

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, March 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 242 ~ 1 of 50

## Groton Area Schedule of Events

### Sunday, March 10, 2019

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

### Monday, March 11, 2019

Big Question National Qualifier Debate, Aberdeen Central High School  
7:00pm- 9:00pm, School Board Meeting, Groton Area High School

### Wednesday, March 13, 2019

End of 3rd Quarter, Groton Area School District

### Thursday, March 14, 2019

Girls Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls  
Boys Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls  
No School, Groton Area School District - Spring Break

### Friday, March 15, 2019

Girls Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls  
Boys Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls  
No School, Groton Area School District - Spring Break

## Help Wanted

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

## **CLOSED!** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

## Turn Clock Ahead 1 Hour Tonight

- 1- Help Wanted
- 1- Winter Storm Warning
- 2- Truss Pros is Hiring
- 2- Lana Greenfield's Column
- 4- Rep. Dusty Johnson's Column
- 5- Sunshine Week Editorial by Betty Breck
- 6- EarthTalk Column
- 7- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column
- 8- Bills signed into law
- 9- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column
- 10- Today in Weather History
- 11- Weather Pages
- 13- Daily Devotional
- 14- 2019 Groton Events
- 15- News from the Associated Press
- 49- DI Regional Information

## WINTER STORM WARNING

Issue Date: 3:16 AM Sat, Mar 9, 2019

Expiration: 6:00 AM Sun, Mar 10, 2019

...WINTER STORM WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 7 AM CDT SUNDAY...

\* WHAT...Heavy snow and light freezing drizzle. Snow accumulations of 5 to 7 inches and ice accumulations of a light glaze. Winds gusting as high as 35 mph late this afternoon into this evening.

\* WHERE...Brown and Spink Counties.

\* WHEN...Until 7 AM CDT Sunday.

\* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Travel could be very difficult. Patchy blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility.

A Winter Storm Warning means significant amounts of snow, sleet and ice will make travel very hazardous or impossible.

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## Lana's Annals

**Lana  
Greenfield  
District 2  
State  
Representative**

Greetings from the snowy city of Pierre! It has been a long, crazy winter everywhere in the state. One thing I have definitely noticed is that capitol visitors are down this year. On an average day, only a handful of people are in the House gallery. I am certain weather has been a factor.

We finished our education bills in committee this week. We had testimony on SB116, which was designed to help certain students who do not ordinarily qualify for scholarships to get some affordable state help. Despite its passage in committee, it was soundly defeated on the House floor after many testified that they had to pay for their own college tuition and felt others should as well. They further pointed out that it is not a state

obligation to provide a college education. Another pointed out that there are many scholarships at colleges and online should one want to apply.

Our committee also passed SB188, which set up a plan for state high school testing. It was to be given in three segments: after algebra 1, after biology, and after English 3. It met with a lot of opposition, and after amendments were added to give the test after general science and not to have the test be a part of any teacher evaluation (which could unfairly jeopardize employment), it passed after 4 votes. When I introduced it on the floor, once again opposition came forth. Many felt that by giving the test in three parts, it gives a watered down, unclear set of scores. Instead the bi-partisan feeling was that the test should focus on accumulative learning. Therefore it met its demise on the floor. Although I voted for the testing bill, I did point out that the legislature had no part in changing upcoming graduation requirements (more of a workforce trac). I assume that this new testing procedure was meant to coincide with the new graduation requirements. I do not know what the next plan now will be. I suppose that the DOE still trumps us in order to put a plan in place, which could be the same plan that was voted down.

SB146 was a somewhat emotionally charged bill. The subject was SLPA (speech language pathology assistants). Back in 2012 these people were told that they had to get their certification and eight employed in Todd and Bennett Counties did not while two in that location did. Various reasons were given for not doing so, but it boiled down to money or lack thereof. Now the problem came to us for possible solution. And it was a problem. These counties have a tough time filling these positions so if we did not keep the people in place, some of the children would have no one to work with them. Meanwhile those who did not get certified should not be given a free pass. Finally one of our legislators proposed an amendment that these people, in addition to a teaching degree, must get SLPA certification by 2024 or be out of a position. This gives them time to continue schooling, quit, or retire. I really felt that the ladies who

# NOW HIRING!

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testified were devoted to their positions and children, but at the same time, we could not just let them believe they could teach without proper credentials. Did we "kick the can down the road?" Maybe. We just had to do something or we would end up seeing more people who do not want to be certified in employment but want to work in areas where one is needed. I just wish we did not have to be placed in mediator position sometimes.

The pheasant habitat bill remains alive and hopeful. I could not vote in favor of it the first two times as I felt we should decide how much money was available for our nursing homes, and this comes ahead of anything else for many of us. Finally after amendments were added to the bill whereby no general money was attached and would be sent to the Senate stating the GFP and "other funds" money would be used for it, I was able to cast a favorable vote. I think the economic idea is a good one and was glad to see the amendments. We will see what the Senate thinks.

Also on the House floor, we passed funding for teachers and for special education. Both were at 2.5 per cent.

Our local government committee did not meet to discuss any issues this past week.

As we head into our final week, we have some important issues upon which to decide. One is the hemp bill. Many of you have contacted us in favor of being allowed to grow it for another crop choice. We have passed this bill in both chambers but still is not a sure thing. Also, our involuntary commitment bill met with county resistance and was put on the back burner until further talks can be made with involved parties. I can understand this, but sometimes we need to give things a special, determined nudge to keep them moving. I do believe it was one of the most important bills to evolve in our session. To do something is better than to just sit and do nothing, especially where lives are at stake each day.

I will wrap up comments next week. Until that point in time, please stay safe and warm, remembering that winter cannot last forever!!

Rep. Lana Greenfield

[lane.greenfield@sdlegislature.gov](mailto:lane.greenfield@sdlegislature.gov) or [lane.greenfield@gmail.com](mailto:lane.greenfield@gmail.com)



CONGRESSMAN  
**DUSTY JOHNSON**  
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



## **Congress Must Act on USMCA**

Trade is about more than exchanging goods and services. Trade can lift families and industries out of an economic slump and offer opportunities for growth. The absence of trade can result in uncertainty and struggle.

Here in South Dakota, it's no secret that trade is vital to our economy and the numbers speak for themselves. According to the U.S. Trade Representative, South Dakota is the country's 10th largest agricultural exporting state, shipping \$4 billion in domestic agricultural exports in 2016. In particular, our state's agricultural producers have enjoyed expanded market access to our neighbors, Canada and Mexico, since passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement – more commonly known as NAFTA.

NAFTA paved the way for Canada to become our nation's top export market for agricultural products, with \$20 billion worth of product crossing our northern border. Mexico isn't too far behind in third place, with product worth \$18.6 billion.

We must keep this momentum going, which is why Congress needs to act on ratifying the newly negotiated United States-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) Agreement. Months have passed since the USMCA was signed and in the meantime, our trading partners and family farms across South Dakota are stuck in a cycle of uncertainty.

This week, I had breakfast with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer. He explained the impressive progress the President's team had made on the trade deal. USMCA is clearly a better deal than NAFTA was. That doesn't mean it's perfect, but it is clearly better for the United States. Ambassador Lighthizer made it clear that inaction would undermine U.S. credibility and threaten our prospects to negotiate future trade agreements with other countries.

We need to send a clear message that the United States, and South Dakota, are open for business.

Since coming to Congress, I've had the opportunity to study the USMCA. Ambassador Lighthizer is right – President Trump and his administration have made much-needed improvements to our trading agreement. Prominently, the USMCA gives U.S. dairy producers greater access to the Canadian market, driving additional demand and opportunities for our producers.

Congress also needs to signal progress in negotiations with other nations. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue recently testified before the House Agriculture Committee, and signaled the steel and aluminum tariffs, along with retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agriculture products, would likely be eased with the approval of the USMCA. This change would give the U.S. and President Trump additional leverage to conclude negotiations with China and to ensure our producers and manufacturers have a level-playing field.

South Dakota farmers and ranchers want market access and a fair opportunity to compete. This is Congress's chance to show the world the United States is a leader on trade. With an ever-increasing global population, South Dakota stands ready to help feed the world and keep our family farms prosperous. I will be doing my part to ensure House leadership brings the USCMA ratification to the floor as soon as possible.

## Sunshine Week Editorial

The criminal penalties attached to South Dakota's Open Meetings law are ineffective and unnecessary, and should be replaced by more effective means of ensuring compliance.

South Dakota is one of only 13 states with such criminal penalties. Absolutely no criminal actions have been filed against public officials in the 154-year history of the state's Open Meetings laws. As a result, no standards of conduct or interpretations of the law were established.

The 2004 formation of the Open Meetings Commission ("OMC") was a commendable effort to bring South Dakota out of the Dark Ages into open government. It enabled citizens to file complaints with local State's Attorneys, who can prosecute them, decide they have no merit, or forward them to the OMC for hearing and possible reprimand, after which violators cannot be prosecuted, thus making criminal penalties unnecessary.

A serious flaw in the OMC process is that State's Attorneys have prosecutorial discretion. They have nearly absolute and unreviewable power to choose whether or not to bring charges, what charges to bring and in what order cases are considered. Such discretion is essential to enable them to handle heavy workloads, arrange plea bargains and recommend sentencing.

However, prosecutorial discretion does not work well in Open Meetings matters. Prosecutorial discretion allowed a State's Attorney to delay action on an Open Meetings complaint for almost five years. It allowed State's Attorneys to find actual violations of the Open Meetings law and not refer them to the OMC. It allowed the 65 State's Attorneys in different counties to reach different conclusions about the same issue.

The Attorney General's Office makes abstracts and Public Education Comments on all "no merit" cases filed with it in an attempt to explain why they have no merit. The most common comment is that "State's Attorneys are to exercise their prosecutorial discretion".

Removing criminal penalties for violation of the Open Meetings law would eliminate the problem of inconsistent and questionable decisions by State's Attorneys, but what could replace it?

Other states have adopted various solutions to the question, such as monetary fines; voiding action taken in violation; re-enacting disputed meetings; or removal from office. Some states have formed public information boards with representatives of the media, governmental bodies and the public, where citizens can ask questions, seek advisory opinions, and file informal and formal complaints. Such boards, like our own OMC, are empowered to investigate and hear cases and issue reprimands or rulings. Education of the public and governmental bodies is often a high priority for such boards.

It's time to take another step toward more open government by eliminating unnecessary and nonproductive criminal penalties for Open Meetings violations and adopting a system that will establish and enforce uniform standards for conducting the public's business in the sunshine.

Submitted by:

Betty Breck

Groton, SD 57445



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**EARTHTALK** ™  
*Questions & Answers About Our Environment*

**From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine**

Dear EarthTalk: I saw a news item about overhauling classic old cars with electric engines, and wondering if this can be done with any old car, such as my 1999 Subaru Outback? If this is feasible, maybe I should reconsider my plan of trading up for a new Prius. -- Tim St. Germain, Boise, ID

It's true that there's never been a better time to convert an old gas guzzling car into an emissions-free electric vehicle (EV), but some makes and models are better suited for a so-called "EV swap" than others.

Michael Bream of San Marcos, California's EV West, which made news recently with its conversions of old VWs and Porsches into EVs, says you could convert a '99 Subaru—but EV Swaps are typically reserved for classic cars. "A newer Subaru has a ULEV certified (low emission) engine, so it's not as bad a polluter as a classic car, and doesn't suffer from reliability and power issues that classic cars typically suffer from," he says. "A typical conversion of a Subaru would cost about the same with parts and labor as a brand-new all-wheel drive Tesla Model 3, so unless your vehicle is extremely well loved, or you can't stand the thought of selling it, then it might be a better solution to buy or lease a new EV."

EV West is one of a handful of garages across North America now specializing in EV conversions. Some others include: Zelectric Motors (San Diego, CA), ElectricGT (Chatsworth, CA), Make Mine Electric (Sebastopol, CA), Electric Vehicles of Washington (Bellingham, WA), Shockwave Motors (Russellville, TN), Epic Car Conversions (Toronto, ON) and Green Shed Conversions (Crystal River, FL).

If you don't want to wait to get your car converted by one of these shops, you'll just have to do it yourself (or find a local mechanic looking for an interesting project). Luckily lots of companies now sell EV conversion kits (Canadian Electric Vehicles, Electro Automotive, Wilderness Electric Vehicles, DIY EV, EV Source, Metric Mind Corporation, EV Drive) that include new engines, batteries and components. Expect to spend at least \$8,000 on all the parts needed for the job (and tack on an additional ~50 percent more if you opt for longer-range lithium ion batteries). The labor will be up to you. DIYers should check out EVRater.com's "How to Build Your own Electric Vehicle in 5 Easy Steps" or Mechanic Doctor's "How to Convert Your Car to an Electric Vehicle" for step-by-step instructions. Meanwhile, California-based EV4U runs "3-Day Hands-On Conversion Workshops" near Sacramento for \$495.

With a new base model Prius starting at \$23k, you may well be better off doing the EV Swap on your old car. According to EVW, the operating costs of driving a Prius hybrid (\$0.14/mile) are about four times what it costs to get around in an EV (whether native or a conversion). "In addition to the fuel savings, electric cars do not need oil changes, spark plugs, distributors, timing belts, etc.," EVW adds.

What you won't get is that new car smell or the nervous feeling of driving a brand-new car off the dealer's lot. But you will get the satisfaction of knowing that you saved two tons of metal from the junk heap—and saved the world the trouble of sourcing materials for and building another brand-new Prius.

CONTACTS: EV West, [www.evwest.com](http://www.evwest.com); Zelectric Motors, [zelectricmotors.com](http://zelectricmotors.com); Make Mine Electric, [makemineelectric.com](http://makemineelectric.com); Electric Vehicles of Washington, [www.electricvehicleswa.com](http://www.electricvehicleswa.com); Epic Car Conversions, [epiccarconversions.com](http://epiccarconversions.com); Green Shed Conversions, [greenshedconversions.com](http://greenshedconversions.com); EVRater, [evrater.com/build-your-own-ev](http://evrater.com/build-your-own-ev); Mechanic Doctor, [www.themechanicdoctor.com/convert-car-electric-vehicle](http://www.themechanicdoctor.com/convert-car-electric-vehicle); EV4U Workshops, [ev4unow.com/EVWorkshops.html](http://ev4unow.com/EVWorkshops.html); Canadian Electric Vehicles, [canev.com](http://canev.com); Electro Automotive, [electroauto.com](http://electroauto.com); Wilderness Electric Vehicles, [e-volks.com](http://e-volks.com); EV Source, [evsource.com](http://evsource.com); Metric Mind Corporation, [metricmind.com](http://metricmind.com); EV Drive, [evdrive.com](http://evdrive.com).

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## SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR **KRISTI NOEM**



### **Protecting Our Free Press**

"Either write things worth reading, or do things worth writing," is a quote often attributed to Benjamin Franklin. That's often how I feel like my relationship goes with the press. I hope to be doing things worth writing about, and I hope they are writing things worth reading.

One of South Dakota's greatest resources is the hometown newspaper. Local newspapers, television stations, and other media sources like these play an instrumental role in keeping communities strong and informed. And honest reporting can be a valuable tool in upholding the integrity of government entities.

I've seen that first-hand. Fact-based reporting helped shine a light on federal VA abuses against our veterans. It has helped us see inside institutions like the Indian Health Service. Tough, investigative reporting can lead to much-needed policy reforms. Even so, local reporters can be forced to testify for investigating important stories, causing them to choose between maintaining the confidentiality of their sources and the possibility of jail.

Reporters should never have to choose between revealing a confidential source and jailtime. That's why, in my State of the State address, I asked for a reporter shield law that protects journalists from revealing privileged sources and information to reach my desk by the end of session. I'm pleased to report that a good bill recently passed both the House and Senate, and I signed it into law.

This new law will help ensure that investigative reporters can do their jobs without fear of consequences or legal action. This is a necessary step toward protecting the constitutional right to a free and independent press. I am thankful that the South Dakota Newspaper Association (SDNA) supported this concept and worked with a majority of legislators to get this across the finish line.

As David Bordewyk, the Executive Director of SDNA, said: "The journalist's shield law will help to ensure a free and robust press in South Dakota can do its work effectively without fear of being compelled to divulge confidential sources or to release unpublished newsgathering material. These protections are important to protecting a free flow of information in our state." I couldn't agree more.

I'm committed to making my administration the most transparent in our state's history. As we grow our economy and strengthen family structures, we must be diligent in keeping government transparency as a cornerstone. Let's throw open up state government to more daylight and let genuine accountability be a guiding principle as we work to make South Dakota stronger for the next generation.

## Noem Signs Reporter Shield Law Approves 13 Bills on Variety of Topics

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem yesterday signed the Reporter Shield Law, a bill that protects journalists from revealing privileged sources and information.

“Fact-based reporting can be a valuable tool in upholding the integrity of government entities, and investigative reporting can lead to much-needed policy reforms. Even so, local reporters can be forced to testify for investigating important stories, causing them to choose between maintaining the confidentiality of their sources and the possibility of jail,” said Noem. “This Reporter Shield Law will help ensure that investigative reporters can do their jobs without fear of improper legal action. This is a necessary step toward protecting the constitutional right to a free and independent press.”

“The journalist’s shield law will help to ensure that a free and robust press in South Dakota can do its work effectively without fear of being compelled to divulge confidential sources or to release unpublished newsgathering material,” said David Bordewyk, Executive Director of the South Dakota Newspaper Association. “These protections are important to protecting a free flow of information in our state. Thank you, Governor Noem, for supporting the public’s right to know in South Dakota and for promoting transparency in government.”

