

Groton Daily Independent

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Groton Area Schedule of Events

Saturday, March 16, 2019

Girls Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls
Boys Varsity State Tournament @ Sioux Falls
Mitchell Classic Show Choir Competition

Tuesday, March 19

City Council meeting at the Groton Community Center,
7 p.m.

Help Wanted

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

Bates Township Equalization Notice

Bates Township Equalization Meeting Notice:

The Bates Township Board of Equalization will meet at the Clerk's home on Tuesday, March 19th, 2019 at 7 pm.

All persons disputing their assessments are requested to notify the clerk prior to the meeting.

Betty Geist
Bates Township Clerk
14523 409th Ave
Conde, SD 57434
(0313.0320)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$19.21. 17306

Bates Township ROW Maintenance

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and expenses charged to the landowner.

Landowner is responsible for spraying all noxious weeds.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors

Betty Geist
Township Clerk
(0313.0320)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$20.11. 17307

- 1- Help Wanted
- 1- Bates Township Notices
- 2- Truss Pros is Hiring
- 2- Streets still blocked in Groton
- 3- Wanner chipping away at the ice
- 4- Photo of Icicle Tree
- 5- Friday evening sunset
- 5- Keith joins Harr Motors
- 6- Instant Replay Topic
- 7- Brown County Commission Agenda
- 7- Noem Signs Emergency Declaration
- 8- Earthtalk: Reforestation Projects
- 10- SD News Watch: Internet coverage, reliability in rural areas hinders development
- 13- Class B Boys State Bracket Updated
- 14- Class A Boys State Bracket Updated
- 15- Class A Girls State Bracket Updated
- 16- Class AA Girls State Bracket Updated
- 17- Class AA Boys State Bracket Updated
- 18- Today in Weather History
- 19- Weather Pages
- 21- Daily Devotional
- 22- 2019 Groton Events
- 23- News from the Associated Press

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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This is the view of Third Avenue West in Groton as the road is closed to through traffic due to the snow drifts. The same is true for Fifth Avenue West and 16th Avenue. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

NOW HIRING!

Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

Looking for assemblers - both shifts &
Class A CDL Drivers

New Starting Competitive Wages
Overtime Available

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health, Dental & Vision insurance
- Life Insurance
- STD
- LTD
- 401k
- Holiday Pay
- Vacation Pay
- Paid Sick Leave
- Referral Bonuses

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

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Shaun Wanner was chipping away at the ice that had accumulated on the roof. He said that he has never seen this much snow around his house and his biggest fear is water getting into his basement as his backyard is full of snow. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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This tree at the apartments on Garfield Street was full of ice yesterday. The left photo shows a closer view of the ice buildup. (Photos by Paul Kosel)

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The sunset for Friday evening. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



**4255 6th Ave
SE, Aberdeen**

Hi, my name is Bary Keith, a Groton resident. I have just recently joined the Harr Motors sales team. I'm excited to start helping people get into the right vehicle for them. Right now, any vehicle purchased from me, until the end of April, will receive an Autostart at no charge. Give me a call (605-216-6952) or (605-725-8624) or stop out and see me at Harr Motors today!!!

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Instant Replay Topic

Editor's Note: There must have been some controversial call at the end of the game that prompted this response from the SDHSAA. Apparently, from twitter accounts, there was no conference among the three officials on a controversial call at the end of the game. Here is an excerpt from the Sioux Falls Argus Leader:

RAPID CITY — The Class AA semifinals came to a controversial conclusion Friday night, with senior Luke Ronsiek hitting a shot at the buzzer to lift No. 3 O'Gorman to a 43-42 win over No. 2 Yankton.

Down one, Ronsiek received a pass from Canyon Bauer on the near wing with about 2.6 seconds remaining. Ronsiek dribbled around Rex Ryken and into the lane. He went airborne with less than a second left, pulling the ball back ever so slightly before tossing it towards the hoop.

The game clock appeared to have expired before the ball left Ronsiek's hand, but the official along the far sideline immediately motioned that the basket counted.

As the Knights began celebrating underneath the basket, Yankton coach Chris Haynes ran across the court with his arms extended, pleading with the officials. But the call had been made and with no replay or recourse available, the decision was final and the game was over.

This was the response from Dr. Daniel Swartos, SDHSAA Executive Director:

The SDHSAA is aware of the situation that occurred at the end of the Yankton/O'Gorman State AA Boys Basketball Semifinal this evening in Rapid City. NFHS rules do allow states to adopt instant replay in basketball under very limited circumstances. The SDHSAA process for rule changes involves passage by member votes at an advisory committee level, followed by a vote of the state athletic directors, and finally two readings by the SDHSAA Board of Directors. While the topic of instant replay in basketball has been previously broached in South Dakota, it has never left the advisory stage of our membership's rule change process. As such, instant replay is not currently used in SDHSAA basketball nor any of our other activities. Further, per our Constitution and By-Laws, officials decisions in any contest are by their nature necessarily regarded as final and shall not be considered as the basis for protest.

It is the intention of the SDHSAA to again examine instant replay in basketball throughout the coming year, and we will follow the wishes of our membership in regards to this topic. It will go through the same rule change process as anything else, and would be implemented if approved by a vote of the state Athletic Directors and two readings of the representative SDHSAA Board of Directors.

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AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION
COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

TUESDAY
MARCH 19, 2019

8:45 a.m. - 8:50 a.m. – Ord. 134 First Reading (Campbell Rezone) & Ord. 135 First Reading (Remitz Rezone)
8:50 a.m. – 8:55 a.m. – Derek Ricci, Fair Manager – Fair Board Member Appointments

- Approve General Meeting minutes of March 12, 2019
- Claims/Payroll
- HR Report
- Fair Contracts
- Authorize advertising bids for Weed & Pest Chemicals
- Liquor Licenses
- Lease

Any other matters to come before the Commission for discussion

Noem Signs Emergency Declaration

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem today signed an emergency declaration that allows the use of additional state funds for South Dakota counties impacted by this week's blizzard and flood.

"The storms this week have been extremely difficult for many of our communities," said Noem. "This has been a statewide emergency with people impacted by heavy snow, high winds, rain, and freezing rain. This emergency declaration provides state agencies flexibility to help counties recover."

The extra money comes from the state's Disaster Fund. The money can be used for costs incurred by state agencies for resources deployed to the scene at the request of a county. The emergency order also allows for the activation of the South Dakota National Guard if necessary.

Noem said the state has been providing resources and technical assistance as needed to those counties dealing with the storm's aftermath. Departments like Public Safety and Transportation have been working with affected counties before the storm's onset earlier this week. On Thursday, Noem activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) that is being used to help coordinate the state's response.

"We have an obligation to help counties, and we will," said Noem. "We want to ensure our infrastructure remains strong during this period and people get the help they need."

Depending on the extent of damage, the state may eventually request a Presidential Disaster Declaration asking for federal funds to aid recovery efforts.

Reforestation Projects

From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that China and other nations have gone gangbusters with reforestation projects that are ambitious enough to have a significant impact on cutting carbon emissions. Why aren't we also doing this here in the U.S.?

-- Mickie Infurcia, Hamden, CT

A recent Boston University (BU) study tracking satellite data of vegetation coverage found that the world is indeed getting greener overall, largely thanks to an ambitious reforestation program underway in China.

"China alone accounts for 25 percent of the global net increase in leaf area with only 6.6 percent of global vegetated area," says lead researcher Chi Chen of BU's Department of Earth and Environment.

"This is equal to the net greening in the three largest countries, Russia, the United States and Canada, that together hold 31 percent of the global vegetated area."

China's reforestation efforts date back to the 1970s when the government started requiring every citizen over age 11 to plant at least three saplings every year to augment official government-backed reforestation projects. The result has been the planting of some 66 billion trees across some 12,000 miles of Northern China over the last few decades, with the so-called "Great Green Wall of China" expected to snake along some 2,800 continuous miles by 2050.

China isn't the only country hell-bent on reforestation. Pakistan embarked on its Billion Tree Tsunami campaign in 2014 and is well on its way of achieving its goal of restoring healthy forests to some 350,000 hectares of degraded land. Meanwhile, Australia's "20 Million Trees Program" aims to re-establish green corridors and urban forests across the country while mitigating climate impacts by facilitating the planting of 20 million trees by 2020. Another major reforestation effort with global impact is happening in Brazil, where the non-profit Conservation International is helping restore 30,000 of the hardest hit hectares across the so-called "arc of deforestation" in the Amazon rainforest as a key part of that country's Paris climate agreement goal of reforesting 12 million hectares by 2030.

Here in the U.S., our forebears chopped down practically every tree they could until around 1920, but then we started to regain some of the lost tree cover over the next 40 years as abandoned farms reverted back to forest. Since then, we are barely net positive in forest cover as tree planting campaigns by the



Caption: China, Australia, Pakistan, Brazil and other countries have undertaken massive reforestation campaigns, but the United States? Not so much. Credit: Garrat, FlickrCC.

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U.S. Forest Service and the non-profit Arbor Day Foundation have made up for losses from development and logging. That said, increased reforestation is not a major part of American efforts to meet climate mitigation targets given more practical ways we can achieve quicker overall emissions reductions.

Beyond the U.S., though, there is still lots of “low-hanging fruit” around the world in the form of other areas that would be good candidates for reforestation. The non-profit World Resources Institute (WRI) maintains the Atlas of Forest & Landscape Restoration Opportunities, which includes global overlay maps on current forest coverage, potential forest coverage, forest condition and human pressure on forest landscapes. According to WRI, upwards of two billion hectares of degraded or logged over forest lands around the world are ripe for restoration work if only we can muster the political will to make it happen.

CONTACTS: Chi Chen, sites.bu.edu/cliveg/people/doctoral-students/chi-chen/; EarthTalk’s “What Is The Great Green Wall of China?” earthtalk.org/green-wall-china/; Australia’s 20 Million Trees Program, nrm.gov.au/national/20-million-trees; Arbor Day Foundation, arborday.org; WRI’s Atlas of Forest & Landscape Restoration Opportunities, wri.org/applications/maps/flr-atlas.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. To donate, visit www.earthtalk.org. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
NEWS WATCH**

Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

Internet coverage, reliability in rural areas hinders development

By: Tom Griffith

This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit news organization. Find more in-depth reporting at www.sdnewswatch.org.

South Dakota is threatened by a growing urban-rural digital divide, endangering residents' quality of life and economic development efforts unless significant investments are made in advanced mobile technology, a new study suggests.

Researchers from the University of South Dakota and Virginia's Old Dominion University interviewed and surveyed rural South Dakota residents last fall to determine their perceptions of coverage, capacity and speed of Internet access.

While South Dakota's economy has outpaced national economic growth over the last two decades, Bob McNab, an economist and director of Old Dominion's Center for Economic Analysis and Policy and the study's lead author, says many participants indicated their rural networks have insufficient coverage, capacity and speed for basic health and safety, let alone quality of life.

"The most intriguing finding was, if you look at mobile coverage maps, providers would say the entire state is covered," McNab noted. "But what we found was the facts on the ground are dramatically different for rural consumers compared with urban consumers."

Expanding broadband access in the state is a priority of Gov. Kristi Noem. On her "Priorities Tour" in late February, Noem said she is committed to bringing high-speed internet to every corner of the state, enabling advances and increased employment in industries such as bio-tech, cybersecurity and technology.

It is also a focus nationally. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has set up a \$600 million grant and loan program to internet service providers to encourage them to provide service to rural areas and other spots where service can be expensive. And recently, U.S. Sen. John Thune, chairman of the Senate Communications Subcommittee, held a hearing on "The Impact of Broadband Investments in Rural America," examining the FCC's efforts and other opportunities to make broadband more easily available in rural areas.

Experts know improving digital connectivity in remote areas is expensive and convincing providers to make the investment likely will require substantial public-private partnerships.

In the meantime, rural residents struggle to run businesses, complete transactions and handle daily communication needs.

Rural South Dakotans told researchers from Old Dominion and University of South Dakota that their rural networks have insufficient coverage, capacity and speed for their basic needs.



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Real-life challenges

Living and working in rural South Dakota poses real-life challenges that urban dwellers seldom encounter. A grocery store or gas station can be 30 minutes to an hour away, a hospital even farther.

