

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 1 of 47

## Groton Area Schedule of Events

### Saturday, February 23, 2019

Robotics at Harrisburg High School  
Show Choir at Vermillion  
Wrestling: Boys Varsity State @ Rapid City (Combined State Tourney (Class A & B))

### Sunday, February 24, 2019

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

### Monday, February 25, 2019

Basketball: Girls Varsity Region 1A: (High Seed (Host) #1 Seed---Bye #2 vs #7 #3 vs #6 #4 vs #5)

### Tuesday, February 26, 2019

Basketball: Boys Varsity Region 1A: (High Seed (Host) #1 Seed---Bye #2 vs #7 #3 vs #6 #4 vs #5)

### Thursday, February 28, 2019

Basketball: Girls Varsity Region 1A: High Seed (Host) #1 vs #4/#5 winner #2/#7 winner vs #3/#6 winner

### Friday, March 1, 2019

Basketball: Boys Varsity Region 1A: High Seed (Host) #1 vs #4/#5 Winner #2/#7 Winner vs #3/#6 Winner  
State Debate at Sioux Falls O'Gorman High School

### Saturday, March 2, 2019

State Debate at Sioux Falls O'Gorman High School

### Sunday, March 3, 2019

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

- 1- Groton Care & Rehab Help Wanted Ad
- 1- Help Wanted
- 2- Lady Tigers post season finale win over Webster Area
- 2- Regional Seedings
- 3- Snow Removal and piles
- 4- Men's basketball defeats UMary en route to second straight NSIC Championship
- 4- Morton's 80th Birthday Card Shower
- 5- Winter Weather Advisory
- 5- Groton Prairie Mixed
- 6- Today in Weather History
- 7- Weather Pages
- 9- Daily Devotional
- 10- 2019 Groton Events
- 11 - News from the Associated Press

## Help Wanted

Looking for a fun, part-time job? Groton Dairy Queen is now hiring. Stop in for an application. (0216.0316)

## 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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## 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 2 of 47

## Lady Tigers post season finale win over Webster Area

Groton Area's girls basketball team finished the regular season with a 55-47 win over Webster Area. It was the regular season finale played in Groton.

The game was tied four times. Webster Area led early in the game before Groton Area took an 8-6 lead and led the rest of the game with the biggest lead coming in the fourth quarter. The game was tied at two, eight, 25 and 27.

Gracie Traphagen led the Tigers with 26 points followed by Miranda Hanson with 12, Eliza Wanner had nine, Jennie Doeden four and Payton Maine and Kaycie Hawkins each had two.

Cara Shoemaker led the Bearcats with 16 points which included eight of eight free throws. Emily Breske had seven, Payton Sattler and Kayla Fischer each had six, Alivia Baumgarn had five, Abby Snell four and Olivia Dorsett added three points.

Groton Area made 17 of 51 field goals for 33 percent while Webster Area made 12 of 43 for 27 percent. From the line, Groton Area was 19 of 28 for 67 percent off of Webster Area's 23 team fouls. Webster Area was 19 of 24 for 79 percent off of Groton Area's 16 team fouls. Groton Area had seven turnovers while Webster Area had nine. Doeden had 10 of the team's 38 rebounds, Wanner had three of the team's five steals and Doeden had four of the team's 10 assists.

Webster Area won the junior varsity game, 26-23. Allyssa Locke had eight points, Trista Keith, Kenzie McInerney and Brooke Gengerke each had four and Maddie Bjerke had three points. Alivid Baumgarn led the Bearcats with nine points.

## Regional Seedings

Region 1	Girls	Seed Points	W-L
	<a href="#">Aberdeen Roncalli</a>	42.737	15-4
	<a href="#">Redfield/Doland</a>	41.947	13-6
	<a href="#">Groton Area</a>	39.750	9-11
	<a href="#">Milbank</a>	39.722	8-10
	<a href="#">Tiospa Zina</a>	37.450	7-13
	<a href="#">Sisseton</a>	35.842	3-16
	<a href="#">Webster Area</a>	35.842	3-16

Region 1	Boys	Seed Points	W-L
	<a href="#">Tiospa Zina</a>	43.850	17-3
	<a href="#">Aberdeen Roncalli</a>	43.250	14-6
	<a href="#">Redfield/Doland</a>	40.053	10-9
	<a href="#">Groton Area</a>	39.550	7-13
	<a href="#">Milbank</a>	39.421	7-12
	<a href="#">Sisseton</a>	39.278	7-11
	<a href="#">Webster Area</a>	37.389	5-13

Nothing is official yet from the South Dakota High School Activities Association, but based on the seed points available as of 2 p.m. today, the Groton Area girls will host either Sisseton or Webster Area on Monday (I'm guessing Sisseton since Sisseton defeated Webster Area as the tie breaker). In the same bracket, Redfield/Doland would then host Webster Area on Monday. The top bracket on Monday would have Tiospa Zina at Milbank Area with the winner of that game going to Aberdeen Roncalli on Thursday.

Meanwhile in the boy's division, it appears on Tuesday, Groton Area will host Milbank in the first game and the winner will travel to Tiospa Zina on Friday. In the other bracket on Tuesday, Webster Area will travel to Aberdeen Roncalli and Sisseton will travel to Redfield/Doland.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 3 of 47



**The piles of snow along Broadway in Groton are getting taller with each snow event.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Dwight Zerr was out with his four-wheeler pushing snow on the sidewalk after Groton received another 3 inches of snow yesterday.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Jerry Bjerke was out snow blowing this morning.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

## Men's basketball defeats UMary en route to second straight NSIC Championship

Bismarck, N.D. – The Northern State University men's basketball team clinched their second NSIC Conference Championship in a row with a 69-64 victory over the University of Mary on Friday evening. With the win, Northern won the outright overall and North Division Championships, improving to 21-6 overall and 17-4 in the NSIC. The conference championship is the 37th in Northern State program history.

The Wolves out-shot and out-rebounded the University of Mary in the win, shooting 45.5 percent from the floor with 39 rebounds. Northern tallied 27 points off the bench, 24 points in the paint, 15 points off turnovers, and 14 second chance points. They combined for seven made 3-pointers, 14 assists, nine blocks and one steal.

Gabe King led the team with 19 points, shooting 63.6 percent from the floor. The junior added four rebounds and one assist, knocking down four from beyond the arc. Mason Stark was second on the team and led the Wolves off the bench with 13 points. The freshman shot 62.5, and tallied two assists, one rebound, and one block.

Parker Fox and Ian Smith were the final Wolves in double figures, notching 12 points apiece. Smith tallied a double-double with a team leading 11 rebounds. He shot 45.4 percent from the floor, adding four assists. Fox hit 5-of-10 from the field, and tallied two rebounds and a team high five blocks.

Justin Decker and Andrew Kallman rounded out the starting five with eight and three points respectively. Decker tallied two rebounds and two blocks, while Kallman recorded one rebound, one steal, and a team leading five assists. Jordan Belka grabbed the final two team points, adding four rebounds.

The Wolves cap off the regular season today on the road at Minot State University. Tip-off is set for 5:30 p.m. from Minot.



**Card Shower  
for  
Darlene Morton's  
80th Birthday  
on Feb. 24, 2019  
Send to:  
320 Grant Ave. NE  
Conde, SD 57434**

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 5 of 47

## WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY

Issue Date: 9:42 AM Sat, Feb 23, 2019

Expiration: 6:00 PM Sun, Feb 24, 2019

...Ground Blizzard Possible...

.Northwest winds will increase tonight and Sunday. Gusty winds combined with the fresh snow will cause blowing and drifting snow.

...WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT FROM 6 AM TO 6 PM CST SUNDAY...

\* WHAT...Blowing snow expected. Winds gusting as high as 45 mph.

\* WHERE...Spink, Clark and Brown Counties.

\* WHEN...From 6 AM to 6 PM CST Sunday.

\* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Areas of blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility. The cold wind chills as low as 20 below zero could cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 30 minutes.

A Winter Weather Advisory for blowing snow means that visibilities will be limited due to strong winds blowing snow around. Use caution when traveling, especially in open areas.

The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 5 1 1.

## Groton Prairie Mixed

**Team Standings:** Foxes 14, Shih Tzus 13, Chipmunks 10, Cheetahs 10, Coyotes 7, Jackelopes 6

**Men's High Games:** Roger Spanier 203, Doug Jorgensen 203, Roger Colestock 194

**Women's High Games:** Darci Spanier 193, Lori Giedt 186, Lori Wiley 182, 169

**Men's High Series:** Brad Waage 556, Doug Jorgensen 546, Roger Spanier 545

**Women's High Series:** Lori Wiley 493, Nicole Kassube 469, Darci Spanier 457

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 6 of 47

## Today in Weather History

February 23, 1977: A storm center developed over Colorado the morning of the 22nd and moved to southeast Nebraska by midnight Wednesday the 23rd with snow and rain entering southern Minnesota. The low-pressure center advanced to Iowa by sundown and weakened somewhat with precipitation across all of Minnesota. Snow over the north and combination of rain and freezing rain were in the south. The low then intensified over southeast Minnesota during the nighttime of Thursday the 24th before continuing northeast into Wisconsin with snow and blowing snow continuing over much of the state before ending on the 26th. There was a combination of rain, freezing rain and the winds over southern Minnesota with 4 to 12 inches of snow in the north. Freezing rain and the heavy icing on power lines caused the worst power failure in a decade in the twin cities with 125,000 homes affected. Power outages occurred over numerous areas of southern and central Minnesota. Many roads were ice-covered with numerous vehicle accidents and many cars in the ditch. Many roads were blocked or closed with numerous schools closed. The ice storm also damaged many trees.

February 23, 2007: A strong area of low pressure tracking across the central plains brought widespread snowfall to parts of central and much of northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota. The precipitation initially began as freezing rain and sleet late in the evening of the 23rd as it lifted across the area through the morning of the 24th. The freezing rain and sleet then changed over to snow during the morning hours of the 24th. Thundersnow also occurred at some locations across the area. Snowfall amounts of 6 to 15 inches occurred by the end of the storm. With the roads slippery from the freezing rain and then the heavy snow, travel conditions became very difficult. The South Dakota State Emergency Management, Highway Patrol, and Department of Transportation issued a travel advisory for no travel for Interstate-90 and many highways in central South Dakota. There were numerous accidents along the interstate. Some snowfall amounts included, 7 inches at Browns Valley, 9 inches at Bryant, Webster, Wheaton, Artichoke Lake, and Tintah, 10 inches at Toronto, Roy Lake, Garden City, and Ortonville, 11 inches at Faulkton, 12 inches at Watertown, and 15 inches at Clear Lake.

February 23, 2010: Pierre sets a new record with a streak of 84 consecutive days with high temperatures failing to reach 40 degrees.

February 23, 2012: An area of low pressure sliding across the region brought heavy snow to much of central and north-central South Dakota. Travel became difficult with many schools canceled.

1887: The Central Bureau of Meteorology of Rome began receiving the first reports of a massive earthquake from northern Italy Observers. This estimated magnitude earthquake of 6.0 kills more than 2,000 people in southern France and northern Italy.

1977: A very rare February tornado touched down briefly in Mason City, Iowa, inflicting F1 damage on a home and injuring one person inside. This is the only known February tornado on record in Iowa.

1995: Cyclone Bobby slams into the Western Australia coast causing widespread flooding. Some areas report up to 12 inches of rain from the storm.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 7 of 47

This Afternoon	Tonight	<b>Winter Weather Advisory</b> Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
				
Mostly Cloudy	Patching Blowing Snow and Blustery	Patching Blowing Snow and Blustery	Increasing Clouds	Slight Chance Snow then Mostly Cloudy
<b>High: 22 °F</b>	<b>Low: 4 °F</b>	<b>High: 7 °F</b>	<b>Low: -12 °F</b>	<b>High: 1 °F</b>

## Ground Blizzard Conditions Possible Sunday

Northwest winds increase tonight and Sunday. Gusts to 40 to 50 mph will cause blowing and drifting snow.

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 2/23/2019 3:43 AM Central

Published on: 02/23/2019 at 3:49AM

Very light snow will exit the region this morning. Northwest winds increase tonight and Sunday. A ground blizzard is possible along the I-29 corridor and into west central MN on Sunday. Other areas will see blowing snow reduce visibilities to one half mile at times starting this evening.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 8 of 47

## Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 22 °F at 4:58 PM

Low Outside Temp: -5 °F at 4:21 AM

High Gust: 20 mph at 5:42 PM

Precip:

## Today's Info

Record High: 60° in 1976, 1905

Record Low: -25° in 1910

Average High: 31°F

Average Low: 11°F

Average Precip in Feb.: 0.40

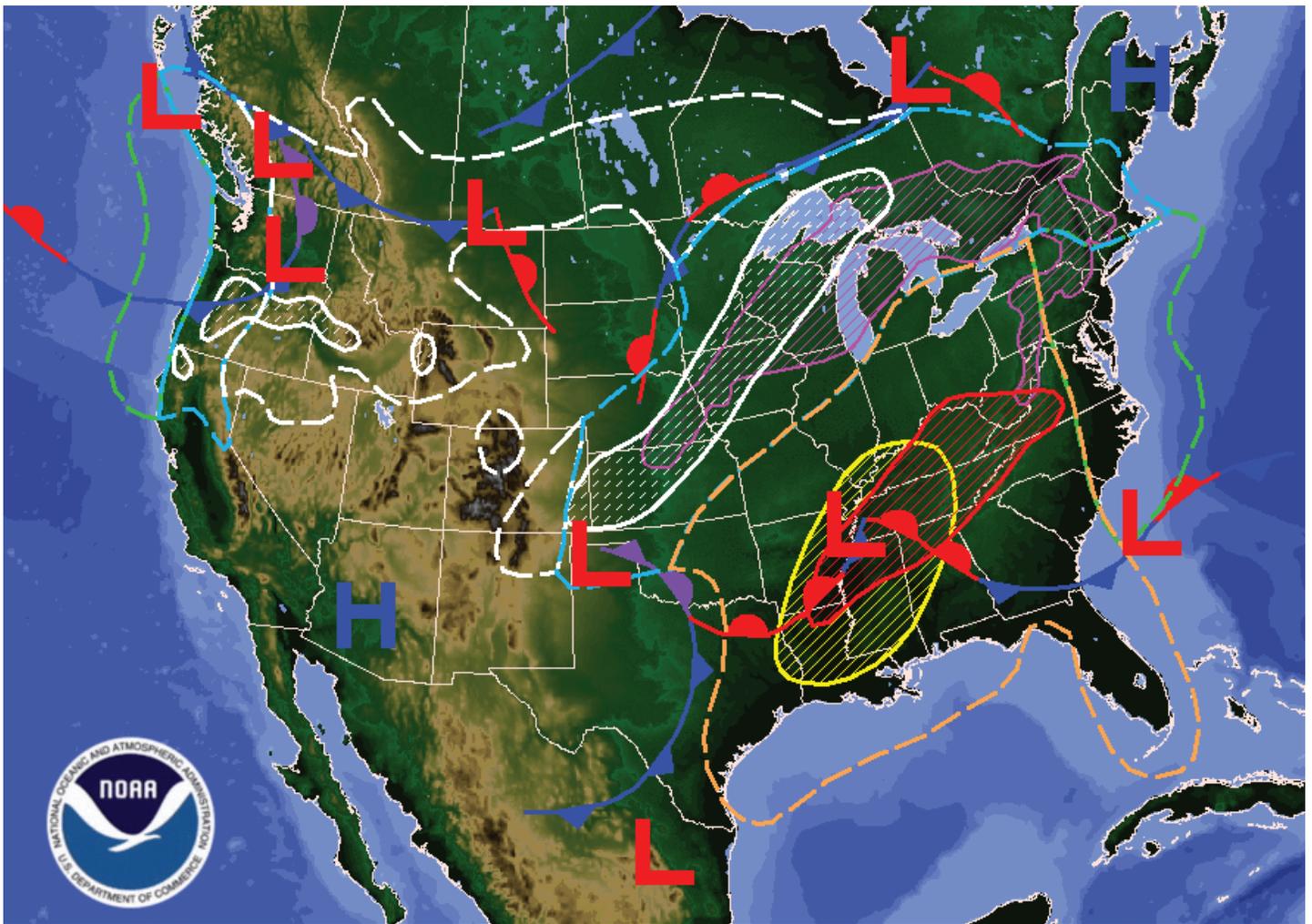
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.87

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 6:12 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:21 a.m.



