that the developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline filed against environmental groups and activists, saying he found no evidence of a coordinated criminal enterprise.

Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners sued Greenpeace, BankTrack and Earth First in August 2017, alleging the groups worked to undermine the \$3.8 billion pipeline that's now shipping oil from North Dakota to Illinois. The company's accusations included interfering with its business, facilitating crimes and acts of terrorism, inciting violence, targeting financial institutions that backed the project, and violating defamation and racketeering laws. The groups maintained the lawsuit was an attack on free speech.

U.S. District Judge Billy Roy Wilson last year dismissed Earth First and BankTrack as defendants, saying ETP had failed to make a case that Earth First is a structured entity that can be sued and that BankTrack's actions in imploring banks not to fund the pipeline did not amount to radical ecoterrorism.

Wilson on Thursday granted motions to dismiss from Greenpeace and individually-named defendants that the company added to the lawsuit last August. The judge said ETP's claim failed to establish several necessary elements required by the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, including that the defendants worked together on a criminal enterprise.

"Donating to people whose cause you support does not create a RICO enterprise," and "posting articles written by people with similar beliefs does not create a RICO enterprise," Wilson wrote. Later in his ruling he added that "acting in a manner similar to others, without any sort of agreement or understanding, does not make you part of a RICO enterprise."

Greenpeace lauded the dismissal of what it said was an attempt by ETP to "bully" those who "advocate for human rights and the planet."

"Justice has been served. This is a huge victory not just for Greenpeace but for anyone and everyone who has ever stood up against powerful corporate interests," Greenpeace USA attorney Tom Wetterer said.

ETP spokeswoman Vicki Granado said the company is disappointed and intends to pursue some claims in state court.

Groups and American Indian tribes who feared environmental harm from the pipeline staged large protests that resulted in 761 arrests in southern North Dakota over a six-month span beginning in late 2016. ETP maintains the pipeline is safe.

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

South Dakota lawmakers seek to reduce absentee voting window

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers are advancing a bill that would cut the amount of time available for early voting.

The House State Affairs Committee voted 11-2 Wednesday for the bill.

It would reduce the absentee voting window from 46 days to the first Friday in October before an election. Republican Rep. Drew Dennert says the new window would be 32 days.

House Majority Leader Lee Qualm, the sponsor, says the measure is about a better, more informed electorate. ACLU of South Dakota policy director Libby Skarin opposed the measure, saying the current 46-day period is critical to ensuring residents can access their right to vote.

Secretary of State's office elections official Kea Warne says the office hasn't had a phone call from any voter criticizing the absentee voting timeframe.

Arkansas lawmakers send governor 'triggered' abortion ban

By ANDREW DeMILLO, Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Arkansas lawmakers sent Gov. Asa Hutchinson legislation Thursday that would ban abortions in the state if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns its landmark 1973 ruling legalizing the procedure nationwide.

The majority-Republican House on Thursday approved by a 72-20 vote the proposal to ban all abortions, except for medical emergencies, if the nation's highest court overturns the Roe v. Wade decision. The ban would also take effect if the U.S. Constitution is amended to allow states to prohibit abortion. A spokesman said Hutchinson, a Republican, planned to sign the measure into law next week.

Louisiana, Mississippi, North Dakota and South Dakota have similar "trigger" bans on the books. Abortion opponents have been pushing for the measures in other states, saying they hope that the high court may be open to more sweeping bans after President Donald Trump's appointed two conservatives.

"You have the opportunity to articulate the humanity of human beings and voice our will to protect and honor human life by passing this bill," Republican Rep. Mary Bentley told lawmakers before the vote.

The measure is among several abortion restrictions that have been proposed in the majority-Republican legislature. They include a measure filed this week that would ban abortions 18 weeks into a woman's pregnancy. Arkansas already bans abortions at 20 weeks. Other measures being considered include a bill banning abortions because of a Down syndrome diagnosis and a proposal to expand the state's waiting period before having an abortion from 48 hours to 72 hours.

Arkansas has enacted some of the strictest laws in the country since Republicans won control of the state Legislature in 2012, and many have been the subject of court battles.

"Today the Arkansas General Assembly carried out another extreme and unnecessary attack on women and their health," Rita Sklar, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, said in a statement. "Deeply personal medical decisions should be made by women in consultation with their families and doctors - not dictated by politicians."

A Republican who voted against Thursday's ban said he's opposed to abortion but said Thursday's measure went too far, noting it didn't include exemptions for rape, incest or for severe fetal abnormalities.

"Who are we to sit in judgment of these women making a decision between them and their physician and their God above?" Republican Rep. Dan Douglas, who voted against the bill, said on the House floor. "It is their right to do that and not ours."

Follow Andrew DeMillo on Twitter at www.twitter.com/ademillo

State House approves high school civics test requirement

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A measure that would require South Dakota high school students to pass a civics test to graduate is headed to the Senate.

The House voted 38-31 Thursday for the bill. It would mandate that high school students score at least 70 percent to get a diploma.

The exam would include 10 questions from the U.S. citizenship test. The bill, proposed by Gov. Kristi Noem, was changed in committee in part to reduce the number of questions from at least 50 to 10.

Noem said in her State of the State address that it's only fair that young people demonstrate a basic knowledge of the nation's institutions and history before graduating from high school and taking on their responsibilities as citizens.

Democratic Rep. Ryan Cwach, an opponent, says government teachers are teaching civics right now.

Noem revives request that lawmakers hold off on hemp bill

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem is restating her "very real concerns" with efforts to legalize industrial hemp this year.

The Republican last week asked lawmakers to shelve efforts this session to allow the cultivation of industrial hemp in South Dakota. Representatives voted 65-2 just days later to send the bill to the Senate.

Noem on Thursday revived her request, saying South Dakota isn't ready for industrial hemp. She says the state doesn't have funds budgeted for areas including establishing a licensing program and having inspectors.

The governor also raised public safety worries, saying hemp looks like marijuana and officials don't have a roadside test to measure THC levels. Noem stopped short of a veto threat.

The 2018 federal farm bill legalized the cultivation of industrial hemp. Supporters say there's an industry ready in South Dakota to start processing hemp products.

South Dakota Senate to debate Port Yankton casino complex

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A measure to put a proposed casino complex in a southeastern South Dakota city to a statewide vote will be debated by the state Senate.

Senators voted 20-11 on Thursday to schedule the Yankton casino and entertainment measure for debate next week.

Kasi Haberman, Convention and Visitor's Bureau director in Yankton, recently told a Senate committee that the Port Yankton project is an effort to drive tourism for the city and state.

But Native American tribes in Nebraska and South Dakota objected to the plan. Yankton Sioux Tribe Vice Chairman Jason Cooke told the panel that the tribe's casino employs people and helps support programming including education.

Cooke said Port Yankton would be "very detrimental" to his tribe.

The proposed constitutional amendment would ask voters to give a nonprofit group one gambling license in Yankton.

South Dakota revenues on track as lawmakers prepare budget

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers projected Thursday that they will have a little bit more money available than previously expected when they craft the state budget this session.

The Legislature's Joint Committee on Appropriations set revenue projections that are slightly above collections anticipated in Republican Gov. Kristi Noem's budget plan from January. The budget-writing panel set a general fund revenue target of roughly \$1.7 billion for the upcoming 2020 budget year that starts July 1, up about \$5.6 million from Noem's budget.

"We are the stewards of the resources and the people's dollars in South Dakota," said Republican Rep. Jean Hunhoff, a panel member.

Committee Co-Chairman Chris Karr said it's a very "fiscally conservative and responsible" projection. He said it allows for a buffer from concerns over the agriculture industry or a potential economic slowdown.

Noem, in her first budget plan as governor, proposed a nearly \$1.7 billion general fund spending plan for the 2020 budget year. She recommended roughly \$54 million in new ongoing spending, including 2.5 percent increases for education, Medicaid providers and state workers.

Noem said she feels passionately about her budget proposal and that her administration worked hard on it to fund what she believes should be priorities in South Dakota.

"We were responsible with it. We balanced our budget without raising taxes," Noem told reporters. "We also funded providers, educators, making sure that we're taking care of people in the state, but also going after crime and meth, which is incredibly important."

The governor said she has encouraged legislators to be conservative and that "we don't spend money we don't have."

Noem's plan for next budget year also calls for spending about \$1.75 billion in federal funds and more than \$1.4 billion in other state money, totaling more than \$4.8 billion.

The Joint Committee on Appropriations also established a roughly \$1.65 billion revenue target for the current budget year, about \$3.7 million above Noem's plan.

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Democratic Sen. Reynold Nesiba said he's confident that officials have underestimated revenues for both years, calling it a "conservative process." Lawmakers will reshape the current budget and approve the next one during the 2019 session.

Noem has proposed emergency appropriations of more than \$28 million for the current state budget year, including \$7.4 million to expand the Jameson Annex at the South Dakota State Penitentiary and roughly \$3.9 million for a National Guard Readiness Center.

She's also calling for one-time spending including \$3.8 million for Medicaid providers, \$5 million for nursing home grants and \$5 million for expanding rural broadband.

Senate panel advances bill to allow guns in Capitol

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Republican leaders are optimistic about a bill that would allow people to bring guns into the state Capitol.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 4-2 Thursday to send the bill to the floor. It would allow people who have an enhanced permit to bring concealed handguns into the Capitol if they notify security beforehand.

House and Senate Republican leaders predict it will have support in their chambers.

GOP Sen. Jim Stalzer, the sponsor, says state employees and legislators have indicated a desire to be able to defend themselves. Republican Sen. Arthur Rusch opposed the bill, saying he doesn't think there should be "more guns in more places."

Last year, 1,615 new enhanced permits were issued. Obtaining one requires completing a handgun course. There are no metal detectors at Capitol entrances.

Flu cases on the rise in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The number of flu cases is starting to climb in South Dakota.

State health officials say that as of early February, about 1,000 cases of flu have been reported. In Pennington County, 21 cases from December to February have involved hospitalization, including one death.

Regional Health Director of Infection, Prevention and Control Tyron White tells KOTA-TV Influenza A and a respiratory virus called RSV are the most common illnesses in Rapid City. RSV affects children the most.

