

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, March 11, 2019 ~ Vol. 26 - No. 244 ~ 1 of 40

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

- 1- Help Wanted
- 1- DI Review is tonight
- 2- Truss Pros is Hiring
- 2- Men's basketball earns the second seed in the NCAA Central Region Tournament
- 3- Cat. 2 hurricane likeness on its way
- 4- Prevent House Flooding
- 5- Sunshine Week Article: Loss of local news hinders ability to watchdog government
- 6- State AAU Youth Wrestlers Qualifiers
- 7- Major Mid-Week Winter Storm Likely
- 8- Snow on the roads
- 9- Shoveling snow off the roof
- 10- Today in Weather History
- 11- Weather Pages
- 13- Daily Devotional
- 14- 2019 Groton Events
- 15- News from the Associated Press

DI Review set for tonight

Groton's Destination Imagination teams will be appraised at the regional level this evening at the Groton Area Elementary School. An appraisal team is being put together. The instant challenges will begin at 5 p.m. with the performances set for 6 p.m. The performances are open to the public.

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.

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Men's basketball earns the second seed in the NCAA Central Region Tournament

Indianapolis – The Northern State University men's basketball team will head to the NCAA Central Region Tournament for the second straight season. The men earned the No. 2 seed and will hit the road to Maryville, Mo, as Northwest Missouri State earned the No. 1 seed. The Central Region will take place March 16 (four games), March 17 (two games) and March 19 (regional final) in Bearcat Arena.

Northern earned an automatic bid to the NCAA Central Region Tournament after winning the NSIC/Sanford Health Conference Tournament. The Wolves will face off against No. 7 Southeastern Oklahoma at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 16. The Wolves are currently 26-6, while Southeastern is 22-7.

Tickets for the regional can be purchased online [HERE](#) starting at 10 p.m. Sunday evening. All seating for the regional will be general admission. Fans can purchase single session tickets in person at the Cashiering office. The Cashiering office, located on the first floor of the Administration Building, will be open until from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Fans are encouraged to purchase tickets early.

Single session tickets can be purchased for \$12 each for adults and \$7 for students. Children 2 and under are free per NCAA policy. The ticket office will open 1 hour and 15 minutes prior to the start of each session.

NCAA Central Region Schedule

Saturday, March 16

Noon: No. 3 Washburn vs. No. 6 Missouri Southern (Session 1)

2:30 p.m.: No. 2 Northern State vs. No. 7 Southeastern Oklahoma State (Session 1)

6 p.m.: No. 1 Northwest Missouri vs. No. 8 Minnesota State, Mankato (Session 2)

8:30 p.m.: No. 4 St. Cloud State vs. No. 5 Southern Nazarene (Session 2)

Sunday, March 17

5 p.m.: Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2

7:30 p.m.: Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4

Tuesday, March 18

7 p.m.: Regional Championship Game

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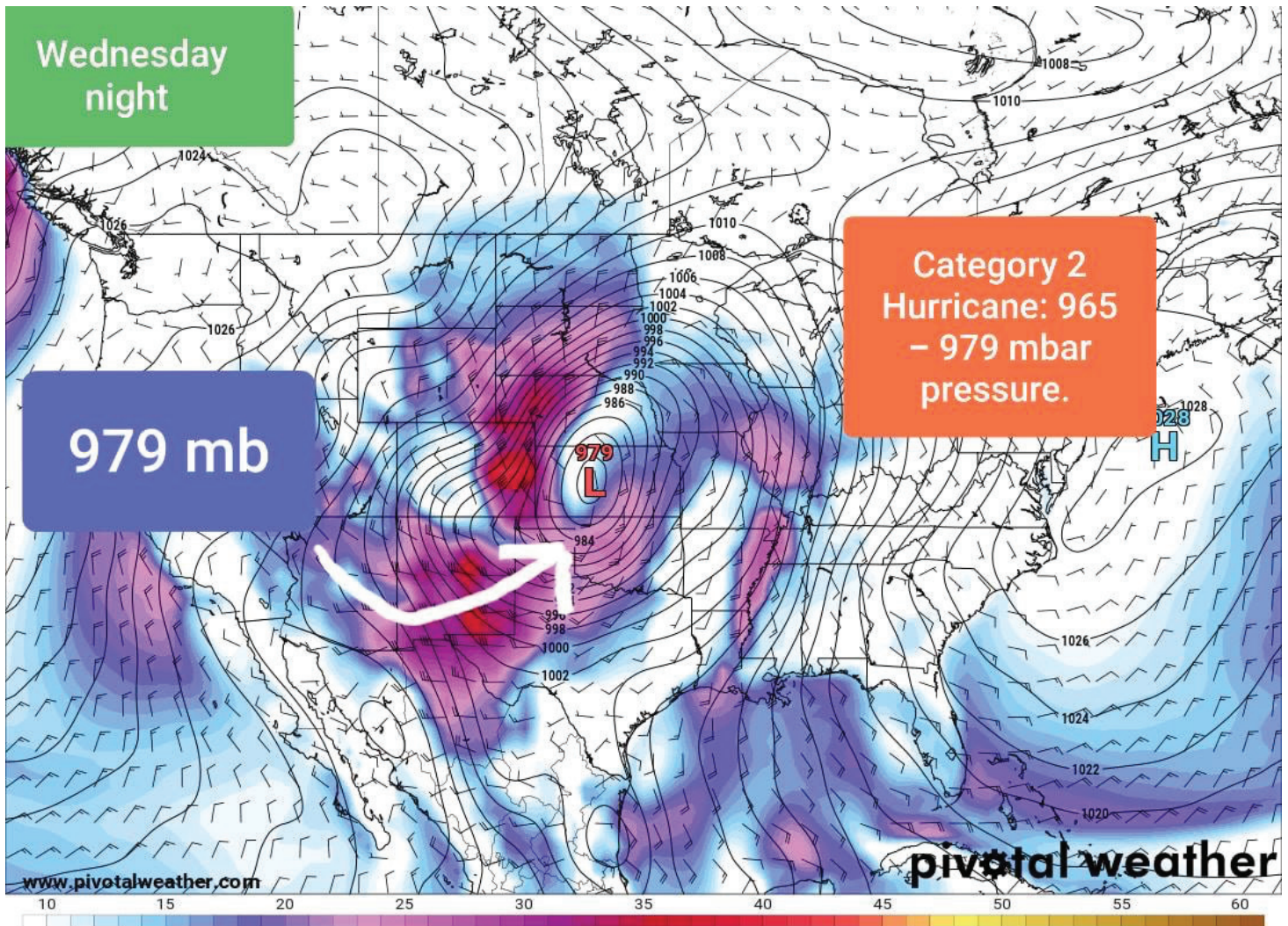
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To apply visit www.uslbm.com/careers or call Diane at 605-448-2929.

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This is a conservative forecast, some models are advertising an even deeper cyclone. A category 2 hurricane has a central pressure of 965-979 millibars.

By Wednesday night, the storm that will be affecting the Northern Plains, could potentially be as strong as a Category 2 hurricane.

This storm will be a beast. Wherever it tracks, those on the northwest side of the Low will see significant blizzard conditions.

Prevent house flooding



**Clear ice
from
downspouts**

**Clear a
path for
downspouts**

**Remove snow
from street
storm drains**



Loss of local news hinders ability to watchdog government

By MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

One of the last investigations Jim Boren oversaw before he retired as executive editor of The Fresno Bee was a four-month examination of substandard housing in the city at the heart of California's Central Valley.

The multimedia project revealed the living conditions imposed on many of the city's low-income renters, many of them immigrants: apartments filled with mold, mice and cockroaches, to name some of the more glaring problems. Local housing advocates compared it to the tainted water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

The investigation got immediate results.

"We made people's lives better. We changed laws," said Boren, who retired in 2017 and is now director of the Institute for Media and Public Trust at Fresno State University.

Among other things, the city responded by requiring property owners to make repairs when it found violations, rather than just levy fines.

"Those are the kinds of things that journalists do," Boren said.

It's the kind of journalism — holding local government officials accountable for problems that affect the lives of real people — that is in danger of being lost in many communities around the country.

Newspapers are closing or being consolidated at an astounding rate, often leaving behind what researchers label as news deserts — towns and even entire counties that have no consistent local media coverage.

According to an Associated Press analysis of data compiled by the University of North Carolina, more than 1,400 towns and cities in the U.S. have lost a newspaper over the past 15 years. Many of those are in rural and lower-income areas, often with an aging population.

The loss of a reliable local news source has many consequences for the community. One of them is the inability to watchdog the actions of government agencies and elected officials.

Newspapers typically have played the lead role in their communities in holding local officials accountable. That includes filing requests to get public records that shine a light on government action — or inaction — or even filing lawsuits to promote transparency.

"Strong newspapers have been good for democracy, and both educators and informers of a citizenry and its governing officials. They have been problem-solvers," said Penelope Muse Abernathy, a University of North Carolina professor who studies news industry trends and oversaw the "news desert" report released last fall.

"That is what you are missing when you don't have someone covering you and bringing transparency or sunlight onto government decisions and giving people a say in how those government decisions are made."

The absence of a local newspaper playing a watchdog role also can translate into real costs to a community and its taxpayers.

Researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Notre Dame found that municipal borrowing costs increase after a newspaper ceases publication. They found the increase had nothing to do with the economy. Rather, the demise of a paper leaves readers in the dark and emboldens elected officials to sign off on higher wages, larger payrolls and ballooning budget deficits, their study found.

"Our evidence suggests that a local government is more likely to engage in wasteful spending when there is no local newspaper to report on that government," said University of Illinois Chicago's Dermot Murphy, one of the study's authors. "Investors find it riskier to lend money to wasteful governments, and



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thus the costs of financing public infrastructure projects, such as schools, hospitals, and roadways, for a local government are higher.”

Stanford University’s James Hamilton applies a wider lens to the problem of newspaper closures, examining the benefits that come with investigative journalism — and what is lost when it disappears.

In his book “Democracy’s Detective,” he examined several case studies of newspaper investigations, including police shootings of civilians, and found that each dollar spent by the news organization generated hundreds of dollars in benefits to society.

“When investigative scrutiny declines, stories go untold, which means waste, fraud, and abuse will be less likely to be discovered,” said Hamilton, director of the Stanford Journalism Program. “News outlets will still have stories about a bad doctor, identified through court cases or patient complaints. The story about a bad hospital, which would require more resources and analysis to document, will be less likely to be told.”

Follow Michael Casey at <https://twitter.com/mcasey1>



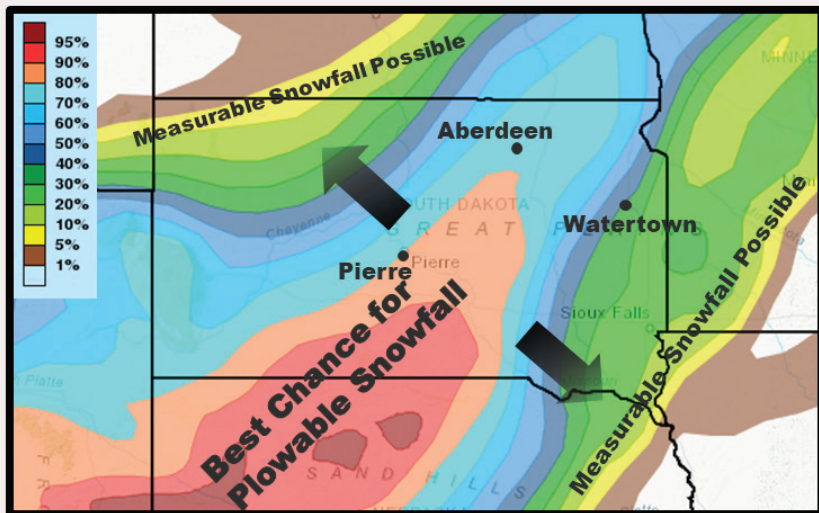
Major Mid-Week Winter Storm Likely



Updated: 3/11/2019 4:31 AM Central

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Probability of getting 4" or more Snow Wednesday-Thursday



*Note: A heavy rain threat exists for areas S+E of the above highlighted snow threat

What We Know

Confidence is increasing that a significant, moisture-rich Winter Storm system with rain, freezing rain, sleet and/or snow as well as strong winds will impact the area Wednesday and Thursday.