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Feb 23, 2019, issued 4:30 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 9 of 47



## IF YOU DO, THEN HE WILL...

Have you ever met anyone who wanted to be a failure? Someone who looked for ways to be unsuccessful or a loser? A person who would wake up in the morning and say, Well, I wonder what I can do today to mess things up?

Probably not. Most are just the opposite. They want to succeed, to be accepted, to make a positive contribution to themselves and others. Millions of dollars are invested annually by people who want to succeed and get ahead of others, make it to the top of corporate the ladder, or at least get a promotion.

If they knew a proverb or two from Solomon, they might have an edge on others: My son, he wrote, do not forget my teaching. But keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity. Here, once again, we find a negative and a positive statement together: Do not forget, and keep my commandments.

This is one of the many if/thens found in Scripture: If we do what God asks us to do, then He will guarantee us success. Its not about forgetting a verse of Scripture or not knowing the details of a particular event. Rather, it is to know and then disregard His commandments, to worship other gods, not to honor Him and not to live in fear of and respect for Him.

If our hearts are centered on Gods Word and if we are faithful to Him in all things, then He is obligated to reward us for our faithfulness. We can hold Him to His Word. We can trust God! Read His Word! It provides all the evidence we need to know that He alone is faithful.

Prayer: Lord, increase our faith to trust You and Your Word, knowing that You will honor us if we honor You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 3:1-2 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity.

## 2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

## News from the Associated Press

### **South Dakota man indicted in October 2017 killing**

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Federal authorities in South Dakota have indicted a man for the October 2017 killing of a man who was found in a burned-out home in Allen.

The Rapid City Journal reports that Emery Arapahoe III is accused in the death of 24-year-old Ray Waters Jr. Arapahoe is charged with second-degree murder, arson, first-degree burglary and larceny.

Court documents accuse Arapahoe of entering the home of Waters' nephew in order to assault and kill Waters with a "sharp blunt object." Authorities say Arapahoe set the home on fire and stealing a pickup truck owned by One Spirit, a nonprofit that helps the Lakota people.

A pathologist says Waters had skull fractures and cuts to his neck that were likely caused by an ax.

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

### **1 dead, 1 injured in 2-vehicle collision near Humboldt**

HUMBOLDT, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say one person died and another was seriously injured in a two-vehicle crash north of Humboldt.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the crash happened Friday afternoon on state Highway 19. A 45-year-old man driving a car attempted to pass two vehicles and a snowplow on the two-lane highway and collided with a pickup.

The driver of the car was pronounced dead at the scene. The 60-year-old pickup driver received serious non-life threatening injuries. He was airlifted to a Sioux Falls hospital.

The names of the people involved in the crash have not been released.

### **Tinton Trail nearing formal inclusion into Forest Service**

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A popular trail just outside of Spearfish is close to being officially included in the Black Hills National Forest trails system.

The 46-mile Tinton Trail is used by mountain bikers, hikers, trail runners and horse riders. Around 11 miles of the Tinton Trail overlap with existing system trails at Big Hill, Rimrock, and Old Baldy.

The Forest Service issued a scoping notice Feb. 4, starting a mandatory 30-day public comment period, the Black Hills Pioneer reported.

The trail would not require significant maintenance since it is already well established, according to the Forest Service's scoping study. Some reroutes would be required to address resource or security concerns.

Perry Jewett, a member of the Ridge Riders mountain bike group that helped establish trails around the Black Hills, was one of the early riders who developed the trail. Jewett worked for the Forest Service in 1995 and was looking for trails leading into the forest that were also near town.

"I heard about a proposal for a trail that followed the western rim of (Spearfish) Canyon," Jewett said. "I found documents they never pursued. It was basically a line of the map that encouraged me to look for a trail."

He said with the assistance of the Ridge Riders and associates, they finally located a link.

"From there it snowballed taking it up to the rim of the Canyon, linking up to different Forest Service systems," Jewett said.

He said Spearfish has been a premier destination for mountain bikers.

Spearfish and its surrounding trails have been featured in national mountain bike magazines and draw people from across the country.

Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 12 of 47

## Wintry mix: Upper Midwest storm brings snow, sleet, wind

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Another winter storm is bringing a little bit of everything to the Upper Midwest, including a chance of thunderstorms.

The National Weather Service says a mixture of snow, sleet and freezing rain started moving northeast across southern Wisconsin Saturday morning, with ice accumulations of a tenth to two-tenths of an inch in some areas.

Much of southern Minnesota was placed under a blizzard warning from 6 p.m. Saturday to 6 p.m. Sunday. A band of heavy snow from 8 to 12 inches is expected Saturday night, from the Rochester area moving east into Wisconsin.

Localized flooding is possible in southeast Wisconsin.

Forecasters are predicting ground blizzard conditions for eastern North Dakota and South Dakota Saturday night into Sunday, with winds gusting to as high as 40 mph or more.

## Bighorn sheep captured, tagged in Nebraska Panhandle

CHADRON, Neb. (AP) — Nearly 50 bighorn sheep in the Nebraska Panhandle have been outfitted with new tracking devices to help wildlife officials monitor their health and combat diseases.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission says helicopter crews captured the sheep, gave them vaccinations and equipped the animals with tracking collars and ear tags. Several ewes also received vaginal implant transmitters to help study lamb mortality.

Twenty-two sheep were tagged in the Wildcat near McGrew and 26 at three locations in the Pine Ridge near Chadron and Crawford. Seven chronically ill ewes also were taken to South Dakota State University for additional study.

About 50 people helped with the process, including commission staff and those with South Dakota State University, Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, the Lincoln Zoo, private veterinarians and the Alliance Animal Clinic.

## Dakota Access developer sues Greenpeace in state court

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON**, Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The developer of the Dakota Access oil pipeline is going after the environmental group Greenpeace in state court in North Dakota, after a judge tossed the company's \$1 billion racketeering claim out of federal court.

Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners on Thursday sued Greenpeace and several activists it also had targeted in the federal lawsuit that U.S. District Judge Billy Roy Wilson dismissed on Feb. 14. Wilson said he found no evidence of a coordinated criminal enterprise that had worked to undermine ETP and its pipeline project.

ETP had made claims under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act and also under North Dakota laws. Wilson did not address the merits of the state claims.

ETP seeks "millions of dollars of damages" in the state lawsuit, which makes similar claims to its federal lawsuit — that Greenpeace and activists conspired to use illegal and violent means such as arson and harassment to disrupt pipeline construction and damage the company, all the while using the highly publicized and prolonged protest to enrich themselves through donations.

"Defendants thus advanced their extremist agenda ... through means far outside the bounds of democratic political action, protest, and peaceful, legally protected expression of dissent," company attorney Lawrence Bender wrote in the complaint.

Greenpeace on Friday had not yet been served with the lawsuit and declined to comment on its specifics. However, Greenpeace attorney Deepa Padmanabha said ETP "is clearly still trying to bully Greenpeace through the legal system."

"We are confident that this latest attempt to silence peaceful advocacy will receive the same fate as the last meritless attack," he said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 13 of 47

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. It began moving North Dakota oil through South Dakota and Iowa to a shipping point in Illinois in June 2017.

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

## Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

### BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Brandon Valley 68, Douglas 29  
Burke 71, Avon 40  
Clark/Willow Lake 55, Arlington 44  
DeSmet 54, Wolsey-Wessington 51  
Dell Rapids 59, Flandreau 46  
Dell Rapids St. Mary 69, Howard 53  
Dupree 70, Takini 58  
Elkton-Lake Benton 68, Deubrook 51  
Faith 51, Wall 33  
Florence/Henry 63, Estelline/Hendricks 58  
Great Plains Lutheran 51, Waubay/Summit 26  
Hanson 60, Freeman 58  
Harding County 74, Bison 61  
Hot Springs 48, Rapid City Christian 42  
Langford 40, Waverly-South Shore 38  
Lemmon 75, Wakpala 42  
McCook Central/Montrose 72, Baltic 56  
Menno 68, Centerville 63, OT  
Miller 52, Highmore-Harrold 48  
Mitchell 66, Aberdeen Central 58  
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 68, Wessington Springs 44  
Sioux Falls Christian 69, Tri-Valley 26  
Sioux Falls Lincoln 61, Harrisburg 43  
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 61, Brookings 45  
Sunshine Bible Academy 56, Iroquois 51  
Tea Area 79, Beresford 41  
West Central 48, Colman-Egan 47  
Yankton 64, St. Thomas More 59, OT

### GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Aberdeen Central 32, Mitchell 30  
Beresford 63, Tea Area 51  
Brandon Valley 67, Douglas 40  
Brookings 60, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 51  
Groton Area 55, Webster 47  
Yankton 55, St. Thomas More 36

### POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Aberdeen Roncalli vs. Miller, ccd.

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

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:

Mega Millions

18-24-31-34-55, Mega Ball: 4, Megaplier: 4

(eighteen, twenty-four, thirty-one, thirty-four, fifty-five; Mega Ball: four; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$224 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$304 million

## Nonprofit dedicates child development center in South Dakota

By JIM HOLLAND, Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Little more than 15 months ago, Bruce Long Fox joined many of his Rural America Initiatives staff members and city leaders on a biting cold, windy October day to break ground for a 22,000-square-foot building to house its Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Recently, Long Fox could not have been more thrilled to be standing inside the new Child Development Center for its grand opening celebration while basking in the warmth of a community's commitment to its children.

"The kids deserve a place to feel free," said Long Fox, the executive director for Rural America Initiatives, or RAI. "It really is a dream come true."

The grand opening of the center was the culmination of a five-year fundraising campaign that netted \$7.2 million to help the nonprofit consolidate its programs from five modular buildings spread out across Rapid City to under one roof.

The need for the new center, Long Fox said, actually dates back to 1990, when the first of the aging modular buildings housing RAI's Head Start, Early Head Start and Ateyapi programs went into use.

Now Long Fox, who directs nearly 100 employees both in Rapid City and in RAI programs on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation, can just walk down the hall to talk to his staff instead of calling them on the phone or communicate with everyone at once during a staff meeting.

"Mostly, it just feels way different," he told the Rapid City Journal. "It feels good compared to feeling cramped."

Some of the major contributions to RAI's capital campaign included \$2 million from Rapid City's Vision Fund, \$1 million from the John T. Vucurevich Foundation, \$500,000 from Harry and Jeanette Weinberg, whose names grace the lobby and reception area in a central atrium, and a contribution from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Business Committee, the namesake of a wing of six classrooms.

According to a release, RAI serves 1,200 children and their families, who are making the often difficult transition from area reservations to living and working in Rapid City.

Child development programs focus on children who are homeless, in foster care or handicapped through Head Start and Early Head Start for children pre-natal through age 5 and their families, along with older children through Ateyapi (Lakota for "fatherhood"), a positive role-modeling mentorship program in Rapid City's elementary, middle and high schools.

Rapid City Mayor Steve Allender said the new center reflects the city's sense of community.

"Community means we're not only neighbors, we look out for each other like family. We look out for each other's interests. We care about us whether we are young or old and regardless of our background," he said. "With this great facility, it's going to allow this organization to do what it does best in a way it has never done it before in one location."

Contractor Jim Scull, part of a steering committee that helped secure the funding and design the new building, said the project is the largest one the city has done for Native American people in the region.

"This is a home run for all of us," Scull said.

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

## Sioux Falls' drag king scene looks to make a comeback

By TREVOR MITCHELL, Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — It's 9:30 p.m. in the Club David dressing room, and the nervous energy is palpable.

Alex Feeliner wants to make sure he looks nerdy enough for his performance of "Cooler Than Me." Sexton Urmum Valentine is trying to make sure that bright pink glitter is evenly spread throughout his beard and mustache. And Oliver Clozoff is just hoping he can see through his Deadpool mask well enough to avoid falling off the stage.

Stressing about a performance is to be expected, but this isn't just any performance. This is an attempt to bring something back, something that's fallen away over the last half decade.

And if they can get it all right, if they can show people what they've been missing, they can create their own beginning, carve out a new niche in the city.

It's Sioux Falls' first drag king show in five years — which Quinn Kathner and many others have been working toward since last June. They're ready to start, and they're not interested in stopping anytime soon.

Kathner is the president of Sioux Falls Pride, a position she's held since August 2018. She notes that she's the first openly lesbian president of the organization — and also, with a laugh, that she "vomits rainbows."

Above all else, though, she's trying to make Sioux Falls a safer place for its LGBTQ community.

"It's all about creating that visibility for the community," Kathner told the Argus Leader. "Knowing that our community has a place to come through and feel loved and trusted."

In that vein, she's been especially devoted to making sure this drag king show gets off the ground — after all, she's performing.

Kathner was at a drag show in Minneapolis in June when she saw a performance by Damien D'Luxe.

"I just remember looking up and seeing them perform and saying to myself 'I'm going to do that,'" Kathner said.

But the drag king scene in Sioux Falls, while not completely dead, wasn't exactly vibrant either. There might be a performer or two at some drag queen shows, but there hadn't been a drag king-focused show in at least five years.

Facebook groups were made, people started talking and eventually it became clear that some sort of event needed to happen.

In coordination with Club David and Martina Shakers, a well-known Sioux City drag queen, the plan to put on a drag king show as part of Sioux Falls Pride's Winter Pride events came into view.

"I'm passionate about elevating the Sioux Falls drag king community," Kathner said, "setting a stage for this dialogue and this performance genre."

The demand was so high to be part of the show, she said, that several kings had to be turned away, with interest coming from Rapid City to Des Moines.

In the end, eight drag queens and two drag queens were set for the show, and Kathner said future events are already in the works.

"I'm very passionate about creating that safe space for everybody," Kathner said, "where they can come and do drag, or they can come sit in the corner and be an introvert."

A week before the show, the nerves and anxiety that will fill the dressing room are nowhere to be found in Katie and Christine Morgan's basement, where an impromptu dress rehearsal is taking place.

Four of the performers are present — Kayla Harris, Ashlee Reck, Katie Morgan and Quinn Kathner. Over the next three hours, they'll take on the personas (respectively) of Sexton Urmum Valentine, Oliver Clozoff, Alex Feeliner and Maddix Wild.

Gathering around two card tables, the group workshops makeup techniques, debates over whether to

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 16 of 47

listen to Queen or Cardi B and makes numerous not-safe-for-work jokes.

As Katie Morgan is pulling hair left over from her last haircut out of a plastic bag and finely chopping it into a size usable for facial hair, Harris is removing her Amazon-purchased beard from its packaging. Both will attach them with spirit gum, and neither is excited about the removal process.

Meanwhile, Reck is describing the various methods by which she obtained parts of her costume, including the jacket (she got it from a friend's mother who worked with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra, who were no longer using it) and her boots (she got them from Savers).

It's not all makeup and jokes, though. Later in the day, several of the performers are talking about struggles with issues like anxiety and depression and the importance of speaking with therapists who have experience with LGBT cases.

As the rehearsal nears its completion, however, the mood has lightened. Kathner has passed out lottery tickets to everyone, which someone calls "a Quinn tradition."

And Harris talks about her 80-year-old grandmother Kay Davis, a former South Dakota state representative who came to a drag show with her and loved it.

"Do you want to see her picture?" she said, digging into her wallet.

Inside the dressing room, three more drag kings have arrived from out of town. Sarah Keppen, the president of the Black Hills Center for Equality, Gracie Dobbs from Rapid City and Janey Iriarte from Sioux City.

Keppen, who is wearing an LED-lit jacket and tie as Holden Oliver Love, has been performing since Aug. 2018.

"It's about wanting to connect with people across the state," Keppen said. "Having the opportunity to perform with them, it's an amazing experience."

Dobbs is preparing for the first half of James Gemini's performance in an understated costume, his plain pink shirt and slacks standing out among the glittered beards and comic book character attire of the rest of the kings.

But it's all part of the show — James' performance in the second act has him take on a darker, more steampunk-inspired look for a performance of The Doors' "People Are Strange."

Dobbs only started performing in November but said she won the Rapid City Center for Equality's newbie ball.

"I'm excited about the whole thing," she said. "For me it's just a whole other way to express myself. I've seen kings that sing, dance, strip, do that."

As she says "do that," she points to Reck, who is currently showing off the flexibility and contortions you can perform with 16 years of dance experience.

And then there's Iriarte, who will be performing two Bruno Mars songs as Victor Victoria Goldstein. She's been performing for 22 years, seven of them as a drag king, making her by far the most experienced one in the room.

"I think it's a privilege to be asked to perform," she said. "I love seeing the new faces, conversing and helping."

With the beginning of the show minutes away, drinks are finished, final costume alterations are made, and the performers take one final deep breath.