Noem signed the following pieces of legislation yesterday:

HB1001 – An act to revise the timing of the recalculation of the allocations for the disability levels in the state aid to special education formula

HB1009 – An act to revise certain provisions regarding state employment

HB1061 – An act to provide for a court order to test for HIV at the request of victims of certain crimes

HB1063 – An act to revise provisions regarding engaging in sexual activity for a fee or other compensation

HB1071 – An act to revise and repeal provisions regarding aviation

HB1074 – An act to provide a privilege for journalists and newscasters regarding refusal to disclose information

HB1137 – An act to revise certain provisions regarding pharmacy benefit managers.

HB1196 – An act to provide a definition of blockchain technology for certain purposes

SB18 – An act to update certain references to federal laws and regulations regarding pipeline safety inspections and to increase the maximum civil penalty for certain pipeline safety violations

SB34 – An act to make an appropriation for the replacement of the Elm Lake Dam spillway and to declare an emergency

SB36 – An act to revise the membership of the State Workers’ Compensation Advisory Council

SB100 – An act to reduce the number of petition signatures required for conservation district supervisor elections

SB113 – An act to provide that certain information contained within applications for money lending licenses are public records



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## Tourism in South Dakota Continues to Grow

With the frigid temperatures and heavy snow we're experiencing, it's hard to believe that spring is just around the corner. But before long, we'll be seeing green grass in our lawns again, farmers will be planting crops and tourists from across the world will flock to South Dakota to experience our many attractions. Tourism is a vital part of our economy— number two only to agriculture. Last year alone, tourism supported more than 54,000 jobs and generated nearly \$300 million in tax revenue.

When I was working as governor, boosting tourism in South Dakota was one of our top priorities. I'm pleased that it has continued to flourish over the years. Those of us who live here know that South Dakota is beautiful, diverse and full of history and culture—we're the "land of infinite variety." We welcome travelers to our state so they can get a taste of what we get to experience every day! In addition to our countless outdoor activities, historical landmarks and national and state parks, the kindness and generosity of the people of South Dakota are what keep visitors coming back year after year.

The men and women who make up South Dakota's tourism industry work hard throughout the year to make our communities fun, inviting places to spend a vacation. Because we're a small population state with a low unemployment rate, hiring and keeping employees can be difficult for businesses that operate on a seasonal basis. I recently held a roundtable meeting in Rapid City with South Dakota Department of Tourism Secretary Jim Hagen and tourism industry stakeholders to discuss how we can continue to increase tourism in our state. One of the main issues I heard time and time again was the need for more H-2B visas for temporary, seasonal workers.

The H-2B visa program allows employers to hire foreign workers for short-term jobs for specific periods of time before the workers must return to their home country. Because of low unemployment rates, the program is in high demand. However, the cap on visas hasn't been adjusted to accommodate the demand and employers are going without workers during their busiest seasons.

I recently sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) urging the administration to use the authority they have been granted by Congress to increase the statutory cap of H-2B visas available for Fiscal Year 2019. From April 1, 2019, through the end of the fiscal year, the demand for H-2B visas exceeds 95,000 workers. That is nearly three times the number of available H-2B visas available for that time period.

If the cap for H-2B visas isn't increased soon, there will be serious consequences for seasonal businesses and our state's economy. The busy tourism and construction seasons are starting up in South Dakota, and these industries need workers. I look forward to hearing back from DHS soon because employers in our state need to be able to plan for their busiest seasons.

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## Today in Weather History

March 9, 1993: High winds gusting more than 50 mph moved east across South Dakota behind a strong cold front. Peak wind gusts reported included 62 mph at Pierre and 49 mph at Aberdeen. Also, high winds flipped over a mobile home on top of a car and a utility shed near The Oahe Reservoir. A semi-tractor trailer was overturned while crossing Ft. Randall Dam. An office trailer was also tipped over at the same location.

1891: From March 9th through the 13th, a blizzard struck southern England and Wales with gale force winds. 220 people were killed; 65 ships foundered in the English Channel, and 6,000 sheep perished. Countless trees were uprooted and trains buried. Up to a foot of snow and snowdrifts of 11.5 feet were reported in Dulwich, London, Torquay, Sidmouth, and Dartmouth. Click [HERE](#) for more information about this storm from the National Maritime Museum.

1956: A whopping 367 inches of snow was measured on the ground at the Rainier Paradise Ranger Station in Washington. The snow depth was a state record and the second highest total on record for the continental U.S.

1957: An earthquake measuring a magnitude 8.6 struck the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. A Pacific-wide tsunami was generated that caused damage in Hawaii, but fortunately, no lives were lost. Hardest hit was the island of Kauai, where houses were destroyed and roads washed away. Waves reached 34.1 feet high at Haena, HI.

1956 - A whopping 367 inches of snow was measured on the ground at the Ranier Paradise Ranger Station in Washington. The snow depth was a state record and the second highest total of record for the continental U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1960 - A winter storm produced a narrow band of heavy snow from north central Kentucky into Virginia and the mountains of North Carolina. Snowfall amounts ranged from 12 to 24 inches, with drifts up to eleven feet high in western Virginia. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Gale force winds ushered arctic air into the north central U.S. Some places were 50 degrees colder than the previous day. Northeast winds, gusting to 60 mph, produced 8 to 15 foot waves on Lake Michigan causing more than a million dollars damage along the southeastern shoreline of Wisconsin. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

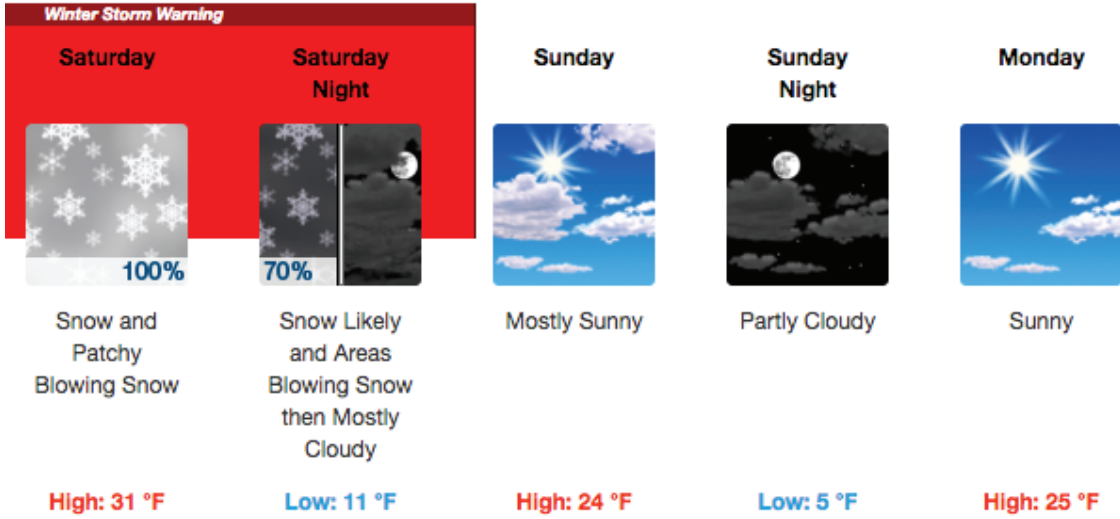
1988 - A cold front brought high winds to the southwestern U.S. Winds in the Las Vegas Valley of Nevada gusted to 70 mph, and one person was injured by a falling tree. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Twenty-two cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. In New Mexico, afternoon highs of 72 at Los Alamos, 76 at Ruidoso, and 79 at Quemado, were records for March. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in West Texas. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 71 mph at Lubbock, and golf ball size hail was reported at several other locations. Strong thunderstorm winds injured two persons north of the town of Canyon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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## Snow & Strong Winds!

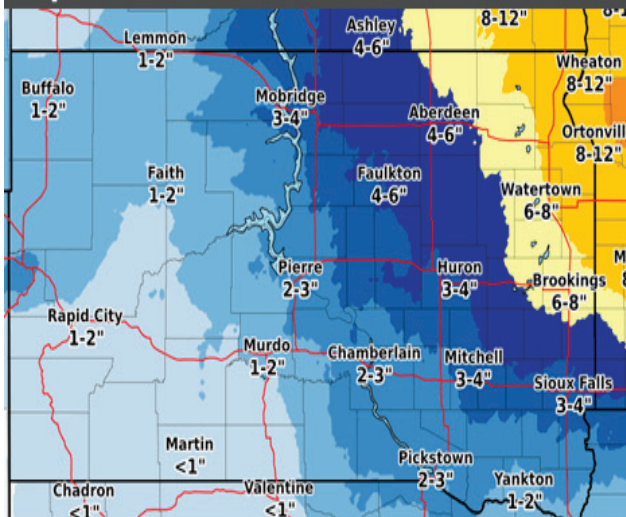
- ✓ 4 to 12" of additional snow expected today through tonight over ne SD & w MN
- ✓ Prepare for rapid reductions in visibility in falling and blowing snow
- ✓ Wind gusts of 35 to 45 mph this afternoon over central SD, moving to e SD and w MN this evening
- ✓ Monitor Road Conditions



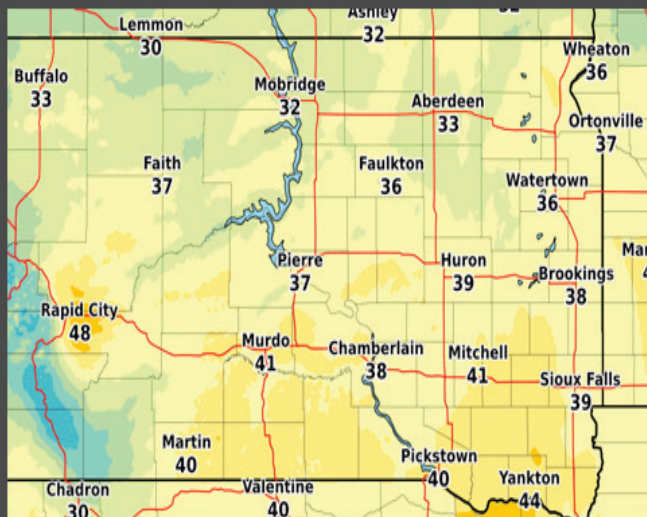
SD... <https://www.safetravelusa.com/sd/>  
 MN... <https://hb.511mn.org>



### Additional Snow Today through Tonight



### Highest Wind Gusts through Tonight



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
 OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

[www.weather.gov/abr](http://www.weather.gov/abr)

Updated: 3/9/2019 3:55 AM Central

Published on: 03/09/2019 at 3:59AM

Snow to continue, and strong winds to develop over central South Dakota this afternoon and push into eastern South Dakota and Minnesota by this evening. Prepare for rapid reductions in visibility in falling and blowing snow. Travel may become difficult from central South Dakota into western Minnesota, so monitor the latest road conditions if you have travel plans. SD... <https://www.safetravelusa.com/sd/> MN... <https://hb.511mn.org>

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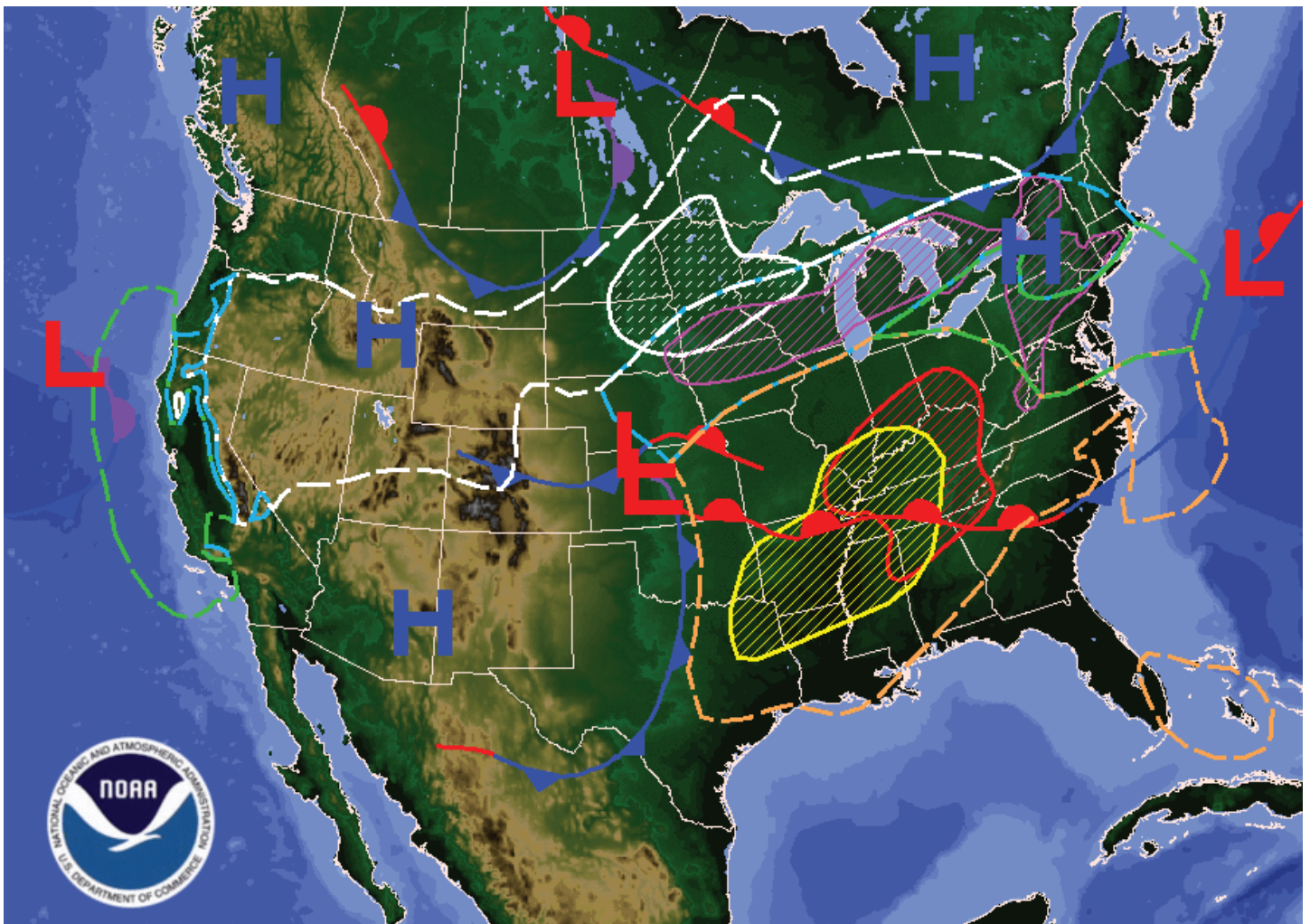
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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 28 °F at 3:16 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: 18 °F at 12:00 AM**  
**High Gust: 15 mph at 6:46 AM**  
**Precip:**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 64° in 1936**  
**Record Low: -20° in 1951**  
**Average High: 36°F**  
**Average Low: 17°F**  
**Average Precip in Mar.: 0.23**  
**Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00**  
**Average Precip to date: 1.25**  
**Precip Year to Date: 1.46**  
**Sunset Tonight: 6:31 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:56 a.m.**



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Mar 09, 2019, issued 4:51 AM EST  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by Hurley with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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## HOMESCHOOLING

Early childhood education begins at home. From the very first moment a child opens its eyes, hears a noise from any source, experiences warmth or cold or feels the pangs of hunger, the opportunity to teach and learn is present and profound.

Though an infant does not know the difference between a Bible or catalog, the object will make an impression which will eventually be interpreted. And if there are more catalogs than Bibles, the child will one day understand the priorities of the parents.

Homes have walls and floors, shelves and ceilings. But what parents place on the walls or hang from the ceilings or place on the shelves is a choice. In my childhood home, everywhere we looked were objects that had a reference to God. I still remember my mother explaining or interpreting the meaning of pictures or using an old globe to tell a story about missionaries and what they did for Jesus. It was an important part of our family life. What I was taught through being schooled at home remains a very important part of my life and ministry today.

Listen, my sons, to a fathers instruction; pay attention and gain understanding...When I was a boy in my fathers house and an only child of my mother...he taught me: keep my commands, get wisdom and understanding! How precious!

My son, Im passing my wisdom to you that came from my father...when I was young and tender. Gods wisdom was passed from grandfather to father to child. We are all passing on what is of value to us, too.

Prayer: Father, we each leave a legacy to everyone we meet. May it bring honor and glory to Your name! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 4:2-5 For I am giving you good guidance. Dont turn away from my instructions. For I, too, was once my fathers son, tenderly loved as my mothers only child. My father taught me, Take my words to heart. Follow my commands, and you will live. Get wisdom; develop good judgment. Dont forget my words or turn away from them.

## 2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

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## News from the Associated Press

### Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL  
Class B State Tournament  
Consolation Semifinal  
Warner 66, Waverly-South Shore 52  
White River 69, Ipswich 61  
Semifinal  
DeSmet 64, Corsica/Stickney 62  
Ethan 44, Freeman 27

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

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) \_ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Friday:  
Mega Millions  
04-09-42-62-68, Mega Ball: 7, Megaplier: 4  
(four, nine, forty-two, sixty-two, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: seven; Megaplier: four)  
Estimated jackpot: \$45 million  
Powerball  
Estimated jackpot: \$414 million

### South Dakota nonprofit to document combat nurse's life

By PAT BUTLER Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Marcella LeBeau's life story is well-documented.

The 99-year-old Native American began breaking barriers when she graduated in 1940 from St. Mary's School of Nursing in Pierre.

Three years later, she enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps and became a combat nurse during World War II. She would tend to wounded and dying soldiers who ran into a relentless hail of German fire while storming the beaches of Normandy, France, on D-Day.

