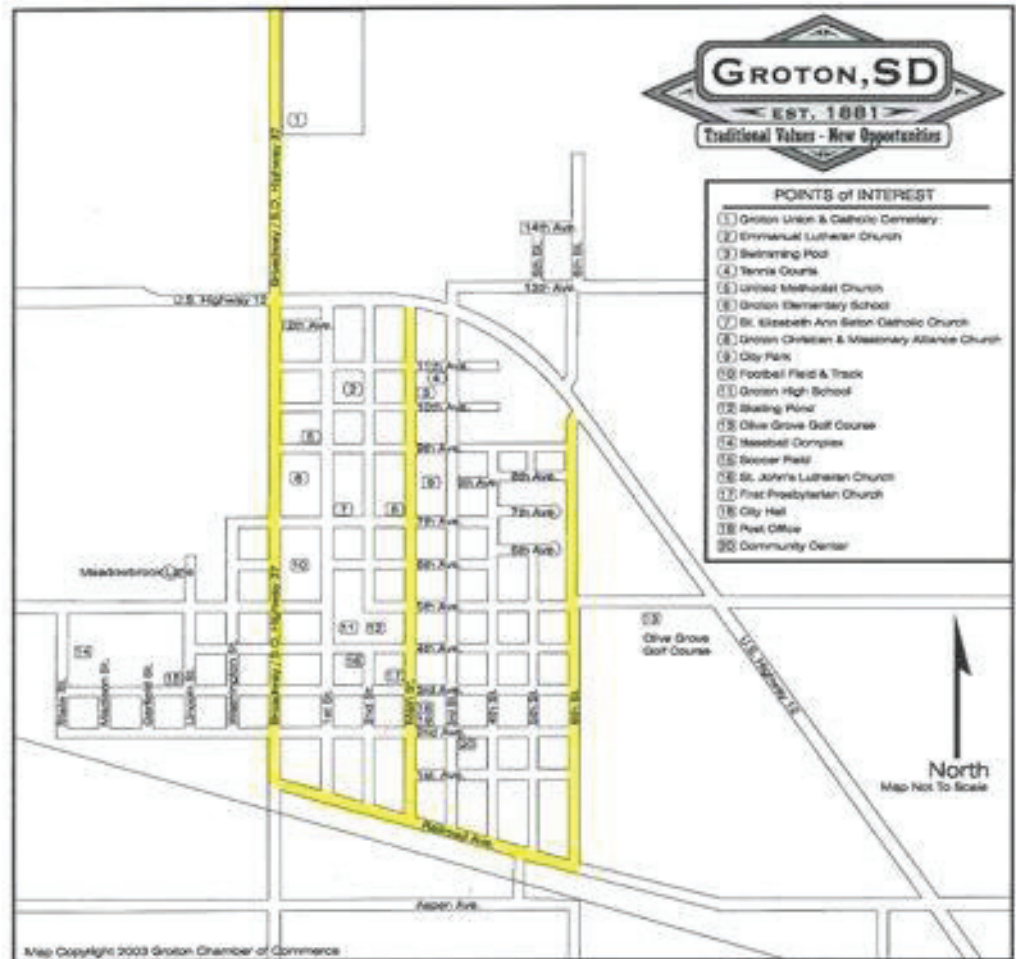


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## Notice of Garbage Pickup- Effective March 20<sup>th</sup>



Groton residents are asked to bring their garbage to the following locations until further notice:

**Railroad Avenue, Main Street, Sixth Street, & Highway 37**

Residents of HRH Mobile Home Park need to take their garbage to **Highway 37**.

Residents north of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Olson and Jacobson Development) need to bring their garbage to the **Bus Barns**.

**Your cooperation is greatly appreciated during the spring thaw.**

**Please bring your garbage bags & cans to these streets for Tuesday pickup**

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## Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Today we continue our roster breakdown series. This is where we take a look at the Minnesota Vikings' roster, focusing on how the players performed last season and what their cap hit is going into the 2019 NFL season. We have already covered the offense, as well as the defensive line, so this week we will turn our attention to the linebackers.

Head coach Mike Zimmer asks a lot of his linebackers. Not only do the linebackers have to stop the run, they are also asked to cover tight ends and running backs or blitz on passing plays. The linebackers in Zimmer's defense need to be jack-of-all-trades, making this one of the most important positions on the roster.

Anthony Barr is the high-profile linebacker on the Vikings. He was Mike Zimmer's first draft pick, so it wasn't a surprise to see the Vikings hand him a big contract a few weeks ago instead of allowing him to go to another team. Barr is very hot or cold, meaning some games he basically disappears and other games he takes over and dominates. Barr has been in the NFL for five seasons, and he has only missed nine games – while making the Pro Bowl for the past four seasons. Barr just signed a five-year, \$67.5 million contract and will count \$5.6 million against the cap in 2019.

Next to Anthony Barr is Eric Kendricks, who plays middle linebacker. Kendricks is entering his fifth-season in the NFL and has played in all but five games during that span. He is one of the most underrated linebackers around the league, as he's led the team in tackles every season he's been in the league, but he has yet to make the Pro Bowl. Kendricks has five years left on his contract, and his cap hit in 2019 will be \$6.57 million.

The third linebacker spot on the Vikings is technically a starting position, but the Vikings use their nickel formation (where they take out a linebacker and replace him with a defensive back) 77% of the time,

## 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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which is the most in the league. Ben Gedeon usually mans the third linebacker spot on the Vikings, and he has started 17 games over the past two seasons after being drafted in the fourth round in 2017. He will make a little over \$800k this season since he's still on a rookie deal.

Eric Wilson was an undrafted rookie in 2017, but he has carved out a role on the team as the primary backup linebacker. Wilson started four games this past season and is entering the last year of his rookie contract, which will pay him \$648k in 2019.

The Vikings have three other linebackers on the roster: Kentrell Brothers, Reshard Cliett, and Devante Downs. Brothers is entering his fourth year in the NFL and will have a \$778k cap hit. Cliett has bounced around the NFL since entering the league in 2015, with the Vikings being his seventh team. He spent all last season on the Vikings' practice squad, and he will earn just under \$500k in 2019. Devante Downs was a seventh-round pick by the Vikings in 2018 and he played in 11 games (mostly special teams) last year. His cap hit is just under \$600k.

Check back next week as we break down the cornerbacks. If you have any questions or comments, reach out to me on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL). Skol!

## NOW HIRING!

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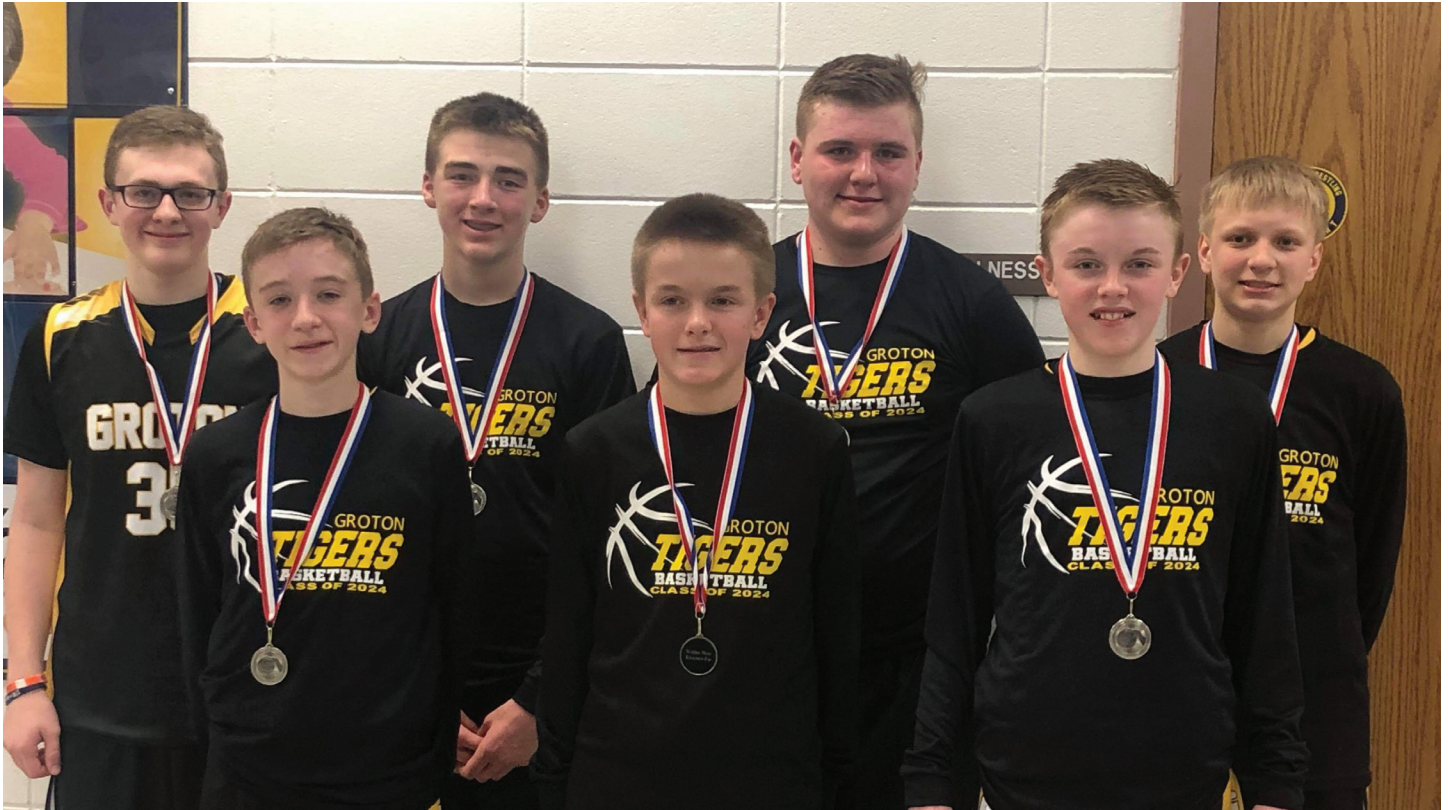
 **HARR**  
Motors

**4255 6th Ave  
SE, Aberdeen**

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

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## 2nd place at Willie Mac for the 7th grade boys

Back row: Holden Sippel, Colby Dunker, Logan Ringgenberg, Jacob Zak.

Front row: Braxton Imrie, Dillon Abeln, Lane Tietz. (Photo by Dawn Imrie)

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## Today in Weather History

March 25, 2009: Rapid snowmelt and ice jamming caused the Elm River near Westport to rise -above flood stage on March 20th. The Elm River reached an all-time record level of 22.69 feet on March 25th almost 9 feet above flood stage. The previous record was 22.11 feet set on April 10th, 1969. The flood stage for the Elm River at Westport is 14 feet. The city of Westport was evacuated with the flood waters causing damage to many homes and roads in and around Westport. Also, many other roads and agricultural and pastureland along the river were flooded. The Elm River slowly receded and fell below flood stage on March 30th. The flood waters from the Elm River flowed south and into the northern portion of Moccasin Creek. Subsequently, the Moccasin Creek rose as the water flowed south into the city of Aberdeen. Flooding became a concern for Aberdeen and areas along the creek north of Aberdeen. The Governor signed an emergency declaration which allowed the state to help with flood response efforts, including sending 50,000 sandbags to the area. Also, the National Guard was activated to move a variety of heavy equipment. Some sandbagging and a falling Elm River kept the Moccasin Creek from causing any significant flooding in and north of Aberdeen. The creek flooded some township and county roads. Click [HERE](#) for pictures of the Elm and Maple Rivers.

1843 - A second great snowstorm hit the northeastern U.S. The storm produced snow from Maine all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Natchez MS received three inches of snow, and up to 15 inches buried eastern Tennessee. Coastal Maine received 204 inches of snow that winter. (David Ludlum)

1901: More than 20 people were killed by an estimated F3 tornado that moved across parts of Birmingham, Alabama. The twister cut a 15-mile path from the south side of the city to Avondale and Irondale.

1914 - Society Hill, SC, was buried under 18 inches of snow, establishing a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1934 - A spring storm produced 21 inches of snow at Amarillo TX in 24 hours. However, much of the snow melted as it fell, and as a result, the snow cover was never any deeper than 4.5 inches. (David Ludlum)

1935: Suffocating dust storms frequently occurred in southeast Colorado between the 12th and the 25th of the month. Six people died, and many livestock starved or suffocated. Up to six feet of dust covered the ground. Schools were closed, and tenants deserted many rural homes.

1948 - For the second time in less than a week airplanes were destroyed by a tornado at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma City OK. A March 20th tornado destroyed fifty planes at Tinker AFB causing more than ten million dollars damage, and the March 25th tornado destroyed another thirty-five planes causing six million dollars damage. The first tornado struck without warning, and caused more damage than any previous tornado in the state of Oklahoma. The second tornado was predicted by Fawbush and Miller of the United States Air Force, and their accurate tornado forecast ushered in the modern era of severe weather forecasting. (The Weather Channel) (Storm Data) (The National Severe Storms Forecast Center)

1975 - The town of Sandberg reported a wind gust to 101 mph, a record for the state of California. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Heavy rain left rivers and streams swollen in Kansas and Nebraska, causing considerable crop damage due to flooding of agricultural areas. The Saline River near Wilson Reservoir in central Kansas reached its highest level since 1951. March rainfall at Grand Island NE exceeded their previous record of 5.57 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - An early season heat wave prevailed in the southwestern U.S. The high of 93 degrees at Tucson, AZ, was a new record for March. Windy conditions prevailed across the central and eastern U.S. Winds gusted to 60 mph at Minneapolis MN, and reached 120 mph atop Rendezvous Peak WY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

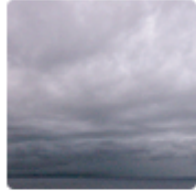
1989 - A Pacific storm brought wet weather to much of the western third of the country, with heavy snow in some of the higher elevations. La Porte CA was drenched with 3.56 inches of rain in 24 hours. Up to 24 inches of snow blanketed the Sierra Nevada Range. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Temperatures dipped below zero in the Northern Rocky Mountain Region. Hardin MT was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 10 degrees below zero. Freezing drizzle was reported in the Southern Plains Region, with afternoon highs only in the 30s from the Southern High Plains to Missouri and Arkansas. (The National Weather Summary)

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Today



Cloudy

High: 34 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 26 °F

Tuesday



Mostly Cloudy

High: 44 °F

Tuesday Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 33 °F

Wednesday

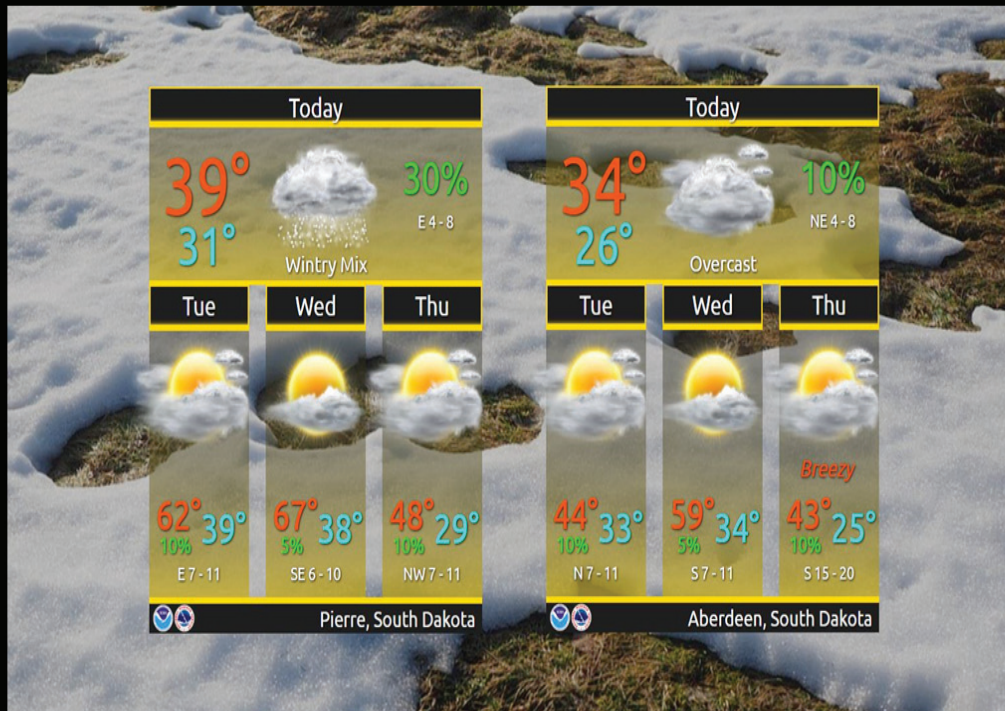


Mostly Sunny

High: 58 °F



## Snow Melt Continues



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Published on: 03/25/2019 at 6:01AM

