

Groton Daily Independent

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Groton Area School District Election Day!

Polls Open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Andover Area Precinct #1, (which includes Andover Town, Andover Township and Farmington Township) – Andover Senior Center.

Bristol Area Precinct #2, (which includes Bristol Town, Butler Town, Lily Town, Bristol Township, Butler Township, Kidder Township, Lynn Township, Oak Gulch Township, Scotland Township, Troy Township, Union Township, Valley Township and York Township as well as Clark County residents in Warren Township) – Bristol Community Center.

Columbia Area Precinct #3, (which includes the City of Columbia, Brainard Township #7, Shelby Township #8, Cambria Township #15, and Garland Township #46,) – Columbia Community Center

Groton Area Precinct #4, (which includes the City of Groton, Wards 1, 2, & 3, and Claremont Township #10, Riverside Township #16, Groton Township #17, Henry Township #18, Bath Township #19, Gem Township #24, East Hanson Township #25, Garden Prairie Township #26 East Rondell Township #27, Bates Township #44, Putney Township #48, and West Hanson Township #49 as well as Spink County residents in Beotia Township, Conde Township and Olean Township) – Groton Community Center.

Click on Ad to sign up!

OPEN: Re-
cycling Trailer in
Groton

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



Greenhouse Raffle

Prizes are:

Greenhouse (12'x7.5', 2 shelves, 2 outlets, light)
Hunting Blind (Hexigon with 6 shooting windows)

Free delivery within 20 miles

2 Dairy Queen \$50 Gift Cards

Need not be present to win. \$10 Donation

Drawing to be held April 15th

**Contact any Robotics member for a ticket or
call Jim Lane at 605/397-7013.**

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WINTER STORM WATCH

Issue Date: 6:29 AM Tue, Apr 9, 2019

Expiration: 4:00 AM Fri, Apr 12, 2019

...WINTER STORM WATCH REMAINS IN EFFECT FROM WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON THROUGH LATE THURSDAY NIGHT...

* WHAT...Blizzard conditions possible. Total snow accumulations of 3 to 10 inches possible. Winds could gust as high as 45 mph.

* WHERE...McPherson, Campbell, Brown and Edmunds Counties.

* WHEN...From Wednesday afternoon through late Thursday night.

* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Travel could be very difficult. Blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility. The hazardous conditions could impact the morning or evening commute.

A Winter Storm Watch for blizzard conditions means there is a potential for falling and/or blowing snow with strong winds and extremely poor visibilities. This can lead to whiteout conditions and make travel very dangerous.

NOW HIRING!

Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

Looking for assemblers - both shifts

*** New Starting Wage - \$15/hr day shift and
\$16/hr night shift
Overtime Available**

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health, Dental & Vision insurance
- Life Insurance
- Short-term Disability and Long-term Disability
- 401k
- Holiday Pay
- Vacation Pay
- Paid Sick Leave
- Referral Bonuses

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

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Community Events

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

Track meet in Groton is cancelled

6:00pm: FCCLA Banquet, Library Conference Room

Thursday, April 11, 2019

4:00pm: Junior High Track Meet at Sisseton

6:00pm: Indoor Track Meet at Northern State University, Aberdeen

Friday, April 12, 2019

8:30am- 3:30pm: KG Roundup (Screening) at the Groton Area Elementary School

**Come and go Bridal shower for Emily Kern,
bride to be of Nathan Skadsen,
Sunday, April 28 2019 2-5 pm at
Emmanuel Lutheran Church**

**2019 Groton Area Elementary
Kindergarten Roundup (Screening) for
children turning 5 on/or before Sept. 1, 2019**

Friday, April 12

Parents of children who will be turning 5 on or before September 1, 2019, in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to set up a screening time or to confirm their screening time.

*Students currently attending Junior Kindergarten will not be screened at this time.

Packets will be sent home this week with a scheduled time and additional paperwork that will need to be completed.

Kindergarten Roundup will take place at the Groton Area Elementary School. Please check in at the office.



**HARR
Motors**

4255 6th Ave

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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OST Program is in the red

During the financial report, it was brought to the board's attention that the OST balance is in the hole by \$1,900. Superintendent Joe Schwan said that there are too many delinquent accounts that will need to be brought up to date before school lets out.

Superintendent Joe Schwan reported that there are not health rate increases for next year; however, the Associated School Boards of South Dakota will offer only three plans. The Worker's Compensation rate will go up next year.

The district will be having a new website for the upcoming school year.

Schwan got a price quote from Sheyenne Transport of Webster about having them take over the route. Their cost was \$2.89 per mile while the actual cost for the district is \$1.77 per mile. The district would still need a fleet for extra curricular activities.

The next school board meeting will be Tuesday, April 23, 8 p.m.

Elementary Track and Field Day will be held Friday, May 17 with the picnic lunch at 11 a.m. and track and field events will begin at 12:30 p.m. Junior Kindergarten through fifth grade will be participating. The elementary health fair will be Monday, May 20.

It sounds like the merry-go-round will be replaced this year as the Parent Advisory Council is looking at getting it replaced.


The FCCLA Banquet will be held tonight. It will not be a style show this year but the students will be showing off their projects in the GHS Multipurpose Room starting at 6 p.m.

The Groton Area FFA Chapter will be the educators at the FFA Ag Fair April 16 at Prairie Hill Farms near Aberdeen. About 500 fourth graders go through the program.

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. is the election for school board candidates today.