Clozoff kicks the show off as Deadpool, while Feeline's "Cooler Than Me" and Valentine's "Body Like A Back Road" get good reactions from the crowd, but the opinion in the dressing room at intermission is that reaction has been subdued for now.

"I think the crowd's finally warming up a bit," said Christine Morgan as the dressing room filled back up.

As a charity bachelor auction breaks up the show's two halves, the performers get feedback and look toward their second song.

Christine Morgan and Harris, without a hint of joking, have an extended discussion about the best, most performative way to fling a pair of underwear into the crowd — whether throwing it like a slingshot it or simply tossing it would have a better effect.

And then, after a moment of silence, Christine asks if anyone else is concerned about what could happen with the mixture of a packed nightclub and South Dakota's new constitutional carry bill, signed two days

prior and set to take effect on July 1.

Most of them share her worries.

The crowd has indeed warmed up, as Clozoff's performance of "I Write Sins Not Tragedies" gets everyone singing along, and Goldstein continues the excitement with "Uptown Funk."

From James Gemini to Holden Oliver Love, the crowd is loving every minute of it, and by the time Wild performs Katy Perry's "Peacock" and drags an unsuspecting friend on stage, Martina Shakers has called it "the best king show I've ever been to."

When it finally comes to an end, there's group photos, an impromptu dance session on the stage, and finally a retreat back to the dressing room.

The nervous energy that filled the room is gone, replaced by the electricity of a successful theater performance as people network, change back into their clothes and relax for the first time in hours.

"Down there," Kathner said, "is the change that's going to make everything come together."

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

## South Dakota senators scrap ban on teaching gender dysphoria

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota Senate panel rejected a bill Friday to limit teaching about gender dysphoria in public schools after a transgender high school student told members that passing the measure would only ensure "another generation of isolation that would erase people like me."

It's the third bill aimed at transgender people that state lawmakers rejected during the 2019 legislative session; another is set to be decided next week.

Cathryn Oakley, state legislative director and senior counsel at the Human Rights Campaign, recently said that South Dakota introduced four "anti-trans" bills this year, more than any other state.

On Friday, the Senate State Affairs Committee voted 7-2 against the gender dysphoria measure, which passed the House last week. It would have prohibited public school instruction on the topic through seventh grade.

People with gender dysphoria suffer discomfort or distress due to the difference between their gender identity and gender at birth.

Republican Rep. Tom Pischke, the measure's sponsor, repeated previous testimony, saying his intent was to make sure public schools aren't confusing children and making them "more susceptible to this dysphoria." Parents should be the ones having discussions about gender fluidity with their children — and only if they're necessary, Pischke said.

School Administrators of South Dakota executive director Rob Monson said the practice isn't happening in state schools and the bill wasn't necessary.

Oliver Dickman, a transgender high school senior from Yankton, told committee members that the measure — House Bill 1108 — made him feel like he's not welcome in South Dakota.

"Not being able to learn who or what is in our society creates an unknown bubble around the trans community, and people fear the unknown," said Dickman, 17. "Passing a bill such as 1108 would only ensure another generation of isolation that would erase people like me."

The bill's rejection was a "tremendous relief," Dickman said after the vote. He added that he feels like he can be proudly who he is in his high school.

"It means that I am welcomed here in South Dakota, and that my Capitol supports me and who I am," Dickman said.

But he said the Legislature's slate of bills targeting transgender people have brought him down. It feels like generations younger than him aren't safe if lawmakers are trying to pass bills that will "prevent them from living their lives," Dickman said.

A House panel earlier this month rejected a measure that said a parent can refuse consent to health care treatments for a minor child if the parent thought it would induce, confirm or promote the child's

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 18 of 47

belief that their gender identity is different than their sex at birth. A Senate panel in January voted down a bill that would have voided an activities association policy allowing transgender students' request to participate on the athletic team that matches their gender identity.

A House panel on Thursday advanced without recommendation a similar transgender student athlete bill, which is set to come up next week.

Shortly before the gender dysphoria bill was voted down, a House committee rejected a measure that would have made sexual orientation and gender identity part of the state hate crime law, which currently includes race, ethnicity, religion, ancestry and national origin.

It would have meant a lot if they had been added, Dickman said.

"I oftentimes don't feel safe driving to Sioux Falls and going to the mall with my friends unless I have at least a few friends with me who I know would stand up for me," he said.

## Noem says resolution to trade disputes taking too long

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem said Friday the White House should move quickly to resolve trade disputes, saying trade wars with countries like China have "devastated" her state.

Politico reported Noem's comments Friday at a conference it sponsored in Washington, D.C., alongside the Republican Governors Association meeting. The former congresswoman said trade wars are hurting not only her state's dominant farm industry but also other sectors of the economy including main street businesses.

Kristin Wileman, Noem's spokeswoman, said in an email to The Associated Press that Noem is "supportive and thankful" for President Donald Trump's efforts to address trade inequities and the governor will be talking with him about ways to open markets and support South Dakota producers.

"South Dakota producers and manufacturers deserve trade agreements that work, but they also need market certainty," Wileman said. "Since trade negotiations began, South Dakota producers have seen a steep drop in commodity and livestock prices linked to trade policies.

Politico reported that Noem said she believes countries like China haven't been trading fairly and that the Trump administration is trying to address that, but that the dispute has gone on too long. She said low commodity prices linked to tariff wars are "driving a lot of family businesses out of business."

Soybean farmers have been particularly affected by tariff wars. South Dakota farmers last year produced a record-size soybean crop, totaling 257 million bushels, according to federal Agriculture Department data.

The Trump administration and Chinese negotiators on Friday resumed high-level talks aimed at resolving the trade dispute that centers around U.S. allegations that China steals trade secrets and forces American companies to hand over technology. Trump is set to raise tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports if the two sides can't reach a deal by March 2.

## AG's push to scrap presumptive probation falls short in 2019

By JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Senators have decided to keep in place South Dakota's presumptive probation policy for some lower-level felonies, voting Friday to reject an expensive proposal from new Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg to scrap the practice.

The Senate voted 18-12 against the measure, a top priority for Ravnsborg that legislative analysts predicted would cost more than \$53 million over the next decade. Republican Gov. Kristi Noem had asked that lawmakers hold off on reversing the policy, citing the cost.

Ravnsborg acknowledged that the bill's defeat is likely the end of his push this year, but said that doesn't mean supporters won't try again. He's argued presumptive probation doesn't work, saying in part that drug offenders have no incentive to work with law enforcement to turn in dealers because they know they'll just be sentenced to probation.

"Obviously, the problem continues even though the bill went down," Ravnsborg said after the vote. "We still have a meth epidemic in this state."

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 19 of 47

The presumptive probation law requires judges to sentence people who have committed certain nonviolent, lower-level felonies — including drug possession and use — to probation rather than prison, unless there's a "significant risk" to the public. The practice, part of a 2013 Republican-led justice overhaul, is credited with helping avert expensive prison population growth, but critics say it ties judges' hands.

Republican Sen. Lance Russell, a bill supporter, said a day earlier that the overhaul is an "unmitigated failure." GOP Sen. Stace Nelson unsuccessfully appealed to his colleagues to help authorities "protect South Dakotans."

Supporters of ending presumptive probation contend it's driven up county jail budgets across the state as judges send offenders to jail rather than state prison terms. Law enforcement representatives backed the change.

But Republican Sen. Arthur Rusch warned senators not to make the mistake of thinking that they could repeal presumptive probation and avoid building new prisons.

The legislative analysis predicted that repealing presumptive probation would result in more people getting sent to prison at an annual cost of nearly \$4 million. Housing those inmates would spur about \$14 million in one-time construction costs, according to the estimate. Noem's administration projected far higher construction expenses and annual operating costs.

A 2016 report from the Urban Institute found presumptive probation and other changes played a major role in avoiding growth in the state prison population, and the latest state analysis credits the overhaul with saving taxpayers about \$28 million. In an unusual alliance, local chapters of the ACLU and Americans for Prosperity have opposed the attorney general's bill.

"Going forward, we are eager to continue working with policymakers to improve the treatment and rehabilitation options in our state," Americans for Prosperity-South Dakota State Director Don Haggard said in a statement.

Ravnsborg said officials will go back to the drawing board and continue to "fight the good fight" for South Dakotans with their current tools. His platform also focuses on prevention, rehabilitation and bolstering work programs.

## **Government: Highway shutdown not aimed at tribe, media**

**By BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Government officials say the five-month shutdown of a North Dakota highway during protests against the Dakota Access oil pipeline was not aimed at manipulating the media or the American Indian tribe that has led the protracted fight against the project.

Authorities had justifiable cause for closing the stretch of state Highway 1806 that included limiting disruptions to a project deemed by President Donald Trump to be in the national interest, attorneys for Morton County and state officials, including former Gov. Jack Dalrymple, argued in recent court filings in a lawsuit over the shutdown.

State Deputy Solicitor General James Nicolai said people he called violent criminals "had infiltrated the protest and turned it from a peaceful protest into a criminal riot."

Their argument comes in response to a lawsuit by Standing Rock Sioux tribal members and others who say the closure was aimed not only at protesters but also at influencing the tribe's position and the media coverage.

The protest in 2016 and 2017 resulted in 761 arrests in six months, most of them near protest camps between the pipeline construction route and the reservation. Two of the camps, including one that morphed into a small city with at times thousands of people, were bordered on another side by the highway.

State officials blocked off a stretch of the highway in October 2016 after fires were set on a bridge and didn't reopen it until March 2017, after repairs and the shutdown of the camps. The \$3.8 billion pipeline began moving North Dakota oil to Illinois three months later.

A reservation businesswoman, two pipeline opponents and a reservation church priest sued last Octo-

ber over the highway shutdown, seeking unspecified monetary damages from Morton County, its sheriff, several state officials and a company that oversaw private security for Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners.

The plaintiffs say the highway closure unduly restricted travel and commerce and violated free speech and religious rights. An amended complaint filed earlier this month broadened the claims, alleging the shutdown aimed to extort concessions from the tribe, such as a public decree to vacate the camps, and to manipulate the media by making reporters more reliant on government reports of what was happening.

Nicolai and county attorney Shawn Grinolds dispute that.

"The trespasses, destruction of private property, and vandalism were real, not false perceptions created by an impliedly gullible local media," Nicolai said.

The defense attorneys also rejected the claim that the highway shutdown was aimed at disrupting commerce for the tribe and its popular casino.

"The constitutional rights and alleged injuries of (plaintiffs) are the issues before the court, not any alleged political negotiations between two sovereigns, one of whom (the tribe) is not a party to the lawsuit," Nicolai said.

He and Grinolds are seeking to have the lawsuit dismissed. Plaintiffs' attorney Noah Smith-Drelich in a statement responded that "clearly the defendants are appealing to the court of public opinion, rather than addressing the law."

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

## 2 men arrested in Yankton for making false robbery report

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say two men in Yankton were arrested for allegedly lying about being robbed.

The Argus Leader reports that a 23-year-old man and 21-year-old man were charged with false reporting and possession with intent to distribute marijuana. Their names have not been released.

Police say officers were called to the Meridian Bridge near Riverview Park around 7:45 p.m. on Thursday after two people reported being robbed. Officers say their stories didn't make sense and the men eventually admitted to making the false report.

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

## R. Kelly ordered jailed on \$1M bond at Chicago hearing

By MICHAEL TARM, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — R. Kelly was ordered jailed on \$1 million bond Saturday at his first court hearing since the R&B star was charged with sexually abusing four people, including three minors, in a case that seemed likely to produce another #MeToo trial involving a celebrity.

The 52-year-old Grammy winner turned himself in late Friday and spent a night in jail before being taken to the courthouse. He stood with his hands behind his back and said to the judge, "How are you?"

Kelly's attorney, Steve Greenberg, said his client is not a flight risk and told the judge, "Contrary to the song, Mr. Kelly doesn't like to fly."

The bond requires Kelly to post \$100,000 to be released.

Cook County Judge John Fitzgerald Lyke Jr. called the allegations "disturbing." He said the bail amount equals \$250,000 for each of the four people Kelly is charged with abusing. The singer-songwriter looked down at the floor as judge spoke.

A prosecutor told the judge that Kelly met one of the four accusers at his 2008 trial on child pornography charges. The two met when he gave her an autograph, and the abuse occurred between 2009 and 2010. The accuser gave law enforcement a shirt that had Kelly's DNA on it, the prosecutor said.

He has been trailed for decades by allegations that he violated underage girls and women and held some

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 21 of 47

as virtual slaves. He was charged with 10 counts of aggravated sexual abuse. Authorities said the abuse dated back as far as 1998 and spanned more than a decade.

Kelly, who was acquitted of child pornography charges in 2008, has consistently denied any sexual misconduct. Greenberg told reporters following the singer's arrest that one of the charges he faces appears to be tied to a decade-old child pornography case.

"Double jeopardy should bar that case," Greenberg said. "He won that case."

Greenberg said prosecutors rushed to judgment Friday in charging Kelly. He called the singer "an innocent man."

"Mr. Kelly is strong," Greenberg added. "He's got a lot of support, and he's going to be vindicated on all these charges."

Best known for hits such as "I Believe I Can Fly," Kelly broke into the R&B scene in 1993 with his first solo album, "12 Play," which produced such popular sex-themed songs as "Bump N' Grind" and "Your Body's Callin'."

Robert Kelly rose from poverty on Chicago's South Side and has retained a sizable following. He has written numerous hits for himself and other artists, including Celine Dion, Michael Jackson and Lady Gaga. His collaborators have included Jay-Z and Usher.

The jury in 2008 acquitted Kelly of child pornography charges that centered on a graphic video that prosecutors said showed him having sex with a girl as young as 13. He and the young woman allegedly seen with him denied they were in the 27-minute video, even though the picture quality was good and witnesses testified it was them, and she did not take the stand. Kelly could have gotten 15 years in prison.

Charging Kelly now for actions that occurred in the same time frame as the allegations from the 2008 trial suggests the accusers are cooperating this time and willing to testify.

Because the alleged victim 10 years ago denied that she was on the video and did not testify, the state's attorney office had little recourse except to charge the lesser offense under Illinois law, child pornography, which required a lower standard of evidence.

Each count of the new charges carries up to seven years in prison. If Kelly is convicted on all 10 counts, a judge could decide that the sentences run one after the other — making it possible for him to receive up to 70 years behind bars. Probation is also an option under the statute.

Greenberg said he offered to sit down with prosecutors before charges were filed to discuss why the allegations were "baseless." But they refused, he said.

"Unfortunately, they have succumbed to the court of public opinion, who've convicted him," he said.

Kelly was charged a week after Michael Avenatti, the attorney whose clients have included porn star Stormy Daniels, said he gave prosecutors new video evidence of the singer with an underage girl.

At a news conference Friday, Avenatti said a 14-year-old girl seen with R. Kelly on the video is among four victims mentioned in the indictment. He said the footage shows two separate scenes on two separate days at Kelly's residence in the late 1990s.

During the video, both the victim and Kelly refer to her age 10 times, he said.

Avenatti said he represents six clients, including two victims, two parents and two people he describes as "knowing R. Kelly and being within his inner circle for the better part of 25 years."

Legally and professionally, the walls began closing in on Kelly after the release of a BBC documentary about him last year and the multipart Lifetime documentary "Surviving R. Kelly," which aired last month. Together they detailed allegations he was holding women against their will and running a "sex cult."

#MeToo activists and a social media movement using the hashtag #MuteRKelly called on streaming services to drop Kelly's music and promoters not to book any more concerts. Protesters demonstrated outside Kelly's Chicago studio.

As recently as Thursday, two women held a news conference in New York to describe how Kelly picked them out of a crowd at a Baltimore after-party in the mid-1990s when they were underage. They said Kelly had sex with one of the teens when she was under the influence of marijuana and alcohol and could not consent.

Latresa Scaff and Rochelle Washington were joined by lawyer Gloria Allred when they told their story publicly for the first time.

In the indictment, the prosecution addressed the question of the statute of limitations, saying that even abuse that happened more than two decades ago falls within the charging window allowed under Illinois law. Victims typically have 20 years to report abuse, beginning when they turn 18.

Check out the AP's complete coverage of the investigations into R. Kelly.

## Severely ill children left in limbo by Venezuela-US crisis

By JOSEPH WILSON and LUIS ALONSO LUGO, Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Carlos Acosta thought his prayers had been answered when he was able to fly his son out of Venezuela, where hospitals lack basic supplies, to Spain for a needed bone marrow transplant.