High temperatures in the 30s and 40s will lead to a continued slow snow melt across the region. There is a chance of seeing a little bit of light rain by this afternoon 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: 35 °F at 1:48 AM

Low Outside Temp: 27 °F at 10:26 PM

High Gust: 20 mph at 10:57 AM

Precip:

## Today's Info

Record High: 81° in 1925

Record Low: -10° in 1894

Average High: 45°F

Average Low: 24°F

Average Precip in Mar.: 0.84

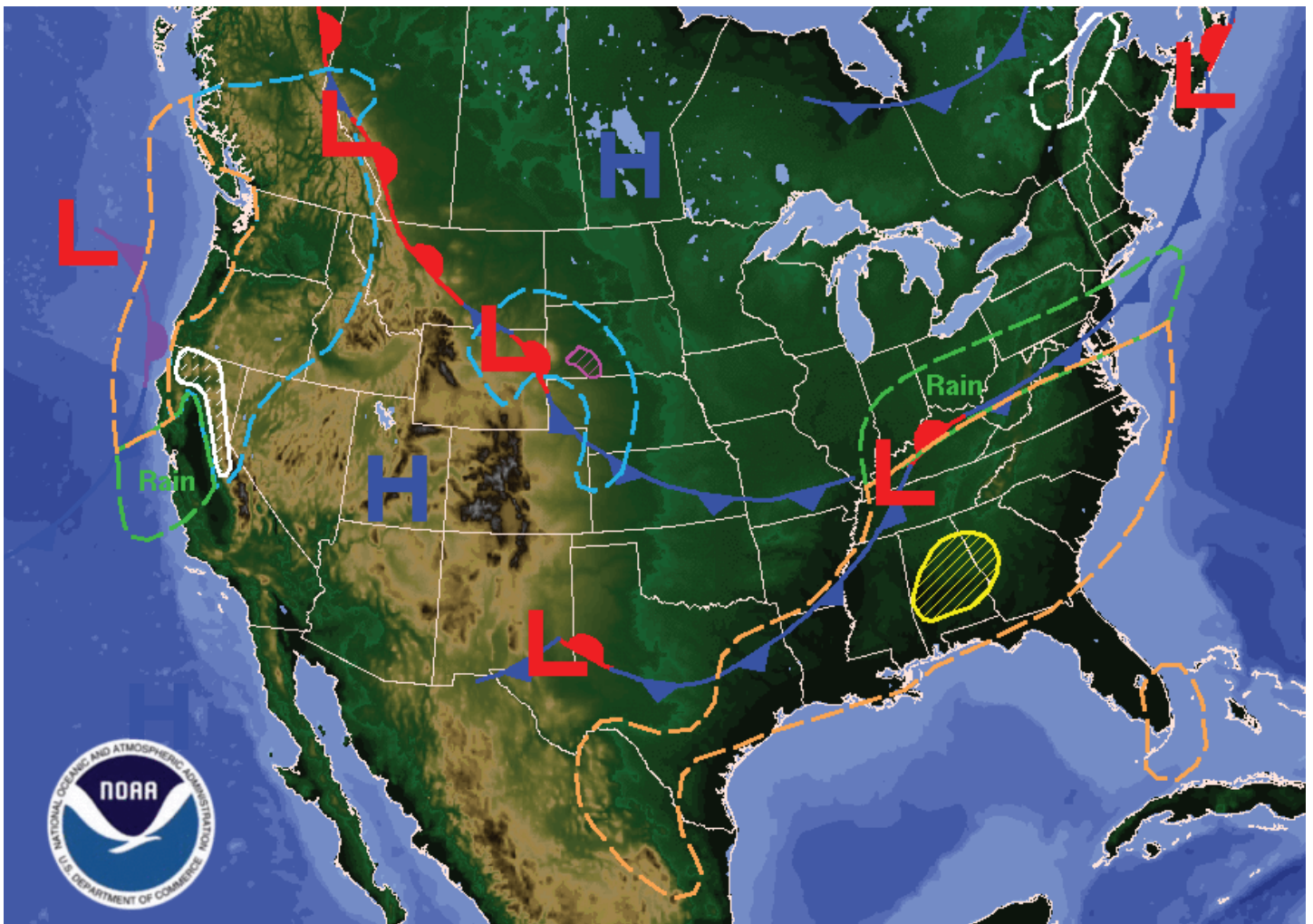
Precip to date in Mar.: 0.87

Average Precip to date: 1.86

Precip Year to Date: 3.06

Sunset Tonight: 7:53 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:26 a.m.



### Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Mon, Mar 25, 2019, issued 4:23 AM EDT  
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center  
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

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

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## A DISASTROUS ENDING

Sexual promiscuity, in the eyes of many, is not all that bad or something that cant be helped or is just the way things are. For some it has been labeled an addiction that needs to be cured. For others, it is not what I had planned - but just happened. And far too many have been desensitized to the fact that it is a sin and simply wrong, or if its consensual, its OK.

Not in Gods sight. It is sin and wrong.

God, speaking through Solomon, graphically set the standards for a sexual lifestyle that He would bless and the consequences for those who disregard His commandment.

Following Gods wisdom brings justice, safety, deliverance, good, godly friends, pleasure, peace, security, longevity, wellness, wholesome living, and certainly His very best blessings.

On the other hand...The passing pleasure of indulging in a life of adulterous living, however, has its own rewards. Solomon writes, Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. It would seem that this would cause many to pause and ponder about sexual misconduct. But it does not stop there: Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death.

What a powerful exposé of the sin of adultery.

Our choice is very clear: we can enjoy intimacy and pleasure that comes from following Gods plan for sex, or follow a path that ends in the chamber of death.

Prayer: Lord, as always, the choice is ours. If we want a God-blest life life as You designed for us, we must follow Your commands. Lead us in paths or righteousness. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 7:26-27 Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death.



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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 Associated Press

### **Sisseton businessman pleads not guilty to theft from tribe**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Sisseton businessman has pleaded not guilty to stealing from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate tribe.

The U.S. attorney's office alleges 46-year-old Dustin Kirk and his now-dissolved Siouxland Lumber and Materials business stole more than \$1,000 from the Dakota Nation Development Corp. and the Sisseton-Wahpeton Housing Authority between August 2016 and December 2018.

Trial is scheduled for May 14. Kirk faces up to five years in prison if convicted.

### **2 missing after truck enters flooded South Dakota river**

MITCHELL, S.D. (AP) — Authorities in South Dakota are searching for two men missing after a garbage truck went into a flooded river.

Searchers returned Sunday to the James River about 15 miles (24 kilometers) north of Mitchell, South Dakota.

KELO-TV reports the men have been missing since Thursday. Sanborn County Sheriff Tom Fridley says authorities believe the truck went off state Highway 37 into the river. Authorities began searching a stretch of the river after finding a damaged guardrail on the highway near the James River Bridge.

Authorities have not released the men's names. State and local agencies are involved in the search.

Recent flooding in the Midwest is blamed in three confirmed deaths. In addition, two men in Nebraska have been missing for more than a week.

In central Minnesota, crews rescued dozens of people stranded inside a restaurant in Waite Park after flash flooding Saturday night on the Sauk River.

The National Weather Service warned Sunday that rain storms expected later this week could lead to another crest along the Missouri River and its tributaries just as residents are cleaning up from this spring's flooding.

NWS hydrologist Kevin Low said that more than an inch of rain is expected to fall in Nebraska and Iowa later this week.

Low says the storms between Wednesday and Friday could create a 1-foot rise in the level of the Missouri River around Omaha and cities downstream starting next weekend.

But it's not yet clear how much additional flooding that rise could create.

### **Augustana University revives special ed master's program**

By **SHELLY CONLON** Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A university in Sioux Falls is reviving a teaching program after a 20-year hold to help put a dent in the nationwide special education teaching shortage.

Augustana University will be launching an online-only master's of arts and special education program this fall, in hopes of giving more teachers access to proper certifications, said Laurie Daily, chairwoman of the university's education department.

"In South Dakota, there's a critical shortage of special ed in the rural areas and the more urban areas like Sioux Falls, where they consistently fall short in trying to meet the needs and have certified teachers in their classrooms," Daily told the Argus Leader.

Nationally, the number of special education teachers has dropped more than 17 percent in the last decade, according to a December article by Education Week, a nonprofit news source for K-12 education. But special education in general has been a critical shortage area in teacher education and certifications since the 1980s in all states, Daily said.

At about that same time, Augustana started its initial special education teaching program. But the program

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faded between 2004 and 2005 because students wanted something other than face-to-face education, Daily said.

Now, 36 interested students can specialize in one of two areas, K-12 or early childhood special education, and manage the workload from wherever they are, Daily said.

The new special education teaching program joins one of at least two others offered in the state, with one at the University of Sioux Falls and the other at University of South Dakota.

Still, the struggle behind the shortage lies in actually attracting educators to the classroom, Daily said. "It's a high burn-out field, so the demands are great," she said.

And districts across South Dakota have had to work with the Department of Education to have educators become alternatively licensed, Daily said. That means those hired into special education positions are often completing the requirements to become certified while they're teaching.

But Augustana's new program will allow certified teachers to simply add a specialization to the degree they already have.

"We're building on a long history of undergraduate programming in special education, and graduate programming in special ed," Daily said. "We wanted to design a program that would be responsive to needs not only within South Dakota, but across the country."

Sioux Falls School District has stayed ahead of the shortage for the most part, said Deborah Muilenburg-Wilson, the Sioux Falls School District's special services program director.

But in the last five years, the district has had to step up its game to recruit and retain special education teacher candidates, Muilenburg-Wilson said.

With about 300 special education teachers district-wide, filling open positions sometimes takes right up until the beginning of a new school year, Muilenburg-Wilson said. Because of the shortage, the district has had to move up its timeline for hiring new educators.

"Every year, when we get that last special ed teaching position filled, HR and I do a little 'woohoo,'" Muilenburg-Wilson said. "Then I thank goodness I'm in Sioux Falls because it's probably an appealing place for teachers to come to. I'm not going to pretend we have some advantages."

Muilenburg-Wilson is on the Augustana University education advisory board and helped design parts of the program.

Having more certified teachers in special education helps solves two main issues, she said. The first — and main reason educators go into the field — is the service element behind helping a student with disabilities learn in a classroom setting, she said.

"The other part you can't pretend isn't there is the whole compliance and regulatory part, which is kind of laden in paperwork," Muilenburg-Wilson said. "Sometimes, people choose special ed because of this intervention and work with youth. Then they get in the field and learn about this other piece, and that's harder for them."

Sarah Henrichs has been a special education teacher in the district for about 18 years. She's seen the strain of the shortage firsthand in both rural and urban school districts.

"Sioux Falls, I feel doesn't feel the shortage as small as some of the other towns around," said Henrichs, who works at McGovern Middle School. "But I have had positions I've worked with that aren't certified. They're not responsible for the paperwork piece, the legal documents that need to be done."

In some instances she's had to take over the other half of the position, and mentor teachers through the compliance side of the job, she said.

"The years it's happened, you're just busier. You just have so much more going on, your case load is so much larger than typical," she said. "When I seem to notice it is the year after, when I have a normal case load."

In response, the district has increased its number of student teachers and has hired instructional coaches to help new teachers during their first years, Muilenburg-Wilson said.

The district has also brought in a facilitator to help with the clerical side of the job and works closely with universities and colleges to make sure future educators know Sioux Falls is a potential career choice, she said.

"We've tried to put pieces in place to set ourselves above the level of support we provide to teachers," Muilenburg-Wilson said.

Augustana's new master's program will only add another layer of support for Sioux Falls. And as someone who grew up in a small town and moved to the largest city in the state, Muilenburg-Wilson said she knows the online program will do even more for potential educators in rural areas.

"I think about that school I went to, which doesn't exist anymore. There were good people who had the skills to be a teacher, but were committed to living in that part of the world or maybe had family ties and couldn't move," Muilenburg-Wilson said. "The Augie program will offer someone in that kind of situation an opportunity to pursue a special education teaching degree that you would not have had 20 years ago."

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

## South Dakota cake decorator creates Native American designs

By VICTORIA LUSK Aberdeen American News

EAGLE BUTTE, S.D. (AP) — When Leah Red Bird put her decorating tip to an ice cream cake nearly three years ago, she had no idea what was about to happen.

But as each colorful diamond met the next, her star quilt design took shape. Rave reviews followed.

It was her 19th year at the Dairy Queen in Eagle Butte. She started in 1997, and she's now been decorating cakes for about 15 years.

A May 9, 2016, post on the Eagle Butte Dairy Queen Facebook page celebrating Leah and her unique designs has been seen by 250,000 people. It also garnered more than 4,000 shares, 4,500 reactions and 300 comments.

Some of those comments inquired about shipping the cakes, but no one has followed through on that, Dairy Queen manager Barb Jensen, told the Aberdeen American News.

Jensen "came with the building," Jensen said. The Eagle Butte store will celebrate its 29th year in business come April.

Red Bird creates about 30 cakes a week, Jensen said.

"And our store isn't even a big cake store," she said.

As far as she knows, Red Bird, 52, is the only decorator in the area who does the Native American designs. They don't last long.

"The minute we put the cakes out, they are gone within a day or two," Jensen said

The Native American art is perfect for the area the Dairy Queen serves, she said.

Red Bird's newest design is an intricate web of lines that form each strand of a dream catcher.

Traditionally, dream catchers are hung above beds to sift dreams and visions or so that bad ideas get trapped in the web, according to information from the Akta Lakota Museum and Cultural Center in Chamberlain.

Red Bird needs 24 hours notice for a custom cake. An "easy" cake might only take her an hour to decorate, but a sheet cake will take an entire day, depending on the design, she said.

Next, Red Bird said, she'd like to create something with a horse.

She said she gets her ideas from other cakes, artwork and things she sees.

Her favorite part of the cake-decorating gig is how her designs look when they are completed.

"I just have to think about it first, and then I put it together," she said.

"She's being modest," Jensen said. "She's very creative."

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

## Parents: Missing South Dakota girl had history of escapes

STURGIS, S.D. (AP) — A 9-year-old girl missing from a South Dakota residential youth home for nearly

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two months has a history of running away, her parents said in an interview published Sunday.

Chad and Kasandra Dennard told the Rapid City Journal that their daughter, Serenity Dennard, had planned escapes by packing a suitcase and leaving in the middle of the night. The family's home in Sturgis, South Dakota, has an alarm to help prevent that from happening.

Serenity has been missing since she ran away from Black Hill's Children's Home near Rockerville in frigid weather on Feb. 3. Authorities say she was not dressed for the weather and that it's unlikely she survived if she was outside.

Chad Dennard, 37, tells the newspaper he's "100 percent" certain that Serenity planned an escape from Children's Home by having another child run away first.

"That's just her MO (mode of operation)," he said. "She's just going to wait until everything is calmed down."

The couple said Serenity runs away because she doesn't know how to process her emotions, or because she begins to feel too comfortable in a place.

Serenity and three other children were playing inside the gym at Children's Home when one of the other children ran away, Bill Colson, executive director of the Children's Home Society, has said. As a staffer ran after that child, Serenity took off. Because the remaining staffer was still supervising two other children, that person stayed and called for help rather than follow Serenity.

Serenity's parents said their daughter would hide from staff inside Children's Home and threaten to run away. She may have run away Feb. 3 because she started to feel too comfortable at the home, was no longer the new girl and was ready for something new, the couple said.

Kasandra Dennard, 25, said she thinks her daughter's struggles stem from the inconstancy of being raised by many different people. She said Serenity's birth parents loved her but they were both sent to prison.

Once Serenity was removed from her family, "she was tossed through foster homes," about 12 to 13 homes in two years, Kasandra Dennard said.

"She's used to wearing somebody out, and they send her to somebody else," she added.

Chad Dennard and his ex-wife adopted Serenity in October 2014, and the couple broke up in early 2015. Chad and Kasandra Dennard began raising her in May 2015.

Authorities said finding Serenity remains a top priority. The Pennington County Sheriff's Office plans a search next weekend, Sgt. Todd Battest told The Associated Press.

At her family's home, a stuffed pink unicorn sits on Serenity's neatly made bed with its arms open wide, the newspaper reported. The girl moved last summer to Children's Home and was expected to be discharged in September 2019, depending on her progress.