Groton City Notice

**Sump Pumps must
be discharged
OUTSIDE!**



Failure to comply will result in fines.

Hiring High Schoolers!

If you are 16 or older and need a summer job, the Groton Rehabilitation Center has the job for you!

During the summer, you can work inside and get some experience for a CNA career in the future!

We are an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.



1106 N 2nd Street ~ Groton, SD ~ 605-397-2365

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Today in Weather History

April 9, 1997: A late season storm produced snow from the Black Hills through South Central South Dakota. The greatest amounts occurred in a 40-mile wide swath along and south of Interstate 90. Snowfall amounts included 9 inches at Rapid City, 12 inches at Deerfield, 10 inches at Custer, 11 inches at Mission, and 12 inches at Winner. Outside this swath, snowfall ranged from 3 to 6 inches.

April 9, 2007: Arctic air moved into central and northeast South Dakota and remained for nearly a week. High temperatures from April 3rd to April 9th were mostly in the 20s to around 30 degrees with lows in the single digits and teens. The high temperatures were from 20 to 30 degrees below average, and the lows were from 10 to 25 degrees below normal across all of the area. Some record lows and many record low maximum temperatures were set throughout the period. The first ten days of April were the coldest on record for Aberdeen. The early spring cold period affected many of the residents, especially farmers and ranchers, of central and northeast South Dakota. Also, many robins died from the cold and lack of food.

1889: The Norfolk Landmark reported that damage was more substantial than the August 1879 hurricane because it lasted for a much longer duration- the water was 18 inches higher. Rain, snow, and sleet fell, totaling 3.2 inches. Drummonds Bridge was swept away (later replaced by the Ghent Bridge). Trees were uprooted, and roofs were torn off.

1947: An estimated F5 tornado struck Woodward, Oklahoma during the late evening killing 95 persons and causing six million dollars damage. The tornado, one to two miles in width, and traveling at a speed of 50 mph, killed a total of 167 persons along its 221-mile path from Texas into Kansas, injured 980 others, and caused nearly ten million dollars damage.

1953: The first radar image of a tornado was detected by radar equipment at the University of Illinois Airport at Champaign, IL. Studies of the radar pictures from that day showed that a tornado of significant size and intensity could be detected.

1877 - Oregon Inlet, NC, was widened three quarters of a mile by a nor'easter. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1947 - A tornado struck Woodward, OK, during the late evening killing 95 persons and causing six million dollars damage. The tornado, one to two miles in width, and traveling at a speed of 68 mph, killed a total of 167 persons along its 221 mile path from Texas into Kansas, injured 980 others, and caused nearly ten million dollars damage. (David Ludlum) A man looking out his front door was swept by a tornado from his home near Higgins TX and carried two hundred feet over trees. The bodies of two people, thought to be together at Glazier TX, were found three miles apart. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1977 - A storm brought 15.5 inches of rain to Jolo, WV, in thirty hours. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - International Falls, MN, reported their sixth straight record high for the date, with a reading of 77 degrees. A cold front ushering sharply colder weather into the north central U.S. produced wind gusts to 60 mph at Glasgow MT. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Residents of Sioux City, IA, awoke to find two inches of snow on the ground following a record high temperature of 88 degrees the previous afternoon. (The National Weather Summary)

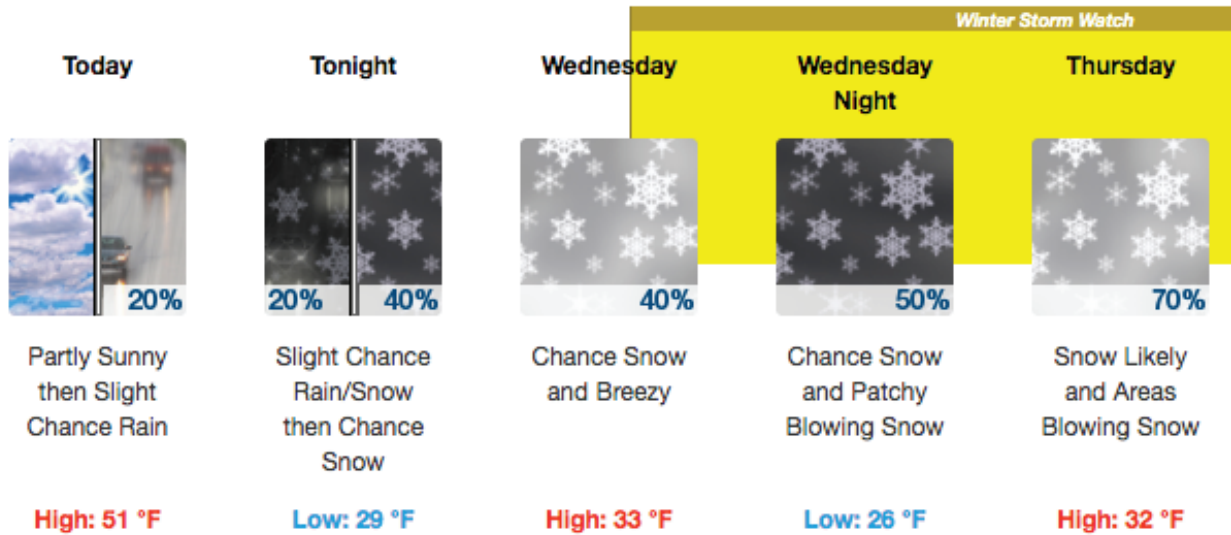
1989 - Eighteen cities in the southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The afternoon high of 80 degrees at Eureka CA established a record for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from the Central High Plains to Arkansas and northern Texas. Severe thunderstorms spawned five tornadoes, and there were seventy reports of large hail and damaging winds. A tornado injured four persons at Ardmore OK, and thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Kellyville OK, and hail three inches in diameter at Halmstead KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