A state health report says 3 percent of school children have missed school at the start of 2019 because of illness.

Information from: KOTA-TV, <http://www.kotatv.com>

Man's death in Sioux Falls attributed to cold exposure

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police say a man found dead under a viaduct in Sioux Falls is believed to have died from exposure to the cold.

The man's body was discovered early Tuesday by someone who knew him. Police spokesman Sam Clemens says an autopsy will be done before a final cause of death is determined, but exposure is the preliminary finding. There are no signs of foul play. The man has not been identified.

It's the second cold weather death in South Dakota this year. A Mobridge woman died in freezing temperatures outside her mobile home in January.

Trump will sign border deal but will also declare emergency

By ALAN FRAM, CATHERINE LUCEY and ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress lopsidedly approved a border security compromise that would avert a second painful government shutdown.

But a new confrontation has been ignited — this time over President Donald Trump's plan to bypass lawmakers and declare a national emergency to siphon billions of dollars from other federal coffers for his wall on the Mexican boundary.

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Money in the bill for border barriers, about \$1.4 billion, is far below the \$5.7 billion Trump insisted he needed and would finance just a quarter of the 200-plus miles (322 kilometers) he wanted. The White House said he'd sign the legislation but act unilaterally to get more, prompting condemnations from Democrats and threats of lawsuits from states and others who might lose federal money or said Trump was abusing his authority.

The uproar over Trump's next move cast an uncertain shadow over what had been a rare display of bipartisanship to address the grinding battle between the White House and lawmakers over border security.

The Senate passed the legislation 83-16 Thursday, with both parties solidly aboard. The House followed with a 300-128 tally, with Trump's signature planned Friday. Trump will speak Friday morning in the Rose Garden about border security, the White House said.

Trump is expected to announce that he will be spending roughly \$8 billion on border barriers — combining the money approved by Congress with funding he plans to repurpose through executive actions, including a national emergency, said a White House official who was not authorized to speak publicly. The money is expected to come from funds targeted for military construction and counterdrug efforts.

House Democrats overwhelmingly backed the legislation, with only 19 — most of whom were Hispanic — opposed. Just over half of Republicans voted "no."

Should Trump change his mind, both chambers' margins were above the two-thirds majorities needed to override presidential vetoes. Lawmakers, however, sometimes rally behind presidents of the same party in such battles.

Lawmakers exuded relief that the agreement had averted a fresh closure of federal agencies just three weeks after a record-setting 35-day partial shutdown that drew an unambiguous thumbs-down from the public. But in announcing that Trump would sign the accord, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders also said he'd take "other executive action, including a national emergency,"

In an unusual joint statement, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said such a declaration would be "a lawless act, a gross abuse of the power of the presidency and a desperate attempt to distract" from Trump's failure to force Mexico to pay for the wall, as he's promised for years.

"Congress will defend our constitutional authorities," they said. They declined to say whether that meant lawsuits or votes on resolutions to prevent Trump from unilaterally shifting money to wall-building, with aides saying they'd wait to see what he does.

Democratic state attorneys general said they'd consider legal action to block Trump. Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello told the president on Twitter "we'll see you in court" if he makes the declaration.

Despite widespread opposition in Congress to proclaiming an emergency, including by some Republicans, Trump is under pressure to act unilaterally to soothe his conservative base and avoid looking like he's lost his wall battle.

The abrupt announcement of Trump's plans came late in an afternoon of rumblings that the volatile president — who'd strongly hinted he'd sign the agreement but wasn't definitive — was shifting toward rejecting it. That would have infused fresh chaos into a fight both parties are desperate to leave behind, a thought that drove some lawmakers to ask heavenly help.

"Let's all pray that the president will have wisdom to sign the bill so the government doesn't shut down," Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said Thursday's Senate session opened.

Moments before Sanders spoke at the White House, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., took to the Senate floor to announce Trump's decisions to sign the bill and declare an emergency.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, told reporters there were two hours of phone calls between McConnell and the White House before there were assurances that Trump would sign.

McConnell argued that the bill delivered victories for Trump over Pelosi. These included overcoming her pledge to not fund the wall at all and rejecting a Democratic proposal for numerical limits on detaining some immigrants, said a Republican speaking on condition of anonymity to describe private conversations.

In a surprising development, McConnell said he would support Trump's emergency declaration, a turn-

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about for the Kentucky Republican, who like many lawmakers had opposed such action.

Democrats say there is no border crisis and Trump would be using a declaration simply to sidestep Congress. Some Republicans warn that future Democratic presidents could use his precedent to force spending on their own priorities, like gun control. GOP critics included Maine Sen. Susan Collins, who said emergency declarations are for "major natural disasters or catastrophic events" and said its use would be of "dubious constitutionality."

White House staff and congressional Republicans have said that besides an emergency, Trump might assert other authorities that could conceivably put him within reach of billions of dollars. The money could come from funds targeted for military construction, disaster relief and counterdrug efforts.

Congressional aides say there is \$21 billion for military construction that Trump could use if he declares a national emergency. By law, the money must be used to support U.S. armed forces, they say. The Defense Department declined to provide details on available money.

With many of the Democrats' liberal base voters adamantly against Trump's aggressive attempts to curb immigration, four declared presidential hopefuls opposed the bill in the Senate: Cory Booker of New Jersey, New York's Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Kamala Harris of California. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota voted for it, as did Vermont independent Bernie Sanders, who is expected to join the field soon.

Notably, the word "wall," the heart of many a chant at Trump campaign events and his rallies as president, is absent from the compromise's 1,768-page legislative and descriptive language. "Barriers" and "fencing" are the nouns of choice, a victory for Democrats eager to deny Trump even a rhetorical victory.

The agreement, which took bargainers three weeks to strike, would also squeeze funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, in an attempt to pressure the agency to detain fewer immigrants. To the dismay of Democrats, however, it would still leave an agency many of them consider abusive holding thousands more immigrants than last year.

The measure contains money for improved surveillance equipment, more customs agents and humanitarian aid for detained immigrants. The overall bill also provides \$330 billion to finance dozens of federal programs for the rest of the year, one-fourth of federal agency budgets.

Trump sparked the last shutdown before Christmas after Democrats snubbed his \$5.7 billion demand for the wall. The closure denied paychecks to 800,000 federal workers, hurt contractors and people reliant on government services and was loathed by the public.

With polls showing the public blamed him and GOP lawmakers, Trump folded on Jan. 25 without getting any of the wall funds. His capitulation was a political fiasco for Republicans and handed Pelosi a victory less than a month after Democrats took over the House and confronted Trump with a formidable rival for power.

Trump's descriptions of the wall have fluctuated, at times saying it would cover 1,000 miles of the 2,000-mile boundary. Previous administrations constructed over 650 miles of barriers.

Associated Press Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro and reporters Padmananda Rama, Lolita Baldor and Matthew Daly contributed.

As Democrats lean left, will voters follow?

By **LISA MASCARO** and **STEVE PEOPLES**, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — What is happening to the Democrats?

Captivated by a handful of liberal superstars, they are venturing where the party has long feared to tread: Steep taxes on the rich. Abolishing an immigration enforcement agency. And proposing a sweeping Green New Deal that calls for an "economic transformation" to combat climate change.

On Thursday, newly-elected Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez led a chorus of cheers as Amazon announced it was abandoning plans to build a sought-after headquarters in New York City. Activists berated the online giant for a \$3 billion package of tax breaks she said the city could better invest in hiring teachers or fixing

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the subway.

This is not the Democratic Party of yesteryear. Or even last year.

"The Amazon New York fight is an illustration of how power is moving to the left," said Ben Wikler, of the liberal group MoveOn. "One of the world's most powerful organizations doesn't want to pick a fight with progressive activists."

As the liberal flank celebrates its sudden ascendance in the party, energized by the new House freshmen pushing the party toward bold policy solutions, others wonder if the Democrats are veering so far left they're about to fall off a cliff.

It's a valid question ahead of a presidential primary season with an unusually robust roster of contenders trying to wrest the White House from President Donald Trump. The race comes at a time of shifting party loyalties and eroding confidence in traditional corridors of power, a dynamic that has recast the policy prescriptions of both parties.

The big questions for 2020: Will Democrats move beyond the center-left policies that have dominated the party since Bill Clinton's presidency? And if so, will they find the electorate is repelled, as Republicans claim, or will they discover that a country long described as "center-right" is receptive to a return to liberalism?

Democratic pollster John Anzalone said the leftward lurch that's playing out in the Amazon fight wouldn't necessarily hurt the party heading into 2020 and could resonate with voters.

"When you're doing corporate giveaways, whether for a big company or a sports team, it's not as cut-and-dry as most people think," Anzalone said. "The fact is there tends to be a belief that these big corporations have a lot of money and use their power to get deals they don't need."

As if to highlight the churn within the party, the 2020 class was mixed in their reactions.

A spokesman for former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg didn't respond to a request for comment. Howard Schultz, another business-minded former Democrat who's now weighing an independent bid for president, also declined to comment.

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who have long railed against the influence of corporations, weighed in, as did New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand.

"The people of New York and America are increasingly concerned about the power of large multinational corporations and the billions in corporate welfare they receive," Sanders said in a statement. "Our job is to end the race to the bottom where taxpayers in one city or state are forced to bid against each other for desperately needed jobs. This is what the rigged economy is all about."

Warren tweeted: "One of the wealthiest companies on the planet - just walked away from billions in taxpayer bribes, all because some elected officials in New York aren't sucking up to them enough. How long will we allow giant corporations to hold our democracy hostage?"

And Gillibrand said, "Walking away so quickly shows that Amazon was interested in the taxpayer assistance and not being a good neighbor in Queens hiring the greatest workers in the world."

As liberal activists across the country welcomed Amazon's decision as a fresh demonstration of the increasing power of the Democratic Party's far-left wing, Republicans highlighted the same thing, using the situation to cast the modern-day Democratic Party as extreme. Following Trump's lead, they pepper their speeches with claims that Democrats are veering toward socialism.