Jessie Tucker, the manager of member services at West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, understands those communications challenges better than most. His coop's 3,700 members are scattered across roughly 7,000 square miles of service territory, stretching from the Cheyenne River on the north to the White River on the south, and from Cactus Flats near Kadoka on the west to the Missouri River on the east.

"The more rural the area, the less coverage there is," Tucker said. "In our job, it's really challenging to get a hold of a number when we have outage-type scenarios, when something goes wrong."

While Tucker credits providers such as Golden West Technologies with improving coverage and reliability in recent years, he said he still finds himself stopping his vehicle along country roads several times per week when his cellphone shows a couple of bars, indicating a good signal.

"You pull over when you have a signal so the connection isn't lost," he said. "Especially when we are working with line crews, if we need communications, at times a cellphone is not an option. Getting in touch with linemen who are out servicing lines is our biggest challenge."

Shirley Wetz raises horses, cattle and sheep with her husband, LeRoy, along the banks of the Belle Fourche River 30 miles east of Sturgis. Their nearest neighbor is three and a half miles up the road.

To hear Shirley describe it, getting reliable Internet service and cellphone coverage was as tough as drilling the 120-year-old family homestead's first well.

"I'm on the end of the electric line which comes from Wall and I'm on the end of the phone line which comes out of Sturgis," she said. "At one point, the phone company said, 'Quit calling and complaining because we're not going to improve that line anyway,' so we had to switch to satellite."

After investigating and employing several providers over a period of years, Shirley Wetz settled on a separate Verizon phone that allows her to access the Internet at her home, albeit with a hefty price tag of \$100 per month. But, even far from the comforts of town, the rancher said Internet access remains critical to the couple's livelihood.

"It's costly number one, and it took time to figure out what would work for us," she said. "I run two horse sales out of my house and I have photos coming in all the time, which I need to post to websites and Facebook, and send to the printer who does our catalog."

"My internet phone, which I use for the house, only gives us a half a bar," Shirley Wetz said.

"My regular cell phone doesn't have any bars at the ranch. So, if I want to make a call, I have to drive up the hill."

Spotty service is problem

According to the study, South Dakota ranked 34th in the nation in residents with access to

"Solutions require effective cooperation across all these levels to address this issue. Mitchell can't do it on its own. Pierre can't do it without buy-in across the state. There have to be effective communications and collaboration across all those levels and we have to incentivize better high-speed coverage in rural areas," David Earnest, chair, USD Department of Political Science

broadband coverage, defined as a minimum of 25 megabytes per second download and 3 Mbps (Megabits per second) upload speed. Meanwhile, North Dakota ranked 17th; Iowa ranked 35th; Nebraska ranked 40th; and New Jersey, where Old Dominion University is located, stood at first in the U.S.

But data collected for the study indicated that broadband coverage throughout South Dakota is spotty, at best. For instance, 100 percent of Harding County residents have access to 25/3 Mbps service, while none of the residents of Dewey County could make the same claim. By comparison, 94.4 percent of the

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residents of New Jersey's Cumberland County, the county with the lowest broadband coverage in the state, could access the same level of Internet services.

Although the study confirmed suspicions of a growing urban-rural digital divide, both professors said it did not delve into solutions to the issue.

"We haven't systematically explored complex solutions," Earnest said. "That will be the next step. This is really a shared problem between the federal government and state and local governments.

"Solutions require effective cooperation across all these levels to address this issue. Mitchell can't do it on its own. Pierre can't do it without buy-in across the state. There have to be effective communications and collaboration across all those levels and we have to incentivize better high-speed coverage in rural areas."

Noem said she budgeted \$5 million to leverage with federal funds to incentivize Internet companies to invest in improving Internet access and reliability throughout South Dakota.

"Frankly, if we don't have high-speed Internet access everywhere in South Dakota, we can't be successful," the governor said recently in Rapid City.

In a column published in the Argus Leader in January, Noem said that she would involve the state's rural telecommunications companies and wireless service providers in finding ways to increase their service levels.

"What's more, I want to bring in companies with emerging technologies in the fixed wireless arena, such as Microsoft's Airband initiative, that may offer more cost-efficient ways to provide fast, reliable service to our most difficult to serve locations. And I see a role for companies ready to invest in new 5G technology, which promises faster, more reliable service over cellular data networks," Noem wrote.

According to McNab and Earnest, the Federal Communications Commission is planning to spend more than \$6 billion over the next decade and ease regulatory requirements to close the digital divide.

The study by USD and ODU researchers attempted to focus on one largely rural state and add the voices of residents to the ongoing analysis on the coverage, capacity and speed of mobile networks.

The two professors said the study reinforced their belief that investments in mobile Internet, particularly new fifth-generation (5G) networks, could help rural areas better compete in a global economy, and more cost-efficiently than broadband.

The study noted that investments in mobile networks are necessary to sustain economic growth and improve the quality of life of rural residents.

"If South Dakota wishes to broaden its economic base and participate in the scientific and engineering developments that propel many other states, it must consciously promote investments in technology," McNab said. Those investments will be critical to allowing rural residents to compete with their urban counterparts and stem out-migration from the most remote regions of the country, he said.

The consequences of that urban-rural digital divide are evident in the fact that South Dakota's two largest communities are growing in population, while rural counties continue to lose residents, he said.

"South Dakota as a whole is attracting people, with net migration applied to Sioux Falls and to a lesser extent, Rapid City," McNab said. "But rural counties continue to lose population."

While most rural residents "make do" with the Internet connections they have, others participating in the study questioned why the state's Internet service lags behind their urban counterparts.

As one respondent told researchers, "If the Taliban can upload videos in Afghanistan, how can I not get Netflix to play in America? It is 2018, and we are smart people. We should be able to watch a movie without it buffering."

About Tom Griffith

Tom Griffith, Deadwood, S.D., reported this story for South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit news organization. A fourth-generation South Dakotan, Griffith has been



a journalist, editor and photographer in Arizona, Montana and South Dakota. He also has written or co-authored more than 70 books and his travel features have appeared in more than 250 magazines and newspapers worldwide.

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Consolation Championship Saturday, March 16	Consolation Semifinals Friday, March 15	1st Round - Quarterfinals Thursday, March 14	Championship Semifinals Friday, March 15	Championship Round Saturday, March 16
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Records/Seed Point Average:

White River	20-2	46.316
Timber Lake	18-2	46.235
Clark/Willow Lake	20-2	46.211
Jones County	19-2	45.722
De Smet	21-2	45.500
Sully Buttes	19-3	45.211
Bridgewater-Emery	19-4	45.150
Viborg-Hurley	21-2	44.150

	Session 1	
	2:00 PM CT	
Session 3	#1 White River 61	Session 4
12:00 Noon CT	#8 Viborg-Hurley 68	6:00 PM CT
#1 White River 78	3:45 PM CT	#8 Viborg-Hurley 48
#4 Jones County 56	#4 Jones County 55	#5 De Smet 70
	#5 De Smet 60	

Session 5
1:45 PM CT
#1 White River
#6 Sully Buttes
5th/6th Place Game



2019 Class B State Boys Basketball Tournament
Aberdeen, SD



Session 6
8:00 PM CT
#5 De Smet
#3 Clark/Willow Lake
Championship Game

	Session 2	
	6:00 PM CT	
Session 3	#2 Timber Lake 54	Session 4
1:45 PM CT	#7 Bridgewater-Emery 55	7:45 PM CT
#2 Timber Lake 50	7:45 PM CT	#7 Bridgewater-Emery 55
#6 Sully Buttes 54	#3 Clark/Willow Lake 58	#3 Clark/Willow Lake 56
	#6 Sully Buttes 26	

Session 5
12:00 Noon CT
#4 Jones County
#2 Timber Lake
7th/8th Place Game

Session 6
6:00 PM CT
#8 Viborg-Hurley
#7 Bridgewater-Emery
3rd/4th Place Game

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Consolation Championship
Saturday, March 16

Consolation Semifinals
Friday, March 15

1st Round - Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 14

Championship Semifinals
Friday, March 15

Championship Round
Saturday, March 16

Records/Seed Point Average:

Tea Area	21-1	46.600
SF Christian	19-2	46.000
St. Thomas More	18-4	45.050
Pine Ridge	18-3	44.789
Hot Springs	20-3	43.850
Lennox	18-5	43.600
Madison	15-7	42.600
Dell Rapids	14-7	42.000

Session 1

3:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 Tea Area	81
#8 Dell Rapids	38

Session 4

6:30 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 Tea Area	57
#4 Pine Ridge	51

Session 3

12:45 PM CT (SF Arena)

#8 Dell Rapids	47
#5 Hot Springs	37

7:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#4 Pine Ridge	75
#5 Hot Springs	51

Session 5

11:45 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#8 Dell Rapids	
#3 St. Thomas More	

5th/6th Place Game



2019 Class A State Boys Basketball Tournament

Sioux Falls, SD



Session 6

7:30 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 Tea Area	
#2 SF Christian	

Championship Game

Session 2

3:00 PM CT (SF Arena)

#2 SF Christian	63
#7 Madison	46

Session 4

8:15 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#2 SF Christian	53
#6 Lennox	46

Session 3

12:45 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#7 Madison	43
#3 St. Thomas More	58

7:00 PM CT (SF Arena)

#3 St. Thomas More	40
#6 Lennox	48

Session 5

11:45 AM CT (SF Arena)

#5 Hot Springs	
#7 Madison	

7th/8th Place Game

Session 6

3:15 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#4 Pine Ridge	
#6 Lennox	

3rd/4th Place Game

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Consolation Championship Saturday, March 16	Consolation Semifinals Friday, March 15	1st Round - Quarterfinals Thursday, March 14	Championship Semifinals Friday, March 15	Championship Round Saturday, March 16
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Records/Seed Point Averages

West Central	22-0	46.400
Winner	21-0	45.737
Todd County	21-2	44.700
Lennox	19-3	44.200
St. Thomas More	18-5	44.150
McCook Central/Montrose	18-4	43.900
Aberdeen Roncalli	17-4	42.895
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	17-6	42.650

Session 1

1:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 West Central	50
#8 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	46

Session 4

3:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 West Central	44
#4 Lennox	41

Session 3

11:00 AM CT (SF Arena)

#8 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	38
#5 St. Thomas More	58

5:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#4 Lennox	49
#5 St. Thomas More	27

2019 Class A State Girls Basketball Tournament
Sioux Falls, SD



Session 2

1:00 PM CT (SF Arena)

#2 Winner	59
#7 Aberdeen Roncalli	55

Session 4

4:45 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#2 Winner	66
#6 McCook Central/Montrose	44

Session 3

11:00 AM CT (PREMIER Center)

#7 Aberdeen Roncalli	52
#3 Todd County	62

5:00 PM CT (SF Arena)

#3 Todd County	75
#6 McCook Central/Montrose	80

Session 6

5:00 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#1 West Central	
#2 Winner	

Championship Game

Session 5

10:00 AM CT (PREMIER Center)

#5 St. Thomas More	
#3 Todd County	

5th/6th Place Game

Session 5

10:00 AM CT (SF Arena)

#8 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton	
#7 Aberdeen Roncalli	

7th/8th Place Game

Session 6

1:30 PM CT (PREMIER Center)

#4 Lennox	
#6 McCook Central/Montrose	

3rd/4th Place Game

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Consolation Championship
Saturday, March 16

Consolation Semifinals
Friday, March 15

1st Round - Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 14

Championship Semifinals
Friday, March 15

Championship Round
Saturday, March 16

Records/Seed Point Average:

SF O'Gorman	18-3	44.000
Harrisburg	17-4	43.400
SF Lincoln	14-6	43.368
Brandon Valley	17-4	43.250
Brookings	15-4	43.056
SF Washington	13-7	42.211
RC Stevens	15-6	41.750
Mitchell	13-8	41.250

Session 1

1:00 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#1 SF O'Gorman	54
#8 Mitchell	63

Session 2

3:00 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#8 Mitchell	38
#4 Brandon Valley	52

Session 2

11:00 AM MT (Ice Arena)

#1 SF O'Gorman	61
#5 Brookings	41

5:00 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#4 Brandon Valley	68
#5 Brookings	37

Session 3

10:00 AM MT (Barnett Arena)

#1 SF O'Gorman	
#7 RC Stevens	

5th/6th Place Game



**2019 Class AA State
Girls Basketball
Tournament
Rapid City, SD**



Session 3

5:00 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#4 Brandon Valley	
#3 SF Lincoln	

Championship Game

Session 1

1:00 PM MT (Ice Arena)