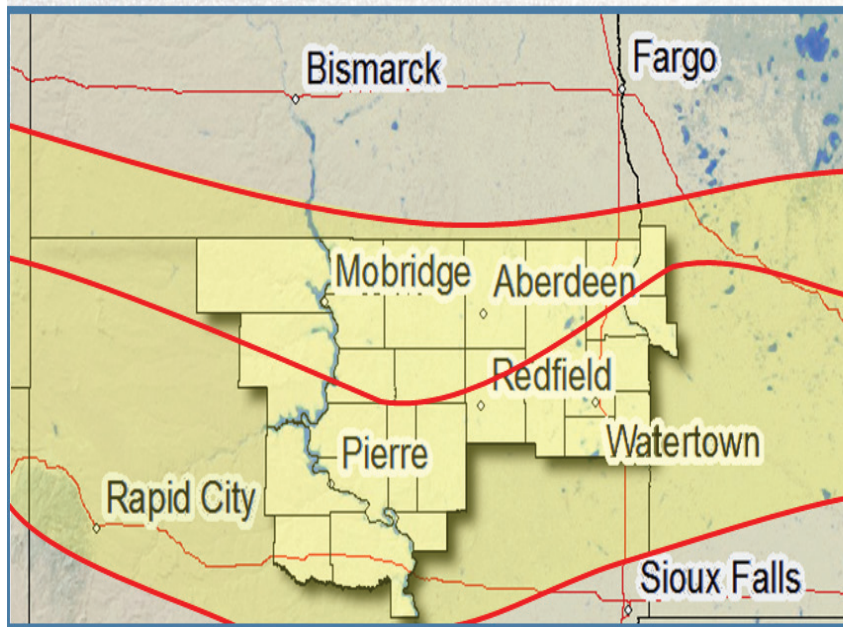
2011 - An EF-3 tornado hits Mapleton, IA. Officials estimate more than half the town is damaged or destroyed but none of the 1200 residents were killed. 31 tornadoes were confirmed across Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina on this day.

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Confidence – Impactful Springtime Snowstorm Mid-Week



- ← Higher Confidence: Little If Any Moisture
- ← Lower Confidence: Dry Air – Sharp Cut-off
- ← Higher Confidence: Heavy Wet Snow

**General Model
Trends – Slight
South Shift**



Visit www.weather.gov/abr for a detailed forecast for your specific location

Updated: 4/8/2019 3:08 PM CT



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Published on: 04/08/2019 at 4:14PM

We continue to watch for a powerful spring snowstorm to move across the region Wednesday and Thursday. Heavy snow will accompany the system, however the northward extent of the snow remains difficult to decipher, with a slight shift south of the cut-off with the latest model guidance. Still - it pays to be prepared for heavy, wet snow...which we are especially expecting for those in central and east-central South Dakota and western Minnesota.

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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 65 °F at 5:02 PM

Low Outside Temp: 42 °F at 6:02 AM

High Gust: 31 mph at 2:15 PM

Precip:

Today's Info

Record High: 91° in 1977

Record Low: 8° in 1997

Average High: 54°F

Average Low: 29°F

Average Precip in April.: 0.37

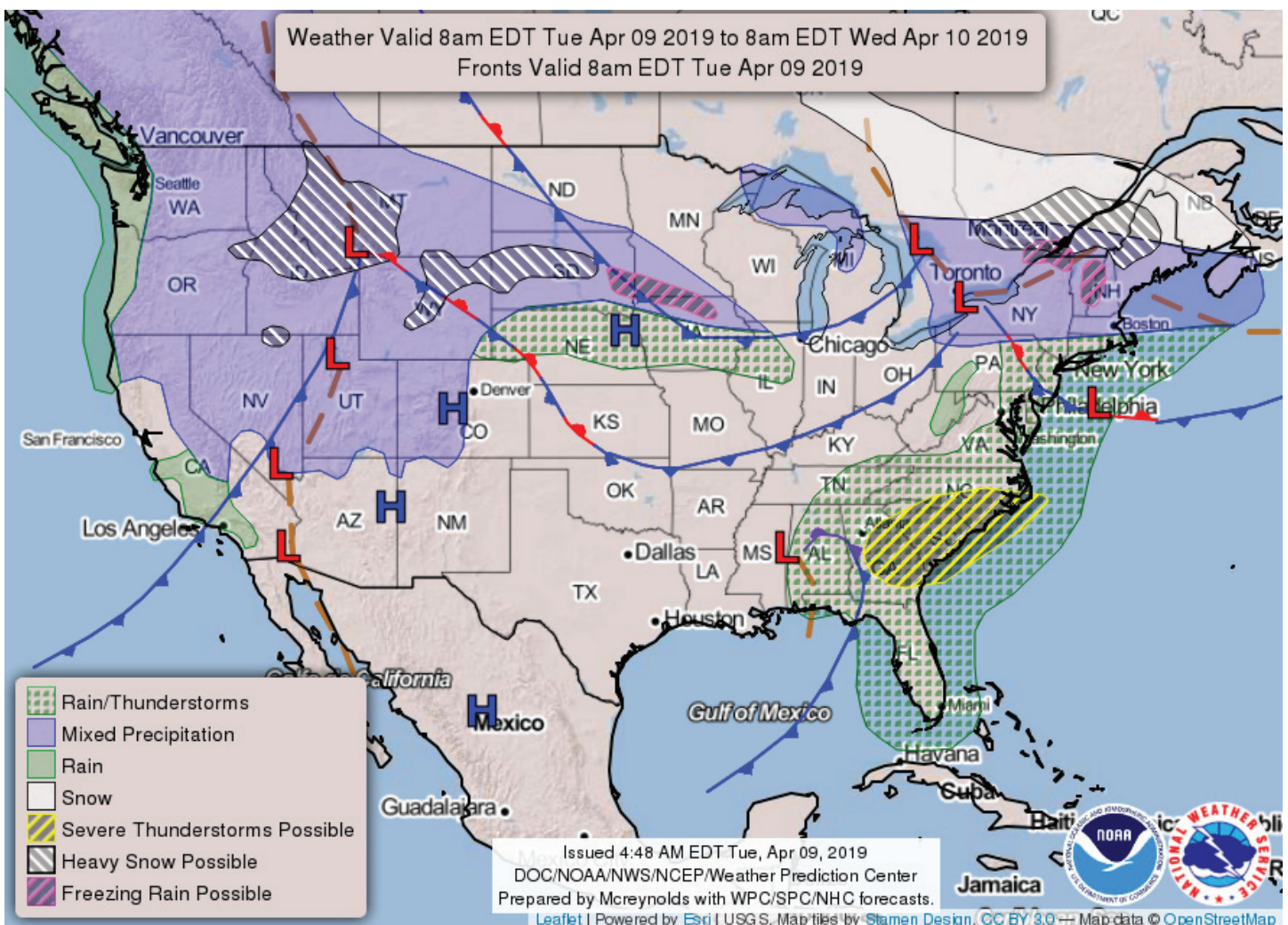
Precip to date in April.: 0.87

Average Precip to date: 2.55

Precip Year to Date: 3.06

Sunset Tonight: 8:12 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:58 a.m.



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WE HAVE OUR LIMITS

Solomon makes no apology when he writes: The blessing of the Lord, it makes one rich. That is the literal translation of the verse: The blessing of the Lord brings wealth. When he wrote that powerful statement, he made it abundantly clear that our resources - no matter how abundant they may be - are limited by God. It is the Lord who is faithful and who has the final word on riches, who gets them and when they will get them.

No matter how hard we try, how many hours we work, what we do or the skills we possess, we - in and of ourselves - cannot produce wealth. All the wealth in the world cannot make one rich. If God does not add His blessing to whatever we have we are, in His sight, poor. On the other hand, one may have none of this worlds goods, yet be rich. How can this be? Rich but not rich? Poor and yet rich? It certainly seems to be contradictory.

But it isnt. Rich is in the eye of the beholder.

Throughout his Proverbs, Solomon warns us that if we get the riches of this world through methods that are dishonest or deceitful, unfair and unjust, many problems will come with them. These problems may range from psychological to physical, legal to financial, personal to interpersonal or relationship issues. Godly living, God-honoring work, and God-centered practices bring joy and satisfaction, peace and true prosperity with them to those who live for the Lord and live righteous lives.

Gods riches come with Gods blessings. And, His blessings are readily available, worry-free, come without guilt or fear of being exposed and shamed from having harmed others.

Prayer: Father, may all that we do, bring blessings, honor, and glory to Your name. May we seek Your riches. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, without painful toil for it.

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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

Fight at Yankton restaurant turns deadly

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — A Yankton man is facing criminal charges after a fight inside a Yankton pizza restaurant turned deadly.

The 22-year-old man is accused of fatally shooting Lucas Smith in an alley last Saturday after the two were thrown out of Mojo's Pizza and Spirits because of a fight. Police say the suspect approached Smith with a gun shortly after they were kicked out of the restaurant, shot him several times and ran from the scene.

The Argus Leader says police pinged the suspect's phone to find him. He was arrested at his Yankton residence.

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

Storm to hit Rockies before forming new 'bomb cyclone'

By MATT VOLZ Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Flood, snow, avalanche and fire alerts popped up Monday from Idaho to Colorado, as parts of the U.S. interior that were paralyzed by blizzards and floods last month braced for round two of an unusual weather phenomenon.

Welcome to springtime in the Rockies and parts of the Great Plains.

It's not unusual for floods, snow and fire to co-exist in the Rockies thanks to powerful storms blowing through the mountains, melting snow swelling waterways and high winds sweeping across dry grasslands and trees that haven't seen their first green shoots and leaves.

Those conditions are what drove a wildfire Sunday on southeastern Montana's Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, where a house fire sparked a blaze that quickly burned through 1,700 acres (688 hectares) of dry grass and trees. It forced evacuations Sunday in Lame Deer, a town of about 2,000 people that is the seat of the tribal government, before fire crews were able to contain it.

Also normal are the fire warnings issued for eastern Colorado on Monday, a day after a wildfire near Colorado Springs forced the temporary evacuation of about 20 homes. Forecasters frequently issue red flag warnings for March and April on the eastern and southeastern Colorado plains as the jet stream moves southward and brings stronger weather systems and higher wind, said Jennifer Stark, meteorologist in charge for the National Weather Service in Pueblo, Colorado.

"This is the time of year when we get a roller coaster of weather," Colorado state climatologist Russ Schumacher said Monday. "Going from 80 degree temperatures one day to a snowstorm the next is not that out of the ordinary, especially in March and April, around here."