"Now, thousands of #New Yorkers will be deprived of good paying jobs at #amazon because of socialists like @AOC - and unfortunately the promise of a #greenjob won't pay the bills," former Trump aide Sean Spicer said on Twitter.

On Capitol Hill, it's hard not to compare the arrival of Ocasio-Cortez and the emerging Democratic divide to the tea party class of 2010 that took control of the House and pushed the Republican agenda rightward, ultimately helping give rise to the politics of Trump.

It's not just Ocasio-Cortez. She and House colleagues — Reps. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts — jointly announced their opposition to the bipartisan border security deal. They want to cut the Department of Homeland Security's budget over the administration's deportation policies, including those that separated families at the border.

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The four lawmakers were urged on by activists outside the Capitol, protesting what's seen as ICE's unnecessarily harsh deportations and raids against immigrants here illegally.

Omar, who is Muslim-American, pushed the party further into conflict this week with comments about Israel that were widely seen as anti-Semitic. She apologized. But the questions she and others are raising about the longstanding U.S. ally reflect a growing unease among some Democrats with Israel's treatment of Palestinians.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says the Democratic Party's diversity in the House is its strength, as evidenced by the way her caucus held unified against Trump's demand for money from Congress to build the wall on the border with Mexico.

"Welcome to the Democratic Party," Pelosi said Thursday. "We are not a monolith, never have been. And who would want to lead a party that would be described that way?"

While some high-profile newcomers are capturing media attention, the House majority was also won with new lawmakers who are more measured in their approach to governing even as they battle Trump. All but 19 Democrats approved the bipartisan border package late Thursday.

But other Democrats marvel at how quickly the party has shifted even since the 2016 election.

This week, when the Republican leader of the Senate, Mitch McConnell, announced an upcoming vote on the Green New Deal climate change plan as a way to force Democrats into an awkward vote, the Democrats responded, "Bring it on." They say Americans want answers on climate change, and Republicans have none.

Ocasio-Cortez, who stunned Washington when she knocked off an incumbent party leader during a primary last year, recently suggested a 70 percent marginal tax rate on top earners.

"Anything is possible," Ocasio-Cortez tweeted Thursday, "today was the day a group of dedicated, everyday New Yorkers & their neighbors defeated Amazon's corporate greed, its worker exploitation, and the power of the richest man in the world."

AP Interview: Maduro reveals secret meetings with US envoy

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and IAN PHILLIPS, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A month into Venezuela's high-stakes political crisis, President Nicolas Maduro revealed in an Associated Press interview that his government has held secret talks with the Trump administration. He also predicted he would survive an unprecedented global campaign to force his resignation.

While harshly criticizing President Donald Trump's confrontational stance toward his socialist government, Maduro said Thursday that he holds out hope of meeting the U.S. president soon to resolve a crisis triggered by America's recognition of his opponent, Juan Guaido, as Venezuela's rightful leader.

Maduro said that during two meetings in New York, his foreign minister invited the Washington-based special envoy for Venezuela, Elliott Abrams, to visit "privately, publicly or secretly."

"If he wants to meet, just tell me when, where and how and I'll be there," Maduro said without providing more details. He said both New York meetings lasted several hours.

U.S. officials have not denied Maduro's claim of talks.

A senior administration official in Washington who was not authorized to speak publicly said U.S. officials were willing to meet with "former Venezuela officials, including Maduro himself, to discuss their exit plans."

Venezuela is plunging deeper into a political chaos triggered by the U.S. demand that Maduro step down a month into a second presidential term that the U.S. and its allies in Latin America consider illegitimate. His opponent, the 35-year-old Guaido, burst onto the political stage in January in the first viable challenge in years to Maduro's hold on power.

As head of Congress, Guaido declared himself interim president on Jan. 23, saying he had a constitutional right to assume presidential powers from the "tyrant" Maduro. He has since garnered broad support, calling massive street protests and winning recognition from the U.S. and dozens of nations in Latin America and Europe who share his goal of removing Maduro.

The escalating crisis is taking place against a backdrop of economic and social turmoil that has led to severe shortages of food and medicine that have forced millions to flee the once-prosperous OPEC nation.

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Abrams' appointment as special envoy last month signaled the Trump administration's determination to take a tougher line on Venezuela.

The hawkish former Republican diplomat was a major voice pushing for the ouster of Manuel Noriega in Panama in the 1980s and also was convicted for withholding information from the U.S. Congress during the infamous Iran-Contra affair. He also played a leading role in managing the U.S.'s tepid response to a brief coup that toppled Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 2002.

Two senior Venezuelan officials who were not authorized to discuss the meetings publicly said the two encounters between Abrams and Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza came at the request of the U.S.

The first one on Jan. 26 they described as hostile, with the U.S. envoy threatening Venezuela with the deployment of troops and chastising the Venezuelan government for allegedly being in league with Cuba, Russia and Hezbollah.

When they met again this week, the atmosphere was less tense, even though the Feb. 11 encounter came four days after Abrams said the "time for dialogue with Maduro had long passed." During that meeting, Abrams insisted that severe U.S. sanctions would oust Maduro even if Venezuela's military stuck by him.

Abrams gave no indication the U.S. was prepared to ease demands Maduro step down. Still, the Venezuelans saw the meetings as a sign there is room for discussion with the Americans despite the tough public rhetoric coming from Washington.

At turns conciliatory and combative, Maduro said all Venezuela needs to rebound is for Trump to remove his "infected hand" from the country that sits atop the world's largest petroleum reserves.

He said U.S. sanctions on the oil industry are to blame for mounting hardships even though shortages and hyperinflation that economists say topped 1 million percent long predates Trump's recent action.

"The infected hand of Donald Trump is hurting Venezuela," Maduro said.

The sanctions effectively ban all oil purchases by the U.S., which had been Venezuela's biggest oil buyer until now. Maduro said he will make up for the sudden drop in revenue by targeting markets in Asia, especially India, where the head of state-run oil giant PDVSA was this week negotiating new oil sales.

"We've been building a path to Asia for many years," he said. "It's a successful route, every year they are buying larger volumes and amounts of oil."

At a petroleum conference in New Delhi, Venezuela's oil minister Manuel Quevedo suggested the country was open to a barter system with India to get around U.S. sanctions.

"We do not have any barter system with Venezuela. Commercial considerations and related factors will determine the value of trade," India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Raveesh Kumar said in response to the Venezuelan officials' comments.

Maduro also cited the continued support of China and especially Russia, which has been a major supplier of loans, weapons and oil investment over the years. He said that the antagonistic views taken by Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin runs the risk of converting the current crisis into a high-risk geopolitical fight between the U.S. and Russia that recalls some of the most-dangerous brinkmanship of the Cold War.

Amid the mounting pressure at home and abroad, Maduro said he won't give up power as a way to defuse the standoff.

He also reiterated a refusal to allow humanitarian aid, calling boxes of U.S.-donated food and pediatric supplies sitting in a warehouse on the border in Colombia mere "crumbs" after the U.S. administration froze billions of dollars in the nation's oil revenue and overseas assets.

"They hang us, steal our money and then say 'here, grab these crumbs' and make a global show out of it," said Maduro.

His comments came hours after British billionaire Richard Branson announced in a video that he'll be hosting a concert in the Colombian border town of Cucuta in hopes of raising \$100 million to buy humanitarian supplies for Venezuelans.

"With dignity we say 'No to the global show,'" said Maduro. "Whoever wants to help Venezuela is welcome, but we have enough capacity to pay for everything that we need."

Opponents say the 56-year-old former bus driver has lost touch with his working-class roots, accusing

him of ordering mass arrests and starving Venezuelans while he and regime insiders — including the top military brass — line their pockets through corruption.

But Maduro shrugged off the label of “dictator,” attributing it to an ideologically driven media campaign by the West to undermine the socialist revolution started by Chavez.

He said he won't resign, seeing his place in history alongside other Latin American leftists from Salvador Allende in Chile to Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala who in decades past had been the target of U.S.-backed coups.

“I'm not afraid,” he said, adding that even last year's attack on him with explosives-laden drones during a military ceremony didn't shake his resolve. “I'm only worried about the destiny of the fatherland and of our people, our boys and girls....this is what gives me energy.”

Associated Press writer Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

Risk of flooding, mudslides remains after California storm

By TERENCE CHEA and JOHN ANTCZAK, Associated Press

SAUSALITO, Calif. (AP) — Authorities warn that mudslides are still possible Friday even after a damaging storm moved through California, trapping people in floodwaters, triggering a debris flow that destroyed homes, and forcing residents to flee communities scorched by wildfires last year.

The powerful system swept in from the Pacific Ocean and unleashed rain, snow and wind across the U.S. West into Wyoming, Colorado and Arizona after walloping Northern California and southern Oregon earlier.

The rain mostly ended Thursday night. But officials said hillsides could still loosen and collapse, bringing down mud, boulders and debris.

“The ground is still so saturated and the water is still flowing down from the mountains,” said April Newman, spokeswoman for Riverside County Fire Department.

The National Weather Service reported staggering rainfall amounts across California, including more than 9.4 inches (24 centimeters) over 48 hours at one location in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles.

A woman pulled from rising water in a low-lying area between those mountains and Los Angeles had a heart attack and died at a hospital, said Capt. Ryan Rolston with the Corona Fire Department. The unidentified woman was one of nine people and three dogs rescued in a flood-control channel where homeless people camp, Rolston said.

A second death was reported in Escondido, northeast of San Diego, where firefighters recovered the body of a man who had been seen paddle boarding in the surging waters of a concrete-lined flood-control channel.

North of San Francisco, a mudslide barreled over cars, uprooted trees and sent a home sliding down a hill and smashing into another house in Sausalito.

A woman was rescued from the splintered wreckage with only cuts and bruises. Susan Gordon was buried under a tree and mud for two hours while crews dug her out, her son wrote on an online fundraising page.

Chris Parkman said it has been years since a storm so powerful has hit the hillside community, where at least 50 properties were evacuated.

“We don't see the rain most of the year. So most of the year you feel safe. But when the big storms come, your safety factor is gone,” he said.