What We Don't Know

The exact track of this system, thus the location, timing, and precipitation amounts, will need to be refined.

What You Can Do

Significant travel impacts are expected. Continue to monitor the latest reliable-source forecast.

Published on: 03/11/2019 at 4:32AM

Keep a close eye on updates to this powerful system in the coming days, especially if you have travel plans mid-week. www.weather.gov/abr

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About 10 inches of snow made travel in town difficult unless you had a 4-wheel drive vehicle. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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This is becoming more of a site around town as people are shoveling the snow off of the roofs. Joe Schwan was doing exactly that Sunday afternoon. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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Today in Weather History

March 11, 1991: A developing winter storm, centered to the south of the Black Hills, caused heavy snow to fall on the northern Black Hills the evening of March 11 until the morning of March 12th. Snowfall totals of 3-9 inches were reported, including 9 inches at Custer, 8 inches at Deerfield, and 8 inches at Lead.

March 11, 2011: A very intense low-pressure area moving across North Dakota brought widespread blizzard conditions to central and northeast South Dakota. The low-pressure area brought 1 to 3 inches of snowfall to the region. This new snow combined with 30 to 50 mph winds with gusts to 60 to 70 mph brought widespread whiteout conditions. Traffic was brought to a standstill with many motorists having to be rescued and taken to a shelter. Hundreds of cars were stranded on mainly Highway 12 and Interstate-29. Two people traveling on Highway 10 in McPherson County told about how they became stuck and were picked up by another vehicle and that it took them over 2 1/2 hours to travel just a few miles to safety. Interstate-29 was closed from Watertown to Sisseton from 6 pm on the 11th until noon on the 12th. Many events were affected including the Girls State Basketball Tournament in Watertown. There were several overturned semis along with several vehicle accidents across the area. Some of the highest wind gusts included 56 mph at Watertown; 58 mph at Mobridge, Sisseton, and Faulkton; 59 mph at Aberdeen; 61 mph at Bowdle; 66 mph near Hillhead, and 71 mph west of Long Lake.

1888: The Great Blizzard of 1888 paralyzed the east coast from the Chesapeake Bay to Maine on March 11 through the 14th. The blizzard dumped as much as 55 inches of snow in some areas, and snow drifts of 30 to 40 feet were reported. An estimated 400 people died from this blizzard. Click [HERE](#) for more information from History.com. Click [HERE](#) for additional information from the National Centers for Environmental Information (section 14).

1897: The coldest March reading at Medicine Hat, Alberta Canada occurred as the temperature dropped to 38 degrees below zero.

1911: Tamarack, California reported 451 inches of snow on the ground, a record for the U.S.

1948 - Record cold followed in the wake of a Kansas blizzard. Lows of -25 degrees at Oberlin, Healy and Quinter established a state record for the month of March. Lows of -15 at Dodge City, -11 at Concordia, and -3 at Wichita were also March records. (The Weather Channel)

1962 - One of the most paralyzing snowstorms in decades produced record March snowfalls in Iowa. Four feet of snow covered the ground at Inwood following the storm. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Unseasonably cold weather prevailed in the southeastern U.S., and a storm over the Gulf of Mexico spread rain and sleet and snow into the Appalachian Region. Sleet was reported in southern Mississippi. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A blizzard raged across the north central U.S. Chadron NE was buried under 33 inches of snow, up to 25 inches of snow was reported in eastern Wyoming, and totals in the Black Hills of South Dakota ranged up to 69 inches at Lead. Winds gusted to 63 mph at Mullen NE. Snow drifts thirty feet high were reported around Lusk WY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)






1989 - Twenty-one cities in the central and southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 95 degrees at Lubbock TX equalled their record for March. (The National Weather Summary)


1990 - Forty-four cities in the central and eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Record highs included 71 degrees at Dickinson ND and Williston ND, and 84 degrees at Lynchburg VA, Charleston WV and Huntington WV. Augusta GA and Columbia SC tied for honors as the hot spot in the nation with record highs of 88 degrees. A vigorous cold front produced up to three feet of snow in the mountains of Utah. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2006 - Phoenix's record run for dry days finally ends at 143 days. The last measured rain fell on October 18, 2005. Not only did the rain break the dry spell, the 1.40 inches that fell was a record amount for the date.

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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Patchy Fog then Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Patchy Fog	Patchy Fog then Mostly Cloudy	Areas Fog	Slight Chance Snow then Snow Likely
High: 25 °F	Low: 18 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 34 °F





SPRING RAIN APPROACHING, along with more SNOW

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
Graphic Created 3/11/2019 4:51 AM



Today 
morning fog
25 to 34°

Tuesday 
Light rain over Sisseton Hills
fog possible
36 to 43°

Wednesday & Thursday 
Major Winter Storm Likely
33 to 38°

Published on: 03/11/2019 at 4:53AM

Except for morning fog, today will be mostly sunny. Take the time to prepare for the next event Wednesday and Thursday. Except for morning fog, today will be mostly sunny. Take the time to prepare for the next event Wednesday and Thursday. In town, prepare for runoff by clearing a path for water to flow down drains. It's also a good time to check on your vehicle emergency kit. Need to refresh any supplies from the long winter? Stay tuned to the latest forecast, as this one could bring rain, freezing rain, and heavy snow. Very strong winds are also expected late Wednesday through Thursday evening.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 25 °F at 4:25 PM

Low Outside Temp: 5 °F at 9:15 AM

High Gust: 15 mph at 12:56 PM

Precip: .73

Today's Info

Record High: 71° in 2016

Record Low: -27° in 1948

Average High: 37°F

Average Low: 18°F

Average Precip in Mar.: 0.30

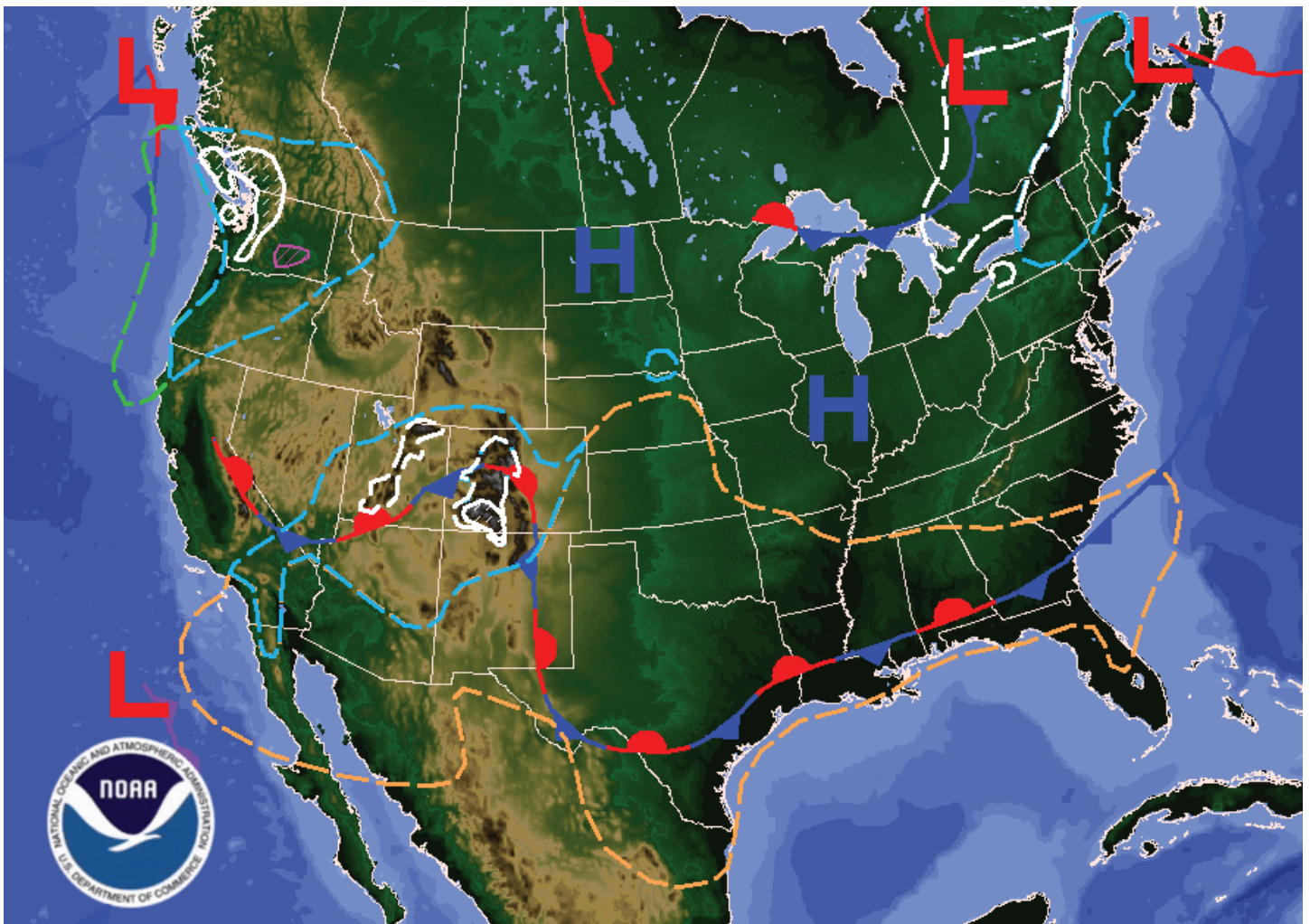
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.32

Precip Year to Date: 1.46

Sunset Tonight: 7:34 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:52 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Mar 11, 2019, issued 4:42 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McReynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow

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

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SAFE PASSAGE

Well over a year ago, I underwent spinal surgery. Not long after that, it was necessary for more surgery on another section on my spine. God was very gracious to me, and both were successful. He blessed the skills of the surgeons as they corrected various problems that had developed over the years.

During a post-surgical consultation, one of them asked, Larry, walk over to the door, turn around and then walk back toward me. I followed his instructions and, after carefully watching every step, he asked me to repeat the process.

After a moment he asked, Do you feel like you are off balance? And did you notice your feet seemed to oppose the directions you wanted them to travel?

Well, yes, I replied, but I thought those two conditions would correct themselves after some time.

Oh, no, he said. Youll need some extensive physical therapy to correct those problems.

Physical therapy is important to correct physical problems. But only spiritual therapy can solve spiritual problems. Solomon said that if we apply Gods wisdom to our lives, our steps will be secure at all times. Our steps will not be hampered - or restricted - by the obstacles of life. We will be able to take long, safe, secure strides if we follow His will. He also said that when we run we will not stumble and our feet will never become ensnared by the traps of this world.

Prayer: Lord, unite our heads, hearts, hands and feet so that we are completely surrendered in service to You in all that we do. Assure us that if we follow Your will, our paths will be safe, our journeys enjoyable, and our lives satisfying! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 4:12 When you walk, you wont be held back; when you run, you wont stumble.

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

Fatal stabbing has neighbors on edge

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Residents of a Sioux Falls neighborhood where a man was fatally stabbed say they are surprised such a violent crime could occur on their quiet block.

Officers were called about the stabbing at a residence just before 8 a.m. Sunday. Police found a 38-year-old man who had been stabbed multiple times. He could not be revived. A 40-year-old suspect is in custody. Police say the two men knew each other.

Jim Hanscom tells KELO-TV he was checking for his Sunday paper when he saw police handcuffing a man in shorts. Hanscom says he didn't recognize the man. He says he's lived in the neighborhood for nearly 50 years and usually the biggest problem is speeding.

Police may release additional details about the crime at a Monday morning briefing.

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

South Dakota artist creates display that teaches math, art

By **KAIJA SWISHER** Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — In the midst of patrons running laps and playing pickleball, a display devoted to the art of perspective is currently set up in the Lookout Room at the Spearfish rec center. A group of eighth-grade students recently got to explore the "Up, Down, and All Around" display with its creator, Spearfish artist Dick Termes.

"The concept behind this is basically teaching people about total visual space, that we always are in a total space around us, all the time, and we don't even think about it. This makes us think about it a little bit. Everything I do is based on that total visual space," Termes explained.

Termes is known across the globe for his Termespheres, varying sizes of spherical wonders that feature the artist's signature six point perspective, the Black Hills Pioneer reported. Termes chooses the "rotating point," or center of the sphere, which determines the perspective one sees, as the rotating point is as if standing inside the sphere itself. The six points are then directly above, below, in front, behind, and to each side, equally spaced.

