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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

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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EARTHTALK ™

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: Given all the advances in residential household efficiency, can you paint a picture of what the home of the future will look like?
-- Jennifer C., Valmeyer, IL

No doubt, homes in the future, whether single family dwellings or apartments in larger buildings, will be much greener than what we are all living in these days. For starters, the use of sustainable, locally sourced (and ideally recycled) materials will be the norm, not the exception, so as to avoid the unnecessary emissions and resource consumption required to make new stuff and ship it around the world.

Homes of the future will be energy efficient. Part of this efficiency will come from better insulation, doors and windows to keep the heat/cold inside where you want it. The other part will come in the form of using renewable energy generated on-site, whether from rooftop photovoltaic solar panels, thin-film window treatments, solar shingles, micro wind turbines, kinetic energy harvesters, or other newfangled technologies. And all this self-sustaining energy will be stored in your own high-capacity batteries probably not so different from Tesla's Powerwall array.

Homes of the future will also be smart. Your appliances, A/C, lighting, home security, motorized blinds,

Groton Dairy Queen's 25th Anniversary!

Come Celebrate With Us - March 25-29!

Monday: Soft Drinks for 25¢

**Tuesday: Buy one regular priced Blizzard®
and get one of the same size or smaller for 25¢**

Wednesday: Root Beer Float: \$1.25

Thursday: Indian Tacos: \$5.25

Friday: Small Cones for 25¢



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garage door openers and other systems will be connected to your network with controls available through apps over the Internet. And chances are, your future home will be smaller. The "tiny house" movement highlights how much homeowners can save on utility bills when space is limited. Efficiency can also be about use of space as much as about use of energy. While we won't all live in tiny homes, downsizing will definitely continue to be "in."

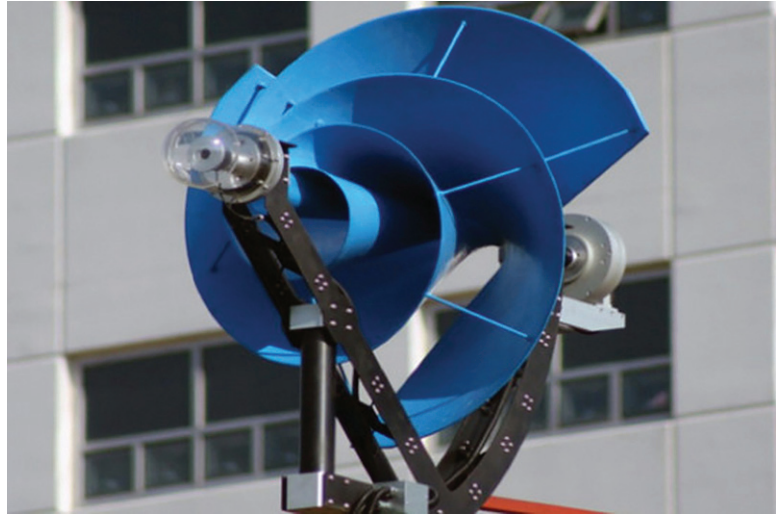
And what about outside your home? Don't be surprised if your perfect lawn has been replaced by native plants attuned to the surrounding ecosystem. These hardy local plants won't need chemical fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides to thrive. Rainwater from your roof will be collected in cisterns, with the resulting "graywater" used to irrigate your landscaping. A green roof or vertical garden could top it all off.

While the picture painted above may seem far-fetched, it's really not, given that you could build a home that met all of the above criteria today for not much more than a conventional home. That said, it might be greener still to retrofit your existing old-school home with eco-friendly upgrades than to tear it down and build a new one, given the emissions associated with manufacturing, materials transport and assembly on a new structure. While the new home will be more efficient, it could take decades to "pay back" the "carbon debt" accrued by building from scratch.

Of course, all buildings run their course eventually, so when it is time to tear-down, it's good to know there are plenty of green options out there to replace the old homestead. And with California adopting new building codes that go into effect in 2020 calling on all new construction of single-family homes and low-rise apartments to meet zero net energy standards (whereby they generate as much power from on-site renewables as they consume from the grid), the future may be here sooner than we imagined.

CONTACTS: Tesla Powerwall, tesla.com/powerwall; "Tiny Homes Are Big On Energy Efficiency," ase.org/blog/tiny-homes-are-big-energy-efficiency; "CA Building Code Takes Big Step Toward Net-Zero Energy," nrdc.org/experts/pierre-delforge/ca-building-code-takes-big-step-toward-net-zero-energy.

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.



This small rooftop wind turbine from Netherlands-based start-up The Archimedes can generate 1,500 kilowatt-hours of energy each year, which would account for about 15% of the typical American household's annual energy needs.

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By Richard P. Holm, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

Anaphylaxis and shock, reversed by epinephrine

Ms. A. was in the bagel shop line and told the server she was allergic to peanuts. The server reassured her there were no peanuts in the bagel but was unaware some peanut butter was left on the knife from an earlier sandwich. After a few bites of the bagel, Ms. A.'s face and lips started swelling, she itched all over, slipped off her chair, vomited and fell flat losing consciousness. When the ambulance arrived the emergency team kept her flat, gave an intramuscular injection into her thigh muscle of epinephrine (also known as adrenalin), then took her off to the hospital.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can follow exposure to an allergic trigger and will happen in the lifetime of one or two out of every one hundred people. Symptoms are secondary to the release of histamine and other mediators causing a severe drop in circulating blood pressure. Triggers can be from food such as peanuts, wheat, nuts, shellfish or milk, an insect bite or sting, or a medication like penicillin. The full list is long.

Aside from avoiding the trigger in the first place, the single most important treatment for anaphylaxis is epinephrine which is a hormone released from our adrenal glands. There are few reasons not to give an injection of epinephrine if there is a chance that anaphylaxis is happening. Our bodies make natural epinephrine when we are faced with fight or flight situations. Antihistamines like Benadryl®, Claritin® and others have no role in the prevention or treatment of anaphylaxis as they only help the itch. The single treatment for anaphylaxis is epinephrine, period. Have injectable epinephrine available and near persons at risk and use it if worried.

To obtain a self-injector of epinephrine, you need a prescription. There are now five types available and they all work well. Ask your pharmacist to get you the least expensive one and be sure you know how to use it.

The price for a kit with two autoinjectors runs from \$375 to \$600. The cost to the pharmaceutical company to purchase one autoinjector from the manufacturer was reported as approximately \$30 by NBC News in 2016 after a U.S. House Committee looked at the price of autoinjectors. I believe excessive markup of the prices of medicine by drug manufacturers or pharmaceutical companies is unethical and we need to pressure our national legislators to do something about it.

Patients with anaphylactic allergies must know what to avoid, have epinephrine available, use it when necessary, and after any reaction see their provider.

Ms. A recovered fine and never went without her epinephrine rescue injector again.

For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow The Prairie Doc® on Facebook, featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming live and broadcast on SDPTV most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting

March 25, 2019 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Program Overview Presentations
 - a. Food Service...B. Clocksene
 - b. Transportation/Custodial...L. Bahr/M. Nehls
 - c. Wellness & Health Services...B. Gustafson
3. School Board Committee Reports:
 - a. **Building, Grounds, & Transportation:** Clint Fjelstad, Merle Harder
 - b. **Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum:** Deb Gengerke, Kara Pharis
 - c. **Negotiations:** Grant Rix, Steve Smith, Marty Weismantel
4. Discussion/possible action on 2018-2019 school calendar amendments related to make-up snow days.
5. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Consider proposal from Obermiller Nelson Engineering for 1934 Addition boiler replacement.
2. Consider proposal from JLG Architects for Elementary tuck pointing services.
3. Adopt resolution authorizing membership in the South Dakota High School Activities Association for the 2019-2020 school year.
4. Discussion on policy IDGK Participation of Alternative Instruction Students.
5. Approve hiring Lynn Miller, bus route driver, retroactive to March 18, 2019.
6. Acknowledge receipt of public school exemption #19-16.
7. Executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(4) for negotiations.

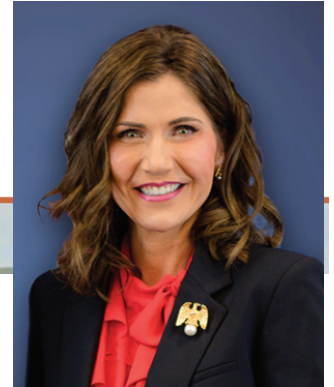
ADJOURN

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



South Dakota Grit In The Face of Storms

Earlier this month, our state was hit by a bomb cyclone – an unusual name to match unusual circumstances. The middle of our state got buried in snow, while the southeast corner was devastated by four inches of rain fallen on frozen ground, sending it into the river and causing major flooding throughout the region.

As soon as it was safe to leave Pierre, I headed to the southeast to visit Yankton, Dakota Dunes, Sioux Falls, and other communities impacted by the storms. I saw flooded basements, destroyed fields, collapsed foundations, and city parks with brand new equipment – all completely underwater. I was thankful for the conversations I had with local leaders and the ways we're working together on recovery efforts.

On March 15, I issued an emergency declaration that will allow us to use special dollars for rebuilding our communities in the coming weeks. We lost a lot of bridges, culverts, trails, and infrastructure that will need attention. It will also help us qualify for federal programs and FEMA funds.

I've been in constant communication with Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken and other community leaders in the southeast. I've also positioned one of my senior staff members in the Sioux Falls Emergency Operations Center so our local and state teams can seamlessly coordinate on recovery efforts and execute quickly when situations arise, especially as we're preparing for additional flooding along the Big Sioux River.

Furthermore, I have been in close contact with the White House and other federal officials to ensure we're utilizing all available resources to address storm damage. As a result of these conversations, FEMA representatives have frequented storm sites and the Corps of Engineers has agreed to an operational training mission to assist with levees. Recovery from these floods requires an all-hands-on-deck approach, so it's important we use appropriate local, state, and federal resources to minimize damage and enhance communication in communities.

Storms often bring out the worst in people, but in South Dakota, we see the opposite. I heard the story of a Highway Patrol officer who went on a rescue mission, got stuck in the weather, and ended up staying at a farmhouse for several days while the storm passed. They took him in like family. I know of people who used snowmobiles to help their neighbors get to work at our hospitals. Plow drivers who pulled double and triple shifts to keep roads safe. Law enforcement officials who didn't hesitate to face dangerous situations to ensure order and peace in communities. It's pretty incredible.

It's part of that South Dakota grit. The storms were strong, but South Dakota is stronger. We're resilient. We're tough. Working together, we will get through this.

Gov. Noem Waives Carrier Permit Fees For Those Helping Flood Relief Efforts

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Kristi Noem has signed an executive order that waives permit fees for those carriers transporting flood relief loads to sites in South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska.

“Many people not just in South Dakota, but in neighboring states are suffering from this flood,” Gov. Noem said. “This waiver is intended to make it easier for carriers to get relief items to those areas.”

The executive order, signed Tuesday, states that the type of permits still needed are: trip permits, fuel permits and overwidth or non-divisible load overweight permits. But fees for those permits will not be assessed.

Carriers are still required to have a commercial driver license and insurance. Waived safety regulations would include things like hours of service and annual inspections. Drivers are encouraged to be well-rested for their journey.

To get the free permits or other information call the South Dakota Highway Patrol’s Motor Carriers port of entry offices at:

- *** Sisseton Port- 605-698-3925
- *** Jefferson Port- 605-356-0124
- *** Tilford Port- 605-347-2671
- *** Sioux Falls Port- 605-757-6403

SD National Guard members activated to help provide water on Pine Ridge Reservation

WATERTOWN, S.D. - Gov. Kristi Noem has activated 13 members of the South Dakota Army National Guard to help distribute water to communities on the Pine Ridge Reservation after recent floodwaters have washed out a county rural waterline.

The Soldiers from Watertown-based Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion, will arrive today to provide drinkable water to those in need in the communities of Red Shirt, Pine Ridge, Porcupine, Evergreen and Wounded Knee.

The Soldiers will deploy with five Load Handling System vehicles equipped with five Compatible Water Tank Racks, or “Hippos.” The Hippo has the capability to receive, store and distribute up to 2,000 gallons of potable water per system.

The National Guard members will be providing water to the public from a central location in each community until the waterline is restored. Residents should bring with them plastic bottles, containers or receptacles to receive the water.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
NEWS WATCH**

Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

Stressed farmers face continuing economic decline

By: Bart Pfankuch

This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch. Find more in-depth reporting at www.sdnews-watch.org.

A 5-year slide in the agricultural economy in South Dakota and across the Great Plains has left many producers operating at a loss and is putting some in jeopardy of losing their farms.

A major decline in most commodity prices is the primary cause of the losses, but extended drought and recent flooding combined with a lingering trade war with China and other importers have added to the financial and emotional stress on farmers and ranchers.

Some producers are reducing family living expenses, delaying building repairs or equipment purchases or even selling assets to stay solvent. Recent government reports have highlighted a rise in farm bankruptcies in the Midwest and point to growing concerns over depression among farmers that can lead to suicide.

U.S. Department of Agriculture data show that net farm income — essentially a farmer's take-home pay — is down significantly in all Great Plains states from 2013 to 2017 and that total cash receipts for agricultural products trended downward as well.

Scott VanderWal, a farmer from Volga who is president of the South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation and a vice president of the American Farm Bureau, said farmers and ranchers in South Dakota are reeling from the slow but steady decrease in income.

"We're really in the fifth year of declining equity for farmers and ranchers," VanderWal said. "We're at the position where there isn't an ag commodity that has made any money in the past five years."

In the short term, the downward trend is exerting high stress on farmers and their families and forcing many to make tough financial choices. The overall state economy, including sales tax collections that fund most government services, will take a hit, VanderWal said.

"It's going to be hard on everybody, and it will be hard on Main Street," VanderWal said. "Chemicals, feed, equipment, groceries, all the places farmers go to town to spend money, when times are bad, we don't go spend that money."

But a larger, longer-term worry hovers over the depressed farm economy.

According to VanderWal and others, if things don't bounce back, the potential long-range impacts could alter South Dakota agriculture at a fundamental level for generations years to come.

The extended downturn could cause more farmers, ranchers and dairy operators to declare bankruptcy. Older farmers may cash out and leave the industry while they still have some land and equipment equity remaining. Younger producers with limited equity may not be able to sustain losses and could get out of farming. Potential new entrants into the industry may choose another career option if they don't see a path to profitability.

Ultimately, the potential exists that corporate or foreign interests may buy up farms and turn families that were once landowners into contract employees who farm the land but don't have the stability or commitment to stewardship that follows ownership.

"Whether it's five years or 10 years, it's very serious and we could have fewer family farms in the end," said Jerry Runia, 60, who farms and ranches near Estelline in Hamlin County. "We want to keep this a rural state, and if it changes like that, I think it affects everybody. Right now, people trust family farmers. In the future, will you trust whatever owner-investor is running it?"

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Cattle are part of the lifeblood of the Bar Bell Ranch run by Josh Geigle and his father on their property 15 miles north of Wall. Financial hurdles challenge the Geigles and other South Dakota ag producers. Photo: Bart Pfankuch

farms in South Dakota and across the Great Plains remains in steady decline. The Rushmore State had 36,250 operating farms in 1985, about 32,000 farms in 2013 and fewer than 31,000 in 2017. North Dakota lost about 2,000 farms from 2008 to 2017.

Debt service and capital payments to lenders was the top expense for South Dakota farmers in 2017 at \$1.2 billion, ahead of seed purchases (\$916 million), fertilizer (\$792 million), miscellaneous costs (\$789 million) and livestock purchases (\$750 million).

Reduced revenues and rising expenses are a bad combination for the balance sheet of individual farmers, according to Nate Franzen, president of the Agri-Business Division at First Dakota National Bank in Yankton.

For nearly 20 years, Franzen and his colleagues have tracked the profitability of the bank's agricultural borrowers. For a long time, the worst year was 2002 when 64 percent of farmers made a profit and 36 percent lost money, Franzen said. The peak in profits came amid soaring commodity prices in 2012 when 93 percent of farmers operated in the black.

Since then, the losses have mounted for many producers and Franzen's recent profitability reports have all been worse than the former low point in 2002.

"These last four years, we ranged from 52 percent making money to 63 percent making money," Franzen said. "Basically, invert that and over the last four years, we've had anywhere from 48 percent to 37 percent losing money."

The current downward trend is different, and perhaps more vexing, than the farm crisis in the 1980s that quickly led to foreclosures and bankruptcies due to a simultaneous crash in prices and spike in loan rates, Franzen said.

"This time it's a grind, it's happening slowly," he said. "They lost money in 2012 or 2013, and it wasn't a complete disaster, but in 2014, 2015 and 2016, they lost a little more each year."

Incomes fall, stresses rise

Both big-picture data sets and individual balance sheets show the depth of the economic crisis in agriculture.

The overall net farm income in South Dakota – the money left over for the state's 31,000 farmers after they pay all expenses — has been mostly on a steadily decline over the past five years.

According to data from the USDA, net farm income in South Dakota fell 61 percent during that five years, from \$3.7 billion in 2013 to just \$1.4 billion in 2017. Net income fell by 68 percent from the peak year of 2011, when it was \$4.5 billion.

As a result, the state saw its national ranking in net farm income fall from ninth in 2013 to 19th in 2017.

Meanwhile, the number of

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The slow slide has caused some producers to make drastic choices, Franzen said. Some have sold off land or equipment to raise money quickly. Others have divested of one form of farming or one part of their operation that isn't as profitable or isn't their specialty. And a few, especially those near the end of their careers, are making the hardest choice of all.

"It's a grind where they're whittling away at their equity to where some are saying, enough is enough, and they're getting out completely," Franzen said.

Outside of their families, the most critical personal relationship for many South Dakota farmers and ranchers is with their banker.

In most cases, producers must approach their lender every year to get operating loans of \$100,000 or even \$500,000 or more in order to finance their farm operations for the coming year. That money is owed with interest at year's end, and if a producer wants to make a profit, they must generate enough revenue to cover the loan and have money left over. The economic dance has been going on for generations and is one that both sides rely on to keep their businesses in the black.

Producers are asked to present a detailed business plan for the coming year to justify the size of their loan or line of credit.

Franzen said he and other bankers are sympathetic to the economic downturn but must also keep a close eye on borrowers and their habits to ensure loans are paid back. Franzen said his institution strives for consistency in how it treats customers and approach their loan requests in good times or bad. But he acknowledged that in hard times, bankers must use more scrutiny, eyeing expenses such as planned vacations or equipment purchases and sometimes suggesting that borrowers curtail spending or reduce family living expenses.

"It probably feels like it to some people that banks are tightening up and asking for a lot more details and in some ways, we are looking at things more thoroughly and more deeply," Franzen said. "It's no different than any business. If times are good, it's easier to give bonuses or raises, and as soon as times toughen up, you have to tighten up your belt."

Franzen said critical components of producer success in South Dakota are a willingness to adapt and try new technologies or methodologies and the ability to create and execute a detailed, long-term business strategy.

"From farm to farm, one thing I often say is, 'We've got haves and have-nots in agriculture,'" Franzen said. "The haves have been really proactive in monitoring their positions and adapted, and they're doing fine and are making money in this environment. The have-nots expanded at the wrong time, they bought too much, they elevated their cost structure and they're having a hard time making money."

CASH FLOW FALLING FOR GREAT PLAINS FARMERS

This chart shows the total agricultural cash receipts for seven Great Plains states. Farm revenues jumped in the mid-2010s when prices and demand were high, but have fallen the past five years in all states. South Dakota sales dropped 11.8 percent from 2013 to 2017.