Further north, a levee along State Route 37 near Novato was breached, flooding a rural field. Officials were monitoring the area in case water flows onto the highway or train tracks.

A deluge southeast of Los Angeles washed away a section of a two-lane mountain highway. Photos by the state Department of Transportation showed about 75 feet (23 meters) of pavement completely collapsed along State Route 243 near the remote community of Idyllwild.

“We're basically stranded right now,” said resident Gary Agner, adding that several other roads were closed because of flooding and debris. “I'm glad I went to the grocery store yesterday.”

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The risk of flooding led officials to order people out of areas burned bare by a summer wildfire in the Santa Ana Mountains, with flash-flood warnings blanketing a huge swath east and south of Los Angeles. The evacuation orders were downgraded to flood warnings Thursday night.

Authorities also told parts of artsy Laguna Beach to evacuate for much of the day, while the desert resort city of Palm Springs urged residents to stay in place because of flooded streets. In Cabazon, two people marooned on the roof of their flooded car were rescued by helicopter.

Flood advisories extended to Arizona.

Weather was so severe that the Hollywood Walk of Fame had to postpone the dedication of a sidewalk star honoring the band Aerosmith. Knott's Berry Farm and Six Flags Magic Mountain theme parks closed.

Trouble also persisted in saturated Northern California, where thousands of people lost power and flooding was possible. Downtown San Francisco saw more than 1.75 inches (4.4 centimeters) of rain over 24 hours.

A flooded creek led authorities to urge about 300 residents to leave a community about 20 miles (32 kilometers) west of Paradise, a town destroyed last year by the nation's deadliest wildfire in a century.

The storm followed more than a week of severe weather in the Pacific Northwest and was the latest in a series of storms that has all but eliminated drought-level dryness in California this winter. It's fueled by an atmospheric river — a plume of moisture stretching across the Pacific Ocean nearly to Hawaii.

Nearly 37 percent of California had no level of drought or abnormal dryness, the U.S. Drought Monitor reported Thursday. About 10.5 percent of the state was in moderate drought, and just over 1.6 percent was in severe drought. The remainder was in the abnormally dry category. The numbers reflect data gathered up to Tuesday.

Atmospheric rivers are long bands of water vapor that form over an ocean and flow through the sky. Formed by winds associated with storms, they occur globally but are especially significant on the West Coast.

Even before the height of the storm, mandatory evacuations were ordered near the wildfire area in the Santa Ana Mountains where officials said there was a high risk of debris flows.

Tim Suber chose not to leave his hillside neighborhood in Lake Elsinore. He said Thursday that he has lost count of how many times his family has been evacuated between last summer's devastating wildfire and this winter's storms.

The rain was so heavy that "it sounds like a hundred bowling balls a minute are going down the creek" behind his house, Suber said. A neighbor had mud in his pool, but so far the area hadn't lost power and culverts and washes were handling the runoff.

The storm delayed flights destined for San Francisco International Airport, closed sections of several key highways, including Highway 1 on the Central Coast, Interstate 5 north of Sacramento, and U.S. 395 in the snowy eastern Sierra Nevada.

Wintry weather closed Interstate 80 in California near the Nevada border and across much of Wyoming and sections of at least four other highways. Multiple avalanches disrupted highway traffic in northwestern Montana near the Idaho border.

In Colorado, high winds shattered windows and downed power poles, leaving thousands in Colorado Springs without power.

Associated Press writers Olga Rodriguez in San Francisco and Christopher Weber and Amanda Lee Myers in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

In Hebron, Palestinians patrol in place of foreign monitors

By EYAD MOGHRABI, Associated Press

HEBRON, West Bank (AP) — Following Israel's expulsion of an international observer force from the volatile West Bank city of Hebron, Palestinian activists are trying to fill the void by launching their own patrols to document alleged Israeli settler violence.

Armed with video cameras and donning blue vests, the activists say they will replace the Temporary

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International Presence in Hebron. The group has enlisted 18 volunteers and began its work this week.

"By expelling the international monitors, the Israeli government wanted to hide the Israeli settlers' and soldiers' violations, but we will not let them get away with that," Issa Amro, an activist leader, told The Associated Press. "We will document any attack by photos and words, and we will circulate it all over the world."

Hebron, the West Bank's largest city, is a frequent flashpoint between settlers and Palestinians. Over 200,000 Palestinians live in the city, along with several hundred ultranationalist Israeli settlers who live in the down town area in heavily fortified enclaves protected by the military.

Palestinians frequently must pass through Israeli checkpoints in the area of the settler enclaves, restrictions that have hit the once-thriving city center and forced many businesses to close.

Adding to this combustible mix, Hebron is home to a holy site revered by Jews and Muslims as the burial site of religious patriarchs. Jews revere the site as the Tomb of the Patriarchs, while Muslims call it the Ibrahimi Mosque, after the patriarch Abraham.

The site has been divided into Jewish and Muslim prayer areas since shortly after a settler opened fire on Muslim worshippers at the shrine in 1994, killing 29 people and wounding over 100 others.

The international mission, known as TIPH, was initially established after the mosque shooting, and began operating in its latest form after a 1997 agreement between Israel and the Palestinians.

Until recently, the mission stationed unarmed civilian observers from Norway, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey to report on alleged violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws in the divided city.

But last month, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that the mission would be halted, saying Israel "will not allow the continuation of an international force that acts against us."

The development, seen as a gesture to his hard-line base as Netanyahu seeks re-election, drew declarations of concern from the United Nations, European Union, and contributing countries.

In a joint statement, TIPH member countries said the suspension "undermines one of the few established mechanisms for conflict resolution between Israelis and Palestinians." The EU said it "risks further deteriorating the already fragile situation on the ground."

The mission has long had a strained relationship with the settlers.

TIPH had drawn negative press in Israel in recent years after one of its observers was deported by Israel after slapping an Israeli child and another was filmed puncturing the tires of a settler's vehicle. In December, Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that TIPH had produced an internal report criticizing "several and regular" Israeli violations of international law.

Amro, the activist leader, is well-known in Hebron. Saying he promotes non-violent opposition to discriminatory Israeli policies, he has run afoul of both Israeli and Palestinian authorities.

He is on trial before an Israeli military on accusations of inciting violence. In 2017, he was arrested by Palestinian authorities for a Facebook post critical of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Amro and other volunteer activists began their work on Sunday as a "human rights monitoring and protection team" by escorting Palestinian students to school in Hebron's Israeli-controlled downtown area.

Tensions started right away, Amro said.

An AP cameraman filmed a settler cursing the activists in front of the Israeli soldiers as "dogs and sons of dogs." An activist cursed the settler back.

Amro said he was "slapped and punched by the settlers" and vowed to file a complaint with Israeli police.

Yishai Fleisher, a settler spokesman, said the Hebron Jewish community is "fully against violence and vigilantism" and doesn't condone its members' altercation with Amro and the other volunteers. At the same time, he accused Amro of being an "instigator," and the main source of tension between Jews and Arabs in Hebron.

"This is the ultimate fake observer, fake peace monitor," Fleischer said. "He's interested in demolishing any sense of normality that has been built up between Jews and Arabs in Hebron."

Hundreds of Palestinian students study in schools in Hebron's Old City. Altercations between Palestinians and Israelis are not uncommon, but Fleisher insisted that day-to-day affairs between the two communities

function normally.

The students' families expressed relief at having the volunteers in the street.

"These groups are very good; we need them after the departure of the TIPH and the foreign researchers," said Sameh al-Muhtasib, a father.

In response to the arrival of the activists, the Israeli military declared the area of the Old City a military closed zone on Tuesday and banned the activists from remaining there.

Izzat Karaki, another activist, vowed to continue the work. "We will stay here and support our students and people," he said.

AP analysis: Steel tariffs waived even with tough trade talk

By RICHARD LARDNER and LARRY FENN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite President Donald Trump's tough talk on trade, his administration has granted hundreds of companies permission to import millions of tons of steel made in China, Japan and other countries without paying the hefty tariff he put in place to protect U.S. manufacturers and jobs, according to an Associated Press analysis.

The waivers from the import tax show how pliable his protectionist policies can be. Trump has positioned himself as an "America First" trade warrior, using tariffs as a club against countries he's accused of playing unfairly. Although China has been the principal target of Trump's ire, he also has criticized Japan and American allies in Europe.

Behind the scenes, however, his Commerce Department approved tariff exemption requests from 370 companies for up to 4.1 million tons of foreign steel, with roughly 8 percent of the total coming from China and close to 30 percent from Japan, according to AP's review of thousands of applications for relief from the import tax on steel. Many recipients of the waivers are subsidiaries of foreign-owned businesses.

Although Trump has sought to rebuild America's steel industry by curbing imports, tariffs are fraught with economic risk — a message that came through loud and clear in many of the waiver applications. Companies that use steel in their products warned the Commerce Department that the 25 percent tariff could do serious damage to their businesses.

The numbers also provide a window into a steel tariff exemption program that has vexed many applicants as well as lawmakers who've questioned the pace, transparency and fairness of the process. The flood of applications overwhelmed the system the department set up nearly a year ago to review them, and more than 38,000 requests still await rulings.

The Commerce Department has received waiver applications from 45 states and Puerto Rico, evidence of the geographic range of companies angling for exemptions.

Tioga Pipe in Philadelphia, which supplies a variety of industrial customers with pipe, fittings and flanges, received approval to import as much as 86,500 tons of Chinese steel duty free; that was the most of any company with approved waivers. Tioga did not return calls and emails seeking comment, but its applications indicate the material isn't available from domestic suppliers in the sizes and shapes it needs.

DS Containers, a subsidiary of Japan's Daiwa Can, makes aerosol and liquid pour cans at factories in Illinois using laminated tin-free steel that U.S. suppliers have shown no interest in manufacturing, CEO Bill Smith told the Commerce Department. Smith received the go-ahead to import up to 390,000 tons of the material from Japan, the Netherlands and United Kingdom. If the waivers had not been granted, Smith warned, DS Containers might have been forced to shut down production lines or lay off employees.

A 25 percent tariff "is a very heavy burden on any company," Smith told AP last year.