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

## Third-seeded Syracuse goes for a second home sweep

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP) — Syracuse lost its last home game during the regular season, a big disappointment for coach Quentin Hillsman and his seniors. But his Orange still finished high enough in the national rankings to land as a host for the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament, and those seniors now have a chance to win their final game in the Carrier Dome.

And the Orange have proved there's no place like home in March. When they hosted three years ago they made it to the national championship game, losing to UConn. Now, after opening the tournament with a victory over Fordham, third-seeded Syracuse (25-8) faces Summit League champion South Dakota State (27-6) on Monday night, a berth in the Sweet 16 at stake.

It's the first meeting between the teams.

"If you lose, you go home," Hillsman said. "We want people to still be able to see us, to watch us on TV, so it doesn't have to be the last time they see us. We are going to do everything in our power that it isn't the last time you see us play this year."

Syracuse beat 14th-seeded Fordham 70-49 in the first round Saturday behind a near triple-double by

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guard Tiana Mangakahia, who had 21 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds. The No. 6 Jackrabbits held off No. 11 Quinnipiac 76-65 in the other Carrier Dome matchup with Summit League Player of the Year Macy Miller leading the way with a game-high 28 points and 11 rebounds. The Jackrabbits shot 40 percent from the field and made 20 of 24 free throws.

After losing to Notre Dame in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament, Hillsman gave the Orange a good dose of rest for the big tournament — no contact, no scrimmages — and it took them a quarter against Fordham to knock off the rust.

"We hadn't played a real game in two weeks, so getting back into the flow of things was a little bit difficult," said Mangakahia, second nationally with 8.4 assists per game. "After that first quarter and after the half we knew this is the tournament, it's going to be up and down, and we had to just come out and give it our all. We started doing things that we do right."

Syracuse turned up the intensity in the second quarter, holding the Rams to just three made baskets and outscoring them 24-12 to open an 11-point halftime lead. The Orange scored 22 points off turnovers and held Fordham to seven points in the final quarter.

It was an impressive showing after the layoff.

"I think it's extremely important, especially during this time of the year," Mangakahia said. "A lot of teams sometimes take their seed for granted and come out there and don't do as well. I think we knew that, so we just had to focus and not let an upset happen, and I think that helped us."

The Jackrabbits present another big challenge. They've won 17 in a row, they travel well, and they have that band.

"I'd say it makes a huge difference," Miller said. "It still gives me chills every time I'm on the court and I hear a school song being played. They do a great job cheering and firing up our crowd."

Added senior guard Madison Guebert: "Jackrabbit nation comes out everywhere we go, and even being a long way from South Dakota, here we had tons of fans out there. Their constant energy and their cheering adds an extra fuel for us, and they give us that extra spark when we need it."

Other things to know when South Dakota State meets Syracuse in the second round:

## LOUD HOUSE

Syracuse is asking fans to turn out for the big game with a "Pack the Loud House" campaign: "Help send your Orange to Portland and to the Sweet 16!" Just under 3,000 fans turned out for the first-round game.

To be sure, the Orange relish playing in front of the home crowd. Last year they lost in the first round to Oklahoma State on the road.

"It was a big difference compared to last year. We had to travel down to Mississippi," Mangakahia said. "Playing at home and sleeping in your own bed, just that kind of stuff is a great feeling. The fans were great. Knowing that we matter to them is a good feeling."

## JACKRABBITS RULE

South Dakota State has had 13 20-win seasons in the last 15 years and is 3-8 in the NCAA Tournament. This is the highest seed they've had in nine appearances, and their performance on the glass against Quinnipiac was key in their first-round triumph. South Dakota State outrebounded Quinnipiac 49-34 and is now 23-1 when holding opponents to 70 points or less as it strives to make the Sweet 16.

"The team is hungry, we're playing well, we've got the pieces or the things it would take to play at that (Sweet 16) level," South Dakota State coach Aaron Johnston said. "You really have to play well to get to that game."

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/WomensNCAATournament> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

## Group to teach Rapid City students about e-cigarette hazards

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Rapid City social service organization wants to educate elementary and middle school students on the health hazards related to the new vaping trend amid a statewide decline

in teen usage of traditional tobacco products.

Michele Brink-Gluhosky, a Lifeways counselor, said at an assembly group Wednesday at North Middle School that vaping can be a safer option for chain smokers who are already suffering from lung damage, but it is not safe for kids, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Eight percent of the South Dakota middle school students surveyed said they've used e-cigarettes or vaporizers at least once, up 5 percent from 2015, according to a 2017 state Department of Health report.

Lifeways now includes facts on the products in its intervention- and prevention-oriented programming. This year, the group obtained \$2,000 in state grants to coordinate a programming partnership with Rapid City schools.

The extensive accessibility of the devices and wide collection of flavors well-suited with them are enticing younger users whose brains are particularly susceptible to nicotine's addictive components, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Experiments with drugs and alcohol usually happen in the early teen years, which is why the group prioritizes students in elementary and middle grades, Brink-Gluhosky said.

No data on tobacco and nicotine use at Rapid City schools was immediately available, but Brink-Gluhosky noted vaping is rising in popularity in the district.

Peton Swallow, an eighth-grade student at North Middle, said she has often overheard classmates express a desire to try vaping. Swallow is a member of the school's Youth to Youth club, which assisted in organizing the Wednesday's event.

"We want to make people aware of what this can do to your body," Swallow said.

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

## Thai parties jostle for power after 1st election since coup

By **KAWEEWIT KAEWJINDA** and **STEPHEN WRIGHT** Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A military-backed party that based on unofficial results won the most votes in Thailand's first election since a 2014 coup said Monday that it would try to form a government, after a rival party also claimed it had the right to govern.

The conflicting claims following Sunday's election highlight the deep divisions in Thailand, which has been wracked by political instability for nearly two decades.

Uttama Savanayana, the head of the Palang Pracharat party that is backed by junta leader and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, said it would contact like-minded parties to form a new administration.

But earlier Monday, Sudarat Keyuraphan, leader of the Pheu Thai party that was ousted in the 2014 coup, said it would try to form a government because it won the most constituency races. The party is allied with exiled Thai leader Thaksin Shinawatra.

"As we have said before, the party with the most seats is the one that has received the confidence from the people to set up the government," Sudarat said.

But the party faces an uphill battle because selection of the next prime minister will be decided by the 500-member lower house as well as a 250-member junta-appointed Senate.

The Election Commission announced the results of 350 constituency races but said full vote counts, which are needed to determine the allocation of 150 other seats in the House of Representatives, won't be available until Friday.

Unofficial results show Palang Pracharat had the highest popular vote, which along with the appointed Senate puts Prayuth in a relatively strong position to stay in office and cobble together a coalition government. Analysts say the next government is likely to be unstable and short-lived, whichever party leads it.

The election is the latest chapter in a nearly two-decade struggle pitching conservative forces including the military against the political machine of Thaksin, a tycoon who upended tradition-bound Thailand politics with a populist political revolution.

Thaksin was ousted as prime minister in a 2006 military coup and now lives in exile abroad to avoid a

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prison term, but parties allied with him have won every election since 2001. His sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, who led the Pheu Thai government that was ousted in 2014, also fled the country after what supporters said was a politically motivated prosecution.

The blunt-speaking Prayuth, who as army chief led the 2014 coup, has aimed to extend his hold on power by engineering a new political system that stifles the influence of big political parties not aligned with Palang Pracharat and the military.

Under the convoluted election system created by the junta, 350 of the lower house members are elected from constituencies and 150 are allocated to parties based on share of the nationwide popular vote.

Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, leader of the anti-junta Future Forward party, which polled in a strong third place after scooping up first-time voters, said the party won't nominate him as a prime ministerial candidate to avoid a political deadlock.

He urged all parties that support a true democracy to form a coalition to trump the spoiling effect of the votes of 250 junta-appointed senators.

The Election Commission's secretary-general, Charoongwit Poomma, defended the EC's handling of Sunday's vote and said delays in announcing full results reflect its duty to ensure the election is free and fair.

"Elections in our country are not like other countries," he said.

"We have laws to determine whether the election was free and fair or not. It needs to go through the process of orange, yellow, red cards before results are announced," Charoomwit said, referring to different levels of seriousness for election violations.

## Mueller report details emerge, but few see fight as over

By MATT SEDENSKY AP National Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The first glimpse into the special counsel's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election did little to mend a gaping American political divide.

The four-page summary of Robert Mueller's probe released by Attorney General William Barr didn't satisfy many who wanted more details. But in a bitterly divided country, the little bit that was known stirred cheers from many Republicans and scoffs from many Democrats.

"The one side that's happy is happy. And the other side that's not happy wants to do some more investigation or do something else," said Stephen Turner, an electrical engineer from Belmont, North Carolina, who is Republican and voted for Trump. "I wish it'd just go away."

Across the union, the split reaction to the Mueller news repeated.

In West Palm Beach, Florida, along the route Trump's motorcade took before returning to Washington on Air Force One, Mary Jude Smith got a wave and a smile from the chief executive. The 71-year-old retiree from Hypoluxo, Florida, speaks about him with passion, and insists he has been exonerated. She sees the investigation as Democrats' pathetic attempt to impeach Trump.

"I think Mueller was a crook. He wasted millions of our tax dollars for nothing," she said, before offering her assessment of Trump: "He's as clean as the driven snow."

In blue-state New York, 49-year-old filmmaker Dan Lee of Brooklyn Heights felt let down by Mueller and left with more questions than answers.

"It stings a little, because I trusted Mueller," said Lee, a Democrat. "There are still so many questions and it seems inconceivable that obstruction isn't one of the conclusions."

In red-state West Virginia, 44-year-old truck driver Michael Tucker of Bancroft, declared the Russian investigation "a joke, for the most part" and that Trump has been treated unfairly.

"It's one witch hunt after another," said Tucker, who gave his vote to Trump in 2016 and likely will again next year. "If they could have found anything, they would have."

There were morsels in Barr's letter both sides could savor. For Republicans, it was acknowledgement that there was no evidence Trump or his campaign conspired with Russia. For Democrats, it was the admission that while Trump wasn't charged with obstruction, he also wasn't exonerated.

Trump supporter Richard C. Osburn, 52, a nurse from South Charleston, West Virginia, said Mueller's



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findings were proof the president was “drug through the mud.” He knows Democrats are “hell-bent” on destroying Trump, but says it’s time for the president to be given a break.

“The things that the man’s doing to try to help the average worker in this country never gets recognized by the mainstream media,” said Osburn, a longtime Republican. “They would rather hate, hate, hate than recognize accomplishments. Those days have got to stop.”

In Los Angeles, 57-year-old accountant Sue Arani, checked news on her phone as she took her dog for an afternoon walk Sunday. She calls herself a Republican-leaning voter, though she gave her support to Clinton in 2016. She trusts Mueller, but even with Barr’s release, she thinks there was collusion between Trump’s campaign and the Russian government.

“The public needs to see the report,” she said, “especially before the next election.”

Claire Finkelstein, a University of Pennsylvania professor who founded the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law, said if the full report isn’t made available to the public and its contents become known only through leaks and back channels, it would be damaging to faith in the government.

“Secrets are where conspiracy theories fester and grow,” Finkelstein said. “The only way that we are going to be able to move past this state of affairs is by as much coming out into the light as possible. Let’s flesh out the facts, let’s get them on the table and have a robust conversation.”

What seemed certain was there would be no end to the debate over Trump, Mueller’s investigation, and the political divide across the U.S.

In Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 74-year-old Richard Howell, a supporter of the president, said news of the Mueller report proves what critics of the investigation have been saying all along.

“So we spent two years and millions of dollars,” he said, “worrying about nothing.”

In Gaston County, North Carolina, Trump voters outnumbered Clinton backers nearly two-to-one in 2016, but Joy Owens didn’t budge from her opposition. She believes Mueller has done a good job with the investigation but she’s left feeling unfulfilled.

“I keep hoping that if we just be patient, we be patient for a little bit longer, that there will be justice,” said Owens, 66, who recently retired from running a yarn shop and framing business. “I cannot believe of all the other convictions that are happening about this that Trump is going to be scot-free on this.”

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Sedensky can be reached at [msedensky@ap.org](mailto:msedensky@ap.org) and <https://twitter.com/sedensky>

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Contributing to this report were Corey Williams in Detroit, Michigan; Sharon Cohen in Chicago, Illinois; Chris Weber in Los Angeles, California; Claire Galofaro in Louisville, Kentucky; Jeff Baenan in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Rebecca Santana in New Orleans, Louisiana; Tim Talley in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Alanna Durkin Richer in Boston, Massachusetts; Denise Lavoie in Richmond, Virginia; Josh Replogle in West Palm Beach, Florida; Colleen Slevin in Denver, Colorado; Sarah Blake Morgan in Belmont, North Carolina; Roxana Hegeman in Wichita, Kansas; Adam Geller in New York, New York; and John Raby in Cross Lanes, West Virginia.

## Democrats want to have their say on the Mueller probe

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William Barr has made his determination about special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation . Now Democrats want to make their own.

The delivery Sunday of Barr’s summary to Congress about Mueller’s conclusions has opened a new chapter in the battle over the two-year investigation that is likely to consume Capitol Hill in the coming weeks and months. Democratic lawmakers are demanding a full look at Mueller’s findings and dismissing Barr’s summary as incomplete, at best, and biased, at worst.

They have seized on a line in the summary that says Mueller’s report “does not exonerate” President Donald Trump on obstruction of justice — even though Barr concluded the evidence of obstruction is insufficient to find Trump committed a crime.

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"The fact that Special Counsel Mueller's report does not exonerate the president on a charge as serious as obstruction of justice demonstrates how urgent it is that the full report and underlying documentation be made public without any further delay," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said in a joint statement. "Given Mr. Barr's public record of bias against the Special Counsel's inquiry, he is not a neutral observer and is not in a position to make objective determinations about the report."

Given the report, Democrats seemed more likely to focus on their ongoing investigations, calls for transparency and frustrations with Barr, rather than engaging with the talk of impeachment that has been amplified on Pelosi's left flank. As the release of Mueller's report loomed, Pelosi recently tried to scuttle that talk by saying she's not for impeachment, for now.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, who would lead any impeachment effort, said he would call Barr to testify soon "in light of the very concerning discrepancies and final decision making at the Justice Department."

Yet while Democrats focused on the obstruction piece, Barr's summary report dealt their investigative efforts an undeniable blow by concluding that Trump's campaign never conspired with Russia. Top Democrats, now leading broad investigations of Trump in the House majority, had long suggested just the opposite.

"After 22 months of a special counsel and 2 years of congressional investigations, it's over," tweeted North Carolina Rep. Mark Meadows, a close ally of Trump. "The clock has finally struck midnight on the 'Russian collusion' fantasy."

In a joint statement, Nadler, House intelligence committee chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., and House Oversight and Reform Committee Chairman Elijah Cummings, D-Md., almost seemed to concede that collusion had not been found, saying they have confidence in Mueller, "notwithstanding the very public evidence of Trump campaign contact with and willingness to receive support from Russian agents."

Still, they said, "it will be vital for the country and the Congress to evaluate the full body of evidence collected by the special counsel, including all information gathered of a counterintelligence nature."

Democrats discussed strategy in a flurry of calls over the weekend. Pelosi and Schumer talked repeatedly, including several calls Sunday from her home in San Francisco. As soon as Barr's letter arrived, Pelosi quickly convened a call Sunday with Cummings, Schiff and Nadler to go over its main points. They were on the same page with their response, according to a person familiar with the call. Nadler later held a conference call with Democratic members on the Judiciary panel and reiterated calls for transparency.

People familiar with the calls requested anonymity to discuss them freely.

Republicans unified to call for Congress to move on. "This case is closed," said House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy in a statement.

Trump celebrated the findings but did not appear ready to let the matter drop, calling the investigation "an illegal takedown that failed." He said that, "hopefully somebody's going to look at the other side," an apparent reference to Democrats.

Democratic calls for transparency on the Mueller report could set up a court battle with the Trump administration that could take months or years to resolve.

It's unclear what else is coming from Barr, though he states in the letter that he is working to make more information public. He said he will be consulting with Mueller to determine what else can be released. But whatever is provided is unlikely to be enough for Democrats, who have said they want all of Mueller's underlying evidence — including interviews, documents and material turned over to the grand jury.

Democrats have said they are 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.

In the meantime, Democrats will keep the focus on full transparency.

"I don't want a summary of the Mueller report," tweeted Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, a Democratic

presidential candidate. "I want the whole damn report."

Associated Press writers Mike Balsamo and Lisa Mascaró contributed to this report.

Follow all of AP's Trump Investigations coverage at <https://apnews.com/TrumpInvestigations> .