Farm cash receipts (in billions)

State	2008	2013	2017
Iowa	\$23.7	\$30.6	\$26.6
Minnesota	\$15.7	\$21.7	\$17.1
Montana	\$2.8	\$4.1	\$3.5
Nebraska	\$16.5	\$23.1	\$21.3
N. Dakota	\$6.9	\$8.8	\$7.8
S. Dakota	\$7.7	\$10.1	\$8.9
Wyoming	\$1.0	\$1.7	\$1.4

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Planning for a tough future

Josh Geigle sees himself in the "have" category in Franzen's equation.

Geigle and his father raise cattle and grow winter wheat, safflower, corn and millet on about 3,900 acres of land known as the Bell Bar Ranch.

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The farm lies in a small, wind-protected valley along Pleasant Ridge about 15 miles north of Wall in far eastern Pennington County.

Geigle and other farmers and ranchers across South Dakota knew they were in a boom period in the early 2010s and that the high prices for crops and cattle likely would not last, and they were right.

Geigle, who has about 150 to 160 breeding cows at any one time, has seen prices for new calves fall from a high of \$1,600 a head around 2013 to roughly \$1,000 or less per head now.

The financial challenges arise not only due to a loss in income, but because expenses to keep the farm going have increased, further cutting into net revenues.

"The biggest thing is that our expenses never go down," said Geigle, 39, a married father of three who sometimes gets help on the farm from his 5-year-old son Sully. "Your feed costs, fuel costs, fertilizer costs never go down, and they certainly have not followed the downward movement of the market."

Geigle and others try to cut back on expenses by forgoing a family vacation, scaling back on birthdays and holidays and putting off needed repairs to homes, barns or equipment. Yet there are some costs that cannot be cut, Geigle said.

"You can skip that family vacation but you can't skip buying fertilizer for your crop or you'll have low yield and it will cost you even more money," he said.

Geigle, who has a degree in agriculture systems from South Dakota State University, said there's a nagging stress that follows farmers throughout the entire year. Most producers only receive one or two paychecks a year after harvests or cattle sales, and with constant variability in commodity prices, it is difficult to plan for expenses or know when to spend money to aid their farms or families.

"There's highs and lows. There's days you feel like you have the world by the tail and you can be really generous and maybe improve some equipment here or your barn here or your house there, and then there's days where you're going, 'Man, I don't know if we're going to have enough to make it through the end of the year...we maybe shouldn't have made those improvements to the house,'" Geigle said. "It's kind

of a like a roller coaster or arguing with yourself all the time."

The most worrisome issues arise when – as with the current agricultural economy – prices fall or weather or other crises arise over a period of several years and producers cannot sustain the extended losses, Geigle said.

"If you come up \$10,000 short three or four years in a row, it's not that big of a deal," he said. "But if you're \$50,000 or \$60,000 short a few years in a row, you've got big troubles and the bankers will start to look hard at that."

The recent flooding that has left parts of eastern South Dakota and much of Nebraska awash in snow-melt and rainwater is a serious concern that could cause a short-term or long-term spike in financial losses or even bankruptcies.

"Some people are a crop failure away from not being able to cover



Josh Geigle, a South Dakota farmer and rancher from the Creighton area, north of Wall, S.D., tells of the "roller coaster" ride that many agricultural producers go on as they try to make ends meet. Photo by Bart Pfankuch

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loans," Geigle said.

Knowing that, Geigle said he dedicated himself this year to developing a 5-year plan for managing his herd in a new way in hopes of enhancing revenues and limited expenses. He said his banker was impressed and he had no trouble getting his annual six-figure line of credit.

Sleepless nights, long days

Runia, of Estelline, has built up significant equity by farming the same land for 38 years. He runs breeding cattle, grows corn and soybeans and operates a feedlot with his son-in-law.

Still, even seasoned producers like Runia are suffering from the economic downturn.

"It's been a huge change in the last five years," Runia said. "You can just look at your books and see, where is my growth income, how far down has it been, and it's just been down, down, down."

On a recent day, Runia awoke at 3:30 a.m. and couldn't get back to sleep.



Josh Geigle, who farms and ranches near Wall, discusses the personal decisions producers make in dealing with a poor agricultural economy. Photo by Bart Pfankuch

"It was stress," he said. "I was thinking about stuff, tossing and turning for an hour, and I could not get back to sleep."

Runia told his wife he was getting up and got into a loader and did some farm work until daybreak. After that, he did the rest of his daily chores and slept a little better the next night.

"It was one of those things where I had to physically do something to get away from that stress, from thinking about that stress," he said. "That's the day-to-day type of thing I'm dealing with, this whole worry and stress about things."

Overall, Runia is in a strong financial position, but he has seen his long-term equity erode some during the extended downturn.

"I constantly tell myself, 'If I just pray more and turn it over to the Lord, it will help,'" Runia said. "It doesn't hurt, don't get me wrong. But it's still a reality you've got to

deal with; it's real financial stress."

VanderWal, of the farm bureau, said such worry is not new to farmers, but has gotten worse for some producers in the past few years, especially as the average age of farmers continues to rise.

He said agriculture was booming while the overall American economy tanked during the Great Recession from 2008 to 2012. But when things bounced back in most sectors of the American economy, the nation's agricultural industry did not follow suit.

VanderWal has made it a mission to protect the future of farming. He recently flew to Wisconsin to attend a program that encourages young people to enter the industry. He has also traveled to Washington to push for emergency payments to help farmers endure the trade war. A top goal remains the expansion of future uses of South Dakota agricultural products and developing of new export markets in Asia, South

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ABOUT BART PFANKUCH

Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is an investigative reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal. Bart has spent almost 30 years as a reporter and editor.

America and elsewhere.

"You can't idle your way to prosperity, so we continue to try to get better all the time," VanderWal said.

In the meantime, ValderWal and other producers will keep their chins up and hold onto the belief that hard work, ingenuity and some luck will reverse the current negative economic trendlines.

"Farmers and ranchers by our very nature are very optimistic," he said. "Hopefully, we're getting toward the bottom and we'll take off again."



**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!!!

Six facts to know about SD's robust rural broadband

It's undeniable areas of South Dakota need improved broadband access, but recent news reports about rural coverage don't offer the full picture of all that's happening to connect our citizens.

The South Dakota Telecommunications Association is made up of 18 local companies: 12 cooperatives, three municipals, two family-owned and one tribal-owned companies. These local businesses and SDN Communications collectively cover 76 percent of South Dakota's geography and generate impressive broadband results.

1. One-third of the SDTA/SDN companies' networks are 100 percent fiber today, half have 80 percent or greater fiber connectivity, and by 2021, 93 percent of them will have full fiber connectivity;
2. 76 percent of the customers have broadband today (25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload);
3. 94 percent of schools in these territories already have fiber connectivity;
4. By 2021, the locally-owned companies will have made \$700 million in capital investments toward achieving full fiber connectivity to homes, farms, and businesses;
5. Over the next three years, an additional 7,800 miles of fiber will be added to their current broadband networks to achieve that fiber connectivity;
6. 53,000 total fiber miles, enough to circle the earth twice, will be within the network of these locally owned companies;

For complete details on our companies' successes see our Report on the Deployment and Impact of Rural Broadband. (<https://sdncommunications.com/media/files/Docs/SD-Broadband-Report-2018.pdf>)

So where is the digital divide in South Dakota? A look at the Federal Communications Commission public data offers a clear conclusion:

The digital divide is very stark between urban and rural South Dakota. Largely, the rural areas without internet connectivity exist in markets owned by out-of-state companies.

The digital divide is the result of simple economics: Delivering fiber connectivity in a city can yield hundreds of customers on a single fiber mile. It's profitable. Conversely, some rural markets need to deploy fiber for six miles to reach a single, remote farm. Costs to serve that customer might never be fully recovered.

The next step in bringing broadband access to all of South Dakota will be determining which rural markets outside the SDTA/SDN territories need broadband service. Our local companies are in discussions with Gov. Kristi Noem's administration on how to best leverage the state's recent \$5 million investment with private sector investments.

Some SDTA/SDN companies have already edged out of their long-established service areas, bringing other rural residents fiber-based broadband, and they have also been testing new technologies in neighboring markets where out-of-state providers have not provided broadband services.

Our companies congratulate Gov. Noem on her goal and financial commitment. We stand with her and look forward to finding bold, creative ways to partner and conquer South Dakota's digital divide.

Rod Bowar
Kennebec Telephone Co. & SDTA President

Gov. Noem proclaims Vietnam Veterans Day

PIERRE, S.D. – At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Governor Kristi Noem has proclaimed Friday, March 29, 2019, as “Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day,” calling on all South Dakotans to recognize the courage, service and sacrifice of the men and women who served during the Vietnam War.

Some served as ground troops in a combat capacity in country, some were a mile off shore in a Navy ship providing gunfire support, some were air support, while others provided the necessary support roles both in Vietnam, other nearby posts and some back in the States that are so vital during a foreign engagement. Whatever the specific method of service, all were affected in some way by that experience.

“More than 27,000 South Dakotans served valiantly under difficult circumstances during the Vietnam War and 210 made the ultimate sacrifice,” said Governor Kristi Noem. “Through the establishment of an annual statewide Vietnam Veterans recognition day, South Dakotans can express their appreciation and honor the men and women who served during the Vietnam War”

“It is America’s veterans and their families who keenly understand the meaning of the word sacrifice,” said Greg Whitlock, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. “For some of them, sacrifice has meant living with serious injuries. For all of them, it meant missing holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and the small but irreplaceable memories that come with normal everyday life.”

“On this special day, we encourage our fellow Americans to join us in remembering and honoring those who served during the Vietnam War with the gratitude and respect that they deserve,” said Whitlock.

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Jump start your spiritual life

By Paul Irvin Kosel.

Heaven Bound Ministries, Pierpont / Buffalo Lake Lutheran Church, rural Eden/
March 23-24, 2019

When the battery of our vehicle is dead, we get out the jumper cables to give it some energy. Of course, you can't put the jumper cables of the source end to just any battery. You need one that is fully charged or from a vehicle that has a fully charged battery. Simply putting the jumper cables from a dead battery to your dead battery is not going to do any good.

We need to attach ourselves to the strength and will of God. For in (Psalms 27:1) The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

And the Power of our life comes from God. (2 Peter 1:2-3) Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

It's important that we connect with God. Our jumper cables are the Holy Spirit and Jesus who intervenes between us and the Father. After all, Jesus said, (John 14:6)

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Again, looking at the Greek, Jesus didn't use the words "a way," He said "the way." Jesus is like our charged up battery giving us the energy to live our life.

The primary reason that Christians profess Jesus Christ as the only way to heaven is that He forgives sin and offers eternal life, something that no other religious founder or leader has ever claimed. Every human is separated from God by sin. According to God's holy standards, each human must either pay the penalty for his sin (death) or find a willing, sin-free substitute to pay the penalty for him (Hebrews 9:14, 22). 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! 22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only possible substitute. Out of love, He demonstrated His willingness to pay the world's penalty by dying on the cross for each and every one of us. In His divinity, He saw the sins we would commit before we were even born. Yet, His love poured out to us before we even knew Him. That's why Jesus is the only way to God and heaven.

And how do we get charged up? Through prayer. One of the powerful stories from the Bible is Shadrach, Meshac and Abendego in the fiery furnace for not bowing down to King Nebuchadnezzar's idol. They miraculously survived, but nearly as surprising is what these men of faith taught us before they were thrown in, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. "But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." (Daniel 3:16-18)

This can super-charge your prayer life! I know my God is able to do the impossible, but even if he doesn't, I will serve him and follow Him only! This kind of praying offers supreme submission and faith in God, and he is greatly honored by this kind of praying.

Remember, its your battery that needs charging. Not God's.

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Here is an interesting thought. Did you know there are more than 3,000 promises from God in the Bible? So when we pray, we talk to God. But when we read the Bible, God talks to us.

Listen to one of Paul's prayers for the Church in Colossea, In Colossian 1:9-12: "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light."

I had to read through that a couple of times to realize that what Paul is praying for is that ONLY which God can give us. Praying for knowledge. Praying for wisdom. Praying for understanding. Praying to live a holy life. Praying for endurance and patience. These are things we are to pray for. And if you are a worry wart, then you need to take Philippians 4:6, write it out and put it on your refrigerator or at your desk. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

The jumper cables, when used correctly, will give your battery life to start your car. Prayers will give us that life so much so, that God will give us the key. That key is faith.

Jude 1:20: "But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit."

The book of Jude is a small book in the New Testament but has this important scripture, that tells us that we need to build ourselves up in our faith. If you have ever had your car battery go dead, you have to recharge it. Car batteries don't recharge themselves automatically, and when they go dead they are worthless.

If we don't charge our faith, it can also go dead and become worthless. The way we can keep our faith charged is to keep our relationship plugged into God at all times. Just like our car battery, if we don't keep our relationship with God plugged in, all the time, we can lose it and it will be worthless. There will be many times in your life where you walk in faith, due to a health issue, job, finances, relationship, or many other situations, where you will be depending upon your faith in God to provide for you. Just like Peter, when his faith was charged he could walk on water, but when it began to fail, he began to sink. Your faith will carry you through many adversities in life, as long as you keep connected to God, and depend upon Him. God also wants to stay connected to you, and tells you that He will provide all your needs, if you will just keep your faith and trust in Him. We see many examples throughout the Bible where people like Moses, David, Abraham, Jacob and others kept their faith, by staying in a close relationship with God. If you find yourself in situations where you are struggling, maybe it's time to recharge your battery of faith, by getting closer to God, and build yourself up by the power He will provide to keep you fully charged.

It is amazing how little people know about the Word of God, especially here in America where virtually everyone has access to the Bible. Back when Jay Leno was hosted the Tonight Show, he frequently did "man-on-the-street" interviews. One night he collared some young people to ask them questions about the Bible. "Can you name one of the Ten Commandments?" he asked two college-age women. One replied, "Freedom of speech?" Mr. Leno said to the other, "Complete this sentence: Let he who is without sin..." Her response was, "have a good time?" Mr. Leno then turned to a young man and asked, "Who, according to the Bible, was eaten by a whale?" The confident answer was, "Pinocchio." While such misunderstandings may seem to be humorous, they are in fact tragic. The Bible is far more than just a book. It is the Word of God and provides us with all things that pertain to life and godliness. The importance of God's Word is reiterated throughout its pages and no more powerfully than in Romans 10:17 where it states, "faith co-

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meth by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" As such we need to know it, stow, sow it, and show it.

Other books were given for our information; the Bible was given for our transformation.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The word of God, along with prayer and faith are all conduits of God's power to us. He has used them as jumper cables to give us the strength to get started. Our battery is ready to go - or is it????

What is it that sustains the battery? Can it survive alone? If you shut the car off and try to start it again, will there be energy to get it started? God has given us the tools to communicate with him, but how good are our tools? Let's face it, the battery, alone, will not last. It needs help, just like we need help. So what is it that our vehicle has to keep the battery sustained? It's the alternator. The alternator is a continuous source of energy feeding the battery so it is always charged up.

The best thing to do with the Bible is to know it in your mind, stow it in your heart, sow it in the world, and show it in your life. Your faith has to be active. Your love has to be active. Your prayers have to be active.

Stay Connected to God by Praying

It's time to talk directly to God. Instead of relying on anyone else to tell you what God wants for your life, start a direct conversation with Him. Tell Him what is on your mind. Tell Him your concerns. Ask for what you need and even what you want. Pray for the needs of others. And, believe that what you ask will be answered. Jesus exercised his faith in Matthew 21 about the fig tree. 18 Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. 19 Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered. 20 When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked. 21 Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. 22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

Stay Connected to God by Accepting Jesus' Love

John 14:21 says, "21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them." You don't have to be shy about your relationship with the Father. You can be confident of God's love for you and His desire to bless you.

Rufus Moseley, a great man of God who went to heaven some years ago, once said, "Life in Jesus is gloriously easy. It has one responsibility: the responsibility of remaining in union. If you stay in union with Him, He'll take care of everything else."

When you incorporate these steps into your life, staying connected to God is delightfully simple. You're able to keep that vital connection and trust Him to take care of everything else.

Now one thing you may have noticed on the jumper cables is that there is a red end and a black end. What would happen if I would reverse the leads when I tried to attach the batteries. There would be all kinds of sparks and commotion.

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Likewise, if you try to master the things of this world while also trying to serve God, it's not going to work very well. It's like reversing the end of the cable because you want to

Matthew 6:24 New International Version (NIV)

24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Refuse to allow the things of the world—material possessions, career position, sinful pursuits, ungodly relationships or social standing—to eat away at your time with God. Get His Word into your heart so deeply that no one else's opinion is important.

Allow the jumper cables to be our conduit to God, through prayer that our faith will increase and our love will get stronger.

Psalms 86 gives us a helpful lesson on prayer. In many ways, it is not a very original psalm. It's like a mosaic, piecing together verses and phrases from other psalms and Scriptures. We don't need originality in our prayers, but rather, reality with God. And Psalm 86 is the earnest, heartfelt cry of a man of God in a desperate situation laying hold of the God whom he knew well.

Psalm 86 New International Version (NIV)

A prayer of David.

- 1 Hear me, Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.
- 2 Guard my life, for I am faithful to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God;
- 3 have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long.
- 4 Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you.
- 5 You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you.
- 6 Hear my prayer, Lord; listen to my cry for mercy.
- 7 When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me.
- 8 Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours.
- 9 All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name.
- 10 For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.
- 11 Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.
- 12 I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.
- 13 For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths, from the realm of the dead.
- 14 Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God; ruthless people are trying to kill me—they have no regard for you.
- 15 But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
- 16 Turn to me and have mercy on me; show your strength in behalf of your servant; save me, because I serve you just as my mother did.
- 17 Give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame, for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

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Today in Weather History

March 24, 1996: North winds of 30 to 40 mph, gusting to 55 mph, combined with the falling snow and the previous day's snowfall to create blizzard conditions. Travel became extremely difficult. Several cars went into ditches, and flights out of Aberdeen were canceled. Schools and activities were either delayed or canceled. Some of the more significant two-day snowfall amounts include 6 inches at Sisseton and Aberdeen, 7 inches at Sand Lake NWR, 8 inches near Veblen, 9 inches at Britton, and 10 inches near Victor.

March 24, 2009: An area of low pressure moved out of the Rockies and into the Northern Plains producing snow and widespread blizzard conditions across central and north central South Dakota. Winds gusting to over 60 mph along with several inches of snow caused hazardous travel conditions. Interstate 90 was closed for a time across much of Jones and part of Lyman County. Power was also out in parts of Pierre and Mobridge for a short period. Some snowfall amounts included; 2 inches at Pierre; 5 inches in Hayes and Timber Lake; 6 inches in Murdo, McLaughlin, and 6 miles southeast of McIntosh; 7 inches 14 miles northeast of Isabel; 8 inches in Eagle Butte; and 12 inches 8 miles southwest of Keldron.

1912: Residents of Kansas City began to dig out from a storm that produced 25 inches of snow in 24 hours. The snowfall total was nearly twice that of any other storm of modern record in Kansas City before or since that time. A record 40 inches of snow fell during March that year, and the total for the winter season of 67 inches was also a record. By late February of that year, Kansas City had received just six inches of snow. Olathe, Kansas received 37 inches of snow in the snowstorm, establishing a single storm record for the state of Kansas. (23rd-24th)

1929: St. Louis, Missouri soared to 92 degrees; their all-time record high for March.