On the 60th anniversary of that battle, LeBeau traveled to France and received the French Legion of Honor Award. She also served on the front lines during the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, where she would spend a year and receive a medal of honor from that nation.

After being discharged from the military as a lieutenant, she spent 31 years working as a nurse and in other capacities for Indian Health Service on the Cheyenne River Sioux reservation where she grew up and now lives.

In 2006, she was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame. In 2018, she received an honorary doctorate degree in public service from South Dakota State University. She is a founding member of the North American Indian Women's Association.

She has spoken at countless events and is the subject of two books now being written. What more could be said or written about a woman whose impressive life story has been told over and over again?

The answer may be just around the corner.

The Rural Ethnic Institute of Rapid City recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Mary Chilton Daugh-

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ters of the American Revolution Foundation in Sioux Falls to create a manuscript documenting LeBeau's life, the Rapid City Journal reported.

The author will be her great-granddaughter, Ryia LeBeau, a 20-year-old who attends Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. She promises the story she tells will be different.

"I will bring a unique perspective," Ryia LeBeau said. "We have spent a lot of time together, traveled widely together. I have been inspired by her. I feel that this is a very important role for me."

Ryia LeBeau said she hopes to finish a 120-page manuscript by the end of the summer.

"I have started working on the manuscript," she said Wednesday. "I have completed a few interviews."

Marcella LeBeau is confident her great-granddaughter is the right choice to pen the manuscript.

"Ryia is awesome. She is one-of-a-kind kid. She does things beyond her age. She's my right hand," said Marcella LeBeau, who lives independently at her home in Eagle Butte and is "doing pretty good for being 99 years old."

Gemma Lockheart submitted the grant application and will assist Ryia LeBeau with the manuscript. Marcella LeBeau's story is an important one in many ways, she said.

"Marcella connects us with stories and values of the old people. More, her story unfolds decisions and experience along the way of making choices for strength of community and country," Lockheart said. "It's a story worth hearing, worth knowing about for how it informs us in our own living."

She also looks forward to seeing what Ryia LeBeau will write about such a well-known figure.

"She is looking forward to writing about her great-grandmother," Lockheart said. "It will be in her words."

Judy Goetz, grant chair for the Daughters of American Revolution in Sioux Falls, said the organization looks primarily at three criteria when it determines who receives grant awards — patriotism, historic preservation and education.

Marcella LeBeau's life covered all three of those categories, she said.

"We want to educate children and adults about what someone has done in their life," Goetz said.

Tom Katus, the managing director for the Rural Ethnic Institute board, said the nonprofit seeks to improve relations between Native Americans and others in the Black Hills and western South Dakota.

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

## South Dakota movie rental store to close

By PATRICK ANDERSON Argus Leader

DELL RAPIDS, S.D. (AP) — It wasn't the digital era that forced Dan Ahlers to close his video rental store.

When national behemoths such as Blockbuster folded under competition from Netflix, Redbox and on-line streaming, his store held its own because he established a strong bond with customers, Ahlers said.

Instead, mounting supply-side problems prompted his decision to shutter Video Plus, Ahlers said. Hollywood wasn't supporting his needs as the owner of a video rental store.

Posters and marketing materials went away a while ago. Orders from vendors started coming late and mixed-up. And then Disney — which is merging with Fox — refused to sell to him directly, Ahlers said.

"These things make it difficult to run a business that really has survived the digital age because of customer service," he said.

Ahlers is planning to close Video Plus in mid-March, but recently had his last day of rentals, the Argus Leader reported. He also began selling DVDs from his inventory of 17,000 movies.

Video Plus is one of South Dakota's last stand-alone video rental stores. Movie Mania in Pierre and Mr. Movies in Rapid City are some of the other holdouts in an increasingly shrinking field. Northview Video in Aberdeen still keeps a couple of shelves dedicated to DVDs, but owner Marian Osborn transitioned to selling party supplies in 2007 and has continued to shrink her video rental inventory.

She keeps it as a resource for the community, but has thought about ending rentals, Osborn said.

"We toy with whether you keep it," she said.

Ahlers recently greeted Baltic resident Charlene Iverson by name when she walked in looking for a copy



of "The Sisters Brothers" starring John C. Reilly and Joaquin Phoenix. As Iverson searched the shelves, Ahlers dug a Blu-ray Disc out from behind the cash register and talked about how a couple of customers had been raving about the film.

It's that sort of interaction that Iverson will miss, she said.

"You come here, it's more personal," she said.

Ahlers was the original tenant of the small strip mall when Video Plus opened in 1999. Fresh out of college and working at Menards, Ahlers' friends told him he should open a store because of his love of movies, he said.

His customers are his neighbors. He represented them in Pierre when he was elected to state House of Representatives as a Democrat. He teaches their children at the Dell Rapids School District, where he fills in as a substitute teacher.

Some have told him he should try out a career in sales after he shuts down, but Ahlers isn't sure that's the right move.

His favorite part of running Video Plus was always the connection he made with people, Ahlers said.

"You earn that trust of your customers," he said.

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

## SD lawmakers to pass state budget as end of session nears

By JAMES NORD Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers this week are set to pass a state budget, debate bills to legalize industrial hemp and address the Legislature's commitment to scale back a 2016 sales tax hike.

The Legislature returns Monday for the final days of the 2019 legislative session. Here's some of what's on the agenda:

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### BUDGET

Lawmakers will reshape the current state budget and approve the next one before closing out the main portion of the session on Wednesday. Senate Majority Leader Kris Langer said last week that lawmakers are "getting really close" on crafting the spending plan.

Gov. Kristi Noem in January proposed about \$54 million in new ongoing spending, including 2.5 percent increases for education, Medicaid providers and state workers. She called for a nearly \$1.7 billion general fund budget for the 2020 budget year that starts July 1.

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

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### INDUSTRIAL HEMP

Representatives on Monday are expected to send a bill that would legalize industrial hemp to Noem, who has asked lawmakers to hold off this year. The House has to debate changes made in the Senate that include broader background check requirements, giving more rulemaking authority to state agencies and restricting who could transport industrial hemp.

The 2018 federal farm bill legalized cultivation of industrial hemp nationally. Supporters contend planting hemp wouldn't even happen until 2020 under the bill, which defines industrial hemp as containing no more than 0.3 percent THC.

Noem has said the state isn't ready.

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### SALES TAXES

The House is set to debate whether to accept the Senate's changes to a bill that legislators are discussing after the state won the ability to collect sales taxes from out-of-state internet retailers. Republican Rep. Chris Karr, the bill's sponsor, said he will seek a conference committee to negotiate differences between

the chambers.

The state won a U.S. Supreme Court case last year clearing the way for online sales tax collections, which started Nov. 1. Under existing law, the state's 4.5 percent sales tax rate is to be rolled back by one-tenth of a percent for every additional \$20 million in online sales tax revenue collected, with a floor of 4 percent. But officials have said new legislation would be required for the envisioned tax reductions to occur.

The bill in its current form would repeal provisions directing the tax cuts and instead allow the Legislature's budget-writing committee to propose reductions each year that online sales tax revenue grows by \$20 million. The more forceful version the House approved would automatically trigger a one-tenth of a percent rate reduction each budget year that sales tax collection growth exceeds cost-of-living plus \$20 million, also setting the floor at 4 percent.

## Another South Dakota nursing home closing due to money woes

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Huron nursing home will close after 59 years in business due to a lack of money, making it the latest in a string of South Dakota nursing homes to go belly-up.

The Violet Tschetter Memorial Home's board of directors said Thursday that the facility would close by May 10 due to a lack of funding, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

The facility's 36 residents will be transferred, the board said. The nursing home said its 45 staffers will be assisted in their job search.

The Huron business is the sixth nursing home in the state to close in the last three years, following closures in Madison, Mobridge, Tripp, Bryant and Rosholt, according to the South Dakota Health Care Association.

About 53 percent of the residents at such facilities rely on Medicaid to cover the costs, and nursing homes lose about \$58.30 per day for each resident paying through Medicaid, the group said.

"We are in the midst of a long-term care funding crisis," Mark B. Deak, the group's executive director, said in a news release. "For years, Medicaid has not been properly funded and we are unfortunately now seeing the consequences. It is critical that the legislature and governor act urgently to address this crisis."

The Legislature halted a pair of measures this session that would have allotted one-time funding for nursing homes. Appropriators said they wanted a long-term solution, but with just a few weeks remaining in the legislative session, that seems doubtful.

Governor Kristi Noem's proposed budget does contain a 5 percent increase in the reimbursement rate to nursing homes, including \$5 million in innovation grants to facilities. Deak called the proposals an "encouraging step" but not a full solution.

If additional funding is not secured, more closures will almost certainly occur, he said.

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

## Woman charged in 1981 death of newborn found in ditch

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota woman was charged Friday in the death of a newborn who was abandoned in a ditch 38 years ago, and police said they used DNA and genealogy sites to determine she was the baby's mother.

Theresa Rose Bentaas was arrested and charged with murder and manslaughter in the 1981 death of the infant, known as Baby Andrew.

Bentaas told authorities last month that she had hidden her pregnancy from her friends and family and gave birth while alone in her apartment, according to a court affidavit. Bentaas allegedly said she then drove the baby to the area he was later discovered, a cornfield ditch in Sioux Falls.

Bentaas, now 57, said she was "young and stupid" and felt sad and scared as she drove away, according to the document. The baby died of exposure.

Bentaas, who was 19 when the baby died, later married the infant's father and has two living adult children with him, the Argus Leader reported.

Court records don't list an attorney for Bentaas who could comment on the allegations.

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The case has gripped Sioux Falls for decades. Roughly 50 people attended the child's funeral, held more than a week after he was discovered. Children left stuffed animals and a pin on his pajamas read: "You are loved."

Retired Detective Mike Webb said authorities used DNA from the baby exhumed 10 years ago and DNA obtained from Bentaas through a search warrant. Webb said the father won't be charged because he wasn't involved.

"I couldn't be more pleased with the results today and the arrest and the closure that we find, as well as the hard work and dedication for the pursuit of justice for Andrew," Chief Matt Burns said.

Public genealogy databases have been used in other recent cases, including the capture last April of the suspected Golden State Killer in northern California and the arrest of a businessman accused of fatally stabbing a Minneapolis woman in 1993.

In South Dakota, authorities submitted a DNA sample from Baby Andrew to Parabon NanoLabs, which found two possible matches using the public genealogical database GEDmatch. Police constructed a family tree and performed a "trash pull" to collect beer and water containers and cigarette butts at Bentaas' home. Results from a cheek swab sample show there's "extremely strong evidence" to support a biological relationship between Bentaas and the child, according to the affidavit.

## Deputy dragged by car following dispute over snow plow

BLACK HAWK, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a Meade County deputy was dragged by a vehicle after he tried to intervene in a dispute between the vehicle's driver and the driver of a snow plow.

Meade County Sheriff Ron Merwin tells KNBN-TV that Deputy Branden Torres responded to a call in Black Hawk that a man in a car was blocking the plow because the plow was making drifts in his driveway.

Merwin says the deputy was gathering information about the incident when the vehicle drove off with Torres holding onto it. Torres was taken to a hospital for evaluation and released.

The 24-year-old driver was taken to the Meade County Jail and is facing a possible drunken driving charge.

Information from: KNBN-TV, <http://www.newscenter1.com>

## Woman sues former employer alleging sexual harassment

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A woman who worked at a Sioux Falls manufacturer is suing her former employer claiming she was repeatedly sexually harassed by a supervisor and fired when she complained.

Corissa Thompson was 19 when she began working at Maguire Iron in September 2017. Her lawsuit says a male employee began making sexual advances a few months after she started. KELO-TV reports Thompson says it wasn't long before he became her supervisor and the advances got worse.

Thompson says the supervisor subjected her to unwanted sexual touching and at one point threatened to have her disciplined unless she performed oral sex. She was fired a short time later.

Thompson is seeking more than \$75,000 in damages. Maguire Iron says it's working with legal counsel on the lawsuit.

Information from: KELO-TV, <http://www.keloland.com>

## First lady: Growing ease in official role, but not politics

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and CATHERINE LUCEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Melania Trump came armed with surefire applause lines when she stepped up to address a largely female audience that had gathered to celebrate other women.

The first lady showcased the record number of women serving in Congress. She said women's unemployment had hit its lowest level in 65 years, though it has since ticked up slightly. And she highlighted the more than 2 million women who have joined the workforce since November 2016, when her husband

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was elected president.

"This is something to celebrate," Mrs. Trump declared at Thursday's State Department event, where many of her lines easily could have fit into a campaign stump speech.

But as President Donald Trump shows his eagerness for the coming 2020 re-election battle, less clear is Mrs. Trump's fervor for joining the effort. She largely avoided the campaign trail in 2016, citing her desire to be home for the couple's young son, Barron, now 12. And spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham predicted that once again, Mrs. Trump "is going to want to be home for her son, no matter his age."

People in Trump's political orbit, for their part, are skeptical that one of the most private first ladies in modern history would want to take on a big public role in her husband's bid to win another four years in office.

Even if Mrs. Trump sticks largely to her official role, though, there's plenty she can do to try to help her husband connect with women, a voting bloc with whom Trump is particularly vulnerable.

Beyond the State Department appearance, Mrs. Trump showed growing ease with her role in the past week as she also made a three-state swing to promote the three pillars of her "Be Best" children's initiative and accompanied her husband to Alabama to survey tornado damage.

In Oklahoma, she chatted with second-graders about the burdens of homework and watched older students in a science class measure the density of different colored liquids. In Washington state, she watched as Microsoft Corp. executives demonstrated features to help protect children online. In Las Vegas, she delivered a pointed jab at the news media, prodding the press to spend as much time highlighting the opioid epidemic as it devotes to "idle gossip or trivial stories."

And in the tornado zone, the stiletto-friendly first lady wore sneakers as she played empathetic backup to her husband. She participated in a briefing, joined the president as he greeted relief workers, engaged with victims with him and on her own, and signed autographs.

Recent first ladies have all taken prominent roles in re-election campaigns. Michelle Obama, Laura Bush, Hillary Clinton and Barbara Bush all campaigned separately from their husbands at re-election time.

Katherine Jellison, a history professor at Ohio University who studies first ladies, said they can help their husbands politically by reaching out to female audiences and showing up at smaller venues than where the president campaigns.

"Typically, the president and the first lady are the family superstars," said Jellison, adding that it was hard to find a more reclusive first lady in recent history than Mrs. Trump.

Trump continues to suffer from low approval ratings among women, which could prove challenging as he faces a Democratic primary field with a historic number of female candidates vying to run against him in 2020. In Gallup's latest tracking poll, Trump had a 36 percent approval rating among women, which is about where it's held throughout his presidency.

Still, polls broadly show Republican women are overwhelmingly likely to support him — as they do the first lady. Her appeal to other female demographics remains an open question.

In a Quinnipiac University poll conducted in November 2018, about two-thirds of Republican registered voters, or 65 percent, said they had a favorable opinion of Mrs. Trump, while just 3 percent said they viewed her unfavorably. But just 35 percent of registered voters overall said they had a favorable opinion of her, and 20 percent said they had an unfavorable view.

The same survey showed that 63 percent of registered voters said they had a favorable opinion of Mrs. Obama, and 24 percent said they had an unfavorable one. But that may at least be partially due to the fact that Mrs. Trump has kept a much lower profile than her predecessor.

Mrs. Trump limited her role in the 2016 campaign to just a handful of appearances and interviews. Her most memorable moment came during the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, when her high-profile speech was quickly overshadowed by accusations that she had stolen passages from a speech given by Mrs. Obama. A speechwriter later took responsibility and apologized.

With her husband out campaigning, Mrs. Trump wanted their son, who was 9 when his dad became a candidate, to have one parent at home at their Trump Tower penthouse in New York. Barron turns 13 later this month, and he will be 14 by the time the re-election effort is in full swing.

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Grisham said that it was too early for campaign scheduling and that the first lady was focused on her family, her duties as first lady and the nearly year-old "Be Best" childhood initiative, which focuses on well-being, cyberbullying and opioid abuse.

Campaigning aside, Mrs. Trump, 48, remains one of her husband's closest advisers. She's also independent and protective of her husband and carefully picks the moments when she strikes out politically. Last fall, she told a TV interviewer that she had told the president about staffers they couldn't trust and that some of those people no longer worked for him as a result.

And in an extraordinary intervention into West Wing operations by a first lady, she engineered the dismissal of deputy national security adviser Mira Ricardel following a disagreement over the use of assets for the first lady's weeklong trip to Africa last October.

Critics have noted that Mrs. Trump's husband routinely mocks people on Twitter. But, much like her spouse, she has been dismissive of the media.

As she set out on the "Be Best" tour, Mrs. Trump ignored a reporter's shouted question about whether she accepted an apology from Michael Cohen, the president's former longtime personal lawyer. He recently testified to Congress that he regretted lying to the first lady about his role in arranging to buy the silence of porn star Stormy Daniels and one-time Playboy model Karen McDougal, both of whom have said they had sex with Trump before he became president. Trump has denied the relationships.

Mrs. Trump has never commented publicly about the allegations. By ignoring the question, she signaled she wasn't about to start now.

AP Polling Editor Emily Swanson and Associated Press writers Hannah Fingerhut and Jill Colvin contributed to this report.

Follow Darlene Superville and Catherine Lucey on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap> and [http://www.twitter.com/catherine\\_lucey](http://www.twitter.com/catherine_lucey)

## Trump offers budget with funds for border wall, Space Force

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump will be making a significant request for border wall funds and seeking money to stand up Space Force as a new branch of the military in the White House budget being released next week, an administration official said.