But what is unusual is what's coming next. A storm system that is moving in from the Pacific Ocean is forecast to intensify and form into a new inland "bomb cyclone."

A bomb cyclone is a rapid drop in air pressure — at least 24 millibars in 24 hours — and often is over or near oceans or seas because it requires warm moist air smacking into cold dry air, along with volatile weather from the jet stream. The central and mountain part of the country may get one of these every few winters, said Greg Carbin, forecast branch chief for the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in Maryland.

But this would be the second such storm in less than a month. The March 13 storm caused massive flooding in the Midwest, a blizzard in Colorado and Wyoming, and produced winds of between 96 mph and 110 mph (155 and 177.02 kph).

This week's bomb cyclone one is expected to be similar in intensity and in snowfall, meteorologists said. Heavy, wet snow will fall from the Nebraska panhandle through south central and southeastern South Dakota into western Minnesota. Wind speeds can reach 50 mph to 60 mph (80 to 96 kph) across Kansas.

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"This blizzard will further exacerbate flooding in Nebraska with the added insult of heavy snowfall to eventually melt," said Ryan Maue, a meteorologist at the private weathermodels.com. "This is more bad news for suffering farmers who are unable to flip the calendar on winter."

But first, the storm is expected to flooding in Idaho and western Montana, and dump up to 2 feet (61 centimeters) feet of snow in the mountains of Montana and Wyoming as it moves in from the Pacific Ocean. Parts of Colorado that were under a fire warning Monday are expected to see snow and temperatures drops of more than 40 degrees by Wednesday at the southern edge of the storm, meteorologists said.

The storm dumped rain on parts of Oregon Sunday and Monday as it moved inland, causing flooding that closed some schools in the central Willamette Valley and forced the release of water from dams.

While it's unusual to see two consecutive inland bomb cyclones, it's difficult to pin the cause on climate change, said Schumacher.

"I think it's an interesting question to ask whether there's some climate change fingerprint on this," he said. "But it's a complicated puzzle to piece together."

That includes what is happening as the storm forms over the Pacific Ocean, what happens once it's over land and what effect climate change may have on those variables.

"I'm not sure we have the answer," Schumacher said.

Associated Press writers Seth Borenstein in Washington, D.C., and Dan Elliott in Denver contributed to this report.

Storm unlikely to swell rivers to last month's levels

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A storm that could bring blizzard conditions to the Midwest is expected to swell creeks and rivers in South Dakota, but not to the levels they rose last month.

The National Weather Service says the winter storm could drop as much as 1 ½ feet of snow on parts of the state later this week.

Hydrologist Mike Gillispie says the snow as it melts will push up rivers and creeks that are receding after heavy flooding. But he says most areas on the Big Sioux River will see only minor to moderate flooding, not major. And he says the new moisture will just prolong major flooding on the James River.

Gillispie says the difference is that last month, heavy rains fell on top of a wet snowpack that's now melted.

For some river towns, flood protection is simply too costly

By JIM SALTER and BLAKE NICHOLSON Associated Press

CLARKSVILLE, Mo. (AP) — The window of the Bee Naturals bath-and-body shop offers a view out of a Mark Twain novel: The sprawling Mississippi River at one of its widest points lapping against a small-town Missouri waterfront as barges float by and eagles dart in the air above.

But with a major flood receding and predictions of potentially even worse flooding to come later in the spring, owner Barbara Chappuis is moving her business, abandoning the Clarksville riverfront for higher ground across Highway 79.

"We're looking at potential historic floods," Chappuis said. "I can't risk that."

Most communities on America's rivers have some sort of flood protection — usually a concrete wall or an earthen levee. But a few places such as Clarksville do not. They simply cannot afford it, either because Congress will not authorize money or because the local share of the project is more than a small town can pay for. Some communities also struggle with the aesthetics of flood barriers and worry that they will spoil the rustic riverfront streets that are popular with tourists.

Clarksville, a town of 450 people 90 miles north of St. Louis, just endured its seventh major flood in the past decade. Volunteers spent days filling sandbags and building a 4-foot rock-and-sandbag fortress that successfully kept water out of the downtown arts-and-craft shops that operate out of 19th century brick buildings.

But with snowmelt still coming down from the north and more spring rain expected, the National Weather

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Service warns that the potential for even worse flooding is high.

Clarksville leaders have long opposed an earthen levee because of how it would change the local scenery.

"If we don't have the view, we don't have anything left," Mayor Jo Anne Smiley said.

That doesn't mean they don't want protection. Town officials favor a system that consists of a removable wall with pieces stored inside a pod. When a flood threatens, the interlocking steel and aluminum pieces can be installed in a day. When the water goes down, the wall goes down.

The proposal would cost \$4 million. Smiley said the federal government and Missouri would provide \$1 million each. The rest of the money is up to Clarksville to find — a tall task for a city with an annual budget of \$550,000.

A comparable problem has developed in South Dakota, where the Big Sioux River offers dramatic scenery and abundant recreation for the 22,000 residents of Watertown. But the river is also a curse. Six major floods over the past two decades have cost Watertown millions of dollars. Local leaders want to build a dam upstream that would regulate the river, but Congress will not authorize funding.

"So here we are, we're in the midst of another flood," Mayor Sarah Caron said as she took a break from fighting the water. "People have given up, I think. A lot of people think there will never be a flood-control project for Watertown. So we'll just fight it whenever it happens."