1975: "The Governor's Tornado" hop-scotched a 13-mile path across the western part of Atlanta, GA during the early morning hours, causing considerable damage to the Governor's mansion. Hundreds of expensive homes, businesses and apartment complexes were damaged. Total losses were estimated at \$56 million. Three people lost their lives, and the F3 tornado injured another 152.

1987 - A winter-like storm in the central U.S. produced blizzard conditions from South Dakota to western Kansas. Snowfall totals ranged up to 24 inches at Neligh NE, with 19 inches at Winner SD. Winds gusting to 60 mph created twelve foot snow drifts in Nebraska stranding thousands on the highways. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms developing along a cold front produced severe weather from Minnesota to north-eastern Texas. The thunderstorms spawned ten tornadoes, including one which injured five persons near Raymondville MO. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Low pressure off the coast of Virginia brought heavy rain to the Middle Atlantic Coast States, and heavy snow to the Northern Appalachians. Cape Hatteras NC was soaked with 5.20 inches of rain in 24 hours, and snowfall totals in Vermont ranged up to 12 inches. Winds gusted to 52 mph at New York City. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - The storm system which produced heavy snow in the Lower Missouri Valley the previous day, spread heavy snow across parts of the Upper Ohio Valley and the Middle Atlantic Coast Region. Snowfall totals of 2.2 inches at Philadelphia PA and 2.4 inches at Atlantic City NJ were records for the date. Up to six inches of snow blanketed southern Ohio. In the Middle Atlantic Coast Region, snow coated the blossoms of cherry trees which had bloomed in 80 degree weather the previous week. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Today



Areas Fog
then Cloudy

High: 37 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 24 °F

Monday



Mostly Cloudy

High: 37 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Cloudy


Low: 27 °F

Tuesday








Mostly Cloudy



High: 47 °F



Snow Melt Continues



Today				Today			
41°		40%		37°		10%	
28°		NE 7-11		24°		N 10-15	
Rain				Breezy			
Mon	Tue	Wed					
41°	60°	63°					
31°	40°	36°					
40%	10%	5%					
NE 7-11	E 6-10	S 10-15					
  Pierre, South Dakota			  Aberdeen, South Dakota				


National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD


Published on: 03/24/2019 at 6:38AM

High temperatures in the 30s and 40s will lead to a continued slow snow melt across the region. There is a small chance of seeing a wintry mix by Monday morning across parts of western and central South Dakota. Otherwise, dry weather and a warm up into the 50s and 60s still looks probable by mid-week.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 48 °F at 4:55 PM

Low Outside Temp: 22 °F at 6:31 AM

High Gust: 15 mph at 1:33 AM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 80° in 1939

Record Low: -10° in 1893

Average High: 44°F

Average Low: 23°F

Average Precip in Mar.: 0.79

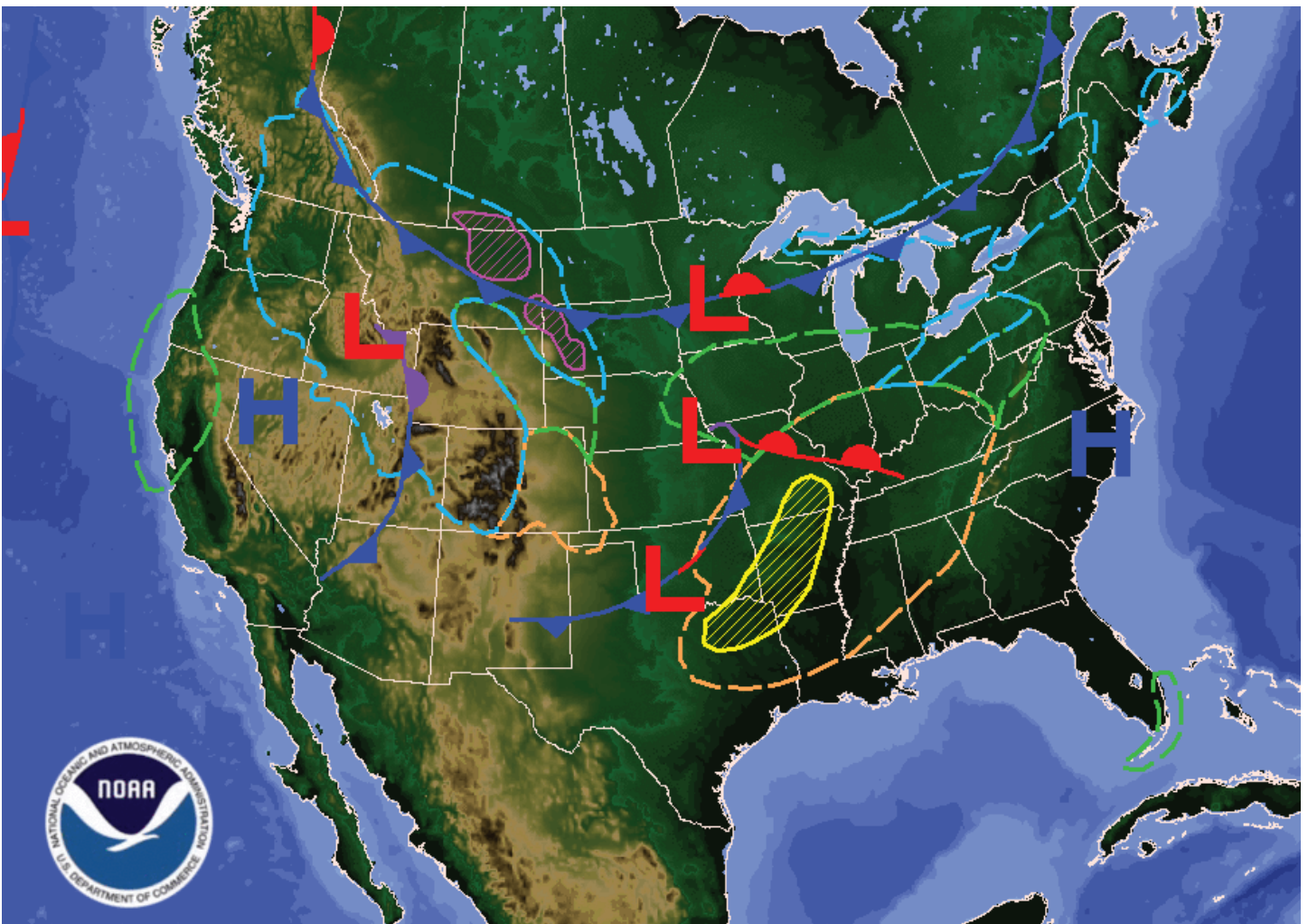
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.87

Average Precip to date: 1.81

Precip Year to Date: 3.06

Sunset Tonight: 7:51 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:28 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Sun, Mar 24, 2019, issued 4:57 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by Hammond 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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THERE IS A DIFFERENCE

While some may disagree, there is an obvious difference between sophistication and maturity. And over the years, the gap has grown.

A good example of this is seen in our childrens heroes. Heroes are no longer respected for what they do for others - but by how popular they are. Young girls see their heroes singing songs that mock purity, justice and decency, and dress seductively. Young boys wear the jerseys of athletes who have been accused of crimes that are erased when their hero stands up and says, I take full responsibility for my behavior and then go free. That does nothing to remove the scars from the victims heart. We see society making heroes of the wrong people.

Solomon looked out of his window and saw a group of young men making plans for the evening. One of them stood out from the others. It seemed as though he was having a difficult time with his options. Perhaps he was shifting back and forth from one foot to the other or glancing away from the gang as though he was not sure if he wanted to participate in their decision.

I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment. He was not ignorant nor did he have a low IQ. He was struggling to understand his choice and their consequences and lacked direction. He knew what was appealing but had no one to guide him. What a tragedy.

How many of us see young men and women who have needs like this young man - trying to make a decision that will affect their entire life? Sophistication implies worldly knowledge. Maturity implies wise choices. Gods Word provides His wisdom to make wise choices.

Prayer: Lord, so many of our youth need guidance. In Your mercy, convict those of us who understand your wisdom to step up and speak out to help the lost. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 7:7 I saw some naive young men, and one in particular who lacked common sense.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 03/17/2019 Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
- 04/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/27/2019 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/04/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/27/2019 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program (Memorial Day)
- 06/13/2019 Transit Fundraiser (Thursday Mid-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
- 06/22-23/2019 Groton Junior Legion Tournament
- 06/29/2019 Groton U10/U12 Round Robin Tournament
- 07/04/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 07/14/2019 Summer Fest/Car Show (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/18/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Tournament
- 07/21/2019 Granary Ice Cream Social & Family Music Fest
- 08/02/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Wine on Nine
- 08/09-11/2019 State Junior Legion Tournament in Groton
- 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
- 09/08/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 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 (Halloween)
- 11/09/2019 Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- Bingo: every Wednesday, Labor Day-Memorial Day, 6:30pm at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 4/4/2020 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 4/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 5/2/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

03-04-22-26-31

(three, four, twenty-two, twenty-six, thirty-one)

Estimated jackpot: \$193,000

Lotto America

30-40-42-45-46, Star Ball: 2, ASB: 2

(thirty, forty, forty-two, forty-five, forty-six; Star Ball: two; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$17.17 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$57 million

Powerball

24-25-52-60-66, Powerball: 5, Power Play: 3

(twenty-four, twenty-five, fifty-two, sixty, sixty-six; Powerball: five; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$625 million

Experts warn Midwest flood risk may persist for months

By JIM SALTER Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Even as floodwaters receded in hard-hit places in the Midwest, experts warned Saturday that with plenty of snow still left to melt in northern states, the relief may only be temporary.

Rainfall and some snowmelt spurred flooding in recent weeks that's blamed in three deaths so far, with two men in Nebraska missing for more than a week. Thousands were forced from their homes in Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri, as water broke through or poured over levees in the region. The damage is estimated at \$3 billion, and that figure is expected to rise.

As temperatures start to warm, snowmelt in the Dakotas and Minnesota will escalate, sending more water down the Missouri and Mississippi rivers and their tributaries.

Lt. Col. James Startzell, deputy commander of the Corps of Engineers' Omaha, Nebraska, district, said even warmer temperatures are possible



An angel statuary graces a yard near Hansen Lake Friday, March 22, 2019, in Bellevue, Neb. Residents were allowed into the area for the first time since floodwaters overtook several homes. Flooding in Nebraska has caused an estimated \$1.4 billion in damage. The state received Trump's federal disaster assistance approval on Thursday. (Kent Sievers/

Omaha World-Herald via AP)

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into next week. He urged people living near rivers to be watchful.

Bill Brinton, emergency management director for hard-hit Buchanan County, Missouri, which includes St. Joseph's 76,000 residents, said his counties and surrounding ones have already been ravaged by flooding.

"There's a sense from the National Weather Service that we should expect it to continue to happen into May," Brinton said. "With our levee breaches in Atchison and Holt and Buchanan counties, it's kind of scary really."

A precautionary evacuation involving hundreds of homes in the St. Joseph area was lifted as the Missouri River began a swift decline after unofficially rising to a new all-time high, inches above the 1993 record. St. Joseph was largely spared, but Brinton said 250 homes were flooded in the southern part of Buchanan County. It wasn't clear when residents would be able to get back.

When they do, officials say they need to be careful. Contaminants that escaped from flooded farm fields, industrial operations and sewage plants are part of the murky water now saturating homes.

In Fremont County, Iowa, homes remain underwater, so it will be some time before residents can return, said county Supervisor Randy Hickey.

"We don't want them in that water, anyway," Hickey said.

Experts also warn that sharp objects — broken glass, pieces of metal, pointy sticks and rocks — could lurk in muddy debris. Downed or broken power lines also may pose electrocution hazards.

On Saturday, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds said President Donald Trump granted her request for an expedited disaster declaration for 56 counties with flooding damage. The move makes assistance available to homeowners, renters, businesses, public entities and some nonprofit organizations.

Another risk is posed by wildlife. Brinton said two people in Buchanan County were bitten by snakes after returning home following flooding in 2011.

The Missouri River had yet to crest further downstream in Missouri, but the flooding impact in those areas was expected to be far less severe.

In South Dakota, Gov. Kristi Noem activated 13 members of the Army National Guard to help distribute water on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation after floodwaters washed out a county waterline. The guardsmen will provide drinkable water to people in the communities of Red Shirt, Pine Ridge, Porcupine, Evergreen and Wounded Knee. The Guard will set up from a central location in each community until the waterline is fixed.

Even the lower Mississippi River was impacted. The U.S. Coast Guard on Friday rescued two boaters from a disabled vessel near New Orleans. Coast Guard officials said the flooding means more debris in the river, and the currents can pull a boat into danger.

Associated Press reporter Dave Kolpack in Fargo, North Dakota, contributed to this report.

National Guard to distribute water on Pine Ridge Reservation

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem has activated 13 members of the South Dakota Army National Guard to help distribute water on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation after floodwaters washed out a county waterline.

Noem says the soldiers were scheduled to start Saturday on providing drinkable water to people in the communities of Red Shirt, Pine Ridge, Porcupine, Evergreen and Wounded Knee.

The soldiers are bringing five water tank vehicles with the capability to receive, store and distribute up to 2,000 gallons of potable water per system. The Guard will set up from a central location in each community.

The reservation is bracing for more problems from flooding. State Rep. Peri Pourier, of Pine Ridge, tells KELO-TV that water is blocking roads and some people have been evacuated from their homes

South Dakota State tops Quinnipiac 76-65

By MARK FRANK Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — South Dakota coach Aaron Johnston's team came up with some big rebounds down the stretch to hold off Quinnipiac.

Macy Miller scored 27 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lead the No. 6 seed Jackrabbits to a 76-65 win over 11th-seeded Quinnipiac in a first-round game of the NCAA Tournament on Saturday.

The victory was the 17th straight for the Jackrabbits (27-6), who will meet the winner of the Syracuse-Fordham game on Monday.

Myah Selland chipped in with 14 points and nine boards for South Dakota State and Madison Guebert added 11 points.

With Quinnipiac only down 64-61 with 2:59 to go, Miller missed a 3-pointer for South Dakota State, but Selland grabbed the offensive rebound. Tagyn Larson missed another 3, but Tylee Irwin grabbed that board. Fay then fouled Irwin, who sank two free throws to make it 66-61.

A traditional three-point play by Paige Warfel brought Quinnipiac to 69-64. Miller missed a jump shot on South Dakota State's ensuing possession, but Irwin grabbed yet one more offensive board. Fay then fouled Miller, who proceeded to make both free throws.

"Those rebounds were great to see," Johnston said. "Those are difference makers. They're momentum changers. They're mental changers, too. I'm not surprised the game came down to that."

Neither was Quinnipiac coach Tricia Fabbri.

"That was tough. They capitalized on what was one of our strengths all season long," Fabbri said. "That hurt because I think that one possession we gave up two or three offensive rebounds that resulted in fouls."

Jen Fay led Quinnipiac (26-7) with 25 points and nine rebounds. Paula Strautmene had 15 points. The loss snapped the Bobcats' 21-game winning streak.

South Dakota State dominated on the boards, outrebounding Quinnipiac 49-34.

A jumper by Fay brought Quinnipiac to within 64-61 with 2:59 to go. Miller

The Jackrabbits held a 41-30 halftime lead, but Fay rallied Quinnipiac in the third quarter, scoring 12 points to close the gap to 58-51 at the end of the period. Fay's hot hand continued in the fourth, her lay-in at 3:29 bringing the Bobcats to within 62-59.

Fay was a perfect 4 of 4 after the break.

"Obviously, I wasn't making too many shots in the first half," Fay said of her 3-for-7 performance in the first two quarters. "In the second half I was trying to get into a flow to bring the team back. I went out being aggressive."

Irwin's lay-in with 3:20 extended South Dakota State's lead to 64-59, but Fay connected on another jumper to bring Quinnipiac within 64-61 with 2:59 to go.

Two foul shots by Irwin and a 3 by Miller extended South Dakota State's lead to eight with 1:31 to go. Miller hit five more foul shots and Selland sank two from the line to secure the victory.

"Rebounding is super important," Selland said. "It's something we work on all the time and it really paid off at the end."

BIG PICTURE

Quinnipiac fought back without much help from their second-leading scorer. Aryn McClure scored just



South Dakota State's Macy Miller (12) attempts a basket against Quinnipiac's Aryn McClure (25) during a first round of women's college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament in Syracuse, N.Y., Saturday, March 23, 2019. (AP Photo/Heather Ainsworth)

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11 points on 5 of 19 shooting and fouled out. Nevertheless, it was a great season for the Bobcats, who were a perfect 18-0 in Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference play.

South Dakota State is now 23-1 when holding opponents to 70 points or less, and the Jackrabbits' toughness showed down the stretch with several key offensive rebounds that kept Quinnipiac at bay.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/WomensNCAATournament> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Woman who killed husband sentenced to 20 years in prison

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A western South Dakota woman convicted of killing her husband has been sentenced to 20 years in prison.

The Rapid City Journal reports that 31-year-old Tiffany Janis shot 52-year-old Brian Garrett in February 2018 in front of their two sons at their home in Kyle. Garrett was a police officer with the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Viken on Friday sentenced Janis to 10 years in prison for second-degree murder and 10 years for firing a gun while committing a violent crime. Viken said the actions by Janis had a "tremendous impact" on two large families in a small community.

Janis was originally charged with first-degree murder, which is punishable by life in prison or the death penalty. That charge was dropped as part of a plea deal.

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

Noem signs law that targets companies marketing 'fake meat'

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem has signed legislation that requires "fake meat" products to be correctly labeled, hoping to reduce the impact of lab-cultured products on the local beef market.

A product is misbranded if it intentionally labels products in a false, deceptive or misleading manner that misrepresents it as meat or a meat byproduct, the law states.

Noem signed the bill Monday and it will go into effect July 1, the American News reported. Her press secretary, Kristin Wileman, said the measure correctly defines real meat.

"In South Dakota, we are proud of our agricultural heritage. We pride ourselves in producing quality food products, so it's concerning when something is grown in petri dishes and labeled as meat. This legislation clearly outlines how we define meat in South Dakota and how we expect real meat to be treated around the country," Wileman said.

Data from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service shows South Dakota had over 4 million total head of cattle, including calves, as of January 1, 2019.

The South Dakota Stock Growers Association believes the non-meat alternatives need to be clearly defined as such. Meat substitutes should not be allowed to benefit from the generations of hard work that have gone in to creating the current day market for actual meat food products, according to the association's news release.

The bill will rely on the current inspection system to catch violators who mislabel artificial meat products as real meat.

Rep. Carl Perry said the bill simply makes it unlawful to purposely mislead consumers.

"If it's fake meat, you can't say it's meat," he said.

Proponents believe the measure will help protect the livestock industry from being impacted if problems arise with artificial meat products.

"What if something goes wrong with these lab-cultured products? Even though they leave the plant OK, if there's a contamination, and they are called meat, the whole industry will take the hit," said Rep. Oren Lesmeister, one of the bill's sponsors.

Critics argue such statutes can be problematic for free speech in marketing.

"The problem with a lot of these laws is they're written to make it illegal to use terms like veggie burger," said Jarrett Dieterle, director of commercial freedom at R Street Institute.

Thais vote in long-delayed poll pitting junta versus critics

By **STEPHEN WRIGHT** and **PREEYAPA T. KHUNSONG** Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Nearly five years after a coup, Thailand voted Sunday in a long-delayed election pitting a military-backed party against the populist political force the generals overthrew.