That was until Acosta's 12-year-old son Jesus, along with at least eight other severely ill children, became the unintended victims of U.S. sanctions against companies tied to the embattled government of Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro.

The bills for Acosta and Jesus, who had the operation but requires follow-up care and possibly a second transplant, had been covered by the Houston-based "Simon Bolivar Foundation," a charity funded by Citgo, a subsidiary of Venezuela's state-run oil giant PDVSA.

But last week Acosta and the parents of eight other children receiving treatment in Barcelona got a letter from the foundation saying it could no longer support them due to fallout from the diplomatic crisis between Washington and Venezuela. That left them wondering what would become of them, along with other sick kids waiting to leave Venezuela.

The letter said: "Unfortunately, due to the recent changes to legal regulations and the sanctions imposed by the United States on Venezuela and Petroleos de Venezuela ("PDVSA"), the Foundation has been prohibited from paying services and expenses incurred by the Patient as of February 26, 2019."

The email with the letter included plane tickets for Acosta and his son to fly back to Venezuela on Sunday. Acosta said he and Jesus are not going anywhere. They can't. Jesus, whose immune system is weak, would be incredibly vulnerable to getting sick on the flight.

And once home, Acosta said he wouldn't be able to guarantee that his son got clean blood for the transfusions he has needed since he was diagnosed at 5 months old with Thalassemia, a blood disorder that means his body doesn't produce enough red blood cells. Acosta said Venezuela's hyperinflation has driven prices beyond his reach and led to the scarcity of medicines and basics like medical gloves and sanitized syringes.

"Going back would be a death sentence" for Jesus, Acosta told The Associated Press from the apartment where he has been staying since arriving to Barcelona in July.

"Thank God he was given the chance to have the transplant," he said. "But right now Venezuela is not safe in the least for him in his state of health."

Acosta did not criticize the sanctions that the Trump administration hopes will pressure Maduro to step down in favor of Juan Guaido, whose claim to the interim presidency is recognized by the U.S. and dozens of other countries. Last month the U.S. blocked companies from entering into financial transactions with PDVSA. That made it very hard for Maduro's struggling regime to access overseas assets and earnings, including those from Citgo. It is expected that the U.S. will try to hand over control of Citgo to people chosen by Guaido.

Acosta hopes that if Guaido can take power, the money will once again flow through to the foundation, and the families.

"In Venezuela we are going through situations that are critical and this foundation was the only option we had," said Acosta, who works for the power company in Ciudad Bolivar, some 300 miles (482 kilometers) southeast of Caracas.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 23 of 47

The other children from Venezuela who are being treated at the Sant Joan de Deu hospital have problems that include brain tumors, eye glaucoma, leukemia and heart conditions.

Apart from paying medical costs, plane tickets and accommodation in a hostel for the patient and one of the parents, the foundation gave them a 930-euro (\$1,053) monthly stipend.

But payments dried up earlier this month.

Fortunately, the Sant Joan de Deu Hospital stepped in and footed the hotel bill for this month. Acosta, who can't legally work in Spain, is getting meals with the other parents from the hospital's cafeteria.

Sant Joan de Deu Hospital executive Toni Arias told the AP the Simon Bolivar Foundation had provided it with sufficient funds to cover the remaining medical care of the nine children. Arias said the hospital is also trying to find charities or local government aid to help with the parents' living expenses.

"We are not going to let them be cast out on the street," Arias said.

Sant Joan de Deu said while it will guarantee the care of its current patients, no further children will arrive via the Simon Bolivar Foundation.

Sandra Manzanares, an insurance broker in Valencia, Venezuela, is the mother of a child who has been left in the lurch.

Her 14-year-old son Javier is suffering from a skin reaction produced by a bone marrow transplant he received at Sant Joan de Deu in 2017. She was planning to take him back to Spain for more treatment but has had to put those plans on hold. She said she knew of three more children in the same predicament.

Manzanares told the AP that in Venezuela she is able to find maybe half of the seven types of medicine her son needs daily.

"Maybe they have had their funding frozen, but a solution can be sought. Especially when it concerns health," she said.

The Simon Bolivar Foundation and Citgo did not immediately respond to requests for comment. According to the foundation's website, besides helping Venezuelans get treatment abroad since 2008, it funds patients and programs at five hospitals in the U.S.

Jesus has been in the apartment with his father since he was released from the hospital two weeks ago. He visits the hospital regularly and must remain under doctors' close care for at least seven more months.

Acosta has been given strict orders to cook all the food his son eats, to keep their room especially clean, and to keep him away from crowds so that his immune system doesn't fall prey to infection or disease.

Jesus said that despite missing his mother and baseball, he wants to remain in Spain.

"I prefer to stay here," he said. "There is more hygiene."

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Luis Alonso Lugo reported from Washington. Aritz Parra contributed from Madrid.

## Goodell has wide-ranging powers to fine or suspend Kraft

By BARRY WILNER, AP Pro Football Writer

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has wide-ranging powers to discipline teams, coaches, players, and, yes, owners.

Pending the completion of police investigations in Florida — and likely a league inquiry as well — Goodell could punish New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft for being charged with two counts of soliciting a prostitute.

The 77-year-old Kraft was twice videotaped in a sex act at a shopping-center massage parlor in Florida, police said Friday. The charges come amid a crackdown on sex trafficking in which hundreds of arrest warrants have been issued.

Under the NFL's personal conduct policy that states "ownership and club or league management have traditionally been held to a higher standard and will be subject to more significant discipline," Goodell could fine and/or suspend Kraft from any activities involving the Super Bowl champions.

"It is not enough simply to avoid being found guilty of a crime," the policy says. "We are all held to a higher standard and must conduct ourselves in a way that is responsible, promotes the values of the NFL,

and is lawful.”

Kraft has been accused of misdemeanor charges and might not be required to perform more than community service and attend a course on the harmful effects of prostitution and sex trafficking. Goodell will be judging whether this was “conduct detrimental to the integrity of and public confidence in” the NFL.

He’s made many such judgments before — including fining Kraft and the Patriots \$250,000 in 2007 for filming other teams’ signals, and \$1 million in 2014 for deflating footballs during the AFC title game. The “Deflategate” case damaged Goodell’s close relationship with Kraft, one of his trusted advisers on many NFL matters, including labor and broadcast rights.

Even though Goodell is employed by the owners, at a cost of about \$40 million annually in salary and bonuses, he views the commissioner’s role as one protective of the game and the league. If you embarrass “the shield,” you are punished.

So he doesn’t often hesitate to discipline wayward owners, basically penalizing his bosses.

Only one of them, the Indianapolis Colts’ Jim Irsay, has been suspended by Goodell, who replaced Paul Tagliabue as commissioner in 2006. Irsay acknowledged having a painkiller addiction in 2002 and sought treatment. The DEA investigated, but local prosecutors did not file charges.

Then, in March 2014, Irsay was arrested near his home in suburban Carmel and was held overnight after he failed sobriety tests and police found prescription medications in his car. The police said the drugs were not associated with any of the prescription bottles found inside.

He was charged with operating a vehicle while intoxicated, along with four felony counts of possession of a controlled substance; police also found \$29,009 in cash. He again sought treatment and in September 2014 pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor count of driving while intoxicated, agreeing to undergo drug testing for a year. Irsay also acknowledged he was under the influence of the painkillers oxycodone and hydrocodone when he was arrested.

Irsay drew a six-game suspension and \$500,000 fine from Goodell.

Last year, Jerry Richardson essentially was forced to sell the Carolina Panthers after allegations surfaced of his sexual and racial misconduct in the workplace. Following a six-month investigation by the league, he was fined \$2.7 million by Goodell. Richardson, like Kraft, was a confidant of Goodell’s on league business matters.

In 2012, following a long investigation into the New Orleans Saints’ bounties system, Goodell fined Saints owner Tom Benson \$500,000 and stripped the team of second-round draft picks in 2012 and 2013. But that was for an on-field issue — as was Kraft’s fine for deflated footballs.

The current Kraft case, of course, has nothing to do with NFL play. It has plenty to do with Goodell’s use of his disciplinary powers, and there will be a spotlight shining brightly on whatever decisions he makes.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/tag/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Mueller still seeking secrecy in Manafort investigation

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller is still seeking to keep secret details about his investigation into former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, according to a judge’s ruling Saturday.

Mueller’s team has filed its recommendation for Manafort’s punishment in one of his two criminal cases, but U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson says it contains sensitive information that prosecutors want to keep secret. The judge has directed that a public version of the document be filed with some material blacked out. It’s unclear if that will happen Saturday.

The sentencing recommendation comes as the 69-year-old Manafort, who led Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign for several critical months, is already facing the possibility of spending the rest of his life in prison in a separate case. It could also shed more light on how Manafort fits into Mueller’s larger Russian investigation, which is nearing an end.

In recent weeks, court papers have revealed that Manafort shared polling data related to the Trump

campaign with an associate the FBI says has ties to Russian intelligence. A Mueller prosecutor also said earlier this month that an August 2016 meeting between Manafort and the associate, Konstantin Kilimnik, goes to the "heart" of the Russia probe. The meeting involved a discussion of a Ukrainian peace plan, but prosecutors haven't said exactly what has captured their attention and whether it factors into the Kremlin's attempts to help Trump in the 2016 election.

Like other Americans close to the president charged in the Mueller probe, Manafort hasn't been accused of involvement in Russian election interference. His criminal case in Washington stems from illegal lobbying he carried out on behalf of Ukrainian interests. As part of a plea deal in the case, Manafort admitted to one count of conspiracy against the United States and one count of conspiracy to obstruct justice.

Prosecutors aren't expected to recommend leniency because a judge found earlier this month that Manafort lied to investigators after agreeing to cooperate.

Each count carries a maximum of five years in prison, a much lower potential punishment than in Manafort's separate tax and bank fraud case in Virginia. A jury convicted Manafort of eight felony counts last year, and Mueller's team endorsed a sentence of between 19.5 and 24.5 years in prison in that case.

Manafort, who has been jailed for months and turns 70 in April, will have a chance to file his own sentencing recommendation next week.

Manafort's is set to be sentenced March 8 in Virginia and March 13 in Washington.

## Counting starts in Nigeria's delayed poll marked by violence

By **BEN CURTIS** and **RODNEY MUHUMUZA** and **ISMAIL ALFA ABDULRAHIM**, Associated Press

DAURA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria began counting votes in a presidential election on Saturday marked by an extremist attack, late-opening polling stations and a surprise loss for top challenger Atiku Abubakar in his own hometown.

The voting took place a week after a painful election delay and final results are expected on Tuesday, though plenty of work remained as many voters in Africa's largest democracy still waited in line at sundown. Observers and security forces gave scattered reports of torched ballot boxes, soldiers firing on suspected vote-snatchers and people illegally selling their votes for as little as 500 naira (\$1.38). Several people were killed.

President Muhammadu Buhari, who seeks a second term after largely failing to deliver on fighting extremism and corruption, was first in line at his polling station in his northern hometown of Daura. After cheekily peering at his wife's ballot, he told reporters he was ready to congratulate himself on victory. He refused to say whether he would accept a loss.

Billionaire former vice president Abubakar, who had told reporters that "I look forward to a successful transition," was embarrassed by his 186-167 loss to the president at his polling station under a tree in Yola. A large crowd of Buhari supporters exploded in cheers at the news.

Observers had said the election was too close to call.

Election day began with multiple blasts in Maiduguri, the capital of northeastern Borno state. Security forces at first denied an attack but eventually acknowledged that extremists had "attempted to infiltrate" the city by launching artillery fire. One soldier was killed and four were wounded, a security official said, insisting on anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press.

The attacks, claimed by the Islamic State West Africa Province, frightened some voters away from the polls. "I feared for my life," resident Haruna Isa said. "I don't trust anyone anymore." He stayed home and wished the candidates luck.

Asmau Hassan said she lost her voting card in the confusion after one explosion struck her displacement camp. She wanted to vote for Buhari but said "I have just turned into an onlooker now." Authorities confirmed another attack on a military base in Geidam in northeastern Yobe state, saying it prevented the governor from voting.

In Rivers state in Nigeria's restive south, police confirmed three people were killed in election violence.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 26 of 47

Military convoys rumbled through the region, their presence heavier than in past elections.

Buhari called the voting smooth, but a coalition of civic groups said multiple polling units had not opened more than four hours after the official start. Delays were reported in parts of the south and in the north-central state of Nasarawa as well as in Lagos, Nigeria's largest city, where thugs set ballots at one polling station ablaze.

Many of Nigeria's more than 72 million people eligible to vote pressed on, some walking for hours along roads deserted by traffic restrictions. Raphael Dele, a popular singer in Yola, said he walked over 10 kilometers (6 miles) to his polling station "because there is no room for excuses."

Many Nigerians, appalled that their country has recently become the world leader in the number of people living in extreme poverty, said the election will be decided by economic issues. The country suffered a rare, months-long recession under Buhari when global oil prices crashed, with unemployment growing significantly to 23 percent and inflation in the double digits.

Some on Saturday noted a lower turnout than four years ago, when many Nigerians hoped that Buhari, a former military dictator, would tame multiple security crises.

"Really this time, there were not many people from what I observed," said Habiba Bello, a political party agent who attended vote-counting in Kano, Nigeria's second-largest city. One nearby station showed just 102 voters out of the nearly 400 expected.

In the dusty schoolyard, party agents recited aloud in unison as polling officials held ballot papers aloft one by one. "I'm feeling fine now!" declared Nura Abba, there for the ruling party.

An electoral commission presiding officer, Kabiru al-Haji Musa, held up another station's presidential results, scrawled in ballpoint pen. Buhari received 88 votes. Abubakar had just eight.

Elsewhere, votes were counted by the light of mobile phones after sundown.

Observers said the delay of the election from last week, blamed on logistical challenges, could favor Buhari and the ruling party, with some Nigerians saying they didn't have the resources to travel a second time across the West African nation to their place of registration.

Some also warned the delay could hurt the election's credibility.

"Unless Atiku is declared the winner, many will still believe that (the electoral commission) colluded with the government to rig him out," said Jidefor Adibe, associate professor of political science at Nasarawa State University.

Some of those who turned out, however, dismissed concerns about having to wait.

"This election means so much to me. It means the future of Nigeria. The future of my children unborn. And the future of my entire family," voter Blessing Chemfas said.

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Muhumuza reported from Yola, Nigeria. Abdulrahim reported from Maiduguri, Nigeria. Associated Press writers Cara Anna in Kano, Nigeria, Sam Olukoya in Lagos, Nigeria, Hilary Uguru in Oleh, Nigeria, and photographer Jerome Delay in Kaduna, Nigeria contributed.

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Follow AP's full coverage of the Nigeria elections here: <https://www.apnews.com/Nigeria>

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## Soldiers unleash tear gas amid tension on Venezuela's border

By **CHRISTINE ARMARIO** and **LUIS ANDRES HENAO**, Associated Press

CUCUTA, Colombia (AP) — Venezuela's National Guard fired tear gas on residents clearing a barricaded border bridge to Colombia on Saturday, as the opposition began making good on its high-risk plan to deliver humanitarian aid to Venezuela despite objections from President Nicolas Maduro.

By midday, opposition leader Juan Guaido pulled himself onto a semitruck and shook hands with its driver as he and Colombian President Ivan Duque gave a ceremonial send-off to an aid convoy looking to transport nearly 200 metric tons of mostly U.S.-supplied emergency food and medical supplies from the

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 27 of 47

Colombian border city of Cucuta.

"Our call to the armed forces couldn't be clearer: put yourself on the right side of history," he said in an appeal to troops who constitute Maduro's last-remaining major plank of support in a country ravaged by hyperinflation and widespread shortages.

The opposition is calling on masses of Venezuelans to form a "humanitarian avalanche" to escort the trucks across several border bridges.

But clashes started at dawn in the Venezuelan border town of Urena, when residents began removing yellow metal barricades and barbed wire blocking the Francisco de Paula Santander bridge. Venezuela's National Guard responded forcefully, firing tear gas and buckshot on the protesters, some of them masked youth throwing rocks, who demanded that the aid pass through.

Later, the youth commandeered a city bus and set it afire. At least two dozen people were injured in the disturbances, according to local health officials in Urena.

The potentially volatile moment for both Venezuela's government and opposition comes exactly one month after Guaido, a 35-year-old lawmaker, declared himself interim president based on a controversial reading of the constitution before a sea of cheering supporters. While he has earned popular backing and recognition from over 50 nations, he has not sealed the support of the military, whose loyalty to Maduro is crucial.