#2 Harrisburg	55
#7 RC Stevens	45

Session 2

4:45 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#2 Harrisburg	39
#3 SF Lincoln	42

Session 2

11:00 AM MT (Barnett Arena)

#7 RC Stevens	62
#6 SF Washington	38

5:00 PM MT (Ice Arena)

#3 SF Lincoln	36
#6 SF Washington	31

Session 3

10:00 AM MT (Ice Arena)

#5 Brookings	
#6 SF Washington	

7th/8th Place Game

3rd/4th Place Game

Session 3

1:30 PM MT (Barnett Arena)

#8 Mitchell	
#2 Harrisburg	

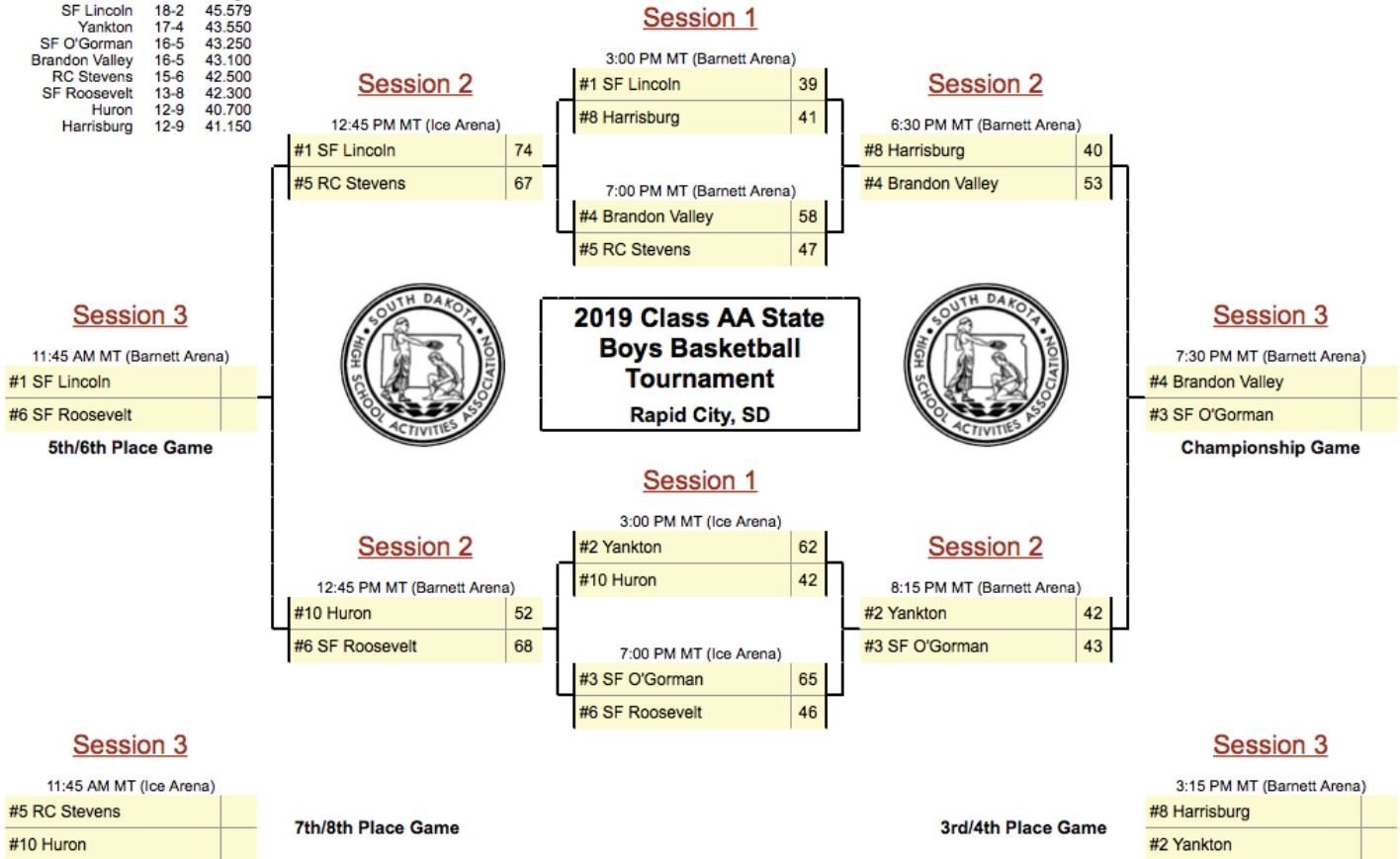
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Consolation Championship Saturday, March 16	Consolation Semifinals Friday, March 15	1st Round - Quarterfinals Thursday, March 14	Championship Semifinals Friday, March 15	Championship Round Saturday, March 16
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Records/Seed Point Average:

SF Lincoln	18-2	45.579
Yankton	17-4	43.550
SF O'Gorman	16-5	43.250
Brandon Valley	16-5	43.100
RC Stevens	15-6	42.500
SF Roosevelt	13-8	42.300
Huron	12-9	40.700
Harrisburg	12-9	41.150



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Today in Weather History

March 16, 2012: Temperatures reaching eighty degrees or higher in March across central and northeast South Dakota is a rare occurrence, and for this to occur in mid-March is exceedingly rare. On March 16th, several locations across the area set record highs by topping the 80-degree mark including Aberdeen, Mobridge, and Pierre. Sisseton and Watertown also set records for March 16th. Aberdeen topped out at 81 degrees, Mobridge reached 83 degrees, with 86 degrees at Pierre. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

1885: On this date through the 21st, Pointe-des-Monts, Quebec Canada received 98 inches of snowfall.

1942: A deadly tornado outbreak occurred over the Central and Southern US on March 16-17th. The tornado outbreak killed 153 people and injured at least 1,284. The best estimate indicates this event contained 13 F3 tornadoes, 6 F4s, and one F5. The F5 tornado occurred north of Peoria, Illinois, in the towns of Alta, Chillicothe before crossing the Illinois River and striking the town of Lacon. A quarter of the homes in Lacon were destroyed, and debris was carried for 25 miles.

1942 - Two tornadoes, 24 minutes apart, struck Baldwin, MS, resulting in 65 deaths. (David Ludlum)

1975 - A single storm brought 119 inches of snow to Crater Lake, O,R establishing a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - A small but rare tornado touched down perilously close to Disneyland in Anaheim CA. (Storm Data)

1987 - Softball size hail caused millions of dollars damage to automobiles at Del Rio TX. Three persons were injured when hailstones crashed through a shopping mall skylight. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data) (The Weather Channel)


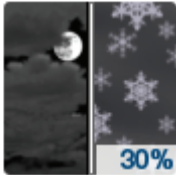



1988 - A winter storm produced heavy snow in the Central Rockies. Winds gusted to 80 mph at Centerville UT. Eighteen cities in the southeastern U.S. reported new record low temperatures for the date, including Tallahassee FL with a reading of 24 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - A winter storm brought heavy snow and high winds to the southwestern U.S. Winds gusted to 60 mph at Lovelock NV, Salt Lake City UT, and Fort Carson CO. Snow fell at a rate of three inches per hour in the Lake Tahoe area of Nevada. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced large hail and damaging winds from northwest Florida to western South Carolina. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 75 mph at Floridatown FL. Sixteen cities across the northeastern quarter of the nation reported record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 78 degrees at Burlington VT smashed their previous record for the date by 23 degrees. New York City reported a record high of 82 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)






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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy then Chance Snow	Chance Snow then Slight Chance Wintry Mix	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny
High: 30 °F	Low: 12 °F	High: 33 °F	Low: 14 °F	High: 31 °F

5 Day Forecast March 16-20

Gradual Warming Trend

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
				
Mostly cloudy Light Snow in the Morning	Partly Sunny	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny	Party Sunny
DRY!				
HI: 26 to 37°	HI: 30 to 40°	HI: 30 to 40°	HI: 35 to 45°	HI: 35 to 45°

Light snow flurries this morning should be the last of the precipitation over the next several days. A slow, but gradual warming trend is expected this weekend and into next week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 32 °F at 3:49 PM

Low Outside Temp: 16 °F at 8:07 AM

High Gust: 26 mph at 12:23 AM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 81° in 2012

Record Low: -17° in 1906

Average High: 40°F

Average Low: 20°F

Average Precip in Mar.: 0.47

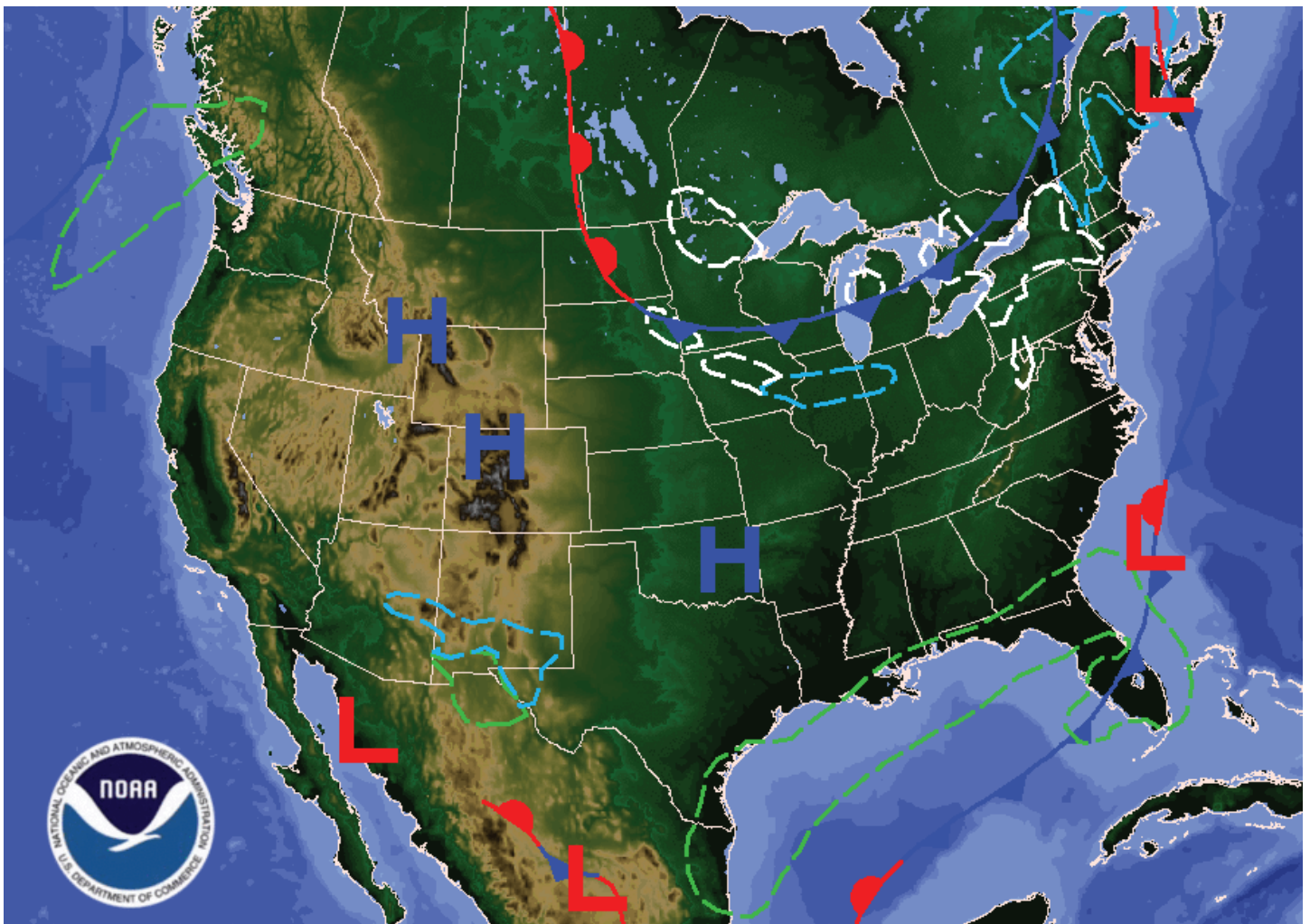
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 1.49

Precip Year to Date: 2.19

Sunset Tonight: 7:41 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:43 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sat, Mar 16, 2019, issued 4:17 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Kong 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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A FORTIFIED FOCUS

Fifty-eight percent of the foods on the shelves of our grocery stores are fortified. Researchers claim that they make a significant contribution to the quality and value of the food we eat. Additionally, many of our foods in cans, in boxes, in the meat and dairy isles or in the fruit and vegetable sections of the stores where we shop have been genetically modified in one way or another. Biologists claim that it makes the products last longer, tastier, and more nutritious.

Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you! Guide your eyes and know where you are going warns Solomon. We are to fortify the way we view and live life with Gods wisdom, power, and strength, and then be careful where we place our feet. In other words, stay focused on using Gods wisdom and apply it to life!

The fool, the ones who choose not to acknowledge the existence or power of God, is easily distracted. Any image that springs-up or appears with no warning is a call to lure the fool into a trap. Jesus said that the eye is the lamp of the body and will project on the screen of our minds an image that quickly and without warning leads the fool astray. The eyes, once seduced, need more and more entertainment until, rather than being lured or enticed, actually search with determination for images and that are corrupt, vile and destructive to keep their life exciting.

Looking straight ahead and fixing His gaze is what Jesus did during His lifes journey. He resolutely set out for Jerusalem - fortified by God. Can we do less if we love Him?

Prayer: God, grant us the willingness to plant Your wisdom so deeply in our hearts that we will stay focused on Your Word, Your will, Your way, and Your work! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 4:25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you.

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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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

03-29-56-62-64, Mega Ball: 4, Megaplier: 3

(three, twenty-nine, fifty-six, sixty-two, sixty-four; Mega Ball: four; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$495 million

Midwest flooding forces evacuations, closing of road, river

By MARGERY A. BECK and BLAKE NICHOLSON Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Flooding in the central U.S. on Friday swamped small towns, forced some residents along waterways to evacuate, threatened to temporarily close a nuclear power plant and shut down stretches of a major river and an interstate highway, foreshadowing a difficult spring flooding season.

The high water, prompted by a massive late-winter storm, pushed some waterways to record levels in Nebraska, South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. The flooding was the worst in nearly a decade in places, though the situation was expected to improve quickly in many places over the weekend, according to Mike Gillispie, National Weather Service hydrologist in Sioux Falls.

But in eastern Nebraska, flooding worsened Friday and remained a big concern in the lower Missouri River region — which is a major source for the Mississippi River — with the weather service issuing warnings of high water along the river and its tributaries from southeastern South Dakota to St. Louis in Missouri.

About 45 miles northwest of Omaha, the town of North Bend — home to nearly 1,200 along the banks of the Platte River — emergency workers used boats to evacuate residents. Also Friday afternoon, officials asked residents of Valley, home to nearly 1,900 people just west of Omaha, to evacuate. Within hours of that request, anyone left in the city found all access in and out cut off by floodwaters from the Elkhorn River.

Officials in eastern Nebraska said more than 2,600 people living along the Missouri, Platte and Elkhorn rivers there had been urged to evacuate, as waters breached levees in several rural spots.

“Things are moving and changing at a rapid pace,” Douglas County Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson said Friday at a news conference. “We need you to follow instructions and evacuate when we say you need to evacuate.”

President Donald Trump on Friday tweeted that he had spoken to Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts about the flooding. The president also praised first responders and emergency response teams for doing “a great job dealing” with flooding, high winds and road closures.

Rising waters on the Missouri River also led Iowa officials on Friday to shut down much of Interstate 29 from the Missouri state line north about 85 miles (137 kilometers) to about Missouri Valley, Iowa. The closure was reminiscent of historic flooding along the river in 2011 that saw segments of the interstate in western Iowa washed away. Officials on Friday said the river is expected to crest well below what was seen in 2011.

Wisconsin’s governor declared a state of emergency Friday as flooding worsened, and Iowa’s governor expanded an emergency proclamation issued a day earlier.

The U.S. Coast Guard shut down all traffic on the Missouri River from about 50 miles (80.5 kilometers) south of Omaha, Nebraska, downstream to St. Joseph, Missouri on Friday, a stretch of about 70 miles (112.7 kilometers).

The Coast Guard and Corps also requested all river vessel operators create as little wake as possible

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between St. Joseph downstream to Kansas City to minimize levee damage.

The restrictions came as the river reached moderate flood stage at nearly 32 feet on Friday at Omaha, where it's expected to crest at nearly 34 feet on Monday, according to the National Weather Service. The river is expected to crest at St. Joseph on Tuesday at just over 30 feet. Major flood stage at St. Joseph is 27 feet.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the river, drastically increased releases from Gavins Point Dam in southeastern South Dakota due to limited storage capacity behind the dam for the excess runoff. The releases are expected to worsen flooding downstream, though the agency was helping with levee monitoring and other flood response measures, and it stopped releases from Fort Randall Dam upstream from Gavins Point.

The swollen Missouri threatened a nuclear power plant in southeastern Nebraska. The Nebraska Public Power District said it was likely the Cooper Nuclear Station about 59 miles (95.5 kilometers) south of Omaha would be shut down early Saturday.

Officials are confident that the flooding around the plant presents no danger to the public, power district spokesman Mark Becker said.

The storm also significantly increased spring flood worries in the Red River Valley in the Upper Midwest, where the neighboring cities of Fargo, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota, experienced a record flood 10 years ago.

The two cities have implemented several measures such as home buyouts and levees since then. They could be tested this year. The National Weather Service in an updated outlook Friday said "significant" snowmelt flooding is likely in the valley. The chance the river will reach major flood stage in Fargo increased from 50 percent last week to 90 percent.

The midweek storm crippled parts of Colorado and Wyoming with blizzard conditions. Thousands of homes and businesses were still without power Friday in Colorado, mostly in the Denver area, although crews worked throughout the day to restore electricity.

The storm also spawned at least three tornadoes in Michigan and Indiana on Thursday, according to the National Weather Service. There are no immediate reports of any injuries, but homes and trees were damaged and power was knocked out to thousands. Flooding, hail and strong winds also were reported in parts of the two states. The weather service recorded a 60 mph (97 kph) wind gust at Indianapolis International Airport.

For the latest developments in this story: <https://apnews.com/99c572c0cfa643a28bacccb0f31fb4d4>

Contributing to this report were Associated Press reporters Josh Funk in Omaha, Nebraska; Dan Elliott in Longmont, Colorado; David Pitt in Des Moines, Iowa; Bob Moen and Mead Gruver in Cheyenne, Wyoming; Gretchen Ehlike in Milwaukee and Nelson Lampe in Omaha, Nebraska.

AP FACT CHECK: O'Rourke on climate, Trump on 'no collusion'

By CALVIN WOODWARD, SETH BORENSTEIN and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Beto O'Rourke opened his Democratic presidential campaign this past week with a call to action on global warming that misrepresented the science. From Iowa, he claimed scientists are united in believing the planet only has a dozen years to turn the tide on climate change, which is not quite their view.

In Washington, an exasperated federal judge fact-checked the "no collusion mantra" recited by President Donald Trump and his associates as they try to dispel suspicions that people from his 2016 campaign and Russia worked together to tilt that election. Judge Amy Berman Jackson, while sentencing former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, reminded her courtroom — and indirectly the president — that Manafort's trial was unrelated to questions of collusion with Russia.

"Court is one of those places where facts still matter," Jackson said. "The 'no collusion' mantra is simply

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a non sequitur."

That didn't stop the refrain. "Again that was proven today, no collusion," Trump tweeted.

A look at some of the political rhetoric of the past week:

CLIMATE CHANGE

O'ROURKE, on global warming: "This is our final chance. The scientists are absolutely unanimous on this. That we have no more than 12 years to take incredibly bold action on this crisis." — remarks in Keokuk, Iowa, on Thursday.

THE FACTS: There is no scientific consensus, much less unanimity, that the planet only has 12 years to fix the problem.

A report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, drawn from the work of hundreds of scientists, uses 2030 as a prominent benchmark because signatories to the Paris agreement have pledged emission cuts by then. But it's not a last chance, hard deadline for action, as it has been interpreted in some quarters.

"Glad to clear this up," James Skea, co-chairman of the report and professor of sustainable energy at Imperial College London, told The Associated Press. The panel "did not say we have 12 years left to save the world."

He added: "The hotter it gets, the worse it gets, but there is no cliff edge."

"This has been a persistent source of confusion," agreed Kristie L. Ebi, director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at the University of Washington in Seattle. "The report never said we only have 12 years left."

The report forecasts that global warming is likely to increase by 0.5 degrees Celsius or 0.9 degrees Fahrenheit between 2030 and 2052 "if it continues to increase at the current rate." The climate has already warmed by 1 degree C or 1.8 degrees F since the pre-Industrial Age.

Even holding warming to that level brings harmful effects to the environment, the report said, but the impact increases greatly if the increase in the global average temperature approaches 2 degrees C or 3.6 degrees F.

"The earth does not reach a cliff at 2030 or 2052," Ebi told AP. But "keep adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere and temperatures will continue to rise."

As much as climate scientists see the necessity for broad and immediate action to address global warming, they do not agree on an imminent point of no return.

Cornell University climate scientist Natalie M. Mahowald told the AP that a 12-year time frame is a "robust number for trying to cut emissions" and to keep the increase in warming under current levels.

But she said sketching out unduly dire consequences is not "helpful to solving the problem."

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

TRUMP, on Manafort's sentencing to a second federal prison term: "I can only tell you one thing: Again that was proven today, no collusion." — remarks Wednesday to reporters at the White House.

THE FACTS: There was no such proof in that trial or in Manafort's other trial. Whether collusion happened was not a subject of the charges against Manafort. It's one of the central issues in a separate and continuing investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller.

In the case that produced Manafort's first prison sentence, he was convicted of tax and bank fraud related to his work advising Ukrainian politicians. Judge T.S. Ellis III neither cleared nor implicated the president, instead emphasizing that Manafort was "not before this court for anything having to do with collusion with the Russian government."

Trump ignored that point afterward, tweeting: "Both the Judge and the lawyer in the Paul Manafort case stated loudly and for the world to hear that there was NO COLLUSION with Russia." Trump misquoted the lawyer as well as the judge.

On Wednesday, Jackson sentenced Manafort for misleading the government about his foreign lobbying work and for encouraging witnesses to lie on his behalf. Again, the case did not turn on his leadership of

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Trump's campaign. "The investigation is still ongoing," she noted, scolding Manafort's lawyers for bringing up the "no collusion" refrain during the trial.

The two judges sentenced Manafort to 7.5 years altogether.

As with other Americans who were close to Trump and have been charged in the Mueller probe, Manafort hasn't been accused of involvement in Russian election interference. Nor has he been cleared of that suspicion. The same is true of Trump.

THE BORDER

TRUMP: "Since 1976, presidents have declared 59 national emergencies. ... The only emergency Congress voted to revoke was the one to protect our own country. So, think of that: With all of the national emergencies, this was the one they don't want to do. And this is the one, perhaps, they should most do." — Oval Office remarks Friday after vetoing the congressional resolution seeking to strike down his declaration of a border emergency.

THE FACTS: His declaration was not the only one designed to protect the country.

President Barack Obama declared an emergency in 2009 to protect the nation from the swine flu, which had killed more than 1,000 people and spread to 46 states before he took that step. The H1N1 flu strain was linked to more than 274,000 hospitalizations and 12,000 deaths in the U.S. between April 2009 and April 2010.

It enabled the activation of emergency plans, such as moving emergency rooms offsite to keep those infected with the virus away from other emergency room patients, and it had Republican support. Unlike Trump's order, it was not designed to free up money that Congress had already refused to spend.

Most national emergencies declared by presidents have been narrowly drawn, designed to protect U.S. interests in foreign countries, often in response to crises breaking abroad.

TRUMP on border security: "We're apprehending record numbers of people." — drug-trafficking meeting Wednesday.

THE FACTS: One major record has been broken — the number of migrant families arrested for crossing into the U.S. illegally. Other records have not.

More than 76,000 migrants crossed the U.S.-Mexico border last month, more than double the number from the same period last year. Most were families coming in increasingly large groups.

Overall numbers of Border Patrol arrests were the highest in 12 years, but not the highest ever.

The annual numbers are far from a record. About 400,000 people were arrested for crossing the border illegally in the last budget year, just one-quarter of the 1.6 million in 2000. That is the record.