Officials in some small towns believe the government sees them as expendable when it comes to flooding, while hundreds of millions of dollars are spent to protect larger communities.

About 150 miles north of Watertown stand the neighboring communities of Fargo, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota, which straddle the Red River and together are home to 250,000 people. A \$2.8 billion floodwater-diversion project has been in the works there since a record-breaking 2009 flood. The federal government has already dedicated \$450 million and promised \$300 million more.

Similarly, the Army Corps of Engineers agreed to spend \$117 million to fend off future flooding in Cedar Rapids, Iowa's second-largest city, after a devastating 2008 flood caused \$5.4 billion in damage. That money, combined with more than \$100 million from the city and \$284 million from the state, is funding a host of improvements, including new floodwalls, green space and upgraded pumps.

Meanwhile, officials in Hamburg, Iowa, population 1,000, have tried for years to come up with money to restore a levee damaged in the 2011 flood. The money never came, and when massive flooding arrived again in March, the town was swamped. Mayor Cathy Crain said 169 of the town's 566 homes were underwater. Eighty-eight percent of businesses were damaged.

Crain doesn't know if a higher levee would have been enough to save the town, but "it sure would have given us a better chance." The water "would have only overtopped by half a foot. Instead, we had 9 feet."

The National League of Cities said small flood-prone communities suffered a blow in 2011, when House Republicans banned earmarks, or items placed in spending bills by individual lawmakers for favored projects. That step left communities of all sizes competing for the same federal dollars.

"Metro areas, they have more buildings and infrastructure. Their needs are going to be greater," said Yucel Ors, the league's program director of public safety. "With limited resources, it's hard (for Congress) to find funding for smaller communities."

Chappuis spent years working as nurse. The constant hand-washing left her fingers raw, so she developed a product using beeswax to protect her hands. That evolved into a thriving business. In addition to her store in Clarksville, Bee Natural has a store in suburban St. Louis and sells online.

Leaving her riverfront perch inside an 1850-era building that once housed the town bank will be "heart-breaking," but necessary, she said. Chappuis believes Clarksville has vast potential if only the town can find a way to hold back the Mighty Mississippi.

"There's just a certain charm here. It's beautiful," she said. "And the river is spectacular."

Nicholson reported from Bismarck, North Dakota. Associated Press Writer Scott McFetridge in Des Moines, Iowa, also contributed to this report.

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Lowest number of lions killed in Black Hills in 10 years

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The mountain lion hunting season has ended in the Black Hills with the lowest number of animals taken in 10 years, according to South Dakota officials.

South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks said 21 mountain lions were killed this season, which started Dec. 26 and ended March 31. The agency had set the hunting limit at 60 males or 40 females.

The Rapid City Journal says this year's harvest number follows back-to-back seasons where fewer than 35 lions were taken and continues a downward trend since the 2012-2013 season when 56 lions were killed.

The largest lion shot this season was a 5-year-old male weighing 161 pounds in Lawrence County. The smallest was a 9-month-old cat weighing 74 pounds. Eight females and 13 males made up this year's harvest. Nine were killed in Custer County, eight in Lawrence County and four in Pennington County.

Game, Fish & Parks estimated the lion population in the Black Hills at 500 in January 2018, but officials said that may be a statistical anomaly and the actual population is closer to 300.

"We believe the lion population is very healthy and stable. As far as we can tell, the population is holding stable the last four or five years," said state wildlife biologist Steve Griffin.

Mountain lion hunting seasons for the area outside the Black Hills remain open all year.

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

Excerpts from recent South Dakota editorials

By The Associated Press undefined

Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, April 5

Why is state government sanctioning Christianity?

For those paying attention, it appears that Christianity is being thrust upon South Dakotans in a more state-sanctioned manner these days. The reasons behind that are worth examining.

Gov. Kristi Noem signed into law last month a bill that requires public schools to prominently display the national motto, "In God We Trust," starting in 2019-20. A prominent location is defined as a school entryway, cafeteria or other common area where students are likely to see it.

It's reasonable to view this as an attempt to formalize Christianity as the state's official religion in the eyes of those students, which violates the "establishment clause" of the First Amendment.

That clause forbids government entities from establishing an official religion or elevating one religion over another, which means South Dakota's state leaders have put their school districts on shaky constitutional ground.

Maybe that's why the legislature added language declaring that if displaying "In God We Trust" leads to a lawsuit, the attorney general will provide legal representation at no cost to the local district or school board.

If it sounds like South Dakota is bucking for a fight, perhaps mindful of a more conservative-leaning U.S. Supreme Court, they're certainly not alone. Six states passed "In God We Trust" bills into law last year, and South Dakota was among 10 that either introduced or passed such legislation in 2019.

This is part of a national effort called "Project Blitz," spurred by conservative Christian political groups who are pushing model legislation and other evangelical-based directives on receptive state capitals, with an eye toward greater national influence.

One such group, Capitol Commission, even handed out Bibles stamped with the South Dakota state seal at a legislative coffee in Pierre in February, a gesture state minister Jarvis Wipf called a "unique gift" for lawmakers.

The justification for "In God We Trust" legislation is that the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of using the phrase on U.S. currency and as a national motto due to "ceremonial deism" in those contexts, meaning they have become customary enough to be deemed non-religious.

But bringing the phrase into public schools is more complicated, as evidenced by Supreme Court rulings that have struck down organized prayer at school assemblies and football games as unconstitutional.