## Mueller's Russia probe report rules out criminal collusion

By **ERIC TUCKER, MICHAEL BALSAMO, CHAD DAY and JULIE PACE** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller did not find evidence that President Donald Trump's campaign "conspired or coordinated" with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election but reached no conclusion on whether Trump obstructed justice, Attorney General William Barr declared. That brought a hearty claim of vindication from Trump but set the stage for new rounds of political and legal fighting.

Trump cheered the Sunday outcome but also laid bare his resentment after two years of investigations that have shadowed his administration. "It's a shame that our country has had to go through this. To be honest, it's a shame that your president has had to go through this," he said.

Democrats pointed out that Mueller found evidence for and against obstruction and demanded to see his full report. They insisted that even the summary by the president's attorney general hardly put him in the clear.

Mueller's conclusions, summarized by Barr in a four-page letter to Congress, represented a victory for Trump on a key question that has hung over his presidency from the start: Did his campaign work with Russia to defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton? That was further good news for the president on top of the Justice Department's earlier announcement that Mueller had wrapped his investigation without new indictments. The resolution also could deflate the hopes of Democrats in Congress and on the 2020 campaign trail that incriminating findings from Mueller would hobble the president's agenda and re-election bid.

But while Mueller was categorical in ruling out criminal collusion, he was more circumspect on presidential obstruction of justice. Despite Trump's claim of total exoneration, Mueller did not draw a conclusion one way or the other on whether he sought to stifle the Russia investigation through his actions including the firing of former FBI director James Comey.

According to Barr's summary, Mueller set out "evidence on both sides of the question" and stated that "while this report does not conclude the president committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him."

Barr, who was nominated by Trump in December, and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller in May 2017 and oversaw much of his work, went further in Trump's favor.

The attorney general said he and Rosenstein had determined that Mueller's evidence was insufficient to prove in court that Trump had committed obstruction of justice to hamper the probe. Barr has previously voiced a broad view of presidential powers, and in an unsolicited memo last June he cast doubt on whether the president could have obstructed justice through acts — like firing his FBI director — that he was legally empowered to take.

Barr said their decision was based on the evidence uncovered by Mueller and not affected by Justice Department legal opinions that say a sitting president cannot be indicted.

Mueller's team examined a series of actions by the president in the last two years to determine if he intended obstruction. Those include his firing of Comey one week before Mueller's appointment, his public and private haranguing of then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia investigation because of his work on the campaign, his request of Comey to end an investigation into Michael Flynn, the White House's first national security adviser, and his drafting of an incomplete explanation about his oldest son's meeting with a Russian lawyer during the campaign.

Mueller's findings absolve Trump on the question of colluding with Russia but don't entirely remove the legal threats the president and associates are facing. Federal prosecutors in New York, for instance, are investigating hush-money payments made to two women during the campaign who say they had sex with the president. Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, implicated Trump in campaign finance

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violations when he pleaded guilty last year.

The special counsel's investigation did not come up empty-handed. It ensnared nearly three dozen people, senior Trump campaign operatives among them. The probe 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 Hillary Clinton and exposed lies by Trump aides aimed at covering up their Russia-related contacts.

Thirty-four people, including six Trump aides and advisers, were charged in the investigation. Twenty-five are Russians accused of election interference either through hacking into Democratic accounts or orchestrating a social media campaign to spread disinformation on the internet.

Sunday's summary — and its suggestion that Mueller may have found evidence in support of obstruction — sets up a fight between Barr and Democrats, who called for the special counsel's full report to be released and vowed to press on with their own investigations.

"Attorney General Barr's letter raises as many questions as it answers," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said in a statement.

"Given Mr. Barr's public record of bias against the special counsel's inquiry, he is not a neutral observer and is not in a position to make objective determinations about the report," they said. Trump's own claim of complete exoneration "directly contradicts the words of Mr. Mueller and is not to be taken with any degree of credibility," they added.

Trump was at his Florida estate when lawmakers received the report. Barr's chief of staff called Emmet Flood, the lead White House lawyer on the investigation, to brief him on the findings shortly before he sent it to Congress. Mueller submitted his report to Barr instead of directly to Congress and the public because, unlike independent counsels such as Ken Starr in the case of President Bill Clinton, his investigation operated under the close supervision of the Justice Department.

Barr did not speak with the president, Mueller was not consulted on the letter, and the White House does not have Mueller's report, according to a Justice Department official.

Though Mueller did not find evidence that anyone associated with the Trump campaign coordinated with the Russian government, Barr's summary notes "multiple offers from Russian-affiliated individuals to assist the Trump campaign."

That's a likely reference not only to a June 2016 Trump Tower meeting at which Donald Trump, Jr. expected to receive damaging information on Clinton from a Kremlin-connected lawyer, as well as a conversation in London months earlier at which Trump campaign aide George Papadopoulos was told Russia had "dirt" on Clinton in the form of thousands of stolen emails.

Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York, the House Judiciary Committee chairman, said Congress needs to hear from Barr about his decision and see "all the underlying evidence." He said on Twitter, "DOJ owes the public more than just a brief synopsis and decision not to go any further in their work."

Barr said that Mueller "thoroughly" investigated the question of whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia's election interference, issuing more than 2,800 subpoenas, obtaining nearly 500 search warrants and interviewing 500 witnesses. Trump answered some questions in writing, but refused to be interviewed in person by the Mueller team.

Barr said Mueller also catalogued the president's actions including "many" that took place in "public view," a possible nod to Trump's public attacks on investigators and witnesses.

In the letter, Barr said he concluded that none of Trump's actions constituted a federal crime that prosecutors could prove in court.

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

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Online: Read the letter: <http://apne.ws/Am0jB94>

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## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

### 1. MUELLER'S REPORT COMPLETED, DEBATE CONTINUES

The stage is set for new rounds of political and legal fighting after the special counsel did not find evidence that Trump's campaign "conspired or coordinated" with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election.

### 2. TRUMP'S LEGAL WOES MAY BE FAR FROM OVER

Federal and state investigators in New York are deep into investigations of their own into the president and those in his orbit.

### 3. GAZA ROCKET STRIKES HOME IN CENTRAL ISRAEL, 7 WOUNDED

The attack prompts Benjamin Netanyahu to cut short a trip to Washington and sets the stage for a potential major conflagration, shortly before Israel's upcoming elections.

### 4. PERILOUS TIMES FOR MOZAMBICAN KIDS

Some 900,000 children have been orphaned or separated from their families, made homeless or otherwise affected by Cyclone Idai.

### 5. WHAT NEW ZEALAND PROBE WILL FOCUS ON

An inquiry into the massacre of 50 people at two Christchurch mosques will look into what roles semi-automatic guns, social media and intelligence agencies had preceding the attacks.

### 6. WHERE THERE'S A BRAIN DRAIN

A small but growing number of the millions who have already left Ukraine are doctors, nurses and computer specialists — an exodus of highly skilled workers.

### 7. BINGO, GOLF AND BONGS

More Americans in their 70s and 80s are adding marijuana use to their roster of senior activities, interested in easing age-related maladies such as arthritis and sleeplessness.

### 8. APPLE LAUNCHING LONG-AWAITED VIDEO SERVICE

The iPhone maker is expected to begin a video service that could compete with Netflix, Amazon and cable TV itself.

### 9. JORDAN PEELE'S 'US' SHATTERS BOX OFFICE RECORDS

"Us", whose plot centers on vacationing parents whose family is faced with eerie doppelgangers of themselves, debuts with \$70.3 million in ticket sales — the largest debut for an original horror film.

### 10. IT'S CHALK SO FAR IN MARCH MADNESS

The NCAA Tournament has the top three seeds in each round in the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2009.

## Israel mobilizes after Gaza rocket attack, escalation looms

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

KFAR SABA, Israel (AP) — An early morning rocket fired from the Gaza Strip demolished a house in central Israel on Monday, wounding seven people and prompting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to cut short a trip to Washington. The military quickly mobilized troops and called up reserves, setting the stage for a potential major conflagration shortly before Israel's upcoming elections.

The rocket destroyed a residential home in the farming community of Mishmeret, north of the city of Kfar Saba, wounding six members of a family. The Magen David Adom rescue service said it treated seven people overall, including two women who were moderately wounded. The others, including two children and an infant, had minor wounds.

The sounds of air raid sirens jolted residents of the Sharon area, northeast of Tel Aviv, from their sleep shortly after 5 a.m., sending them scurrying to bomb shelters. A strong sound of an explosion followed.

The Israeli military said militants from Gaza's ruling Hamas movement fired the rocket from one of their launching pads in southern Gaza Strip, near Rafah. Maj. Mika Lifshitz, a military spokeswoman, said it

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was a self-manufactured rocket with a range of 120 kilometers (75 miles). She added that two armor and infantry brigades were being mobilized to the Gaza front and that a limited drafting of reserves was also taking place.

The family home in Mishmeret was left in ruins, with tiles, broken furniture and debris scattered about. A shattered baby's crib lay among the rubble and two family dogs died in the explosion.

"It's a miracle that nobody got killed," said Assi Dvilanski, a Magen David Adom paramedic who was one of the first responders at the scene.

Netanyahu, in Washington to meet President Donald Trump, held emergency consultations with military officials back in Israel and decided to cut his visit short, cancelling a planned address to the AIPAC conference and meetings with congressional leaders.

"There has been a criminal attack on the State of Israel and we will respond forcefully," he said. "In a few hours I will meet with President Trump. I will return to Israel immediately afterward."

Anticipating a strong Israeli response, Gaza's Hamas leaders have apparently gone underground. Witnesses reported seeing Hamas evacuating its personnel from government premises. Hamas also announced that its Gaza chief, Yehiya Sinwar, had cancelled a scheduled public speech. Israel also shut down its main crossings into Gaza and imposed restrictions on fishing off the Gazan coast.

Monday's attack came 10 days after rockets were fired from Gaza toward Israel's densely populated commercial capital of Tel Aviv. The Israeli military at the time struck back and the sides appeared to be hurtling toward another confrontation. But Gaza's Hamas leaders said the rocket was fired accidentally and calm was quickly restored.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Monday's attack, but it would seem to be much harder to dismiss the latest incident as another misfire.

A possible trigger could be a prison riot late Sunday when Hamas-affiliated prisoners stabbed an Israeli guard in the neck in southern Israel. Israeli guards moved in to subdue the rioters, wounding about a dozen prisoners, three of them seriously. In a statement, Hamas called for an end to the crackdown.

"We do not yet have a full understanding of who exactly ordered the firing of the rocket," said Eran Lerman, a former deputy director at Israel's National Security Council. "But clearly this is no longer something that can be explained away as a mistake or a technical failure."

Gaza is controlled by Hamas, an Islamic militant Palestinian group that seeks Israel's destruction and possesses a large arsenal of rockets and missiles capable of striking deep inside Israel. The territory is home to other Palestinian militant groups, including Islamic Jihad, an Iranian-backed armed organization that also has a formidable rocket arsenal.

Israel and Hamas are bitter enemies and have fought three wars since the group seized power in the strip in 2007. Smaller flare-ups have occurred sporadically since Israel and Hamas fought their last war in 2014. Israel says it holds Hamas responsible for all fire coming out of the coastal territory.

The outburst comes at a sensitive time for both sides. Israel is holding national elections in 15 days. Netanyahu, who also served as defense minister, is locked in a tight fight for re-election and has faced heavy criticism from his opponents for what they say has been an ineffective response to Gaza militants.

"The reality in which Hamas turned Israel into a hostage is unprecedented and unfathomable," his chief challenger, Benny Gantz, wrote on Twitter on Monday.

Netanyahu has also come under attack from his own nationalistic camp.

"Israel's deterrence has collapsed, and it has to be said in all honesty Netanyahu has failed against Hamas," said Education Minister Naftali Bennett, head of the Yamin HeHadash faction in Netanyahu's coalition. "Netanyahu is a good prime minister but a failed defense minister."

In Gaza, Hamas has come under rare public criticism for the harsh conditions in the territory. An Israel-Egyptian blockade, combined with sanctions by the rival Palestinian Authority and mismanagement by the Hamas government have fueled an economic crisis. The territory's residents have little desire for another war with Israel.

Instead of a full-fledged conflict, Hamas has tried to end the blockade through a violent weekly protest

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movement along the Israel-Gaza border fence that it launched a year ago. It too has largely failed. About 190 Palestinians and an Israeli soldier have been killed during the weekly rallies.

Egypt, Qatar and United Nations are trying to broker a long-term truce between Israel and Hamas but that effort has yet to bring about an agreement. At the same time, there has been an uptick in violence in the West Bank over the past week, with a stabbing and shooting attack that left two Israelis dead near a West Bank settlement and Israel's killing of two Palestinians it said attacked troops.

Associated Press writer Fares Akram in Gaza City, Gaza Strip, contributed to this report.

## Long-awaited video service expected from Apple on Monday

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and TALI ARBEL AP Technology Writers

Apple is expected to announce Monday that it's launching a video service that could compete with Netflix, Amazon and cable TV itself.

It's a long-awaited attempt from the iPhone maker, several years after Netflix turned "binge watching" into a worldwide phenomenon.

The new video service is expected to have original TV shows and movies that reportedly cost Apple more than \$1 billion — far less than Netflix and HBO spend every year.

Also expected is a subscription service consisting of news, entertainment and sports bundled from newspapers and magazines.

Apple is making the announcements at its Cupertino, California, headquarters during an event likely to be studded with Hollywood celebrities.

The iPhone has long been Apple's marquee product and main money maker, but sales are starting to decline. The company is pushing digital subscriptions as it searches for new growth.

Making must-have TV shows and movies that are watchable on any device has propelled Netflix into a force in both Silicon Valley and Hollywood.

But Apple remained focused on making on gadgets: iPhones, iPads, computers and its Apple TV streaming box for TVs. Apple co-founder Steve Jobs began toying with the idea of building a powerful TV business, but he couldn't pull it off before his death in 2011. It has taken his successor, CEO Tim Cook, nearly eight years to draw up the script that the company will now try to execute.

"Apple is very late to this game," eMarketer analyst Paul Verna said. "Netflix has become the gold standard in how to create and distribute content, using all the data they have about their viewers."

Netflix's prowess has attracted 139 million subscribers worldwide. But Apple will have several other deep-pocketed competitors fighting for consumers' dollars. Amazon has also become a formidable force in video streaming. Walt Disney Co. is launching its own service this year, armed with an imposing library that became more formidable with its purchase of 21st Century Fox's films and TV series. AT&T is debuting another streaming service built around HBO.

Apple has plenty of money to spend, though, with about \$245 billion in cash and marketable securities. It must prove itself attractive to Hollywood even without a track record for supporting high-quality programming and then ensuring it gets widely seen.

As part of its efforts to make quick connections, Apple hired two longtime Sony television executives, Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg, in 2017. They have reportedly signed up stars such as Oprah Winfrey, Steven Spielberg and Jennifer Aniston.

## Upset Special? NCAA favorites lead the way into Sweet 16

By DAN GELSTON AP Sports Writer

Chalk one up for the seeded favorite in the NCAA Tournament.

The biggest upset this March isn't a wild heave at the horn for a winner from a No. 15 seed or a First Four team somehow weaving into the second weekend — it's the lack of genuine stunners to shake up the bracket.

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The top seeds are still at the top of the tourney.

The field has the top three seeds in each round in the Sweet 16 for only the second time (2009) since the bracket expanded in 1985. It's tied with 2009 for the most top four seeds (14) in the Sweet 16.

Sure, Virginia had to sweat out another tourney opener.

And Duke was a tip-in away from being done.

But it's rare this many single-digit teams still have a shot at cutting down the nets.

Think that's improbable? Consider this, the NCAA bracket tracker says one perfect bracket remains across all major online bracket games, including Yahoo, ESPN, CBS, Fox, Sports Illustrated and the NCAA's own contest. It's the longest streak of correct bracket picks, breaking the reported record of 39 games, which happened in 2017.

The NCAA says the odds of a perfect bracket are 1 in 9.2 quintillion — so bettors, take the under.

Just imagine if the entrant named "Center Road" in the NCAA's bracket challenge had bet the house on a 48-team money line parlay! For any fan who has a shot at entering one of those second-chance pools, take note: "Center Road" has Duke, Michigan State, Gonzaga, Michigan, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and Kentucky as the Elite Eight. Oh, and if you believe "Center Road" knows more than Dickie V or Sir Charles, roll the dice on Gonzaga to beat Kentucky in the national championship game.

Cinderella will take a rain check to this party, please.

The favorites don't mind if the trend continues for another week.