MELANIA TRUMP

TRUMP: "The Fake News photoshopped pictures of Melania, then propelled conspiracy theories that it's actually not her by my side in Alabama and other places. They are only getting more deranged with time!" — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: No, there's no evidence that the news organizations Trump likes to call the "Fake News" doctored pictures of Melania Trump to peddle the falsehood that a stand-in took the first lady's place in Alabama last week or other places at other times. Some wrote about the fakery, spread by a mix of satirical, gullible and anti-Trump people online, and Trump's tweet gives them more visibility than they would have had otherwise.

Among them, The Guardian columnist Marina Hyde tweeted in October 2017 that she was "absolutely convinced Melania is being played by a Melania impersonator these days." She followed up with an admission that she had indulged in a "parallel fake universe" in which she fantasized that the first lady had escaped to small-town Missouri and was volunteering at a shelter for refugees.

RAIL SAFETY

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TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ELAINE CHAO, on positive train control: "Nothing happened on this until we came into office. And I would like some credit for that." — remarks Monday to reporters.

THE FACTS: Her comment that nothing was done on positive train control before she took control of the Transportation Department is not true.

The Federal Railroad Administration took an aggressive posture on the braking technology under the Obama administration. After an Amtrak train derailed in Philadelphia in 2015, the agency's administrator, Sarah Feinberg, pushed railroads to move faster on installing positive train control, which has been available for years. The GPS-based technology is designed to automatically slow or stop trains that are going too fast and can take over control of a train when an engineer is distracted or incapacitated.

Congress had mandated that railroad companies install the braking technology by 2015, after a 2008 Metrolink crash in California killed 25 people. But the rail industry persuaded Congress to push back the installation deadline to 2018, while allowing railroads to apply for an extension until 2020 in some circumstances.

Feinberg said she wouldn't accept further delays and had her agency post quarterly updates about each railroad's progress on her agency's website.

She warned railroads that any extensions beyond the 2018 deadline would only be considered if the railroads could prove they made a good-faith effort to meet the mandate. She also told railroads to submit plans that spelled out their detailed schedules for the braking systems and warned that the agency could fine them up to \$5,000 per day if they didn't file the required plans.

In contrast, Chao was noncommittal on the deadline at her confirmation hearing, saying she needed to be briefed on the technology.

Data provided by the FRA shows that by the end of 2016, positive train control was in operation for 16 percent of freight railroads' required route miles and 24 percent of passenger railroads' required route miles. As of December 2018, it was operating for 83 percent of route miles for freight railroads and 30 percent of passenger railroads' required route miles.

The miles completed under the Trump administration built on the foundation that had been set out under Obama.

CLINTON EMAILS

TRUMP, on former FBI lawyer Lisa Page: "Comey testified (under oath) that it was a 'unanimous' decision on Crooked Hillary. Lisa Page transcripts show he LIED." — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Nothing in Page's testimony to the House Judiciary Committee last year indicates that former FBI Director James Comey lied about his investigative team's decision not to recommend charges against 2016 Democratic presidential nominee Clinton in her handling of an email server while secretary of state. A transcript of Page's testimony was released by the panel's top Republican this past week.

Trump is correct that Comey did testify to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee in July 2016 that the decision on no charges was unanimous among his investigative team.

In the newly released transcript, Page said the investigative team determined it did not have "sufficient evidence" against Clinton to bring a charge of "gross negligence" in her handling of emails.

Page did note there was some "smack talk" by higher-level FBI officials expressing a desire to "get" Clinton. "So I am aware of senior FBI officials talking to subordinate FBI officials on the Hillary Clinton investigative team who unquestionably had anti-Hillary sentiment, but who also said: You have to get her or — again, I don't have an exact quote — but like we're counting on you, you know," Page said.

But Page also noted that none of those officials was in a position of authority over the investigation any longer.

BREXIT

TRUMP, on how he stood at his Scottish golf resort, Turnberry, on the eve of the Brexit referendum and predicted that the British would vote to leave the European Union: "I predicted it was going to happen

and I was right and people laughed when I predicted it and they won by about two points. And I was standing out on Turnberry and we had a press conference and people were screaming. That was the day before, if you remember. I think you were there. And people were screaming and I said, 'No, I think it's going to happen.' And people were surprised I made the prediction ...because President Obama made the opposite prediction. And I was right." — remarks Thursday at White House.

THE FACTS: As when he has told this story before, Trump is mixing up his predictions and his days. A month before the vote, he did predict accurately that Britain would vote to leave the EU. The day after the 2016 vote — not the day before — he predicted from his Scottish resort that the EU would collapse because of Britain's withdrawal. That remains to be seen.

Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Eric Tucker, Michael Balsamo, Chad Day, Mary Clare Jalonick and Jill Colvin in Washington and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apne.ws/2kbx8bd>

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'RUN!': NZ shooting victims recount horror, mourn the lost

By KRISTEN GELINEAU and JULIET WILLIAMS Associated Press

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — They had walked that once innocuous stretch of sidewalk side-by-side so many times. Every Friday, Yasir Amin and his dad had ambled along the path toward the mosque where they prayed together in peace, a routine so serene and so ordinary that Amin was nearly blinded by confusion when the man drove up with the gun.

Amin and his father, Muhammad Amin Nasir, were just 200 meters from the Al Noor mosque on Friday when everything went wrong. They had no idea that a white supremacist had just slaughtered at least 41 people inside the mosque's hallowed halls, or that more people would be killed at a second mosque soon after. All they knew was that a car that had been driving by had suddenly stopped. And a man was leaning out the car's window, pointing a gun at them.

"RUN!" Amin screamed.

The bullets began to fly. The men began to run. But at 67, Nasir couldn't keep up with his 35-year-old son. And so he fell behind, by two or three fateful steps.

Amid the blasts, Amin turned to scream at his father to get down on the ground. But his father was already falling.

The gunman drove away. A pool of blood poured from Nasir's body.

"Daddy!" Amin screamed. "Daddy! DADDY!"

Amin had never seen anyone shot before. He left Pakistan for Christchurch five years ago, and was embraced by a multicultural city that felt like the safest place on earth. His father, who farms vegetables, wheat and rice back in Pakistan, also fell for the leafy green city at the bottom of the world.

And so Nasir began making routine visits to see his son, sometimes spending up to six months in New Zealand before returning to Pakistan to tend to his crops. Nasir had been in town only three weeks for his most recent visit when he was shot three times on the street of the city he had adopted as a second home.

From the ground, Nasir stared up at his son, unable to speak, tears running down his face. Amin ran to his car to grab his phone and called the police. Officers quickly arrived, and soon the father and son were in an ambulance racing to the hospital.

Nasir had always been more than just a dad to Amin. When Amin was just 6, his mother died, leaving Nasir to raise him along with his four siblings. Nasir became both a father and a mother, a reliable source of laughter with a huge heart. He embraced Amin's new community of New Zealand friends as if they were his own family. And in turn, the community embraced Nasir — so much so, that it initially confused him.

The elder man was baffled by the constant chipper greetings of "Hello!" he received whenever he dropped Amin's children off at school. Why do they keep saying that to me? he asked his son. Amused,

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Amin explained that the locals were simply trying to welcome him, their own version of the Arabic peace greeting, "As-Salaam-Alaikum."

Amin chuckled at the memory on Saturday, one day after he brought his father to the hospital. Nasir remains in an induced coma with critical injuries, though his condition has stabilized. The bullets pierced his shoulder, chest and back.

Like many other victims struggling to cope with the horrific events of Friday that left 49 dead, Amin made his way to Hagley College near the hospital. The college was serving as a community center for the grieving, and members of the public poured in with meals and drinks, doling out hugs and words of support to those in need.

Outside the college, Javed Dadabhai mourned for his gentle cousin, 35-year-old Junaid Mortara, who is believed to have died in the first mosque attack. As of Saturday, many families were still waiting to find out if their loved ones were alive.

"He's very punctual, so he would've been there at a dime. He would've been there at 1:30," Dadabhai said, a reference to the time of the attack, which began soon after.

His cousin was the breadwinner of the family, supporting his mother, his wife and their three children, ages 1 to 5. Mortara had inherited his father's convenience store, which was covered in flowers on Saturday.

Mortara was an avid cricket fan, and would always send a sparring text with relatives over cricket matches when Canterbury was facing Auckland.

"The sad thing is he was actually due to come up to Auckland next weekend for a family wedding," Dadabhai said. "We were due to have a catch-up. But I never knew a more shy, soft-spoken kind of person. ... As cousins, you'd kind of make fun of the fact when someone's so gentle like that, but he's leaving a huge void."

The long wait for information on the status of the dead was particularly painful because Muslim tradition calls for burials within 24 hours of a person's death.

Dadabhai said the community was trying to be patient, because they understood there was a crime scene involved. "But it's hard, because until that happens, the grieving process doesn't really begin," he said.

For some families, patience had worn thin by Saturday, and frustration erupted as they waited to find out the status of their relatives.

Ash Mohammed, 32, of Christchurch, pushed through a police barricade outside the Al Noor mosque Saturday morning, desperate for information, before police held him back.

"We just want to know if they are alive or dead," he could be heard telling an officer at the barricade.

In an interview later, Mohammed said he was desperate for information about his brothers, Farhaj Ashashan, 30, and Ramazvora Ashashan, 31, and his father, Asif Vora, 56, who were all at the mosque on Friday.

"We just want to know, are they alive or not alive so we can start the funerals," he said. "The hospital's not helping, cops not helping. Somebody has to help get the answers."

As Amin waited and worried over the fate of his father, he was also focused on trying to protect the youngest members of his family. He and his wife have so far tried to shield their children from hearing about the attack. But on Friday, Amin's wife briefly turned on the news and an image of an ambulance popped onto the screen. Their 5-year-old son immediately dove under a table, assuming there was an earthquake. Christchurch, no stranger to disaster, suffered a devastating quake in 2011 that left 185 dead.

Though his relatives back in Pakistan now fret that New Zealand is too dangerous, Amin believes Christchurch is the safest place in the world. And he hopes that his funny, fiercely loving father will pull through, so they can immerse themselves once again in the friendly hellos and the peaceful Friday prayers they have long cherished.

Like Amin, Farid Ahmed refuses to turn his back on his adopted home. Ahmed lost his 45-year-old wife, Husna Ahmed, in the Al Noor mosque attack, when they split up to go to the bathroom. The gunman livestreamed the massacre on the internet, and Ahmed later saw a video of his wife being shot dead. A police officer confirmed she had passed away.

Despite the horror, Ahmed — originally from Bangladesh — still considers New Zealand a great country.

"I believe that some people, purposely, they are trying to break down the harmony we have in New Zealand with the diversity," he said. "But they are not going to win. They are not going to win. We will be harmonious."

Associated Press videojournalist Haruka Nuga contributed to this report.

Where's Mick? Trump acting chief of staff has low-key style

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump struggled with mounting Republican defections over his emergency declaration to pay for a border wall, his acting White House chief of staff wasn't on Capitol Hill cajoling former colleagues or in the West Wing making calls.

Instead, Mick Mulvaney was in Las Vegas for an annual getaway with friends and family.

It was a telling example of Mulvaney's laissez-faire approach as he settles into a role that has bedeviled those who came before him.

His predecessor, retired four-star Gen. John Kelly, tried to micromanage Trump but ended up grating on the president and antagonizing outside allies. Mulvaney has made clear he believes his job is to manage the staff and not the president, according to current and former officials and people close to him. And he's OK with that.

Mulvaney doesn't try to limit whom the president speaks with or curb access to the Oval Office. He just asks that those who talk to Trump fill him in on what was discussed to avoid surprises. While former staffers compare the current atmosphere in the West Wing to the early, chaotic days of the administration, when the Oval Office had the feel of Grand Central Station, Mulvaney understands that's how Trump likes it.

The former South Carolina congressman has focused on and succeeded in improving staff morale in a building known for infighting and damaging leaks. Shortly after his arrival, Mulvaney organized a staff retreat at Camp David. He also has worked to build relationship on Capitol Hill, where he served for years. He schmoozed with lawmakers on the sidelines of the president's State of the Union speech and invited them to a Camp David retreat as well.

It's an approach that some outside the building question.

"The chief of staff has to be able to manage down as well as up," said Chris Whipple, author of "The Gatekeepers: How the White House chiefs of staff define every presidency." "I don't think he's been empowered and I think that's a mistake."

Mulvaney's tenure has coincided with an especially tumultuous time in Washington, beginning with the fight over border wall money that caused the longest government shutdown in the nation's history.