"We're tired. There's no work, nothing," Andreina Montanez, 31, said as she sat on a curb recovering from the sting of tear gas used to disperse the crowd.

A single mom, she said she lost her job as a seamstress in December and had to console her 10-year-old daughter's fears that she would be left orphaned when she decided to join Saturday's protest.

"I told her I had to go out on the streets because there's no bread," she said. "But still, these soldiers are scary. It's like they're hunting us."

At the Simon Bolivar bridge, a group of aid volunteers in blue vests calmly walked up to a police line and shook officers' hands, appealing for them to join their fight. But the goodwill lasted only a short while and a few hours later they were driven back with tear gas, triggering a chaotic stampede.

At the same post, four National Guardsmen deserted the force early in the day and took refuge inside Colombia.

A video provided by Colombian authorities shows three of the men wading through a crowd with their assault rifles and pistols held above their heads in a sign of surrender. The young soldiers were then ordered to lie facedown on the ground as migration officials urged angry onlookers to keep a safe distance.

"I've spent days thinking about this," said one of the soldiers, whose identity was not immediately known. He called on his comrades to join him: "There is a lot of discontent inside the forces, but also lots of fear."

Guaido, who has offered amnesty to soldiers who join the opposition's fight, applauded their bravery, saying it was a sign that support for Maduro was crumbling.

"They aren't deserters," he said on Twitter. "They've decided to put themselves on the side of the people and the constitution.....The arrival of liberty and democracy to Venezuela can't be detained."

International leaders including U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres are appealing for the sides to avoid violence.

But on Friday, a member of an indigenous tribe was killed and 22 others injured in clashes with security forces who enforced Maduro's orders to keep the aid out at a crossing with Brazil.

In previous waves of unrest, citizens have been tear-gassed and killed.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said the military would "never have orders to fire on the civilian population" and likened the aid push to a media spectacle.

"We can only hope that sanity and good sense prevail in Cucuta, in Colombia, and that it will remain as a big show, a big party, and that they don't try to open the doors to a military intervention," he said Friday at U.N. headquarters in New York.

The push comes on the heels of a giant concert organized by British billionaire Richard Branson aimed at pressuring Maduro to accept the aid. Tens of thousands of Venezuelans gathered in a field to hear pop stars like Juanes sing beneath a scorching sun. Guaido made a surprise appearance toward the end.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 28 of 47

The opposition is planning to hold three simultaneous aid pushes on Saturday. Aside from the events in Colombia, they also hope to get humanitarian assistance delivered by sea and through Venezuela's remote border with Brazil, which the government of Maduro has ordered closed.

Amid the sometimes chaotic and hard-to-verify flow of information, opposition lawmakers and Guaido said the first shipment of humanitarian aid had crossed into Venezuela from Brazil — although reports from the ground revealed that two trucks carrying the aid had only inched up to the border itself.

Dueling demonstrations also took place in the capital. Government opponents, one of them dressed like Captain America in a nod to the Trump administration's prominent role cornering Maduro, headed toward an air base. With the opposition mostly mobilized along the border, a much larger mass of red-shirted government supporters, some of them on motorcycles, filed downtown toward the presidential palace.

Venezuela's military has served as the traditional arbiter of political disputes in the South American country, and in recent weeks, top leaders have pledged their unwavering loyalty to Maduro. However, many believe that lower-ranking troops who suffer from the same hardships as many other Venezuelans may be more inclined to now let the aid enter.

Opposition leaders are pushing forward in belief that whether Maduro lets the aid in or not, he will come out weakened. They also contend that if the military does allow the food and medical gear to pass, it will signify troops are now loyal to Guaido.

Analysts warn that there may be no clear victor and humanitarian groups have criticized the opposition as using the aid as a political weapon.

"I don't know that anyone can give a timeline of when the dam might break, and it's quite possible that it won't," said Eric Farnsworth of the Council of the Americas and Americas Society, a Washington-based think tank.

Fearful of what they might encounter, some Venezuelans in Cucuta said they planned to stay away from the border crossings, while others said they'd face the risks and go.

"For my son, I'd risk everything," said Oscar Herrera, 25, a Venezuelan man who took an 18-hour bus ride to Colombia to buy his infant medicine for a skin irritation earlier this week.

Hernan Parcia, 32, a father of three, said he planned to go with his entire family.

"I'm pained by what's happening to my country," he said. "They can count on me."

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Henao reported from Urena, Venezuela. AP Writers Joshua Goodman and Scott Smith contributed to this report from Caracas, Venezuela.

## Told to leave, IS 'caliphate' holdouts in Syria stay devoted

By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press

OUTSIDE BAGHOUZ, Syria (AP) — They were living in holes in the ground, with only dry flatbread to eat at the end. They had no clean water to drink, and no medical care for those wounded in an intense military campaign.

Yet, if it were not for the call from their leaders to leave, they would have stayed.

Such is the devotion of several hundred men, women and children who were evacuated Friday from the last speck of land controlled by the Islamic State group, a riverside pocket that sits on the edge of Syria and Iraq. Hundreds, if not thousands, more remain holed up in Baghouz — the last redoubt of the militants' self-proclaimed caliphate that leaders once said would stretch to Rome.

They include militants, of course, but also their family members and other civilians who are among the group's most determined supporters. Many of them traveled to Syria from all over the world. And they stuck around as the militants' control crumbled.

"Baghouz maybe is the most difficult moments of all my life," said 21-year-old Um Youssef, a Tunisian-French woman who came to Syria at 17 with her mother. Food was scarce and water was dirty, but despite that, she said, she had no regrets.

Um Youssef — which means mother of Youssef in Arabic — sent her two kids and her mother out of the

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 29 of 47

pocket last month and stayed with her husband.

"I didn't make Hijrah (migration) for the food, or for the good life," she said. "It is jihad (holy war) for the sake of God."

At least 36 flatbed trucks used for transporting sheep carried the disheveled, haggard crowd out of the territory to a desert area miles (kilometers) away for screening. They were the latest batch of evacuees from the territory following airstrikes and clashes meant to bring about the militants' complete territorial defeat.

For now, the civilians are expected to be sent to a displaced people's camp, while suspected fighters will go to detention facilities. Previous evacuations have already overwhelmed camps in northern Syria, and at least 60 people who left the shrinking territory have died of malnutrition or exhaustion.

In a dusty area surrounded by grass, women in black head-to-toe robes and children in dirty jackets — many of them crying for food — formed a line. Men wearing tattered headscarves formed another. Foreign men filed into a third.

One woman had given birth in one of the trucks. An old man was carried in a blanket by two others to the screening line. A young girl sat under the shade of the wheel of a truck looking dazed, while another moved between the crowds, asking for food.

The evacuees included French, Polish, Chinese, Bengali, Egyptians, Tajiks, Moroccans, Iraqis and Syrians.

It is impossible to know if all are wholeheartedly behind the militant group or how many expressed support out of fear of reprisals. But many vehemently defended IS, arguing the group was down but not out, and said they only left because of an order from the remaining religious leader in the area. Some referred to the wali, the provincial leader, while others said the order was from the group's top leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who is referred to as the "Caliph."

It is not clear if IS leaders were in agreement. Amid the military pressure, reports have emerged of disagreements among them. Monitoring group the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said one IS leader was beheaded in recent days for urging civilians to leave.

All those interviewed gave nicknames or spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared for their safety. They spoke of the Caliphate as the "glory" of Islam where they said resources were plentiful and "God's rule" would be the law of the land.

It was hard to see how that could be from the hills overlooking Baghouz. A four-year international campaign has reduced the self-proclaimed caliphate — which once sprawled over nearly a third of Syria and Iraq — to a tent encampment and a few homes in this village overlooking the Euphrates River.

An estimated 300 IS militants are besieged there, hemmed in by the river and the U.S-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-led militia spearheading the fight against IS following an intense push since September. Thousands of civilians have also poured into the area.

The presence of so many civilians— and possibly senior members of the militant group — in Baghouz has surprised the SDF and slowed down the expected announcement of the extremist group's territorial defeat.

Recapturing Baghouz would mark an end to the militants' territorial rule, but few believe that will end the threat posed by an organization that still stages and inspires attacks through sleeper cells in both Syria and Iraq and that has active affiliates in Egypt, West Africa and elsewhere. The group also has a presence online, using social media to recruit new members and promote its attacks.

In the past few weeks, nearly 20,000 people have left Baghouz on foot through the humanitarian corridor, but the militants then closed the passage and no civilians left for a week until Wednesday, when a large group was evacuated.

Among those evacuated Friday was a group of 11 Yazidi children. Thousands from the Yazidi minority were kidnapped by IS in Iraq in 2014, and are still missing.

In the dusty clearing where the evacuees were being screened Friday, a 16-year-old mother of two from Aleppo said she has not had food for a couple of days, opting to feed her children instead.

A child said he has not showered in a month, and a woman from Tajikistan asked for a phone to call her mother. Frantic and in tears, a mother held out her pale and motionless toddler, screaming for help. The cries of hungry children rang through the open desert as SDF officials searched the evacuees' belongings.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 30 of 47

But of over a dozen people interviewed by The Associated Press, only four said they didn't want to be in Baghouz.

They described living in dug-up holes with hoisted tents to protect against airstrikes. Some said they initially had lentil soup, but then only green-brownish loaves of flatbread were available.

"We weren't going to leave, but the Caliph said women should leave," said Um Abdul-Aziz, a 33-year-old Syrian mother of five whose moniker means mother of Abdul-Aziz in Arabic. She was referring to IS leader al-Baghdadi. "I wanted to stay. It is an Islamic State. It is land of Islam."

Her husband stayed behind to fight. "They thought if they let the women out, God may help them. May God help them," she said.

A few were critical. "Order or no order, I wanted to get out," said Aya Ibrahim, an Iraqi mother who said she was unable to secure medicine for her children. "Many families died from airstrikes. Many kids died from hunger."

The 16-year old Syrian mother of two from Aleppo said she lost four husbands, her father, sister and two brothers. Um Mohammed — mother of Mohammed in Arabic — said the last days have been hard, with food prices soaring and intensive bombing campaigns keeping them in hiding.

About 2 pounds (a kilogram) of sugar went for nearly 30,000 Liras (\$70), more than 30 times the price in other parts of Syria, while a quarter-gallon (liter) of cooking oil cost 10,000 Liras (\$23). "I have not eaten in four days," she said.

Then the order came for them to leave.

But, for some, it's not the end.

Um Youssef, the French-Tunisian, said she has no plans or desire to return home in Tunisia, saying she would find her way to another Syrian city.

"Islamic State is over? Says who?" asked a 14-year-old Syrian girl who refused to give her name. "Wherever you go there is Islamic State."

## Smile: Some airlines have cameras on seat-back screens

By DAVID KOENIG, AP Airlines Writer

Now there is one more place where cameras could start watching you — from 30,000 feet.

Newer seat-back entertainment systems on some airplanes operated by American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and Singapore Airlines have cameras, and it's likely they are also on planes used by other carriers.

All four airlines said that they have never activated the cameras and have no plans to use them.

However, companies that make the entertainment systems are installing cameras to offer future options such as seat-to-seat video conferencing, according to an American Airlines spokesman.

A passenger on a Singapore flight posted a photo of the seat-back display last week, and the tweet was shared several hundred times and drew media notice. BuzzFeed first reported that the cameras are also on some American planes.

A United spokeswoman repeatedly told a reporter Friday that none of its entertainment systems had cameras before apologizing and saying that some did. On Saturday, Delta also said some of its in-flight entertainment screens have the cameras.

The airlines stressed that they didn't add the cameras — manufacturers embedded them in the entertainment systems. American's systems are made by Panasonic, while Singapore uses Panasonic and Thales, according to airline representatives. Neither Panasonic nor Thales responded immediately for comment.

As they shrink, cameras are being built into more devices, including laptops and smartphones. The presence of cameras in aircraft entertainment systems was known in aviation circles at least two years ago, although not among the traveling public.

Seth Miller, a journalist who wrote about the issue in 2017, thinks that equipment makers didn't consider the privacy implications. There were already cameras on planes — although not so intrusive — and the

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 31 of 47

companies assumed that passengers would trade their images for convenience, as they do with facial-recognition technology at immigration checkpoints, he said.

"Now they're facing blowback from a small but vocal group questioning the value of the system that isn't even active," Miller said.

American Airlines spokesman Ross Feinstein said cameras are in "premium economy" seats on 82 Boeing 777 and Airbus A330-200 jets. American has nearly 1,000 planes.

"Cameras are a standard feature on many in-flight entertainment systems used by multiple airlines," he said.

Singapore spokesman James Boyd said cameras are on 84 Airbus A350s, Airbus A380s and Boeing 777s and 787s. The carrier has 117 planes.

While the airlines say they have no plans to use the cameras, a Twitter user named Vitaly Kamluk, who snapped the photo of the camera on his Singapore flight, suggested that just to be sure the carriers should slap stickers over the lenses.

"The cameras are probably not used now," he tweeted. "But if they are wired, operational, bundled with mic, it's a matter of one smart hack to use them on 84+ aircrafts and spy on passengers."

## AP FACT CHECK: Undocumented GOP, Dem rhetoric on immigration

By HOPE YEN, CALVIN WOODWARD and CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The political fallout from President Donald Trump's push for his border wall is giving rise to overwrought rhetoric from Republicans and Democrats alike.

Trump, as he has so often done, claimed progress on the wall that isn't borne out by what's going on along the border. In the Democrats' 2020 presidential campaign, Trump was assailed for confining kids in "cages," though his administration's fenced facilities for migrant children are the same the Obama administration used to hold children by the thousands.

And a Republican senator, seeking to show there's a low bar for presidents to declare a national emergency, asserted President Barack Obama took that step against the swine flu even when there were no cases of that malady in the country. Actually, more than 1,000 Americans had died from that flu before Obama made his emergency declaration in 2009.

On other fronts, Trump misrepresented the history of U.S. diplomacy with North Korea as he anticipated his summit this coming week with that country's leader. And with the special counsel's Russia investigation possibly close to wrapping up, he revisited past attempts to discredit a "rigged" probe.

A look at recent political rhetoric:

### THE WALL

TRUMP: "We have just built this powerful Wall in New Mexico. Completed on January 30, 2019 - 47 days ahead of schedule! Many miles more now under construction! #FinishTheWall." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: This is the latest of many examples of Trump presenting replacement fencing or pre-existing barrier as evidence that his promised wall is coming along. In reality, Trump has not completed any additional miles of barrier in his presidency.

In this case, he is citing the replacement of 20 miles (32 kilometers) of existing fencing at Santa Teresa, New Mexico, just outside El Paso, the only barrier construction in New Mexico so far. The \$73 million project started in April.

Construction was beginning this month for 14 miles (22 km) of new fencing in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas — the first additional miles of barrier in Trump's presidency. That's from money approved by Congress a year ago.

Money approved by Congress this month to avert a government shutdown would cover about 55 more miles (88 km) and he's trying unilaterally to free up money for more.

Trump now often incorrectly portrays his wall as largely complete, with the rally cry, "Finish the wall," which replaced his initial slogan, "Build the wall." In fact, the barrier now in service — about 650 miles

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 32 of 47

(1,050 km) of fencing — was put in place by previous administrations.

TRUMP: "The failed Fast Train project in California, where the cost overruns are becoming world record setting, is hundreds of times more expensive than the desperately needed Wall!" — tweet Tuesday.

THE FACTS: The high-speed rail project is nowhere close to being "hundreds of times" more expensive than Trump's proposed border wall. The estimated cost for a San Francisco-to-Los Angeles train has more than doubled to \$77 billion. That's about 13 times the \$5.7 billion Trump sought unsuccessfully from Congress to build just part of the wall. Last year, he sought \$25 billion to pay the full costs of building his wall, also rejected by Congress. The California project would cost three times more than that — far from "hundreds of times more."

Gov. Gavin Newsom, D-Calif., said earlier this month the project "as currently planned, would cost too much and take too long." He said the state would focus on completing a shorter segment in the Central Valley while seeking money from new sources for the longer route.

## EMERGENCY DECLARATION

SEN. KEVIN CRAMER, Republican of North Dakota: "Barack Obama declared a national emergency to fight swine flu and we didn't have a single case of it in the United States." — podcast posted Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Cramer is wrong. More than 1,000 people had died in the U.S. from the flu strain known as H1N1, commonly called the swine flu, by the time Obama declared a national emergency over the outbreak Oct. 23, 2009. The first swine flu death in the U.S. was reported in April 2009. By the time of Obama's declaration, widespread flu activity was reported in 46 states. The government estimates the flu strain was linked to more than 274,000 hospitalizations and 12,000 deaths in the U.S. between April 2009 and April 2010, according to final figures released in 2011.