An opinion survey taken in the days before the election, and released after voting closed, indicated that the governing party ousted in the 2014 coup would win the most parliamentary seats but not enough to govern alone. A military-backed party would win the second-highest number of seats, according to the Suan Dusit survey.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the blunt-speaking army chief who led the coup, is hoping to extend his hold on power after engineering a new political system that aims to stifle the influence of big political parties not aligned with the military.

Voting stations closed at 5 p.m. and meaningful results were expected within several hours. The formation of a new government, likely to be unstable and short-lived, could take weeks of haggling.

About 51 million Thais were eligible to vote. Leaders of political parties opposed to military rule urged a high turnout as the only way to derail Prayuth's plans.

Prayuth was among the first to vote in Bangkok, the capital, arriving in a black Mercedes after polling booths opened at 8 a.m.

"I hope everyone helps each other by going to vote today as it's everyone's right," he told reporters after voting. He played golf later in the morning before heading to an army base to await results.

The election is the latest chapter in a nearly two-decade struggle between conservative forces including the military and the political machine of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a tycoon who upended tradition-bound Thailand's politics with a populist political revolution.

Thaksin was ousted in a 2006 military coup and now lives in exile abroad to avoid a prison term, but parties allied with him have won every election since 2001. His sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, who led the government that was ousted in 2014, also fled the country after what supporters said was a politically motivated corruption prosecution.

After the coup, political party gatherings were banned and pro-democracy activists and other dissenters were regularly arrested, interrogated and imprisoned. Just days before Sunday's election, the Thaksin-allied Pheu Thai party said the houses of party officials and its campaign canvassers in some provinces were searched by military personnel in an act of intimidation.

The party's leader, Sudarat Keyuraphan, said after voting in Bangkok's Ladprao district that she was confident of winning.



Pheu Thai party leader Sudarat Keyuraphan, left, receives a bouquet of flowers from a supporter at the party headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand, Sunday, March 24, 2019. Nearly five years after a coup, Thailand voted Sunday in a long-delayed election setting a military-backed party against the populist political force the generals overthrew. Sudarat said after voting in Bangkok's Ladprao district that she was confident of winning. (AP Photo/Wason Wanichakorn)

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"I don't say it'll be a landslide. I don't know. Depends on the people. But I think we can win this election," she said.

Thailand's powerful King Maha Vajiralongkorn issued a statement on the eve of the election that said the role of leaders is to stop "bad people" from gaining power and causing chaos. It was also broadcast on Thai television stations minutes before voting started.

Invoking a speech by his father, the previous Thai king who died in 2016 after reigning for seven decades, Vajiralongkorn said not all citizens can be transformed into good people so leaders must be given support in ruling to create a peaceful nation.

He urged government officials, soldiers and civil servants to look after national security.

It was the monarch's second notable intervention in politics recently. Last month, he demanded his sister Princess Ubolratana Mahidol withdraw as a prime ministerial candidate for a small Thaksin-allied party within 24 hours of her announcement.

First-time voter Napasapan Wongchotipan said she hopes for positive changes after the election.

"I have no idea what the results will be like," she said. "But I do wish that the party that we will get, the party that wins the votes, will come in and improve our country."

Thais were voting for a 500-seat parliament that along with a 250-member junta-appointed Senate will decide the country's next prime minister. That setup means a military-backed figure such as Prayuth could become leader even while lacking a majority in parliament.

"The biggest challenge of this election is whether it will mark the beginning of a transitional democracy in Thailand. I hope to see that, but it seems to be a very dimmed hope," said Siripan Nogsuan Sawasdee, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University.

"It might end up with the election being used as a façade for a new authoritarian ruler or we might end up with another round of conflicts and polarization," she said.

Political parties and their main leaders held their final major rallies on Friday evening in Bangkok.

Sudarat said Pheu Thai would fight to overcome constitutional hurdles erected against it by Prayuth's regime.

"In 2014, they took power with the barrel of a gun, by a coup," she said. "In 2019, they are trying to take away the people's power again through crooked regulations under the constitution."

When it seized power in 2014, the military said it was to end political unrest that had periodically turned violent and disrupted daily life and the economy. The claim has been one of the few selling points for the gruff Prayuth, who according to critics has overseen a period of growing inequality and economic hardship in Thailand.

"I want things to improve," Narate Wongthong said after voting. "We had too many conflicts in the past and I want to see lots of people come out and vote."

Associated Press journalists Hau Dinh, Grant Peck, Kawewit Kawjinda and Tassanee Vejpongsa contributed to this report.

Barr weighs how much of Trump-Russia report to release

By ERIC TUCKER, MICHAEL BALSAMO and CHAD DAY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William Barr has scoured special counsel Robert Mueller's confidential report on the Russia investigation with his advisers, deciding how much Congress and the American public will get to see about the two-year probe into President Donald Trump and Moscow's efforts to elect him.

Barr was on pace to release his first summary of Mueller's findings on Sunday, people familiar with the process said.

The attorney general's decision on what to finally disclose seems almost certain to set off a fight with congressional Democrats, who want access to all of Mueller's findings — and supporting evidence — on whether Trump's 2016 campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the election and whether the president

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later sought to obstruct the investigation.

Barr and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller and oversaw much of his work, analyzed the report on Saturday, laboring to condense it into a summary letter of main conclusions. Mueller delivered his full report to Barr on Friday.

The Russia investigation has shadowed Trump for nearly two years and has ensnared his family and close advisers. And no matter the findings in Mueller's report, the probe already has illuminated Russia's assault on the American political system, painted the Trump campaign as eager to exploit the release of hacked Democratic emails to hurt Democrat Hillary Clinton and exposed lies by Trump aides aimed at covering up their Russia-related contacts.

Barr has said he wants to release as much as he can under the law. That decision will require him to weigh the Justice Department's longstanding protocol of not releasing negative information about people who aren't indicted against the extraordinary public interest in a criminal investigation into the president and his campaign. Democrats are already citing the department's recent precedent of norm-breaking disclosures, including during the Clinton email investigation, to argue that they're entitled to Mueller's entire report and the underlying evidence he collected.

Even with the details still under wraps, Friday's end to the 22-month probe without additional indictments by Mueller was welcome news to some in Trump's orbit who had feared a final round of charges could target more Trump associates or members of the president's family.

The White House sought to keep its distance, saying Saturday it had not been briefed on the report. Trump, who has relentlessly criticized Mueller's investigation as a "witch hunt," went golfing and was uncharacteristically quiet on Twitter. Not so one of his guests, musician Kid Rock, who posted a picture with the president and the tweet, "Another great day on the links! Thank you to POTUS for having me and to EVERYONE at Trump International for being so wonderful. What a great man, so down to earth and so fun to be with!!"

In a possible foreshadowing of expected clashes between the Justice Department and Congress, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a letter to members that Barr's offer to provide a summary of principal conclusions was "insufficient." Pelosi later told Democrats on a conference call that she would reject any kind of classified briefing on the report and that the information must be provided to Congress in a way that would allow lawmakers to discuss it publicly.

The conclusion of Mueller's investigation does not remove legal peril for the president. He faces a separate Justice Department investigation in New York into hush money payments during the campaign to two women who say they had sex with him years before the election. He's also been implicated in a potential



Attorney General William Barr carries his briefcase as he arrives at his home in McLean, Va., on Saturday evening, March 23, 2019. Barr scoured special counsel Robert Mueller's confidential report on the Russia investigation with his advisers Saturday, deciding how much Congress and the American public will get to see about the two-year probe into President Donald Trump and Moscow's efforts to elect him. (AP Photo/Sait Serkan Gurbuz)

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campaign finance violation by his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, who says Trump asked him to arrange the transactions. Federal prosecutors, also in New York, have been investigating foreign contributions made to the president's inaugural committee.

As for Mueller, with no details released at this point, it was not known whether he concluded the campaign colluded with the Kremlin to tip the election in favor of the celebrity businessman. A Justice Department official did confirm that Mueller was not recommending any further indictments, meaning the investigation had ended without any public charges of a criminal conspiracy, or of obstruction of justice by the president.

In a letter to the Republican and Democratic leaders of the congressional Judiciary committees, Barr noted on Friday that the department had not denied any request from Mueller, something Barr would have been required to disclose to ensure there was no political inference. Trump was never interviewed in person by Mueller's team, but submitted answers to questions in writing.

In a Saturday conference call to strategize on next steps, Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, issued a warning for his fellow Democrats, some of whom have pinned high political hopes on Mueller's findings: "Once we get the principal conclusions of the report, I think it's entirely possible that that will be a good day for the president and his core supporters."

A handful of Trump associates and family members have been dogged by speculation of possible wrongdoing. They include Donald Trump Jr., who had a role in arranging a Trump Tower meeting at the height of the 2016 campaign with a Kremlin-linked lawyer, and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who was interviewed at least twice by Mueller's prosecutors.

All told, Mueller charged 34 people, including the president's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, his first national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and three Russian companies. Twenty-five Russians were indicted on charges related to election interference, accused either of hacking Democratic email accounts during the campaign or of orchestrating a social media campaign that spread disinformation on the internet.

Five Trump aides pleaded guilty and agreed to cooperate with Mueller and a sixth, longtime confidant Roger Stone, is awaiting trial on charges that he lied to Congress and engaged in witness tampering.

Peter Carr, spokesman for the special counsel, said Saturday that the case of former Trump campaign aide Rick Gates will be handed off to the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia. Gates was a key cooperator in Mueller's probe and court papers show he continues to help with several other federal investigations.

Justice Department legal opinions have held that sitting presidents may not be indicted. But many Democrats say Trump should not be immune from a public accounting of his behavior. Though the department typically does not disclose negative information about people who are not indicted, officials have at times broken from that protocol.

Former FBI Director James Comey famously held a July 2016 news conference in which he criticized Clinton as "extremely careless" in her use of a private email server but said the FBI would not recommend charges. The Justice Department also took the extraordinary step of making available to lawmakers the details of a secret surveillance warrant obtained on a Trump campaign aide in the early days of the Russia probe.

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York, Deb Riechmann in Palm Beach, Florida, and Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington contributed to this report.

Venezuelan power struggle creates diplomatic duel abroad

By **CHRISTINE ARMARIO** Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — When Lorena Delgado approached the Venezuelan consulate in Colombia's capital on a recent afternoon hoping to extend the life of her expiring passport, she found the metal gates to the languishing building shuttered.

Days earlier, Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro had severed ties with the neighboring Andean nation where over a million of his compatriots have fled in recent years, recalling all his diplomats and leaving the consulate and embassy buildings closed.

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The man challenging Maduro's claim to the presidency had appointed a new ambassador, but he was at a loss about how to help her. Despite Colombia recognizing Juan Guaido as Venezuela's legitimate president, the ambassador he sent does not have access to the consulate or the ability to issue passport extensions.

"You feel trapped," said Delgado, 32, who needs to travel abroad to apply for a work visa. "We're in limbo."

As Venezuela's power struggle stretches on, a parallel dispute for control of embassy buildings in the countries recognizing Guaido as Venezuela's true president has taken root. While new opposition-appointed diplomats are being recognized around the world, the United States is the only nation where they control a consulate building. In no country do Guaido's envoys have the ability to carry out basic tasks like issuing a passport, as Venezuela's civil registration agency remains under the control of Maduro.

The diplomatic duel has left the estimated 3.4 million Venezuelans who now live abroad stuck between two administrations. In most countries holdover consular employees continue to carry out tasks like registering births abroad while new, Guaido-appointed ambassadors remain outside embassy walls, symbols of their movement's lagging advance.

"At this moment, we don't have a solution from either side," said Paola Soto, 25, who is trying to reunite with her 5-year-old son in Chile.

The battle for diplomatic recognition is largely taking place behind closed doors, but it has occasionally spilled out into public.

In February, the Guaido-appointed ambassador to Costa Rica, Maria Faria, announced she had taken control of the embassy in San Jose, proudly posting on Twitter a photograph of herself standing in front of a Venezuelan flag inside the building. A shouting match erupted outside when the Maduro-appointed diplomats tried to get in.

Costa Rica's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, despite recognizing Faria as Venezuela's ambassador, issued a statement deploring her actions, saying she'd broken an established protocol allowing Maduro appointees 60 days to leave.

In March, a similarly confusing incident took place in Lima, Peru when workers were spotted at night removing chairs and even a stately bust of South American independence hero Simon Bolivar from the Venezuelan embassy. The furniture was put back inside after anti-government protesters decried them.

"You've robbed enough in Venezuela!" one angry woman shouted.

More recently, on Monday, Guaido's U.S. ambassador announced he was taking control of the New York consulate and two military-owned buildings in Washington where images of Maduro have now been replaced with portraits of Guaido.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza accused the United States of violating articles of the Vienna



In this March 19, 2019 photo, Venezuelan citizens stand outside their consulate after finding it closed in Bogota, Colombia. Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro has severed ties with the neighboring Andean nation where over a million of his compatriots have fled in recent years, recalling all his diplomats and leaving the consulate and embassy buildings closed. (AP Photo/Fernando Vergara)

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Convention on Diplomatic Relations that require host countries to protect foreign embassy buildings even when ties are severed.

He warned that if the U.S. doesn't fulfill its international obligations, the Venezuelan government could pursue legal action and retaliate with reciprocal action - a not so veiled threat that they might occupy the recently vacated U.S. Embassy in Caracas. The U.S. withdrew all embassy personnel from Caracas due to safety concerns after Maduro severed ties with the U.S. over its support for Guaido.

Gustavo Marcano, an exiled Venezuelan mayor who now works for the Guaido-backed Venezuelan embassy in the U.S., said the building acquisition is one of several attempts to ensure Venezuela's assets abroad are protected. The U.S. is also working to transfer other prized belongings, like Houston-based CITGO, a subsidiary of Venezuela's state oil company, to Guaido.

"This is the first step toward ending usurpation," he said from inside the Manhattan consulate, where photos of the late socialist leader Hugo Chavez still hung on the walls.

He added that while they cannot issue documents like passports, the Guaido-led consulate does plan to look for other remedies to help the increasingly large number of Venezuelans who possess no valid form of identification. One idea being floated is the creation of a consular-issued identification card that would be recognized by the host nation.

In other countries, the Guaido-named ambassadors are taking a gentler approach, choosing to slowly work toward eventually taking control of consulates in conjunction with the host nation's foreign relations ministry - or avoiding the topic altogether.

Humberto Calderon, the appointed ambassador to Colombia, said he's focused more on tending to Venezuelan migrants, viewing occupying the buildings as a potential agitator that could harm Colombians living in Venezuela.

"It's our decision," he said. "We haven't wanted to do it."

Calderon once served as Venezuela's energy minister and is working from a hotel. He said that when Maduro severed diplomatic relations with Colombia, nearly all the consular staff left, boarding a government-sent plane and flying home. He's had no access to anything they left behind in the buildings.

In other countries, some Maduro employees have stayed on, gingerly sidestepping the higher-voltage political fight.

In Peru, five Maduro-appointed envoys will remain in place to carry out consular functions, according to a high-ranking Venezuelan official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the situation. He said that after talks with Peru's foreign ministry, an agreement was reached allowing them to remain in the country and continue working in the embassy, even though the nation recognizes Guaido's ambassador.

"The objective is to maintain consular relations," he said. "Not diplomatic ones."

That's a scenario that's likely to play out in most countries: Even as more than 50 heads of state declare their allegiance to Guaido, necessity will inevitably compel them to maintain a range of ties to the Maduro government.

"Ultimately it's not in any country's real interest to maintain an embassy that's run by staff that have no ability to advance commercial or consular interests," said Geoff Ramsey, a Venezuela researcher at the Washington Office on Latin America.

He pointed to the case of the Netherlands, which despite backing Guaido, has pledged to keep the Maduro consular staff intact in the Dutch Caribbean island of Curacao, which stands about 40 miles from Venezuela's coast. The Netherlands has joint ventures with Venezuela's giant state-run oil company at stake.

"It's very much a dual diplomacy situation for many of these countries," Ramsey said.

Soto said she doesn't know how to explain the standoff to her son, who left by plane from Venezuela with his father over a year ago. Ever since she's been trying to meet up with him in Chile but has gotten stuck in Colombia.

"There's no solution," she said. "Not here, not in Venezuela, nowhere."

_ Associated Press writer Claudia Torrens contributed to this report.

_ Follow Christine Armario on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/cearmario>

Tugs tow Norway cruise ship after 463 rescued; 17 injured

By MARK LEWIS Associated Press

STAVANGER, Norway (AP) — More than 450 passengers were airlifted off a cruise ship that got stranded off Norway's western coast in bad weather before the rescue operation was suspended Sunday so the vessel could be towed to a nearby port, Norwegian authorities said.

Five helicopters flying in the pitch dark took the evacuated passengers from the tossing ship in a painstaking process that continued throughout the night. The rescues took place under difficult conditions that included wind gusts up to 38 knots (43 mph) and waves over 8 meters (26 feet).

Some 17 people were hospitalized with injuries, police said.

Passenger Alexis Sheppard told The Associated Press in a message sent from the Viking Sky that people with injuries or disabilities were winched off the cruise ship first. The atmosphere onboard grew calmer after the rescue operation's first dramatic hours, Sheppard said.

"It was frightening at first. And when the general alarm sounded it became VERY real," she wrote.

Photos posted on social media showed the ship listing from side to side, and furniture smashing violently into walls.

"We saw two people taken off by stretcher," another passenger, Dereck Brown, told Norwegian newspaper Romsdal Budstikke. "People were alarmed. Many were frightened but they were calm."

The Viking Sky carried 1,373 passengers and crew members when it had engine trouble in an unpredictable area of the Norwegian coast known for rough, frigid waters. The crew issued a mayday call Saturday afternoon.

Police said the crew, fearing the ship would run aground, managed to anchor in Hustadvika Bay so the evacuations could take place.

Coast guard official Emil Heggelund estimated to newspaper VG that the ship was 100 meters (328 feet) from striking rocks under the water and 900 meters (2,953 feet) from shore when it stopped.

The ship was visiting the Norwegian towns and cities of Narvik, Alta, Tromso, Bodo and Stavanger before its scheduled arrival Tuesday in the British port of Tilbury on the River Thames. The passengers mostly were a mix of American, British, Canadian, New Zealand and Australian citizens.

The airlifts continued at a steady pace Sunday morning, as the vessel was being prepared for towing by two tugboats to the nearby town of Molde, according to Per Fjerd at the Joint Rescue Coordination Center.

The helicopters stopped taking people off the ship when the ship was ready for the trip to shore, and 463 passengers had been evacuated by that time, the Joint Rescue center said. Three of the ship's four



This photo provided by Michal Stewart shows passengers on board the Viking Sky, waiting to be evacuated, off the coast of Norway on Saturday, March 23, 2019. Rescue workers off Norway's western coast rushed to evacuate 1,300 passengers and crew from the disabled cruise ship by helicopter on Saturday, winching them one-by-one to safety as heaving waves tossed the ship from side to side and high winds battered the operation. (Michal Stewart via AP)

engines were working as of Sunday morning, the center said.

The Viking Sky, a vessel with a gross tonnage of 47,800, was delivered in 2017 to operator Viking Ocean Cruises.

A look at some unanswered questions of the Mueller probe

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller has wrapped up his investigation, but whether the public will get answers to consequential questions about President Donald Trump and Russia remains to be seen.

Attorney General William Barr is combing through Mueller's report and will release at least some of his findings publicly.

A look at what is still unknown:

DID THE TRUMP CAMPAIGN COLLUDE WITH RUSSIA DURING THE 2016 ELECTION?

Mueller's team has assembled perhaps the most detailed account of Russia's election interference and the actions of Trump campaign officials and associates in 2016, interviewing scores of witnesses and amassing millions of documents and other pieces of evidence.