The department declined interview requests. A spokesman said in an emailed statement that exemptions can be approved if the department determines the metal "is not produced in the United States in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or of a satisfactory quality or should be excluded based upon specific national security considerations."

Overall, the department has so far approved nearly 14,000 requests for exemption from the steel duty, with 59 percent of the total going to firms with a foreign corporate parent. Most of the waivers last for a

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year. More than 4,400 applications were denied.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who this month declared herself a Democratic candidate for president in 2020, told Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross in late October that giving exemptions to foreign-owned businesses “appears to be massive loophole.” The purpose of tariffs, she said, is to benefit U.S. manufacturing, not undermine it.

Warren said in a statement to AP that Trump “claims to be implementing trade policies that put America first, but here’s what the data show: this administration is handing out special tariff exemptions to foreign-owned companies at the expense of American companies.”

But Scott Paul, the president of the pro-tariff Alliance for American Manufacturing, said a company’s lineage shouldn’t be a factor in whether it receives waivers. Paul said the volume of steel exempted from the duty is small compared with the U.S. market for steel.

“You’d be hard pressed to find a bigger China trade hawk than me,” Paul said, “but I’m not overly concerned with the number of exemptions granted so far.”

Two subsidiaries of Japanese companies, both in the suburbs of Indianapolis, had vastly different experiences as each tried to avoid the steel tariff.

Nachi America, in Greenwood, Indiana, received close to 530 waivers for metal that included a heat-treated steel bar made in Japan with a “precision straightness” that U.S. suppliers can’t match, according to one of the company’s applications. Nachi America declined to comment.

Indiana Automotive Fasteners in Greenfield, about 40 miles away, made a similar argument: only Japanese-made steel meets the exacting requirements for the bolts, nuts and screws it produces for the country’s largest automakers. Yet only 43 of its requests were approved while more than 100 were rejected on the grounds they weren’t completed properly. Nearly 150 requests are pending.

The denials perplexed Mark Vance, vice president for sales at Indiana Automotive Fasteners. Although the company is permitted to refile the rejected requests, Vance said Commerce Department officials couldn’t tell him what should be modified the second time around, leaving him to conclude the denials were due to the “subjectivity on the part of the person reviewing” the applications.

To put the tariffs into effect, Trump employed a rarely used 1962 law that empowers him to put a levy on a particular product if the Commerce Department determines it threatens national security. The department posts the requests online to allow third parties to file objections — even from competitors who have an interest in seeing a rival’s bid rejected.

The two most prolific protesters are also two of the country’s largest steel producers and key beneficiaries of the tariff. Nucor and U.S. Steel have filed more than 5,800 objections between them, according to numbers compiled by the office of Rep. Jackie Walorski, an Indiana Republican opposed to the steel tariff. Her data also shows requests that trigger objections are rarely approved.

U.S. Steel announced Monday that due to Trump’s “strong trade actions” the company would be re-summing construction of a new steelmaking plant in Alabama that had been suspended in late 2015 “due to unfavorable market conditions.” Nucor also is expanding and late last month reported record annual earnings for 2018.

Among the thousands of requests hanging in the balance are the dozens submitted by NLMK USA, the U.S. subsidiary of the Russian steel company Novolipetsk Steel. NLMK imports huge slabs of steel from Russia and has paid nearly \$150 million in tariffs so far as it awaits rulings, said Robert Miller, the company’s president and CEO.

Miller told the Commerce Department that a domestic shortage of steel slab means he has no choice but to go overseas for the metal his facilities in Pennsylvania and Indiana need. But Nucor and U.S. Steel objected, contending there’s plenty of slab available in the U.S. Nucor said NLMK wants to rely on “cheap steel slab from Russia” to support a business model that is “classic outsourcing.”

Fenn reported from New York.

Follow Richard Lardner on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/rplardner>

China says trade talks to continue in Washington next week

By JOE McDONALD, AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — With a March 2 deadline looming, U.S. and Chinese negotiators will meet in Washington next week for more talks on a tariff war over Beijing's technology ambitions, China's government announced Friday.

The announcement came after U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told Chinese President Xi Jinping that negotiators had "made headway" on important issues in two days of talks that wrapped up Friday in Beijing.

Officials expressed optimism but gave no details of this week's negotiations, which had been the last scheduled before a planned American tariff hike on \$200 billion of Chinese imports on March 2. Economists said the talks were too brief to resolve the tariff fight that is dragging on global economic growth.

"I hope you will continue to work hard to promote a mutually beneficial and win-win agreement," Xi told Lighthizer in a meeting after the negotiations ended, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

The announcement of further talks suggested both sides believe they are making progress. But there was no indication of movement on the thorniest dispute: U.S. pressure on Beijing to scale back plans for government-led creation of Chinese global leaders in robotics and other technologies.

"We feel we have made headway on very, very important and difficult issues," Lighthizer told Xi. "We have additional work we have to do but we are hopeful."

Xi said Beijing and Washington "share broad mutual interests" in promoting global economic prosperity and stability.

"We shoulder important responsibilities," the Chinese leader said.

Trump had made "no decision" on the tariff hike, his top economic adviser Larry Kudlow told reporters Thursday in Washington. The president said Tuesday he might let the March 2 deadline "slide for a little while" if the talks went well.

Washington, Europe, Japan and other governments say Beijing's industry plans violate its market-opening obligations. Some American officials worry they might erode U.S. industrial leadership.

Trump raised tariffs in July over complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. The dispute has spread to cover cyber-spying traced to China, the country's multibillion-dollar trade surplus with the United States and support for state industry.

Beijing has offered to narrow its trade surplus by purchasing more American soybeans, natural gas and other exports. But the government has resisted pressure to cut back development plans it sees as a path to prosperity and global influence.

"From politics to economy to ideology, the United States hopes to intervene in China's affairs," said the newspaper Global Times, published by the ruling Communist Party.

Chinese officials also have balked at U.S. pressure to accept an enforcement mechanism to monitor whether Beijing carries out its promises.

Beijing has tried to deflect pressure by emphasizing China's growth as an export market. It has announced changes over the past year to open finance and other fields, including allowing full foreign ownership in its auto industry for the first time.

White House scrambles to find pots of money to use for wall

By LOLITA BALDOR and LISA MASCARO, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — If President Donald Trump declares an emergency to build the wall with Mexico, he still needs money to pay for it. And shifting money from other accounts to deliver the \$5.7 billion he wants is not without political problems.

The administration has been eyeing several pots of money — including disaster funds, counternarcotic accounts and military construction dollars — to fund Trump's wall, according to congressional aides and

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White House officials.

White House acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney has said there are various accounts available.

One possibility is shifting a portion of the \$13 billion in disaster aid Congress approved last year for Puerto Rico and a dozen states, including California and Texas, hit hard by hurricanes, flooding and other disasters. The money funds Army Corps projects, and the Puerto Rico aid alone totals more than \$2 billion.

But Texas lawmakers revolted over White House plans to tap Hurricane Harvey funds, and Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said Thursday they won assurances from the White House that the money won't be used for the wall.

"We've been pretty clear we thought that would be a mistake," said Cornyn, who along with the state's governor and other lawmakers urged the White House to stay away from that account. "There's limited pots of money he can get into, but I'm pretty confident he won't get into disaster funds."

A more likely option is the military construction account that's used to upgrade bases and facilities.

Congressional aides said there is \$21 billion available. That includes about \$10 billion in funds from the current 2019 fiscal year that ends Sept. 30, and \$11 billion remaining from the previous four years, said the aides. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly about the funding details.

But tapping the military construction money also may hit resistance. The money often goes for improvements to housing, roads, hospitals and other facilities, and can be used to eliminate mold or other hazardous problems at military installations in congressional districts across the nation and around the globe.

As an example, the aides said, there is funding for a medical facility at a U.S. base in Germany that has been partially constructed. If those funds were used, the medical center could be left half built.

The president can decide to use military construction funds, but it will be up to the Defense Department to determine which specific projects would lose their money, the aides said.

While the president has the authority to take the funds, the aides said that, according to the law, the money must be used in support of U.S. armed forces, and the key question is whether Trump could prove the funds were being spent to actually support troops.

The Defense Department has declined to provide any details on the amount of money available.

Potentially easier to tap is the military's counterdrug account, so-called Section 284 money, as suggested by Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., a Trump ally and leader of the conservative Freedom Caucus. But it falls short of what's needed with about \$800 million available.

Using that money would not require declaration of a national emergency, but aides said it is less likely the president would dip into those funds.

"I've obviously suggested 284 for a long time," Meadows said recently. "There's not enough money there, but it's a good start."

The White House has been searching for funding as it became clear Congress would not provide the money Trump was demanding to build the wall. Trump had campaigned on the promise that Mexico would pay for it.

Instead, this week lawmakers struck a bipartisan deal to provide nearly \$1.4 billion for fences and barriers along the southern border as part of a broad funding package to avoid another federal shutdown.

Both the Senate and House approved the compromise on Thursday, ahead of Friday's deadline. The White House said Trump would sign it but then declare a national emergency and perhaps invoke other executive powers to build the wall.

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. WHO VENEZUELA'S GOVERNMENT HAS BACK-CHANNELED WITH

President Nicolas Maduro revealed in an AP interview that his government held secret talks with the Trump administration and predicted he would survive an unprecedented global campaign to force his resignation.

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2. FROM SHUTDOWN TO SHOWDOWN

Congress has approved a border security deal that would avert a second government closure but a new confrontation has been ignited by President Trump's plan to declare a national emergency to obtain billions for his wall on the Mexican border.

3. PLENTY OF EXCEPTIONS TO LEVY RULE

Despite President Trump's tough talk on trade, hundreds of companies permission could import millions of tons of steel without paying the hefty tariff he put in place to protect U.S. manufacturers and jobs, according to an Associated Press analysis.

4. 100 DAYS AFTER PARADISE BURNED

With the aid of public records, CalFire mapping of the fire's progression and dozens of interviews, the AP tells the stories of how California wildfire victims lived and died.

5. POTENTIAL COSTS OF BIG APPLE REBUFF

Amazon's decision to walk away and take with it 25,000 promised jobs could scare off other companies considering moving to or expanding in New York City.