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"Anything that might send a message to our children that you have to be a Christian to be a full American is extremely problematic," said Amanda Tyler, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, which is fighting against the recent spate of legislation.

More disturbing is that conservative Christian groups pushing these bills view "In God We Trust" as a preliminary step. Some states have moved to the next stage by seeking to pass "Bible literacy" bills, which allow students in public high schools to study the Old and New Testaments. President Trump weighed in on these bills in January, calling them "great."

Notably, the faith-based fervor of this movement comes at a time when organized religion has become less prevalent in American society.

The share of Americans who say they are "absolutely certain" God exists decreased from 71 percent in 2007 to 63 percent in a recent Pew Research Center study. The percentages who say they pray every day, attend religious services regularly and consider religion to be very important in their lives have also declined.

While South Dakota still has an overwhelmingly Christian population, times are changing. The Sioux Falls School District has become increasingly diverse, with 90 different languages spoken among its student body. Policies or symbols that exclude other faiths or alienate non-believers violate a fundamental mandate of publicly funded institutions.

This is not to say that Christianity is not part of the fabric of our society. The prevalence of faith-based groups and their tireless efforts to promote spiritual and community growth is impossible to ignore.

But religion at its core is a personal pursuit, meant to be shared with family and like-minded congregations. The trouble occurs when it is thrust upon those with different beliefs or no religious inclination at all. The day we make those people feel less a part of society is the day we lose track of the values that our country was built upon.

"I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between church and state," wrote Thomas Jefferson in 1802.

There's no telling what he might have thought of Noem's decision to declare a Statewide Day of Prayer this Sunday as a means of "praying for the well-being" of those affected by recent flooding throughout the region.

It's quite possible that Jefferson would have pointed out that Sunday is already a day of prayer and suggested a day of robust volunteerism instead.

Rapid City Journal, April 4 **Falling Rock: Fatalities just ahead**

"Why Die?"

A decorated "X marks the spot" road fatality reminder — Someone died here doing exactly what you're doing now — pokes up along state Highway 44 about 50 feet from the entrance to Falling Rock Road.

Turn onto Falling Rock Road, and two signs prohibit campfires and off-road vehicles. Farther up the dirt path, more signs advise "No fireworks."

One more sign is needed: "Use caution! Since 1985, at least nine people have died here from falls."

Might that tighten the grip of a parent's hand? Awaken a photographer focused only on flowing Rapid Creek far below? Remind someone with impaired balance that a stumble across these spectacular jagged, rocky ledges might be the final trip?

Sunday's tragic fall of 6-year-old Pierre girl Sadie Whitetwin at Falling Rock, just west of Rapid City, should be met with more than prayers and condolences, more than additional lamentations from Forest Service officials over potential liability issues. The well-worn path to the cliff's edge is on public land in the Black Hills National Forest, which has long resisted adding safety features.

One trek through a pile of Falling Rock Journal news clippings uncovers numerous instances of fatal falls, serious non-fatal falls and news stories or editorials explaining why little or nothing should be done.

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A Forest Service spokesman said Monday that officials "won't be able to provide a statement at this time," but ample arguments for doing nothing have been included in past reports. It's time we reconsider.

One argument states the high number of fatal accidents at Falling Rock occurs not because it's more dangerous than other Black Hills locations but because it's easily accessible and more frequently visited. Actually, that's an explanation for why it is more dangerous, why so many people die there. Easy access to the site invites more children, more inexperienced hikers. It's why more eyes would fall upon a cautionary sign.

A second argument: If signs were posted to advise the public about the danger at Falling Rock, the federal government could then become liable for accidents on federal land not marked as dangerous. If that's true, how do highway departments get away with their signs: Dangerous curve ahead? Blind intersection? Falling rock?

Nobody wants a sign posted every 15 feet along every dangerous cliff. Nobody wants a fence enclosing every precipice. And nobody wants a "Dangerous intersection" sign at every crossing. They might, however, want a warning sign near the one intersection where crashes have killed someone, on average, every four years.

Might a warning sign be vandalized? Sure. Aren't others? But how much does a sign cost? Compare that with the cost of recovering a body. Compare it with the value of a single child.

Cliffs, like highways, are inherently dangerous. People must assume responsibility for risk whenever they venture upon either. In both cases, personal responsibility plays the largest role in individual safety. But that's not to say people cannot be provided a little help, given a small reminder or even a bit of historical context — nine deaths in 35 years.

Locals know about the dangers, but in this case we have a child from Pierre. Had the family asked longtime residents: Is there a place in the Black Hills where people continually fall to their deaths, most of us would respond, "Oh yeah, Falling Rock. Bunches of them over the years. Everybody who lives here knows it."

What if a sign were erected to offer that warning?

Will a sign prevent all fatal or serious falls? No. Accidents happen, and laws cannot prevent people from doing foolish things. But at the current rate, we can expect another serious fall within two years, with a fatal fall two years later. Most falls occur in April, May and June.

Should we just sit by, do absolutely nothing, and look forward to tragedies around 2023, 2027, 2031, 2035 ...?

Aberdeen American News, April 6

Young workers are vital to our business community

Everyone looks forward to new restaurants coming to town.

However, few seem to want to work at them.

That was one of the reasons Max & Erma's co-owner Mark McNeary gave about why he and the other owners decided to close the restaurant. He spoke with the American News earlier this week, stating that keeping a full staff has been an issue for a long time.

Not only is that sad, it's also a little mind-boggling.

As of January, the state Bureau of Labor Statistics put Aberdeen's unemployment rate at 3.2 percent.