Even before Mueller finished his report, court filings show he concluded that Russia launched a large-scale, multi-part influence operation that sought to help Trump's campaign and hurt Hillary Clinton's. Filings have also shown the Trump campaign sought to politically benefit from Russia's efforts.

But the special counsel's probe ended Friday with no Americans being charged with crimes related to the Kremlin's attempts to sway the election. A Justice Department official also confirmed that Mueller is done bringing indictments.

What remains to be seen is what Mueller uncovered that may have fallen short of a crime and whether Barr will publicly address the collusion question head on.

DID TRUMP OBSTRUCT JUSTICE?

The special counsel has scrutinized several episodes, several of which involve the president and former FBI Director James Comey.

Prosecutors have interviewed White House officials about Trump's May 2017 firing of Comey and his explanation in a television interview that he was thinking of "this Russia thing" at the time.

According to Comey, Trump also encouraged him to drop an investigation into his former national security adviser Michael Flynn; harangued his hand-picked attorney general over his decision to step aside from the Russia investigation and tried to get him to reverse his recusal decision; and publicly attacked at least one cooperating witness, his former attorney Michael Cohen, as a "rat," raising questions about whether he was attempting to intimidate associates to prevent them from testifying against him.



The White House is seen through a security fence, before sunrise, in Washington, Saturday, March 23, 2019. Special counsel Robert Mueller closed his long and contentious Russia investigation with no new charges, ending the probe that has cast a dark shadow over Donald Trump's presidency. (AP Photo/Cliff Owen)

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Also of interest to Mueller: The president dictated a misleading statement for the news media about a Trump Tower meeting at which his oldest son expected to receive damaging information about Clinton. The statement said the meeting was about adoptions but omitted the real reason why Donald Trump Jr. took the meeting in the first place.

Mueller has adhered to Justice Department legal opinions saying a sitting president cannot be indicted. But Mueller could have laid out his findings on the question of obstruction in his report, given that it was one of the original parts of his appointment order.

Whether the public will ever know is up to Barr.

WHAT ABOUT THE JUNE 2016 TRUMP TOWER MEETING?

It appears Mueller found no prosecutable crimes related to it.

The Russia probe concluded Friday without anyone involved in the gathering being charged because of it. That includes Trump Jr. and Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner.

The June 9, 2016, meeting with a Russian attorney, Natalia Veselnitskaya, has been a source of endless public intrigue and a longstanding subject of the investigation.

Trump Jr., who invited Kushner and then-campaign chairman Paul Manafort to the meeting, was promised dirt on Clinton as part of an ongoing Russian government effort to help his father. Trump Jr. responded enthusiastically to the overture, but after the meeting was disclosed, asserted that he had received nothing of note from Veselnitskaya and dismissed it as a veritable waste of time.

Prosecutors took grand jury testimony from multiple participants at the meeting, including a British music promoter who helped arrange it. But they never directly referenced it in court filings. It's unclear whether Mueller will lay out what he learned about the meeting and how it factored into his larger probe.

Veselnitskaya faces unrelated charges in New York.

WHY HAVE SO MANY TRUMP ASSOCIATES LIED ABOUT RUSSIA?

George Papadopoulos. Michael Flynn. Paul Manafort. Roger Stone. Michael Cohen.

According to Mueller, all of these men lied in one way or another about something to do with Russia and Trump.

Papadopoulos lied about contacts he had with a Maltese professor who told him the Russians had dirt on Clinton in the form of emails. Flynn lied about his conversations during the presidential transition with Russia's ambassador. Manafort lied about his interactions during the campaign with an associate the FBI says has ties to Russian intelligence.

Stone is accused in an indictment of lying to Congress about his efforts to alert the Trump campaign to WikiLeaks' plans to release damaging information on Clinton during the election. (Stone has pleaded not guilty.)

Cohen told Congress a false story about a business deal Trump was pursuing in Russia during the election. He says he lied out of loyalty to Trump and to be consistent with the president's public denials about Russia.

For the rest, the motivation remains a mystery.

DID MUELLER ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN HIS REPORT?

He could have but it's not required.

Justice Department regulations say only that Mueller must explain his "prosecution and declination decisions" in his report to Barr. A Justice Department official said Friday that the special counsel's report was "comprehensive" and Barr's letter to Congress is expected to summarize its "principle conclusions."

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NCAA Latest: Auburn trounces Kansas to reach Sweet 16

By The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the second round of the NCAA Tournament (all times Eastern):

12:05 a.m.

Auburn is going back to the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2003.

Bryce Brown made eight of his first nine shots and finished with 25 points to lift the fifth-seeded Tigers to an 89-75 victory over Kansas.

This was a wire-to-wire runaway against the fourth-seeded Jayhawks, an injury riddled group that came into the NCAA Tournament without a conference title for the first time in 15 seasons.

Auburn alum Charles Barkley went nuts while watching in the TV studio, as the Tigers (28-9) rolled two days after barely hanging on for a one-point win over New Mexico State.

Jared Harper had 18 for the Tigers, who will play either North Carolina or Washington on Friday in the Midwest Region semifinals.

Led by Brown's 7-for-11 effort from 3, the Tigers made 13 from behind the arc on 30 attempts.

Dedric Lawson led the Jayhawks (26-10) with 25 points and 10 rebounds.

—Eddie Pells reporting from Salt Lake City

10:55 p.m.

Auburn is threatening to shoot Kansas out of the bracket.

The Tigers opened with a barrage of 3-pointers, then started going inside while building a 51-25 halftime lead in their second round game in the Midwest Region.

Auburn led by 17 in the opening eight minutes and made 20 of 36 shots. The Tigers are 9 of 17 from the 3-point arc, with Bryce Brown hitting 6 of 7 for 17 points.

Kansas has struggled against the Tigers' defensive pressure and struggled to shoot from the perimeter, going 1 for 10 from 3-point range.

Auburn is seeking its first Sweet 16 since 2003.

— John Marshall reporting from Salt Lake City

10:40 p.m.

It was the most lopsided NCAA Tournament loss for a defending champ in nearly three decades.

Carsen Edwards scored a career-high 42 points, and Purdue knocked defending champ Villanova out of the tournament with an 87-61 rout.

The last time a defending champ was beaten that badly was when Loyola-Marymount ran past Michigan 149-115 in 1990.

Matt Haarms added 18 points and nine rebounds for the Boilermakers (25-9), who advanced to their third straight Sweet 16.



Auburn guard J'Von McCormick (12) drives to the basket against Kansas guard Marcus Garrett (0) during the first half of a second-round game in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament Saturday, March 23, 2019, in Salt Lake City. (AP Photo/Jeff Swinger)

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Eric Paschall had 19 for Villanova (26-10), which saw its quest for a third national title in the last four seasons fall short. Fellow senior Phil Booth scored 15 points, putting him over 1,500 for his career.

Edwards has battled a sore back and had been in a recent shooting slump, making just 7 of 23 shots from the field in Purdue's first-round win over Old Dominion.

He found the bottom of the net early and often against Villanova, making 12 of his 21 shots, including nine of 16 from behind the arc.

Some other recent tournament blowouts suffered by defending champs:

1998: Utah beat Arizona 76-51.

2001: Arizona beat Michigan State 80-61.

2011: Arizona beat Duke 93-77.

2018: Texas A&M beat North Carolina 86-65.

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut

10:20 p.m.

The defending champions are getting blown out.

Purdue, which has led by as many as 35 points, is up 66-42 on Villanova with 7:43 remaining. Carsen Edwards has 30 points for the Boilermakers.

Villanova senior Phil Booth has just seven points, leaving him one shy of 1,500 for his career. It looks like the Wildcats will continue a five-year pattern that has seen them go out in the second round, win a national title, go out in the second round, win a national title and go out again in the second round.

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

10:05 p.m.

Michigan State is finally back in the Sweet 16.

The Spartans ran away from undermanned Big Ten foe Minnesota for a 70-50 victory in the second round of the East Region to set up a matchup with LSU next week in Washington.

Xavier Tillman led the way for Michigan State with 14 points in 22 minutes. The Spartans lost in either the second or first round in each of the last three years.

The Gophers had to play without star forward Jordan Murphy, who had back spasms and was forced out after only four minutes of action in the first half.

Murphy went into the game briefly in the closing stretch so the Minnesota fans could give the senior a proper send-off. He had tears in his eyes as he walked gingerly back to the bench and hugged his coaches and teammates.

9:40 p.m.

Carsen Edwards seems to have shot himself out of his slump.

The Purdue star, who was 7 for 23 from the field Thursday, hit five of his nine first-half shots Saturday. He has 17 points, and the Boilermakers lead defending national champion Villanova 43-24 at the start of the second half.

Center Matt Haarms did the bulk of the work down low. The Dutchman, who at 7-foot-3 towered over the shorter Wildcats, has 12 points.

Purdue's defense held Villanova to nine baskets on 24 shots (38 percent).

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

9:30 p.m.

Gonzaga is headed to the Sweet 16 for a fifth straight season.

Brandon Clarke had 36 points, eight rebounds and blocked five shots, lifting the top-seed Zags to an 83-71 win over Baylor in the West Region.

The Zags (32-3) put on an offensive and defensive show in the first half, building a 16-point lead.

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The Bears (20-14) caught Gonzaga off guard by switching defenses, reeling off 10 straight points start the second half and pull to 43-38.

Gonzaga righted itself and kept Baylor at arm's length, earning a spot in the Sweet 16 against Florida State on Thursday in Anaheim, California.

The Zags are headed to their eighth Sweet 16 in 20 seasons under coach Mark Few.

Mark Vital and Makai Mason led Baylor with 17 points each.

— John Marshall reporting from Salt Lake City.

9:05 p.m.

No. 2 seed Michigan State is off to a much stronger start in its all-Big Ten second-round game in the East Region against Minnesota.

After struggling to separate from No. 15 seed Bradley in the first round, the Spartans have a 33-19 lead on the Gophers at halftime in Des Moines, Iowa.

Minnesota fell behind by as much as 20 points, badly missing star forward Jordan Murphy. The senior played only four minutes in the first half after injuring his back at the end of a first-round win over Louisville. Murphy was walking around gingerly on the sideline, trying to get loose. The Gophers are already thinned in the frontcourt by a foot injury that sophomore Eric Curry suffered a little more than two weeks ago.

The Gophers are just 2 for 16 from 3-point range, after making 11 of 27 in the first round.

Kenny Goins has nine points for Michigan State, which has failed to reach the Sweet 16 for the last three years.

9 p.m.

Purdue's Carsen Edwards is on an early tear against the defending champs.

Edwards is 4 of 6 from the field — all from 3-point range, and the Boilermakers lead Villanova 27-15 just over halfway through the first half. Purdue has already made seven 3s.

Boilermakers center Matt Haarms scored their first two baskets with a dunk and a follow-up layup of his own miss against the much smaller front line of the Wildcats.

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

8:15 p.m.

Florida State was too much for Ja Morant and Murray State to handle.

Mfiondu Kabengele scored 22 points, Terance Mann added 18 and the Seminoles advanced to the Sweet 16 by overwhelming the Racers 90-62.

Morant, in what was almost certainly his final college game, scored 28 points, 18 of them in the first half. The rest of the Racers combined for 34 points.

The much bigger Seminoles shot 51 percent from the floor and dominated down low, outscoring the Racers 44-26 in the paint and winning the rebounding battle 45-33. Florida State's bench outscored Murray State's 47-6.

Florida State will face either top seed Gonzaga or Baylor in Anaheim on Thursday.

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

8:10 p.m.

Gonzaga is running away from Baylor in the West Region.

Led by Brandon Clarke, the top-seeded Zags have dominated at both ends to lead the Bears 39-23 at halftime.

One of the nation's most efficient offensive and defensive teams, the Zags made 15 of 27 shots in the first half and made life miserable for No. 9 Baylor on offense. Even Gonzaga's alley-oops are swishing through: Geno Crandall tried to hit Clarke, and it went straight into the basket for a 3-pointer.

Clarke has 16 points, including two monster dunks. He blocked three shots and altered several others.

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Baylor is 1 for 10 from the 3-point arc after hitting a school NCAA Tournament record 16 against Syracuse in its opener.

— John Marshall reporting from Salt Lake City.

8:05 p.m.

Purdue has put its defensive stopper back in the starting lineup.

Nojel Eastern is in the lineup that was handed out before Saturday night's game against defending champion Villanova. He missed most of the Boilermakers' first-round win over Old Dominion after twisting an ankle before the game.

Purdue is looking to make its third straight trip to the Sweet 16, which would be a first for the program since 1998-2000.

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

7:40 p.m.

Michigan is headed to the Sweet 16 for the third straight season.

The second-seeded Wolverines held 10th-seeded Florida to 21 points in the second half, beating the Gators 64-49 to advance to the regional semifinals.

Jordan Poole led Michigan with 19 points. The Wolverines will face either Texas Tech or Buffalo in the next round.

Florida shot 6 of 12 from 3-point range in the first half and 3 of 14 in the second.

7:05 p.m.

Ja Morant scored 18 points and made all five of his 3-point shots, but Florida State dominated everywhere else and leads 12th-seeded Murray State 50-34 at halftime.

Defense is usually the Seminoles' forte', but they were sharp offensively, starting 8 for 11 from 3 and shooting 51.3 percent overall in the half. While Morant carried the Racers, fourth-seeded Florida State got contributions from all over: Mfiondu Kabengele and RaiQuan Gray had 11 points each and Terrance Mann scored 10, including a couple of highlight-reel dunks.

— Ralph D. Russo reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

6:40 p.m.

Ja Morant made his first five 3-point shots, to go with three assists, two rebounds, a steal and a blocked shot, but Florida State is getting contributions from all over and leads 12th-seeded Murray State 37-26 with 7:12 left in the first half.

The Seminoles are 7 for 10 from 3-point range, including three from RaiQuan Gray.

Morant's first shot of the game was a 3-pointer from up top that he swished. He followed it up with a no-look pass to Shaq Buchanan for a layup.

Morant briefly came up limping at one point, but he remained in the game and seemed OK.

— Ralph D. Russo reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

6:30 p.m.

No. 10 seed Florida is hanging with second-seeded Michigan midway through an NCAA second-round game in the West Region.

The Wolverines are controlling the inside and lead 32-28 at halftime, but the Gators' 6-of-12 shooting from 3-point range has kept it close.

Charles Matthews, Jordan Poole and Zavier Simpson have seven points apiece for the Wolverines. Big Ten newcomer of the year Ignas Brazdeikis has gotten off to a slow start, going 1 for 6 and sitting out the last 3:50 of the half with two fouls.

Noah Locke leads the Gators with eight points.

— Eric Olson reporting from Des Moines, Iowa.

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6:15 p.m.

Phil Cofer was on the floor with his teammates for the playing of the national anthem before Florida State met Murray State in the West Region. The senior forward found out after Thursday's game that his father had died.

Cofer was not in uniform and was wearing a plastic boot on his sore right foot. He listened to the anthem with his head down and rubbed at his eyes. After the song was over, teammate Terrance Mann, standing next to Cofer, gave him a hug and a pat on the chest. The teams left the floor before introductions and some Murray State players came over to Cofer to give him a hug or pat on the back.

Cofer was on the bench wearing a warmup suit at the start of the game.

— Ralph D. Russo reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

5:35 p.m.

A couple of guys who played basketball together in grade school are on opposite sides in the second-round NCAA Tournament game between Florida and Michigan.

Gators freshman point guard Andrew Nembhard and Wolverines freshman forward Ignas Brazdeikis were teammates on a club team called the Panthers when they were in fifth and sixth grade in suburban Toronto. They also played together on the Canadian national team in the 2016 under-17 world championship.

Both are key cogs for their teams. Nembhard has started all 35 games and hit the winning last-second shot to beat LSU in the Southeastern Conference Tournament, a win that secured the Gators' at-large bid.

Brazdeikis is the Big Ten newcomer of the year award winner. He leads the Wolverines with 15 points per game.

— Eric Olson reporting from Des Moines, Iowa

5:25 p.m.

Florida State forward Phil Cofer did not join his team on the court for its stretching session before Saturday's game with Murray State.

Cofer found out Thursday that his father, former NFL linebacker Mike Cofer, had died at age 58 after a long illness. Phil Cofer sat out the Seminoles' first-round win over Vermont with a foot injury that has been bothering him since the preseason.

The Florida State team and staff are all wearing black pins with the initials "MC."

— Pat Eaton-Robb reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

5:15 p.m.

Second-seeded Kentucky clamped down on Fletcher Magee and beat Wofford 62-56 in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. It was Wofford's first loss in 22 games.

Reid Travis had 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Wildcats (29-6), who advanced to the Sweet 16.

Magee finished with eight points on 4-of-17 shooting. He missed all 12 of his shots from behind the arc. The Terriers hit 8 of 27 from 3-point range, including 3 of 15 in the second half.

Nathan Hoover led Wofford (30-5) with 19 points and made four 4s.

— Mark Long reporting from Jacksonville, Florida.

5 p.m.

Wofford's Fletcher Magee is struggling from long range against second-seeded Kentucky.

Magee, who set the Division I record for career 3-pointers in the first round, missed his first 10 attempts from behind the arc against the Wildcats. Tyler Herro has been primarily responsible for guarding Magee.

Magee is 4-for-15 from the field. He hit seven 3s in the team's first NCAA Tournament victory, against Seton Hall.

Nathan Hoover has 19 points thanks mostly to four 3s, and the Terriers have kept it close despite a notable size discrepancy.

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Kentucky leads 58-54 with under 2:00 to play.
— Mark Long reporting from Jacksonville, Florida.

4:45 p.m.

Central Florida's Johnny Dawkins was hesitant about coaching his son, Aubrey, when the younger Dawkins decided to transfer after two seasons at Michigan. But things could not have worked out much better for those two.

The ninth-seeded Knights will take on top overall seed Duke for a spot in the Sweet 16 on Sunday. Johnny Dawkins used to train Aubrey as a boy and teenager after his day job either as a Duke assistant from 1998 to 2008 or as Stanford head coach after that.

Dad was concerned the good father-son relationship might strain if Aubrey played for him, but friends and fellow coaches like Steve Alford said he shouldn't miss that experience.

"They were absolutely right," Johnny Dawkins said Saturday.

Aubrey Dawkins, a redshirt junior, is averaging 15.1 points a game. Aubrey Dawkins has also loved the time together. He likes that his father treats him like the rest of his teammates.

"We don't see it as father-son," UCF center Tacko Fall said. "We see all of us as his sons."

— Pete Iacobelli reporting from Columbia, South Carolina.

4:30 p.m.

A GoFundMe page has drawn more than \$30,000 in donations for the family of Florida State forward Phil Cofer, who found out after Thursday's game his father had died after a long illness.

Mike Cofer, a former NFL linebacker, died at age 58. His son was expected to remain with the team for Saturday's second-round West Region game against Murray State, but it was unclear if Phil Cofer would play. He missed the Seminoles' first game against Vermont with a foot injury.

The official FSU Hoops Twitter account tweeted out a link to the GoFundMe, and the Murray State Sports account retweeted it.

— Ralph D. Russo reporting from Hartford, Connecticut.

4 p.m.

Kentucky has pulled ahead at halftime of its Midwest Regional game against Wofford.

The second-seeded Wildcats finished the opening half on a 10-2 run, going to the locker room with a 28-26 lead.

Kentucky is doing a good job on Wofford star Fletcher Magee, who has only two points on 1-of-6 shooting. The NCAA Division I career leader in 3-pointers has missed all four of his attempts beyond the arc.