6. TRADE CONFLICT STILL AT AN IMPASSE

Two days of U.S.-China trade talks ended with no immediate word of progress, as the White House weighs whether to escalate a technology dispute by going ahead with a March 2 tariff increase on imports from China.

7. GRANDDADDY OF THE CONSPIRACY CULTURE

Eight-time presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche died on the fringes this week, but his influence will surely outlast him.

8. WHERE ELECTION BUSTLE JARS WITH GRINDING POVERTY

In Nigeria's vote, the spectacle of campaign expenditure is at odds with the rampant poverty afflicting many.

9. MORE INDICATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT?

Attorney Michael Avenatti says he has given Chicago prosecutors new video evidence of R&B star R. Kelly having sex with an underage girl.

10. CIVIC DUTY OR EXPLOITATION

Unpaid Olympic volunteers do almost everything: guide athletes around, greet dignitaries and translate for lost fans. Almost everyone else working the Olympics gets paid. Many, handsomely.

Amazon's exit could scare off tech companies from New York

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and JOSH BOAK, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon jilted New York City on Valentine's Day, scrapping plans to build a massive headquarters campus in Queens amid fierce opposition from politicians angry about nearly \$3 billion in tax breaks and the company's anti-union stance.

With millions of jobs and a bustling economy, New York can withstand the blow, but experts say the decision by the e-commerce giant to walk away and take with it 25,000 promised jobs could scare off other companies considering moving to or expanding in the city, which wants to be seen as the Silicon Valley of the East Coast.

"One of the real risks here is the message we send to companies that want to come to New York and expand to New York," said Julie Samuels, the executive director of industry group Tech: NYC. "We're really playing with fire right now."

In November, Amazon selected New York City and Crystal City, Virginia, as the winners of a secretive, yearlong process in which more than 230 North American cities bid to become the home of the Seattle-based company's second headquarters.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio and Gov. Andrew Cuomo heralded the city's selection at the time as the biggest boon yet to its burgeoning tech economy and underscored that the deal would generate billions of dollars for improving transit, schools and housing.

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Opposition came swiftly though, as details started to emerge.

Critics complained about public subsidies that were offered to Amazon and chafed at some of the conditions of the deal, such as the company's demand for access to a helipad. Some pleaded for the deal to be renegotiated or scrapped altogether.

"We knew this was going south from the moment it was announced," said Thomas Stringer, a site selection adviser for big companies. "If this was done right, all the elected officials would have been out there touting how great it was. When you didn't see that happen, you knew something was wrong."

Stringer, a managing director of the consulting firm BDO USA LLP, said city and state officials need to rethink the secrecy with which they approached the negotiations. Community leaders and potential critics were kept in the dark, only to be blindsided when details became public.

"It's time to hit the reset button and say, 'What did we do wrong?'" Stringer said. "This is fumbling at the 1-yard line."

Amazon said in a statement Thursday that its commitment to New York City required "positive, collaborative relationships" with state and local officials and that a number of them had "made it clear that they oppose our presence and will not work with us to build the type of relationships that are required to go forward."

Not that Amazon is blameless, experts say.

Joe Parilla, a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, said the company's high-profile bidding process may have stoked the backlash. Companies usually search for new locations quietly, in part to avoid the kind of opposition Amazon received.

"They had this huge competition, and the media covered it really aggressively, and a bunch of cities responded," Parilla said. "What did you expect? It gave the opposition a much bigger platform."

Richard Florida, an urban studies professor and critic of Amazon's initial search process, said the company should have expected to feel the heat when it selected New York, a city known for its neighborhood activism.

"At the end of the day, this is going to hurt Amazon," said Florida, head of the University of Toronto's Martin Prosperity Institute. "This is going to embolden people who don't like corporate welfare across the country."

Other tech companies have been keeping New York City's tech economy churning without making much of a fuss.

Google is spending \$2.4 billion to build up its Manhattan campus. Cloud-computing company Salesforce has plastered its name on Verizon's former headquarters in midtown, and music streaming service Spotify is gobbling up space at the World Trade Center complex.

Despite higher costs, New York City remains attractive to tech companies because of its vast, diverse talent pool, world-class educational and cultural institutions and access to other industries, such as Wall Street capital and Madison Avenue ad dollars.

No other metropolitan area in the U.S. has as many computer-related jobs as New York City, which has 225,600, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, Washington, Boston, Atlanta and Dallas each have a greater concentration of their workers in tech.

In the New York area, the average computer-related job pays roughly \$104,000 a year, about \$15,000 above the national average. Still, that's about \$20,000 less than in San Francisco.

Even after cancelling its headquarters project, Amazon still has 5,000 employees in New York City, not counting Whole Foods.

"New York has actually done a really great job of growing and supporting its tech ecosystem, and I'm confident that will continue," Samuels said. "Today we took a step back, but I would not put the nail in the coffin of tech in New York City."

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Boak reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Bernard Condon in New York and Chris Rugaber in Washington contributed to this report.

Lyndon LaRouche's conspiracy mindset lives on

By HILLEL ITALIE, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Fitting for a man who saw so much darkness in the world, Lyndon LaRouche died on the fringes this week, his name little known to anyone under 50, his death rumored online a day before mainstream outlets confirmed it.

His influence, however, will surely outlast him.

"LaRouche is the granddaddy of the conspiracist culture that is poisoning our culture today," says Matthew Sweet, who wrote about LaRouche last year in "Operation Chaos: The Vietnam Deserters Who Fought the CIA, the Brainwashers, and Themselves."

"Some of his ideas were insanely exotic — the idea that the Queen was plotting World War III, for example," Sweet says. "But his fantasies about George Soros proved rather more contagious. Alex Jones, Roger Stone, those figures in the US who made it their business to produce seductive, confusing, paranoid noise, see him as an elder statesman. They're toiling in the same dismal field."

LaRouche, who died Tuesday at age 96, was an eight-time presidential candidate who never received more than a tiny percentage of the vote. But he had a global following, and he has been praised by some people now very much in the news.

Stone, the longtime associate of President Donald Trump who has alleged the "Deep State" is trying to kill him, has said he was "very familiar with the extraordinary and prophetic thinking" of LaRouche. He added that LaRouche's ideas had an "important backstage role" in electing the very untraditional Trump.

"A friend of mine, a good friend of mine, and a good man," Stone called him in 2017.

Jones, being sued for his allegations that the Sandy Hook shootings were a hoax, has interviewed LaRouche on his Infowars program and shared conspiracies about everything from the "Rothchilds" (a code word for Jews) of international banking to the evils of British power.

LaRouche's thinking was shaped by the post-World War II culture. He has called himself a Franklin D. Roosevelt Democrat who became convinced that Harry Truman and other future presidents were pawns of the British, whose power dated back to the Roman Empire.

He indulged in many of the conspiracy theories common to his time, such as believing that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by government forces because he was a threat to the establishment. He has called global warming a hoax (as has Trump), dismissed the Holocaust as "mythical" and disputed medical warnings about AIDS as lies.

But LaRouche also was unique for the extremity of his rhetoric and for his blurring of the far left and far right.

Jesse Walker, author of "The United States of Paranoia: A Conspiracy Theory," published in 2014, says LaRouche's rise coincided with a new kind of conspiracy thinking.

"Before, people tended to adopt the conspiracy theories associated with their own circumstances — there were liberal conspiracy theories, conservative conspiracy theories, and so on," he says. "Now there was a growing interest in conspiracies — in themselves, so that, for example, you might start out interested in left-wing theories about the CIA but then check out what this fellow on the right has to say about banks."

Gradually, Walker says, "this left/right crossover became a full-fledged subculture. LaRouche wasn't himself a part of that subculture, but his mix of far-left and far-right ideas mirrored it in some ways — and helped guarantee that the members of the subculture would pay attention to him, though they never did agree on how seriously to take him."

Today, suspicion of conspiracy has never been more widespread or more amplified. But American conspiracies long predate LaRouche and his era.

New Englanders in the 17th century accused women of being witches, tried them, and, in some cases, hanged them. In the 18th century, colonists speculated that a British statesman — John Stuart, 3rd Earl

of Bute, was a behind a cabal to tyrannize Americans. A century later, Lincoln assassination conspiracists blamed everyone from the pope to the Confederacy's Jewish secretary of state, Judah P. Benjamin.

"It's much safer to believe that 'someone secretly did it with a giant diabolical plan' rather than that a single person can change our entire world at any moment," says Brad Meltzer, the best-selling novelist whose nonfiction books include "The First Conspiracy: The Secret Plot to Kill George Washington."

"We don't like being scared. It's much safer to blame others — especially when it's a group of a different race, religion or nationality," Meltzer says. "As long as there are believers, there will be those who take advantage of them, riding them to power. People want to believe. Show me your favorite conspiracy theory and I'll show you who you are."

Trump's new trade decision: Impose tariffs on imported cars?

By TOM KRISHER and PAUL WISEMAN, AP Business Writers

DETROIT (AP) — Sometimes, on a bad night, Brad Strong wakes at 2 a.m. and can't get back to sleep. The insomnia isn't about his family or money or health. It's about tariffs.

The Strong family's three car dealerships in Salt Lake City could suffer a significant blow if President Donald Trump proceeds with a proposal to impose tariffs of 20 to 25 percent on imported autos and auto parts.

Strong may be in for a few more sleepless nights.

By Sunday, Trump's Commerce Department is expected to issue an opinion on whether auto imports endanger U.S. national security enough to justify such import taxes. Trump would then have 90 days to decide whether to impose them.

The department could decide to postpone its conclusion. Or it could just hand its recommendations to Trump without making them public.

But if it does suggest that Trump impose the tariffs, Commerce would be advocating a major escalation in Trump's combative trade policies. So far, he has stuck tariffs on imported steel, aluminum, dishwashers, solar panels and hundreds of Chinese goods. The tariffs have become a financial burden for U.S. companies that import goods and parts and have led some to pass on their higher costs to customers. Many economists worry about the eventual impact on the U.S. economy.