Termes explained that the display, which features different stations that allow participants to explore drawing, perspective, 3D geometries, 2D and 3D puzzles, and more, was originally commissioned by the South Dakota Discovery Center in Pierre. The hands-on center had created a series of displays, with topics like electricity, dinosaurs, insects, etc., that could be contained within trailers that different groups could check out to use in libraries, schools, etc. The center approached Termes about creating one focused on Termespheres, so he created the display, which was then used by the center for a number of years.

After the center stopped utilizing the trailers, Termes bought the trailer and display, which he uses at different locations and gallery shows.

"It is really pretty fun, and I would love to get more students through it," he said, describing that the display will be up at the rec center through March before heading to the Dahl Arts Center in Rapid City where Termes has a show.

Eighth-grade students in art teacher Brandi Roetzel's classes recently went through the display with Termes, after he had visited their classrooms previously to help them create their own Termespheres.

Roetzel said that the experience brings the students out into the community, getting them out of the classroom, up, and moving.

"They get to see a local artist, and he's also a world-famous artist," she said, describing that all of the different elements in Termes's techniques show the students that art is more than the traditional methods that come to mind.

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Roetzel said she is looking forward to bringing in another group of students to the display during the upcoming trimester.

"He gets them out of the 'Art is just drawing, art is just painting' (misconception) and gets them out into the world and how to apply all of those (elements) to the world," she said.

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

Aberdeen cornhole league draws interest

By VICTORIA LUSK Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The thump as bags land on cornhole boards, one after another.

The occasional silence as a bag is tossed perfectly in the hole — like a basketball going smoothly through the net, but without the swish.

A bag in the hole gets three points, a bag on the board gets one point. Either of those can be canceled out by the other team's bags. The first team to 21 wins the game.

Players show up early, get in a few practice rounds and pay their \$5 buy-in. Then teams are drawn.

When the Aberdeen Cornhole League started, there were set teams. But Wednesday league nights got less enjoyable when the same people continuously won, said Tim Rogers, league organizer.

The number of people who show up determines the structure of play for the night. If there are 20 or fewer players, two-person teams are formed for round-robin style of play. The team with the best record at night's end gets bragging rights. If there are more than 20 players, it's a double-elimination tournament, Rogers said. There's a 100 percent payout at the end of the night, funded by buy-ins.

For the most part, the league follows the rules of the American Cornhole Association, the Aberdeen American News reported.

The boards are placed on faux grass exactly 27 feet apart.

A flip of a coin lets the winners decide either on which side of the board they wish to stand or which team tosses first.

A team will only throw first until points are scored. Whichever team scores tosses first in the next round.

The first squad to 21 wins, and it doesn't matter if a team goes over.

"I'd rather put one in the hole than on the board," Rogers said.

In some games, going over 21 points sends a team back to 11. But resetting just adds time to the games, and time is limited on league night, Rogers said.

It's all in good fun.

For the most part, anyhow.

Most games are coupled with some laughter, some groans and very little smack talk.

When it comes to winning, it's not about being good.

"I don't know how much talent is involved. It's more muscle memory," Rogers said.

Most players stand firmly with their inside foot next to the edge of the board, careful to not cross an imaginary line. The outside leg gives a soft kick as the bag in hand releases with a flick of the wrist. Most bags gently spin as they fly toward the board.

In. In. In. In. The players' bags land in the hole, matching point for point, canceling out potential points. That's where strategy comes in.

"You can play defensively," Rogers said. "But it's hard to do."

One side of a cornhole bag is rough, made to stick where it lands. The other is slick, made to slide. Players can stack bags in front of the hole, or throw to push bags already on the board in.

Or they can try to avoid any barrier bags and aim straight for the hole — "airmail," it's called.

The league plays year-round. It recently moved league nights to the Yelduz Shrine Center. It started at the Eagles Club, which is now closed.

Games are played outside during the summer, at various sponsors. Their logos can be found on the boards. The popularity of cornhole is crazy, Rogers said.

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"It wouldn't be too far off to say that it'd be in the Olympics one day," he said. The sport is already on ESPN on occasion.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Purdue Fort Wayne beats S. Dakota in Summit League tourney

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — John Konchar had a triple-double with 18 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists to carry Purdue Fort Wayne to a 96-70 win over South Dakota in the quarterfinals of the Summit League tournament on Sunday night.

Kason Harrell had 21 points for Purdue Fort Wayne (18-14). Matt Holba added 15 points. Dee Montgomery had 11 points for the home team.

Stanley Umude had 21 points for the Coyotes (13-17). Tyler Peterson added 15 points. Triston Simpson had 12 points and eight assists.

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

This was generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

North Dakota St. beats Oral Roberts in Summit League tourney

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Tyson Ward had 25 points as North Dakota State defeated Oral Roberts 86-73 in the quarterfinals of the Summit League Conference tournament on Sunday night.

Ward hit 11 of 13 from the free throw line.

Jared Samuelson had 15 points for North Dakota State (16-15). Cameron Hunter added 13 points. Rocky Kreuser had eight rebounds and four blocks for the home team.

Kevin Obanor had 23 points and 10 rebounds for the Golden Eagles (11-21). Sam Kearns added 16 points. Kaelen Malone had eight assists.

Emmanuel Nzekwesi, who led the Golden Eagles in scoring entering the contest with 15 points per game, shot only 17 percent for the game (1 of 6).

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

This was generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

Police arrest man in fatal stabbing in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police in Sioux Falls have arrested a 40-year-old man suspected in a fatal stabbing.

Officers were called about a stabbing at a residence just before 8 a.m. Sunday. Police found a 38-year-old man who had been stabbed multiple times. Attempts to revive the victim were not successful.

Police found the suspect nearby and took him into custody. Police say the suspect and the victim apparently knew each other.

Police are not looking for any other suspects. The suspect is being held in the Minnehaha County Jail.

Storm dumps more than foot of snow in parts of Upper Midwest

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Interstates have reopened in North Dakota and South Dakota after a winter storm

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dumped more than a foot (0.3 meter) of snow in parts of the Upper Midwest.

North Dakota transportation officials on Sunday reopened Interstate 94 from Bismarck to Fargo. I-29 was reopened from Grand Forks in North Dakota to Watertown in South Dakota.

In South Dakota, officials reopened a stretch of I-90 between Wall and Mitchell.

The National Weather Service says the storm dumped 15 inches (38 centimeters) of snow in Herman and near Pelican Rapids in northwestern Minnesota, 13 inches (33 centimeters) in Detroit Lakes, and 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) in Mahanomen and Holloway.

Public transit bus service in the Fargo-Moorhead area was suspended an hour early Saturday night, at 10:15 p.m., because of deteriorating road conditions.

Badlands Motor Speedway back on market after deal stalls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Badlands Motor Speedway is on the market again, continuing a persistent effort by its owner to sell the racetrack.

Owner Chuck Brennan said a potential deal was reached with a former owner of the Brandon-based track, but the deadline to produce the funding has passed without any notification from the prospective buyer, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

The Dollar Loan Center owner bought the former Huset's Speedway in 2015. Brennan closed it in 2017 after making renovations to the site.

Brennan said he will allow time for another offer, but if no buyer comes forward he might have to move forward with previous plans to dismantle the track.

"We just need to determine at this point what we're going to do," he said.

In December, Brennan reached an agreement with Steve Rubin, whose family previously owned Huset's. They agreed to extend the sales deadline and give Rubin more time to find backing. Rubin did not respond to a request for comment.

Badlands has been trying to sell the property for months. He tried to initiate bidding at an auction last fall. The preliminary bid was set at \$3.15 million. No one made an offer.

Brennan said in October he would keep the listing up until December, but if there was no deal in place he would remove and recycle the buildings and utilities. Rubin then produced an offer, asking for 60 days to form an investment team and come up with the money.

Brennan will wait for more offers to come in, but he wasn't sure about the future. Badlands Motor Speedway is listed available for purchase on the racetrack's website for \$9.45 million.

"I do want to give ample time if somebody wants to step forward and buy it, they sure can," Brennan said. "I'd much rather have it out there racing."

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:

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

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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.

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.

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.

Indonesian woman freed 2 years after killing of Kim Jong Nam

By EILEEN NG Associated Press

SHAH ALAM, Malaysia (AP) — One of two women accused of killing North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's half brother by smearing VX nerve agent on his face was freed Monday after Malaysian prosecutors unexpectedly dropped the murder charge against her.

Indonesian Siti Aisyah and her Vietnamese co-defendant, Doan Thi Huong, have said they thought they were taking part in a prank for a TV show.

Aisyah cried and hugged Huong before leaving the courtroom and being ushered away in an Indonesian Embassy car. She told reporters that she had only learned Monday morning that she would be freed.

She flew back to Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, later Monday and thanked the president and other officials for their help.

Huong, who remains on trial, was distraught following Aisyah's release.

"I am in shock. My mind is blank," she told reporters after Aisyah left.

The two women had been the only suspects in custody after four North Korean suspects fled the country the morning of Feb. 13, 2017, when Kim's half brother, Kim Jong Nam, was killed in an airport terminal in Kuala Lumpur.

The trial is to resume Thursday, and prosecutors are expected to reply to a request by Huong's lawyers for the government to withdraw the charge against her as well.

Indonesia's government lobbied repeatedly for Aisyah's release. Vietnam has pushed less hard, and recently hosted Kim Jong Un for an official visit and a summit with President Donald Trump.

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The High Court judge discharged Aisyah without an acquittal after prosecutors applied to drop the murder charge against her. They did not give any reason.

Prosecutor Iskandar Ahmad said Aisyah can be charged again if there is fresh evidence, but there are no such plans now.

"I feel very happy," Aisyah said at a news conference at the Indonesian Embassy in Malaysia. "I didn't expect that today will be my freedom day."

Indonesia's government said its continued high-level lobbying resulted in Aisyah's release. Its foreign ministry said in a statement that she was "deceived and did not realize at all that she was being manipulated by North Korean intelligence."

It said Aisyah, a migrant worker, never had any intention of killing Kim.

The ministry said that over the past two years, Aisyah's plight was raised in "every bilateral Indonesia-Malaysia meeting," including at the presidential level, the vice presidential level and in regular meetings of the foreign minister and other ministers with their Malaysian counterparts.

Aisyah's release comes just a month before Indonesia's general election and is seen as a boost to President Joko Widodo, who is seeking re-election.

Aisyah, surrounded by government officials and a mob of reporters at Jakarta's airport, struggled for words as journalists shouted questions. With a prompt from Indonesia's law and human rights minister, she thanked the president and other officials for helping secure her release.

"The Malaysian government treated me well, there was no bad treatment at all," she said. "After this I just want to gather with family."

Huong's lawyer, Hisyam Teh Poh Teik, said after the court session that Huong felt Aisyah's discharge was unfair to her because the judge last year had found sufficient evidence to continue the murder trial against both of them.

"She is entitled to the same kind of consideration as Aisyah," he said. "We are making representation to the attorney general for Doan to be taken equally ... there must be justice."

A High Court judge last August had found there was enough evidence to infer that Aisyah, Huong and the four missing North Koreans engaged in a "well-planned conspiracy" to kill Kim Jong Nam. The defense phase of the trial had been scheduled to start in January but was delayed until Monday.

Lawyers for the women have previously said that they were pawns in a political assassination with clear links to the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, and that the prosecution failed to show the women had any intention to kill. Intent to kill is crucial to a murder charge under Malaysian law.

Malaysian officials have never officially accused North Korea and have made it clear they don't want the trial politicized.

Kim was the eldest son in the current generation of North Korea's ruling family. He had been living abroad for years but could have been seen as a threat to Kim Jong Un's rule.

Associated Press writer Niniek Karmini in Jakarta, Indonesia, contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. ETHIOPIA, CHINA GROUND BOEING JETS AMID GLOBAL MOURNING

Ethiopian Airlines grounds all of its Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft and Chinese aviation officials do the same the day after a crash in Addis Ababa killed all 157 on board.

2. 'I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT TODAY WILL BE MY FREEDOM DAY'

An Indonesian woman has been freed after a Malaysian judge threw out the murder charge against her in the killing of the Kim Jong Un's half brother.