He was at the table in Vietnam for Trump's abruptly terminated summit with North Korea's leader and has watched as newly empowered House Democrats have launched investigations into Trump's dealings.

Trump has been known to make remarks undercutting Mulvaney in front of him, giving some the impression that Trump already may be souring on his third chief of staff in as many years.

But by all accounts, Mulvaney is a happy warrior who generally gets along well with the equally blunt president and brushes off slights. Though Trump gave Mulvaney the job on an "acting" basis last December, Trump doesn't appear likely to replace him anytime soon.

Mulvaney has the added benefit of getting along well with Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law Jared Kushner, both senior advisers with enormous internal power. Mulvaney, who has personal experience working in a family business, understands their unique positions. He built relationships with both as Trump's budget director and has had dinner with their family.

"He's trying to do the best he can with what he has to work with," said Leon Panetta, a former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton who also served as budget director, defense secretary and CIA director.

Like others interviewed, Panetta said it would be impossible to serve as a typical chief in Trump's White House. "All you can do is be there, respond to the president when you can, try to maintain some semblance of order and try to keep things at least halfway on track and not collapsing into total chaos," Panetta said.

Mulvaney, who technically also retains the title of budget director, remains engaged in policy and budget issues, which made his absence in recent days especially notable. He left on Wednesday afternoon as the White House was mounting a final effort to try to stop GOP senators from backing a resolution to block Trump's emergency order. Mulvaney was absent for Thursday's vote, when a dozen Republican senators joined Democrats in rebuking the president. And he was still gone Friday when Trump issued the first veto of his presidency, overruling the vote to terminate his declaration.

The White House defended Mulvaney's decision to take the trip, which senior strategy adviser John Czwartacki said was part of a 25-year tradition.

Mulvaney was to return to Washington on Saturday, in time to appear on the Sunday talk shows, and worked throughout his trip, talking to senators and at least a half-dozen staffers and receiving briefings on the shooting in New Zealand, Czwartacki said.

Czwartacki also said the president was fine with Mulvaney's absence and that the chief of staff had a team in place empowered to operate without him.

Indeed, in a quiet sign of his influence, Mulvaney has brought on a half-dozen new staffers, including communications aides.

Panetta, however, said it was "very unusual" that Mulvaney hadn't played a more prominent role in this year's budget talks, saying he should have been "the primary person trying to guide negotiations."

David B. Cohen, a political science professor at the University of Akron who is also writing a book on the chief of staff role, echoed that perception, saying previous chiefs, especially those with experience like Mulvaney's, "were essentially handed the keys and told, 'Get this done.'"

Mulvaney is "good at television, he's good at communication. But I think at this point, he's little more than an administrative assistant for Trump," Cohen said.

The White House pushed back on the idea that Mulvaney should have been charged with steering the border wall talks, saying it made sense for Vice President Mike Pence and the White House legislative affairs director to take the lead.

Mulvaney appears happy to be promoting Trump's agenda, even when the president's policies stand in conflict with ideas that Mulvaney has long championed.

In the months before he signed the emergency declaration, Trump argued to his staff that the situation at the border was a national security crisis and demanded to know why he, as president, couldn't stop what he deemed an "invasion."

Other aides told Trump there was nothing he could do. But Mulvaney, a longtime fiscal hawk who had blasted former President Barack Obama for using executive action to dictate immigration policy, went back to his colleagues at the Office of Management and Budget and asked them to start identifying various sources of money the White House might be able to access without Congress' approval to start building the wall.

Associated Press writer Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

When gunman advanced on New Zealand mosque, 1 man ran at him

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — When the gunman advanced toward the mosque, killing those in his path, Abdul Aziz didn't hide. Instead, he picked up the first thing he could find, a credit card machine, and ran outside screaming "Come here!"

Aziz, 48, is being hailed as a hero for preventing more deaths during Friday prayers at the Linwood mosque in Christchurch after leading the gunman in a cat-and-mouse chase before scaring him into speeding away in his car.

But Aziz, whose four sons and dozens of others remained in the mosque while he faced off with the

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gunman, said he thinks it's what anyone would have done.

The gunman killed 49 people after attacking two mosques in the deadliest mass shooting in New Zealand's modern history.

The gunman is believed to have killed 41 people at the Al Noor mosque before driving about 5 kilometers (3 miles) across town and attacking the Linwood mosque, where he killed seven more people. One person died later in a hospital.

White supremacist Brenton Tarrant, 28, has been charged with one count of murder in the slayings and a judge said Saturday that it was reasonable to assume more charges would follow.

Latef Alabi, the Linwood mosque's acting imam, said the death toll would have been far higher at the Linwood mosque if it wasn't for Aziz.

Alabi said he heard a voice outside the mosque at about 1:55 p.m. and stopped the prayer he was leading and peeked out the window. He saw a guy in black military-style gear and a helmet holding a large gun, and assumed it was a police officer. Then he saw two bodies and heard the gunman yelling obscenities.

"I realized this is something else. This is a killer," he said.

He yelled at the congregation of more than 80 to get down. They hesitated. A shot rang out, a window shattered and a body fell, and people began to realize it was for real.

"Then this brother came over. He went after him, and he managed to overpower him, and that's how we were saved," Alabi said, referring to Aziz. "Otherwise, if he managed to come into the mosque, then we would all probably be gone."

Aziz said as he ran outside screaming, he was hoping to distract the attacker. He said the gunman ran back to his car to get another gun, and Aziz hurled the credit card machine at him.

He said he could hear his two youngest sons, aged 11 and 5, urging him to come back inside.

The gunman returned, firing. Aziz said he ran, weaving through cars parked in the driveway, which prevented the gunman from getting a clean shot. Then Aziz spotted a gun the gunman had abandoned and picked it up, pointed it and squeezed the trigger. It was empty.

He said the gunman ran back to the car for a second time, likely to grab yet another weapon.

"He gets into his car and I just got the gun and threw it on his window like an arrow and blasted his window," he said.

The windshield shattered: "That's why he got scared."

He said the gunman was cursing at him, yelling that he was going to kill them all. But he drove away and Aziz said he chased the car down the street to a red light, before it made a U-turn and sped away. Online videos indicate police officers managed to force the car from the road and drag out the suspect soon after.

Originally from Kabul, Afghanistan, Aziz said he left as a refugee when he was a boy and lived for more than 25 years in Australia before moving to New Zealand a couple of years ago.

"I've been to a lot of countries and this is one of the beautiful ones," he said. And, he always thought, a peaceful one as well.

Aziz said he didn't feel fear or much of anything when facing the gunman. It was like he was on autopilot. And he believes that God, that Allah, didn't think it was his time to die.

New Zealanders reach out to Muslims in wake of mass shooting

By JULIET WILLIAMS and NICK PERRY Associated Press

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — New Zealand's stricken residents reached out to Muslims in their neighborhoods and around the country on Saturday, with a fierce determination to show kindness to a community in pain as a 28-year-old white supremacist stood silently before a judge, accused in mass shootings at two mosques that left 49 people dead.

Brenton Harrison Tarrant appeared in court amid strict security, shackled and wearing all-white prison garb, and showed no emotion when the judge read him one murder charge. The judge said "it was reasonable to assume" more such charges would follow. Tarrant, who posted an anti-immigrant manifesto online and apparently used a helmet-mounted camera to broadcast live video of the slaughter in the city

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of Christchurch, appeared to make a hand sign, similar to an OK sign, that is sometimes associated with white nationalists.

The massacre during Friday prayers prompted a heartfelt response from Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who pronounced it "one of New Zealand's darkest days" and said the shooter, an Australian native, had chosen to strike in New Zealand "because we represent diversity, kindness, compassion."

Her fellow countrymen seemed to want to prove her right by volunteering acts of kindness. Some offered rides to the grocery store or volunteered to walk with their Muslim neighbors if they felt unsafe.

In online forums, people discussed Muslim food restrictions as they prepared to drop off meals for those affected.

"Love always wins over hate. Lots of love for our Muslim brothers," read a handwritten card on a wall of flowers in a historic part of the city that stretched a full block.

Still, Muslims were advised to stay away from mosques while the nation's security alert remained at the second-highest level a day after the deadliest shooting in modern New Zealand history.

Ardern said 39 survivors remained hospitalized Saturday, with 11 critically wounded. But updates were slow to come, and many families were still waiting to hear whether their loved ones were among the victims.

Outside one of the two mosques, 32-year-old Ash Mohammed pushed through police barricades in hopes of finding out what happened to his father and two brothers, whose cellphones rang unanswered. An officer stopped him.

"We just want to know if they are dead or alive," Mohammed told the officer.

Hungry for any news, families and friends of the victims gathered at the city's Hagley College, near the hospital.

They included Asif Shaikh, 44, who said he was among more than 100 people at the Al Noor mosque when the attacker came in. He said he survived by played dead, but was desperate to know what happened to his friends who were there with him.

"It's been 36 hours, I haven't heard anything about them," he said.

Nearby, Akhtar Khokhur leaned on the shoulders of her friend and cried as she held up her cellphone with an image of her husband.

"I still don't know where he is," she said.

Khokhur, 58, and husband Mehaboobhai Khokhur, 65, had traveled from India to spend time with their son Imran, their first visit in the eight years since he moved to New Zealand. The couple was due to fly out Sunday.

Imran had dropped off his father, an electrical engineer, at the Al Noor mosque on Friday and was looking for a parking space when the shooting began. They have not heard from him since.

The gunman had posted a jumbled, 74-page manifesto on social media in which he identified himself as an Australian and white supremacist who was out to avenge attacks in Europe perpetrated by Muslims.

He livestreamed 17 minutes of the rampage at the Al Noor mosque, where, armed with at least two assault rifles and a shotgun, he sprayed worshippers with bullets, killing at least 41 people. More people were killed in an attack on a second mosque a short time later.

Facebook, Twitter and Google scrambled to take down the gunman's video, which was widely available on social media for hours after the bloodbath.

The second attack took place at the Linwood mosque about 5 kilometers (3 miles) away.

The video showed the killer was carrying a shotgun and two fully automatic military assault rifles, with an extra magazine taped to one of the weapons so that he could reload quickly. He also had more assault weapons in the trunk of his car, along with what appeared to be explosives.

Two other armed suspects were taken into custody Friday while police tried to determine what role, if any, they played in the cold-blooded attack that stunned New Zealand, a country so peaceful that police officers rarely carry guns.

Tarrant's relatives in the Australian town of Grafton, in New South Wales, contacted police after learning of the shooting and were helping with the investigation, local authorities said. Tarrant has spent little time

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in Australia in the past four years and only had minor traffic infractions on his record.

New Zealand Police Commissioner Mike Bush confirmed Tarrant was involved in both shootings but stopped short of saying he was the sole gunman.

During the Saturday morning hearing, a man who was not in court was charged with using writings to incite hatred against a race or ethnicity, but it was not clear if his case was related to the mosque attacks.

"We appear to primarily be dealing with one primary perpetrator, but we want to make sure that we don't take anything for granted in ensuring New Zealanders' safety," Prime Minister Ardern said.

New Zealand, with a population of 5 million, has relatively loose gun laws and an estimated 1.5 million firearms, or roughly one for every three people. But it has one of the lowest gun homicide rates in the world. In 2015, it had just eight.

Ardern said Tarrant was a licensed gun owner who bought the five guns used in the crimes legally.

"I can tell you one thing right now, our gun laws will change," Ardern said.

She did not offer too much detail, but said a ban on semi-automatic weapons would be looked at. Neighboring Australia has virtually banned semi-automatic rifles from private ownership since a lone gunman killed 35 people with assault rifles in 1996.

Before Friday's attack, New Zealand's deadliest shooting in modern history took place in 1990 in the small town of Aramoana, where a gunman killed 13 people following a dispute with a neighbor.

Associated Press writers Kristen Gelineau in Christchurch and Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, contributed to this report.

New US military budget focused on China despite border talk

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chinese bombers. Chinese hypersonic missiles. Chinese cyberattacks. Chinese anti-satellite weapons.

To a remarkable degree, the 2020 Pentagon budget proposal is shaped by national security threats that Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan has summarized in three words: "China, China, China."

The U.S. is still fighting small wars against Islamic extremists, and Russia remains a serious concern, but Shanahan seeks to shift the military's main focus to what he considers the more pressing security problem of a rapidly growing Chinese military.