"Everyone is talking about a Final Four, but I've never been to a Sweet 16," Virginia guard Ty Jerome said.

The Big 12 has kept the conference from perfection. No. 4 seed Kansas State was surprised by UC Irvine (well, a surprise for everyone but "Center Road") and No. 4 seed Kansas was knocked out by fifth-seeded Auburn, which was actually favored by sportsbooks over the Jayhawks. While not among the top 16 seeds, sixth-seeded Villanova also lost, guaranteeing a new national champion will be crowned in Minneapolis.

— The 1s: Duke, Virginia, UNC, Gonzaga.

— The 2s: Michigan State, Michigan, Tennessee, Kentucky.

— The 3s: LSU, Texas Tech, Purdue and Houston.

— The 4s: FSU and Virginia Tech.

When the betting favorite wins, gamblers call it going chalk, an old-school slang term still common in an era where pools are now nearly ubiquitous. It might have to be bought in bulk for a tournament where the 12th-seeded Oregon Ducks are the only double-digit seed in the Sweet 16. The casinos surely could have used a few more upsets to keep the sportsbook a winner.

If you're a fan hooked in March because of the upstart teams from conferences no one has really heard of knocking off the blue bloods while pandemonium ensues, try back next year.

But for fans who want the best teams still alive and playing for it all, next weekend could be as good as it gets.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/MarchMadness> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

## Bingo and bongos: More seniors seek pot for age-related aches

By JOHN ROGERS Associated Press

LAGUNA WOODS, Calif. (AP) — The group of white-haired folks — some pushing walkers, others using canes — arrive right on time at the gates of Laguna Woods Village, an upscale retirement community in the picturesque hills that frame this Southern California suburb a few miles from Disneyland.

There they board a bus for a quick trip to a building that, save for the green Red Cross-style sign in the window, resembles a trendy coffee bar. The people, mostly in their 70s and 80s, pass the next several hours enjoying a light lunch, playing a few games of bingo and selecting their next month's supply of cannabis-infused products.

"It's like the ultimate senior experience," laughs 76-year-old retired beauty products distributor Ron Atkin as he sits down to watch the bingo at the back of the Bud and Bloom marijuana dispensary in Santa Ana.



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Most states now have legal medical marijuana, and 10 of them, including California, allow anyone 21 or older to use pot recreationally. The federal government still outlaws the drug even as acceptance increases. The 2018 General Social Survey, an annual sampling of Americans' views, found a record 61 percent back legalization, and those 65 and older are increasingly supportive.

Indeed, many industry officials say the fastest-growing segment of their customer base is people like Atkin — aging baby boomers or even those a little older who are seeking to treat the aches and sleeplessness and other maladies of old age with the same herb that many of them once passed around at parties.

"I would say the average age of our customers is around 60, maybe even a little older," said Kelty Richardson, a registered nurse with the Halos Health clinic in Boulder, Colorado, which provides medical examinations and sells physician-recommended cannabis through its online store.

Its medical director, Dr. Joseph Cohen, conducts "Cannabis 101" seminars at the nearby Balfour Senior Living community for residents who want to know which strains are best for easing arthritic pain or improving sleep.

Relatively little scientific study has verified the benefits of marijuana for specific problems. There's evidence pot can relieve chronic pain in adults, according to a 2017 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, but the study also concluded that the lack of scientific information poses a risk to public health.

At Bud and Bloom, winners of the bingo games take home new vape pens, but Atkin isn't really there for that. He's been coming regularly for two years to buy cannabis-infused chocolate bars and sublingual drops to treat his painful spinal stenosis since the prescription opiates he had been taking quit working.

It was "desperation" that brought him here, he said, adding that his doctors didn't suggest he try medical marijuana. But they didn't discourage him either.

The dispensary is filled with the 50 people from the bus as they peruse counters and coolers containing everything from gel caps to drops to cannabis-infused drinks, not to mention plenty of old-fashioned weed.

Adele Frascella, leaning on her cane, purchases a package of gummy candies she says helps keep her arthritic pain at bay.

"I don't like to take an opioid," said Frascella, 70.

Fashionably dressed with sparkling silver earrings, Frascella confirms with a smile that she was a pot smoker in her younger days.

"I used to do it when I was like 18, 19, 20," she said. "And then I had a baby, got married and stopped."

She took it up again a few years ago, even investing in a "volcano," a pricey, high-tech version of the old-fashioned bong that Gizmodo calls "the ultimate stoner gadget." But these days, like many other seniors, she prefers edibles to smoking.

Renee Lee, another baby boomer who smoked as a youth, got back into it more than a dozen years ago after the clinical psychologist underwent brain surgery and other medical procedures that she said had her taking "10 meds a day, four times a day."

"And I wasn't getting any better," she said, adding that she asked her doctors if she might try medical marijuana as a last resort. They said go ahead and she found it ended her pain.

In 2012 she founded the Rossmoor Medical Marijuana Club in her upscale San Francisco Bay Area retirement community.

"We started with 20 people, and we kept it really quiet for about a year and a half," she said, noting that although California legalized medical cannabis in 1996, it was still seen in some quarters as an outlaw drug.

Her group has since grown to more than 1,000 members and puts on regular events, including lectures by pro-cannabis doctors and nurses.

People Lee's age — 65 and over — are the fastest-growing segment of the marijuana-using population, said Dr. Gary Small, professor of psychiatry and aging at the University of California, Los Angeles.

He believes more studies on the drug's effects on older people are needed. And while it may improve quality of life by relieving pain, anxiety and other problems, he said, careless, unsupervised use can cause trouble.

"We know that cannabis can cause side effects, particularly in older people," he said. "They can get dizzy. It can even impair memory if the dose is too high or new ingredients are wrong. And dizziness can lead to falls, which can be quite serious."

Richardson said Colorado saw an uptick in hospital visits by older users soon after the state legalized cannabis in 2012. The problem, he said, was often caused by novices downing too many edibles.

That's a lesson Dick Watts, 75, learned the hard way. The retired New Jersey roofing contractor who keeps a winter home at Laguna Woods Village began having trouble sleeping through the night as he got into his 70s. He attended a seniors' seminar where he learned marijuana might help, so he got a cannabis-infused candy bar. He immediately ate the whole thing.

"Man, that was nearly lethal," recalled Watts, laughing.

Now when he has trouble sleeping he takes just a small sliver of candy before bed. He said he wakes up clear-headed and refreshed.

"And I have it up on a shelf so my grandkids can't get to it," Watts said.

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Associated Press Writer Krysta Fauria contributed to this story. Follow AP's complete marijuana coverage: <https://apnews.com/Marijuana>.

## **New Zealand to probe role of spies, guns in mosque attacks**

**By NICK PERRY Associated Press**

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — New Zealand will hold a top-level inquiry into the massacre of 50 people at two Christchurch mosques that will examine what roles guns, social media and spy agencies played preceding the attacks.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced Monday that it would hold a Royal Commission of Inquiry, the country's highest form of investigation.

"While New Zealanders and Muslim communities around the world are both grieving and showing compassion for one another, they are also quite rightly asking questions on how this terror attack was able to happen here," Ardern said.

Her Cabinet had previously agreed on holding an inquiry, but had not decided what level of investigation. She said royal commissions are usually reserved for matters of the gravest public importance and that was clearly appropriate in this case. She said the exact terms of the inquiry, including its duration, would be finalized over the next two weeks.

"In short, the inquiry will look at what could have or should have been done to prevent the attack," Ardern said. "It will inquire into the individual and his activities before the terrorist attack, including, of course, a look at agencies."

She said those agencies will include the country's domestic spy agency, the Security Intelligence Service, and its international counterpart, the Government Communications Security Bureau. Other agencies to be looked at include police, customs and immigration.

A royal commission is run independently from the government and is chaired by a high-court judge. It has the power to compel witnesses to testify and organizations to hand over documents. But it remains up to the courts or government to follow through on any recommendations or findings.

Australian white supremacist Brenton Tarrant, 28, has been charged with murder for the March 15 attacks. He is next due in court on April 5.

Some people have already criticized New Zealand's intelligence agencies for focusing too much on perceived threats from Muslim extremists and left-wing radicals while not looking deeply enough into possible threats from nationalist groups and white supremacists.

"There will be a focus on whether our intelligence community was concentrating its resources appropriately and whether there were any reports that could, or should, have alerted them to this attack," Ardern said. "It is important that no stone is left unturned to get to the bottom of how this act of terrorism occurred and what, if any, opportunities we had to stop it."

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On Thursday, less than a week after the attack, the government announced it was rushing through new laws to ban "military-style" semi-automatic firearms and high-capacity magazines like those used by the gunman.

Ardern said Monday that it was unacceptable that a disturbing video of the attack taken by the gunman and livestreamed on Facebook continued to be available on some social media platforms. She said she wanted assurances from social media leaders that something similar would never happen again.

New Zealand has previously held royal commissions into the 2010 Pike River coal mine disaster and building failures during the 2011 Christchurch earthquake. It is currently holding an inquiry into historical abuse in state care.

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Associated Press writer Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, contributed to this report.

## Justice sought for 4 Dutch journalists killed in El Salvador

By **ANDREW SELSKY** Associated Press

It was 1982, the height of the civil war in El Salvador. Four Dutch TV journalists had linked up with leftist rebels near the town of El Paraiso, which has an army base on its outskirts.

Planning to spend several days behind rebel lines, the newsmen hoisted rucksacks onto their backs and, carrying their recording gear, walked single-file down a narrow dirt trail.

They had only minutes to live. Lying in wait, Salvadoran soldiers armed with assault rifles and machine guns were ready to spring an ambush.

"They were sitting ducks. The military waited for them and basically executed them," said Thomas Buerghental, an American who was part of the three-member United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador, set up as part of a U.N.-brokered peace agreement in 1992.

In 1993, the commission's report on wartime human rights violations concluded that the ambush was set up to kill the journalists, and was ordered by Col. Mario Reyes Mena, a brigade commander.

Calls are now mounting in the Netherlands for Reyes Mena and others responsible for the killings to be brought to justice after a documentary shown on Dutch TV cast a spotlight on the never-prosecuted slayings. The investigative piece, aptly titled "In Cold Blood," revealed that Reyes Mena had been living for years in relative obscurity in the United States.

"It is very much in the interest of the Dutch government to bring those responsible for the deaths of the four journalists to justice," the Dutch foreign and justice ministers told lawmakers six weeks after the documentary aired. "Not only because it concerns four Dutch citizens who were shot dead, but also because it concerns journalists, who have an indispensable task in a democratic constitutional state."

"The government will make every effort to achieve this result," the ministers said.

Reyes Mena, now 79, lives in a Washington suburb. A legal resident of the United States since at least 1987, he is no longer shielded by a 1993 amnesty law that protected the military, paramilitary groups and guerrilla fighters from prosecution for human right abuses during the 12-year war. The Salvadoran Supreme Court declared the amnesty unconstitutional in 2016, though the country's legislature is now considering granting another one.

Even before the Dutch documentary aired in September, the attorney general's office in El Salvador had begun investigating possible criminal charges against Reyes Mena and Francisco Antonio Moran, the former head of the Salvadoran secret police who was also named in the U.N. report. The prosecutors were acting on a criminal complaint filed in March 2018 by lawyers for Gert Kuiper, a brother of one of the slain journalists, said Oscar Perez, a spokesman for Kuiper's legal team.

"I need to find justice," said Kuiper, whose older brother, Jan, was killed two days before his 40th birthday.

The Salvadoran attorney general's office won't comment on its confidential investigation, which the Dutch government says began last June.

The developments come amid a growing push for justice on behalf of victims of El Salvador's civil war, during which an estimated 75,000 civilians were killed, mostly by U.S.-backed government security forces.

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In November 2017, former Salvadoran army Col. Inocente Orlando Montano, accused in the 1989 massacre by soldiers of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in San Salvador, was extradited from the United States to stand trial in Spain. Several of the victims were Spaniards. He remains jailed and the trial is expected to begin later this year.

In January 2016, former Defense Minister Jose Guillermo Garcia Merin was deported from the United States to El Salvador. He is among those being prosecuted for the December 1981 massacre by a U.S.-trained Salvadoran army battalion of almost 1,000 people in the village of El Mozote, the largest massacre in modern Latin American history.

Geoff Thale, of the human rights group Washington Office on Latin America, said it is important for El Salvador to see justice done in these cases, even as the Central American country struggles with gang-related violence.

"It's hard to imagine that Salvadorans would feel confident about the ability of attorneys general and courts to bring them justice today if they can't bring justice in cases like El Mozote, or internationally covered cases like the Dutch journalists or the Jesuits," Thale said. "It's a test of the judicial system and of the rule of law in El Salvador today."

In its report, the U.N. truth commission cited statements from officers at a military base outside El Paraiso in naming Reyes Mena as the planner of the ambush on the Dutch journalists.

An Associated Press reporter, photographer and videographer went to the town house where Reyes Mena lives in Centreville, Virginia, last month after telephone calls seeking comment about the allegations were not returned. A middle-aged man opened the door a crack and then slammed it shut without saying a word.

In the Dutch documentary, Reyes Mena accused the filmmakers of being part of a communist conspiracy for seeking answers about the killings.

"I don't have to be talking about it. It was more than 30 years ago," he said. The filmmakers left after a younger man standing behind Reyes Mena told them to go.

Days before their deaths, journalists Jan Kuiper, Koos Koster, Hans ter Laag and Joop Willemsen had come under the scrutiny of El Salvador's secret police after Koster's contact information was found on a guerrilla. Before dawn on March 11, 1982, the four were rousted in their San Salvador hotel and taken to secret police headquarters for interrogation by Moran.

A photo taken after their release later that day appeared in a local newspaper with a headline identifying Koster as "a contact for subversives," according to the U.N. report.

Undeterred, the four pushed ahead with their plan to meet up with Salvadoran guerrillas on March 17. A German journalist drove them in a Volkswagen van from the capital to the outskirts of El Paraiso, where, guided by a young boy, they linked up with four rebels and headed down a path. The truth commission report, citing testimony of the sole survivor of the ambush, a rebel identified only as Martin, described what happened next.

"They had gone about 250 meters when they came under heavy fire from M16 rifles and M60 machine guns, coming from two hills about 100 meters away. Martin saw two of the journalists fall to the ground. They were hit by the first shots and never moved again," the report said. Martin ran a zig-zag path to evade the bullets and escaped.

Soon after the ambush, Todd Greentree, a political officer at the U.S. Embassy at the time, met with reporters and dismissed as fiction the official Salvadoran account that the newsmen died in crossfire.

Still, Greentree says he's "very ambivalent" about seeking justice for what he said was "obviously a war crime."

Bringing individual officers to trial for what appeared to be a coordinated operation among different security force branches seems at best "an incomplete form of seeking justice," he said by telephone from his home in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Greentree said the Dutch journalists were seen by Salvadoran security forces as agents of the enemy because of a previous film that Koster made that they considered sympathetic to the rebels.

Buergenthal disagrees. "These were legitimate journalists," he said.

Globally, journalists now face even greater peril, with the number killed in retaliation for their work nearly

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doubling in 2018 over the previous year to 34, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The 1982 case stands out because state security targeted the newsmen, said Natalie Southwick, CPJ program coordinator for South and Central America.

Bringing those responsible to justice is "incredibly important" because it sends a message to those considering killing journalists that they won't get away with it, Southwick said.

Buergenthal, who from 2000 to 2010 served as a judge on the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands, said the Dutch government was oddly silent about the killings for years.

"I expected, when I was elected to the court, that sooner or later somebody from the Dutch government would try to find out more about the case," Buergenthal recalled. "Not a word. No interest shown, whatsoever. I don't know why."

Associated Press reporters Mike Corder in Amsterdam; Marcos Aleman in San Salvador, El Salvador, and Luis Alonso Lugo in Centreville, Va., contributed to this report.

Follow Andrew Selsky on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/andrewselsky>

## Trump declares victory now but legal perils far from over

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump may be reveling in what he sees as "complete and total exoneration" from special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, but his legal perils are far from over.

Federal and state investigators in New York are deep into investigations of their own into Trump and those in his orbit, probes that some observers have long viewed as every bit as menacing as Mueller's two-year look into possible collusion with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election.

"They are very real and very significant," said Patrick J. Cotter, a former federal prosecutor in the Southern District of New York. "If you're Trump, this has got to feel, in some ways, like an even greater threat than the Russia probe."

Federal prosecutors in Manhattan are pursuing at least two known criminal inquiries, one focused into possible corruption in Trump's inaugural committee and another on the hush-money scandal that led his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, to plead guilty last year to campaign-finance violations.