3. TRUMP REVIVES BORDER WALL FIGHT

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The president is preparing a new budget that will seek \$8.6 billion for his signature project and impose steep spending cuts to other domestic programs.

4. WHERE THERE'S A RESPITE AND HOPE

For the first time in years, Iraq is not at war. The defeat of the Islamic State group after a ruinous four-year conflict gives Baghdad a moment of peace.

5. INDICTMENTS SPOTLIGHT PRISON REHAB SCAMS

Federal prosecutors say charges in Connecticut expose shady dealings in the largely unregulated industry of "prison consultants."

6. WHERE SOME 2020 DEMOCRATIC HOPEFULS ARE SPENDING TIME

They're in America's small towns to become better-versed on rural issues and compete for votes in places that supported Trump heavily in 2016.

7. COLORADO OIL AND GAS BATTLE BOILS OVER

Frustrated residents of a Denver suburb are launching legal challenges to a state law that is forcing them to participate in an oil and gas drilling project against their wishes.

8. FED CHAIR PREACHES 'PATIENCE' WITH MONETARY POLICY

Jerome Powell says the central bank halted rate hikes in January because the global economy was slowing and other risks to the U.S. economy were rising.

9. ALLRED: TAPE APPEARS TO SHOW R. KELLY SEXUALLY ABUSING GIRLS

Attorney Gloria Allred says a client has turned a tape over to law enforcement that appears to feature the R&B singer sexually abusing underage girls.

10. AB GETS HIS WISH

The Steelers have an agreement to trade the prolific wide receiver Antonio Brown to the Raiders, the culmination of a messy and public divorce.

Growing number of Boeing Max 8 planes grounded after crash

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Aviation authorities in China, Indonesia and Ethiopia ordered airlines on Monday to ground their Boeing 737 Max 8 planes after one of the aircraft crashed in Ethiopia, killing all 157 people on board.

The crash of the Ethiopian Airlines jet shortly after it took off from Addis Ababa on Sunday is drawing renewed scrutiny of the plane just four months after a similar crash of the same model of aircraft in Indonesia that killed 189 people.

A spokesman for Ethiopian Airlines, Asrat Begashaw, said the carrier had grounded its remaining four 737 Max 8 planes until further notice as an "extra safety precaution."

The airline had been using five new 737 Max 8s and awaiting delivery of 25 more. Asrat said the search for body parts and debris from the crash was continuing.

China's Civil Aviation Administration said that it ordered airlines to ground all 737 Max 8 aircraft as of 6 p.m. (1000 GMT) Monday, in line with the principle of "zero tolerance for security risks."

It said it would issue further notices after consulting with the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and Boeing.

China Southern Airlines is one of Boeing's biggest customers for the aircraft.

Indonesia also grounded 737 Max 8s for inspections.

Director General of Air Transportation Polana B. Pramesti said the grounding was taken to ensure flight safety and ensure the planes are airworthy.

There are currently 11 Max 8 planes operated by airlines in Indonesia including 10 by Lion Air and 1 by the national carrier, Garuda.

Cayman Airways said it was temporarily grounding the two Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft it operates, as of Monday.

Real time flight radar apps showed dozens of the aircraft still operating around the globe.

Chicago-based Boeing said it did not intend to issue any new guidance to its customers. It plans to

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send a technical team to the crash site to help Ethiopian and U.S. investigators, however, and issued a statement saying it was "deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the passengers and crew" on the Ethiopian Airlines Max airplane.

The 737 is the best-selling airliner in history, and the Max, the newest version of it with more fuel-efficient engines, is a central part of Boeing's strategy to compete with European rival Airbus.

"Safety is our number one priority and we are taking every measure to fully understand all aspects of this accident, working closely with the investigating team and all regulatory authorities involved," the company said in a statement.

The head of Indonesia's national transport safety agency, Soerjanto Thahjono, offered to aid the Ethiopian investigation into Sunday's crash.

The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board likewise said it was sending a team to help Ethiopian authorities. Boeing and the U.S. investigative agency are also involved in the probe into the Lion Air crash in Indonesia in October.

Like the Ethiopian Airlines crash, which happened minutes after the jet's takeoff from Addis Ababa, the Lion Air jet that crashed off Indonesia had erratic speed during the few minutes it was in the air.

Safety experts cautioned, however, against drawing too many parallels between the two disasters.

"I do hope though that people will wait for the first results of the investigation instead of jumping to conclusions based on the very little facts that we know so far," said Harro Ranter, founder of the Aviation Safety Network, which compiles information about accidents worldwide.

The situation will be better understood after investigators find and analyze the Ethiopian plane's black boxes, said William Waldock, an aviation-safety professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

He said the way the planes both crashed — a fatal nosedive — was likely to raise suspicion. Boeing will likely look more closely at the flight-management system and automation on the Max, he said.

"Investigators are not big believers in coincidence," he said.

Boeing has delivered about 350 737 Max planes to scores of airlines and has orders for more than 5,000.

Shares in the company fell 9.6 percent Monday in pre-market trading.

Alan Diehl, a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator, said reports of large variations in vertical speed during the Ethiopian jetliner's ascent were "clearly suggesting a potential controllability problem."

Other possible causes include engine problems, pilot error, weight load, sabotage or bird strikes, he said.

Ethiopian has a good reputation and the company's CEO told reporters no problems were spotted before Sunday's fight. But investigators also will look into the plane's maintenance, which may have been an issue in the Lion Air crash.

Days after the Indonesian accident, Boeing notified airlines that faulty information from a sensor could cause the plane to automatically point the nose down. The automated system kicks in if sensors indicate that a plane is about to lose lift, or go into an aerodynamic stall. Gaining speed by diving can prevent a stall.

The notice reminded pilots of the procedure for handling such a situation, which is to disable the system causing the automatic nose-down movements.

Indonesian investigators are examining whether faulty readings from a sensor might have triggered the automatic nose-down command to the plane, which the Lion Air pilots fought unsuccessfully to overcome.

The Lion Air plane's flight data recorder showed problems with an airspeed indicator on at least four previous flights, although the airline initially said the problem was fixed.

Boeing Chairman and CEO Dennis Muilenburg said in December that the Max is a safe plane.

Associated Press writer Niniek Karmini in Jakarta, Indonesia, and AP Airlines Writer David Koenig in Dallas, Texas, contributed to this report. Koenig can be reached at <http://twitter.com/airlinewriter>

2020 Democrats aim to make inroads in rural America

By **BILL BARROW** Associated Press

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DENMARK, S.C. (AP) — Deanna Miller Berry doesn't often see presidential candidates. So when New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker recently came to Bamberg County, South Carolina, she was primed to unload about a contaminated water system.

"What is your plan to fix it?" Berry asked, her eyes narrowed.

Booker, former mayor of Newark, the largest city in the most densely populated state, assured Berry he cares about the 3,000 residents of Denmark, South Carolina. "This is a time in America where too many people are feeling left out, left behind, not included," he said, promising "a massive infrastructure investment" targeting "forgotten" places.

The exchange highlights the effort by Democratic presidential candidates to make inroads in rural America. With the first contests unfolding next year in South Carolina, Iowa and New Hampshire, small-town voters will play a critical role in choosing the next Democratic nominee. And the early attention could help the eventual nominee be more conversant on rural issues and compete for votes in places that gave President Donald Trump his most intense support in 2016.

"Organizing in every precinct is the key to winning both the caucus and the general election in Iowa," Iowa Democratic Chairman Troy Price said.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders lamented rural decline during an Iowa swing this weekend.

"All over America, we have tragically seen more and more young people leave the small towns they grew up in, the small towns they love, because there are no decent-paying jobs in those towns — we intend to change that," Sanders said, drawing cheers at the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

At the same time, California Sen. Kamala Harris was in small-town South Carolina advocating more spending on telemedicine, broadband internet and infrastructure. Booker used his two-day rural swing last month to talk health care, housing, infrastructure and criminal justice, among other issues. New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand was the first candidate who ventured to rural northern New Hampshire. Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar has already visited a tiny town in Wisconsin, which will be a general election battleground.

Several candidates plan to attend a March 30 rural issues forum at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa — population 10,600.

The approach matters most immediately because the delegates necessary to become the nominee are awarded in part from primary and caucus results in individual congressional districts, even the most rural and Republican-leaning. But investing there also could narrow Republicans' general election margins, by increasing turnout among Democratic-friendly constituencies like rural black and Latino voters or peeling off white voters or both.

That could flip states like Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania, North Carolina — even Florida — that propelled Trump to an Electoral College majority. Besides helping win the presidency, rural gains would be necessary for Democrats to have the muscle on Capitol Hill to enact the kinds of sweeping policy changes they are advocating on many fronts.

"So much of this is about the margins," Iowa's Price said.

Beyond the politics, candidates say rural outreach is required of anyone who wants to govern a diverse nation.

"Folks want to be seen," Harris said. "They want their issues to be heard. ... They could care less about half the stuff that gets covered on cable news networks."

In Wisconsin, Klobuchar said, it's "about knowing the issues that matter to people whether they're Democrats, Republicans and independents — and in rural areas it's not just about the farm bill."

The 2018 midterms demonstrated Democrats' tough realities beyond metro areas, but still offered some bright spots.

AP VoteCast, a national survey of more than 115,000 voters, found rural and small-town residents cast 35 percent of midterm ballots; 56 percent of those voted for Republican House candidates, compared to 41 percent for Democrats. The advantage was wider among small-town and rural whites: 30 percent of the electorate, tilting 63-35 for Republicans. Correspondingly, Democrats' net 40-seat gain in the House was driven mostly by previously GOP-leaning suburban districts, while Democratic nominees fell short in

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more rural areas.

There's no consensus on whether rural success for Democrats is about policy or personality or some combination. Some winners establish a personal brand at odds with the national party — West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin defending the coal industry, Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown opposing much of U.S. trade policy, Montana Sen. Jon Tester playing up his rancher credentials.

But that won't necessarily work for a presidential candidate looking to become the face of a party with a decidedly liberal base. None of the declared candidates deviates from Democratic orthodoxy supporting abortion rights and LGBTQ civil rights and opposing Trump's hard line on immigration — all positions that run afoul of rural and small-town voters who collectively are more culturally conservative than urban dwellers.

Sanders struggled with that balance in 2016 when Hillary Clinton hammered him for some Senate votes against gun measures that most Democrats backed. Sanders noted that many Vermonters, as in the rest of rural America, view guns differently than most big-city residents, but Clinton successfully used the issue against Sanders, particularly with black women.

Would-be Democratic presidents are left to mix economic arguments with biography.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee grew up in Seattle, but he often mentions that he spent his early adult years in central Washington. He touts his signature issue — combating climate change — as a boon for the "heartland" economy by growing the clean-energy industry.

Klobuchar, a Twin Cities-area native, points to her work on the Senate Agriculture Committee and notes she's won every congressional district in Minnesota during her Senate career. Sanders, who still speaks with his native Brooklyn inflection, drew roars in Iowa when mentioned using antitrust law to limit corporate power.

Harris notes that California — caricatured in Middle America as a bastion of coastal liberalism — has the nation's biggest agricultural output. And in South Carolina, she said she heard a lot about jobs and state Republicans' refusal to expand Medicaid insurance.

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren notes that long before her Harvard law career, she was a child in Norman, Oklahoma, where her family's working-class struggles shaped her liberal approach to consumer, labor and finance law.

After hearing Booker, Kenneth Belton, a 63-year-old resident of struggling Fairfield County, South Carolina, said a president doesn't have to come from his walk of life. Belton just wants the person in the Oval Office to understand him — and then to help.

"It just feels like they've been ignoring us," he said.

Berry, the clean water activist, agreed, crediting Booker and others for what she describes as first steps. "I've heard enough to be inspired," she said, pausing before adding, "enough to want to hear more."

Associated Press writers Sara Burnett in Chicago, Alexandra Jaffe in Des Moines, Iowa, Meg Kinnard in North Charleston, South Carolina, and Hannah Fingerhut in Washington contributed to this report.

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

UK prime minister fights to save Brexit deal

By JILL LAWLESS and DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Theresa May was battling Monday to stave off a new defeat for her European Union divorce deal, with talks deadlocked a day before Parliament is scheduled to vote on the plan.