Reid Travis leads Kentucky's balanced attack with six points. Nathan Hoover is pacing seventh-seeded Wofford with 11.

— Paul Newberry reporting from Jacksonville, Florida.

3:25 p.m.

It may be a No. 9 seed going against top-seeded Virginia on Sunday, but don't call Oklahoma a Cinderella.

In the South bracket, where three double-digit seeds survived the first round and the winner of Sunday's Oklahoma-Virginia game will play the winner of No. 12 Oregon and No. 13 UC Irvine, Sooners guard Christian James says the slipper doesn't fit his team.

James says Oklahoma expected to be in the tournament's second round even after a five-game losing streak during Big 12 play.

The senior was also part of the Oklahoma team that went to the Final Four in 2016.

— Jeffrey Collins reporting from Columbia, South Carolina.

2:45 p.m.

A buzzer beater at the NCAA Tournament.

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Tremont Waters drove around three defenders and flipped in a shot with 1.6 seconds remaining to give LSU a 69-67 victory over Maryland in the second round of the East Region.

Maryland rallied from a 15-point deficit in the second half, setting up the thrilling finish. Skylar Mays hit a 3-pointer with 40 seconds left, giving LSU a 67-64 lead, but Jalen Smith answered from the corner with 26 seconds remaining to tie it.

The first round of this tournament was a bit light on exciting finishes. New Mexico State's Trevelin Queen shot an air ball from the wing, missing a chance to beat Auburn, and Iowa State's Nick Weiler-Babb missed a 3-pointer against Ohio State that would have tied the game.

Waters took advantage of his opportunity. He ran the clock down, got a pick near the foul line and drove down the right side of the lane to make the game winner.

Third-seeded LSU (28-6) is heading to the Sweet 16 for first time since reaching the Final Four in 2006. The Tigers will face the winner of the Michigan State-Minnesota game. Those teams are playing Saturday night. Maryland finishes 23-11.

— Paul Newberry reporting from Jacksonville, Florida.

1:15 p.m.

LSU is handling Maryland in the post and on the scoreboard.

Naz Reid has 8 points, all of them in the paint, and the Tigers lead the Terrapins 38-29 at halftime on Saturday.

No. 3 seed LSU has doubled up sixth-seeded Maryland in the paint, 20-10. The Tigers also played exceptional defense, holding Maryland to 28.6 percent from the field and forcing six turnovers.

Maryland trailed by as many 15 midway through the half, but got it under double digits thanks to two late 3-pointers by Aaron Wiggins. Wiggins hit one with 1:01 remaining and another with four ticks left.

It didn't help Maryland that forward Jalen Smith picked up two fouls and played less than 10 minutes.

— Mark Long reporting from Jacksonville, Florida.

12:10 p.m.

Time to see whether the upstarts of the NCAA Tournament can dance their way to the Sweet 16.

Seventh seeded Wofford of the Southern Conference plays No. 2 seed Kentucky on Saturday in a game that will test how the team outside the Power Five is set up for a deep run.

The Terriers have won 21 straight games and haven't lost since Dec. 19. They were ranked in the AP Top 25 for much of the season. Kentucky is favored by 5 but is playing without leading scorer and rebounder PJ Washington because of a foot sprain.

No. 12 seed Murray State also plays Florida State in the West, riding high behind Ja Morant and his virtuoso performance with 17 points, 16 assists and 11 rebounds in a rout of fifth-seeded Marquette in the first round.

11:45 a.m.

The Big Ten leads the tournament among conferences with seven teams still in and a 7-1 record.

It's even set up for a less than ideal second-round matchup between No. 2 seed Michigan State and 10th-seeded Minnesota.

Here's a quick look at the rest of the conference records going into Round 2 among those that have teams remaining, including the first four play-in games:

— Big Ten, 7-1, 7 teams left

— SEC, 5-2, 5 teams

— ACC, 5-2, 5 teams

— Big 12, 4-2, 4 teams

— Pac-12, 3-1, 2 teams

— American Athletic, 2-2, 2 teams

- Ohio Valley, 2-1, 1 team
- Big West, Southern, MAC, Atlantic Sun, 1-0, 1 team each
- West Coast, 1-1, 1 team
- Big East, 1-3, 1 team.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/MarchMadness> and http://www.twitter.com/AP_Top25

Helicopters rescue Norway cruise ship passengers amid storm

By JARI TANNER Associated Press

HELSINKI (AP) — Rescue workers off Norway's western coast rushed to evacuate 1,300 passengers and crew from a disabled cruise ship by helicopter on Saturday, winching them one-by-one to safety as heaving waves tossed the ship from side to side and high winds battered the operation.

The Viking Sky issued a mayday call as bad weather hit and engine problems caused it to start drifting toward the rocky shore, the Norwegian newspaper VG reported. Police in the western county of Moere og Romsdal said the crew, fearing the ship would run aground, managed to anchor in Hustadvika Bay, between the Norwegian cities of Alesund and Trondheim, so the evacuations could take place.

Rescue teams with helicopters and boats were sent to evacuate the cruise ship under extremely difficult circumstances, including gusts up to 38 knots (43 mph) and waves over 8 meters (26 feet). The area is known for its rough, frigid waters.

Norwegian public broadcaster NRK said the Viking Sky's evacuation was a slow and dangerous process, as passengers needed to be hoisted one-by-one from the cruise ship to the five available helicopters.

"I was afraid. I've never experienced anything so scary," Janet Jacob, among the first group of passengers evacuated to the nearby town of Molde, told NRK.

She said her helicopter ride to safety came amid strong winds "like a tornado," prompting her to pray "for the safety of all aboard."

The majority of the cruise ship passengers were reportedly British and American tourists. About 180 have been evacuated so far, according to rescue officials.

Per Fjeld of the Joint Rescue Center Southern Norway said there is no danger to the remaining passengers and the airlift can accommodate all of them. He said the rescue will speed up when there is better light and the weather improves.

Video and photos from people on the ship showed it heaving, with chairs and other furniture dangerously rolling from side to side. Passengers were suited up in orange life vests but the waves broke some ship windows and cold water flowed over the feet of some passengers.

American passenger John Curry told NRK that he was having lunch as the cruise ship started to shake. "It was just chaos. The helicopter ride from the ship to shore I would rather not think about. It wasn't nice," Curry told the broadcaster.

NRK said one 90-year-old-man and his 70-year-old spouse on the ship were severely injured but did not



This photo provided by Alexis Sheppard shows passengers on board the Viking Sky, waiting to be evacuated, off the coast of Norway on Saturday, March 23, 2019. Rescue workers off Norway's western coast rushed to evacuate 1,300 passengers and crew from a disabled cruise ship by helicopter on Saturday, winching them one-by-one to safety as heaving waves tossed the ship from side to side and high winds battered the operation. (Alexis Sheppard via AP)

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say how that happened.

Later, reports emerged that a cargo ship with nine crew members was in trouble nearby, and the local Norwegian rescue service diverted two of the five helicopters working on the cruise ship to that rescue.

Authorities told NRK that a strong storm with high waves was preventing rescue workers from using life boats or tug boats to take passengers ashore.

Fjeld said rescuers were prioritizing the nine crew members aboard the Hagland Captain cargo ship, but later said they had all been rescued and the helicopters had returned to help the Viking Sky.

He said that with two more of the Viking Sky's engines now in operation there is the possibility of sailing, though he would not say whether there is an intention of sailing to shore.

Norwegian authorities said late Saturday that the evacuation of the Viking Sky would proceed all through the night into Sunday.

The Viking Sky was on a 12-day trip that began March 14 in the western Norwegian city of Bergen, according to the cruisemapper.com website.

The ship was visiting the Norwegian towns and cities of Narvik, Alta, Tromso, Bodo and Stavanger before its scheduled arrival Tuesday in the British port of Tilbury on the River Thames.

The Viking Sky, a vessel with gross tonnage of 47,800, was delivered in 2017 to operator Viking Ocean Cruises.

Sheila Norman-Culp contributed from London.

US reacts to end of Mueller probe with relief, skepticism

By MATT SEDENSKY AP National Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — With the long-awaited special counsel's investigation finished but its contents still shrouded in mystery, Americans waited for details, yawned with boredom or stayed fixed to their long-cemented positions on President Donald Trump, the man at the probe's center.

For all the expected splash of Robert Mueller's report, it arrived with more of a thud, thanks to the secrecy surrounding it. Few saw reason to think it would sway many opinions in a divided republic.

Helen Jones, a 72-year-old retired English professor in Salt Lake City, Utah, who is Republican but despises Trump, knows whatever comes out, her relatives who strongly back the president won't budge — just as detractors like her won't be convinced he isn't a crook. She sees no simple end in sight.

"I think it's just the beginning," said Jones, a political junkie who called the moment a historic one like Watergate. "I hope it's a turning point in the Trump presidency."

Across ideology, many expressed relief Saturday that the investigation was finally over.

"Now maybe we can move on to better things," said Bubba Metts, a 61-year-old conservative who is a financial adviser in Lexington, South Carolina. "Twenty million dollars spent — for nothing."

Dajah Harris, 21, a college senior at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, is a Democrat and no fan of Trump. But she saw the investigation as a distraction from more important things like homelessness, college debt and welfare programs. The country should never have elected someone, she said, whose background raises such questions.

"I don't feel that where the country is right now that this is something we should even be discussing," she said.

Mueller worked in virtual silence as a stream of charges have flowed forth against 37 people and companies. From the start, with his appointment on May 17, 2017, some have framed his work as a battle of good and evil of biblical proportions.

And on the 675th day, Mueller finished his work, and he rested. But nothing immediately changed for those who had watched with bated breath.

For Mark Itzen, a 64-year-old social worker from Levittown, Pennsylvania, it was a frustrating reality.

"The most disturbing thing for me is that we don't know the details," the Democrat said. "I thought we have the right to know right off the bat after all this anticipation."

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Expectations remained high for some sort of explosive revelation, but what exactly it might be remained anyone's guess.

For liberals who welcomed the investigation with gleeful shouts of "It's Mueller Time!" and anxiously awaited justice that aligns with their view of Trump as Antichrist, it seemed the endless billows of smoke would surely produce evidence of fire. For conservatives who subscribed to the president's view of the probe as a witch hunt and dismissed it as the misguided tomfoolery of a bitter opposition whose search for retribution is as loopy as its policies, it seemed certain to bring exoneration to Trump and maybe even a roadmap for future victory by him and his party.

Jason Cox, a 51-year-old farmer in Campbellsville, Kentucky, who voted for Trump in 2016 and plans to again next year, saw it the way Trump framed it — as a witch hunt.

"It didn't turn out, it seems to me, the way Democrats wanted," he said.

"I think Pelosi and Schumer are going to just keep beating and badgering and looking for something."

Stanley Twardy, legal adviser to Republicans for the Rule of Law, which worked to protect the Mueller investigation from political interference, said the report won't bring a quick end to anything.

"It's not like the report will be issued and everybody says, 'OK, we're done now,'" he said. "This is all part of a process. The process will work its way out. This is why our country has stood the test of time."

Shaela and Cindy Buchanan were tackling chores Saturday morning at the Lost Sock Laundromat in Wichita, Kansas, when the topic of Mueller was raised.

"Which one is Mueller?" asked Cindy, a 51-year-old manager at a paint company.

She doesn't follow politics closely but liked Trump at first. The questions about Russia, though, caused the 51-year-old paint company manager to reconsider. Her 48-year-old wife Shaela, who considers herself a political independent, sees Trump as "bought and paid for" while regular people live paycheck to paycheck. She doubts Mueller's report ultimately does anything to change that.

"I don't feel it is over once it is released," Shaela Buchanan said. "People any more they have suffered to the point they don't have any power — it doesn't matter."

Peter Malak, a 42-year-old high school civics teacher from northeastern North Carolina, offered similar thoughts. He calls himself a swing voter who tends to lean right. While the media obsess over the Mueller report, he said, most Americans just want to pay their mortgages.

"The average person just doesn't care," he said, while stopping for a haircut. "Your life is going to go on either way, regardless of what the Mueller investigation comes out to be."



This undated photo shows Dajah Harris, in Norfolk, Va. Harris, 21, a college senior at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, is a Democrat and no fan of Trump. But she saw the investigation as a distraction from more important things like the border wall, homelessness, college debt and welfare programs. The country should never have elected someone, she said, whose background raises such questions. (AP Photo/Ben Finley)

Contributing to this report were Mike Catalini in Morrisville, Pennsylvania; Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia; Claire Galofaro in Louisville, Kentucky; Allen Breed in Wake Forest, North Carolina; Jennifer McDermott in Providence, Rhode Island; Adam Beam in Frankfort, Kentucky; Lindsay Whitehurst in Salt Lake City, Utah; Hannah Grabenstein in Little Rock, Arkansas; Jeffrey Collins in Columbia, South Carolina; Roxana Hegeman in Wichita, Kansas; Sarah Blake Morgan in Charlotte, North Carolina; and Elliott Spagat in Solana Beach, California.

Protests held in Pittsburgh after cop cleared in shooting

By MARK SCOLFORO Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The father of a slain black teenager pleaded for peace Saturday after the acquittal of a white police officer triggered an apparent retaliatory shooting at the defense attorney's office and touched off protests in the streets of Pittsburgh.

Police put officers on 12-hour shifts until further notice.

The verdict late Friday in the deadly shooting of 17-year-old Antwon Rose II angered his family and civic leaders and prompted hundreds of people to gather Saturday afternoon at an intersection called Freedom Corner in the Hill District neighborhood, the historic center of black cultural life in Pittsburgh. One man held a sign with the names of black men killed by police around the U.S.

"It's very painful to see what happened, to sit there and deal with it," Rose's father, Antwon Rose Sr., told the crowd. "I just don't want it to happen to our city no more."

Afterward, he told reporters: "I want peace, period, all the way around. ... Just because there was violence doesn't mean that we counter that with violence."

The mostly white crowd then marched through downtown Pittsburgh and other city neighborhoods, periodically blocking streets as they chanted, "Who did this? Police did this!" The protest soon moved onto the University of Pittsburgh campus. Police reported no immediate arrests or injuries.

Early Saturday, five to eight shots were fired into the building where the officer's attorney, Patrick Thomasse, works, police in nearby Monroeville said. No one was hurt. Police said they had been staking out the place as a precaution, and the gunfire erupted after they left to answer another call around midnight.

Former East Pittsburgh police Officer Michael Rosfeld had been charged with homicide for shooting Rose as the unarmed teenager ran away from a traffic stop in June. Rosfeld testified that he thought Rose or another suspect had a gun pointed at him and that he fired to protect himself and the community.

"I hope that man never sleeps at night," Rose's mother, Michelle Kenney, said of Rosfeld after the verdict, according to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "I hope he gets as much sleep as I do, which is none."

Rose's family is now pressing ahead with a federal civil rights lawsuit filed against Rosfeld and East Pittsburgh, a small municipality about 10 miles (16 kilometers) from downtown Pittsburgh, where the trial



Marchers move through the streets Saturday, March 23, 2019 in Pittsburgh, Pa. The group was calling for justice the day after former East Pittsburgh police officer Michael Rosfeld was acquitted in the homicide trial where he was charged with shooting and killing 17-year-old Antwon Rose II last summer near Pittsburgh. (AP Photo/Keith Srakocic)

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was held.

Attorney S. Lee Merritt, who represents Rose's mother in the litigation, said the verdict was based on Pennsylvania law regarding the use of force that he considers unconstitutional.

"The protest is an appropriate response to injustice," Merritt said, adding that he believes the state law is why jurors reached their verdict of acquittal.

He also called the shots at Rosfeld's attorney's office "an act of cowardice and barbarism that does nothing but perpetuate the stereotypes often used to justify police brutality."

Thomassey told reporters after the verdict that Rosfeld is "a good man, he is." The defense attorney said he hopes the city remains calm and "everybody takes a deep breath and gets on with their lives."

The leaders of two major Pittsburgh charities issued a statement expressing "shock and outrage" over the verdict.

"Pittsburgh now sadly joins a disturbing and ever-growing catalogue of cases across the United States where law enforcement or security officials have walked free after the killings of young black men under questionable circumstances," wrote Maxwell King, president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Foundation, and Grant Oliphant, president of the Heinz Endowments.

"We have asked the question, 'Would Antwon Rose be alive today if he had been white?' We, his family and African American community leaders believe that more than likely he would be."

Pittsburgh was in the spotlight less than five months ago, when a gunman ranting about Jews killed 11 people at a synagogue.

Rose was riding in an unlicensed taxi that had been involved in a drive-by shooting minutes earlier when Rosfeld pulled the car over and shot the teenager in the back, arm and side of the face. Neither Rose nor another teen in the taxi was holding a weapon when the officer opened fire, though two guns were later found in the vehicle.

Rosfeld had worked for the East Pittsburgh Police Department for only a few weeks and was sworn in just hours before the shooting.

The 12-person jury — including three black members — saw video of the fatal confrontation. The jury took less than four hours to reach a verdict.

Prosecutor Jonathan Fodi argued that the video showed there was no threat to the officer. But a defense expert testified Rosfeld was within his rights to use deadly force to stop suspects he thought had been involved in a shooting.

The prosecution did not call its own use-of-force expert, a decision the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania questioned. But Mike Manko, a spokesman for the district attorney's office, said prosecutors were confident they had what they needed to make their case.

Shortly before the traffic stop, another person in the taxi, Zaijuan Hester, rolled down a window and shot at two men on the street, hitting one in the abdomen. Hester, 18, pleaded guilty last week to aggravated assault and firearms violations. He said he, not Rose, did the shooting.

Prosecutors had charged Rosfeld with an open count of homicide, meaning the jury had the option of convicting him of murder or manslaughter.

Associated Press journalists Michael Rubinkam in northeastern Pennsylvania, Ramesh Santanam in Pittsburgh and Keith Srakocic in Pittsburgh contributed to this story.

This story has been corrected to show that shots were fired into the lawyer's building early Saturday, not early Friday.

Barr scours Trump-Russia report to see how much to open

By ERIC TUCKER, MICHAEL BALSAMO and CHAD DAY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William Barr scoured special counsel Robert Mueller's confidential report on the Russia investigation with his advisers Saturday, deciding how much Congress and the American public will get to see about the two-year probe into President Donald Trump and Moscow's efforts to elect him.

Barr was on pace to release his first summary of Mueller's findings on Sunday, people familiar with the process said.

The attorney general's decision on what to finally disclose seems almost certain to set off a fight with congressional Democrats, who want access to all of Mueller's findings — and supporting evidence — on whether Trump's 2016 campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the election and whether the president later sought to obstruct the investigation.

No announcement was expected Saturday as Barr and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller and oversaw much of his work, analyzed the report and labored to condense it into a summary letter of main conclusions. Mueller delivered his full report to Barr on Friday.

The Russia investigation has shadowed Trump for nearly two years and has ensnared his family and close advisers. And no matter the findings in Mueller's report, the probe already has illuminated Russia's assault on the American political system, painted the Trump campaign as eager to exploit the release of hacked Democratic emails to hurt Democrat Hillary Clinton and exposed lies by Trump aides aimed at covering up their Russia-related contacts.

Barr has said he wants to release as much as he can under the law. That decision will require him to weigh the Justice Department's longstanding protocol of not releasing negative information about people who aren't indicted against the extraordinary public interest in a criminal investigation into the president and his campaign. Democrats are already citing the department's recent precedent of norm-breaking disclosures, including during the Hillary Clinton email investigation, to argue that they're entitled to Mueller's entire report and the underlying evidence he collected.