The president also faces inquiries from New York's attorney general, Letitia James, who recently opened a civil inquiry into Cohen's claims that Trump exaggerated his wealth when seeking loans for real estate projects and in a failed bid to buy the NFL's Buffalo Bills. Meanwhile, a state regulatory entity is looking into whether Trump gave false information to insurance companies.

Cohen told Congress in testimony last month he is in "constant contact" with prosecutors involving ongoing investigations.

Trump has dismissed the New York investigations as politically motivated harassment, a theme he and his supporters are likely to keep hammering in the wake of the Mueller findings.

The Justice Department declared Sunday that Mueller's two-year investigation found no evidence that Trump's campaign "conspired or coordinated" with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election, and did not come to a definitive answer on whether Trump obstructed justice.

Reacting to the findings in Florida on Sunday, Trump called the Mueller probe "an illegal takedown that failed."

The U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan declined to comment on the New York probes but has told a federal judge it is still investigating campaign-finance violations committed when Cohen helped orchestrate six-figure payments to a porn actress, Stormy Daniels, and a former Playboy model, Karen McDougal, to keep them quiet during the campaign about alleged affairs with Trump. Cohen says Trump ordered the payments and later reimbursed him for his efforts. So far, nobody besides Cohen has been charged.

Political observers have continued to speculate that Cohen, who is scheduled to report to prison in May,

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might secretly be providing investigators with additional information.

"If you've got Michael Cohen, the president's former lawyer, as a tour guide, that means you could go anywhere," former Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey told MSNBC recently.

Cohen stoked speculation when he told Congress he was aware of other "wrongdoing" involving Trump but couldn't talk about it because it was "part of the investigation that's currently being looked at by the Southern District of New York."

Among other things, he suggested prosecutors were investigating communications he had with either Trump or one of his representatives in spring 2018 in the months after the FBI raided his home and office. At the time, Cohen was looking for information about whether Trump might consider giving him a pardon.

The president has denied breaking any laws and dismissed Cohen as a liar. He derided the state investigations in New York as a "witch hunt," calling the state and its Democratic governor and attorney general "proud members of the group of PRESIDENTIAL HARASSERS."

Trump says the payments to Daniels and McDougal were a private matter unrelated to his campaign.

The White House has said Trump was not involved in the operations of his inaugural committee, which raised \$107 million to celebrate his election.

The inquiry into the committee has focused partly on whether donors received "benefits" after making contributions or whether foreign nationals made barred donations, according to a subpoena sent to the committee. The same document shows prosecutors are looking at whether the committee's vendors were paid with unreported donations.

The U.S. Justice Department has held for nearly a half-century that a sitting president is constitutionally immune from criminal prosecution, a conclusion Cotter, the former prosecutor, referred to as Trump's "ace in the hole."

If prosecutors find evidence Trump committed a crime, they could wait to charge him after he leaves office, though the legal deadline for filing charges is five years for most federal offenses, including the campaign-finance violations in question in the Cohen case.

The possibility of Trump's re-election has raised questions about whether that deadline could be tolled — suspended — for the duration of his presidency.

Jennifer Rodgers, a former federal prosecutor in the Southern District of New York, said it's unlikely a judge would allow that because no law expressly forbids charges against a sitting president. Tolling the statute of limitations is typically reserved for circumstances beyond the government's control, like when a defendant becomes a fugitive.

"The DOJ, in fact, could proceed with a case" against the president, said Rodgers, who lectures at Columbia Law School. "They aren't because of their own policy."

James, New York's attorney general, also has a pending lawsuit alleging Trump and his family illegally ran the Trump Foundation as an extension of his businesses and presidential campaign. And she has called for a "full examination" of a New York Times report accusing Trump's family of benefiting from "dubious tax schemes" in the 1990s.

The foundation has agreed to dissolve. Its lawyers have argued that the lawsuit is flimsy and politically motivated.

Experts have said the president is unlikely to be criminally prosecuted over the tax matters, which are far past the statute of limitations, but state officials could pursue Trump for millions of dollars in civil fines.

## Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski announces retirement

By KYLE HIGHTOWER AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — The party's over for Rob Gronkowski. Then again, it might just be getting started.

The New England Patriots' fun-loving, touchdown-spiking tight end announced Sunday that he is retiring from the NFL after nine mostly dominant, Super Bowl-filled seasons.

The four-time All-Pro posted his decision on Instagram, saying that a few months shy of his 30th birthday "it's time to move forward and move forward with a big smile."

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"It all started at 20 years old on stage at the NFL draft when my dream came true, and now here I am about to turn 30 in a few months with a decision I feel is the biggest of my life so far," Gronkowski wrote in his post. "I will be retiring from the game of football today."

Drew Rosenhaus, Gronkowski's agent, confirmed his client's decision to retire.

The playmaking tight end, who turns 30 in May, leaves as a three-time Super Bowl champion who established himself as one of the most dominant players at his position and one of Tom Brady's favorite targets. His personality — on and off the field — was as big as his biceps, and he always seemed to be the life of the party.

"In the nine years that I have known Rob Gronkowski, I have never known him to have a bad day," Patriots owner Robert Kraft said in a statement. "He always has a youthful exuberance about him and is a joy to be around."

But Gronkowski has been dogged in recent seasons by back, knee, ankle and arm injuries that have limited his ability to stay on the field.

It led him to hint at retirement following New England's Super Bowl loss to the Philadelphia Eagles to end the 2017 season and again last month after the Patriots' Super Bowl win over the Los Angeles Rams.

In his Instagram post, Gronkowski thanked the Patriots organization, coach Bill Belichick and New England's fans for their support during his nine NFL seasons.

"Thank you for everyone accepting who I am and the dedication I have put into my work to be the best player I could be," Gronkowski wrote.

Belichick said Gronkowski was a major reason the Patriots won championships.

"His production spoke for itself, but his daily attitude, unmistakably positive energy wherever he went and toward whoever he touched will never be forgotten," Belichick said in a statement.

Gronkowski's teammates also almost immediately began to flood social media with well-wishes.

"Love you man!!" Brady wrote on Instagram, along with an emoji of a goat to refer to Gronkowski as the greatest of all-time. "Couldn't be a better person or teammate!!!!"

It was a sentiment shared by receiver Julian Edelman.

"The other goat," Edelman posted on his Instagram page, also referring to Brady.

Though he won't have the longevity of some of his contemporaries at tight end, Gronkowski is expected to get strong consideration for the Pro Football Hall of Fame when eligible.

Gronkowski, a second-round pick in the 2010 draft, had his fourth career 1,000-yard receiving season in 2017 and was an All-Pro for the fourth time that season.

But at times he looked like a shell of himself during the Patriots' Super Bowl run this past season. Gronkowski finished the 2018 regular season with just 47 catches for 682 yards and three touchdowns.

He had one of his best games of the season in the Patriots' Super Bowl win over the Rams, hauling in six catches for 87 yards, including two receptions on New England's only touchdown drive during their 13-3 victory.

A fan favorite in New England for his gregarious and playful persona that included awkward dance moves and touchdown celebrations, Gronkowski was one of the most dominant tight ends of his era.

His 12 career postseason touchdown receptions are the most by a tight end in NFL playoff history. His 81 career postseason catches are also best among tight ends.

He'll also retire with 79 career TD catches — regular season and playoffs — which is third all-time by a tight end behind only Antonio Gates (116) and Tony Gonzalez (111).

Brady and Gronkowski connected on 78 TD passes. It is the second-most scoring connections between a quarterback and a tight end in NFL history behind only Philip Rivers and Gates (89) and is fifth overall between quarterbacks and all pass-catchers.

"Rob will leave an indelible mark on the Patriots organization and the game," Brady said, "as among the best, most complete players at his position to ever play."

## Military-backed party leads Thailand's post-coup election

By **STEPHEN WRIGHT** Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A military-backed party has taken the lead in Thailand's first election since a 2014 coup, preliminary results showed, suggesting junta leader and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha could stay in power, helped by an electoral system tilted in the military's favor.

With 93 percent of votes counted late Sunday, the Palang Pracharat party was first with nearly 7.6 million votes, according to the Election Commission. Its vote total falls short of the numbers needed for an outright majority in parliament. Pheu Thai, which was the governing party ousted by the coup, was next with 7.1 million votes.

The country likely faces several weeks of bargaining among political parties before a potentially unstable coalition government is formed in May or June. Thais voted for a 500-member parliament, which along with a 250-member junta-appointed Senate will decide the next prime minister.

A new party, Future Forward, which was anti-junta and popular with young voters, scooped up 5.2 million votes. But voters deserted the Democrat Party, the country's oldest political party, in its Bangkok and southern strongholds. Its leader, former Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, resigned. Another party, Phumjai Thai, which experts say could support the junta, picked up 3.2 million votes.

"It looks unlikely that a sizeable enough anti-junta majority will form in the House to put pressure on the military to back away," said Peter Mumford, an analyst at Eurasia Group, which advises international companies on political risks.

That combined with the role of junta-appointed senators in helping to pick the next prime minister means Prayuth "remains in pole position for now," he said in a post-election analysis.

"There will be uncertainty created by post-election coalition negotiations, potential recounts, disqualifications and constituency race reruns, and concerns over the legitimacy of the election," Mumford said.

The election was the latest chapter in a nearly two-decade struggle pitching conservative forces including the military against the political machine of Thaksin Shinawatra, a tycoon who upended tradition-bound Thailand's politics with a populist political revolution.

Thaksin was ousted as prime minister 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 Pheu Thai government that was ousted in 2014, also fled the country after what supporters said was a politically motivated prosecution.

The blunt-speaking Prayuth, who as army chief led the 2014 coup, was 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 Palang Pracharat and the military.

Nearly 6 percent of votes were disqualified, according to the Election Commission, which said it would provide an update on counting Monday.

Pheu Thai's secretary general, Phumtham Wechayachai, said the party was waiting for official results but believes there were irregularities. The party wants to inspect disqualified and spoiled ballots, he said.

"Even the reported numbers from the Election Commission and each media outlet are different. We have our own number too. The Election Commission report even paused for a while. It will be clearer once the official result is announced," Phumtham said.

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, but the 66 percent turnout fell short of their hopes.

A statement from Prayuth's office said he thanked people for voting and officials for holding the election in an orderly fashion.

"What is now interesting is how Palang Pracharat can bring together a coalition," said Kevin Hewison, a Thai politics expert who is a University of North Carolina emeritus professor.

"It looks like it needs at least two other parties but will probably cobble together more than that in the hope of creating a more stable government," he said.

Thailand's powerful King Maha Vajiralongkorn had issued a statement on the eve of the election that said



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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 revered monarch 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 king'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.

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 a selling point for Prayuth, who according to critics has overseen a period of growing inequality and economic hardship in Thailand.

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, Pheu Thai said the houses of party officials and its campaign canvassers in some provinces were searched by military personnel in an act of intimidation.

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Associated Press journalists Grant Peck, Kawewit Kaewjinda and Preeyapa T. Khunsong contributed to this report.

## Oversight or overreach? Democrats wrestle with Trump probes

By **LISA MASCARO** and **STEVE PEOPLES** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For many Democrats, Robert Mueller's investigation has long stood as their best, last chance to take down President Donald Trump before the next election.

The summary of Mueller's report released on Sunday not only lacked that punch, it now forces a moment of reckoning over how far to take the investigations ahead.

It's a delicate issue heading into the 2020 election, where Democrats are balancing the wishes of the liberal, anti-Trump base and the threat of Republicans accusing them of ginning up political witch hunts.

After the summary revealed Mueller found no evidence of Russian collusion, Trump campaign manager Brad Parscale blamed Democrats as having "lied" to Americans and taking them "on a frantic, chaotic, conspiracy-laden roller coaster."

The new landscape leaves Democrats on Capitol Hill and on the presidential campaign trail facing a more complicated path forward.

For weeks, they have worked to set expectations, assuring restless liberals across the country that Mueller's work was the beginning, rather than the end, of the inquiries.

Facing pressure from the base to dig deeper into Trump's personal and professional issues, Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill are mounting their own far-reaching congressional probes into the Republican president before and after he took office. And with only a summary of Mueller's report released by Trump's hand-picked attorney general so far, they're threatening to subpoena Mueller's full report and promising an onslaught of high-drama hearings.

But that intense focus on probe is raising some concerns that it could prove a distraction.

One of the many 2020 presidential candidates, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg, called Sunday's findings "further evidence that it would be a mistake for Democrats to think that the way for the Trump presidency to end is by way of investigation."

Trump became president in part because Democrats in 2016 made the contest too much about him, and not enough about voters, Buttigieg said on MSNBC. He called on his party to stay focused on issues important to people's everyday lives, such as the economy, racial justice and climate change.

Another contender disagreed with those calling for Democrats to move on. "If the investigation into that attack was covered up or obstructed, there has to be accountability and a reckoning," Beto O'Rourke told

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reporters Sunday in Las Vegas.

Most of the other Democratic contenders offered a far simpler message, calling for the release of Mueller's full report — a safe play, politically, as polls show Americans are largely on their side. The House voted overwhelming last week to release it, 420-0.

Still, it's unclear how far Democrats can go in pursuing the investigations that are being demanded by the base of their party without alienating the wide swath of more centrist voters Trump is trying to keep close ahead of the 2020 election.

Democratic strategist Brian Fallon said it won't be tops on the agenda for presidential candidates or those running for Senate. But he said Democrats are on solid ground as they push for release of the report and conduct oversight voters demanded while also focusing on the kitchen table issues — health care, climate change — important to voters. It's the same blueprint Democrats used when voters gave the party control of the House in the midterm election.

"I don't think the public expects Congress to be shrinking violets," he said. "They expect Democrats to pursue oversight and not go overboard."

Liberal activists are already preparing for nationwide protests should the Trump administration not release the full report or appear to be hiding key evidence. After waiting two years for damning evidence on the Republican president, the Democratic base is unlikely to let the issue fade quietly away.

"There is an enormous amount of energy behind this," said Democratic strategist Zac Petkanas. "And I think people should not underestimate what a White House cover-up will unleash if they decide to hide one word of the report or underlying evidence. We are at the beginning of a long fight to ensure that there's not a cover-up."

For Democrats in Congress, pursuing the investigations on their own now is a risky strategy.

In Mueller they had a truth-teller beyond reproach, whose credentials and bipartisan backing gave the questions swirling around Trump more than an air of credibility. Democrats put him "right next to Jesus," cracked Republican Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio on Sunday. Republicans, for the most part, backed Mueller's work.

As Democrats go it alone with congressional investigation, they lose that stamp of impartiality and expose themselves to Trump's constant cries of "presidential harassment."

"What will now follow is mainly political harassment leading to, perhaps, a futile impeachment exercise," Republican Sen. John Cornyn of Texas tweeted.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has drawn criticism from some in the party for her reluctance to pursue impeachment — she has said Trump isn't worth it. The speaker views impeachment as politically fraught unless Democrats have the groundswell of public opinion behind them. Front of mind is her experience during the Republican drive to impeach President Bill Clinton, which voters saw as overly partisan, especially once the independent counsel's report was released, and contributed to GOP electoral losses.

Instead, Pelosi frames the investigations ahead as Congress exerting its constitutional duty to the necessary checks and balances on the executive that voters want. Democrats are sweeping beyond the Russia probe into the president's potential conflicts — his tax returns, financial dealings, Trump Hotel — in the tangled intersection of business and politics.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., a member of the Judiciary Committee and co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, said this is perhaps an "unparalleled" moment in the country's history and Mueller's work is just the start.

"I don't think there's a risk of overreach when you talk about criminal acts — multiple criminal acts — conducted by the top people around the president of the United States," she said. "We have to lay it out for ourselves and lay it for the people and see where it leads us."

But the political risks for Democrats loom large. Trump's team flashed a newly emboldened offensive strategy after years of playing defense.

"Hang in there Dems," White House aide Dan Scavino tweeted after the report was released, "ya all have SIX more YEARS of TRUMP."

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

## Banning of manifesto raises free speech debate in N. Zealand

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

DUNEDIN, New Zealand (AP) — New Zealanders are debating the limits of free speech after their chief censor banned the 74-page manifesto written and released by the man accused of slaughtering 50 people at two mosques in the city of Christchurch.

The ban, issued Saturday, means anybody caught with the document on their computer could face up to 10 years in prison, while anyone caught sending it could face 14 years. Some say the ban goes too far and risks lending both the document and the gunman mystique.

At the same time, many local media organizations are debating whether to even name the Australian man charged with murder in the March 15 attacks, 28-year-old Brenton Tarrant, after New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern vowed she would never mention him by name.