The House of Commons is due to vote Tuesday on whether to approve a deal it resoundingly rejected in January. There are few signs of any big shift in opinion.

Lawmakers' opposition to the deal centers on of concerns over arrangements for the Irish border. May's government has been seeking changes, but the EU refuses to reopen the 585-page agreement that it spent a year-and-a-half negotiating.

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The bloc is frustrated at what it sees as the inability of Britain's divided government to lay out a clear vision for Brexit — and because it is seeking changes to an agreement that May herself helped negotiate. "Technical" talks aimed at securing concessions from the EU failed to secure a breakthrough over the weekend, and a rumored trip by May to meet EU leaders in Brussels on Monday looked to have been shelved.

If Parliament throws out the deal again, lawmakers will vote on whether to leave the EU without an agreement — an idea likely to be rejected — or to ask the EU to delay Brexit beyond the scheduled March 29 departure date.

May warned last week that any delay could mean "we may never leave the EU at all."

Hard-line Brexit supporters in May's Conservative Party said she should postpone Tuesday's vote rather than risk another crushing defeat.

Former Conservative chief whip Andrew Mitchell told the Times of London that "anything that avoids what looks like a massive defeat on Tuesday is worth considering."

May has staked her political reputation on securing an exit deal with the EU, and is under mounting pressure to quit if it is defeated again. She survived a bid to oust her through a no-confidence vote in December, so can't be forced from office for a year.

Conservative lawmaker Nicky Morgan said May's position will become "less and less tenable" if she suffers more defeats in Parliament this week.

"If the votes go this week in a way which means that the prime minister's policy as she has set out and stuck to rigidly over the course of the last two-and-a-bit a years is taken away, dismantled slowly by Parliament this week, I think it would be very difficult for the prime minister to stay in office for very much longer," Morgan told the BBC.

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Trump donor claimed she could offer access to president

By JILL COLVIN and MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A company run by a donor to President Donald Trump claimed it could provide Chinese clients with a chance to mingle and take photos with the president, along with access to his private club in Palm Beach, Florida.

It remains unclear how much Li Yang charged for the services and whether she was ever hired to provide them.

But the company's claims and other eyebrow-raising activity, which were first reported by The Miami Herald and Mother Jones, mark the latest in a litany of complications and ethical issues stemming from Trump continuing to own and operate a private club where dues-paying members and their guests rub shoulders with the president of the United States and his family, friends, White House staff and members of his Cabinet.

The Associated Press has previously reported that aides who accompany the president on frequent trips to the club are always on alert for club members and guests with nearly unlimited access who like to buttonhole the president. They raise pet projects, make policy suggestions and share oddball ideas ranging from the benefits of nuclear-powered cars to personal plans for Mideast peace.

Former administration officials have described the lengths to which aides have gone to try to run interference, including reserving the dinner table next to Trump's to keep as close an eye on him as possible and scanning guest lists for visitors who might prove problematic.

Yang appears to be a relative newcomer to Palm Beach's political scene. GY US Investments LLC, a company she registered in 2017, according to Florida state documents, describes itself on a now-defunct, mostly Chinese website as an international business consulting firm.

The firm "provides public relations services to assist businesses in America to establish and expand their brand image in the modern Chinese marketplace," according to a translation of the page accessed through

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an internet archive service.

That has included, the website claims, access to presidential dinners and roundtables, White House events, photo opportunities and "VIP" activities including the "opportunity to interact with the president, the Minister of Commerce and other political figures."

The site also featured numerous photographs, including a picture of Trump's Mar-a-Lago club and photographs of Yang with Trump, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao and former White House aide Sebastian Gorka.

Yang is described on the website as the company's "Founder CEO," as well as a member of a "Presidential Fundraising Committee" and a "Presidential club member."

Yang and the company did not respond to messages seeking comment, nor did the Trump Organization, Mar-a-Lago club or the Republican National Committee.

Christian Ziegler, vice chairman of the Republican Party of Florida, played down the significance of the webpage and photos Yang has posted of herself with the president and other prominent Republican politicians.

"Anyone can buy tickets to any event and I'm assuming that is what she had done," Ziegler said. "I've never met the lady and I could never pick her out of a police lineup."

He added: "I know the media, Democrats, the left is going to try to do everything to connect her with us, but she had zero role with us. It just looks like she attended some events and took some pictures."

In China, however, pictures can be an end unto themselves, giving an appearance of influence. Pictures with famous people are especially valued in the country, where personal relationships and connections carry special weight in business and politics.

Mother Jones on Saturday detailed Yang's efforts to provide Chinese clients access to Trump and his circle.

The Miami Herald on Saturday reported that Yang arranged for a large group of Chinese business executives to attend a paid fundraiser for Trump in New York City at the end of 2017. Only citizens and permanent residents are allowed to donate to U.S. political campaigns, and it would be illegal for foreign nationals to pay back a U.S. citizen who had purchased their tickets to a fundraiser.

A Republican fundraiser told the AP on Sunday that patrons attending a Republican National Committee dinner at Mar-a-Lago last year noticed a large contingent of Chinese attendees. There was a discussion afterward about making sure they were vetted, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

The Herald on Friday also published a photo of Yang with Trump at a Super Bowl party at his West Palm Beach country club and reported on the link between Yang and the spa where New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft was charged with soliciting prostitution. Yang was a former owner of the spa.

Yang wasn't charged in a multiagency anti-human trafficking operation that resulted in 25 arrests, including Kraft's, and shut down 10 Asian day spas in South Florida last month. None of the spas is registered to Yang or her family. She sold the Jupiter spa to Hua Zhang around 2013. Zhang was charged with racketeering and running a house of prostitution and has pleaded not guilty.

Yang's family still owns several South Florida spas.

Schneider contributed from Orlando, Florida. Associated Press writer Zeke Miller in New York contributed to this report.

Croatia's top oyster farmers in alarm after norovirus found

By **ELDAR EMRIC** Associated Press

MALI STON, Croatia (AP) — Oyster farming is the pride of this small town in the south of Croatia's Adriatic Sea coast. But tasting the famed local delicacy may not be a good idea at the moment.

Authorities have detected norovirus, which causes diarrhea and vomiting, in parts of the Mali Ston bay — triggering shock and alarm among the breeders.

The traditional oyster-tasting feast in March has been canceled and fears are mounting of huge financial

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losses to the local community that harvests about 3 million oysters each year.

Experts are pointing their fingers at the outdated sewage system in the area that has seen a rise in the numbers of tourists flocking to Croatia's stunning Adriatic coast.

"I am really sorry but people themselves are to blame that something like this happened," explained Vlado Onofri from the Institute for Marine and Coastal Research in nearby Dubrovnik. "It's something that has to be solved in the future."

While some stomach bugs can be eliminated with cooking, norovirus survives at relatively high temperatures.

"The problem with oysters is that they are eaten raw," Onofri said.

Stunned locals pointed out their oysters are famous for high quality — a 1936 award from a London international exhibition still hangs on the wall in Svetan Pejic's La Koruna restaurant in Mali Ston.

"Our oyster here is really a special oyster ... and this is the only place (in the world) where it can be found," he insisted. "Everyone wants to take our oysters and try to breed them elsewhere."

Navigating the oyster fields in their small boats, the farmers proudly show visitors rows and rows of oyster-filled underwater farm beds spreading through the bay.

Top municipal official Vedran Antunica questioned the assumption that the local sewage system was to blame for the outbreak.

"Viruses are everywhere, now as we speak, the air is full of viruses," Antunica said. "We had the same sewage system in the past, so why wasn't it (norovirus) recorded? What has changed?"

Powell says Trump's attacks played no role in rate pause

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell says political attacks by President Donald Trump played no role in the Fed's decision in January to signal that it planned to take a pause in hiking interest rates. He also said in an interview broadcast Sunday that he can't be fired by the president and that he intends to serve out his full four-year term.

In a wide-ranging interview with CBS's "60 Minutes," Powell said that the Fed decided to pause its rate hikes in January, after increasing rates four times in 2018, because the global economy was slowing and other risks to the U.S. economy were rising. The Fed said it planned to be "patient" in deciding when to change rates again.

Asked to define patient, Powell said, "Patient means that we don't feel in any hurry to change our interest rate policy."

At another point, Powell said the Fed felt its interest rate policy "is in a very good place right now" with the benchmark rate in a range of 2.25 percent to 2.5 percent, which Powell said was "roughly neutral," meaning the Fed's policy rate was not stimulating growth or holding it back.

"We think that's an appropriate place for an economy that has the lowest unemployment in 50 years, that has inflation right about at our 2 percent objective, that has returned significantly to good health," Powell said.

Powell said in the last three months, the Fed has seen increasing evidence of a global growth slowdown with slower activity in China and Europe and potential threats from such events as Brexit, Britain's planned exit from the European Union.

"We've said that we're going to wait and see how those conditions evolve before we make any changes to our interest rate policy and that means patient," Powell said in the interview with Scott Pelley.

Powell said that despite outside criticism, the Fed will always "make decisions based on what we think is right for the American people. ... We will never, ever take political considerations into effect."

Asked if Trump could fire him, Powell said: "The law is clear that I have a four-year term. And I fully intend to serve it."

Powell's appearance on "60 Minutes" continued a tradition begun by then-Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, who appeared on the program in March 2009, breaking a long tradition of Fed leaders not giving televi-

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sion interviews.

Bernanke's appearance came during the depths of the Great Recession when the country was losing millions of jobs and the country struggled to get out of the deepest downturn since the 1930s.

Bernanke and Powell's immediate predecessor, Janet Yellen, both appeared with Powell during the Sunday broadcast. Powell was picked for the top Fed job by Trump after the president decided not to offer a second term to Yellen. Both Bernanke and Yellen were asked what advice they had given Powell on withstanding outside criticism.

Bernanke said he kept a quotation from Abraham Lincoln on his desk saying that if your decisions turn out to be correct, the criticism will not matter. Yellen said that she and Powell had worked together closely on the Fed and that Powell was doing a good job of being "inclusive" in his decision-making.

Trump has been highly critical of the Fed's rate hikes, calling the increases his biggest threat. Trump's attacks were frequent last fall when the stock market was plunging in value, a drop that the president blamed in part on the Fed's rate hikes.

Trump has not been as vocal about the Fed since the Fed announced it would be "patient" about future rate hikes, but in a March 2 speech he referred to Powell, without using his name, as a "gentleman" who likes raising rates and who likes tightening credit.

In his 2009 appearance, Bernanke talked about "green shoots" and said he felt the recession would "probably" be over by the end of 2009 if the efforts by the Fed and other government agencies were successful in stabilizing the banking system following the 2008 financial crisis.

The country did emerge from the recession in mid-June of 2009 and is currently in the tenth year of an expansion that will become the longest in U.S. history if it lasts past this June.

In the Sunday broadcast, Powell said while he felt U.S. growth would slow this year, he did not feel the country was headed for a recession.

"The outlook for our economy, in my view, is a favorable one," Powell said. "This year, I expect growth will continue to be positive and continue to be at a healthy rate."

The Fed in January signaled that due to a slowing global economy and other economic risks, it had decided to be "patient" in deciding when to raise interest rates again. Powell also delivered that message last month in testimony before Congress.

While the Fed in December had signaled it expected to raise rates two more times in 2019, many economists believe the central bank will now keep rates unchanged for a prolonged period and may not hike rates at all this year.

The economy grew at a solid 2.9 percent rate in 2018, helped by Trump's tax cuts and billions of dollars of increased government spending. But economists believe that support will wane this year and with the global economy slowing, the U.S. economy is likely to slow to growth of just above 2 percent.

On other topics, Powell:

__ Said he did not see much evidence that financial markets had gotten "irrationally exuberant" but he did say that there were some areas that were "hotter than others" such as leveraged lending being extended to corporations.

__ Said that while the economy might achieve annual growth of 4 percent in some years it would be difficult to have an extended period with growth that high because growth in the labor market and productivity, the two factors that determine overall growth, had both slowed.

__ Described the federal government's growing debt burden as an "unsustainable path but said at the moment the country was "not on the verge of a debt crisis or anything like that." He said the government will ultimately find a way to deal with the debt problem.

This version of the story corrects reference from Powell to Yellen in 10th paragraph.