Even with the details still under wraps, Friday's end to the 22-month probe without additional indictments by Mueller was welcome news to some in Trump's orbit who had feared a final round of charges could target more Trump associates or members of the president's family.

The White House sought to keep its distance, saying Saturday it had not been briefed on the report. Trump, who has relentlessly criticized Mueller's investigation as a "witch hunt," went golfing and was uncharacteristically quiet on Twitter. Not so one of his guests, musician Kid Rock, who posted a picture with the president and the tweet, "Another great day on the links! Thank you to POTUS for having me and to EVERYONE at Trump International for being so wonderful. What a great man, so down to earth and so fun to be with!!"

In a possible foreshadowing of expected clashes between the Justice Department and Congress, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a letter to members that Barr's offer to provide a summary of principal conclusions was "insufficient." Pelosi later told Democrats on a conference call that she would reject any kind of classified briefing on the report and that the information must be provided to Congress in a way that would allow lawmakers to discuss it publicly.

The conclusion of Mueller's investigation does not remove legal peril for the president. He faces a separate Justice Department investigation in New York into hush money payments during the campaign to two women who say they had sex with him years before the election. He's also been implicated in a potential campaign finance violation by his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, who says Trump asked him to arrange the transactions. Federal prosecutors, also in New York, have been investigating foreign contributions made to the president's inaugural committee.

As for Mueller, with no details released at this point, it was not known whether he concluded the campaign colluded with the Kremlin to tip the election in favor of the celebrity businessman. A Justice Department official did confirm that Mueller was not recommending any further indictments, meaning the investigation

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had ended without any public charges of a criminal conspiracy, or of obstruction of justice by the president.

In a letter to the Republican and Democratic leaders of the congressional Judiciary committees, Barr noted on Friday that the department had not denied any request from Mueller, something Barr would have been required to disclose to ensure there was no political inference. Trump was never interviewed in person by Mueller's team, but submitted answers to questions in writing.

In a Saturday conference call to strategize on next steps, Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, issued a warning for his fellow Democrats, some of whom have pinned high political hopes on Mueller's findings: "Once we get the principal conclusions of the report, I think it's entirely possible that that will be a good day for the president and his core supporters."

A handful of Trump associates and family members have been dogged by speculation of possible wrongdoing. They include Donald Trump Jr., who had a role in arranging a Trump Tower meeting at the height of the 2016 campaign with a Kremlin-linked lawyer, and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who was interviewed at least twice by Mueller's prosecutors.

All told, Mueller charged 34 people, including the president's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, his first national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and three Russian companies. Twenty-five Russians were indicted on charges related to election interference, accused either of hacking Democratic email accounts during the campaign or of orchestrating a social media campaign that spread disinformation on the internet.

Five Trump aides pleaded guilty and agreed to cooperate with Mueller and a sixth, longtime confidant Roger Stone, is awaiting trial on charges that he lied to Congress and engaged in witness tampering.

Peter Carr, spokesman for the special counsel, said Saturday that the case of former Trump campaign aide Rick Gates will be handed off to the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia. Gates was a key cooperator in Mueller's probe and court papers show he continues to help with several other federal investigations.

Justice Department legal opinions have held that sitting presidents may not be indicted. But many Democrats say Trump should not be immune from a public accounting of his behavior. Though the department typically does not disclose negative information about people who are not indicted, officials have at times broken from that protocol.

Former FBI Director James Comey famously held a July 2016 news conference in which he criticized Hillary Clinton as "extremely careless" in her use of a private email server but said the FBI would not recommend charges. The Justice Department also took the extraordinary step of making available to lawmakers the details of a secret surveillance warrant obtained on a Trump campaign aide in the early days of the Russia probe.

___ Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York, Deb Riechmann in Palm Beach, Florida, and Mary Clare Jalonick in Washington contributed to this report.



Attorney General William Barr leaves his home in McLean, Va., on Saturday morning, March 23, 2019. Special counsel Robert Mueller closed his long and contentious Russia investigation with no new charges, ending the probe that has cast a dark shadow over Donald Trump's presidency.

(AP Photo/Sait Serkan Gurbuz)

Democrats debate Mueller strategy as findings loom

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional Democrats plotted strategy Saturday as they awaited the conclusions of Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, with senior lawmakers demanding full transparency and preparing for next steps if the results were favorable to President Donald Trump.

House Democrats conferenced by phone to share what they knew about the probe and to discuss how to move forward. It was unclear when they would have more information from Attorney General William Barr, who received the report from Mueller on Friday. Barr was on pace to release his first summary on Sunday, people familiar with the process said.

In a call with 120 House Democrats, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she would reject any kind of classified briefing on the report and that the information must be provided to Congress in a way that would allow lawmakers to discuss it publicly. A person on the call described it on condition of anonymity because the session was private.

Pelosi told Democrats that the American people "deserve the truth," the person said. She has said that Barr's offer to provide Congress with a summary of conclusions was "insufficient."

Six committee chairmen also spoke on the call, reiterating the push for releasing the report and underlying documents.

The conclusion of Mueller's probe comes as House Democrats have launched several of their own into Trump and his personal and political dealings. And no matter what Mueller concludes, they say there is much more investigating to do.

"It's the end of the beginning but it's not the beginning of the end," Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, a Democratic member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said in a Saturday conference call, echoing his party's strategy moving forward.

Coons also issued a warning for his fellow Democrats, many of whom have pinned astronomical political hopes on Mueller's findings: "Once we get the principal conclusions of the report, I think it's entirely possible that that will be a good day for the president and his core supporters."

Democrats have said they have to see the full report from Mueller, including underlying evidence, before they can assess it. Those demands for information are setting up a potential tug of war between Congress and the Trump administration that federal judges might eventually have to referee.

Six Democratic committee chairmen wrote in a letter to Barr on Friday that if Mueller has any reason to believe that Trump "has engaged in criminal or other serious misconduct," then the Justice Department should not conceal it.

"The president is not above the law and the need for public faith in our democratic institutions and the rule of law must be the priority," the chairmen wrote.

The Democratic leaders asked various agencies — including the Justice Department, FBI, National Security Agency, State Department, Treasury Department, CIA, IRS and the White House counsel — to preserve the Mueller report, any underlying evidence and all investigatory materials compiled by the special counsel.

It's unclear what Mueller has found related to the president, or if any of it would be damning. In his investigation of whether Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia to sway the 2016 election, Mueller has already brought charges against 34 people, including six aides and advisers to the president, and three companies.

Lawmakers say they need that underlying evidence — including interviews, documents and material turned over to the grand jury — because the Justice Department has maintained that a president cannot be indicted and also that derogatory information cannot be released about people who have not been charged. So if the investigation did find evidence incriminating Trump, they may not be able to release it, under their own guidelines.

The Democrats say it could be tantamount to a cover-up if the department did not let Congress and the public know what they found.

Barr testified at his confirmation hearings that he wants to release as much information as he can about

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the inquiry. But the department's regulations require only that the attorney general report to Congress that the investigation has concluded and describe or explain any times when he or Rosenstein decided an action Mueller proposed "was so inappropriate or unwarranted" that it should not be pursued. Barr said Friday there were no such instances where Mueller was thwarted.

But anything less than the full report won't be enough for Democrats.

"If the AG plays any games, we will subpoena the report, ask Mr. Mueller to testify, and take it all to court if necessary," said Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, D-N.Y. "The people deserve to know."

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff told CNN on Friday that he's willing to subpoena Mueller and Barr, if needed, to push for disclosure.

Though Trump himself has said the report should be made public, it's not clear whether the administration would fight subpoenas for testimony or block the transmission of grand jury material.

If the administration decides to fight, lawmakers could ask federal courts to step in and enforce a subpoena. A court fight could, in theory, reach the Supreme Court. But few tussles between Congress and the White House get that far. They often are resolved through negotiation.

In both the Clinton and Obama administrations, even when talks failed and courts got involved in assessing claims of executive privilege, the White House decided not to take the fight to the high court and complied with lower court rulings against it.

The Democrats, led by Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, could also formally ask Mueller to send his committee evidence that could be used in possible impeachment proceedings against Trump, as suggested by Benjamin Wittes, a senior Brookings Institution fellow and editor-in-chief of the Lawfare blog.

That's the course one of Nadler's predecessors followed during Watergate, although an impeachment inquiry against President Richard Nixon had already started by that point. Grand jury material from special counsel Leon Jaworski, provided through the federal judge who presided over the Watergate trials, became the road map that the House committee used to vote for articles of impeachment. Nixon resigned before the full House acted on his impeachment.

Pelosi said recently that she's not for impeaching Trump, at least for now.



The U.S. Capitol is seen at sunrise, Saturday, March 23, 2019, in Washington. Special counsel Robert Mueller closed his long and contentious Russia investigation with no new charges, ending the probe that has cast a dark shadow over Donald Trump's presidency. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

Associated Press writer Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report.

French yellow vest protests in Paris avoid last week's riots

By SYLVIE CORBET and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Scattered yellow vest protesters clashed with French police Saturday after a peaceful march through Paris, but tougher security measures and protest bans in high-risk neighborhoods prevented the kind of rioting that devastated the capital a week ago.

The 4-month-old movement drew bigger crowds Saturday than in recent weeks, despite heavy security and even though last weekend's violence dented overall support for the cause. The protesters want more help for struggling French workers and retirees and say President Emmanuel Macron favors the elite.

Thousands of demonstrators marched peacefully through Paris - their 19th straight weekend of protests - ending up at the Sacre-Coeur Cathedral overlooking the city from the historic Montmartre neighborhood.

Protesters sprayed yellow flares and unfurled a neon banner from atop the cathedral's white dome. In a relaxed mood, demonstrators and tourists alike took selfies as the march wound down.

Later, however, tensions erupted as small clusters of masked protesters set garbage cans on fire and threw projectiles as they moved toward Republique Plaza in eastern Paris. Helmeted riot police fired volleys of tear gas in response.

A police officer on the plaza suffered a heart problem, slumping to the ground before being hospitalized in what Paris police described as a "very serious" condition. Associated Press journalists at the scene saw no violence or incidents nearby when he collapsed.

At least 2,000 people have been injured in protest violence since the yellow vest movement began in November, and 11 people have been killed in protest-related road accidents.

Elsewhere in France on Saturday, small groups of demonstrators and police clashed in the southern French cities of Nice and Montpellier. Nice was placed under high security measures as Chinese President Xi Jinping is expected to stay overnight on Sunday as part of his state visit to France.

Overall though, Saturday's protests were calmer than a week ago, when resurgent violence reminded France's government that they've failed to quell yellow vest anger. Luxury shops were looted and ransacked last weekend around the Champs-Elysees Avenue in Paris and some were set on fire by protesters.

This week, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner estimated that 40,500 people took part in protests around France, up from 32,300 a week ago. This week's protests were more spread out, with just 5,000 estimated in Paris compared to 10,000 last Saturday.

Some 233 people were arrested, including people trying to come to Paris to protest with baseball bats, slingshots and other potential weapons, Castaner said.



Teargas is used to disperse demonstrators during minor clashes with police in Paris, Saturday, March 23, 2019. The French government vowed to strengthen security as yellow vest protesters stage a 19th round of demonstrations, in an effort to avoid a repeat of last week's riots in Paris. (AP

Photo/Kamil Zihnioglu)

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French authorities banned protests from the Champs-Élysées Avenue in Paris and the central neighborhoods of several other cities including Bordeaux, Toulouse, Marseille and Nice in the south, and Rouen in western France.

The Champs-Élysées was almost empty Saturday except for a huge police presence. Fear of more violence certainly kept tourists away, and police shut down the Champs-Élysées subway stations as a precaution.

The new Paris police chief, Didier Lallement, who took charge this week following the destruction wrought by last week's protests, said specific police units were created to react faster to any violence.

About 6,000 police officers were deployed in the capital Saturday and two drones helped monitor the demonstrations. French authorities also deployed soldiers to protect sensitive sites, allowing police to focus on maintaining order.

That decision prompted criticism from opposition leaders and some protesters.

"Since when do soldiers face a population? We are here in France. You would say that we are here in (North) Korea or in China. I never saw something like this," said Christelle Camus, a protester from a southern suburb of Paris.

Polls suggest last week's violence dampened public support for the yellow vests - but that a majority of French people still agree with the protesters' anger over France's tax system and Macron's leadership.

Saturday's marchers held signs demanding more say for citizens in public policy.

"We come to protest in a calm manner. We have the right to express ourselves, to say that we want to live (decently)," said Celine Dutry, who came to Paris to protest from the northern city of Amiens - Macron's hometown. "We are not jealous of the rich."

The protests started in November to oppose fuel tax hikes but have expanded into a broader rejection of Macron's economic policies, which protesters say favor businesses and the wealthy over ordinary French workers. Macron countered by dropping the fuel tax hike and holding months of discussions with the public on France's stagnant wages, high taxes and high unemployment.

The yellow vest movement was named after the fluorescent garments that French motorists must carry in their vehicles for emergencies.

Milos Krivokapic and Chris den Hond in Paris contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show that an estimated 32,300 people took in last weekend's protests nationwide.

Ethiopian Airlines chief questions Max training requirements

By ELIAS MESERET Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP) — The warning and training requirements set for the now-grounded 737 Max 8 aircraft may not have been adequate, in light of the Ethiopian plane crash that killed 157 people, the chief of Ethiopian Airlines said Saturday.

After the Lion Air crash off Indonesia in October, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and Boeing "came up with contents that we incorporated in our working manuals and also briefed all our pilots. But today we believe that might not have been enough," Tewolde Gebremariam told The Associated Press in an interview in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

Ethiopian Airlines insists the carrier's pilots went through all the extra training required by Boeing and the FAA to fly the 737 Max 8 jet. The March 10 crash killed people from 35 countries.

FAA spokesman Lynn Lunsford declined to comment, citing an open investigation. Boeing on Saturday detailed planned flight-control software fixes for the plane and said it will pay to train airline pilots.

Gebremariam said earlier in the week that the training was meant to help crews shift from an older model of the 737 to the Max 8, which entered airline service in 2017. In a statement, he said pilots were also made aware of an emergency directive issued by the FAA after the Lion Air crash, which killed 189 people.

Ethiopian Airlines has said there is a "clear similarity" between the Lion Air and Ethiopian Airlines crashes,

citing preliminary information from the flight data recorder.

Although the causes of the crashes haven't been determined, investigators in the Lion Air disaster have focused on an automated system designed to use information from two sensors to help prevent a dangerous aerodynamic stall.

It is not known whether the same flight-control system played a role in the crash of the Ethiopian Airlines jet shortly after takeoff from Addis Ababa, but regulators say both planes had similar erratic flight paths, an important part of their decision to ground the roughly 370 Max planes around the world.

Both planes flew with erratic altitude changes that could indicate the pilots struggled to control the aircraft. Shortly after their takeoffs, both crews tried to return to the airports but crashed.

The New York Times reported on Wednesday that the pilots of the doomed Ethiopian plane never trained in a simulator for the Max. Gebremariam, the Ethiopian Airlines CEO, said Saturday that "it wouldn't have made any difference" as the 737 Max simulator isn't designed to imitate problems in the new jet's flight-control software.

He still didn't say whether the pilots had trained on the simulator.

Boeing's planned software update for the Max must "address the problem 100 percent before we return the aircraft to air," he said, noting that the airline hasn't made a decision on whether or not to cancel orders for Max jets.

Ethiopian Airlines is widely seen as Africa's best-managed airline.

The carrier had been using five of the Max planes and was awaiting delivery of 25 more.



Tewolde Gebremariam, Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines, speaks to The Associated Press at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Saturday, March 23, 2019. The chief of Ethiopian Airlines says the warning and training requirements set for the now-grounded 737 Max aircraft may not have been enough following the Ethiopian Airlines plane crash that killed 157 people. (AP

Photo/Mulugeta Ayene)

Anti-Brexit marchers flood into London, demand new vote

By GREGORY KATZ Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Anti-Brexit protesters flooded into central London by the hundreds of thousands on Saturday, demanding that Britain's Conservative-led government hold a new referendum on whether Britain should leave the European Union.

The "People's Vote March" snaked from Park Lane and other locations to converge on the U.K. Parliament, where the fate of Brexit will be decided in the coming weeks.

Marchers carried European Union flags and signs praising the longstanding ties between Britain and continental Europe. The protest drew people from across Britain who are determined to force Prime Minister Theresa May's government to alter its march toward Brexit.

May also is coming under rising pressure from her own Conservative Party to either step down or set a date for her resignation as her political support continues to wilt. The coming week is seen as crucial as political rivals jockey for position to succeed her.

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Conservative Party legislator George Freeman tweeted that a new leader is needed.

"I'm afraid it's all over for the PM. She's done her best. But across the country you can see the anger. Everyone feels betrayed. Government's gridlocked. Trust in democracy collapsing. This can't go on. We need a new PM who can reach out & build some sort of coalition for a Plan B," he tweeted.

Liberal Democrat leader Vince Cable, invited to help lead the march in favor of a second referendum, called the crowd gathered in central London impressive and unified.

"There is a huge turnout of people here from all walks of life, of all ages and from all over the country," he tweeted. "We are a Remain country now with 60 percent wanting to stop the Brexit mess."

Police did not provide a crowd estimate. Independent legislator Chuka Umunna and others supporting a second Brexit referendum estimated the crowd at 1 million.

More than 4 million people endorsed an electronic petition this week in favor of revoking Article 50, the act that formally triggered the Brexit process.

The march comes as May, who opposes a second referendum on Britain's EU membership, is easing away from plans to hold a third vote on her troubled Brexit withdrawal plan, which has been strongly rejected twice by Parliament.

In a letter to lawmakers on Friday night, May said she might not seek passage of her Brexit withdrawal plan in Parliament next week. The embattled leader said she would only bring her EU divorce plan back to Parliament if there seems to be enough backing for it to pass.

"If it appears that there is not sufficient support to bring the deal back next week, or the House rejects it again, we can ask for another extension before 12 April, but that will involve holding European Parliament elections," she said.

May's changing stance reflects the plan's dismal chances in the House of Commons after two prior defeats.

She also says she would need the approval of House Speaker John Bercow to bring the plan back for a third time. Bercow has said a third vote would violate parliamentary rules against repeatedly voting on the same thing unless May's Brexit divorce plan is altered.

Almost three years after Britons voted to walk away from the EU, the bloc's leaders this week seized control of the Brexit timetable from May to avert a chaotic departure on March 29 that would be disruptive for the world's biggest trading bloc and deeply damaging for Britain.

EU leaders at a summit in Brussels set two deadlines for Britain to leave the bloc of nearly half a billion people or to take an entirely new path in considering its EU future.

They agreed to extend the Brexit date until May 22, on the eve of the EU Parliament elections, if May can persuade the British Parliament to endorse her Brexit divorce deal.

Failing that, they gave May until April 12 to choose between leaving the bloc without a divorce deal or



Demonstrators carry posters and flags during a Peoples Vote anti-Brexit march in London, Saturday, March 23, 2019. The march, organized by the People's Vote campaign is calling for a final vote on any proposed Brexit deal. This week the EU has granted Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May a delay to the Brexit process. (AP Photo/Tim Ireland)

deciding on a radically new path, such as revoking Britain's decision to leave, holding a new referendum on Brexit or finding a cross-party consensus for a very different kind of Brexit.

Despite May's letter to lawmakers, it was not clear what path her minority government would take this week.

The anti-Brexit marchers on Saturday included 63-year-old Edmund Sides, who spent the last three weeks walking from Wales to London in order to take part.