This theme, which Shanahan outlined Thursday in presenting the administration's proposed 2020 defense budget to the Senate Armed Services Committee, is competing for attention with narrower, more immediate problems like President Donald Trump's effort to use the military to build a border wall.

The hearing, for example, spent more time on the wall and prospects for using military funds to build parts of it than on any aspect of foreign policy, including the conflict in Syria or military competition with China, Russia or North Korea.

Shanahan is hardly the first defense chief to worry about China. Several predecessors pursued what the Obama administration called a "pivot" to the Pacific, with China in mind. But Shanahan sees it as an increasingly urgent problem that exceeds traditional measures of military strength and transcends partisan priorities.

"We've been ignoring the problem for too long," Shanahan told a senator.

"China is aggressively modernizing its military, systematically stealing science and technology, and seeking military advantage through a strategy of military-civil fusion," he wrote in prepared testimony to the committee, which is considering a \$718 billion Pentagon budget designed in part to counter China's momentum.

The \$25 billion the Pentagon is proposing to spend on nuclear weapons in 2020, for example, is meant in part to stay ahead of China's nuclear arsenal, which is much smaller than America's but growing. Shanahan said China is developing a nuclear-capable long-range bomber that, if successful, would enable China to join the United States and Russia as the only nations with air-, sea- and land-based nuclear weapons.

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Shanahan ticked off a list of other Chinese advancements — hypersonic missiles against which the U.S. has limited defenses; space launches and other space efforts that could enable it to fight wars in space; “systematically stealing” of U.S. and allied technology, and militarizing land features in the South China Sea.

Bonnie S. Glaser, director of the China Power Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says the U.S. has been lacking effective strategies for competing with China on a broad scale.

“It is overdue,” she said of the Shanahan focus. “We have been somewhat slow in catching up” in such areas as denying China its regional ambitions, including efforts to fully control the South China Sea, which is contested by several other countries.

Some defense analysts think Shanahan and the Pentagon have inflated the China threat.

“I do think it’s worth asking what exactly is threatening about China’s behavior,” said Christopher Preble, vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute. He doesn’t discount China as a security issue, including in the South China Sea, but doubts the U.S. military is the institution best suited to deal with such non-military problems as cyber intrusions into American commercial networks.

In Preble’s view, competition with the Chinese is not mainly military. “I still don’t believe the nature of the threat is quite as grave as we’re led to believe” by the Pentagon, he said. “They tend to exaggerate the nature of the threat today.”

In his previous role as deputy defense secretary, Shanahan and President Donald Trump’s first defense secretary, Jim Mattis, crafted a national defense strategy that put China at the top of the list of problems.

“As China continues its economic and military ascendance, asserting power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy, it will continue to pursue a military modernization program that seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global pre-eminence in the future,” that strategy document says.

That explains in part why the U.S. is spending billions more on space, including means of defending satellites against potential Chinese attack, and on building hypersonic missiles to stay ahead of Chinese and Russian hypersonic weapons development.

It also explains some of the thinking behind preparing for an early retirement of the USS Harry Truman aircraft carrier, a strategy that views carriers as a less relevant asset in a future armed conflict involving China.

This concern about countering China has permeated the entire U.S. military. Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, head of U.S. Africa Command, said last month that dozens of African heads of state were invited to Beijing last fall to consider billions in Chinese loans and grants, and that China is building thousands of miles of railroads in Africa, mostly linked to Chinese mineral extraction operations.

“They’re heavily invested and heavily involved” in Africa, he said.

The top U.S. commander in Europe told Congress this week that China also is making inroads in Europe.

“China is looking to secure access to strategic geographic locations and economic sectors through financial stakes in ports, airlines, hotels, and utility providers, while providing a source of capital for struggling European economies,” Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti said.

Beyond veto: Trump seeks more work-arounds to avoid Congress

By ZEKE MILLER and CATHERINE LUCEY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump’s first congressional veto was more than a milestone: It signals a new era of ever more fraught relations between the two ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Trump’s legislative agenda was stymied even before his party lost unified control of Washington at the start of the year and he has grown increasingly frustrated by his dealings with Congress, believing little of substance will get done by the end of his first term and feeling just as pessimistic about the second, according to White House aides, campaign staffers and outside allies.

Republicans in Congress, for their part, are demonstrating new willingness to part ways with the president. On the Senate vote Thursday rejecting the president’s national emergency declaration to get border wall funding, 12 senators defected and joined Democrats in voting against Trump.

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The GOP-led Senate's 59-41 vote against Trump's declaration was just the latest blow as tensions flare on multiple fronts.

Trump tweeted one word after the vote: "VETO!" And he eagerly flexed that muscle on Friday for the first time, hoping to demonstrate resolve on fulfilling his signature 2016 campaign pledge.

Leading up to Thursday's dramatic vote of rebuke, Republican senators had repeatedly agitated for compromise deals that would give them political cover to support Trump despite their concerns that he was improperly circumventing Congress. But the president was never convinced that any of the proposals ensured the resolution would be defeated, said a White House official who demanded anonymity to discuss internal thinking.

A last-ditch trip to the White House by a group of senators Wednesday night only irritated Trump, who felt they were offering little in the way of new solutions.

As the vote neared, Trump repeatedly made clear that it was about party fealty and border security and suggested that voting against him could be perilous.

"It's going to be a great election issue," he predicted.

Looking past the veto, Trump's plans for future collaboration with Congress appear limited. With the exception of pushing for approval of Trump's trade deal with Mexico and Canada, the president and his allies see little benefit for Trump in investing more political capital on Capitol Hill. Trump ran against Washington in 2016, and they fully expect him to do so again.

Instead, the president — who once declared that "I alone can fix it" before getting hamstrung by the morass in Washington — is exploring opportunities to pursue executive action to work around lawmakers as he did with his emergency declaration on the border wall. He is directing aides to find other areas where he can act — or at least be perceived as acting — without Congress, including infrastructure and reducing drug prices.

Trump made his intentions clear recently as he assessed that Democrats would rather investigate him than cooperate on policy, declaring: "Basically, they've started the campaign. So the campaign begins."

His dealings with Congress were inconsistent even when Republicans controlled both chambers, and he has made few overtures to Democrats since they won control of the House.

Trump initially predicted he could work across the aisle, but that sentiment cooled after the bitter government shutdown fight and in the face of mounting investigations. His frustrations underscore the difficulty the Washington neophyte and former business executive has had with the laborious process of lawmaking, and the challenges yet to come.

The White House argues there are still opportunities for collaboration, listing the ratification of Trump's renegotiated North American free trade agreement, known as the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, as his top legislative priority for the coming two years. But passage is anything but assured.

Trump's ire has been directed at both parties for some time, aides said. He was upset with the Republicans' performance during the recent congressional hearing featuring his former fixer Michael Cohen, telling allies that he was not impressed with their questioning.

Trump's budget proposal this past week was viewed as a shot at Democrats, with its proposals to increase funding for the border wall and cut to social safety net programs. The plan, which had little in the way of new or bipartisan ideas, was declared dead on arrival by Democratic House leaders.

Further stoking tensions, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi invited NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg to address an upcoming joint meeting of Congress, in what was widely seen as a rebuke of Trump's criticism of the trans-Atlantic alliance. The invitation was backed by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and followed votes earlier this year in which Republicans voiced opposition to Trump's plans to draw down U.S. troops in Syria and Afghanistan.

Presidential complaints about Congress — and efforts to find a work-around — are nothing new.

Former President Barack Obama in 2014 deployed what became known as his "pen and phone" strategy. "I've got a pen to take executive actions where Congress won't, and I've got a telephone to rally folks around the country on this mission," he said.

Obama's strategy yielded years of executive orders and regulatory action — but many proved ephemeral

when Trump took office and started deconstructing them.

Trump downplays white nationalism threat after massacre

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump played down any threat posed by racist white nationalism after the gunman accused of the New Zealand mosque massacre called the president “a symbol of renewed white identity.”

Trump, whose own previous responses to the movement have drawn scrutiny, expressed sympathy for the victims who died at “places of worship turned into scenes of evil killing.” But he declined to join expressions of mounting concern about white nationalism. When asked whether he thought it was a rising threat around the world, he responded, “I don’t really.”

“I think it’s a small group of people that have very, very serious problems, I guess,” Trump said. “If you look at what happened in New Zealand, perhaps that’s the case. I don’t know enough about it yet. But it’s certainly a terrible thing.”

Trump was asked about white nationalism and the shooting deaths of 49 people at mosques in Christchurch after he formally vetoed Congress’ resolution to block his declaration of a national emergency at the Mexico border. His veto, aimed at freeing money to build more miles of a border wall against illegal immigration, is expected to survive any congressional effort to overturn it.

Questioned about the accused gunman’s reference to him, Trump professed ignorance.

“I didn’t see it. I didn’t see it,” he said. “But I think it’s a horrible event ... a horrible, disgraceful thing and a horrible act.”

The man accused of the shootings, whose name was not immediately released, left behind a lengthy document that outlined his motivations. He proudly stated that he was a 28-year-old Australian white nationalist who hates immigrants and was set off by attacks in Europe that were perpetrated by Muslims. In a single reference, he mentioned the U.S. president.

“Were/are you a supporter of Donald Trump?” was one of the questions he posed to himself. His answer: “As a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose? Sure. As a policy maker and leader? Dear god no.”

The White House immediately denounced the connection. But the mention from the suspect, who embraced Nazi imagery and voiced support for fascism, nonetheless cast an uncomfortable light on the way that the president has been embraced by some on the far right.

Trump, who as a candidate proposed a ban on all Muslims entering the United States, has drawn criticism as being slow to condemn white supremacy and related violence. After a 2017 clash between white nationalists and anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, that left one demonstrator dead, Trump said there were “very fine people on both sides” of the confrontation. He also did not immediately reject the support of David Duke, a former KKK Grand Wizard, during his presidential campaign.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., tied Trump’s inflammatory language to the violence half a world away.

“Words have consequences like saying we have an invasion on our border and talking about people as though they were different in some fatal way,” Blumenthal said on CNN. “I think that the public discourse from the president on down is a factor in some of these actions.”

Former Texas Rep. Beto O’Rourke, who declared his Democratic candidacy for president this week, said, “We must call out this hatred, this Islamophobia, this intolerance, and the violence that predictably follows from the rhetoric that we use.”

The White House, in comments before those remarks, rejected any link to Trump.

“It’s outrageous to even make that connection between this deranged individual that committed this evil crime to the president who has repeatedly condemned bigotry, racism and made it very clear that this is a terrorist attack,” Mercedes Schlapp, the White House’s director of strategic communication, told reporters. “We are there to support and stand with the people of New Zealand.”

Trump himself telephoned New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, offering condolences, prayers

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and any help the U.S. might be able to provide. She told reporters she answered, "My message was: to offer sympathy and love to all Muslim communities."

Trump's hardline immigration rhetoric and calls to return America to its traditional past have been embraced by many on the conservative fringes, including some who troll online with racist imagery, as well as white supremacists who have looked to engage in violence.

In Florida, Cesar Sayoc, who had decorated his van with Trump propaganda, was accused of mailing explosives last fall to Democratic Party officials and media members, many of whom had been criticized by the president. The president said Sayoc had been "insane" long before he became a Trump fan.

Last month, a former Coast Guard official was accused of stockpiling weapons in a plot to kill media members and liberal politicians as part of a plan to transform the U.S. into a white ethno-state. It took more than a week for Trump to respond to the plot, which he deemed "a shame."

Many experts who track violent extremists have identified white nationalism as a growing threat in the U.S. and abroad. In January, for example, the New York-based Anti-Defamation League said that domestic extremists killed at least 50 people in the U.S. in 2018, up from 37 in 2017, and said, "White supremacists were responsible for the great majority of the killings, which is typically the case."

Some critics have accused U.S. authorities of not dedicating adequate resources to stem a threat of domestic terrorism. However, The Washington Post reported last week that internal FBI data showed more domestic terror suspects were arrested last year than those allegedly inspired by international terror groups.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Michael Kunzelman in Washington and Alexandra Jaffe in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, contributed reporting.

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US business groups encouraged by prospect of US-China deal

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. business groups said Friday they are encouraged by China's approval of a new law that loosens restrictions on foreign investment and said it could help smooth the way to a substantive trade agreement between the two countries.

China's ceremonial legislature passed a measure Thursday seeking to prevent Chinese officials from forcing U.S. and other foreign companies to turn over proprietary technology, a key sticking point in the trade fight between the two countries.