Trump reviving his border wall fight with new budget request
By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is reviving his border wall fight, preparing a new budget that will seek \$8.6 billion for his signature project, impose steep spending cuts to other domestic programs and set the stage for another fiscal battle.

Budget documents like the one Trump is releasing Monday are often seen as just a starting point of negotiation. Fresh off the longest government shutdown in history, Trump's 2020 proposal shows he is eager to confront Congress again to boost defense spending and cut \$2.7 trillion in nondefense spending over a decade.

Titled "A Budget for a Better America: Promises Kept. Taxpayers First," Trump's proposal "embodies fiscal responsibility," said Russ Vought, the acting director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Vought said the administration has "prioritized reining in reckless Washington spending" and shows "we can return to fiscal sanity."

Two administration officials confirmed that the border wall request was part of Trump's spending blueprint for the 2020 budget year, which begins Oct. 1. It would pay for hundreds of miles of new barriers along the border.

Trump's budget proposes increasing defense spending to \$750 billion — and standing up the new Space Force as a military branch — while reducing nondefense accounts by 5 percent, with cuts recommended to safety-net programs used by many Americans.

The plan sticks to budget caps that both parties have routinely broken in recent years and promises to come into balance in 15 years, relying in part on economic growth that may be uncertain.

The officials were not authorized to discuss budget details publicly before Monday's release of the plan and spoke on condition of anonymity.

While pushing down spending in some areas, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the proposal will seek to increase funding in others to align with the president's priorities, according to one official.

The administration will invest more than \$80 billion for veterans services, a nearly 10 percent increase from current levels, including "significant" investments in rehabilitation, employment assistance and suicide prevention.

It will also increase resources to fight the opioid epidemic with money for prevention, treatment, research and recovery, the administration said. And it seeks to shift some federal student loan costs to colleges and universities.

By adhering to strict budget caps, Trump is signaling a fight ahead. The president has resisted big, bipartisan budget deals that break the caps — threatening to veto one last year — but Congress will need to find agreement on spending levels to avoid another federal shutdown in fall. To stay within the caps, the budget shifts a portion of the defense spending to an overseas contingency fund, which some fiscal hawks will view as an accounting gimmick.

White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said Trump's budget "points a steady glide path" toward lower spending and borrowing as a share of the nation's economy. He also told "Fox News Sunday" that there was no reason to "obsess" about deficits, and expressed confidence that economic growth would top 3 percent in 2019 and beyond. Others have predicted lower growth.

But the Democratic chairman of the House Budget Committee, Rep. John Yarmuth of Kentucky, called the proposed cuts to essential services "dangerous." He said Trump added nearly \$2 trillion to deficits with the GOP's "tax cuts for the wealthy and large corporations, and now it appears his budget asks the American people to pay the price."

The border wall, though, remains a signature issue for the president and is poised to stay at the forefront of his agenda, even though Congress has resisted giving him more money for it.

Leading Democrats immediately rejected the proposal.

"Congress refused to fund his wall and he was forced to admit defeat and reopen the government. The same thing will repeat itself if he tries this again," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York. They said the money "would be better spent on rebuilding America."

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In seeking \$8.6 billion for more than 300 miles of new border wall, the budget request would more than double the \$8.1 billion already potentially available to the president for the wall after he declared a national emergency at the border last month in order to circumvent Congress — although there's no guarantee he'll be able to use that money if he faces a legal challenge, as is expected. The standoff over the wall led to a 35-day partial government shutdown, the longest in U.S. history.

Along with border wall money, the proposed budget will also increase funding to increase the "manpower" of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and Customs and Border Patrol at a time when many Democrats are calling for cuts — or even the elimination — of those areas. The budget also proposes policy changes to end sanctuary cities, the administration said.

The budget would arrive as the Senate readies to vote this week to terminate Trump's national emergency declaration. The Democratic-led House already did so, and a handful of Republican senators, uneasy over what they see as an overreach of executive power, are expected to join Senate Democrats in following suit. Congress appears to have enough votes to reject Trump's declaration but not enough to overturn a veto.

Trump invoked the emergency declaration after Congress approved nearly \$1.4 billion for border barriers, far less than the \$5.7 billion he wanted. In doing so, he can potentially tap an additional \$3.6 billion from military accounts and shift it to building the wall. That's causing discomfort on Capitol Hill, where even the president's Republican allies are protective of their power to decide how to allocate federal dollars. Lawmakers are trying to guard money that's already been approved for military projects in their states — for base housing or other improvements — for the wall. The administration is promising to backfill those funds, senators said.

The wall with Mexico punctuated Trump's campaign for the White House, and it's expected to again be featured in his 2020 re-election effort. He used to say Mexico would pay for it, but Mexico has refused to do so.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin in Palm Beach, Florida, and Andrew Taylor in Washington contributed to this report.

Across Baghdad, a moment of respite and guarded hope

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Baghdad's main commercial district has seen more bombings than its residents can count. Death visited almost daily during times of war — most horrifically, a 2015 suicide bombing that ripped through two shopping malls, killing over 300 people.

But over the past year or so, the residents of Karrada have felt more normal than they have in decades. Streets lined with food stalls are crowded with shoppers, coffee shops and restaurants are packed until late, and the grey cement blast walls that protected against bombings are being removed.

"I used to go to school and come back home, nothing more," said Rusul Mohsen, a 33-year-old middle school teacher, seated recently at a store front sipping coffee. "If I went to a restaurant, I would ask to sit in a corner the farthest away from any windows, fearing a car bomb explosion might shatter the glass."

For the first time in 15 years there is no major war or insurgency in Iraq, and the defeat of the Islamic State group in late 2017 after a ruinous four-year war has given the population a moment of respite. Despite the enormous challenges ahead, there is a guarded sense of hope across the capital.

Car bomb explosions that became the norm after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, making the Iraqi capital's name synonymous with war, have ceased — at least for now. Thousands of concrete barriers that snaked through the city as protection from suicide car bombers have been towed away in trucks, easing traffic.

Army spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool said thousands of barriers have been towed away to a plot of land on the outskirts of the city, saying they may be used in the future around Baghdad to protect against infiltration.

Parts of the heavily fortified Green Zone on the west bank of the Tigris River have reopened to the public, including public access to the landmark "Victory Arch" — a 40-meter (131-feet) tall arch of two swords

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held by bronze casts of former dictator Saddam Hussein's hands to commemorate the Iran-Iraq war.

The U.S. established the Green Zone in 2003 to secure its embassy and Iraqi government institutions. But the zone became a symbol of the country's inequality, fueling the perception among Iraqis that their government is out of touch.

On the other side of the river, Baghdad's famous Rasheed Street, the capital's oldest street and cultural center known for its crumbling, old Iraqi houses, has also reopened for cars and pedestrians after a 15-year closure due to security risks.

A new Central Bank headquarters, a towering waterfront building on the banks of the Tigris designed by the late Iraq-born architect Zaha Hadid, is currently under construction, expected to be completed next year.

"Baghdad feels better than it has since 2003," remarked a veteran Western diplomat in Baghdad.

Even so, the country faces massive challenges.

The Islamic State group, which is about to lose its last shred of territory in neighboring Syria, is creeping back in Iraq, stepping up insurgent-style attacks in areas outside Baghdad and the country's north. Tens of thousands of people remain displaced and much of the country is in ruins. The country is plagued by corruption, and in the oil-rich but parched south, violent riots have repeatedly broken out against living conditions.

Baghdad, an ancient metropolis of 8 million people that was once the Arab world's cultural center, is barely functional, its infrastructure crumbling. Armed militias who fought IS alongside the Iraqi armed forces roam the streets in what many see as the country's latest menace, amid reports of kidnappings for ransom and general lawlessness. Unemployment, poverty and disenfranchised youth are widespread.

"There is a big gap between people's aspirations and the government ability to deliver," the Western diplomat said, speaking on condition of anonymity so he could speak freely.

Still, many hope that after years of bloodshed, Iraq is starting to turn a corner.

In Karrada, the Hadi Center where a 2015 suicide bombing trapped people in a burning inferno for hours, killing around 300 people, is full of shoppers and youngsters fill the food court. The adjacent Laith Center had to be razed and rebuilt from scratch. It's now almost completed.

Assem Gharib, owner of a pastries and ice cream shop, said for years he used to pay someone to supervise the street outside his shop and keep cars from parking in front.

"I used to be frightened whenever a car approached, imagining it to be a suicide bomber or a car bomb. Now it's the opposite, we are happy when a car parks in front of the shop," he said.

That kind of confidence eluded most Iraqis for the past 15 years. The country has been at war, one way or another, for more than a generation, starting with the eight-year Iraq-Iran war that ended in 1988, followed by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the subsequent military intervention by the United States.

The worst bloodletting came with the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which triggered an al-Qaida driven insurgency and sectarian violence that washed over the country, killing tens of thousands of Iraqis. Bombings reached up to 10 a day.

The violence culminated with the Islamic State group, an al-Qaida offshoot, seizing Iraqi cities and declaring a self-styled Islamic caliphate over large parts of Iraq and Syria. That triggered a displacement crisis unprecedented in Iraq's history. Millions fled their homes in the face of the militants' rapid advance. Others fled as Iraqi forces, backed by the U.S. and Iran, battled back, ultimately reclaiming the last town in late 2017.

Few dare to hope the current lull in fighting will last and many worry fear the growing power of the Shiite militias, known collectively as the Popular Mobilization Forces.

Bashar Ali, a 33-year-old shop owner on Karrada street, said he fears the return of IS fighters from Syria and the lawlessness outside the city, including kidnappings and killings.

"Baghdad is like my home, I feel safe in my own home, but when I go outside I don't feel this way," he said.

Neighbors open another front in Colorado oil and gas battle

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By DAN ELLIOTT Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Frustrated residents of a Denver suburb say state law is forcing them to participate in a major oil and gas drilling project against their wishes, so they launched legal challenges with potentially significant consequences for the industry.

Backed by a federal judge, they have a chance this week to ask state regulators to block multiple wells planned within about 1,300 feet (400 meters) of homes in the city of Broomfield.

The dispute is a microcosm of a broader battle in Colorado, where burgeoning subdivisions overlap with rich oil and gas fields, bringing drilling rigs and homes uncomfortably close.

The battle is playing out on multiple fronts. Broomfield residents are taking their case both to state regulators and federal court. In the Legislature, majority Democrats are pushing legislation that would give the Broomfield residents and others like them powerful new weapons to keep drilling rigs away from their homes.

In Broomfield, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of downtown Denver, Extraction Oil and Gas wants to drill in open areas amid the Wildgrass neighborhood of roomy new homes.

A group called the Wildgrass Oil and Gas Committee says the wells are dangerously close to their homes, although they would be beyond the 500-foot (150-meter) setback required by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, which regulates the industry.

They also argue that state laws is forcing residents who own the mineral rights under their property to lease or sell them to Extraction through a process called forced pooling. It allows the oil and gas commissioners to require all the owners of nearby minerals to sell or lease them to an energy company in exchange for a share of the profits.

Created a century ago, forced pooling was designed to prevent the proliferation of oil derricks. Land-owners were scrambling to drill their own wells to keep a neighbor's well from grabbing their oil. Forced pooling allowed a single well to gather the oil, and the income was distributed among the owners.

In Broomfield, some mineral owners are resisting.

"We did not have any interest in going into business with an oil and gas company," said Lizzie Lario, a member of the Wildgrass group, who along with her husband owns the mineral rights under their home that would be included in the project. She said she did not want to participate in something that could result in spills, fires and explosions so close to homes.

Many states have forced pooling laws, though some require a certain percentage of owners to consent before a pooled well can proceed. Colorado allows forced pooling with the approval of a single party, provided they have the means to get the minerals out.

The Wildgrass committee said the oil and gas commission repeatedly delayed a hearing on their objections, so they filed suit, asking a federal judge to rule the forced pooling law unconstitutional.

The judge hasn't ruled on the lawsuit, but he ordered the commission to hold the long-delayed hearing. It's expected to take place Tuesday.

Kate Merlin, the Wildgrass committee's attorney, said residents want the commission to deny the forced pooling application on the grounds that Extraction has not shown it's capable of developing the project in a way that's economically sustainable and that protects public safety.

Extraction spokesman Brian Cain said the company met with Broomfield officials and a citizens task force more than 28 times over two years and adopted 95 percent of the task force's recommendations. The buffer zone around the well site is four times the state requirement, he said,

He called Extraction's operating agreement with Broomfield "the gold standard in Colorado."