For the first time, Trump plans to stick with the strict spending caps imposed years ago, even though lawmakers have largely avoided them with new budget deals. That will likely trigger a showdown with Congress.

The official said Friday that the president's plan promises to balance the budget in 15 years.

Trump will seek \$750 billion for defense, a boost for the military, while cutting non-defense discretionary spending by 5 percent below the cap, said the official, who was unauthorized to discuss the document ahead of its release and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Budgets are mainly seen as blueprints for White House priorities. But they are often panned on Capitol Hill, where lawmakers craft the appropriation bills that eventually fund the government, if the president signs them into law.

Trump's budget for the 2020 fiscal year will increase requests for some agencies while reducing others to reflect those priorities. Reductions are proposed, for example, for the Environmental Protection Agency.

The official said Congress has ignored the president's spending cuts for too long. The federal budget is bloated with wasteful spending, the official said, and the administration remains committed to balancing the budget.

The cuts being requested by the White House would hit discretionary spending as well as some mandatory safety net programs, which Trump has proposed in the past. Many Republicans are often eager to reduce government spending, but Congress has had trouble passing bills that seriously slash the safety

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net programs used by many Americans.

Budgets often rely on various accounting measures to achieve desired results. This one, for example, counts \$546 billion in defense money as a base, but another \$174 billion in another account to keep within caps.

And while the budget will suggest it balances in future years, it is also expected to rely on projections for continued economic growth from the tax cuts Trump signed into law in 2017. But there's no guarantee that would cover the lost tax revenues.

By proposing spending levels that don't raise the budget caps, the president is courting a debate with Congress. Lawmakers from both parties have routinely agreed to raise spending caps established by a previous deal years ago to fund the government.

Trump, though, has tried to resist those deals. He threatened to veto the last one reached in 2017 to prevent a shutdown. Late last year, a fight over border wall funds sparked the 35-day shutdown that spilled into this year and became the longest in history.

## 'He said, he said' - Who can you trust in Cohen-Trump saga?

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — It's a "he said, he said" where the "he" -- no matter who he is -- has a credibility problem.

The latest White House legal drama — whether or not the president's former legal fixer asked him for a pardon — has pulled back the curtain on a whole cast of characters whose comments can't always be taken at face value.

Michael Cohen, Trump's former attorney who denies asking for presidential intervention, has himself pleaded guilty to lying to Congress — to back up Trump's own stories. His representative, Lanny Davis, has repeatedly had to walk back and amend statements about what Cohen knew and when. But Davis' need to correct previous claims has only been topped by that of Rudy Giuliani, the Trump lawyer whose job description, at times, has seemed to be centered as much on fudging and on moving goalposts.

And then, of course, there is President Donald Trump, who declared for the first time on Friday that Cohen personally asked him for a pardon.

Trump's foes call him a liar and worse. He made dozens of misstatements in just one speech last week-end and is estimated, by one count, to have made more than 9,000 false or misleading statements since taking office.

So, in a production filled with unreliable narrators, who, if anyone, can be trusted?

"My take is that it's all a mess and I don't know if we're ever going to know what really happened," says former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Trump ally who acknowledged that the battle over pardons has left him baffled. "It seems now that we live in an age of total confusion."

The latest act in the Shakespearean tragedy — farce? — over Cohen's fall from grace in Trumpworld came to light in the past week over a fierce debate as to whether the attorney had sought a pardon from the president after his office and hotel room were raided by the FBI last spring. Cohen, who spent a decade working for Trump before turning on him and cooperating with the special counsel investigating the president, testified before Congress last week that he had never sought a pardon from his former boss.

But in the days that followed, stories changed.

Davis, who was not Cohen's lawyer at the time, said Cohen "directed his attorney" to explore a possible pardon with Giuliani and others on Trump's legal team, a statement that appeared to contradict Cohen's sworn congressional testimony.

Then Giuliani said that two lawyers working for Cohen approached him about a pardon last spring. And Davis then allowed in a written statement Thursday that his client was "open to the ongoing 'dangling' of a possible pardon by Trump representatives privately and in the media" in the months after the FBI raid.

Trump took it one step further on Friday.

"Bad lawyer and fraudster Michael Cohen said under sworn testimony that he never asked for a Par-

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don. His lawyers totally contradicted him. He lied!" Trump tweeted aboard Air Force One while en route to inspect damage from a deadly tornado in Alabama. "Additionally, he directly asked me for a pardon. I said NO. He lied again!"

Cohen's turn.

"Just another set of lies by @POTUS @realdonaldtrump. Mr. President" he wrote, before invoking the women whose hush money payments he helped facilitate for candidate Trump. "Let me remind you that today is #InternationalWomensDay. You may want use today to apologize for your own #lies and #Dirty-Deeds to women like Karen McDougal and Stephanie Clifford."

Cohen arranged payments to Clifford, who goes by the stage name Stormy Daniels, and McDougal to prevent them from speaking publicly about alleged affairs with Trump.

Giuliani again.

He said in an interview Friday that he remembered Trump telling him when he joined the president's legal team eleven months ago that Cohen had asked for a pardon, something the former New York City mayor had never previously revealed, including in an interview about pardons the previous day.

This furor is far from the first time the players in this particular melodrama have, to put it charitably, arranged and rearranged their scripts.

Long before he entered politics, Trump embellished his record, posing as his own spokesman to plant flattering stories in New York gossip pages and declaring that the 58-story Trump Tower was actually 68 stories so it would be the tallest in that section of Midtown Manhattan. That track record continued during his campaign and as president. He trotted out big falsehoods — claiming that Barack Obama was not born in the United States and, later, that he wiretapped Trump Tower — and smaller ones, including when boasted that the crowd for his Inauguration was the largest in history.

His administration has had more than 9,000 misleading statements, according to The Washington Post — fake news, according to the president.

Cohen has become a key figure in congressional investigations since turning on his former boss. During last week's public testimony, he called Trump a con man, a cheat and a racist. Trump, in turn, said Cohen "is lying in order to reduce his prison time."

Indeed, Cohen was known to lie to reporters during Trump's 2016 campaign. He is to begin a three-year prison sentence in May for crimes, including lying to Congress — lying to support Trump's own statements about his real estate efforts in Russia.

Both men's lawyers — who act more as TV spokesmen than courtroom attorneys — have also struggled with keeping their facts straight, though sometimes the shifting stories appear to be deliberate efforts to create smoke screens rather than clear anything up. Davis, who served as White House counsel during President Bill Clinton's early crises, has had to walk back at least one bombshell assertion over the past year, that his client could tell investigators that Trump had advance knowledge of a Trump Tower meeting with a Russian lawyer during the 2016 campaign.

Giuliani has fumbled facts and repeatedly moved the goalposts about what sort of behavior by the president would constitute collusion or a crime. He has defended his scattershot approach with a series of memorable turns of phrases, including one that could act as a motto for many of those involved in the saga.

"Truth isn't truth," Giuliani has said.

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## Netanyahu campaign draws accusations of incitement

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has run into political trouble in the past, he has lashed out at the media, the political opposition and Israel's Arab minority with incendiary and

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divisive language to galvanize his nationalist base.

Ahead of April 9 elections, Netanyahu has zoned in on prominent Arab lawmaker Ahmad Tibi.

The Israeli leader, slumping in the polls after the dramatic announcement of his pending corruption indictment, is portraying Tibi as a threat to national security in a charged campaign that critics say questions the loyalty of the country's Arab citizens.

Using his own nickname, Netanyahu has been repeating a campaign mantra: "Bibi or Tibi." The snappy slogan, eagerly parroted by his hard-line allies, highlights Netanyahu's efforts to paint his challengers as weak "leftists" conspiring with Arab Israelis and a hostile media to oust him.

It also shines a spotlight on Tibi — an affable, media-savvy political veteran who speaks fluent Hebrew. Tibi is known for his harsh criticism of government policies toward the country's Arab citizens and toward Palestinians who live under Israeli control in territories Israel captured in 1967.

"Until this week, I didn't know that against my will I was a leading candidate for prime minister," he said with a smile from his home in an Arab neighborhood of Jerusalem.

Despite the humor, Tibi said he is concerned about what he views as Netanyahu's attempt to demonize Israel's Arab minority.

"He is delegitimizing the Arab parties, the Arab lawmakers and the Arab public in general," he said. "He's trying to transmit that it is either me, the supposed patriotic Jewish leader, or the Arabs will take over the country and decide who will be the prime minister. And he portrays this as a nightmare."

Arabs make up about 20 percent of Israel's 9 million residents. They hold full citizenship rights but have faced decades of discrimination.

The outgoing Netanyahu-led government further stoked tensions by passing a controversial law that defines Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people. A parliamentary panel recently recommended banning an Arab party from running in the election, while Netanyahu has courted anti-Arab extremists in hopes of improving his re-election chances.

Part of Netanyahu's typical stump speech these days alleges that his prime challenger, ex-military chief Benny Gantz, will be unable to build a ruling coalition without the backing of Arab parties. Arab parties never sat in an Israeli coalition government, and they say they have no interest in doing so now.

Gantz has been quick to reject the association, flaunting his tough military record of pounding Gaza militants and saying he would not rely on the Arab bloc in parliament to stabilize a future government.

The charge nonetheless is part of the Netanyahu campaign playbook that has worked before.

Fearing a possible loss on election day in 2015, Netanyahu mobilized his supporters by releasing a frantic midday video in which he warned that Arab voters were heading "in droves" to the polls. The move, for which he later apologized, appeared to help turn the tide and secure another term for him.

If he wins again, he's expected to walk back his rhetoric once more, said Yohanan Plesner, president of the non-partisan Israel Democracy Institute.

Plesner said Netanyahu tends to speak in two voices about the Arab minority.

He said Netanyahu has earmarked unprecedented budgets to Arab communities to try to close the wide economic gaps between Arabs and Jews.

But during election campaigns, Netanyahu attempts to mobilize his base, Plesner said. Netanyahu "recruits the ultimate 'other' of Israeli life, which is the Arab minority," he said. "It is cynical, and it is effective."

Such rhetoric will encourage more Arab voters to sit out the election, said Thabet Abu Rass, co-director of the Abraham Fund Initiatives, a non-profit dedicated to promoting equality in Israel.

"A lot of people are now saying we cannot continue to play the game and pretend Israel is a state for all its citizens," he said. "And they'll say we have to highlight this by boycotting the election."

At the same time, many Israeli Jews, especially among Netanyahu's right-wing base, consider the Arab minority disloyal for sympathizing with the Palestinians and other Arab adversaries. A decade ago, Arab lawmaker Azmi Bishara fled into exile after he was accused of spying for Hezbollah — a charge he denied.

The 60-year-old Tibi illustrates many of the contradictions faced by Israel's Arabs. He's worked as a gynecologist in Israeli hospitals and served for years as a member of parliament, but also advised Yasser Arafat, the late Palestinian leader.



For the past two decades, Tibi has advocated for Arab rights in Israel and for a Palestinian state. Hard-line lawmakers frequently brand him a fifth-column in the Israeli legislature.

But he is also considered the most popular Arab lawmaker, even among Israeli Jews. He is a regular on their television screens, known for his witty quips.

In parliament, he's earned praise for his environmental and consumer legislation and for his promotion of Holocaust commemoration that touched many Jews.

In the current election campaign, he has refrained from endorsing any of Netanyahu's challengers, wary of playing into the prime minister's hands. Tibi said he is ill at ease with the leadership of the Blue-and-White party, which includes Gantz and two other former chiefs of what he calls the "occupation army."

But he makes no qualms about wanting to unseat Netanyahu, whom he accuses of "Arab hatred" and of leading Israel down a dangerous path by deepening control over the occupied West Bank and its millions of Palestinians.

"It's possible that Benjamin Netanyahu is leading us toward a binational state, and then it will either be an apartheid state in which only the Jews can vote or a democratic country in which there is one person, one vote," he said. "If that happens, tomorrow I will run against Bibi. Then it will really be Bibi or Tibi."

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## Smollett indicted on 16 counts stemming from reported attack

By DON BABWIN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — A grand jury in Chicago indicted "Empire" actor Jussie Smollett on 16 felony counts related to making a false report that he was attacked by two men who shouted racial and homophobic slurs.

The Cook County grand jury indictment dated Thursday and made public on Friday gives details of the disorderly conduct charge against Smollett. It elaborates on the allegation that he falsely reported he was attacked on Jan. 29 by two masked men who hurled racial and homophobic slurs at the black and openly gay actor, beat him, threw an unidentified liquid chemical on him and looped a rope tied like a noose around his neck.

The indictment — eight counts from what he told the officer who responded to the report of the attack and eight for what he later told a detective — comes a little more than two weeks after prosecutors announced one felony count of the same charge.

Chicago police initially investigated the incident as a possible hate crime but later said Smollett staged the attack, recruiting two brothers to carry it out, because he was unhappy with his pay on the Fox show.

An attorney for Smollett, Mark Geragos, called the indictment "prosecutorial overkill." He said Smollett "adamantly maintains his innocence."

"This redundant and vindictive indictment is nothing more than a desperate attempt to make headlines in order to distract from the internal investigation launched to investigate the outrageous leaking of false information by the Chicago Police Department," Geragos said.

During the investigation of the incident, several Chicago media reported that there were doubts about Smollett's account, quoting unnamed sources. Some local media have reported that the police department is investigating alleged leaks.

While it was not immediately clear why the grand jury indicted Smollett on 16 counts, it divides what prosecutors and police say the actor told the officer who responded to the initial call from what he said to the detective.

The second eight counts are more explosive because they include two things that helped propel the incident into an international sensation. The first is that by the time he talked to the detective, Smollett said he could see through the eye holes of one attacker's mask that he was a white man. The two brothers who allegedly participated are black.

"He took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career," Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson, who is black, told reporters the day Smollett was initially charged. Johnson said Smollett

paid the two brothers \$3,500 to carry out the staged attack.

The second eight counts also include the allegation that Smollett told the detective one of the attackers looped a rope around his neck — a detail that both Johnson and the judge who set Smollett's bond said was a particularly offensive use of a symbol of the ugly history of black lynchings in the United States.

The indictment, written in the dry legal language, does not include new details.

It says that Smollett knew at the time he relayed his account that he had "no reasonable ground that such an offense had been committed."

Since Smollett's arrest, the producers of "Empire" announced that the actor's character would be removed from the season's final two episodes. Fox network and the studio that produces "Empire" had no immediate comment on the latest indictment.

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Check out the AP's complete coverage of the Jussie Smollett case.

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This story has been corrected to show that authorities claim Smollett falsely reported he was attacked on Jan. 29.

## **NCAA can claim victory after losing federal antitrust case**

**By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer**

The NCAA was able to claim victory Friday night after a judge ruled against the governing body for college sports in a federal antitrust lawsuit.

U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken in Oakland, California, said college football and men's and women's basketball players competing at the NCAA's highest level should be permitted to receive compensation from schools beyond the current athletic scholarship, but only if the benefits are tied to education.

The NCAA cannot "limit compensation or benefits related to education," Wilken wrote. That opens the door to athletes receiving more scholarship money to pursue postgraduate degrees, finish undergraduate degrees or study abroad. The NCAA could not, under the court's injunction, limit schools if they choose to provide athletes items that could be considered school supplies such as computers, science equipment or musical instruments.

"Technically the plaintiffs won the case and the NCAA will not be happy that they were found to be in violation of antitrust law, but ultimately this allows the NCAA to keep the bulk of their amateurism rules in place," said Gabe Feldman director of the Tulane University sports law program.

The plaintiffs in the so-called Alston cases were seeking much more.

Plaintiffs had asked the judge to lift all NCAA caps on compensation and strike down all rules prohibiting schools from giving athletes in revenue-generating sports more financial incentives for competing. The goal was to create a free market, where conferences set rules for compensating athletes, but this ruling still allows the NCAA to prohibit cash compensation untethered to education-related expenses.

The claim against the NCAA and the 11 conferences that have participated in the Football Bowl Subdivision was originally brought by former West Virginia football player Shawne Alston. It was later merged with similar lawsuits, including a notable case brought by former Clemson football player Martin Jenkins.

Plaintiffs argued the NCAA illegally restricts schools from compensating football and men's and women's basketball players beyond what is traditionally covered by a scholarship. That includes tuition, room and board and books, plus a cost-of-attendance stipend to cover incidentals such as travel.

Plaintiffs touted the ruling as "monumental."

"We have proven to the court that the NCAA's weak justifications for this unfair system are based on a self-serving mythology that does not match the facts," said Steve Berman, the Seattle-based lead attorney for the plaintiffs. "Today's ruling will change college sports as we know it, forever."

Feldman, though, said: "The remedy is relatively narrow and this is certainly not the sea change that the plaintiffs were looking for in college sports,"

The NCAA argued altering amateurism rules would lead to pay-for-play, fundamentally damaging college

sports and harming academic integration of athletes.

"The court's decision recognizes that college sports should be played by student-athletes, not by paid professionals," NCAA chief legal counsel Donald Remy said in a statement. "The decision acknowledges that the popularity of college sports stems in part from the fact that these athletes are indeed students, who must not be paid unlimited cash sums unrelated to education. NCAA rules actively provide a pathway for tens of thousands of student-athletes each year to receive a college education debt-free.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has already said it expects to take the case. It is possible the injunction will be stayed until the Ninth Circuit rules. Feldman said both sides could have incentive to appeal the ruling.

"We believe the ruling is inconsistent with the decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in O'Bannon," Remy said. "That decision held that the rules governing college athletics would be better developed outside the courtroom, including rules around the education-related support that schools provide."