Cramer's false statement that Obama declared an emergency absent any deaths came as he argued that Trump was justified in declaring one to find money to build his proposed border wall.

## MIGRANT CHILDREN

SEN. KAMALA HARRIS of California, a Democratic presidential contender: "The trauma these children experience will live on for decades to come. It's absurd that it needs to be repeated: Ripping babies away from their parents to put them in cages is inhumane." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: The "cages" are chain-link fences and the Obama administration used them for migrant children, too. That hasn't stopped a variety of Democrats from seizing on the visceral kids-in-cages image as evidence of Trump administration cruelty. Among them, Democrat Stacey Abrams, in her response to Trump's State of the Union address, declared "this administration chooses to cage children."

Children are held behind chain link inside Border Patrol facilities. Obama's administration detained large numbers of unaccompanied children in such a manner in 2014 during a surge of migrant children at the border. Images that circulated online of children in chain link pens during the height of Trump's family separations controversy — and blamed on him — were actually from 2014 when Obama was in office.

Children are placed in such areas by age and sex for safety reasons and are generally held for up to 72 hours by the Border Patrol. They then go into the custody of the Health and Human Services Department and are housed in shelters until they are placed with sponsors in the U.S., usually parents or close relatives. Some children who are with their families will go into family detention or will be released with their family into the country as their immigration cases play out.

The Homeland Security Department's inspector general visited five detention facilities for unaccompanied children on the Texas border with Mexico in late June, during the height of the furor over family separations, and found the facilities appeared to comply with detention standards. The government watchdog reported that cleanliness was inconsistent but that the children had access to toilets, food, drinks, clean bedding and hygiene items.

At the height of the family separations, about 2,400 children were separated. Since then, 118 children have been. Immigration officials are allowed to take a child from a parent in certain cases — serious

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 33 of 47

criminal charges against a parent, concerns over the health and welfare of a child or medical concerns. That policy has long been in place and is separate from the now-suspended zero-tolerance Trump administration policy that saw children separated from parents only because they had crossed illegally.

## ILLEGAL CROSSINGS

CALIFORNIA ATTORNEY GENERAL XAVIER BECERRA, on whether there's a crisis at the border: "We have the lowest level of entries into the country by those that don't have permission than we've had in some 20 years." — interview with ABC's "This Week" on Feb. 17.

THE FACTS: He's incorrect that illegal crossings are the lowest in recent decades, based on Border Patrol arrests, the most widely used gauge. That was true in the 2017 budget year, when Border Patrol arrests along the Mexican border fell to 303,916, the smallest number since 1971. But arrests jumped 31 percent last year, to 396,579. And in the 2019 budget year, which started in October, southern border arrests nearly doubled through January, to 201,497 from 109,543 the same period a year earlier.

Illegal crossings remain relatively low in historical terms but not as low as Becerra claims. California is leading a 16-state coalition in a suit challenging Trump's power to declare an emergency to steer more money to build a wall along the Mexico border.

## DEMS ON ECONOMY

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont, announcing his run for president: "We should not have an economy in which tens of millions of workers earn starvation wages." — email Tuesday to supporters.

THE FACTS: Sanders is overstating his case regarding "starvation wages."

According to his campaign, he defines "starvation wages" as anything below \$15 an hour. But if a family, for example, has two people making \$14 an hour each, working full time, that's roughly \$56,000 in household income before taxes. If they live outside large, expensive cities, their costs of living will also be relatively low. The Census Bureau considers a single parent with two children to be poor if they earn less than \$19,749, or about \$9.90 an hour.

It's true that many people with jobs are still poor. In 2016, census data showed that 7.2 million people were working, but still lived below the poverty line. It's also true that a lot of workers — nearly 40 percent, or 60 million — earn less than \$15 an hour, according to government data compiled by the liberal Economic Policy Institute. But wages have also been rising in the past several years for lower-income workers, thanks in part to higher minimum wages. For those at the 20th percentile of earnings — meaning that 80 percent of workers earn more — their wages rose 4.8 percent last year, more than any other income group, according to that institute.

SEN. KAMALA HARRIS: "The average tax refund is down about \$170 compared to last year. Let's call the President's tax cut what it is: a middle-class tax hike to line the pockets of already wealthy corporations and the 1%." — tweet Feb. 11.

THE FACTS: She's wrong to suggest that smaller tax refunds basically amount to a "middle-class tax hike." The size of a refund doesn't necessarily have anything to do with how much someone is paying in taxes. Many people ended up with less of their taxes withheld from their paychecks in 2018 as a result of Trump's tax cut. That would result in a smaller refund, but it doesn't mean they paid more in federal taxes.

Explaining the tweet, a campaign spokeswoman, Kirsten Allen, said "many middle-class families are seeing increases, while the bulk of the benefits go to corporations and the wealthy. And the long term analysis of this bill is that it raises middle-class taxes." Allen also noted that high-tax states such as California are particularly affected because the new law caps the deduction for state and local taxes at \$10,000.

Trump's tax cut did skew to the wealthy, but most middle-income taxpayers should see a tax cut this year, according to the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center. The average taxpayer is expected to get a tax cut of about \$1,600 in 2018, the center calculates, with two-thirds of U.S. taxpayers getting a cut and about 6 percent paying more.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 34 of 47

## NORTH KOREA

TRUMP, on getting North Korea to “denuclearize”: “I think they want to do something. But you know, you’ve been talking about this for 80 years. They’ve been talking about this for many, many years, and no administration has done anything.” — remarks Wednesday with Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz.

THE FACTS: He’s wrong in suggesting his administration is the first to start on denuclearization with North Korea. The Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations both did so.

Clinton reached an aid-for-disarmament deal in 1994 that halted North Korea’s plutonium production for eight years, freezing what was then a very small nuclear arsenal. Bush took a tougher stance toward North Korea, and the 1994 nuclear deal collapsed because of suspicions that the North was running a secret uranium enrichment program. Bush, too, ultimately pursued negotiations. That led to a temporary disabling of some nuclear facilities, but talks fell apart because of differences over verification. What has most advanced under Trump is the level of engagement with North Korea. He is the first to meet the leader of North Korea.

## RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

TRUMP: “The Mueller investigation is totally conflicted, illegal and rigged! Should never have been allowed to begin, except for the Collusion and many crimes committed by the Democrats. Witch Hunt!” — tweet Feb. 17.

THE FACTS: Trump’s frequent claim that Mueller’s team is “totally conflicted” to the point of being rigged is off the mark.

He’s previously pointed to Mueller’s team, for instance, as “13 angry Democrats,” even though Mueller is a Republican and some others on his team owe their jobs largely to Republican presidents. Some have indeed given money to Democratic candidates over the years. But Mueller could not have barred them from serving on that basis because regulations prohibit the consideration of political affiliation for personnel actions involving career attorneys. Mueller reports to Attorney General William Barr, and before him, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who are both Trump appointees.

Mueller was appointed as special counsel by Rosenstein in May 2017, eight days after Trump’s abrupt firing of FBI Director James Comey and the subsequent disclosure that Trump had encouraged Comey to drop an investigation into former national security adviser Michael Flynn, according to Comey, which raised questions about possible obstruction of justice. Trump has denied he told Comey to end the Flynn probe.

Associated Press writers Amanda Seitz in Chicago, Susan Montoya Bryan in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Elliot Spagat in San Diego and Jill Colvin, Juana Summers and Colleen Long in Washington contributed to this report.

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## **Patriots owner Kraft denies charges of soliciting prostitute**

**By TERRY SPENCER and JOSHUA REPLOGLE, Associated Press**

JUPITER, Fla. (AP) — Robert Kraft, the billionaire owner of the New England Patriots, faces charges of soliciting a prostitute after he was twice videotaped in a sex act at a shopping-center massage parlor in Florida, police said Friday.

The 77-year-old Kraft denied any wrongdoing. The case comes amid a crackdown on sex trafficking from Palm Beach to Orlando in which police planted cameras in massage parlors.

Kraft was not immediately arrested. Jupiter police said a warrant will be issued and his attorneys will be notified. They said details about the misdemeanor charges against the owner of the Super Bowl champion team will not be released until next week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 35 of 47

Hundreds of arrest warrants have been issued in recent days as a result of the six-month investigation, and more are expected. Ten spas have been closed, and several people have been taken into custody on sex trafficking charges.

Jupiter Police Chief Daniel Kerr said he was shocked to learn that Kraft, who is worth \$6 billion, was paying for sex inside a shopping-center massage parlor, the Orchids of Asia Day Spa. "We are as equally stunned as everyone else," Kerr said.

Most people charged for the first time with soliciting a prostitute in Florida are allowed to enter a diversion program, said attorney David Weinstein, a former prosecutor. Kraft would probably have to perform 100 hours of community service and attend a course on the harmful effects of prostitution and sex trafficking, he said.

The arrest could also get Kraft in trouble with the NFL, which in a statement said only that it is "aware of the ongoing law enforcement matter and will continue to monitor developments."

Under league policy, players, owners, coaches and other employees can be punished for "conduct detrimental to the integrity of and public confidence in" the NFL.

"Ownership and club or league management have traditionally been held to a higher standard and will be subject to more significant discipline," the policy says.

The Patriots won the Super Bowl this month over the Los Angeles Rams for their sixth NFL championship in the past 18 seasons, making them the most successful team in pro sports during that span. Before the Super Bowl, several retired NFL players appeared in a public service announcement decrying sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Atlanta, the host city.

Kraft lives in Massachusetts and has a home in the Palm Beach area. Though he is a Democrat, he is friendly with President Donald Trump and a frequent guest at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club. Kraft's wife, Myra Hiatt Kraft, died in 2011. He has been dating 39-year-old actress Ricki Noel Lander since 2012.

"Well it's very sad. I was very surprised to see it. He's proclaimed his innocence, totally," Trump said at the White House on Friday.

In a statement, Kraft's representatives said they "categorically deny that Mr. Kraft engaged in any illegal activity."

The spa Kraft allegedly visited is in a busy, upper-middle-class shopping center with neighbors that include a dentist, a real estate office, surf and bike shops and a Publix supermarket.

After hearing about the arrest, Brian Rubino, a Patriot fan who lives nearby, went by the spa wearing a team jersey. He said Kraft made a mistake, but he could see how it might happen.

"A 77-year-old man, lost his wife, who knows? I see how you can end up in a place like this," Rubino said.

Vero Beach police Chief David Currey, whose agency has been involved in the sex-trafficking investigation, told reporters earlier this week that the prostitutes are victims who have been trapped into the trade.

"These girls are there all day long, into the evening. They can't leave and they are performing sex acts," Currey said, according to TCPalm. "Some of them may tell us they're OK, but they're not."

The owner of Orchids of Asia Day Spa, 58-year-old Hua Zhang, was arrested Tuesday on 29 prostitution and related charges. Police in her arrest report said they watched video of her employees performing various sex acts with two dozen customers. Her attorney, Gennaro Cariglio Jr., had no comment.

Kraft, who made his initial fortune through a packaging company, bought the Patriots in 1994 for \$172 million to keep the team from moving to St. Louis. He hired Bill Belichick as coach in 2000, and the team later drafted quarterback Tom Brady, launching its nearly two decades of success.

In 2007, the Patriots got in trouble for filming other teams' signals. The NFL fined the team \$250,000 and Belichick \$500,000. In 2014, Brady was accused of deflating game footballs to gain a better grip. He served a four-game suspension, and the Patriots were fined \$1 million.

Kraft was not implicated in either scandal.

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Spencer reported from Fort Lauderdale. AP sports writer Kyle Hightower in Boston and reporter Kevin Frekking in Washington, D.C., contributed to this report.

## Train possibly taking Kim Jong Un to summit enters China

By **DAKE KANG, Associated Press**

DANDONG, China (AP) — A train similar to one used in the past by Kim Jong Un entered China on Saturday evening, possibly carrying the North Korean leader on a multiday journey to Vietnam's capital for his summit with President Donald Trump.

An Associated Press reporter saw the green and yellow train cross from North Korea into the Chinese border city of Dandong via a bridge.

Russia's TASS news agency reported hours earlier that Kim had departed from Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, on his personal train. North Korea's state media has yet to report on whether Kim has set off for Vietnam. Kim's overseas travel plans are routinely kept secret.

It could take more than two days for the train to travel thousands of miles through China to Vietnam.

Vietnam's Foreign Ministry announced Saturday that Kim would pay an official goodwill visit to the country "in the coming days" in response to an invitation by President Nguyen Phu Trong, who is also the general secretary of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party.

The Trump-Kim meeting is slated for Wednesday and Thursday in Hanoi. Their first summit, last June in Singapore, ended without substantive agreements and triggered a months-long stalemate in negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang as they struggled with the sequencing of North Korea's nuclear disarmament and the removal of U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

In his upcoming meeting with Trump, experts say Kim will seek a U.S. commitment for improved bilateral relations and partial sanctions relief while trying to minimize any concessions on his nuclear facilities and weapons. While Kim wants to leverage his nuclear and missile program for economic and security benefits, there continue to be doubts on whether he's ready to fully deal away an arsenal that he may see as his strongest guarantee of survival.

Last year, North Korea suspended its nuclear and long-range missile tests and unilaterally dismantled its nuclear testing ground and parts of a rocket launch facility without the presence of outside experts, but none of those steps were seen as meaningful cutbacks to the North's weapons capability. While North Korea has repeatedly demanded that the United States take corresponding measures, including sanctions relief, Washington has called for more concrete steps from Pyongyang toward denuclearization.

Hanoi has been gearing up for the summit with beefed-up security. Officials say the colonial-era Government Guest House in central Hanoi is expected to be the venue for the Trump-Kim meeting, with the nearby Metropole Hotel as a backup. Streets around the two places have been beautified with flowers and the flags of North Korea, the U.S and Vietnam.

Workers were also putting final touches on the International Media Center. Vietnam's Foreign Ministry says some 2,600 members of the foreign press have registered for the event.

Meanwhile, Vietnam has announced a traffic ban along Kim's possible arrival route.

The Communist Party's mouthpiece Nhan Dan newspaper late Friday quoted the Department of Roads as saying the ban will first apply to trucks 10 tons or bigger, and vehicles with nine seats or more on the 170-kilometer (105-mile) stretch of Highway One from Dong Dang, the border town with China, to Hanoi from 7 p.m. Monday to 2 p.m. Tuesday, followed by a complete ban Tuesday on all vehicles from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The People's Committee in Lang Son province, where the Dong Dang railway station is located, issued a statement Friday instructing the road operator to clean the highway stretch and suspend road works, among other things, on Feb. 24-28 as "a political task."

## Teens tweet Trump, find Senate ally, score civil rights win

By **LISA MASCARO, AP Congressional Correspondent**

WASHINGTON (AP) — All the bill needed to become law was President Donald Trump's signature. It would create a national archive of documents from civil rights cold cases. Students had been working on

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 37 of 47

the project for years, families waiting on it for decades. But time was running out.

Legislation dies in the transition from one session of Congress to the next, and unless Trump acted, it would be lost.

So the students at New Jersey's Hightstown High School did what teenagers do: They started tweeting at the president.

And not just Trump. They tweeted at his advisers, his staff and even Trump-friendly celebrities whose thousands of followers could carry their message to the White House.

As the deadline neared, Oslene Johnson, 19, was managing the project's Twitter account from under the blankets in her bedroom and trying not to be discouraged.

"When you really look at it, it's about providing closure for communities, families, and also as a country," said Johnson, who has since graduated but still works with the students.

Imagine, the class considered, all the people, African-Americans mostly, who have lived with questions about what happened to their loved ones 50 years or more ago. The killings and injuries have long passed. The perpetrators are gone. But the families, she said, "they're still with us."

The students' interest began in 2015, when teacher Stuart Wexler's Advanced Placement government and policy class at Hightstown High was studying the civil rights movement. They couldn't believe that in America, so many criminal cases involving racial violence and death could remain unsolved.

Srihari Suvramanian, 17, a senior, said in an Associated Press telephone interview with the class: "It's just atrocious that these individuals have gotten away with crimes committed decades ago, for so long, even though the majority of Americans know it's wrong."

He added: "We think it's very important to provide a sense of closure. Even if we can't get a full sense of closure, maybe provide some answers to the people that were denied justice."