In some ways, Tarrant's manifesto provides the greatest insight into his character and thinking, with neighbors and those he met in a gym in the sleepy seaside town of Dunedin recalling nothing particularly remarkable about him.

Chief Censor David Shanks said Tarrant's manifesto contains justifications for acts of tremendous cruelty like killing children and encourages acts of terrorism, even outlining specific places to target and methods to carry out attacks.

He said that in banning the document, he and his staff worried about drawing more attention to it. But in the end, he said, they decided they needed to treat it the same way as propaganda from groups like the Islamic State, which they have also banned.

Shanks had earlier placed a similar ban on the 17-minute livestream video the killer filmed from a camera mounted on his helmet during the shootings. He said researchers and journalists could apply for exemptions from both bans.

But while free speech advocates haven't questioned banning the graphic video, they said banning the manifesto is a step too far.

"People are more confident of each other and their leaders when there is no room left for conspiracy theories, when nothing is hidden," said Stephen Franks, a constitutional lawyer and spokesman for the Free Speech Coalition. "The damage and risks are greater from suppressing these things than they are from trusting people to form their own conclusions and to see evil or madness for what it is."

Franks said he had no interest in reading the manifesto until it was banned. He now is curious because it is "forbidden fruit," he said, and he worries others may feel the same way. He said the ban makes no sense when New Zealanders remain free to read Adolf Hitler's autobiography, "Mein Kampf."

Ardern told Parliament last week that she wouldn't give the gunman anything he wanted.

"He sought many things from his act of terror, but one was notoriety," she said. "And that is why you will never hear me mention his name."

She said people should instead remember the names of the victims.

Some media organizations appear to be taking up her call. News website Stuff on Saturday published an 1,800-word profile on Tarrant without once naming him.

"Our view at the moment is that we're dialing back on naming him, unless it's pertinent or important," said Mark Stevens, the editorial director at Stuff.

The New Zealand Herald also published a profile on Tarrant with an accompanying editorial that mentions Ardern's stance. The editorial says, "Our piece keeps the mention of his name to a minimum."

News organizations fear Tarrant will use his trial as a soapbox to promote his white nationalist views, especially after he fired his lawyer and said he'd represent himself.

But Danish journalist Claus Blok Thomsen, who works for the Politiken newspaper and covered the trial of Norwegian mass murderer Anders Breivik, said there are dangers in censoring Tarrant. He said that during the Breivik trial, many media outlets, including his own, were careful to report only what happened

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in court without discussing Breivik's far-right ideology.

He said it was an approach favored by intellectuals and so-called experts, but when he interviewed the families of the victims, he found many of them were angry.

"They said when we start to censor ourselves, we just make him into a martyr," Thomsen said. "We are not able to learn how mad this guy was, what his thinking was, until everything is out in the light."

In his manifesto, Tarrant describes himself as being born into a working-class family and not being interested in university. He says he made some money investing, although in other internet posts he talks about getting an inheritance when his father died.

In Dunedin, about a five-hour drive south of Christchurch, Tarrant lived in a modest pale-green wooden apartment. His neighbors said they'd see him out running sometimes, but that he mostly kept to himself. At the Anytime Fitness gym, those who knew him described him as polite and interested mainly in pumping weights that build upper-body strength.

Tarrant was also a member of the Bruce Rifle Club, which has a shooting range down a dusty forest road that's used mostly by hunters and loggers, about a 45-minute drive southwest of Dunedin near the rural town of Milton.

Dozens of boxes of bowling pins stacked in teetering towers and a few fluorescent vests are all there is inside a simple hut at the range. The club closed indefinitely last week after it emerged that Tarrant was a member.

But like much of his life in Dunedin, Tarrant was something of a ghost at the club. Polite, low-key, helpful, normal. Club vice president Scott Williams told the Otago Daily Times that Tarrant seemed "as normal as anyone else" and never mentioned anything about his white supremacist beliefs.

"I think we're feeling a bit stunned and shocked and a bit betrayed, perhaps, that we've had this person in our club who has ended up doing these horrible things," he told the newspaper.

Williams said Tarrant was always helping out around the club, including setting up and packing down the range. He said Tarrant used a hunting rifle and an AR-15, which wasn't unusual.

One of the few people who has publicly said he had concerns about Tarrant before the attacks is hunting guide Pete Breidahl. He said he complained in 2017 to a local police officer who monitors gun licenses about the disturbing behavior of some members of the rifle club.

In a Facebook video and comments posted online, Breidahl said some club members had Confederate flags, wore camouflage clothing with rank insignia, vilified Muslims and had homicidal fantasies. He claimed to have met Tarrant, calling him "not right." Police said they had no record of a complaint but were looking into Breidahl's claims.

In his manifesto, Tarrant claims he got approval for his attack from Breivik, who killed 77 people in Oslo and a nearby island in 2011. Breivik's lawyer has said that's very unlikely because his client has limited contact with the outside world from his prison cell.

Thomsen, the journalist, said the biggest fear he and other reporters had when they were covering Breivik was that he would inspire a copycat killer. Now he's traveled to Christchurch to learn more about what happened there.

"I think it's safe to say that this is what we feared," he said.

## **Analysis: A cloud lifts over Trump, but at a cost**

**By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The cloud that has hung over President Donald Trump since the day he walked into the White House has been lifted.

Yes, special counsel Robert Mueller left open the question of whether Trump tried to obstruct the investigation. Yes, separate federal probes still put Trump and his associates in legal jeopardy. And yes, Democrats will spend the coming months pushing for more details from Mueller, all while launching new probes into Trump's administration and businesses.

But at its core, Mueller's investigation gave the president what he wanted: public affirmation that he and

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his campaign did not coordinate with Russia to win the 2016 election. After spending months tweeting "No collusion," Trump had been proven right.

The findings, summarized Sunday by the Justice Department, are sure to embolden Trump as he plunges into his re-election campaign, armed now with new fodder to claim the investigation was little more than a politically motivated effort to undermine his presidency.

"It's a shame that our country had to go through this," Trump said. "To be honest, it's a shame that your president has had to go through this."

Mueller's investigation stretched on for nearly two years, enveloping Trump's presidency in a cloud of uncertainty and sending him into frequent fits of rage. The scope of the probe was sweeping: Mueller issued more than 2,800 subpoenas, obtained nearly 500 search warrants and interviewed 500 witnesses, including some of the president's closest advisers.

And Trump's ultimate vindication on the question of collusion with Russia came at a steep cost.

The investigation took down his campaign chairman, his White House national security adviser and his longtime lawyer. It revealed the extent of Moscow's desire to swing the 2016 contest toward Trump, as well as Trump's pursuit of business deals in Russia deep into the campaign. And the Justice Department didn't explain why so many Trump associates lied throughout the investigation.

But in the end, Mueller concluded that those lies were not an effort to obscure a criminal conspiracy by Trump and his advisers to work with Russia. There was smoke, and plenty of it — including an eyebrow-raising meeting between Trump's son and a Russian lawyer — but ultimately, no fire.

"Good day for the rule of law. Great day for President Trump and his team," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. "Bad day for those hoping the Mueller investigation would take President Trump down."

Democrats quickly sought to puncture Trump and fellow Republicans' jubilation, vowing to subpoena Mueller's full report, which remains a secret. After spending years questioning Trump's ties to Moscow, the Democrats' focus is shifting to the question Mueller pointedly left unanswered: whether Trump obstructed the investigation by firing FBI Director James Comey and dictating a misleading statement about his son's meeting with the Russian lawyer.

"The fact that special counsel Mueller's report does not exonerate the president on a charge as serious as obstruction of justice demonstrates how urgent it is that the full report and underlying documentation be made public without any further delay," House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said in a joint statement.

The fight for those documents will be lengthy and contentious, particularly against the backdrop of the 2020 presidential election. It will involve complex debates over the rules that govern special counsel investigations, which put a member of Trump's Cabinet in charge of summarizing Mueller's findings for the public, and a president's right to keep his private discussions out of the public eye.

Previewing the case Democrats will make to get more details about Trump's actions, House Judiciary Chairman Jerry Nadler, D-N.Y., declared: "Executive privilege cannot be used to shield or hide wrongdoing."

For Trump and his associates, the argument will be far simpler: Democrats already tried to go after the president once and failed.

"Just as important a victory as this is for President Trump, this is a crushing defeat for Democrats and members of the media who have pushed the collusion delusion myth for the past two years. That officially ends today," said Jason Miller, a former Trump campaign official.

Trump's legal troubles are far from over. Federal prosecutors in Manhattan are pursuing at least two criminal inquiries involving the president or people in his orbit, one involving his inaugural committee and another focused on the hush-money scandal that led his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, to plead guilty last year to campaign finance violations. New York Attorney General Letitia James is also looking into whether Trump exaggerated his wealth when seeking loans for real estate projects and a failed bid to buy the NFL's Buffalo Bills.

But in the hours after Mueller's findings were released, those investigations appeared to be a world away for Trump. As he walked into the White House Sunday night, he pumped his fist to a group of supporters

and declared, "America is the greatest place on earth, the greatest place on earth."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Julie Pace has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2007. Follow her at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>.

Follow all of AP's Trump Investigations coverage at <https://apnews.com/TrumpInvestigations>

## Mozambican families hunt for loved ones separated by cyclone

By CARA ANNA Associated Press

BUZI, Mozambique (AP) — The young mother huddled on a wooden boat clutching her 2-year-old daughter, headed for the unknown: The flooded town of Buzi, which thousands have fled with little but the clothes on their backs.

Fishermen's boats have been ferrying out Buzi's displaced, sometimes scores of people crammed into a single vessel. But Veronica Fatia was going against the tide, up waters that only recently carried corpses to the sea. She was looking for her mother, hoping she was still alive.

Ten days after the fierce rains and winds roared in, the death toll stood at more than 750 in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi — a count that was certain to rise. Thousands of families swept apart by the storm were now seeking to reunite.

After a three-hour journey Fatia stepped carefully out of the boat and walked into the remains of Buzi, a once bustling riverside city of 200,000 now reduced to homelessness and despair.

She passed the shuttered Jesus Saves Bank and a nearby three-story building where residents clustered on the rooftop in search of a signal for their cellphones. She passed people living in the open along the sandy main road. Some were cooking, others building crude shelters. A young boy read a textbook. Her mother might be at the school, Fatia thought.

A cry went up as she approached the building and people came running.

"Mama!" she shouted as she caught sight of her mother. They embraced on a concrete walkway now filled with cooking fires and small children, one nodding off beside a pile of warm ashes.

"My home is gone, but I'm still happy because I can see my family," Fatia said.

Her mother, Maria Antonio, said she last saw her daughter two days before the storm. "I didn't know anything about her," she said. "I'm very happy to see her."

But the fate of her other daughter, in Quelimane further north, remains unknown.

It is a common heartbreak for thousands of families in central Mozambique, who have no way to learn about missing loved ones as destroyed communications networks struggle to return. People are desperately searching for family members separated by the flooding, destruction and death. Many will not be as lucky as Fatia.

The fishing boats between Buzi and the cyclone-shattered port city of Beira about 125 miles (200 kilometers) away are now a lifeline carrying survivors and essential supplies, braving bursts of rain, rolling waves and the ever-pervasive stench of death. Near Buzi, a dog's carcass hung from the branches of a tree.

Cut off from the world, people can easily panic. One member of the Mozambican Red Cross, Assane Paul, tried to calm a knot of people in Buzi who had heard a rumor that another cyclone was on the way.

Others tried to adapt however they could, from the Bible reader on the rooftop who blamed the cyclone on people's sins to the man walking down the road in soaking wet trousers. They were the only clothes he had, he explained. It was very much wash and wear.

Many people were still on the move. Dozens waited at Buzi's small pier for the fishermen's boats to pull up, bags of belongings at their feet and concern on their faces. Others simply watched for news.

At the other end of the journey, the beach in Beira, children and barefoot women were carried off a fishing boat and gathered together by aid workers in the rain. Some looked lost. Few carried much. One small girl stood alone, hugging herself, her eyes wide and pleading.

"I hid in the mosque," said 12-year-old Ramadan Gulam. "I was there for a week." He had come from

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Buzi with nothing but a bag of clothes and his brothers. "My father said to go because the floods would come again. ... I don't know what to do now."

Christina Machado came with her two children and a bandage on her ankle. It was cut by a tin roof during the cyclone, she said. It was treated just yesterday.

"I'm looking for my husband," she said. He had been working in Beira for two months. She didn't know where she would be taken next.

Francisco Mambonda spent about a week on a rooftop with nothing to eat. He and his wife and sons drank muddy water to survive.

Barefoot, shivering and in tattered shorts, he added another plea to the growing chorus: "I don't know what to do now."

Still, there was a ray of hope for emergency crews.

As night fell and one wooden boat from Buzi approached the flickering, generator-lit Beira skyline, another passed in the dusk. It carried soldiers to their duties. Some raised their guns and cheered.

## Terror at sea: Helicopter rescues frighten cruise passengers

By MARK LEWIS and JARI TANNER Associated Press

STAVANGER, Norway (AP) — Rodney Horgen recalled the moment he thought he was facing the end: when a huge wave crashed through the Viking Sky cruise ship's glass doors and swept his wife 30 feet across the floor.

Horgen, 62, of Minnesota, was visiting Norway on a dream pilgrimage to his ancestral homeland when the luxury cruise quickly turned into a nightmare.

The Viking Sky was carrying 1,373 passengers and crew, going from Norway's Arctic north to the southern city of Stavanger when it had engine trouble along Norway's rough, frigid western coast. Struggling in heavy seas to avoid being dashed on the rocky coast, the ship issued a mayday call Saturday afternoon.

Horgen said he knew something was badly amiss when the guests on the heaving ship were summoned to the vessel's muster points.

"When the windows and door flew open and the 2 meters (6 feet) of water swept people and tables 20 to 30 feet that was the breaker. I said to myself, 'This is it,'" Horgen told The Associated Press. "I grabbed my wife but I couldn't hold on. And she was thrown across the room. And then she got thrown back again by the wave coming back."

Photos posted on social media showed the ship listing from side to side and furniture smashing violently into the ship's walls. The hands and faces of fellow passengers were cut and bleeding from the shattered glass, he said.

An experienced fisherman, Horgen said he had never before encountered such rough boating conditions.

"I did not have a lot of hope. I knew how cold that water was and where we were and the waves and everything. You would not last very long," he said. "That was very, very frightening."

And yet, the scariest part was yet to come.

That was when hundreds of passengers, including Horgen, were winched off the heaving ship by helicopter, one-by-one as winds howled around them in the dark of night, by rescue workers trying to evacuate everyone on board.

Waves up to 26-feet- (8-meters-) high were smacking into the ship, making it impossible to evacuate anyone by boat.

The ship was within 100 meters (300 feet) of striking rocks under the water and 900 meters (2,950 feet) from shore when it stopped and anchored in Hustadvika Bay so passengers could be evacuated, Coast Guard official Emil Heggelund told Norway's VG newspaper.

Norway's Joint Rescue Coordination Center stepped in, sending in five helicopters. Passenger Alexis Sheppard told the AP that people with injuries or disabilities were winched off the cruise ship first.

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

Janet Jacob, among the first group of passengers evacuated to the nearby town of Molde, told Norwe-

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gian broadcaster NRK that the winds felt "like a tornado" and prompted her to start praying for everyone on the ship.

"I was afraid. I've never experienced anything so scary," she said.

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

Viking Ocean Cruises, the company that owns and operates the ship, said 20 people were injured and received treatment at medical centers.

The airlift evacuation went all through the night and into Sunday morning, slowing for a bit when two of the five rescue helicopters had to be diverted to save nine crewmembers from a nearby ailing cargo ship.

In all, 479 passengers were airlifted to land, leaving 436 passengers and 458 crew members onboard, the company said, when the Viking Sky's captain decided on a new plan.

Einar Knudsen of Norway's Joint Rescue Coordination Center said the airlift was halted when the captain decided before noon Sunday to try to bring the cruise ship to the nearby port of Molde on its own engines.

"The conditions were good enough for the captain to have no more evacuations," Knudsen told the AP.

Three of the ship's four engines were working so a tug boat and two other vessels assisted the Viking Sky as it slowly headed to Molde under its own power. It finally docked at the port late Sunday afternoon, the cruise company said.

The Viking Oceans Cruise company said the ship's next scheduled trip, to Scandinavia and Germany that was to leave on Wednesday, was cancelled. Norway's Accident Investigations Board said the ship would remain in Molde, pending an investigation.

The Viking Sky was a relatively new ship, delivered in 2017 to operator Viking Ocean Cruises.