Wilken is the same judge who ruled on the so-called O'Bannon case, which challenged the NCAA's right to use athletes' names, images and likenesses without compensation. The case also produced a mixed ruling that eventually went to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

In O'Bannon, Wilken ruled schools should be permitted, but not required, to compensate athletes for use of their name, image and likeness, with payments capped at \$5,000 per year. The appeals court overturned that and said payments "untethered" to education were not required by schools."

Wilken also ruled the NCAA was required to allow schools to factor in their federally determined cost of attendance into the value of an athletic scholarship. That is now common practice in major college sports, though schools were already moving toward NCAA legislation allowing for cost of attendance when Wilken made her ruling.

The plaintiffs argued in the Alston case that implementation of cost-of-attendance stipends prove paying athletes even more would not hurt college sports.

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## Trump budget will seek funds for border wall, Space Force

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump will be making a significant request for border wall funds and seeking money to stand up Space Force as a new branch of the military in the White House budget being released next week, an administration official said Friday.

For the first time, Trump plans to stick with the strict spending caps imposed years ago, even though lawmakers have largely avoided them with new budget deals. That will likely trigger a showdown with Congress.

The official said the president's plan promises to balance the budget in 15 years.

Trump will seek \$750 billion for defense, a boost for the military, while cutting non-defense discretionary spending by 5 percent, said the official, who was unauthorized to discuss the document ahead of its release and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Budgets are mainly seen as blueprints for White House priorities. But they are often panned on Capitol Hill, where lawmakers craft the appropriation bills that eventually fund the government, if the president signs them into law.

Trump's budget for the 2020 fiscal year will increase requests for some agencies while reducing others to reflect those priorities. Reductions are proposed, for example, for the Environmental Protection Agency.

The official said Congress has ignored the president's spending cuts for too long. The federal budget is bloated with wasteful spending, the official said, and the administration remains committed to balancing

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the budget.

The cuts being requested by the White House would hit discretionary spending as well as some mandatory safety net programs, which Trump has proposed in the past. Many Republicans are often eager to reduce government spending, but Congress has had trouble passing bills that seriously slash the safety net programs used by many Americans.

Budgets often rely on various accounting measures to achieve desired results. This one, for example, counts \$546 billion in defense money as a base, but another \$174 billion in another account to keep within caps.

And while the budget will suggest it balances in future years, it is also expected to rely on projections for continued economic growth from the tax cuts Trump signed into law in 2017. But there's no guarantee that would cover the lost tax revenues.

By proposing spending levels that don't raise the budget caps, the president is courting a debate with Congress. Lawmakers from both parties have routinely agreed to raise spending caps established by a previous deal years ago to fund the government.

Trump, though, has tried to resist those deals. He threatened to veto the last one reached in 2017 to prevent a shutdown. Late last year, a fight over border wall funds sparked the 35-day shutdown that spilled into this year and became the longest in history.

International Women's Day: Strikes, protests and holidays

By ALMUDENA CALATRAVA and DEBORA REY Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Marches and protests were held Friday across the globe to mark International Women's Day under the slogan #BalanceforBetter, with calls for a more gender-balanced world.

The day, sponsored by the United Nations since 1975, celebrates women's achievements and aims to further their rights.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a commemoration at U.N. headquarters in New York that "remarkable progress on women's rights and leadership" in recent decades has sparked a backlash from "an entrenched patriarchy."

And he warned that "nationalist, populist and austerity agendas add to inequality with policies that curtail women's rights and cut social services."

"I do not accept a world that tells my granddaughters that economic equality can wait for their granddaughter's granddaughters," Guterres said. "I call for a new vision of equality and opportunity so that half the world's population can contribute to all the world's success."

Millions of others around the world demanded equality amid a persistent salary gap, violence and widespread inequality.

EUROPE

Police in the Ukrainian capital Kiev detained three people as far-right demonstrators tried to provoke activists protesting domestic and sexual violence.

About 300 people gathered on Mykhailivska Square in central Kiev on Friday for the women's rights demonstration. Several dozen far-right demonstrators stood nearby, holding placards reading "God! Homeland! Patriarchy!" and "Feminism is destroying Ukrainian families."

In Spain, where women's rights have become one of the hot topics in the run-up to a general election next month, many female employees didn't show up to work Friday. Others also halted domestic work or left to men the care of children and ill or elderly people.

In the evening, cities across the country lit landmark buildings with purple lights as hundreds of thousands poured into the streets.

"We are getting killed and we are getting lower salaries for being women, but that's just the tip of the iceberg," said Sara Baladron, a 27-year-old pharmacist joining the protest in central Madrid.

In neighboring Portugal, the Cabinet observed a minute of silence Thursday as part of a day of national mourning it decreed for victims of domestic violence. Portuguese police say 12 women have died this year

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in domestic violence incidents — the highest number over the same period in 10 years.

Pope Francis hailed the “irreplaceable contribution of women” to fostering peace.

“Women make the world beautiful, they protect it and keep it alive,” the Argentine Jesuit said.

Francis has vowed to give more decision-making roles to women in the Catholic Church, where the priesthood —and therefore the highest ranks of authority— is reserved for men. Some feminists bristle at Francis’ frequent use of the term “feminine genius” and his focus on women as mothers.

In Germany, topless feminist protesters went to one of the country’s most famous red-light districts in Hamburg and pulled down a metal barrier wall intended to keep out women — other than prostitutes.

A half-dozen women belonging to the Femen activist group had the slogan “No brothels for women” written on their bare back in black lettering.

Legally, all women are allowed to enter the street, but in reality most women obey the signs saying, “Entry only for men 18+.”

In France, the first Simone Veil prize went Friday to a Cameroonian activist who has worked against forced marriages and other violence against girls and women. Aissa Doumara Ngatansou was married against her will at age 15 but insisted upon continuing her studies as a young wife. She has since turned her attention to victims of Boko Haram extremists.

The French award is named for the trailblazing French politician and Holocaust survivor Veil, who spearheaded the fight to legalize abortion.

Meanwhile in Russia, International Women’s Day is a public holiday but it mostly lauds gender roles that are now outdated. As is his custom every year, President Vladimir Putin gave a speech thanking women for their patience, good grace and support.

“You manage to do everything: both at work and at home and at the same time you remain beautiful, charismatic, charming, the center of gravity for the whole family, uniting it with your love,” Putin said.

## LATIN AMERICA

Women in Argentina took to the streets by the tens of thousands, galvanized by the rejection last year of a bill that would have legalized abortion. They marched from Congress to the country’s historic Plaza de Mayo square, many carrying signs in support of abortion or with slogans like “my body doesn’t want your opinion.”

Rallies against violence against women in Argentina, held under the slogan “Not One Less,” have drawn multitudes in the past.

“We have achieved a change of era. Sexist violence is no longer accepted, abuses are not accepted, neither is street harassment ... there are many things that have changed,” said Marta Dillon, an activist and one of the founders of the “Not One Less” movement.

In Puerto Rico, hundreds clad in purple T-shirts protested to demand safer housing as the U.S. territory struggles to recover from Hurricane Maria, while others held up signs with the names of more than 20 women reportedly killed by their partners on the island last year.

Amid the protests, Gov. Ricardo Rossello signed an executive order that would in part create a special agency to intervene in domestic violence cases and establish preventive police patrols around the homes and workplaces of women awarded protection orders.

Meanwhile, similar scenes played out in other South American countries.

In Brazil, thousands of marchers in Rio de Janeiro targeted far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, who has offended many women with his comments, as well as the country’s record of violence against women.

“This year it is especially important to be here because we have a macho president,” said 46-year-old psychologist Juliana Lopez. “Brazil is champion in femicides. We must be on the street to be respected.”

Hundreds of women in Bolivia rallied in main cities, carrying giant undergarments bearing messages such as, “underwear of an irresponsible and abusive father” and “underwear of a child molester,” as Chilean women also demanded access to free and safe abortions.

And in nearby Ecuador, President Lenin Moreno took the day to announce the creation of a bonus of

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about \$300 per month for the children of victims of femicides.

The bonus will help an estimated 88 orphans.

## ASIA

In India, hundreds of women marched on the streets of New Delhi demanding an end to domestic violence, sexual attacks and discrimination in jobs.

Boys are prized more than girls in India. Thousands of Indian women are killed — often doused in gasoline and burned to death — every year because the groom or his family feel the dowry of the bride is inadequate.

Political parties in India have for years been promising 33 percent of seats for women in the country's Parliament, but they have yet to enact legislation to that effect.

In Indonesia's capital Jakarta, several hundred men and women carried colorful placards calling for an end to discriminative practices such as the termination of employment for pregnancy and exploitative work contracts.

"Our action today is to urge (the government) for our right to a society that's democratic, prosperous, equal and free from violence," said Dian Trisnanti, a labor activist. Girls and women in Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, have equal access to education but face higher unemployment, lower wages and poorer working conditions than men.

Both Koreas marked the day. In the South, women wearing black cloaks and pointed hats marched against what they describe as a "witch hunt" of feminists in a deeply conservative society.

College student Noh Seo-young said that South Korea struggles to accept that women are "also humans" and that women have to fight until they can "walk around safely."

In the North, where Women's Day is one of the few national holidays that is not explicitly political in nature, people dressed up for family photo shoots or bought roses for their mothers or wives at the many small, bright orange street stalls in central Pyongyang that sell flowers.

## NORTH AMERICA

U.S. President Donald Trump honored International Women's Day with a presidential message, saying that the U.S. celebrates women's "vision, leadership, and courage," and reaffirms its "commitment to promoting equal opportunity for women everywhere."

On the eve prior, U.S. first lady Melania Trump saluted women from 10 countries for their courage. The recipients of the International Women of Courage Award included human rights activists, police officers and an investigative journalist.

"Courage is what divides those who only talk about change from those who actually act to change," Mrs. Trump said at a ceremony Thursday that was also attended by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Pompeo separately recognized women in Iran for protesting the requirement that they wear a head covering known as a hijab in public and a Ukrainian activist who died in 2018 after she was attacked with sulfuric acid.

## AFRICA

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who named one of the world's few "gender-balanced" Cabinets last year, told a gathering that "women are the pillars of the nation and the least recognized for their sacrifices."

In Nigeria, the U.S. Embassy hosted talks on sexual harassment that included a founder of the recent #ArewaMeToo campaign among women in the country's conservative, largely Muslim north. And in Niger, first lady Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou oversaw the awards in the Miss Intellect Niger contest.

Women protested against gender-based violence in Kenya's capital.

"We haven't gotten to a stage where women are comfortable to come out and say, 'I was sexually abused,'" said protester Esther Passaris. "So what we need to do is slowly, slowly grow."

AP reporters across the globe contributed to this report. Barry Hatton reported from Lisbon, Portugal.

## Venezuela buckles under massive power, communications outage

By **SCOTT SMITH, FABIOLA SANCHEZ and CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA** Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's worst power and communications outage on Friday deepened a sense of isolation and decay, endangering hospital patients, forcing schools and businesses to close and cutting people off from their families, friends and the outside world.

While electricity returned to some parts of Caracas nearly 24 hours after lights, phones and the internet stopped working, several other populous cities remained in the dark as evening approached.

"I'm desperate," said Maria Isabel Garcia, a 39-year-old office worker who hadn't been able to buy food for her three young children because she wasn't able to take money out of the bank on Thursday.

The blackout marked another harsh blow to a country paralyzed by turmoil as the power struggle between Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and opposition leader Juan Guaido stretches into its second month and economic hardship grows.

Venezuelans have grown begrudgingly accustomed to power cuts, but nothing like the one that hit during rush hour Thursday evening, sending thousands of people on long nighttime treks in the dark to their homes. It reached virtually every part of the oil-rich country of 31 million, which was once Latin America's wealthiest but is now beset by shortages and hyperinflation projected by the International Monetary Fund to reach a staggering 10 million percent this year, compelling about one-tenth of its population to flee in recent years.

Venezuelans struggling to put food on the table worried that the few items in their fridges would spoil. One hospital advocate reported there were at least two confirmed deaths due to the outage: A baby in a neonatal unit and a patient at the children's hospital. Venezuelans with chronic conditions like diabetes searched for ice to preserve their limited supplies of medicines.

The blackout promptly became a point of dispute between Maduro, who blamed sabotage engineered by the "imperialist United States," and U.S.-backed opposition leader Juan Guaido, who said state corruption and mismanagement that have left the electrical grid in shambles were the cause. Guaido, the leader of Venezuela's National Assembly, returned from a Latin American tour to Venezuela on Monday in order to escalate his campaign to topple Maduro and hold elections and called for new protests on Saturday.

Many of the more than 3.4 million Venezuelans who have fled thus far left with valuable skills— including energy expertise — and the government's allegations of a saboteurs' plot was met with skepticism by many in Caracas.

"They always say the same thing," said Carlos Ramos, an economist who was waiting to see a doctor outside the darkened lobby of a Caracas hospital.

Elsewhere in the city, Dr. Luz Ardila Suarez, a gynecologist, said many staffers at the hospital where she works were still on the job Friday morning because they couldn't get home the previous night. Like other hospitals, she said the facility was relying on generators but only had enough fuel for another day or two and that she was especially worried about patients in intensive care.

"There are patients who are connected to machines," Suarez said. "And of course, there's no water."

Dr. Julio Castro, one of the leaders of the non-profit Doctors for Health, reported on Twitter that about half of 23 hospitals surveyed were grappling with failing generators.

Another health advocacy group, CODEVIDA, reported that thousands of dialysis patients were going without treatment as a result of the outage. Advocates were particularly concerned about patients who rely on respirators and the lack of air conditioning in several hospitals, which is needed to keep facilities cool in order to prevent the spread of bacteria.

By early Friday afternoon, residents and pro-government state broadcaster VTV reported that power was returning to parts of Caracas. Traffic lights in several neighborhoods were back on, while at one office building the electricity flickered to life and then turned off.

Venezuela's economic woes are likely to increase as U.S. sanctions against its oil industry take their toll, part of an international effort to push Maduro from power. The United States and about 50 other countries

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back Guaido's contention that he is the interim president of Venezuela, and that Maduro's re-election last year was illegitimate because major opposition leaders were barred from running.

Guaido and Maduro, whose chief backers are Russia and Cuba, planned rival demonstrations as they seek to energize supporters.

"The electricity war declared and directed by the imperialist United States against our people will be overcome!" Maduro wrote on Twitter.

The state-owned electricity operator blamed the outage on an act of "sabotage" at the Guri Dam, one of the world's largest hydroelectric stations and the cornerstone of Venezuela's electrical grid. Information Minister Jorge Rodriguez described it as a cyberattack on the dam's operating system which signals to machines whether to boost or diminish power based on capacity and demand.

"By attacking the automated control system, the machines stop as a protective mechanism," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said only Maduro was to blame.

"Maduro's policies bring nothing but darkness," Pompeo wrote on social media. "No food. No medicine. Now, no power. Next, no Maduro."

High-ranking officials have been accused in U.S. court proceedings of looting government money earmarked for the electrical system. Venezuelan authorities routinely accuse the opposition of sabotaging infrastructure, though rarely provide evidence.

The government keeps home power bills exceptionally low — just a couple dollars a month — relying heavily on subsidies from the Maduro administration, which is under increasing financial duress.

Venezuela's normally hyper-active social media was muted during the blackout. Those who managed to get a signal used the hashtag #SinLuz — without light in English — to share images of cities resembling ghost towns.

One user posted a video of a nurse manually pumping air into the lungs of an infant. Others posted photos of long lines of cars at gas stations in hopes of getting fuel. A man anguished that he'd gone 17 hours without hearing from his mother.

Netblocks, a non-government group based in Europe that monitors internet censorship, said online connectivity data indicates the outage is the largest on recent record in Latin America.

As the blackout wore on, the patience of many Venezuelans was wearing thin. On both Thursday and Friday evening, residents in still darkened neighborhoods banged pots and pans in protest. Business owners griped over losses certain to compound an already bleak economic outlook.

"I can't work. I can't do anything," said Veronica Padrino, a lawyer who attended a women's day rally in Caracas. "I can't communicate with my family."

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Associated Press writers Jorge Rueda in Caracas, and Christine Armario and Joshua Goodman in Bogota, Colombia, contributed to this report.

## Bill Shine resigns from White House communications post

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bill Shine, a former Fox News executive who took over as President Donald Trump's communications director last summer, exited the White House on Friday, the latest person to step away from a job that has become a revolving door within the turbulent West Wing.

Shine will join the president's Republican re-election campaign, the White House said in a laudatory statement that quoted Trump and other top White House officials.

When Shine joined the administration, he was viewed as an experienced hand whose television experience could help shape Trump's message. But like others before him, Shine was forced to grapple with a president who preferred to run his own communications strategy via tweet. In recent weeks, Trump had expressed frustration that Shine had not done more to improve his press coverage, said two people close to the president who were not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.



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The announcement took many in the West Wing by surprise, though there were signs of unrest lately. Shine did not join Trump on his high-stakes trip to Vietnam for a summit with North Korea's Kim Jong Un.

Still, Trump said in a statement: "We will miss him in the White House, but look forward to working together on the 2020 Presidential Campaign, where he will be totally involved."

Shine was Sean Hannity's top producer for several years at Fox News Channel, rising to network leadership when founding chief executive Roger Ailes was forced out following sexual misconduct allegations. Shine wasn't accused of such misdeeds, but he was named in lawsuits as someone who tried to keep a lid on allegations of bad workplace behavior instead of trying to root it out.

He was known as Ailes' operations man and enforcer, the one who tried to put his boss' directives into action.

Shine's work at Fox, and the close relationship the network has with the Trump White House, was given new attention this week through a lengthy story in *The New Yorker* magazine. That article led to the Democratic National Committee saying it would not partner with Fox on any debates involving 2020 presidential contenders.