Forced pooling is critical to the oil and gas industry in Colorado, said Scott Prestidge, a spokesman for the Colorado Oil and Gas Association. Without it, some wells would not be financially viable.

Forced pooling combined with horizontal drilling — well bores that penetrate straight down, then bend outward laterally for thousands of feet — make it economical to drill in the oil field north of Denver, he said.

A single site with horizontal wells extending two miles (3.2 kilometers) can replace as many as 18 vertical wells, he said. That makes it cheaper to operate and control pollution, and it reduces the amount of land and roads required.

Prestidge declined to comment on the forced pooling lawsuit or the specifics of the oil and gas bill making its way through the Legislature. Among other changes, the bill would require the consent of at least 50 percent of the mineral owners affected before forced pooling could proceed.

Democratic lawmakers said they consulted with oil and gas companies on the bill, but Prestidge said they never got to review the language or fully grasp the intent before it was introduced.

"Right now there are significant concerns with the piece of legislation that is being rushed through the process and has several elements within it that could use some constructive conversation," he said.

Follow Dan Elliott at <http://twitter.com/DanElliottAP>.

Show up drunk: Indictments spotlight prison rehab scams

By DAVE COLLINS Associated Press

It's a tip that has been passed onto convicts for years: On your way to federal prison, say you have a substance abuse problem, and you could qualify for a treatment program that knocks up to a year off your sentence.

Federal prosecutors have long suspected abuses in the program, which has enrolled a deep list of high-profile convicts. Recently, a grand jury in Connecticut indicted three people accused of coaching ineligible convicts on how to get into the Residential Drug Abuse Program, or RDAP, by telling them to show up to prison intoxicated and fake withdrawal symptoms. The charges are among the first filed against prison consultants involving the program.

The case has put a spotlight on the unregulated world of prison consulting, in which some ex-convicts and former prison employees charge thousands of dollars for their inside knowledge to help people prepare for life behind bars. Some consultants say there has been wrongdoing in the industry for decades, including encouraging clients to scam their way into the rehab program.

The small industry now is "totally the Wild West," said Jack Donson, president of New York-based My Federal Prison Consultant and a retired federal Bureau of Prisons employee.

"I hope it brings light to things," he said, referring to the Connecticut case. "I hope it gives people ... pause to not cross that line to illegality and unethical conduct."

Completing the nine-month, 500-hour treatment program for nonviolent offenders is one of only a few ways inmates can get their sentences reduced. About 15,600 inmates — nearly 10 percent of the current federal prison population — participated in the program last year, and thousands more are on waiting lists. To get in, convicts must present evidence they had substance abuse or addiction problems during the year prior to their arrest. Upon completion, their sentences can be reduced and they can spend the last six months of their sentences in a halfway house.

Christopher Mattei, a former federal prosecutor in Connecticut, said the U.S. attorney's office increasingly saw white-collar convicts make use of the program.

"It undermines the public's confidence that all people when they go before a court for sentencing will be treated fairly. People who know how to game the system know how to get the benefits, whereas people who are struggling with addiction don't know all the angles to play," Mattei said.

Mattei helped send Bridgeport Mayor Joseph Ganim to prison for nearly seven years for corruption. Ganim took part in the drug treatment program, got released early in 2010 and made a stunning comeback by winning back the mayor's seat in the 2015 election.

That Ganim even had a substance abuse problem surprised both Mattei and the federal judge who sentenced him, since there had been no indication of such a problem. After his release, Ganim himself worked as a prison consultant and touted his knowledge of the drug program. He did not return messages from the AP seeking comment.

Questions have been raised about other prominent convicts' admittance to the program.

Former Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell, sentenced to 30 months for tax evasion, completed the program, but the four-month early release he received was revoked in 2008 after prosecutors raised questions about

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whether he really had an alcohol problem.

Former Enron Treasurer Ben Glisan Jr. was sentenced to five years in prison after pleading guilty in 2003 in the Enron fraud scandal, but he shaved 18 months off the sentence through good behavior and the drug treatment program.

While testifying at the fraud and conspiracy trial in 2006, Glisan appeared to joke about the program on the witness stand while being questioned by Daniel Petrocelli, the lawyer for former Enron Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Skilling, the AP reported at the time. Glisan said his pre-prison drinking "problem" was consuming two glasses of wine upon returning home and sometimes a bottle when out with colleagues.

"You said one or two drinks. If you have a drinking problem, then I'm in serious trouble," Petrocelli joked.

"You'll get a year off," Glisan replied with a laugh.

Bureau of Prisons officials said they cannot comment on specific inmates who participated in the program or on legal proceedings, including indictments.

"However, we can share that the BOP is committed to the integrity of the Residential Drug Abuse Program," the agency said in a statement.

The criminal indictments in Connecticut are believed to be among the first criminal charges filed against prison consultants in connection with the treatment program.

Arrested were Michigan residents Tony Pham, 49, and Samuel Copenhaver, 47, both of Grand Rapids; and Constance Moerland, 33, of Hudsonville. The three were managing partners in RDAP Law Consultants, authorities said.

Prosecutors said the three told clients over the past six years to falsely inform Bureau of Prisons officials that they had drug and alcohol problems, taught them how to fake withdrawal symptoms and how to fraudulently obtain medication to treat withdrawal symptoms, so they could show prescriptions to qualify for the program. The partners also told their clients to begin drinking alcohol daily before going to prison and to show up drunk, the indictments said.

Messages were left at phone listings for Pham and Moerland. Copenhaver did not address the allegations in emails with the AP, saying he was too busy to comment. Lawyers for Copenhaver and Moerland declined to comment. A message was left for Pham's public defender.

"The fraudsters not only undermined the authority of the judicial system to administer fair and impactful sentences, but they diverted vital substance abuse treatment from inmates who really needed it," said Kristina O'Connell, an Internal Revenue Service agent in charge of New England investigations.

Last year in New York City, a lawyer and three other people were charged with defrauding the government and making false statements. They allegedly submitted bogus information to prison officials, claiming that a convicted drug dealer had a history of addiction, in an effort to get the client into the drug treatment program so he could be released early. The case remains pending.

Other consultants coach people on how to lie to get into the program, according to Donson, who said some also claim they can get convicts sent to prisons that have the RDAP program when only federal prison officials have that authority. He said he sees potential for fraud also as consultants rush to offer help related to a new law that allows federal prisoners sentenced for crack cocaine offenses before late 2010 the opportunity to petition for a lighter penalty.

Donson and other consultants say more monitoring of the industry and prosecutions would help deter misconduct.

"It's an unregulated industry, so something like this hopefully brings some attention to it," said Dan Wise, an ex-con who completed the RDAP program and now runs a prison consultant business based in Spokane, Washington.

Allred: Tape appears to show R. Kelly sexually abusing girls

By STEPHEN R. GROVES Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A man who said he was cleaning out an old videotape collection found what he

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thought was a recording of R&B singer R. Kelly in concert, but instead turned out to show a man who appeared to be Kelly sexually abusing girls, he and his attorney said Sunday.

The man then turned the tape over to law enforcement, according to attorney Gloria Allred. She and her client, Gary Dennis, would not discuss the specifics of the tape during a news conference in New York. But Allred said it appears to show a separate incident from the 10 counts of aggravated sexual abuse that Kelly faces in Chicago, though she acknowledged she could not be "100 percent certain" that the man in the tape is Kelly.

Steve Greenberg, an attorney for Kelly, noted that lack of certainty.

"The doubt here is self-evident, with reporting that the man on the tape kinda, sorta looks like R. Kelly," Greenberg said Sunday in an email. "That doesn't make it him. It is not him."

The lawyer also said Kelly "denies that he is on any tape with underaged girls."

"It is obviously now just open season on R. Kelly," Greenberg said.

Dennis, an assistant at a nursing home, said he was cleaning out a box of old VHS tapes in his Pennsylvania home recently when he found the footage, on a tape that was labeled with Kelly's name. Dennis said he has never met Kelly and doesn't know how the tape came to be in his possession. He said that because the tape also has a sports game on it, he believes it may have come from a friend.

"To my shock and surprise, R. Kelly appeared to be on the tape, but not in concert," Dennis said. "Instead he was sexually abusing underaged African-American girls."

"I was disgusted and horrified when I saw that," Dennis said.

Allred said they assume the girls in the video were underage because they didn't appear to have developed.

The charges Kelly faces in Chicago are in connection to three girls and one woman. Prosecutors have said they have video of Kelly sexually abusing one of the girls.

Kelly has been trailed for decades by allegations that he victimized women and girls, and he was acquitted of child pornography charges in 2008 related to a tape that prosecutors said showed him having sex with a girl as young as 13. He and his attorneys have repeatedly denied allegations of sexual misconduct, and he has pleaded not guilty to the charges filed last month in Chicago. In an interview that aired Wednesday and Thursday on "CBS This Morning," Kelly pleaded with viewers to believe that he never had sex with anyone under age 17 and never held anyone against their will.

Allred, who represents women who say they were abused by Kelly, said the tape from Dennis was turned over to law enforcement in the federal Eastern District of New York. She didn't say why it went to that venue. A representative for the office declined to comment.

Allred encouraged anyone who was in possession of similar tapes to come forward, either to her or to law enforcement.

A Chicago police spokesman referred questions about Allred's news conference to the prosecutors handling the case. That office did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Associated Press writer Corey Williams contributed to this story from Detroit.

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

60 years after Dalai Lama fled, China defends Tibet policies

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China is defending its often-criticized rule in Tibet 60 years after the Dalai Lama fled into exile amid an abortive uprising against Chinese control, saying those who question its policies are merely showing their anti-Chinese bias.

The statements in official media came as Tibetans and their supporters marked the anniversary Sunday and called for greater international support. Despite decades of such calls, however, the Himalayan region appears no closer to gaining greater autonomy, particularly as China's global influence grows.

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China's official Xinhua News Agency said in an editorial dated Saturday that economic growth, increases in lifespan and better education in the region refute the claims of critics that Tibetans suffer oppression from Beijing.

On Sunday, an editorial in the Communist Party-run Tibet Daily attacked the Dalai Lama, Tibet's traditional Buddhist leader, for what it said are his efforts to "sow chaos in Tibet."

His "separatist plots are doomed to total failure," the paper said.

The Dalai Lama has been living in the northern Indian town of Dharmasala since he fled from Tibet after a failed 1959 uprising against Chinese rule. Beijing accuses him of seeking to separate Tibet from China, which he denies.

Tibet is enveloped in smothering layers of Chinese security and many Tibetans abroad say the Himalayan region's resources are being exploited for Beijing's benefit while Tibet's language and unique Buddhist culture is gradually being destroyed.

In India's capital, New Delhi, at least 3,000 Tibetans marched about 3 kilometers (2 miles) through the center of the city on Sunday carrying Tibetan and Indian flags. Invoking India's concerns over China's expansive power in Asia and beyond, the marchers shouted slogans including "Tibet's freedom is India's security" and "India-China friendship is a sham."

They also carried a portrait of the Dalai Lama while occasionally chanting slogans wishing him a long life and calling for freedom for Tibet.

"We have come here to remind the new generation that China snatched our country ... that's why we got together and started this movement," said one marcher, Sonam Yougyal, 52.

Hundreds of Tibetans and Taiwanese rallied in Taipei, the capital of the self-governing island democracy that China also claims as its territory.

Tashi Tsering, chair of the Human Rights Network for Tibet and Taiwan, recalled what he called China's history of reneging on agreements to Tibetans and others.

"We should not trust the Communist Party of China whatever it says," he said.

China says Tibet has been part of its territory for centuries, although many Tibetans say they were essentially independent for most of that time. Communist troops took control of the region in 1950 after a brief military struggle.

Conditions in the region are difficult to independently ascertain because foreign travelers must get special permission to enter the region. Access is rarely given to foreign journalists, and the region is closed to foreigners entirely during sensitive anniversaries.

The Xinhua editorial did not directly mention Sunday's uprising anniversary, referring to the events of 1959 instead as the inauguration of "democratic reform" that saw the dismantlement of the Buddhist hierarchy and feudal structures.

"Sixty years since the epoch-making democratic reform in Tibet, people in the plateau region have enjoyed unprecedented human rights in history," Xinhua said.