It had departed for a 12-day cruise from the southern Norwegian city of Bergen, visiting the Norwegian towns and cities of Narvik, Alta, Tromso and Bodo before its scheduled arrival Tuesday in the British port of Tilbury on the River Thames. The passengers were mostly an English-speaking mix of American, British, Canadian, New Zealand and Australian citizens.

Viking Cruises chairman Torstein Hagen praised the rescue operation by Norwegian authorities and the actions of the vessel's crew.

He told the VG newspaper that the events surrounding the Viking Sky were "some of the worst I have been involved in, but now it looks like it's going well in the end and that we've been lucky."

Shipping tycoon Hagen is one of Norway's richest men and the founder of the Switzerland-based Viking Cruises that operates river and ocean cruises.

"I'm very proud of our crew," Hagen told VG.

When asked why the cruise ship ventured into an area known for its rough waters in the middle of a storm that had been forecast by meteorologists, Knudsen, from Norway's rescue service, said it was the captain's decision to proceed with the cruise.

Tanner reported from Helsinki, Finland.

## UK PM May faces heavy pressure to step down to save Brexit

By GREGORY KATZ Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Embattled Prime Minister Theresa May was scrambling Sunday to win over adversaries to her Brexit withdrawal plan as key Cabinet ministers denied media reports that they were plotting to oust her.

May spent the afternoon ensconced in a crisis meeting at her country residence Chequers with fellow Conservatives and outspoken Brexit advocates like Boris Johnson, Jacob Rees-Mogg and others who would prefer to leave the European Union without a divorce deal rather than delay Britain's departure from the bloc further.

Her office released a statement afterward giving no hint about whether she had gained any new backing. It said only that they discussed "whether there is sufficient support" to bring her Brexit divorce plan



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back to Parliament for a third vote.

The prime minister has found her authority weakened after a series of setbacks in Parliament and her inability to win meaningful concessions from EU leaders who refuse to sweeten the Brexit deal.

The Sunday Times claims that 11 Cabinet ministers plan to tell May to resign so a caretaker leader can be put in her place to kick start the stalled Brexit process. She faces growing pressure from within her own party either to resign or to set a date for stepping down as a way to build support for her Brexit plan.

The confrontation may come to a head at a Cabinet session expected Monday.

Under Conservative Party rules, May cannot face a formal leadership challenge from within her own party until December because she survived one three months ago. But she may be persuaded that her position is untenable if top Cabinet ministers and other senior party members desert her.

Despite headlines about a Cabinet coup, there was no indication from Downing Street on Sunday that a resignation was near. Two of the people mentioned as possible successors — Cabinet Office Minister David Lidington and Treasury chief Philip Hammond — expressed strong support for May.

Hammond said Sunday that senior party members plotting to oust May were being “self-indulgent.” He said a change of leadership would not provide a solution to the U.K.’s political deadlock on Brexit.

“We’ve got to address the question of what type of Brexit is acceptable to Parliament, what type of way forward Parliament can agree on so that we can avoid what would be an economic catastrophe of a no-deal exit and also what would be a very big challenge to confidence in our political system if we didn’t exit at all,” Hammond said.

Lidington, mentioned as a possible caretaker prime minister should May be ousted, said Sunday that talk of a Cabinet revolt was far-fetched speculation. He said May is doing a “fantastic job” and that he has no desire to take her place.

Still, May thus far has been unable to generate enough support in Parliament for the deal her government and the EU reached late last year. Lawmakers voted down the Brexit plan twice, and May has raised the possibility of bringing it back a third time if enough legislators appear willing to switch their votes.

The Cabinet is focused on the best way to get May’s withdrawal plan passed in the House of Commons, Lidington said.

The U.K.’s departure from the EU was set to take place on March 29, but the absence of an approved divorce agreement prompted May last week to ask the leaders of the 27 remaining EU nations for a postponement.

The leaders agreed to delay Brexit until May 22, on the eve of the EU Parliament elections, if the prime minister can persuade Parliament to endorse her twice-rejected agreement.

If she is unable to rally support for the deal, the European leaders said Britain only has until April 12 to choose between leaving the EU without a divorce deal and a new path, such as revoking the decision to leave the bloc or calling another voter referendum on Brexit.

Parliament may hold a series of votes this week to determine what Brexit proposals, if any, could command majority support.

Conservative Party legislator George Freeman, a former policy adviser to May, tweeted that the U.K. needs a new leader if the Brexit process is to move forward.

“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,” Freeman tweeted. “This can’t go on. We need a new PM who can reach out & build some sort of coalition for a Plan B.”

May also faces pressure from groups demanding a second Brexit referendum. Huge crowds turned out Saturday for an anti-Brexit protest march in London, which organizers claimed involved more than 1 million people.

On Sunday, an electronic petition designed to cancel Brexit altogether passed the 5 million signature mark.

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

## US backed Syrian force clears area retaken from IS

By SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — U.S.-backed Syrian fighters cleared explosives in the last area retaken from the Islamic State group on Sunday and arrested a number of militants hiding in tunnels, a day after declaring military victory and the end of the extremists' self-styled caliphate.

The U.S.-led coalition said the clearing operations will continue until the area is secure.

A spokesman for the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, who goes by the nom de guerre Mervan The Brave, said Baghouz village where the militants made their final stand is "full of all kinds of explosives." He said SDF forces have detonated land mines and suicide belts left behind by the militants.

The Kurdish Hawar News Agency reported that during the combing SDF forces arrested a number of militants found hiding in combat tunnels. Mervan The Brave confirmed the reports but had no further details.

Other activist groups monitoring the area reported limited clashes between remaining militants and SDF fighters.

In a series of tweets, the U.S.-led coalition said the SDF continued "back-clearance operations" to rid Baghouz of any militants or weapon caches.

"The Syrian Democratic Forces will continue to deny Daesh a physical space and influence in the area and work to deny them the resources they need to return," it said using the Arabic acronym for IS. "This back-clearance operation will be deliberate and thorough and help ensure the long-term security for the area."

A day earlier, a Syrian driver working with NBC News reporters was killed by an explosive device that went off in a house used by the SDF as a command post and a media center for journalists covering the fighting in Baghouz.

Noah Oppenheim, the president of NBC News, said in a statement that network employees escaped unharmed and that the reason for the explosion was being investigated. He expressed "deepest sympathies" to the driver's family and said the network is in touch with them to "support them however we can."

The victory announced in Baghouz on Saturday marks the end of a devastating five-year campaign by an array of forces to retake territories held by IS in Syria and Iraq. At its height, IS controlled a sprawling self-declared caliphate between the two countries that was home to some 8 million people.

The campaign against the group came at a staggering cost, with entire neighborhoods and towns destroyed in both countries. Thousands of civilians are believed to have been killed by IS during its brutal reign as well as the air and ground operations by the coalition and allied troops. Watchdog groups continue to document the casualties.

Meanwhile, the SDF said 11,000 of its fighters were killed in the fight against IS.

The militants were holding hostages and had detained civilians, the fate of many also remains unknown.

Despite the territorial defeat, the militants have reverted to insurgent tactics and continue to carry out attacks in areas liberated months or even years ago. An unknown number of fighters and supporters slipped into Syrian and Iraqi towns and villages, forming the backbone of the new insurgency.

The fate of the group's leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, remains unknown. There is a \$25 million bounty on his head.

In recent weeks, thousands of people, including IS fighters and their family members, left Baghouz and were taken to detention centers and crowded camps for the displaced elsewhere in eastern Syria.

"This is an historic moment, but we cannot be complacent," tweeted Maj. Gen. Christopher Ghika, the deputy commander of the U.S.-led coalition against IS.

"Even without territory, Daesh will continue to pose a threat to the people of Iraq and Syria, as well as to the wider world. The coalition must remain firm in its determination to counter Daesh," he said.

Separately, Syrian state media reported that nearly two dozen people have suffered from asphyxiation after shells were lobbed from rebel-held areas into government-administered villages in the country's west. The state news agency quoted director of a local hospital in Hama province as saying that 21 people were hospitalized after inhaling gases in the attack on al-Rasif and al-Aziziyeh villages.

The pro-state Al-Ikhbariya TV interviewed survivors at the hospital who said a foul smell followed the

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launching of mortars into their villages.

The months-old truce, sponsored by Russia and Turkey, in Syria's west has been tested, as fighting between government forces and al-Qaida-linked militants resumed. The government wants to regain control of a key highway that flanks the opposition-held area. Al-Qaida-linked militants have expanded their dominance in northwestern Syria, rooting out other armed opposition groups and undermining the truce.

## Dubai denies there were plans for R. Kelly concert

By JON GAMBRELL and MALAK HARB Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Dubai's government on Sunday forcefully denied a claim by R&B singer R. Kelly that the artist had planned concerts in the sheikhdom after he had sought permission from an Illinois judge to travel here despite facing sexual-abuse charges.

In a rare statement, the government's Dubai Media Office also denied claims by his lawyer in court that Kelly had plans to meet the sheikhdom's ruling Al Maktoum family.

"Authorities in Dubai have not received any request for a performance by singer R. Kelly nor are there any venues that have been booked," the statement said.

It added Kelly "has not been invited by the Dubai royal family for a performance."

In an email to The Associated Press, Kelly's lawyer Steven A. Greenberg responded saying: "Mr. Kelly had a signed contract with a legitimate promoter, and any information that was included in the motion to travel was from that contract. We did not say he was invited by The royal family, but the contract did provide that he would make himself available to meet with them."

Kelly was charged on Feb. 22 with 10 counts of aggravated sexual abuse for allegedly assaulting three girls and one adult woman, coming after the release of a documentary "Surviving R. Kelly." He has denied ever abusing anyone.

In a court filing last week, Greenberg had said the singer needed to raise money as "he has struggled of late to pay his child support and other child related expenses."

"Before he was arrested Mr. Kelly had signed a contract to perform between 3-5 shows in Dubai, UAE, in April 2019," the court filing read. "He requests permission to travel to Dubai for the shows. While there he is supposed to meet with the royal family."

The filing did not elaborate on where Kelly was allegedly supposed to perform. There was no immediately publicized event for which Kelly was known to be a performer, nor did anyone in the entertainment industry hear about one.

However, Dubai's luxury nightclubs often host hip hop and other artists for days at a time to perform and be seen among the millionaires of this skyscraper-studded city that is home to the world's tallest building. Rich families also pay for celebrities at their parties.

The UAE's seven emirates are overseen by hereditary rulers who hold absolute power. Dubai's ruler is Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, 69. His 36-year-old son, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, serves as Dubai's crown prince and is next in line to be ruler.

Dubai, home to the world's largest manmade archipelago the Palm Jumeriah and an indoor ski slope in its desert climes, has long drawn celebrities craving both luxury and seclusion. Will Smith is a repeated visitor. Lindsay Lohan lives off and on in the sheikhdom. David Beckham, Shah Rukh Khan and others are believed to own property in Dubai.

Yet it also has drawn world leaders seeking to escape their own countries. Pakistani Gen. Pervez Musharraf, facing criminal charges back home, fled to Dubai in 2016. Former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra came to Dubai to avoid a criminal conviction in 2017, following in the footsteps of her brother, the ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

The U.S. does not have an extradition treaty with the UAE. However, the U.S. stations some 5,000 troops in the country and Dubai's Jebel Ali port is the biggest port of call for the U.S. Navy outside of America.

Associated Press writer Corey Williams in Detroit 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.

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 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

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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."

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Associated Press writer Claudia Torrens contributed to this report.

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

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## Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 25, the 84th day of 2019. There are 281 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 25, 1911, 146 people, mostly young female immigrants, were killed when fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. in New York.

On this date:

In 1634, English colonists sent by Lord Baltimore arrived in present-day Maryland.

In 1865, during the Civil War, Confederate forces attacked Fort Stedman in Virginia but were forced to withdraw because of counterattacking Union troops.

In 1894, Jacob S. Coxey began leading an "army" of unemployed from Massillon (MA'-suh-luhn), Ohio, to Washington D.C., to demand help from the federal government.

In 1915, the U.S. Navy lost its first commissioned submarine as the USS F-4 sank off Hawaii, claiming the lives of all 21 crew members.

In 1931, in the so-called "Scottsboro Boys" case, nine young black men were taken off a train in Alabama, accused of raping two white women; after years of convictions, death sentences and imprisonment, the nine were eventually vindicated.

In 1947, a coal-dust explosion inside the Centralia Coal Co. Mine No. 5 in Washington County, Illinois, claimed 111 lives; 31 men survived.

In 1965, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led 25,000 people to the Alabama state capitol in Montgomery after a five-day march from Selma to protest the denial of voting rights to blacks. Later that day, civil rights activist Viola Liuzzo, a white Detroit homemaker, was shot and killed by Ku Klux Klansmen.

In 1975, King Faisal (FY'-suhl) of Saudi Arabia was shot to death by a nephew with a history of mental illness. (The nephew was beheaded in June 1975.)

In 1988, in New York City's so-called "Preppie Killer" case, Robert Chambers Jr. pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter in the death of 18-year-old Jennifer Levin. (Chambers received 5 to 15 years in prison; he was released in 2003 after serving the full sentence.)

In 1990, 87 people, most of them Honduran and Dominican immigrants, were killed when fire raced through an illegal social club in New York City.

In 1991, "Dances with Wolves" won seven Oscars, including best picture in a category that also included "Goodfellas," at the 63rd annual Academy Awards; Kathy Bates won best actress for "Misery" while Jeremy Irons received best actor for "Reversal of Fortune."

In 2006, In Los Angeles, half a million people marched to protest federal legislation to make illegal immigration a felony and build more walls along the border.

Ten years ago: Pirates seized the Panama-registered, Greek-owned Nipayia with 18 Filipino crew members and a Russian captain off the Somali coastline. (The ship and crew were released in May 2009.) John Hope Franklin, a towering scholar of African-American studies, died in Durham, N.C. at age 94. Dan Seals, half of the pop duo England Dan and John Ford Coley, later a top country singer ("You Still Move Me"), died in Nashville at age 61.

Five years ago: Following a two-day security summit in The Netherlands, President Barack Obama declared that the gathering had taken "concrete steps" to prevent nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists even though Russia and China failed to sign an agreement to beef up inspections.

One year ago: In an interview with "60 Minutes," adult film star Stormy Daniels said she had been threatened and warned to keep silent about an alleged sexual encounter with Donald Trump in 2006. A fire at a shopping mall in a Siberian city in Russia killed more than 60 people, including 41 children. Former Pennsylvania Republican Sen. Rick Santorum told CNN that students who have rallied for gun control should instead learn CPR or find their own way to prevent a school shooting. Gun manufacturer Remington filed for bankruptcy reorganization amid years of slumping sales and legal and financial pressure from the Sandy

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Hook school massacre in Connecticut. Linda Brown, who as a young girl in Kansas became embroiled in a landmark 1954 Supreme Court case that challenged segregation in public schools, died at the age of 75.

Today's Birthdays: Movie reviewer Gene Shalit is 93. Former astronaut James Lovell is 91. Feminist activist and author Gloria Steinem is 85. Singer Anita Bryant is 79. Actor Paul Michael Glaser is 76. Singer Sir Elton John is 72. Actress Bonnie Bedelia is 71. Actress-comedian Mary Gross is 66. Actor James McDaniel is 61. Former Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., is 61. Movie producer Amy Pascal is 61. Rock musician Steve Norman (Spandau Ballet) is 59. Actress Brenda Strong is 59. Actor Fred Goss is 58. Actor-writer-director John Stockwell is 58. Actress Marcia Cross is 57. Author Kate DiCamillo is 55. Actress Lisa Gay Hamilton is 55. Actress Sarah Jessica Parker is 54. Baseball Hall of Famer Tom Glavine is 53. TV personality Ben Mankiewicz is 52. Olympic bronze medal figure skater Debi Thomas is 52. Actor Laz Alonso is 48. Singer Melanie Blatt (All Saints) is 44. Actor Domenick Lombardozzi is 43. Actor Lee Pace is 40. Actor Sean Faris is 37. Comedian-actor Alex Moffat (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 37. Former auto racer Danica Patrick is 37. Actress-singer Katharine McPhee is 35. Comedian-actor Chris Redd (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 34. Singer Jason Castro is 32. Rapper Big Sean is 31. Rap DJ-producer Ryan Lewis is 31. Actor Matthew Beard is 30. Actress-singer Aly (AKA Alyson) Michalka (mish-AL'-kah) is 30. Actor Kiowa Gordon is 29. Actress Seychelle Gabriel is 28.

Thought for Today: "Scratch a pessimist, and you find often a defender of privilege." — Lord Beveridge, British economist (1879-1963).