Shine called his eight-month stint in the White House "the most rewarding experience of my entire life."

Shine succeeded Hope Hicks as communications director. Others who served in that role were Anthony Scaramucci, who lasted just 11 days, Sean Spicer and Mike Dubke.

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Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire and David Bauder in New York and Catherine Lucey in Washington contributed to this report.

## Technology brings rugged Iditarod race to global audience

By RACHEL D'ORO Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Far from competitors tackling the frozen wilderness in Alaska's Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, a dozen people are holed up inside an Anchorage hotel behind banks of computers, tracking the punishing route and connecting with global fans seeking a real-time link to the off-the-grid sport.

As of Friday, 51 mushers are traveling long stretches between remote village checkpoints with no other company but the dogs pulling their sleds. But they're not competing in a vacuum on the 1,000-mile (1,600-kilometer) trail that spans two mountain ranges and the frozen Yukon River before it heads up the wind-scrubbed Bering Sea Coast to the finish line in the Gold Rush town of Nome.

Their progress is monitored from several hotel rooms whose 24/7 occupants are the Iditarod's electronic eyes and ears. Technology has increasingly made the 47-year-old race more immediate to fans and safer for competitors, said Chas St. George, acting CEO of the Iditarod Trail Committee, the race's governing board.

"This is a really low-tech event when you look at it from that perspective, but high-tech research has always been a huge part of the race," he said Wednesday during a tour of the Iditarod's hotel command post.

This is where volunteers and race contractors monitor the dog teams through sleds equipped with GPS trackers that allow fans to follow them online in real time and organizers to ensure no one is missing. Some serve as aircraft dispatchers for a cadre of pilots who ferry supplies as well as mushers and dogs that drop out.

Others process live video streamed from checkpoints along the rugged trail, using satellite dishes. Some volunteers handle race-standing updates sent through equipment first tested last year, making it possible to activate a super-size hot spot in the most remote places with satellite connections.

Long gone are the days where some race updates came through amateur radio and faxes, said Reece Roberts, a supervisor in the internal communications room who has been a race volunteer for 14 years.

"Now we use satellite phones and we have satellite modems essentially for data transfers," he said. "It's very slow, but it works."

In one room, Art Aldrich worked Wednesday in relative darkness, his face illuminated by his computer screen. He monitored a live video of two Iditarod pundits at the Nikolai checkpoint, 687 miles (1,100 ki-

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ometers) from the finish line on the race's third day. Veteran musher Matt Failor appeared on the feed in real time.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Matt Failor — live from Nikolai," Iditarod Insider interviewer Greg Heister announced, asking how the race was going for him.

"So far, so good," Failor said, grinning. "Are we really live right now?" He waved at the camera.

Aldrich also relays questions from live video chats to camera operators in the field. He said it's not the most sophisticated system, but it gets the job done. "The fans love it," he said.

The live chats, which are posted in the paid subscription platform Iditarod Insider, have attracted an online community from at least 164 countries, according to Mike Vann in the technology war-room.

"It's pretty amazing when we start interacting with them to see where people are joining us from," he said.

This year, race organizers introduced Gia, a digital sled dog mascot with a squeaky voice that fans can chat with through Facebook messenger. Before the race, the cartoon dog even helped organizers recruit donations of straw used for dog beds at the checkpoints, Iditarod officials said.

Veteran musher Scott Janssen is sitting out the race, but like other fans, is following the action through the GPS-rigged sleds required of every participant. As a competitor, he sees the benefits of GPS tracking and the satellite phones that mushers can now carry for emergencies.

Such technological additions make him feel safer — to a point.

"But to be honest, I would say conservatively that 90 percent of mushers would prefer that we had nothing at all on our sleds," Janssen said, adding that the technology eliminates the remote aspect of the race. "It takes some of the toughness away from it. And that's why we're doing that race, is to prove we can do this on our own, completely."

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Associated Press writer Mark Thiessen in Anchorage contributed to this report.

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Follow Rachel D'Oro at <https://twitter.com/rdoro> .

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This story has been corrected to show that the quote from the Iditarod interviewer was misattributed.

## Trump surveys devastation, pays respects to tornado victims

By JILL COLVIN and JAY REEVES Associated Press

BEAUREGARD, Ala. (AP) — Standing near the slab that's all that is left of one family's garage, President Donald Trump on Friday surveyed the devastation wrought by a powerful tornado that ripped through a rural Alabama town, uprooting trees, tearing homes from their foundations and killing nearly two dozen people.

"We saw things that you wouldn't believe," said Trump, overlooking a debris field strewn with branches and other wreckage in Beauregard, which bore the brunt of Sunday's storm. Mangled metal siding, wood planks, piping and electric wires lay strewn on the ground, along with remnants of everyday life: clothing, a sofa, a bottle of Lysol cleaner and a welcome mat encrusted with dirt.

Trump and the first lady spent the afternoon meeting with survivors, victims' families and volunteers trying to rebuild after the massive tornado carved a path of destruction nearly a mile wide, killing 23 people, including four children and a couple in their 80s, with ten victims belonging to a single extended family.

The trip was a familiar one for Trump, who, now in the third year of his presidency, has traveled to the sites of numerous disasters and tragedies, including hurricanes, shootings and wildfires.

The day began with an aerial survey of the area by helicopter, which flew over swaths of land where trees had been flattened. Trump and his wife, Melania, also visited a church serving as a makeshift disaster relief center for survivors. He later observed a moment of silence before white wooden crosses commemorating each of the victims.

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Head bowed, Trump and his wife held hands as they paused in front of each of the markers. Trump shook his head as he stood in front of one, which had been decorated with a tiny pair of children's sneakers.

Trump has, at times, struggled with his role as consoler-in-chief during trips to survey damage and meet with tragedy victims. He memorably tossed paper towels into a crowd as he surveyed damage following hurricanes in Puerto Rico — a move that some saw as inappropriate given the circumstances — and marveled at a yacht that floodwaters had deposited on a family's property during a trip to the Carolinas.

"At least you got a nice boat out of the deal," Trump told the family. He was caught on camera telling a person to whom he had just handed food to "have a good time."

This time, however, Trump appeared to avoid any such distractions aside from some hubbub caused by his decision to sign Bibles, which Providence Baptist Church had been distributing, along with clothing and other supplies, including diapers, toiletries and personal care products.

Before signing autographs or posing for photos with the volunteers there, Trump thanked law enforcement officials and other first responders, as well as Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, who oversees the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which is assisting state and local response efforts.

"I wanted to come the day it happened," he said, adding that Gov. Kay Ivey had asked him to wait.

Before leaving the church, Trump posed for a photograph with a fifth-grade volunteer and signed the child's Bible, said Ada Ingram, a local volunteer. Ingram said the president also signed her sister's Bible.

The pastor, Rusty Sowell, said the president's visit was uplifting and will help bring attention to a community that will need a long time to recover.

"This is a marathon, not a sprint," Sowell said.

Earlier, Trump spent time with three families who lost loved ones, hearing their stories and dispensing hugs. He also met privately with survivors and family members, including a woman mourning the loss of 10 relatives.

"What they've been through is incredible," Trump said after emerging from the meeting.

Before Trump arrived in Beauregard, Renee Frazier stood amid bricks and lumber that used to be her mother's home and waved as the helicopter carrying Trump passed overhead. Minutes before, Frazier, whose mother survived the tornado, had been arguing with relatives who opposed Trump's visit, calling it more about politics than compassion.

Frazier disagreed.

"I want the president here to see what happened to my mom's house," she said. "I want him right here on this land because my mom is about love and unity."

Down the road, where several people died, Trump supporter Bobby Spann said he hoped the president had learned "how to be a Southerner and how to respect people" during his brief visit.

Spann said he also hoped Trump realized how much help is needed.

"Houses need to be replaced. You can't help the dead folks, but you can try to help the ones that's still living," said Spann, chewing on a yellowroot twig. The tornado had partially peeled away the roof of Spann's mobile home.

Trump had said before the visit that he'd instructed FEMA to give Alabama "the A Plus treatment" as it recovers — rhetoric that stood in contrast to Trump's response to disasters on less politically friendly territory. Alabama supported Trump by a wide margin in the 2016 presidential election, and he carried about 60 percent of the vote in Lee County, where Beauregard is located. Blue Trump flags flying outside homes are a frequent sight in the town, and many were seen waving Friday.

In the months after wildfires scorched California, a Democrat-led state that voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, Trump threatened to cut off federal aid unless the state embraced forest management policies he championed.

He also engaged in a sustained back-and-forth with lawmakers from hurricane-whipped Puerto Rico, whose pro-statehood governor identifies as a Democrat. Trump repeatedly blamed the U.S. territory for its problems and noted how much money recovery efforts had cost the federal government.

The administration also considered redirecting disaster aid from those places to pay for Trump's long-promised border wall but ultimately decided to target other funding sources.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville in Washington contributed to this report.

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

## Manafort case sparks conversation about sentence disparities

By MICHELLE R. SMITH Associated Press

A judge's decision to sentence President Donald Trump's former campaign chairman to less than four years in prison — a fraction of the penalty called for in government guidelines — sparked widespread anger Friday and opened up a conversation about whether the justice system treats different crimes and criminals fairly.

Judge T.S. Ellis III's comment that Paul Manafort had lived an "otherwise blameless life" was particularly galling to those who pointed out that Manafort's past included work for people such as Philippine strongman Ferdinand Marcos and Congolese dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.

Sen. Cory Booker, a Democratic presidential candidate, told "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" Thursday night that the criminal justice system "treats you better if you're rich and guilty than if you're poor and innocent" and preys upon the most vulnerable such as "poor folks, mentally ill folks, addicted folks and overwhelmingly black and brown folks."

Asked if he was shocked, Booker replied, "No, this criminal justice system can't surprise me anymore."

Manafort, 69, was convicted by a jury in Virginia of eight felony tax and bank fraud charges. Probation officials calculated a guideline range of 19.5 to 24.5 years.

Many observers raised the case of Crystal Mason, a black woman from Texas who was sentenced in state court last year to five years in prison for voting illegally in 2016, while she was on supervised release from a federal conviction. Mason said she didn't know she wasn't allowed to vote.

Her lawyer, Alison Grinter, said Friday that the judge's comment about Manafort being "blameless" was infuriating, especially considering that he is awaiting sentencing on a different case in Washington, where he faces up to 10 more years. The Washington judge who will sentence him next week has the option to impose that sentence either concurrently or consecutively.

"I'm absolutely aghast. I hardly recognize the judicial system," Grinter said. Mason and "so many other folks like her have come to expect this kind of disparity. It's only now that we're paying attention to it."

Grinter pointed out that her client's original crime was a single tax-related federal charge, and she received the maximum sentence. Manafort, on the other hand, received more than 15 years less than what was called for under the low end of the guideline range.

The most recent statistics from the U.S. Sentencing Commission show that, in fiscal year 2017, roughly half of all federal sentences came in below the guidelines, while only 3 percent went above the guidelines. Roughly three-fourths of all tax cases came in below the guidelines in that fiscal year, according to the commission.

In Manafort's case, the judge called the guideline range "excessive." During Thursday's hearing, he noted that the guidelines were recently changed to calculate higher sentences in tax cases. As a result, many tax evaders who similarly avoided millions of dollars in taxes over the years received much lighter sentences, sometimes less than a year. Defense lawyers cited those cases, and Ellis said he arrived at his sentence in part to avoid unwarranted disparities.

Ellis, who was born in Bogota, Colombia, was appointed to the bench by President Ronald Reagan in 1987.

A review of several of Ellis' cases by The Associated Press found that he is sometimes lenient, meting out lower-than-recommended sentences in multiple fraud and drug cases this year and last. In one drug case, he sentenced a defendant to just over four years, nearly five years less than the nine years called for by the lower end of the guideline range.

However, most of his sentencing departures could be measured in months.

In another high-profile case in 2009, Ellis sentenced Congressman William J. Jefferson to 13 years in

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prison for bribery and fraud, significantly less than the 27 to 33 years calculated for Jefferson under the sentencing guidelines. Still, it was the longest-ever prison sentence for a member of Congress. Ellis later released him after he had served less than half his sentence due to a Supreme Court ruling in another bribery case.

Jefferson, who is black, told the AP on Friday that he believed Manafort's sentence was "grossly inequitable."

"I just count it as another recognition of a fault in the system that seems to be ever-present when it comes to comparing how blacks and whites who are similarly situated are treated differently," he said. The disparity "keeps showing its ugly face."

Marc Mauer, executive director of The Sentencing Project, a group that works to reform sentencing policy and address racial disparities in the criminal justice system, said the system is a function of race and class disparities.

Manafort and other wealthy white-collar defendants are able to afford the best defense money can buy, he said. He questioned why the legal system does not "provide those same resources to the indigent defendants, who are the bulk of the people going through the court system?"

Another way to look at the issue, he said, is "that many people are getting harsh sentences. If there's one thing that characterizes the American court system, it's that our sentences are very severe by any international standards."

Not everyone thought the sentence was too lenient. Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani said Manafort had been treated out of proportion to what he had done. Giuliani blamed prosecutors for what he called "excessive zeal."

"He's not a terrorist. He's not an organized criminal," said Giuliani, who was known for his tough-on-crime approach when he was mayor of New York City. "He's a white-collar criminal."

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Associated Press writers Errin Haines Whack in Philadelphia, Matthew Barakat in Alexandria, Virginia, Jonathan Lemire in New York and AP researcher Jennifer Farrar in New York contributed to this report.

## **Biden eyes fundraising challenge amid new sense of urgency**

**By STEVE PEOPLES and JULIE PACE Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — On the cusp of another White House run, Joe Biden faces a daunting challenge that could complicate his path to the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination: money.

Those close to the former vice president believe he would start off at a fundraising disadvantage compared to would-be rivals, whose campaigns have benefited from an early flood of small-dollar donations from the most liberal wing of the party. Biden, a 76-year-old lifetime politician with strong connections to the party's establishment, would be forced to rely on an "old-school grind-it-out" plan to generate campaign cash from wealthy individual donors, according to a person with direct knowledge of Biden's thinking.

Questions about money are among the nagging issues Biden is still considering as he weighs launching a campaign. He's decamped this week to St. Croix, a favorite Biden family vacation spot in the Caribbean, to discuss the remaining roadblocks with his wife, Jill.

Biden has long disliked the time-intensive process of political fundraising. But with virtually no campaign operation in key states, he'd need to generate millions of dollars in a matter of weeks should he enter what is expected to be the most expensive presidential campaign in U.S. history.

"He obviously has a lot of friends among the Democratic donor community," said David Axelrod, one of former President Barack Obama's top political advisers. "But fundraising today is turbo-charged by social media. He's not of the social media generation."

The fundraising question comes as Biden allies across the country feel an increasing sense of urgency for the Democratic heavyweight to declare his intentions. He has repeatedly hinted that he's close to making a decision, but those close to him now believe that an announcement, which some expected in January, might be delayed until April.

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Democrats in key primary states are warning that it's becoming more difficult to persuade Biden holdouts to be patient as a crowded field of presidential contenders such as Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, California Sen. Kamala Harris and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders actively fight for their support.

In South Carolina, which holds the first primary contest in the South, Charleston County Democratic Party Chairman Brady Quirk-Garvan said Biden's indecision has created a holding pattern for potential staffers and supporters. As time drags on, he said, he's fielding calls from some who are confused by Biden's indecision.

"Several have said it's concerning that he can't seem to make up his mind," Quirk-Garvan said. "If you're going to run for president, most people want someone who's pretty damn sure they want to be president."

Biden has made clear to his family, friends and advisers that he wants to run, but he has held off giving his team the final go-ahead to launch a campaign. Among the factors giving him pause is concern about the impact a presidential run would have on his family, particularly given his son Hunter's complicated personal history.

Even so, Biden adviser Steve Ricchetti has been signaling to potential Democratic rivals that Biden is expected to run. Other advisers including Greg Schultz and Peter Kavanaugh have been in regular contact with potential staff across the country to ensure Biden could quickly ramp up a national organization.

Those close to Biden expect him to signal his decision — at least internally — in the coming days to be followed by an intense period of hiring ahead of an April announcement should he decide to run.

Biden's likely entry into the race was among the factors that led former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg to decide this week that he would not launch a campaign. Biden and Bloomberg spoke after the former mayor announced his decision, according to a person with knowledge of the conversation.

That person, like others in the story, spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations.

Biden has openly raised questions about the social media and fundraising landscape, which has changed dramatically since he first joined Obama on the Democrats' 2008 presidential ticket.

Several 2020 Democratic contenders have condemned super PACs in recent weeks. Warren, who has been struggling to raise money, took it a step further late last month, vowing not to court wealthy donors at all.

Biden acknowledged during a recent appearance at the University of Delaware that fundraising is a major consideration.

"We also are making a decision on whether or not we can fund this campaign on my conditions because I will not be part of a super PAC — and to see whether or not it's realistic," Biden said. "An awful lot of people have offered to help — the people, who are usually the biggest donors in the Democratic Party, and, I might add, some major Republican folks."

A frequent headliner on the Democratic money circuit, Biden is well-known among donors but does not have a pool of big-dollar fundraisers lined up ready to commit to his campaign.

And his fundraising track record is underwhelming at best.

He faced little more than token opposition in his long run as a Delaware senator, requiring a relatively light fundraising burden. And in his 2008 presidential run, Biden raised barely half of the \$20 million fundraising goal he set before dropping out of the race following a weak finish in the Iowa caucuses.