The students crowdsourced a list of cases, filed Freedom of Information Act requests and then waited. Research on old cases often runs into dead ends, and they could imagine the difficulties that families go through trying to get answers.

They turned their attention to Congress.

The President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, which collects records at the National Archives from the assassination, provided a model for the legislation they wanted. They took bus trips to Washington to find supporters. Rep. Bobby Rush, D-Ill., was among the first to sign on, inspired, his office said, by the work and the possibility it held.

Then Democrat Doug Jones won a Senate seat from Alabama in December 2017. They had already reached out to Jones, the U.S. attorney who won convictions after reopening the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing case from 1963 in Birmingham.

Six months after he was sworn in as the first Democratic senator from Alabama in a generation, Jones stood on the Senate floor and introduced the bill that would become the Civil Rights Cold Case Collection Act. The students watched from the gallery above.

"Justice can take many forms," Jones said. Reconciliation can be a potent force, he said. "After all this time, we might not solve every one of these cold cases, but my hope is, our efforts today will, at the very least, help us find some long overdue healing and understanding of the truth."

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who was presiding in the chamber that day, has said he was so moved that he told Jones he would sign on as a co-sponsor. Cruz helped bring Republicans on board. By December, in the final days of the congressional session, the bill unanimously passed the Senate and was approved in the House, 376-6. From there, it was off to the president's desk.

But the students worried the bill would expire when the new Congress convened in January.

"We went on a mad, desperate scramble to get the president to sign the bill," said James Ward, a 17-year-old senior who helped mobilize the student body, class by class, "to take out their phones and tweet."

In Wexler's classroom, students posted photos of Trump's "midnight advisers" — aides, media celebrities — and started putting "X's" through the ones they had reached out to. "We were tweeting at as many people as we could," Suvramanian recalled.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 38 of 47

He was finishing class one afternoon when he dashed off an email to Christopher Ruddy, the CEO of Newsmax and a Trump ally. "He got back to me within 30 minutes," the teenager said. After a short exchange, another note came back, "He said, 'I dropped a message to the president around 10 minutes ago and I really hope your bill gets signed into law.'"

Even with the new Congress starting the next day, the actual deadline for signing the bill was still a week away — the night of Trump's border security address to the nation amid what became the longest government shutdown in U.S. history.

Johnson, a student leader when the project started, tried not to lose hope as she tweeted. She had graduated and moved on, as had many other students. There have been dozens in all, over the past several years, who had been involved in the project.

Then word came. Jones' office told Wexler, who told the students: Trump had signed the bill, which focuses on unsolved criminal cases from 1940 until 1980.

Johnson cried.

"The families could now, with access to information, at least know something about what happened," she said.

Along with Trump's signature came a lengthy signing statement of potential concerns about the process for review and public release of the documents, but also support for Congress to fund the effort. Ruddy confirmed he had reached out to the White House, impressed by the students. He thinks the president would have been, too.

Margaret Burnham, a law professor at Northeastern University and director of the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, said what Wexler and his class did was "nothing short of amazing."

"The creativity was not so much in framing potentially effective legislation, but in strategizing how to get it through the Congress," said Burnham, who has worked for years on these issues and similar efforts in Washington. "That's where Stuart and his students, over several classes, were just dogged — and creative, incredibly creative — in their ability to persuade Congress, people on both sides of the aisle, of the meaning and continuing urgency and significance of this issue."

Tahj Linton, 17, said he hopes other Americans understand the power they have to shape political outcomes. "If we can start to solve some of the racial problems that were never really closed in the past decades or 50 years or so, maybe we can start to work on the ones that are happening today and make a difference about it," he said.

Follow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/lisamascaro>

## US-North Korean deals often made away from negotiating table

By **DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Beware of humor gone awry. Don't be afraid to show emotion. Watch those offhanded one-liners.

At the negotiating table, it can be difficult to get North Korean negotiators off their scripted talking points. Sometimes deals are best sealed while on a Pyongyang subway ride, a stroll outside or even during fits of anger.

No matter what President Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un may agree to at their Vietnam summit this coming week, the follow-up to those talks will require the kind of laborious discussions that have marked four major sets of negotiating sessions between the two sides over the past quarter-century.

Former U.S. diplomats who have spent years in such talks say their North Korean counterparts are always prepared and keen to sniff out anything that seems like a U.S. precondition. They say the North Koreans can launch into anti-American diatribes one minute, then courteously agree to concessions — once they're certain they've gotten all they can.

Bob Carlin, who took part in talks during the Clinton administration, recalled that at the end of one particularly difficult day of negotiations, the chief North Korean balked at one item that had been agreed

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 39 of 47

upon earlier.

"I popped my cork," Carlin said. "This was not an act. I was so angry that he would do this to me."

When the North Korean saw Carlin's flash of anger, he quickly backed down and agreed to what had already been negotiated. The North Korean negotiator apparently just wanted to be able to go back to his superiors and say that he had pushed the Americans as far as he could.

"I learned something important," Carlin said. "If they really go over the line and make me mad, don't sit back and try to be nice. Let them know because they don't want things to fall apart."

In another session, it was the lead North Korean negotiator who got miffed. Carlin, who has traveled to North Korea more than 30 times, said one of the U.S. negotiators wondered aloud when North Korea was going to "join the civilized world."

"The temperature in the room dropped below freezing" and the top North Korean scolded the U.S. negotiator, Carlin said. "It's the type of thing that Americans say without thinking and the North Koreans don't accept."

Victor Cha, a U.S. diplomat who helped negotiate a deal with North Korea in the 1990s, said sometimes the Americans want success so badly that they get caught in negotiation traps choreographed by the North Koreans.

"One of their classic negotiation loops is this end-of-war declaration," Cha said. The idea is that the U.S. declares an end to the Korean War, which ended without a peace treaty. Then, the North Koreans demand the U.S. lift sanctions on them because the war is over. "No," Cha said. "The sanctions are on them for proliferation behavior and human rights abuses. They improve those things, then you lift some comparable sanctions."

Former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations during the Clinton administration, has been a frequent mediator with North Korea since the 1990s. He has visited at least eight times, sometimes acting independently to seek the release of American detainees.

Richardson said he was talking to a North Korean official on the Pyongyang subway in 1996 when he finally persuaded him to release Evan Hunziker, an American who had illegally entered the communist country by swimming, while drunk, across the Yalu River from China.

"About 75 percent of the talking points are anti-American ranting," Richardson said. "So, you've got to make deals with them outside of the negotiating table — either at a meal, or walking or in the subway as I did with Hunziker."

Richardson said humor works sometimes, but American negotiators need to use it carefully. As a joke, Richardson said he once inquired about Hunziker's condition in detention, specifically if he still "had his fingernails."

"I started smiling," Richardson said. "The North Korean looked at me. I thought he was going to kill me. And then he started laughing. They're not used to humor. They're very formal."

On the flip side, Richardson said it was he who didn't know whether the North Koreans were joking when they asked to be reimbursed for the cost of ammunition they used to shoot at an American helicopter pilot in 1994.

Army pilot Bobby Hall's helicopter was hit by North Korean air defenses after he strayed across the border, forcing him into an emergency landing. His co-pilot later died from his injuries.

"They said 'Your pilot violated North Korean air space and so we had to shoot it down and you have to pay for it,'" Richardson said. "I said 'I'm not going to do that. That's ridiculous.' But they were very serious."

Stephen Biegun, the Trump administration's point man on North Korea, said the United States is trying to find better ways to talk with its North Korean counterparts.

"I am not kidding when I say it is difficult for us to communicate with each other," Biegun said in a recent speech at Stanford University.

"We are located in very different parts of the world with very different histories. We have dramatically different views on individual rights and on human rights. ... We also have no trade of any sort, no diplomatic relations and virtually no ability to communicate directly with one another."

Despite that, the two sides for months have been engaged in talks and exchanging letters — messages of trust and confidence to lubricate the process.

Trump has been effusive about his exchanges from Kim.

He told a political rally in West Virginia last fall: "He wrote me beautiful letters and they're great letters. We fell in love."

Follow all of AP's summit coverage at <https://apnews.com/Trump-KimSummit>

## Court records reveal a Mueller report right in plain view

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump was in full deflection mode.

The Democrats had blamed Russia for the hacking and release of damaging material on his presidential opponent, Hillary Clinton. Trump wasn't buying it. But on July 27, 2016, midway through a news conference in Florida, Trump decided to entertain the thought for a moment.

"Russia, if you're listening," said Trump, looking directly into a television camera, "I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing" — messages Clinton was reported to have deleted from her private email server.

Actually, Russia was doing more than listening: It had been trying to help Republican Trump for months. That very day, hackers working with Russia's military intelligence tried to break into email accounts associated with Clinton's personal office.

It was just one small part of a sophisticated election interference operation carried out by the Kremlin — and meticulously chronicled by special counsel Robert Mueller.

We know this, though Mueller has made not a single public comment since his appointment in May 2017. We know this, though the full, final report on the investigation, believed to be in its final stages, may never be made public. It's up to Attorney General William Barr.

We know this because Mueller has spoken loudly, if indirectly, in court — indictment by indictment, guilty plea by guilty plea. In doing so, he tracked an elaborate Russian operation that injected chaos into a U.S. presidential election and tried to help Trump win the White House. He followed a GOP campaign that embraced the Kremlin's help and championed stolen material to hurt a political foe. And ultimately, he revealed layers of lies, deception, self-enrichment and hubris that followed.

Woven through thousands of court papers, the special counsel has made his public report. This is what it says.

### RUSSIA, LOOKING TO INTERFERE

The plot began before Bernie Bros and "Lock Her Up," before MAGA hats and "Lyn' Ted," before there was even a thought of Trump versus Clinton in 2016. It started in 2014, in a drab, concrete building in St. Petersburg, Russia.

There, a group of tech-savvy Russian nationals, working at an organization called the Internet Research Agency, prepared "information warfare against the United States of America." The battleground would be the internet, and the target was the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Using a game plan honed on its own people, the troll farm prepared to pervert the social networks — Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram — that Americans had come to depend on for news, entertainment, friendships and, most relevantly, political discourse.

It would use deception, disinformation and the expansive reach of the electronically connected world to spread "distrust towards the candidates and the political system in general." Ultimately, it would carry a budget in the millions, bankrolled, according to an indictment, by Yevgeny Prigozhin, a man so close to the Russian president that he is known as Putin's chef. (Prigozhin's company has denied the charges).

It was a long game. Starting in mid-2014, employees began studying American political groups to see which messages fell flat and which spread like wildfire across the internet. The organization surreptitiously dispatched employees to the U.S. — traveling through states such as Nevada, California and Colorado—

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 41 of 47

to collect on-the-ground intelligence about an America that had become deeply divided on gun control, race and politics.

As they gathered the research, the trolls began planning an elaborate deception.

They bought server space and other computer infrastructure in the U.S. to conceal the true origin of the disinformation they planned to pump into America's social media blood stream. They began preparing networks of fake accounts they would use like sock puppets to masquerade as U.S. citizens.

The Russian trolls set up accounts that appeared to be associated with Black Lives Matter, the Tennessee GOP, Muslim and Christian groups and the American South. By late 2015, as Clinton sparred with Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, her rival for the Democratic nomination, and as American media still saw Trump as a longshot to emerge from a crowded Republican field, the Internet Research Agency began secretly buying online ads to promote its social media groups.

By February 2016, they were ready. A memo circulated internally. Post content about "politics in the USA," they wrote, according to court papers, and "use any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the rest (except Sanders and Trump— we support them)."

As disinformation scrolled across American computer screens, an entirely different Russian operation readied its own volley.

In March 2016, as Clinton and Trump began to emerge as the leaders of their respective parties, Russian military intelligence officers began setting a trap.

Hackers in Russia's military intelligence, known as the GRU, started sending dozens of malicious emails to people affiliated with Clinton's campaign, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Democratic National Committee.

Like Watergate, it was a break-in. But this time, the burglary tools were emails disguised to fool people into sharing their passwords and in turn provide hackers unfettered access to their emails. The goal was to collect as many damaging documents as possible that could be released online and damage Clinton's candidacy.

In a few short weeks, the hackers had penetrated their targets and hit the motherlode: the private Gmail account of Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta.

## A RECEPTIVE CAMPAIGN

While the Russians were hacking, a young Trump campaign adviser named George Papadopoulos received some startling news in London.

It was April 26, 2016. While traveling through Europe, he had connected with a Maltese academic. The professor, a middle-aged man with thinning gray hair named Joseph Mifsud, had taken a keen interest in Papadopoulos upon learning that he had joined the Trump campaign as a foreign policy adviser. To dazzle his young friend, Mifsud boasted of his high-level Russian connections and introduced him to a woman named Olga — a relative, he claimed, of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Mifsud and Olga wanted Papadopoulos to arrange a meeting between Trump aides and Russian officials. Eager to ingratiate himself with the campaign, Papadopoulos brought up his newfound connections in a meeting with Trump and several high-ranking campaign officials, saying he could broker a Trump-Putin summit. When he raised the idea, his lawyers later said, Trump nodded with approval and deferred to another aide in the room, future Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who said the campaign should look into it. Sessions would later say he remembered telling Papadopoulos that he wasn't authorized to speak for the campaign.

When he walked into a London hotel for breakfast with Mifsud, Papadopoulos expected to discuss Russia's "open invitation" to meet with Trump. But the conversation quickly turned to another subject. Mifsud confided in Papadopoulos that Russia had "dirt" on Clinton. What kind of dirt? "Thousands of emails."

What happened next remains a mystery. Prosecutors haven't revealed exactly where Mifsud got his information or what Papadopoulos might have done with it. The encounter, the first known instance of a Trump aide hearing of stolen emails, would later help kick-start the Russia investigation. But at the time,

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 42 of 47

it was just one of many connections already established between the Trump campaign and Russia.

Unbeknownst to the public, Trump personal lawyer Michael Cohen had been trying to broker a business deal in Russia for the Republican candidate. The proposal was for a Trump Tower Moscow. A letter of intent was signed. Cohen had discussed it with Trump and his children. Cohen had even gone so far as to reach out to the Kremlin directly for help, speaking with an official about ways to secure land and financing for the project.

While Cohen pursued the deal, another person with Russia ties joined the Trump campaign. Paul Manafort, a longtime Washington insider, had made millions as a political consultant for Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich and his pro-Russian political party in Ukraine. Over that time, Manafort developed a close relationship with a man named Konstantin Kilimnik, who the FBI says has ties to Russian military intelligence. Manafort also had worked for a Russian billionaire named Oleg Deripaska who is close with Putin.

But in March 2016, Manafort was looking for a comeback. His business had dried up after Yanukovich was ousted and fled to Russia. The millions that Manafort had hidden from the IRS while enjoying a lavish lifestyle were largely gone. With the Trump campaign, Manafort saw an opportunity to get back on his feet. He and his protege, Rick Gates, quickly worked their way into the highest levels of the campaign, and they began trying to make sure old clients had heard about their new positions.

As Trump clinched the Republican nomination, Manafort and those around him began preparing for a general election battle against Clinton.

The Russians did, too. The Internet Research Agency boosted its support of Trump — and disparagement of Clinton. Using stolen identities and bank account information, the troll farm also began buying political ads on social media services, according to Mueller.

"Donald wants to defeat terrorism ... Hillary wants to sponsor it," read one. "Hillary Clinton Doesn't Deserve the Black Vote," read another.

Meanwhile, hackers with the GRU secretly implanted malicious software — called X-Agent — on the computer networks of the DNC and the DCCC. It allowed them to surreptitiously search through the political operatives' computers and steal what they wanted. As the hackers roamed the Democratic networks, a separate group of Russian intelligence officers established the means to release their ill-gotten gains, registering a website, DCLeaks.com.

By May, the Democratic groups realized they had been hacked. The DNC quickly hired private cybersecurity company, CrowdStrike, to identify the extent of the breach and to try to clear their networks of malware. But they kept it quiet until they knew more.

On the Trump campaign, Papadopoulos continued to push for a Trump-Putin meeting, unsuccessfully.

At the same time, another Russian outreach found a willing audience in Trump's eldest son, Donald Trump Jr.

In early June, Trump Jr. exchanged a series of emails with a British publicist representing Emin Agalarov, a pop singer in Russia, whose father had partnered with the Trumps on the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. Emin Agalarov and Trump Jr. had become friendly, and the publicist, Rob Goldstone, had become a common intermediary between the two wealthy sons.

Over email, Goldstone brokered a meeting between Trump Jr. and a Russian lawyer. He said the lawyer had documents that could "incriminate" Clinton and they were being shared as part of the Russian government's support of the Trump campaign. "Seems we have some time and if it's what you say I love it especially later in the summer," Trump Jr. wrote back.