U.S. auto tariffs would almost surely lead Japan and the European Union to retaliate. They could also spark a rebellion in the U.S. Congress — including from Trump's fellow Republicans — over concern that he is raising tariffs by invoking his authority to label certain imports a threat to America's national security.

"I don't believe that minivans from Canada or other allies are a threat to our national security," said Republican Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio. "I hope the administration takes a step back and reconsiders any auto tariffs."

The tariffs could have far-reaching consequences — on the companies that make cars, often with imported parts; on the dealerships that sell them; and on the consumers who buy them. U.S. imports of passenger vehicles and auto parts amounted to \$340 billion in 2017.

All three of Strong's dealerships sell vehicles made by German automakers — Volkswagen, Audi and Porsche. No Porsches or Audis are built in America. Only a couple of Volkswagen models are. The likely result is higher prices and lower sales for Strong and other dealers who sell imported vehicles.

"I worry about the people that work for me and their families," said Strong, who fears that his dealerships would have to lay off some of their 225 employees.

If 25 percent tariffs were imposed on imported parts and vehicles, including from Canada and Mexico, the price of imported vehicles would jump more than 17 percent, or an average of around \$5,000 each, according to IHS Markit. Even the prices of vehicles made in the U.S. would rise by about 5 percent, or \$1,800, because all use some imported parts.

Luxury brands would absorb the sharpest increase: \$5,800 on average, IHS concluded. Mass-market vehicle prices would rise an average of \$3,300.

If the tariffs are fully assessed, IHS senior economist Peter Nagle predicts that price increases would cause U.S. auto sales to fall by an average of 1.8 million vehicles a year through 2026.

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"We're talking about an environment where sales are slowing already," Nagle said.

In addition to Audi and Porsche, the most affected brands would be Mazda, Aston Martin and McLaren, which build all of their vehicles outside the U.S. The tariffs also would hit Audi, Porsche, Volvo, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai and Volkswagen hard. Nearly 100 percent of Volvos sold in the U.S. were produced elsewhere last year. The figure is 67 percent for BMW, 63 percent for Mercedes, 84 percent for the VW group and 62 percent for Hyundai.

"I think it would be harmful to the whole economy," said Howard Hakes, president of Hitchcock Automotive, which has three Toyota showrooms in metro Los Angeles. "You put a 25 percent tariff on that, you're slowing down the train that's rolling already."

Mario Murgado, who owns Honda, Volkswagen, Audi and other dealerships in the Miami and Chicago areas, has a different view. He says he's willing to sacrifice sales if necessary to make global trade fairer. Other countries, Murgado argues, assess higher tariffs than the U.S. does, while countries like Japan impose other barriers to importing U.S. vehicles.

"I'm just trying to do the right thing that's in the best interest of our country," he said.

Of the 17.2 million vehicles sold in the U.S. in 2017, 52 percent were produced in the U.S., according to the Center for Automotive Research. Fourteen percent came from Mexico and 11 percent from Canada. Ten percent were made in Japan, 5 percent in South Korea, 3 percent in Germany and 5 percent elsewhere.

There are many ways auto tariffs could be imposed. The worst-case scenario for the industry would be tariffs on both vehicles and parts. The administration also could slap levies on vehicles but not parts. Or it could suspend tariffs and use them for bargaining.

But the tariffs would likely invite retaliation aimed at U.S. farmers or other sectors of the economy, said Kristin Dziczek, a vice president at the Center for Automotive Research.

"If we (tax) Audis, Germany could say, 'We don't want your peanut butter,'" she said.

Trump ran for president on a vow to shrink America's trade deficit with the rest of the world by renegotiating trade deals and attacking what he called abusive practices by other nations.

The administration has invoked a little-used weapon in trade policy: Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, which empowers a president to restrict imports and impose unlimited tariffs if Commerce finds that they threaten national security. The administration has used that authority to tax imported steel and aluminum. Now, it may use it on auto imports.

Especially in the case of autos, the administration seems to be relying on a broad definition of national security. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross last year said it could include "a very big variety of things that one would not normally associate directly with military security," including the U.S. economy.

Trump has sought to use the steel and aluminum tariffs — and the threat of auto tariffs — as leverage in trade negotiations, including a rewrite of a North American agreement with Mexico and Canada.

To the shock of many lawmakers and businesses, Trump kept in place the steel and aluminum tariffs on Canada and Mexico even after they agreed to a new pact last year. So it's not clear if he is content to use them as a negotiating tactic or if they're a permanent policy from a president who has called himself a "Tariff Man."

"It's hard to know exactly what the intent of the policies are," said Bryan Riley, director of the Free Trade Initiative at the conservative National Taxpayers Union.

In her view, said Syracuse University economist Mary Lovely: "This is not a negotiating tactic. Trump is a true believer ... He wrongly believes tariffs will help the U.S. auto industry."

The auto industry itself opposes auto tariffs.

And Congress is getting restless. Sens. Pat Toomey, R-Penn., and Mark Warner, D-Va., have introduced legislation to reassert congressional control over trade. Their bill would give Congress 60 days to approve any tariffs imposed on national security grounds. It would also shift responsibility for Section 232 investigations away from Commerce to the Pentagon.

Toomey noted that Trump agreed last summer to hold off on any auto tariffs while the U.S. and EU held trade talks.

"Negotiations are continuing," Toomey said. "That means we should not see a new round of auto tariffs."

Wiseman reported from Washington.

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100 days after Paradise burned, the stories of the victims

By JOCELYN GECKER and JANIE HAR, Associated Press

On that frantic morning, TK Huff was calm. The 71-year-old amputee sat in his wheelchair, pointing a garden hose at what quickly became the deadliest wildfire in California history.

Nobody knew at the time, early on Nov. 8, how bad it would be. When his family called at 7:15 a.m., Huff said he would leave. But he never made it out.

All around, fires were breaking out, and men and women — most of them elderly, many of them disabled — were doomed: Flames soon overtook 74-year-old Richard Brown's beloved log cabin in the Sierra Nevada foothills. On the edge of neighboring Paradise, a blaze prompted the Feather Canyon Retirement Community to evacuate its residents — all except 88-year-old Julian Binstock, overlooked in the chaos.

It was just the start of a day that was almost unfathomable. An entire town was burned off the map of California. Nearly 14,000 homes were incinerated.

All told, 85 people would perish. The oldest was 99; of the 73 bodies that have been identified, 59 were 65 or older. One hundred days later — with the aid of public records showing the locations of victims' deaths, CalFire mapping of the fire's progression and dozens of interviews — their stories can be told. How they lived, how they died.

And how a fire that started at 6:30 a.m. in the tiny town of Pulga would become the nation's deadliest and most destructive wildfire in more than century.

The flames spread through the back of Concow, where Huff lived. This was no ordinary fire, with fronts marching steadily forward. Wind gusts of at least 50 mph blew hot embers a mile or more, creating multiple fires at once and igniting areas the size of football fields every few seconds, said CalFire spokesman Scott McLean.

Huff and his wife, Margaret, who died in August, knew the risk of wildfires. Their house, high on a wooded ridge, burned down in 2008. But this was the house where three generations gathered for Easter egg hunts, for Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners, and pretty much every weekend of the year. With no internet or cell reception, the focus was always on family.

So they rebuilt.

Huff was stoic and strong, a farm laborer who worked in the fields his whole life; he lost a leg in a potato harvesting accident in 2001 but didn't let his disability hold him back, said his daughter-in-law Pearl Lankford, whose own house in Paradise burned down along with the homes of eight family members.

When the fire arrived, just after sunrise, Huff's instinct was to save his house.

"We told him, 'You need to evacuate now,'" said his granddaughter Jordan Huff, 22, who lived in Paradise.

"He was putting out the flames in his backyard in his wheelchair," she said. "There was no distress in his voice."

Soon after the family's call at 7:15 that morning, the house phone went dead. A CalFire simulation shows that by 9 a.m., flames had overtaken Green Forest Lane, where Huff lived.

His remains were found in the ashes of his house. The only thing still standing was his wheelchair, near the back fence with the garden hose.

By then a separate fire about a mile away had destroyed the log cabin built by Richard Brown, the unofficial mayor of Concow, a Vietnam veteran whose mom and stepdad had a winery in Paradise — which is how he came to name his daughter, Chardonnay Telly. She recalled her dad as relentlessly upbeat, a man

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who loved to tinker with old cars that inevitably broke down in the middle of nowhere.

His remains would later be found under one of those vehicles, on his beloved patch of land.

About the same time, more than two miles to the west, on the eastern edge of Paradise, the Feather Canyon Retirement Community was hastily evacuating its more than 100 residents. In the chaos, they somehow overlooked Julian Binstock, 88 — something that rarely happened in a life that took him from Brooklyn to Harvard University to the entertainment business, where he would become a vice president of Warner Communications.

At the retirement community, where he had moved with his wife Elisabetta a decade ago, he was known for his sense of humor. Each year, he won the award for “Funniest Resident”; he kept up his reputation by asking his children for jokes to try out on his neighbors, said his daughter, Christina Lamb, of Southborough, Massachusetts.

By 9 a.m., the community was gone, and so was Binstock.

Lamb, her two siblings and children would spend a frantic week looking for him in evacuation centers and hospitals, but he had died in his residence.

She doesn’t fault the retirement center. “It’s the fire’s fault,” she said.

By 10 a.m., the fire surged across a canyon and into the town of Paradise, population 27,000. It had torched 20 square miles and sparked a separate fire miles away on the other side of town.

On the eastern edge of Paradise, 93-year-old Dorothy Lee Herrera had already left a frantic voicemail for her son, Arthur Lee: “There’s a fire, we’ve got to get out!”

But by the time he called back, there was no answer. She and her husband, Lou Herrera, 86, died in the house where they’d lived for a quarter century, amid the ashes of trees that provided fruit for Dorothy’s delicious pies.

North of the Herrera home, the fire roared through the Ridgewood Mobile Home Park, a tidy community for people 55 and older near the Ponderosa Elementary School, killing Teresa Ammons, 82, Helen Pace, 84, and Dorothy Mack, an 87-year-old retired clerk for the California Department of Corrections who loved Paradise. To her it was a more affordable Grass Valley, the Northern California town where she’s grown up.