He was outraised by four other Democratic candidates in the final three months of his campaign, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

With no clear front-runner in the crowded 2020 Democratic field, many of Obama's donors are holding off on making commitments to one candidate or plan to give smaller amounts to multiple candidates in the coming months. Biden's entry into the race is unlikely to change that approach, according to a Democrat who has spoken to several Obama donors.

But at least one Obama donor, Don Peebles, a two-time member of the former president's national finance team, expressed confidence in Biden's fundraising ability.

"I think he'd raise more money than several of the top candidates combined," Peebles said, vowing to support Biden if he runs. "He's the best chance that the Democrats have to win in November."

Some Biden loyalists are not as patient.

In Iowa, Roxana Moritz, who was part of Biden's Iowa steering committee during his failed 2008 bid, expressed concern that by waiting so long, Biden was allowing other candidates to peel off some of his supporters.

"The longer it goes, the harder it gets" for the former vice president to consolidate support, said Moritz, the Scott County auditor.

While she's still certain to support Biden if he runs, Moritz is getting anxious.

"I wish that he would be clear on his plans," she said.

Pace reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Meg Kinnard in Columbia, S.C.; Alexandra Jaffe in Des Moines, Iowa; and Hunter Woodall in Manchester, N.H., contributed to this report.

## Chelsea Manning jailed for refusing to testify on WikiLeaks

By **MATTHEW BARAKAT** Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, who served years in prison for leaking one of the largest troves of classified documents in U.S. history, was sent to jail Friday for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating WikiLeaks.

U.S. District Judge Claude Hilton ordered Manning to jail for civil contempt of court after a brief hearing in federal court in Alexandria in which Manning confirmed she has no intention of testifying. She told the judge she "will accept whatever you bring upon me."

Manning has said she objects to the secrecy of the grand jury process and already revealed everything she knows at her court-martial. She said prosecutors have granted her immunity for her testimony, which eliminates her ability to invoke her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

"I will not participate in a secret process that I morally object to, particularly one that has been used to entrap and persecute activists for protected political speech," she said in a statement released after she was taken into custody.

The judge said she will remain jailed until she testifies or until the grand jury concludes its work.

Manning's lawyers had asked that she be sent to home confinement instead of the jail because of complications she faces in receiving gender-affirming medical care.

The judge said U.S. marshals can handle her medical care. Prosecutor Tracy McCormick said the jail and the marshals have assured the government that her medical needs can be met.

Amy Bertsch, spokeswoman for the Alexandria jail, confirmed Friday that Manning had been booked.

"Specific details about Ms. Manning's confinement will not be made public due to security and privacy concerns," Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne said in a statement. "We will work closely with the U.S. Marshals to ensure her proper care while she remains at our facility."

Manning acknowledged going into Friday's hearing that she might well be incarcerated at its conclusion. Outside the courthouse, about 10 protesters rallied in her support.

"Obviously, prison is a terrible place," Manning said. "I don't see the purpose to incarcerate people."

Manning served seven years of a 35-year military sentence for leaking a trove of military and diplomatic documents to the anti-secrecy website before then-President Barack Obama commuted her sentence.

The WikiLeaks investigation has been ongoing for a long time. Last year, prosecutors in Alexandria inadvertently disclosed that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is facing unspecified, sealed criminal charges in the district.

WikiLeaks also has emerged as an important part of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible Russian meddling into the 2016 presidential election, as investigators focus on whether President Donald Trump's campaign knew Russian hackers were going to provide emails to WikiLeaks stolen from Democratic organizations, including presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's campaign.

But there is no indication that the Alexandria grand jury's investigation of WikiLeaks is related to the Mueller investigation.

McCormick said Manning can end the incarceration on the civil charge simply by following the law and

testifying.

"We hope she changes her mind now," McCormick said.

Manning's lawyer, Moira Meltzer-Cohen, said she believes jailing Manning is an act of cruelty given her medical issues, and said there are many documented issues of jails and prisons providing inadequate medical care for transgender inmates. She said Manning's one-bedroom apartment would be a sufficient manner of confinement.

Meltzer-Cohen said after the hearing that the detention order can be appealed, but did not comment on whether such an appeal would be filed.

This story has corrected the attribution of the quote in the 11th paragraph to Chelsea Manning, not her lawyer.

## California harassment investigations cost taxpayers \$1.8M

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The California Legislature racked up more than \$1.8 million in legal costs from sexual harassment investigations during 2018 and the first month of this year when at least nine current or former lawmakers faced allegations of misconduct, according to records obtained by The Associated Press.

The Senate spent \$1.26 million and the Assembly \$571,000, according to the documents provided under the Legislative Open Records Act.

Neither chamber provided specifics on how many investigations the money paid for nor how exactly it was spent, citing attorney-client privilege and other exemptions in the public records act.

But both chambers previously have disclosed hiring outside attorneys during that time to investigate five current or former Assembly members and four current or former senators.

Their behavior ranged from using vulgar language and giving uncomfortable hugs and a "noogie," to forcibly kissing a staff member and, in one case, masturbating in front of a lobbyist.

The spending occurred after accusations of widespread harassment at the Capitol surfaced in October 2017 as the #MeToo movement was roiling Hollywood and major corporations.

Four California lawmakers and multiple staffers eventually resigned, and the Legislature has since revamped its policies for reporting and investigating claims of misbehavior.

"It's not the kind of place you want your taxpayer dollars being used," said Assemblywoman Laura Friedman, a Democrat representing part of Los Angeles and surrounding communities who led the committee to change harassment policies. "The goal of our new policies is to try to intervene much earlier before we get to a point where you need to have a very large investigation."

A new "Workplace Conduct Unit" debuted in February to look into all allegations of harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, based on someone's race, gender or other protected classes. The findings of major investigations will then go to a panel of outside experts who will evaluate them and recommend action to the Legislature.

Lawmakers approved \$1.5 million to get the four-person office up and running last year, and its proposed annual budget is \$1.7 million. Some investigations could still be sent to outside lawyers, but most complaints will be handled internally, said Julia Johnson, the head of the unit.

"We expect that as this new process moves forward, it will be both effective for employees in stopping harassment and efficient for taxpayers in how it achieves that critical goal," Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins said in an emailed statement.

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon said his priority is for staff to feel safe and to create a more respectful, diverse and civil culture.

"For that to happen, we have to investigate workplace misconduct thoroughly and consistently. I will not put a price on the safety of our employees," he said in an emailed statement.

In 2018, the Legislature went regularly to outside lawyers to look into complaints. Firms hired by the



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Assembly in 2018 were: Littler Mendelson P.C., Stoel Rives LLP, and Van Dermyden Maddux Investigations. The Senate, meanwhile, hired the Law Offices of Amy Oppenheimer initially and later retained Van Dermyden Maddux and Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP to handle all investigations.

The decision to put two firms on retainer came as the Senate was taking heat over allegations former Sen. Tony Mendoza harassed multiple young women, including offering an underage employee alcohol and inviting another to his home. The firms are no longer handling sexual harassment investigations for the Senate, said Lizelda Lopez, Atkins' spokeswoman.

Former Senate president Kevin de Leon, who was in charge when the firms were put on retainer, said in a text message that employees' safety was the top priority and that the outside firms were brought in to ensure complaints were "aggressively investigated, free of any political influence."

Neither chamber discloses information about allegations that are not substantiated, making it impossible to know the number of investigations actually completed.

The Senate also paid out a \$350,000 settlement to an employee who said the chamber failed to accommodate her needs after she alleged an Assembly employee raped her; the Assembly said it paid out no settlements during that time.

The Senate did not respond to questions about whether that \$350,000 was part of its legal costs. Republican Assemblyman Steven Choi has introduced a bill that would ban the use of taxpayer money on settlements.

A bill by Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez, a Republican, would require the Legislature to publicly release findings of substantiated investigations into lawmakers and high-level staffers. The Legislature already provides that information to reporters, but it is not required to by law.

Beyond legal costs, the Assembly and Senate together spent \$16,800 hiring an outside consulting firm to conduct a "culture survey" in 2018 to assess whether staff members felt respected and comfortable reporting incidents of harassment to their superiors, among other things.

The money went to a Florida-based firm called TalentKeepers. The company charged \$5 for each employee taking the survey, a total of 2,661 people, according to an invoice.

Kim Nalder, a professor of political science at California State University, Sacramento, surmised the public's reaction to all the spending will vary depending on their feelings about the issues raised by #MeToo. Nearly a year-and-a-half after the movement seized the national spotlight, America still is experiencing a cultural awakening about what behavior now is considered unacceptable, she said.

"Californians who are in the 'zero tolerance' camp are going to be horrified that we're paying to investigate this many examples of gross misbehavior," Nalder said. "And I suspect some older people will feel like it's a reflection of a sensitivity that they may find overblown."

## Abandoned tents, foxholes left behind by IS in Syria

By SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

AL-OMAR OIL FIELD BASE, Syria (AP) — Abandoned tents, vehicles and foxholes to hide from airstrikes are all that are left from evacuated parts of the Islamic State group's last shred of territory in Syria.

An exclusive video obtained by The Associated Press on Friday showed parts of the tiny pocket of land in the village of Baghouz vacated recently by Islamic State group members and their families. The area has been under attack since September by the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces who in recent weeks have advanced on the town from three sides, besieging it.

Hundreds of IS fighters, along with thousands of civilians, mostly family members, have evacuated the IS-held area after the SDF alternately applied military pressure and allowed time for evacuees to come out. In the last two weeks, many fighters appeared to be among those evacuating.

But some IS militants are still clinging to a patch of land inside the village and are vowing to fight.

In Washington, a senior defense official estimated that nearly 20,000 people, including 3,500 to 4,000 adult males, have emerged from Baghouz since Feb. 20. The official, who could not be identified by name under Pentagon ground rules, said nearly all of the 20,000, including women and children, are seen as IS

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followers or adherents.

Baghouz in eastern Syria is the very last speck of territory held by IS, which once occupied a territory the size of Britain over areas straddling both Iraq and Syria that it called a "caliphate." The coalition effort to destroy IS has taken place amid Syria's nearly 8-year-old civil war.

The senior U.S. defense official said the U.S. and the SDF had greatly underestimated not only the number of IS fighters and affiliated civilians holed up in the final slice of IS territory, but also the amount of time it would take to finish off the fight. The official said it would not be a surprise, based on current conditions, if it took another couple of weeks.

The official said the SDF is believed to have about 5,000 IS fighters in captivity, of which about 4,000 are Iraqis and Syrians. The other 1,000 or so are "foreign" fighters from dozens of other countries, the official said.

The video obtained by AP was shot on Wednesday by a fighter from the People's Protection Units, or YPG, the main Kurdish militia which is part of the Syrian Democratic Forces. It showed abandoned tents and vehicles, foxholes in which to hide from airstrikes, weapons and other items left behind by the extremists.

A burned pickup truck and several motorcycles could be seen, as well as scattered pieces of clothing, blankets and cases of ammunition.

Under the cover of heavy coalition bombing on March 1-2, SDF forces advanced on the besieged tent encampment, leaving a corridor for residents to leave. During the airstrikes, an ammunition depot and vehicles packed with weapons were targeted, setting off large explosions and a fire that lasted for at least two days. In the video, fire was still smoldering from some tents, which caught fire in the explosion.

Following that operation, thousands of residents and many fighters evacuated Baghouz over the next four days. But on Friday, only a small group came out, raising speculations that a renewed military offensive was being planned.

Evacuated civilians have described terrible conditions inside the village, with food scarce and people forced to hide underground to escape airstrikes and shelling by the SDF. Many of them were also adamant supporters of the militant group, who defended its tactics.

The evacuees have either been sent to a displaced people's camp to the north or suspected fighters have moved to detention facilities. The U.S.-led coalition takes part in screening and interrogating the evacuees.

The aid group International Rescue Committee said at least 6,000 women and children arrived from Baghouz to al-Hol displaced people's camp on Thursday alone, bringing the total of evacuees over two days to 12,000. The camp, IRC said, has reached "a breaking point," with over 55,000 arriving there since December.

The total population of the camp is now at 65,000 as aid workers are overwhelmed with shortage of tents and resources. At least 100 people, mostly children, died en route to al-Hol or shortly after arriving due to a combination of malnutrition and hypothermia. More than 240 unaccompanied children also arrived at the camp, as well as many with serious injuries.

Separately and on the other side of Syria, Turkey's defense minister said on Friday Turkish and Russian troops will begin patrols of Syria's northwestern Idlib region, where the two countries have created a de-escalation zone.

Hulusi Akar also said that restrictions on Turkey's use of the airspace above the Idlib and Afrin regions have been lifted, signaling the possible use of drones or aircraft to secure those areas.

Russia and Turkey brokered a cease-fire in September for Idlib, the last major stronghold of Syria's rebels. The agreement averted a Syrian government offensive, but has come under strain as al-Qaida-linked militants have seized towns and villages from rival insurgents.

In comments aired live on several Turkish news channels, Akar said Russia would patrol the border outside Idlib while Turkey would patrol inside the de-escalation zone.

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Associated Press National Security writer Robert Burns contributed from Washington.

## Women's national soccer team players sue for equitable pay

By ANNE M. PETERSON AP Sports Writer

Three months before beginning their defense of their Women's World Cup title, American players escalated their legal dispute with the U.S. Soccer Federation over equal treatment and pay.

Players filed a federal discrimination lawsuit against the federation Friday, alleging ongoing "institutionalized gender discrimination" that includes unequal pay with their counterparts on the men's national team.

The women's team has often championed equal rights issues and sought more equitable pay during collective bargaining two years ago.

"I think a lot of people look to us and our team and the collective voice that we have and what we've stood for, for inspiration and for power, and as an ally in this broader fight for equality and human rights, really," said winger Megan Rapinoe, a co-captain and veteran of 149 international appearances.

The 28 members of the current women's player pool filed the lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles under the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The lawsuit, which seeks class-action status, was filed on International Women's Day.

Players seek damages that include back pay.

"We believe it is our duty to be the role models that we've set out to be and fight to what we know we legally deserve," forward Christen Press told The Associated Press. "And hopefully in that way it inspires women everywhere."

The U.S. Women's National Team Players Association is not party to the lawsuit but said in a statement it "supports the plaintiffs' goal of eliminating gender-based discrimination by USSF."

The USSF did not have an immediate comment.

The men's and women's U.S. national teams have separate collective bargaining agreements, and their pay is structured differently. That means there is no dollar-to-dollar salary comparison.

The lawsuit claims that from March 2013 through Dec. 31, 2016, when the previous collective bargaining agreement expired, players on the women's team could make a maximum salary of \$72,000, plus bonuses for winning non-tournament games as well as World Cup appearances and victories, and for Olympic placement.

"A comparison of the WNT and MNT pay shows that if each team played 20 friendlies in a year and each team won all 20 friendlies, female WNT players would earn a maximum of \$99,000 or \$4,950 per game, while similarly situated male MNT players would earn an average of \$263,320 or \$13,166 per game against the various levels of competition they would face," the lawsuit says.

It concludes that a top-tier women's player would make only 38 percent of a similarly situated men's player.

A pay disparity was very apparent at the World Cup: In 2014, the federation gave the men's roster a performance bonus of nearly \$5.4 million after the U.S. went out in the round of 16 in Brazil. The women's team received a bonus of \$1.72 million after winning the 2015 World Cup in Canada.

The last time the U.S. men made the World Cup field (for Brazil) male players selected to the roster received a \$55,000 bonus, while the women received \$15,000 each for making the 2015 World Cup, according to court documents. Additionally, the men shared a \$2 million bonus for qualifying, while the women shared \$300,000.

The USSF has long maintained that any disparity is the result of separate collective bargaining agreements.

Compensation for the women includes a guaranteed salary and also salaries paid by the USSF for their time with clubs in the National Women's Soccer League. The men get paid based on roster selection for appearances for friendlies and tournaments.

While star players on the women's team, like forward Alex Morgan, can make as much as their male counterparts because of endorsement deals, the disparity becomes greater for players with lesser profiles.

Terms of the collective bargaining agreements have not been made public.

A group of players filed a complaint in 2016 with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that alleged wage discrimination by the federation. The new lawsuit effectively ends that EEOC complaint, brought by Morgan, Rapinoe, Becky Sauerbrunn, Carli Lloyd and former goalkeeper Hope Solo. The play-

ers received a right-to-sue letter from the EEOC last month.

Kathryn H. Ruemmler, a lawyer representing the federation, wrote in a May 2016 letter to the EEOC that over the previous four years, women's national team players averaged almost \$280,000, a figure \$90,000 more than men's national team players. She pointed out that women receive benefits the men don't, including severance pay, medical insurance, maternity leave, child care and a relocation allowance.

Ruemmler also said men's games generated about \$144 million from 2008-15, while women's matches generated \$53 million, and television ratings for men's games from 2013-15 averaged twice the figure for women's matches.

But those figures were for years prior to the women's 2015 World Cup victory and also did not include the men's failure to reach the 2018 World Cup. The women's team brought in \$6.6 million in profit in 2015, compared to less than \$2 million for the men's team.

Following the EEOC action, the women took the fight for equality into contract negotiations and struck a collective bargaining agreement covering 2017-21.

Players received raises in base pay and bonuses as well as better provisions for travel and accommodations, including increased per diems. It also gave the players some control of certain licensing and marketing rights.

The lawsuit filed Friday seeks "an adjustment of the wage rates and benefits" for the women.

"At the heart of this whole issue we believe that it's the right thing. We believe that there has been discrimination against us," Rapinoe said. "And while we have fought very hard and for a long time, whether that be through our CBA or through our players association, putting ourselves in the best possible position that we can to get the best deal that we can, we still feel that we don't have what we're trying to achieve, which is equality in the workplace."