The meeting was held at Trump Tower in Manhattan on June 9. Trump Jr. attended along with Manafort and Trump son-in-law, Jared Kushner. Participants in the room would later say the meeting was a bust, consumed by a lengthy discussion of Russian adoption and U.S. sanctions. To Trump Jr., the information wasn't useful ammunition against Clinton. He was less concerned that it came from Russia.

Days later, on June 14, the DNC publicly announced it had been hacked, and pointed the finger at Russia.

By then, the Russian hackers had launched DCLeaks.com. According to Mueller, the DNC announcement accelerated their plans.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 43 of 47

They created a fake online persona called Guccifer 2.0, which quickly took credit for the hack. Through Guccifer, the hackers masqueraded as a "lone Romanian hacker" and released caches of stolen material.

The efforts attracted the attention of WikiLeaks, the anti-secrecy group led by Julian Assange from his exile within Ecuador's embassy in London.

On June 22, 2016, the group sent a private message to Guccifer: "Send any new material here for us to review and it will have a much higher impact than what you are doing."

Over the next several weeks, WikiLeaks requested any documents related to Clinton, saying they wanted to release them before the Democratic National Convention when they worried she would successfully recruit Sanders supporters.

We "think trump has only a 25% chance of winning against hillary ... so conflict between bernie and hillary is interesting," WikiLeaks wrote.

Using Guccifer, the Russian intelligence officers transferred the files to WikiLeaks, hoping for a big online splash.

They wouldn't have to wait long.

## LEAKS AND CIGARS

July 22 was supposed to be a big Friday for Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign. The former secretary of state was planning to announce Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine as her running mate. The party's convention was just days away.

But at 10:30 a.m. Eastern time, WikiLeaks stole the limelight, releasing more than 20,000 stolen DNC emails.

The cascade of stolen material was almost immediately picked up by American news outlets, conservative pundits and Trump supporters, who in the wake of Clinton's FBI investigation for using a private email server, were happy to blast out anything with "Clinton" and "emails" in the same sentence.

So was Trump. After publicly questioning that Russia was behind the hack of Democratic groups, he took to the stage in Florida to make his famous call to Russia, "if you're listening." He would later begin praising WikiLeaks.

Smelling a possible political advantage, the Trump campaign reached out to Roger Stone, a close confidant of Trump's who is known for his bare-knuckles brand of political mischief. Stone had been claiming to have connections to WikiLeaks, and campaign officials were looking to find out when Wikileaks would drop its next batch of documents.

According to an indictment against Stone, after the first release of DNC documents, "a senior Trump Campaign official was directed to contact Stone about any additional releases and what other damaging information" WikiLeaks had regarding Clinton's campaign.

In August, Stone began claiming he had inside information into Assange's plans. At the same time, he was privately sending messages to a radio host and a conservative conspiracy theorist — both of whom had claimed to have connections to WikiLeaks — seeking anything they knew. (No evidence has emerged that these messages made it to Assange).

That same month there was a meeting that went to the "heart" of the Russia investigation, according to a Mueller prosecutor. It involved Manafort, and it remains an enigma, at least to the public.

Court papers indicate Manafort had previously shared polling information related to the Trump campaign with Kilimnik, his old Russian pal. According to emails and court papers, Manafort — looking to make money from his Trump access — had also been in touch with Kilimnik about providing private briefings for the billionaire Deripaska. (There's no evidence such briefings ever occurred).

Meeting with Manafort and Gates at New York's Grand Havana Room cigar bar on Aug. 2, 2016, Kilimnik brought up a possible peace plan for Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. What happened at that meeting is in dispute and much of it remains redacted in court papers.

But the Mueller prosecutor would note: The men left separately to avoid unwanted attention.

As the campaign entered the final stretch and Trump's advisers waited for the next WikiLeaks dump, Rus-

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 44 of 47

sian trolls—who had gained hundreds of thousands of social media followers—were barraging Americans with pro-Trump and anti-Clinton rhetoric, using Twitter hashtags such as “#MAGA” and “#Hillary4Prison.”

By early October, Stone was looking for more. On Oct. 3, 2016, ahead of an expected news conference by Assange, Stone exchanged messages with Matthew Boyle, a writer at Breitbart who was close to Trump campaign strategist Steve Bannon.

“Assange — what’s he got? Hope it’s good,” Boyle wrote to Stone.

“It is,” Stone wrote back. “I’d tell Bannon but he doesn’t call me back.”

Hours later, Assange held a news conference in which he appeared to waffle on whether he would release additional documents about Clinton.

Bannon reached out to Stone: “What was that this morning???” Stone chalked it up to a “security concern” and said WikiLeaks would be releasing “a load every week going forward.”

By Oct. 7, the Trump campaign was embroiled in its own scandal. The Washington Post released audio of Trump bragging about sexually harassing and groping women. But within hours, WikiLeaks gave Trump’s team a break.

The first set of emails stolen from Podesta’s accounts popped onto WikiLeaks’ website. Stone’s phone lit up. It was a text message from a Bannon associate.

“well done,” it read.

## A SERIES OF LIES

The first documented lie in the Russia investigation happened on Jan. 24, 2017, in the White House office of freshly appointed national security adviser Michael Flynn.

It was the Tuesday after Trump’s inauguration, and Flynn was settling in after a whirlwind presidential transition.

Since Trump’s victory in November, Flynn had become part of Trump’s inner circle — and the preferred contact between the Trump team and Russia. In late December, Flynn had asked Sergey Kislyak, Russia’s ambassador to the U.S., to reject or delay a U.N. vote condemning Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Days later, as the Obama administration imposed sanctions on Russia for election-meddling, Flynn implored Kislyak not to escalate a “tit-for-tat” fight over punishment imposed on Moscow for election interference.

But on that Tuesday, when FBI agents asked Flynn about those conversations, he lied. No, he said, he hadn’t made those requests of Kislyak.

Days later in Chicago, other FBI agents confronted Papadopoulos as he had just stepped out of the shower at his mother’s home. Though his mother would later say she knew it was a terrible idea, he agreed to go to their office for questioning, where he misled them about his conversations with Mifsud, the Maltese professor.

Months later — after Mueller’s May 2017 appointment — Cohen lied to Congress about the Trump Tower Moscow project, saying it ended much sooner than June 2016. Cohen would later say he was trying to be loyal to Trump and match the public messaging of a president who had adamantly denied any business dealings with Russia.

Even when Trump aides tried to come clean and cooperate with Mueller’s team, they couldn’t keep their stories straight.

As he was working out a plea agreement with Mueller, Gates lied to investigators about his and Manafort’s Ukrainian lobbying work. Manafort pleaded guilty and agree to cooperate but a judge later determined he had also misled Mueller’s team about several matters, including about his interactions with Kilimnik. Those lies voided the plea deal.

The deceptions played out as Mueller methodically brought criminal cases. He indicted the Russian hackers. He did the same to the troll farm. He exposed Manafort’s tax cheating and his illicit foreign lobbying, winning at trial and putting the 69-year-old political operative at risk of spending the rest of his life in prison. And one by one, his team got guilty pleas from Flynn, Papadopoulos and others.

Most recently, he indicted Stone, accusing him of witness tampering and lying to Congress about his efforts to glean information about the WikiLeaks disclosures. Despite emails showing him repeatedly dis-

cussing WikiLeaks with Trump advisers and others, Stone told lawmakers he had no records of that sort. (Stone has pleaded not guilty.)

In the backdrop of all this is Trump and his family.

Mueller's grand jury heard testimony from several participants of the June 2016 Trump Tower meeting arranged by Trump Jr., but no charges have been filed.

The mercurial president himself has made no secret of his disdain for the Mueller investigation and his efforts to undermine it. Mueller has investigated whether any of Trump's actions constituted obstruction of justice, but the special counsel hasn't gone public with what he found.

And it's unclear if he ever will.

Read AP's coverage of the Russia probe: <https://apnews.com/TrumpInvestigations>

## Trump sets up abortion obstacles, barring clinic referrals

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and DAVID CRARY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Friday set up new obstacles for women seeking abortions, barring taxpayer-funded family planning clinics from making abortion referrals. The new policy is certain to be challenged in court.

The final rule released Friday by the Health and Human Services Department also would prohibit federally funded family planning clinics from being housed in the same locations as abortion providers, and require stricter financial separation.

Clinic staff would still be permitted to discuss abortion with clients, along with other options. However, that would no longer be required.

The move is the latest in a series of Trump administration efforts to remake government policy on reproductive health. The American Medical Association warned it could have an impact far beyond abortion, potentially affecting access to health care services now provided to low-income women by the clinics, including birth control, cancer screenings, and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. By law, the family planning program does not pay for abortions.

"This is the wrong prescription and threatens to compound a health equity deficit in this nation," AMA president Barbara L. McAneny said in a statement. "Women should have access to these medical services regardless of where they live, how much money they make, their background, or whether they have health insurance."

It could be some time before women served by the federal family program feel the full impact. Women's groups, organizations representing the clinics, and Democratic-led states are expected to sue to block the policy from going into effect. Administration officials told abortion opponents on a call Friday that they expect legal action, according to a participant.

Abortion is a legal medical procedure, but federal laws prohibit the use of taxpayer funds to pay for abortions except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the woman.

Planned Parenthood, whose affiliates are major providers of family planning services as well as abortions, said the administration is trying to impose a "gag rule," and launched a full campaign to block it. Congressional supporters of the organization said it receives about \$60 million a year from the federal program.

"I want our patients to know this — we will fight through every avenue so this illegal, unethical rule never goes into effect," said Planned Parenthood's president, Dr. Leana Wen.

She said the new policy would prevent doctors from referring women for abortions "even if your life depended on it."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., declared: "Republicans must end their relentless assault on women's health care and rights."

Planned Parenthood and other groups representing the clinics say the new requirements for physical separation of facilities would be costly and all but impossible to fulfill. Planned Parenthood said the administration is making another attempt to drive it out of business, after efforts to deny funding failed in

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 46 of 47

Congress.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway scoffed at that argument. "They've been saying for years they don't co-mingle their funds, so this should be easy for them," she told reporters at the White House. "Physically separate and financially separate."

Religious conservatives see the administration's action as a way to break down what they call an indirect taxpayer subsidy of abortion providers.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, called it "a major step toward the ultimate goal of ending taxpayers' forced partnership with the abortion industry."

The regulation was published Friday on an HHS website. It's not official until it appears in the Federal Register and the department said there could be "minor editorial changes." A department official confirmed it was the final version.

Known as Title X, the family-planning program serves about 4 million women annually through independent clinics, many operated by Planned Parenthood affiliates, which serve about 40 percent of all clients. The grant program costs taxpayers about \$260 million a year.

Leaders of health associations representing black and Latino health care providers and patients joined Wen at a news briefing to decry the new rule. They said women from their communities make up more than half the beneficiaries of Title X grants and would be disproportionately harmed by the changes.

But abortion opponent Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the Susan B. Anthony List, said the administration rule "does not cut family planning funding by a single dime, and instead directs tax dollars to entities that provide health care to women but do not perform abortions." Her organization is a political advocacy group that backs anti-abortion candidates.

An umbrella group that represents family planning clinics broadly, not only those affiliated with Planned Parenthood, said the administration was acting based on ideology and not in the best interests of patients.

"This rule intentionally strikes at the heart of the patient-provider relationship, inserting political ideology into a family planning visit, which will frustrate and ultimately discourage patients from seeking the health care they need," Clare Coleman, head of the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association, said in a statement.

Although abortion remains politically divisive, the U.S. abortion rate has dropped significantly, from about 29 per 1,000 women of reproductive age in 1980 to about 15 in 2014. Better contraception, fewer unintended pregnancies and state restrictions may have played a role, according to a recent scientific report. Polls show most Americans do not want the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling that legalized abortion.

The Trump administration's policy echoes a Reagan-era regulation that barred clinics from even discussing abortion with women. It never went into effect as written, although the Supreme Court ruled it was an appropriate use of executive power.

The policy was rescinded under President Bill Clinton, and a new rule took effect requiring "nondirective" counseling to include a full range of options for women.

The Trump administration is now rolling back the Clinton requirement.

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This story corrects an earlier misspelling of the first name of Planned Parenthood President Leana Wen.

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Crary reported from New York. Associated Press writer Jill Colvin contributed to this report.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Feb. 23, the 54th day of 2019. There are 311 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 23, 1954, the first mass inoculation of schoolchildren against polio using the Salk vaccine began in Pittsburgh as some 5,000 students were vaccinated.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, Feb. 23, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 228 ~ 47 of 47**

On this date:

In 1685, composer George Frideric Handel was born in present-day Germany.

In 1822, Boston was granted a charter to incorporate as a city.

In 1836, the siege of the Alamo began in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1848, the sixth president of the United States, John Quincy Adams, died in Washington D.C., at age 80.

In 1870, Mississippi was readmitted to the Union.

In 1927, President Calvin Coolidge signed a bill creating the Federal Radio Commission, forerunner of the Federal Communications Commission.

In 1942, the first shelling of the U.S. mainland during World War II occurred as a Japanese submarine fired on an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California, causing little damage.

In 1945, during World War II, U.S. Marines on Iwo Jima captured Mount Suribachi, where they raised two American flags (the second flag-raising was captured in the iconic Associated Press photograph.)

In 1965, film comedian Stan Laurel, 74, died in Santa Monica, California.

In 1998, 42 people were killed, some 2,600 homes and businesses damaged or destroyed, by tornadoes in central Florida.

In 2004, the Army canceled its Comanche helicopter program after sinking \$6.9 billion into it over 21 years. Education Secretary Rod Paige likened the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers union, to a "terrorist organization" during a private White House meeting with governors. (Paige later called it a poor choice of words, but stood by his claim the NEA was using "obstructionist scare tactics.")

In 2005, a jury was selected in Santa Maria, California, to decide Michael Jackson's fate on charges that he'd molested a teenage boy at his Neverland Ranch. (Jackson was later acquitted.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama pledged to dramatically slash the skyrocketing annual budget deficit as he started to dole out the record \$787 billion economic stimulus package he'd signed the previous week.

Five years ago: The Sochi Olympics completed a 17-day run with Canada's 3-0 victory over Sweden in the men's hockey final, the last of 98 gold medal events. Dale Earnhardt Jr. persevered through rain and wrecks to win the Daytona 500 for the second time, a decade after his first victory in the "Great American Race." Alice Herz Sommer, 110, believed to be the oldest survivor of the Holocaust, died in London. Samuel Sheinbein, 33, who'd fled from the U.S. to Israel after murdering and dismembering a Maryland man in 1997, was killed in a shootout at an Israeli prison.

One year ago: Rick Gates, a former senior adviser to Donald Trump's election campaign, pleaded guilty to federal conspiracy and false-statements charges, becoming a cooperating witness in the probe of Trump's campaign and Russia's election interference. Florida Gov. Rick Scott announced plans to put more armed guards in schools and make it harder for young adults and some with mental illness to buy guns. Teachers and staff returned to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, for the first time since the shooting that left 17 people dead. Canada's Olympic men's hockey team failed to reach the final at the Winter Olympics in South Korea, losing to Germany 4-3 in the semifinals.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Peter Fonda is 79. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Fred Biletnikoff is 76. Author John Sandford is 75. Country-rock musician Rusty Young is 73. Actress Patricia Richardson is 68. Former NFL player Ed "Too Tall" Jones is 68. Rock musician Brad Whitford (Aerosmith) is 67. Singer Howard Jones is 64. Rock musician Michael Wilton (Queensryche) is 57. Country singer Dusty Drake is 55. Actress Kristin Davis is 54. Tennis player Helena Sukova is 54. Actor Marc Price is 51. TV personality/businessman Daymond John (TV: "Shark Tank") is 50. Actress Niecy Nash is 49. Rock musician Jeff Beres (Sister Hazel) is 48. Country singer Steve Holy is 47. Rock musician Lasse (loss) Johansson (The Cardigans) is 46. Film and theater composer Robert Lopez is 44. Actress Kelly Macdonald is 43. Rapper Residente (Calle 13) is 41. Actor Josh Gad is 38. Actress Emily Blunt is 36. Actor Aziz Ansari is 36. Actor Tye White (TV: "Greenleaf") is 33. Actress Dakota Fanning is 25.

Thought for Today: "The essential conditions of everything you do must be choice, love, passion." — Nadia Boulanger (boo-lahn-ZHAY'), French composer and teacher (1887-1979).

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