Ernie Foss, a 63-year-old musician, also left the expensive San Francisco Bay Area for the cheaper Paradise. His body and that of his dog, Bernice, were found outside his home, near his wheelchair and minivan, according to his children.

The body of his caretaker and stepson, Andrew Burt, was found a quarter-mile away on Edgewood Lane, outside a vehicle at an intersection where four others died in their cars, trying to flee.

Burt was 36 and among the younger victims of the fire. He moved to Paradise with his mother, Linda, and her husband, Foss, about a decade ago and stayed on as a caregiver after his mother died in 2012. His brother, James Burt, said he can’t imagine how dire the situation must have been for Andrew to leave Ernie Foss behind.

“The general consensus was that Andy would not have abandoned Ernie,” he said, “but if Ernie had passed or told Andy to save himself, he would have.”

By the time the fire reached Burt and Foss, it was 10:45 a.m.

Minutes later, the inferno consumed David Marbury, 66. A private man who loved horses, Marbury grew up in Vallejo, California, and headed for the Navy after high school. He eventually retired from the commuter rail Bay Area Rapid Transit and moved to Paradise — “just a good person all around,” said his niece, Sadia Quint.

By 11 a.m., the center of Paradise was being overtaken by flames.

More than a half-dozen fires to the east of town had merged to form a 32 square-mile inferno, a wall of fire and smoke roughly the size of Manhattan.

As the blaze raced west, it reached the homes of John Digby and Victoria Taft — 2.5 miles apart — almost simultaneously.

Both had spoken to their adult children that morning for the last time.

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Victoria Taft's parting words with her 22-year-old daughter, Christina, were tense. A neighbor had come knocking around 8:30 a.m. A fire was coming — they should evacuate. Mother and daughter argued about what to do.

Taft refused to leave. If the threat was real, authorities would order an evacuation, she told her daughter. By 10 a.m. Christina could see the morning sky blackening from smoke. She packed the car and left, joining what had become a bumper-to-bumper exodus.

Victoria Taft's remains were recovered from the ruins of her living room.

In the aftermath, Christina set out to memorialize her mother and in the process discovered a woman she hardly knew existed — a free spirited, fun-loving Southern California beauty who acted in television, movies and commercials, partied with rock stars in the '70s and '80s and traveled the world before motherhood became her focus.

Taft, 66, was losing her eyesight from glaucoma and suffered from memory loss. When Christina asked about her youth, Taft didn't remember the details. But among the items Christina frantically grabbed that morning were boxes of documents from a closet, only later discovering the contents: her mom's old resumes, head shots, casting lists.

The decision to leave her mother behind will forever haunt her. "I didn't do enough to get my mom out," she said. "I feel like I accidentally killed her by not helping her."

Across town, John Digby talked by phone with his son Roman in Owatonna, Minnesota. The son wanted his father to see a doctor about his sore throat. Digby — a 78-year-old Air Force veteran and retired postal carrier — didn't mention anything about a fire.

Two hours later, the fire reached Digby at his home in Space 3 at the Pine Springs Mobile Home Park. A neighbor later told Roman Digby that he tried to get his father to leave, but his father said no.

A quarter-hour after the fire reached Digby and Taft, it came for Andrew Downer — who also had a chance to leave, but chose not to.

Downer, 54, had lost his right leg to diabetes and infection from surgery, and he used a wheelchair. His caregiver Cindy MacDonald was thinking about running over to fix him breakfast, but then she got a call warning of fire. She phoned Downer and offered to pick him up, but he declined. The dogs didn't want to go. He didn't want to leave the place to looters.

Downer, described by friends as loud and fun and generous, died in the house he had filled with collections of marbles, crystals and antiques — and condiments.

Nearly three weeks later, 80-year-old Larry R. Smith was taken off life support at a Northern California medical center — the 85th and final victim of the Camp Fire.

"Uncle Ronnie" — born to a Dust Bowl family of eight children that had come to California to pick crops — loved to host gatherings of the clan on the rambling property he purchased in Paradise about three decades ago. Recently, he had started showing signs of dementia but he was independent and reluctant to leave the first house he ever purchased.

Smith had tried to save his treasured truck, a 1993 Dodge Ram that he rarely drove but plastered with contradictory political bumper stickers. Rescuers found Smith barefoot and badly burned.

He died on Nov. 25.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Feb. 15, the 46th day of 2019. There are 319 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 15, 1961, 73 people, including an 18-member U.S. figure skating team en route to the World Championships in Czechoslovakia, were killed in the crash of a Sabena Airlines Boeing 707 in Belgium.

On this date:

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In 1564, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei was born in Pisa.

In 1798, a feud between two members of the U.S. House of Representatives (meeting in Philadelphia) boiled over as Roger Griswold of Connecticut used a cane to attack Vermont's Matthew Lyon, who defended himself with a set of tongs. (Griswold was enraged over the House's refusal to expel Lyon for spitting tobacco juice in his face two weeks earlier; after the two men were separated, a motion to expel them both was defeated.)

In 1898, the U.S. battleship Maine mysteriously blew up in Havana Harbor, killing more than 260 crew members and bringing the United States closer to war with Spain.

In 1933, President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt escaped an assassination attempt in Miami that mortally wounded Chicago Mayor Anton J. Cermak; gunman Giuseppe Zangara was executed more than four weeks later.

In 1952, a funeral was held at Windsor Castle for Britain's King George VI, who had died nine days earlier.

In 1953, Tenley Albright, 17, became the first American woman to win the world figure skating championship, which was held in Davos, Switzerland.

In 1965, Canada's new maple-leaf flag, which replaced the "Red Ensign" design, was unfurled in ceremonies in Ottawa. Singer Nat King Cole, 45, died in Santa Monica, California.

In 1989, the Soviet Union announced that the last of its troops had left Afghanistan, after more than nine years of military intervention.

In 1992, a Milwaukee jury found that Jeffrey Dahmer was sane when he killed and mutilated 15 men and boys. (The decision meant that Dahmer, who had already pleaded guilty to the murders, would receive a mandatory life sentence for each count; Dahmer was beaten to death in prison in 1994.)

In 2002, a private funeral was held at Windsor Castle for Britain's Princess Margaret, who had died six days earlier at age 71.

In 2004, Dale Earnhardt Jr. won the Daytona 500 on the same track where his father was killed three years earlier.

In 2006, Vice President Dick Cheney accepted blame for accidentally shooting a hunting companion, calling it "one of the worst days of my life," but was defiantly unapologetic in a Fox News Channel interview about not publicly disclosing the incident until the next day.

Ten years ago: President Hugo Chavez (OO'-goh CHAH'-vez) of Venezuela won a referendum to eliminate term limits, paving the way for him to run again in 2012. The Western Conference beat the East 146-119 in the NBA All-Star game. Matt Kenseth won the rain-shortened Daytona 500.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama signed measures lifting the federal debt limit and restoring benefits that had been cut for younger military retirees. Michael Dunn was convicted in Jacksonville, Florida, of attempted murder for shooting into a carful of teenagers after an argument over loud music, but jurors deadlocked on the charge of first-degree murder in the death of 17-year-old Jordan Davis. (Dunn was found guilty of first-degree murder in a second trial and sentenced to life in prison without parole.) Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice was caught on security video punching his then-fiancee (now wife) Janay Palmer inside a casino elevator in Atlantic City, New Jersey. (Rice was charged with assault; he entered an intervention program to have the charges dropped. He has not played again in the NFL.) At the Sochi Olympics, the U.S. hockey team won a shootout to defeat Russia 3-2 in the marquee game of the preliminary round.

One year ago: The last of the bodies of the 17 victims of a school shooting in Florida were removed from the building after authorities analyzed the crime scene; 13 wounded survivors were still hospitalized. In response to the Florida school shooting, President Donald Trump, in an address to the nation, promised to "tackle the difficult issue of mental health," but avoided any mention of guns. Nikolas Cruz, the suspect in the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, was ordered held without bond at a brief court hearing. Chicago Cubs star Anthony Rizzo left spring training in Arizona for his home in Parkland, Florida, to offer support in the wake of the deadly shooting at his former high school. American Mikaela Shiffrin used a hard-charging final run to win the women's giant slalom at the Winter Olympics in South Korea.

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Today's Birthdays: Actress Claire Bloom is 88. Author Susan Brownmiller is 84. Songwriter Brian Holland is 78. Rock musician Mick Avory (The Kinks) is 75. Jazz musician Henry Threadgill is 75. Actress-model Marisa Berenson is 72. Actress Jane Seymour is 68. Singer Melissa Manchester is 68. Actress Lynn Whitfield is 66. "Simpsons" creator Matt Groening (GREE'-ning) is 65. Model Janice Dickinson is 64. Actor Christopher McDonald is 64. Reggae singer Ali Campbell is 60. Actor Joseph R. Gannascoli is 60. Musician Mikey Craig (Culture Club) is 59. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Darrell Green is 59. Actor-comedian Steven Michael Quezada is 56. Country singer Michael Reynolds (Pinmonkey) is 55. Actor Michael Easton is 52. Latin singer Gloria Trevi is 51. Rock musician Stevie Benton (Drowning Pool) is 48. Actress Alex Borstein is 48. Actress Renee O'Connor is 48. Actress Sarah Wynter is 46. Olympic gold medal swimmer Amy Van Dyken-Rouen is 46. Actress-director Miranda July is 45. Rock singer Brandon Boyd (Incubus) is 43. Rock musician Ronnie Vannucci (The Killers) is 43. Rock singer/guitarist Adam Granduciel (The War on Drugs) is 40. Singer-songwriter-musician Conor Oberst (Bright Eyes) is 39. Actress Ashley Lyn Cafagna is 36. Blues-rock musician Gary Clark Jr. is 35. Actress Natalie Morales is 34. Actress Amber Riley is 33. Actor Zach Gordon is 21.

Thought for Today: "Fools act on imagination without knowledge, pedants act on knowledge without imagination." — Alfred North Whitehead, English philosopher (born this date in 1861, died 1947).