More AP soccer: <https://apnews.com/apf-Soccer> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## **Sanders' 'Medicare for All' expands long-term care benefits**

**By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Bernie Sanders is raising the stakes of the "Medicare for All" debate by expanding his proposal to include long-term care, a move that is forcing other Democratic presidential candidates to take a stand on addressing one of the biggest gaps in the U.S. health care system.

Medicare for All is unlikely to advance in the GOP-controlled Senate, but it's a defining issue in the early days of the Democratic primary and candidates have pointed to their support of Sanders' legislation as proof of their progressive bona fides.

Some moderate Democrats have criticized the cost of such an expansive proposal and by adding the long-term care provision, Sanders could further expose that divide.

So far, 2020 candidates Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Kamala Harris of California say they'll support Sanders' more ambitious bill. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts also backed the 2017 version of Medicare for All but has not said how long-term care might affect that.

Sanders' move, confirmed by his office, follows action by Medicare for All allies in the House to incorporate a generous long-term care benefit in their newly introduced legislation. Medicare for All would replace the current mix of private and government financing for health care with a system paid for by the government and funded by higher taxes

As with the rest of Medicare for All, supporters aren't saying how they would pay for long-term care, which experts estimate could cost several hundred billion dollars a year. Several independent estimates for the broader program have ranged from about \$25 trillion over 10 years to \$36 trillion, although supporters say it would be considerably less.

Still, the general idea of a government long-term care program has broad backing.

About two-thirds of U.S. adults favor a long-term care program similar to Medicare, according to an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll last year. That includes 76 percent of Demo-

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crats and 56 percent of Republicans.

The attention from Sanders as well as House Medicare for All leaders Reps. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash. and Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., comes after advocates for disabled people lobbied them to step up coverage for long-term care in the push for a national health care plan.

Many Americans assume that Medicare covers long-term care, but that's not the case. Qualifying for public coverage under Medicaid, which covers low-income people, involves spending down lifetime savings.

Long-term care has "always been the stepchild," said Marc Cohen, a gerontology researcher and professor at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Cohen says he thinks the House plan recently introduced by Jayapal and Dingell would be "unaffordable," but says it recognizes a need. "That is really a positive thing that someone is trying to address it," he added.

Recent state-level efforts on long-term care have sent mixed signals. Maine voters last year rejected a referendum that would have provided home care to all seniors and disabled people regardless of income. But last month the Washington state House approved a plan creating a limited cash benefit to offset long-term care costs. The measure, sent to the state Senate, is financed with a payroll tax on employees.

Only an estimated 7 million to 8 million people have private long-term care insurance, which is costly and generally requires applicants to pass a health screening.

In Congress, the new House Medicare for All bill from Jayapal and Dingell offers the most generous benefit.

People of any age could qualify if illness, injury or age limit their ability to perform at least one "activity of daily living," such as bathing or dressing, or one or more "instrumental activities of daily living," such as managing money or taking prescribed medications. There would be no income or assets tests to qualify, and no copays or deductibles.

The House bill — known as H.R. 1384 — emphasizes home- and community-based care in the "least restrictive setting." But it would also pay for nursing home care. The earlier version of the House bill included a few mentions of long-term care but did not specify benefits.

"We flip the model on its head," said Jayapal. "Instead of saying institutional care is the default we say ... you should be able to be taken care of at home, in your community."

In his 2017 bill, Vermont Independent Sanders left the current low-income Medicaid coverage for long-term care in place. His office says a new edition to be introduced in coming weeks will include added coverage for home- and community-based services, available to people of any age as Medicare for All benefits. Such services can include adult day care, a housekeeper, or home improvements like grab bars in the shower.

The shift by Sanders and his House counterparts came after intensive lobbying from disability rights advocates. The groups were a central part of the coalition that defeated President Donald Trump's effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act and restrict federal financing for Medicaid.

The activists realized during that effort that even Medicare for All came up short on the needs of disabled people, said Nicole Jorwic, policy director for The Arc, which serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"If you don't include long-term supports and services, it cannot be considered a bill that is for all people because it leaves out huge portions of the population, including people with disabilities and aging Americans," Jorwic said.

Online:

House Medicare-for-all bill summary - <https://tinyurl.com/y26keeur>

## Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson is resigning

BY ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson, once seen as a candidate to succeed Jim Mattis as defense secretary, said Friday she is resigning to become president of the University of Texas at El Paso.

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A former U.S. House Republican member from New Mexico and graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Wilson has headed the Air Force since May 2017, making her President Donald Trump's first Senate-confirmed service secretary.

She had been an early skeptic of Trump's interest in creating a Space Force as an independent military department, but she publicly embraced the administration's proposal to Congress last month that would establish a Space Force as a separate service within the Department of the Air Force.

Trump praised Wilson on Twitter Friday. "A strong thank you to Heather for her service," he wrote.

Wilson also had been mentioned as a potential successor to Mattis. After Mattis announced his resignation in late December, Trump named the former deputy defense secretary, Patrick Shanahan, as acting defense secretary. But Trump has not yet nominated anyone for confirmation by the Senate.

In her resignation letter to Trump, Wilson said the University of Texas Board of Regents announced on Friday that she is the sole finalist to become the university's next president, effective Sept. 1. "Under Texas law, my name will be public for three weeks before the regents take a final vote on my appointment," she wrote.

"Upon a favorable vote by the regents, I will resign my position as secretary of the Air Force effective May 31, 2019," she wrote. "This should allow sufficient time for a smooth transition and ensure advocacy during upcoming congressional hearings."

She graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1982 and later earned masters and doctoral degrees as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in England. Wilson is the first graduate of the academy to hold the service's top civilian post. She served in the House from 1998 to 2009. From 1989 to 1991, she served on the National Security Council staff as director for defense policy and arms control for President George H.W. Bush.

By going to the University of Texas at El Paso, Wilson said she was returning to her academic roots. She previously served as president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. Her family home is in New Mexico.

Wilson said she appreciated the opportunity to serve as the Air Force's top civilian official.

"It has been a privilege to serve alongside our airmen over the past two years, and I am proud of the progress that we have made restoring our nation's defense," Wilson said in a statement distributed by the Air Force. "We have improved the readiness of the force; we have cut years out of acquisition schedules and gotten better prices through competition; we have repealed hundreds of superfluous regulations; and we have strengthened our ability to deter and dominate in space."

Rep. Michael Turner, an Ohio Republican, praised Wilson's work as Air Force secretary.

"It is not surprising to me that Heather would be sought out by other organizations looking for her strong leadership," he said. "I wish Heather all the best in her future endeavors. She will be deeply missed. Hopefully, someday we can see Heather Wilson as the first female secretary of defense."

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Associated Press writer Lolita C. Baldor contributed to this report.

## US wages rise by most in decade even as hiring tumbles

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The pace of hiring in the United States fell last month to its lowest point in nearly a year and a half, a surprise drop likely reflecting harsh weather and other temporary factors that led most economists to see the slowdown as a temporary blip.

Employers added just 20,000 jobs, down from a blockbuster 311,000 in January. Even with February's anemic gain, job growth over the past three months has averaged a solid 186,000, enough to lower the unemployment rate over time.

And average hourly pay surged 3.4 percent from a year earlier — the sharpest year-over-year increase in a decade. The unemployment rate also dropped to 3.8 percent, near the lowest level in five decades, from 4 percent in January.

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All told, Friday's monthly employment report from the government pointed to a still-sturdy job market and economy.

"The U.S. labor market is still in good shape," said Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial. "Slower job growth was expected after huge average gains of better than 250,000 over the preceding four months. Job growth should bounce back in March and through the rest of this year."

Last month's pullback in hiring does follow signs that U.S. economic growth is probably slowing because of a weaker global economy, a trade war between the United States and China and signs of caution among American consumers. Those factors have led many analysts to forecast anemic growth in the first three months of this year.

But most economists still cautioned against reading too much into February's sluggish pace of hiring. The monthly employment data can be volatile. During the nearly decade-long recovery from the Great Recession, job growth has sometimes plunged in a single month — to 15,000 in May 2016, for example, and to 18,000 in September 2017 — only to rebound to healthy levels in the months that followed.

And February's increase in average pay suggests that businesses are stepping up their efforts to attract and keep workers. The year-over-year increase of 3.4 percent in February is up from a corresponding figure of just 2.6 percent a year ago.

Julia Pollak, a labor economist at jobs marketplace ZipRecruiter, said many companies are becoming increasingly hungry for workers. The number of job ads on its site that offer to pay for training, she said, jumped 42 percent last year from 2017. And positions that offer flexible hours soared 110 percent — a trend that could draw more women with family responsibilities off the sidelines and into work.

"Employers are finding all these ways to sweeten the deal and invest in their employees," Pollak said.

Carole Witkowski, vice president of human resources at Batteries and Bulbs, said her 700-store retail chain has raised starting hourly pay for workers at its distribution center from \$11 to \$12, with additional raises for those working evening and overnight shifts.

The company has taken other steps, she said: Jobs at the distribution center, located outside Milwaukee, don't require high school diplomas and have been plagued by high turnover. Many workers can find jobs elsewhere. Others haven't worked much before and aren't always used to showing up on time regularly. So about 18 months ago, the company started paying \$250 each quarter to workers who arrive on time every day.

And in the suburbs outside Chicago, when the company received no applications in response to retail job postings last winter, it offered a \$500 signing bonus. That shook loose some applicants.

"We got a little aggressive there," Witkowski said.

Nationally, though, the sluggish hiring and job cuts in February were widespread across industries. Construction cut 31,000 jobs, the most in more than five years, likely because of cold weather. Manufacturing added just 4,000, the fewest in a year and a half, a sign that Trump's trade war has raised costs and lowered exports for many factories.

Retailers cut 6,100 positions, while jobs in a category that mostly includes restaurants and hotels were unchanged.

The unemployment rate fell despite the tepid pace of hiring. The government uses one survey of households to calculate unemployment and a separate survey of businesses to count job growth, and sometimes the results of the two surveys diverge for a single month.

The jobless rate for African-Americans, which hit a record low of 5.9 percent in May and has frequently been celebrated by President Donald Trump, rose for a third straight month in February to 7 percent, its highest point in more than a year. The rate for Hispanic and Latino Americans, though, dropped to a record low of 4.3 percent.

The overall jobless rate fell partly because thousands of federal workers had been temporarily counted as unemployed in January during the partial government shutdown. They returned to work and were counted as unemployed in February.

Also on a positive note, the proportion of part-time workers who'd prefer full-time jobs fell sharply. That

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measure had risen in January during the shutdown as some furloughed government workers took part-time jobs temporarily. But in February, a gauge of what is called underemployment, which includes part-timers who want full-time work and discouraged people no longer looking for jobs, reached 7.3 percent, the lowest level since 2001.

There are signs that the economy is slowing: Consumer confidence fell sharply in January, held back by the shutdown and by a steep fall in stock prices in December. And Americans spent less over the winter holidays, with consumer spending plunging in December by the most in five years.

"We are seeing a fading of the effects of the Trump tax cut and increased government spending," which helped accelerate growth last year, said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at SS Economics.

Analysts generally foresee growth slowing sharply in the first three months of this year to just a 1 percent annual rate, down from a 2.6 percent rate in the October-December quarter. Still, most expect a rebound in the April-June quarter, and there are already signs of one: Consumer confidence rose in February along with the stock market. And more Americans signed contracts to buy homes in January, propelled by lower mortgage rates.

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, March 9, the 68th day of 2019. There are 297 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 9, 1933, Congress, called into special session by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, began its "hundred days" of enacting New Deal legislation.

On this date:

In 1796, the future emperor of the French, Napoleon Bonaparte, married Josephine de Beauharnais (boh-ahr-NAY'). (The couple later divorced.)

In 1841, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *United States v. The Amistad*, ruled 7-1 in favor of a group of illegally enslaved Africans who were captured off the U.S. coast after seizing control of a Spanish schooner, *La Amistad*; the justices ruled that the Africans should be set free.

In 1862, during the Civil War, the ironclads *USS Monitor* and *CSS Virginia* (formerly *USS Merrimac*) clashed for five hours to a draw at Hampton Roads, Virginia.

In 1916, more than 400 Mexican raiders led by Pancho Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico, killing 18 Americans. During the First World War, Germany declared war on Portugal.

In 1935, the animated cartoon character Porky Pig first appeared in the Warner Bros. animated short "I Haven't Got a Hat."

In 1945, during World War II, U.S. B-29 bombers began launching incendiary bomb attacks against Tokyo, resulting in an estimated 100,000 deaths.

In 1954, CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow critically reviewed Wisconsin Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy's anti-communism campaign on "See It Now."

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*, raised the standard for public officials to prove they'd been libeled in their official capacity by news organizations.

In 1976, a cable car in the Italian ski resort of Cavalese fell some 700 feet to the ground when a supporting line snapped, killing 43 people.

In 1977, about a dozen armed Hanafi Muslims invaded three buildings in Washington, D.C., killing one person and taking more than 130 hostages. (The siege ended two days later.)

In 1989, the Senate rejected President George H.W. Bush's nomination of John Tower to be defense secretary by a vote of 53-47. (The next day, Bush tapped Wyoming Rep. Dick Cheney, who went on to win unanimous Senate approval.)

In 1997, gangsta rapper The Notorious B.I.G. (Christopher Wallace) was killed in a still-unsolved drive-by shooting in Los Angeles; he was 24.



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Ten years ago: President Barack Obama lifted George W. Bush-era limits on using federal dollars for embryonic stem cell research.

Five years ago: The search continued for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, a Boeing 777 that had gone missing the day before while over the South China Sea with 239 people on board. (The plane was never found.)

One year ago: A combat veteran who'd been expelled from a treatment program at a California veterans home fatally shot three mental health workers there before taking his own life. Weeks after the shooting that left 17 people dead at a Florida high school, Gov. Rick Scott signed a school-safety bill that included new restrictions on guns, prompting a lawsuit from the National Rifle Association; the bill raised to 21 the minimum age to buy rifles and created a program enabling some teachers and other school employees to carry guns. Martin Shkreli, the former pharmaceutical CEO who'd been vilified for jacking up the price of a lifesaving drug, was sentenced in New York to seven years in prison for securities fraud. A Kentucky neighbor of U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, Rene Boucher, pleaded guilty to a federal charge for tackling the lawmaker in an attack his attorney said was triggered by a dispute over lawn maintenance; Boucher served a 30-day prison sentence.

Today's Birthdays: Former Sen. James L. Buckley, Conservative-N.Y., is 96. Singer Lloyd Price is 86. Actress Joyce Van Patten is 85. Country singer Mickey Gilley is 83. Actress Trish Van Devere is 78. Singer-musician John Cale (The Velvet Underground) is 77. Singer Mark Lindsay (Paul Revere and the Raiders) is 77. Former ABC anchorman Charles Gibson is 76. Rock musician Robin Trower is 74. Singer Jeffrey Osborne is 71. Country musician Jimmie Fadden (The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 71. Actress Jaime Lyn Bauer is 70. Magazine editor Michael Kinsley is 68. TV newscaster Faith Daniels is 62. Actress Linda Fiorentino is 61. Actor Tom Amandes is 60. Actor-director Lonny Price is 60. Country musician Rusty Hendrix (Confederate Railroad) is 59. Actress Juliette Binoche is 55. Rock musician Robert Sledge (Ben Folds Five) is 51. Rock musician Shannon Leto (30 Seconds to Mars) is 49. Rapper C-Murder (AKA C-Miller) is 48. Actor Emmanuel Lewis is 48. Actress Jean Louisa Kelly is 47. Actor Kerr Smith is 47. Actor Oscar Isaac is 40. Comedian Jordan Klepper (TV: "The Daily Show") is 40. Rapper Chingy is 39. Actor Matthew Gray Gubler is 39. Rock musician Chad Gilbert (New Found Glory) is 38. Roots rock musician Ben Tanner (Alabama Shakes) is 36. Actress Brittany Snow is 33. Rapper Bow Wow is 32. Rapper YG is 29. Actor Luis Armand Garcia is 27. Actress Cierra Ramirez is 24.

Thought for Today: "It is the nature of man to rise to greatness if greatness is expected of him." — John Steinbeck, American author (1902-1968).

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## Region DI Information from Julie Milbrandt

Please see the below from Kristie Erickson - the regional Tournament Coordinator and I've included some notes at the bottom ...

Too many teams are not allowed to travel on Saturday for us , along with appraisers being unavailable, to have the tournament on March 9.

While the building in Groton is available for the tournament on March 23, there are many conflicts with teams.

To participate in the State tournament, teams must be reviewed and show they are working on solving the challenge.

On Saturday March 9, we will attempt to review the Groton teams and provide instant challenges for them. Since most are local this seems doable.

If Webster and Rosholt want to attempt travel, they may come also.

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Dean (State Director) will work on setting up reviews for the remaining teams, likely in Watertown, possibly March 23.

Please be sure that your team volunteer is aware of the situation for tomorrow. Thanks!

As long as your team is reviewed, you may register for the State tournament, the registration is online at [disouthdakota.com](http://disouthdakota.com)

Obviously this is disappointing to the team members and all who have worked to bring the tournament together to not be able to hold it. We will hope for better weather to be coming soon! Thank you for your patience and we waited this situation out, hoping for the best!

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR TEAMS?**

We need to get our teams reviewed by an appraisal team. Kristie is working to put people together to do that. We would like to start with Groton teams at 10 am tomorrow. Obviously, if conditions warrant that we all stay home tomorrow, we will have to find another time to put together an appraisal team. We will NOT be having the concession stand and hope to be done by noon. We will be having this at the ELEMENTARY SCHOOL instead of at the HS.