The U.S. has imposed tariffs on \$250 billion worth of Chinese goods in an effort to force changes to a range of China's economic policies. China has retaliated by slapping duties on most U.S. imports.

"It's one of those confidence building measures," Erin Ennis, senior vice president of the U.S.-China Business Council, said of the move by Chinese legislators. It suggests "the two sides are talking the same language."

U.S. companies have long complained that Chinese officials informally push them to turn over trade secrets in order to access China's market. In some cases U.S. businesses are required to form a joint venture with a Chinese partner, and share technology with them. In other cases U.S. companies are forced to provide trade secrets to win regulatory approval from local officials, who then turn over those secrets to Chinese firms.

The Trump administration also wants China to reign in subsidies for state-owned firms and for companies that are focused on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and self-driving cars.

The new law would bar Chinese officials from leaking technology to Chinese firms, and would also make it easier for more U.S. companies to do business in China without a partner.

Still, it's not clear how close the two sides are to an agreement. Earlier this week, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told a Senate committee that "there still are major, major issues that have to be resolved."

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And Ennis said China needs to publish regulations that would implement the new law, a step they have delayed taking in the past.

Lighthizer has emphasized that the agreement must include enforcement provisions that would allow the U.S. to impose tariffs or other sanctions if China doesn't follow through on its promises. That remains a key sticking point between the two sides, business lobbyists have said.

Lighthizer sketched out how the United States wants to enforce the deal in his testimony Tuesday. U.S. companies that are forced to turn over technology, for example, could bring that concern to U.S. officials, who would raise them in monthly meetings with their Chinese counterparts. Lighthizer and his Chinese counterpart would meet every six months and seek to resolve the toughest cases.

If they were unable to do so, Lighthizer said, the U.S. could "unilaterally act to enforce change," which would likely mean tariffs. The Trump administration wants China to agree to not retaliate, but that is a major sticking point.

Still, both presidents want a deal, business lobbyists say.

"We are cautiously optimistic that the two sides are going to get there," said Jeremie Waterman, president of the U.S. Chamber China Center. "They're clearly whittling the number of outstanding issues down."

Some business groups think an agreement, if it is reached, won't happen until the end of April.

President Donald Trump said on Thursday at the White House, "We'll have news on China probably one way or the other over the next three or four weeks."

AP Writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Students globally protest warming, pleading for their future

By FRANK JORDANS and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Students across a warming globe pleaded for their lives, future and planet Friday, demanding tough action on climate change.

From the South Pacific to the edge of the Arctic Circle, angry students in more than 100 countries walked out of classes to protest what they see as the failures by their governments.

Well more than 150,000 students and adults who were mobilized by word of mouth and social media protested in Europe, according to police estimates. But the initial turnout in the United States did not look quite as high.

"Borders, languages and religions do not separate us," eight-year-old Havana Chapman-Edwards, who calls herself the tiny diplomat, told hundreds of protesters at the U.S. Capitol. "Today we are telling the truth and we do not take no for an answer."

Thousands of New York City students protested at locations including Columbus Circle, City Hall, the American Museum of Natural History and a football field at the Bronx High School of Science. Police said 16 protesters were arrested on disorderly conduct charges for blocking traffic at the museum.

The coordinated "school strikes" were inspired by 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who began holding solitary demonstrations outside the Swedish parliament last year.

Since then, the weekly protests have snowballed from a handful of cities to hundreds, fueled by dramatic headlines about the impact of climate change during the students' lifetime. Unless emissions of heat-trapping gases start dropping dramatically, scientists estimate that the protesters will be in their 40s and 50s, maybe even 30s, when the world will reach dangerous levels of warming that international agreements are trying to prevent.

Thunberg, who has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, said at a rally in Stockholm that the world faces an "existential crisis, the biggest crisis humanity ever has faced and still it has been ignored for decades."

Alexandria Villasenor, a 13-year-old co-coordinator of the New York City protest that culminated in a die-in at the steps of the American Museum of Natural History, said while she was pleased with the number of demonstrators, a big turnout isn't the point.

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"It won't be successful until the world leaders take some action," Villasenor said.

Dana Fisher, a University of Maryland sociology professor who tracks protest movements and environmental activists, said action could possibly be triggered by "the fact that we're seeing children, some of whom are quite small, talking about the Earth they're going to inherit."

Across the globe, protesters urged politicians to act against climate change while highlighting local environmental problems:

— In India's capital of New Delhi, schoolchildren protested inaction on climate change and demanded that authorities tackle rising air pollution levels, which often far exceed World Health Organization limits.

— In Paris, teenagers thronged streets around the domed Pantheon building. Some criticized French President Emmanuel Macron, who sees himself as the guarantor of the landmark 2015 Paris climate accord but is criticized by activists as too business-friendly and not doing enough to reduce emissions.

— In Washington, protesters spoke in front of a banner saying "We don't want to die."

— In San Francisco, 1,000 demonstrators descended on the local offices of Sen. Dianne Feinstein and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, wanting passage of the massive "Green New Deal" bill proposed in the U.S. Congress.

— In St. Paul, Minnesota, about 1,000 students gathered before the state Capitol, chanting "Stop denying the earth is dying."

— In South Africa's capital, Pretoria, one protester held a sign reading "You'll Miss The Rains Down in Africa." Experts say Africa, with more than 1 billion people, is expected to be hardest hit by global warming even though it contributes least to greenhouse gas emissions.

— Hundreds of students took to the streets of downtown Los Angeles chanting "What do we want? Science! When do we want it? After peer review."

— Thousands marched in rainy Warsaw and other Polish cities to demand a ban on burning coal, a major source of carbon dioxide. Some carried banners that read "Make Love, Not CO2."

— Protests in Madrid and more than 50 other Spanish cities drew thousands. The country is vulnerable to rising sea levels and rapid desertification.

— In Berlin, police said as many as 20,000 protesters gathered in a downtown square before marching through the German capital to Chancellor Angela Merkel's office.

Some politicians praised the students.

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said he was inspired by the student climate strikers to call a special summit in September to deal with what he called "the climate emergency."

"My generation has failed to respond properly to the dramatic challenge of climate change," Guterres wrote in an opinion piece in *The Guardian*. "This is deeply felt by young people. No wonder they are angry."

In 2015, world leaders agreed in Paris to a goal of keeping the Earth's global temperature rise by the end of the century well below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with pre-industrial times.

Yet the world has already warmed by 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees) since then and is on track for an increase of 4 degrees Celsius, which experts say would have far-reaching consequences for life on the planet.

In Stockholm, Thunberg predicted that students won't let up their climate protests.

"There are a crisis in front of us that we have to live with, that we will have to live with for all our lives, our children, our grandchildren and all future generations," she said. "We are on strike because we do want a future."

Jordans reported from Berlin. Rishabh R. Jain in New Delhi; Monika Scislowska in Warsaw, Poland; Nqobile Ntshangase in Pretoria, South Africa; Angela Charlton in Paris; Jari Tanner in Helsinki, Finland; Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark; Olga Rodriguez in San Francisco; Steve Karnowski in St. Paul, Minnesota; Todd Richmond in Madison, Wisconsin; Brian Witte in Annapolis, Maryland; Amanda Myers in Los Angeles; Karen Matthews in New York and Bernat Armangue in Madrid contributed to this report.

Read more AP climate news here: <https://www.apnews.com/Climate>

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Today in History By the Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, March 16, the 75th day of 2019. There are 290 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On March 16, 1521, Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan and his crew reached the Philippines, where Magellan was killed during a battle with natives the following month.

On this date:

In 1802, President Thomas Jefferson signed a measure authorizing the establishment of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York.

In 1926, rocket science pioneer Robert H. Goddard successfully tested the first liquid-fueled rocket at his Aunt Effie's farm in Auburn, Massachusetts.

In 1945, during World War II, American forces declared they had secured Iwo Jima, although pockets of Japanese resistance remained.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent Congress the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as part of his War on Poverty. (The measure was passed by Congress, and was signed by Johnson in August 1964.)

In 1966, NASA launched Gemini 8 on a mission to rendezvous and dock with Agena, a target vehicle in orbit; although the docking was successful, the joined vehicles began spinning, forcing Gemini to disconnect and abort the flight.

In 1968, the My Lai (mee ly) massacre took place during the Vietnam War as U.S. Army soldiers hunting for Viet Cong fighters and sympathizers killed unarmed villagers in two hamlets of Son My (son mee) village; estimates of the death toll vary from 347 to 504. Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination.

In 1984, William Buckley, the CIA station chief in Beirut, was kidnapped by Hezbollah militants (he was tortured by his captors and killed in 1985).

In 1985, Terry Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for The Associated Press, was abducted in Beirut; he was released in December 1991.

In 1991, a plane carrying seven members of country singer Reba McEntire's band and her tour manager crashed into Otay Mountain in southern California, killing all on board. U.S. skaters Kristi Yamaguchi, Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan swept the World Figure Skating Championships in Munich, Germany.

In 1994, figure skater Tonya Harding pleaded guilty in Portland, Oregon, to conspiracy to hinder prosecution for covering up an attack on rival Nancy Kerrigan, avoiding jail but drawing a \$100,000 fine.

In 2003, American activist Rachel Corrie, 23, was crushed to death by an Israeli military bulldozer while trying to block demolition of a Palestinian home in the Gaza Strip.

In 2005, A jury in Los Angeles acquitted actor Robert Blake of murder in the shooting death of his wife, Bonny Lee Bakley, four years earlier. (A civil court jury later ordered Blake to pay Bakley's four children \$30 million, an award that an appeals court subsequently cut in half; Blake declared bankruptcy.) A judge in Redwood City, California, sent Scott Peterson to death row for the slaying of his pregnant wife, Laci.

Ten years ago: Joining a wave of public anger, President Barack Obama blistered insurance giant AIG for "recklessness and greed" for handing its executives \$165 million in bonuses after taking billions in federal bailout money. British actress Natasha Richardson, 45, was fatally injured in a skiing accident at a resort in Quebec; she died two days later at a Manhattan hospital. Austrian Josef Fritzl pleaded guilty at the start of his trial to imprisoning his daughter for 24 years and fathering her seven children. (Two days later, Fritzl pleaded guilty to the remaining charges against him, including negligent homicide; he was sentenced to life in a psychiatric ward.)

Five years ago: Crimeans voted to leave Ukraine and join Russia, overwhelmingly approving a referendum that sought to unite the strategically important Black Sea region with the country it was part of for some 250 years. Mitch Leigh, 86, a successful advertising jingle writer whose attempt at writing for a Broadway

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show became the instant, celebrated hit "Man of La Mancha," died in New York.

One year ago: Singer Aretha Franklin canceled two upcoming concerts, saying a doctor had told her to stay off the road and rest completely for at least two months. (Franklin died five months later from pancreatic cancer.) Airstrikes in Syria killed more than 100 people as civilians fled besieged areas for a second straight day.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Ray Walker (The Jordanaires) is 85. Game show host Chuck Woolery is 78. Singer-songwriter Jerry Jeff Walker is 77. Country singer Robin Williams is 72. Actor Erik Estrada is 70. Actor Victor Garber is 70. Country singer Ray Benson (Asleep at the Wheel) is 68. Bluegrass musician Tim O'Brien (Hot Rize; Earls of Leicester) is 65. Rock singer-musician Nancy Wilson (Heart) is 65. World Golf Hall of Famer Hollis Stacy is 65. Actor Clifton Powell is 63. Rapper-actor Flavor Flav (Public Enemy) is 60. Rock musician Jimmy DeGrasso is 56. Actor Jerome Flynn is 56. Folk singer Patty Griffin is 55. Movie director Gore Verbinski is 55. Country singer Tracy Bonham is 52. Actress Lauren Graham is 52. Actor Judah Friedlander (FREED'-lan-duhr) is 50. Actor Alan Tudyk (TOO'-dihk) is 48. Actor Tim Kang is 46. Rhythm-and-blues singer Blu Cantrell is 43. Actress Brooke Burns is 41. Actress Kimrie Lewis is 37. Actor Brett Davern is 36. Actress Alexandra Daddario is 33. Rhythm and blues singer Jhene Aiko is 31. Rock musician Wolfgang Van Halen is 28.

Thought for Today: "The only joy in the world is to begin." — Cesare Pavese (CHAY'-zah-ray pah-VAY'-zay), Italian novelist (1908-1950).