"Undeniable facts and figures" related to development "debunk the repeated lies and accusations that aim to smear Tibet's human rights with vile motives," it said. "Anyone without bias will recognize Tibet's tremendous progress in human rights."

Among the figures it cited were a rise in life expectancy of 35.5 years in the 1950s to nearly 70 now; a double-digit growth in regional GDP over the last quarter-century; and reduction of poverty by 80 percent.

China has refused to meet with the Dalai Lama or his representatives until they surrender their conditions for a greater degree of autonomy and submit to Beijing's authority unequivocally.

On Wednesday, China's Communist Party chief in Tibet insisted that the Tibetan people feel more affection toward the government than to the Dalai Lama, who fled following the abortive uprising against Chinese.

The Dalai Lama hasn't done a "single good thing" for Tibet since he left, Tibet Party Secretary Wu Yingjie said during a meeting of China's ceremonial legislature.

Chinese rule in Tibet has grown harsher since anti-government protests in 2008 culminated in attacks on businesses and individuals of Han Chinese ethnicity, the country's ethnic majority.

The government says rioters killed 18 people. An unknown number of Tibetans were killed by security

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forces in the aftermath.

More recently, traditionally Tibetan regions of western China have been racked by a series of self-immolations by Buddhist clergy and lay people calling for the return of the Dalai Lama, now 83 years old.

Also, on a visit to Prague on Wednesday, the prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile said he was heartened to see support for his people in the Czech Republic.

"Each time I come here, I get encouraged, I get the fuel to go back and say 'There are people around the world who support us, who believe us,'" said Lobsang Sangay.

Associated Press journalists Yanan Wang in Beijing, Rishi Lekhi in New Delhi, Wu Taijing in Taipei, Taiwan, and Adam Pemble in Prague, Czech Republic, contributed to this report.

Canada's no-sex, no-money scandal could topple Trudeau

By **ROB GILLIES** Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — There's no money, no sex and nothing illegal happened. This is what passes for a scandal in Canada.

U.S. President Donald Trump has been engulfed in allegations involving possible collusion with Russia and secret payments to buy the silence of a porn star. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is facing a controversy that seems trivial by comparison, but it could topple him in elections later this year.

Two high-profile women ministers in Trudeau's Cabinet, including Canada's first indigenous justice minister, resigned in protest, and his top aide and best friend quit too.

The former justice minister and attorney general, Jody Wilson-Raybould, says Trudeau and senior members of his government pressured her in a case involving a major Canadian engineering company accused of corruption related to its business dealings in Libya. Trudeau reportedly leaned on the attorney general to instruct prosecutors to reach the equivalent of plea deal, which would avoid a criminal prosecution of SNC-Lavalin, because he felt that jobs were at stake.

"People south of the border would be astonished to think that this is the type of scandal that they have in Canada," said Eddie Goldenberg, a former adviser to former Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

Many countries would be jealous of a scandal that went no further than a prime minister asking another minister to do something she is legally entitled to do, Goldenberg said.

"I just don't really see it as a scandal," he said. "There is a political correctness here. Nobody wants to go after an indigenous woman minister. It's become politically incorrect to question the former minister."

Trudeau has said he asked Wilson-Raybould to revisit her decision not to instruct prosecutors and said she agreed to consider that. He denied applying any inappropriate pressure, saying he and his officials were only pointing out that prosecution could endanger thousands of jobs.

SNC-Lavalin has pleaded not guilty to fraud and corruption charges related to allegations it paid about \$35 million (CA\$47 million) in bribes to public officials in Libya between 2001 and 2011.

"It's a pseudo-scandal. It's crap. What the hell? You are doing business in Libya and you are not bribing?" said Robert Bothwell, a professor of Canadian history and international relations at the University of Toronto. "It does suggest to me that the director of public prosecutions ... is also nuts. And so is Wilson-Raybould. These people are delusional."

Wilson-Raybould was demoted from her role as attorney general and justice minister in January as part of a Cabinet shuffle by Trudeau. She has testified that she believes she lost the justice job because she did not give in to "sustained" pressure to instruct the director of public prosecutions to negotiate a remediation agreement with SNC-Lavalin.

That solution would have avoided a potential criminal conviction that would bar the company from receiving any federal government business for a decade. The company is a major employer in Quebec, Trudeau's home province. It has about 9,000 employees in Canada and more than 50,000 worldwide.

The company publicly led the lobbying charge for a law that allows for deferred prosecution agreements as a way to resolve the criminal charges it faces. The new attorney general has not ruled out approving

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a settlement.

Wilson-Raybould has said herself that the pressure from Trudeau and others was not illegal and that she was not explicitly instructed to do a remediation agreement.

Gerald Butts, Trudeau's former principal secretary and best friend who resigned, said nothing inappropriate was alleged until after Wilson-Raybould left the Cabinet, suggesting she felt sour grapes about losing her dream job.

Opposition Conservative Andrew Scheer leader has demanded that Trudeau resign, saying he tried to interfere in a criminal prosecution. Canadian media have covered the story as intensely as American networks have covered Trump, noted Nelson Wiseman, a professor at the University of Toronto.

"Trudeau would not be able to get away with what Trump does because the political cultures and the state of political polarization of the two countries are still quite different," Wiseman said.

The differences among Canadian media outlets, for example, are "relatively narrow compared to the chasms between Fox and MSNBC or CNN. The American media are reporting on two different worlds. The Canadian media are reporting on the same Wilson-Raybould-Trudeau story," Wiseman added.

Daniel Beland, a politics professor at McGill University in Montreal, said Trudeau has framed himself differently than Trump. Trump said sympathetic things about Russia during the campaign and was elected despite that and other controversies, giving him "the sense that he can do anything and his base will still follow him."

Trudeau, meanwhile, promised transparency while describing himself as a feminist who was also determined to right the wrongs against Canada's indigenous people. Women make up half of his cabinet.

"He depicted himself as a feminist, as someone who believes in indigenous reconciliation, and then you have two of his top female Cabinet ministers resign, and they are depicting him in a very different light," Beland said.

Trudeau said he tried to foster an environment where his lawmakers can come to him with concerns, but one of his female Liberal party colleagues, Celina Caesar-Chavannes, took issue with that, tweeting, "I did come to you recently. Twice. Remember your reactions?"

"When you add women, please do not expect the status quo. Expect us to make correct decisions, stand for what is right and exit when values are compromised," she also tweeted.

Caesar-Chavannes, who is not running for re-election, has issued messages of support for Wilson-Raybould and Jane Philpott, a respected Cabinet minister who said she lost confidence in how the government has handled the affair.

"It is a fundamental doctrine of the rule of law that our Attorney General should not be subjected to political pressure or interference regarding the exercise of her prosecutorial discretion in criminal cases," Philpott wrote in the resignation letter to Trudeau.

Other Liberal lawmakers have expressed confidence in Trudeau. The federal election is in October.

Antonia Maioni, McGill University's dean of arts, said citizens of every democracy will look at the Trump scandals and say everything else is small potatoes.

But, she added, "I'm not sure Trump is a good reference point here. Leaders fall in parliamentary systems for many other reasons beyond personal scandal."

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 11, the 70th day of 2019. There are 295 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 11, 1985, Mikhail S. Gorbachev was chosen to succeed the late Konstantin U. Chernenko as general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.

On this date:

In 1513, Giovanni de' Medici was proclaimed pope, succeeding Julius II; he took the name Leo X.

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In 1888, the Blizzard of '88, also known as the "Great White Hurricane," began inundating the north-eastern United States, resulting in some 400 deaths.

In 1918, what are believed to be the first confirmed U.S. cases of a deadly global flu pandemic were reported among U.S. Army soldiers stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas; 46 would die. (The worldwide outbreak of influenza claimed an estimated 20 to 40 million lives.)

In 1935, the Bank of Canada began operations, issuing its first series of bank notes.

In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Bill, providing war supplies to countries fighting the Axis.

In 1954, the U.S. Army charged that Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., and his subcommittee's chief counsel, Roy Cohn, had exerted pressure to obtain favored treatment for Pvt. G. David Schine, a former consultant to the subcommittee. (The confrontation culminated in the famous Senate Army-McCarthy hearings.)

In 1959, the Lorraine Hansberry drama "A Raisin in the Sun" opened at New York's Ethel Barrymore Theater.

In 1977, more than 130 hostages held in Washington, D.C., by Hanafi Muslims were freed after ambassadors from three Islamic nations joined the negotiations.

In 1993, Janet Reno was unanimously confirmed by the Senate to be U.S. attorney general.

In 2003, a U.S. Army helicopter crashed near Fort Drum in upstate New York, killing 11 soldiers. Recep Tayyip Erdogan (REH'-jehp TY'-ihp UR'-doh-wahn), the leader of Turkey's governing party, was named prime minister. After a four-day walkout that cost New York City \$10 million, Broadway musicians settled the first strike on the Great White Way in nearly 30 years.

In 2004, ten bombs exploded in quick succession across the commuter rail network in Madrid, Spain, killing 191 people in an attack linked to al-Qaida-inspired militants.

In 2011, a magnitude-9.0 earthquake and resulting tsunami struck Japan's northeastern coast, killing nearly 20,000 people and severely damaging the Fukushima Dai-ichi (foo-koo-SHEE'-mah dy-EE'-chee) nuclear power station.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama signed a \$410 billion spending package to keep the government running through September 2009, even as he called it "imperfect" because of the number of earmarks it contained. A teenager, Tim Kretschmer, went on a shooting rampage starting at a school in Winnenden, Germany, killing 15 people before committing suicide.

Five years ago: In an extraordinary public accusation, the head of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., declared the CIA had interfered with and then tried to intimidate a congressional investigation into the agency's possible use of torture in terror probes during the Bush administration. Swedish Radio reporter Nils Horner was shot dead in Kabul, Afghanistan, in an attack claimed by a Taliban splinter group. Dallas Seavey ran a blistering pace and took the lead just hours before the finish to win the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

One year ago: The White House pledged to help states pay for firearms training for teachers, and renewed its call for an improved background check system, as part of a new plan to prevent school shootings like the one that left 17 people dead at a Florida high school four weeks earlier; the plan did not include a push to boost the minimum age for purchasing assault weapons to 21. British officials investigating the nerve agent attack on a Russian ex-spy and his adult daughter said limited traces of contamination were found in a restaurant and a pub in the English city of Salisbury. Lawmakers in China abolished presidential term limits that had been in place for more than 35 years, opening up the possibility of Xi Jinping (shee jihn-peeng) holding power for life.

Today's Birthdays: Media mogul Rupert Murdoch is 88. Former ABC News correspondent Sam Donaldson is 85. Musician Flaco Jimenez (FLAH'-koh hee-MEH'-nez) is 80. Actress Tricia O'Neil is 74. Actor Mark Metcalf is 73. Rock singer-musician Mark Stein (Vanilla Fudge) is 72. Singer Bobby McFerrin is 69. Movie director Jerry Zucker is 69. Singer Cheryl Lynn is 68. Actress Susan Richardson is 67. Recording executive Jimmy Iovine (eye-VEEN') is 66. Singer Nina Hagen is 64. Country singer Jimmy Fortune (The Statler Brothers) is 64. Actor Elias Koteas (ee-LY'-uhs koh-TAY'-uhs) is 58. Actor-director Peter Berg is 57. Singer

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Mary Gauthier (GOH'-shay) is 57. Actor Jeffrey Nordling is 57. Actress Alex Kingston is 56. Country musician David Talbot is 56. Actor Wallace Langham is 54. Former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., is 54. Actor John Barrowman is 52. Singer Lisa Loeb is 51. Neo-soul musician Al Gamble (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 50. Singer Pete Dinklage is 50. Actor Terrence Howard is 50. Rock musician Rami Jaffe is 50. Actor Johnny Knoxville is 48. Rock singer-musicians Benji and Joel Madden (Good Charlotte; The Madden Brothers) are 40. Actor David Anders is 38. Singer LeToya is 38. Actress Thora Birch is 37. TV personality Melissa Rycroft is 36. Actor Rob Brown is 35. Actress Jodie Comer is 26.

Thought for Today: "Perhaps it is better to wake up after all, even to suffer, rather than to remain a dupe to illusions all one's life." — Kate Chopin, American writer (1851-1904).