Sides, a geologist, said he wanted to be able to speak to people along the way, encouraging families that have been split between Leave and Remain to mend their fences and talk.

"The whole country isn't doing enough of that," he said.

He is worried about the vicious tone that Brexit arguments have started to take and worries about national cohesion.

"People fear the atmosphere is very dangerous in this country," Sides said.

Danica Kirka and Jill Lawless in London contributed to this report.

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

Pope replaces Santiago bishop accused of sex abuse cover-up

By NICOLE WINFIELD and PATRICIA LUNA Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis on Saturday replaced Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati as archbishop of Santiago, Chile, after he was placed under criminal investigation in the country's spiraling church sex abuse and cover-up scandal.

Francis accepted Ezzati's resignation and named a temporary replacement to govern Chile's most important archdiocese: the Spanish-born Capuchin friar and current bishop of Copiapo, Chile, Monsignor Celestino Aos Braco.

In a statement asking for prayers for his new job, Aos acknowledged the difficulties ahead, noting the "light and darkness, success and shortcomings, wounds and sins" of the Santiago church. But Aos too faced accusations of cover-up after a former seminarian accused him of helping stall his case years ago.

The 77-year-old Ezzati had submitted his resignation to Francis two years ago when he reached the mandatory retirement age of 75. But Francis kept him on, and Ezzati became the flashpoint of abuse survivors' ire for mishandling several cases of abuse.

Just Friday, an appeals court in Chile allowed prosecutors to continue investigating Ezzati for an alleged cover-up, rejecting his motion to dismiss the case and remove himself from the probe, Chilean media reported.

Ezzati has denied covering up any cases but has acknowledged the pain of abuse victims and vowed to promote transparency.

At a press conference Saturday, he said he was leaving "with my head held high." He insisted that all complaints that were lodged with the archdiocesan office he created in 2011 "have been investigated or are being investigated."

Francis himself became embroiled in the Chilean scandal after initially discrediting victims during his 2018 trip to the country, sparking a crisis in confidence in the Chilean hierarchy and his own leadership.

After realizing his error and apologizing to the victims, Francis summoned all of Chile's 30-plus active bishops to the Vatican last May and strong-armed them into offering their resignations. With Ezzati's resignation Saturday, Francis has accepted eight of them.

Chilean abuse survivors have long accused Ezzati and his predecessor in Santiago, Cardinal Javier Errazuriz, of protecting predator priests and discrediting victims. In recent weeks, Ezzati has been embroiled in a new scandal after a man sued him for allegedly covering up his rape inside the cathedral.

The Chile abuse scandal first erupted in 2009, when victims publicly accused one of the country's most prominent preachers, the Rev. Fernando Karadima, of molesting them for years. Errazuriz initially shelved

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an investigation, only to have the Vatican eventually convict Karadima in a church tribunal.

After the scandal exploded again last year, Francis stiffened the penalty against Karadima and defrocked him.

Pollsters have cited the Karadima scandal as the tipping point in the Chilean church's progressive loss of credibility among ordinary Chileans.

Francis had sparked the recent crisis by strongly defending one of Karadima's proteges, Bishop Juan Barros, against accusations that he had witnessed Karadima's abuse and ignored it. But after realizing that something was amiss, Francis ordered a Vatican investigation that uncovered decades of abuse and cover-ups by the Chilean church leadership, Barros and Ezzati included.

One of Karadima's victims and Ezzati's harshest critic, Juan Carlos Cruz, welcomed Aos' appointment, tweeting that "anything is better than Ezzati and his band."

In a joint statement, he and Karadima's other whistleblowers said they hoped Aos "would bring about a culture centered on victims and vulnerable people and no longer one of culture and cover-up."

But a former seminarian, Mauricio Pulgar, said Aos didn't allow him to present proof or witnesses to back up his claims of abuse by a priest, the Rev. Jaime Da Fonseca, when he first presented them in 2012.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Pulgar said Aos - who as a priest had been tasked with investigating the case in Valparaiso - "covered up abusers and one of them was Jaime Da Fonseca and that allowed him to keep abusing for six more years."

Da Fonseca was finally defrocked last year. Aos left Valparaiso in 2014 to become bishop of Copiapo; the bishop running Valparaiso at the time was removed last year as part of Francis' cover-up house-cleaning.

The Chilean Church did not immediately respond to a request for comment Saturday on Aos' role in the Da Fonseca case.



Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati, the archbishop of Santiago, gestures with his hand as he speaks during a news conference, in Santiago, Chile, Saturday, March 23, 2019. Pope Francis on Saturday replaced Ezzati as archbishop of Santiago, after he was placed under criminal investigation in the country's spiraling church sex abuse and cover-up scandal.

(AP Photo/Esteban Felix)

This version corrects the spelling of the defrocked priest to Jaime Da Fonseca.

Luna reported from Santiago.

Patriots owner apologizes in Florida prostitution case

MIAMI (AP) — New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft is apologizing after being charged in a Florida massage parlor prostitution investigation.

"I am truly sorry," Kraft said in a statement Saturday. "I know I have hurt and disappointed my family, my close friends, my co-workers, our fans and many others who rightfully hold me to a higher standard."

The statement was first reported by ESPN.

Kraft said he has "extraordinary respect for women," adding that his morals were shaped by his late wife. Myra Kraft died in 2011.

"Throughout my life, I have always tried to do the right thing. The last thing I would ever want to do is disrespect another human being," he said.

"I expect to be judged not by my words, but by my actions. And through those actions, I hope to regain your confidence and respect," Kraft said.

Kraft pleaded not guilty last month to two counts of misdemeanor solicitation of prostitution.

This week, attorneys for 77-year-old Kraft and other men charged in multiple Florida counties asked a judge to block the release of video recordings that police say show them engaging in sexual acts. The Associated Press is part of a media coalition trying to get the evidence in the case released.

Prosecutors have offered to drop the charges if Kraft and the men enter a diversion program for first-time offenders. That would include an admission they would be found guilty if their case went to trial, a \$5,000 fine, 100 hours of community service and attendance in a class on the dangers of prostitution and its connection to human trafficking. They would also have to make a court appearance and be tested for sexually transmitted diseases.

Attorneys representing other defendants told the AP their clients won't accept the offer because it is much tougher than what is offered in other Palm Beach County solicitation cases.

Kraft has an arraignment court hearing scheduled Thursday, though he is not expected to appear in person.

Kraft is one of about 300 men charged between Palm Beach and Orlando as part of a crackdown on illicit massage parlors and human trafficking. Ten parlors have closed and employees have also been charged. Many of the women are originally from China and were forced to live in the spas and not allowed to leave without an escort, according to investigators.

According to police records, Kraft was chauffeured on the evening of Jan. 19 to a Jupiter massage parlor, where officers secretly recorded him engaging in a sex act and then handing over an undetermined amount of cash.

Investigators said Kraft returned 17 hours later. Kraft, who is worth \$6 billion, was again videotaped



FILE - In this Jan. 20, 2019, file photo, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft walks on the field before the AFC Championship NFL football game in Kansas City, Mo. Florida prosecutors have offered a plea deal to Kraft and other men charged with paying for illicit sex at a massage parlor. The Palm Beach State Attorney confirmed Tuesday, March 19, 2019, it has offered Kraft and 24 other men charged with soliciting prostitution the standard diversion program offered to first-time offenders. (AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall, File)

engaging in sex acts before paying with a \$100 bill and another bill, police said.

Hours later, he was in Kansas City for the AFC Championship game, where his Patriots defeated the Chiefs. His team then won the Super Bowl in Atlanta, the Patriots' sixth NFL championship under his ownership.

William Burck, one of Kraft's attorneys, told ESPN on Friday that police improperly obtained a search warrant to secretly install cameras inside the Jupiter massage parlor.

Planet savior or horror show? Green New Deal inflames debate

By **MATTHEW DALY** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — To Democratic supporters, the Green New Deal is a touchstone, a call to arms to combat climate change with the full measure of the nation's resources and technological might. "A mission to save all of creation," in the words of Massachusetts Sen. Edward Markey, one of the plan's lead authors.

To Republican opponents, the much-hyped plan is a dystopian nightmare, a roadmap to national bankruptcy in pursuit of zealous environmentalism. "A big green bomb" for the economy, says Sen. John Barrasso of Wyoming.

Lost in the clamor is the reality that, if passed, the Green New Deal would require the government to do absolutely nothing. It exists only as a nonbinding resolution because Democrats have yet to fill in the potentially treacherous details of how to pay for the Green New Deal, how to carry it out and what, exactly, it will do.

Announced to great fanfare in February, the Green New Deal calls for a "10-year national mobilization" on the scale of the original New Deal to shift the U.S. economy away from fossil

fuels such as oil and coal and replace them with renewable sources such as wind and solar power. It calls for meeting "100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable and zero-emission energy sources," including nuclear power.

The plan has broad support among Democratic activists, and all six of the 2020 presidential contenders serving in the Senate have signed on as co-sponsors, putting it at the forefront of the party's sprawling primary race.

Republicans have mocked the Green New Deal as a progressive pipedream that would drive the economy off a cliff and lead to a huge tax increase. They call it more evidence of the creep of "socialism" in the Democratic Party, along with "Medicare for All" and a sweeping elections reform package that would allow public financing of congressional campaigns.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, who has scheduled a vote on the resolution next week, has led the GOP's assault on the Green New Deal, jabbing at it repeatedly at news conferences



FILE - In this Jan. 19, 2019, file photo, U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, (D-New York) waves to the crowd after speaking at Women's Unity Rally in Lower Manhattan in New York. To Democratic supporters, the Green New Deal is a touchstone, a call to arms to combat climate change. To Republican opponents, it's zealous environmentalism, a roadmap to national bankruptcy. Lost in the clamor is the reality that, if passed, the much-hyped Green New Deal would require the government to do absolutely nothing.

(AP Photo/Kathy Willens, File)

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and in floor speeches.

"Just a good old-fashioned, state-planned economy. Garden-variety 20th-century socialism," McConnell said in a recent speech. "Our Democratic colleagues have taken all the debunked philosophies of the last hundred years, rolled them into one giant package, and thrown a little 'green' paint on them to make them look new."

Utah Rep. Rob Bishop went further, calling the proposal "tantamount to genocide" for rural America and warning it could outlaw hamburgers, among other things.

In truth, the text of the resolution makes no reference to banning cows, but Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York — the main Democratic co-sponsor with Markey — has said in interviews that the U.S. has "got to address factory farming" to combat climate change.

McConnell and other Republicans frequently cite a whopping \$93 trillion price tag for the resolution, a figure derived from a right-leaning think tank that even its author says is overly precise. President Donald Trump has rounded that up to \$100 trillion and warns it would "shut down American energy."

The attacks have succeeded in putting Democrats on the spot, with some backing the resolution, others downplaying it as aspirational and those in positions of power — such as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi — calling it one proposal among many to address climate change.

Ocasio-Cortez and the other backers are undeterred. They insist the nation can eliminate carbon emissions by 2030 — a target most experts call unrealistic — and say a transformation of the nation's energy use is simply a matter of political will.

"Leader McConnell thinks the Green New Deal is just a resolution, but the Green New Deal is a revolution," said Markey. "The Green New Deal has struck a powerful chord in this country, and it is igniting the movement of young people who are ready to make this the organizing issue for their generation."

The plan goes far beyond energy to urge national health care coverage and job guarantees, high-quality education and affordable housing, as well as "upgrading all existing buildings in the United States" to be energy-efficient.

In calling for a vote, McConnell hopes to test how far Senate Democrats — including the presidential candidates — are willing to go to accede to the party's newly empowered liberal wing, at the risk of leaving moderate voters behind.

Major labor unions, traditionally aligned with Democrats, oppose the plan. The AFL-CIO says it makes promises "that are not achievable or realistic," adding that the union "will not stand by and allow threats to our members' jobs and their families' standard of living go unanswered."

Democrats hope to thwart McConnell by voting "present" on the resolution. The idea is to signal their disgust at what they call a "sham" vote that seeks to quash public debate by blocking public hearings or expert testimony about the consequences of inaction on climate change.

"We know they don't like the Green New Deal," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said of Republicans. "But what is their plan then?"

Jason Grumet, president of the independent Bipartisan Policy Center, said climate change has inspired "magical thinking" on both sides of the political divide.

"Most members of the Republican Party believe that climate change is real but tend to avert their eyes when people say it's not, because why pick up the fight?" Grumet said at a Senate hearing this month.

And most Democrats "know we're not going to eliminate fossil fuels in 10 years or go to 100 percent renewables" as power sources, he said. "But they kind of avert their eyes because that's where the energy of the party is and nobody wants to be on the wrong end. And we just end up ceding to the edges" of both parties.

Extremists attack Somalia govt office, minister among 5 dead

By ABDI GULED Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — Gunmen set off a suicide car bombing and then stormed a government building in Somalia's capital Saturday, killing at least five people including the country's deputy labor minister, police said. It was the latest attack by Islamic extremists in the troubled Horn of Africa nation.

After an hours-long gunbattle, Somalia's security forces took back control of the building in Mogadishu on Saturday afternoon from at least five attackers who forced their way into the government building that houses the ministries of labor and public works, police Capt. Mohamed Hussein told The Associated Press.

Saqar Ibrahim Abdalla, Somalia's deputy minister of labor and social affairs, was killed in his ground-floor office shortly after gunmen entered the building, he said.

Hussein said at least 10 other people were wounded in the attack, which the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group has claimed responsibility for.

Dozens of people were inside the building at the time since Saturday is a working day in Somalia. The building is not far from the headquarters of the Somali intelligence agency.

As the attack unfolded, gunfire could be heard from inside the building. White smoke billowed from the scene, according to witnesses.

A similar attack targeting a busy area in Mogadishu at the end of February killed at least 24 people.

Al-Shabab, Africa's most active Islamic extremist group, has been fighting for years to take power and create an Islamic state in Somalia. It frequently carries out suicide bombings targeting public places, hotels and government offices despite being pushed out of Mogadishu. It mostly operates from rural areas in the country's south.

African Union peacekeepers stationed in Mogadishu and elsewhere in the country have helped Somali forces to keep al-Shabab fighters at bay.

The extremist group has also carried out many deadly attacks in neighboring Kenya in retaliation over the country's deployment in 2011 of peacekeepers in Somalia.

The U.S. military has carried out a number of deadly airstrikes in recent months against al-Shabab.



A police vehicle drives past wreckage after a suicide car bomb attack on a government building in the capital Mogadishu, Somalia, Saturday, March 23, 2019. Al-Shabab gunmen stormed the government building after a suicide car bombing, killing at least five people including the country's deputy labor minister, police said, in the latest attack by Islamic extremist fighters in the Horn of Africa nation.

(AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh)

Associated Press writer Rodney Muhumuza in Kampala, Uganda, contributed to this report.

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Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, March 24, the 83rd day of 2019. There are 282 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 24, 2015, Germanwings Flight 9525, an Airbus A320, crashed into the French Alps, killing all 150 people on board; investigators said the jetliner was deliberately downed by the 27-year-old co-pilot.

On this date:

In 1765, Britain enacted the Quartering Act, requiring American colonists to provide temporary housing to British soldiers.

In 1832, a mob in Hiram, Ohio, attacked, tarred and feathered Mormon leaders Joseph Smith Jr. and Sidney Rigdon.

In 1882, German scientist Robert Koch (kohk) announced in Berlin that he had discovered the bacillus responsible for tuberculosis.

In 1944, in occupied Rome, the Nazis executed more than 300 civilians in reprisal for an attack by Italian partisans the day before that killed 32 German soldiers.

In 1955, the Tennessee Williams play "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" opened on Broadway.

In 1958, Elvis Presley was inducted into the U.S. Army at the draft board in Memphis, Tennessee, before boarding a bus for Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. (Presley underwent basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, before being shipped off to Germany.)

In 1976, the president of Argentina, Isabel Peron, was deposed by her country's military. British war hero Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, 88, died in Alton, Hampshire, England.

In 1988, former national security aides Oliver L. North and John M. Poindexter and businessmen Richard V. Secord and Albert Hakim pleaded not guilty to charges stemming from the Iran-Contra affair. (North and Poindexter were convicted, but had their verdicts thrown out; Secord and Hakim received probation after each pleaded guilty to a single count under a plea bargain.)

In 1989, the supertanker Exxon Valdez (vahl-DEEZ') ran aground on a reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound and began leaking an estimated 11 million gallons of crude oil.

In 1995, after 20 years, British soldiers stopped routine patrols in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

In 1998, two students, ages 13 and 11, opened fire outside Jonesboro Westside Middle School in Arkansas, killing four classmates and a teacher. (The gunmen were imprisoned by Arkansas until age 18, then by federal authorities until age 21.)

In 1999, NATO launched airstrikes against Yugoslavia, marking the first time in its 50-year existence that it had ever attacked a sovereign country. Thirty-nine people were killed when fire erupted in the Mont Blanc tunnel in France and burned for two days.

Ten years ago: In his second prime-time news conference since taking office, President Barack Obama claimed early progress in his aggressive campaign to lead the nation out of economic chaos and declared that despite obstacles ahead, "we're moving in the right direction." Citing the AIG debacle, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, in a rare joint appearance before a House committee, asked for unprecedented powers to regulate complex nonbank financial institutions.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama began a week of international travel as he arrived in the Netherlands with Russia's Crimean incursion at the top of his agenda. An Egyptian court sentenced to death nearly 530 suspected backers of ousted President Mohammed Morsi over a deadly attack on a police station, capping a swift, two-day mass trial in which defense attorneys were not allowed to present their case. Five former employees of imprisoned financier Bernard Madoff were convicted at the end of a six-month trial in New York that cast them as the long arms of their boss.

One year ago: In the streets of the nation's capital and in cities across the country, hundreds of thousands of teenagers and their supporters rallied against gun violence, spurred by a call to action from student survivors of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, that left 17 people dead.

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Today's Birthdays: Poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti is 100. Actor William Smith is 86. Fashion and costume designer Bob Mackie is 80. Former Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire is 72. Rock musician Lee Oskar is 71. Singer Nick Lowe is 70. Rock musician Dougie Thomson (Supertramp) is 68. Fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger is 68. Comedian Louie Anderson is 66. Actress Donna Pescow is 65. Actor Robert Carradine is 65. Former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer is 63. Actress Kelly LeBrock is 59. Rhythm-and-blues DJ Rodney "Koolhaas" Terry (Ghostown DJs) is 58. TV personality Star Jones is 57. Country-rock musician Patterson Hood (Drive-By Truckers) is 55. Actor Peter Jacobson is 54. Rock singer-musician Sharon Corr (The Corrs) is 49. Actress Lauren Bowles is 49. Actress Lara Flynn Boyle is 49. Rapper Maceo (AKA P.A. Pasemaster Mase) is 49. Actress Megyn Price is 48. Actor Jim Parsons is 46. Christian rock musician Chad Butler (Switchfoot) is 45. Actress Alyson Hannigan is 45. Former NFL quarterback Peyton Manning is 43. Actress Amanda Brugel (TV: "The Handmaid's Tale") is 42. Actress Olivia Burnette is 42. Actress Jessica Chastain is 42. Actor Amir Arison is 41. Actress Lake Bell is 40. Rock musician Benj Gershman (O.A.R.) is 39. Neo-soul musician Jesse Phillips (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 39. Actor Philip Winchester (TV: "Strike Back") is 38. Dancer Val Chmerkovskiy is 33. Actress Keisha Castle-Hughes is 29.

Thought for Today: "If merely 'feeling good' could decide, drunkenness would be the supremely valid human experience." — William James, American psychologist (1842-1910).