That's very low. But there are still plenty of folks looking for work. And if that's the case, why are business owners constantly looking for help?

Is it because these jobs don't have benefits? Is it because they aren't "good enough?" Do they not pay enough? Is it the hours? Do potential workers have other priorities? Do people have too many other commitments?

With three high schools and two colleges in Aberdeen, one would think that jobs, especially those that only require part-time hours, would be filled almost as soon as they're posted.

But they're not.

Maybe high school- and college-aged students can step up to help.

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And maybe the burden of showing young people the importance of an earned wage is our job as parents, guardians, educators and community members.

One of the reasons part-time work is hard to fill is that those jobs often don't offer benefits. But most students below the age of 26 are still on their parents' insurance, which should help.

Students are very busy these days with after-school sports and other extracurricular activities — but don't they want their own spending cash?

Jobs in the restaurant business aren't always easy. And they're definitely not glamorous. But for someone looking to get a job for the first time, there is so much that can be learned from the hospitality industry.

And those lessons can be carried over to a career.

Working in a busy restaurant takes a great deal of organization. From numerous tables each requesting different items to keeping the cash register balanced, a server must keep an organized list of who needs what and when. Knowing how to keep priorities in line is something that employers look for.

Time management is also a critical skill that students can learn in the service industry. There's no better way to hone your craft than knowing how much time you have to get one table's drinks before another table's food is ready to be served.

Another essential lesson is customer service. It's easy to get frustrated at the woman who demands a very intricate order or the man who wants to use his expired coupons. Learning how to handle these situations and keep the customer happy is an incredible life lesson.

We can't dismiss other basic lessons, either:

- Clearing tables teaches the value of cleanliness and picking up after yourself.
- Handling money is a great responsibility and hones math skills.
- Getting to work on time helps with accountability.
- Earning a paycheck reflects self-worth and yields appreciation for a hard day's work.
- These lessons don't exclusively apply to being a server in a restaurant.

And the lack of applicants isn't exclusively a service industry issue, either.

But it seems fewer and fewer students are taking advantage of the numerous employment opportunities in the area.

If we want new restaurants — or any new business, for that matter — to come to town, we need people to work at them.

We need to put aside the idea that a particular job is beneath a particular person.

We, as parents, need to teach our children that work isn't easy, but it can be rewarding. And being of service to others is an incredible lesson that can only be learned when it's put in action. We need to prove that there are valuable life lessons that can be learned when a person takes a job for the first time.

So encourage your child to take that job serving food. Or washing cars. Or scrubbing toilets, planting flowers or delivering newspapers.

Take that job for the betterment of your community.

And the betterment of yourself.

South Dakota snowbank challenge raises money for schools

By CHARLIE HILDEBRAND Aberdeen American News

BOWDLE, S.D. (AP) — There are many issues that arise when schools decide to form a sports co-op.

One that's easy to forget is the cost of uniforms.

With Bowdle, Eureka and Edmunds Central joining to create the North Central Thunder, money was needed to be raised to pay for uniforms. Tara Beitelspacher, the owner of the Bowdle newspaper, The Pride of the Prairie, had a clever way to help raise the money.

"It was about three schools coming together to fund the uniforms," Bowdle superintendent Hector Serna said. "It was to get people to help donate."

Beitelspacher posted her idea on the Facebook page of the Pride Publications. People were asked to climb a snowbank, have someone take their picture and then donate \$100 to the school of their choice,

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the Aberdeen American News reported.

"Just like the polar bear challenge or other challenges you see on social media," Serna said. "You go on top of the snowbank and challenge other community members to do it."

The snowbank challenge was created. It's worked, too.

It started March 19. Within one week, Bowdle had raised \$10,000 to pay for roughly 100 uniforms. A little over two weeks later, Bowdle has raised even more money.

"Right now we've raised over \$15,000 in the Bowdle district," Serna said.

Serna isn't sure how much Eureka or Edmunds Central have raised.

"Right now we're trying to figure how many uniforms we have total for a three-school cooperative," Serna said. "Each community is doing its own."

Since Beitelspacher's initial post on the Pride's Facebook page, over 80 pictures of people taking the challenge are shown on the same page. Many people from across the country donated to all three schools.

According to the same Facebook page, Edmunds Central had raised enough money to pay for 38 uniforms as of March 27. There was no information about Eureka on the Facebook page.

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

South Dakota schools redesign classrooms to ease stress

By TANYA MANUS Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Rapid City schools are tapping into the use of color, lighting and furniture to give students lower-stress environments. These redesign efforts support district's focus on trauma-informed practices.

"It really morphed into how can physical environments better meet the needs of students who experienced trauma," said Dave Swank, principal at Canyon Lake Elementary School.

When Open Heart United Methodist Church held a Christmas fundraiser to benefit its neighborhood schools, Robbinsdale Elementary was one of the recipients, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Principal Beth Keeney earmarked the funds for teachers. They can choose to either create a calming corner in their classroom or purchase flexible seating, which gives students options while learning. They might opt to sit on the floor at low tables, or choose large inflatable balls or even a standing desk, Keeney said.

"Kids are wiggly, and they need to move. These seating options let students choose what works best for them," she said. "In one classroom, kids start in an assigned spot and later in the day they are free to choose where they want to sit and where they want to work."

Calming corners or "chill out zones" are being developed in schools districtwide, offering students a chance to regain control of their emotions when they're upset.

Robbinsdale Elementary has a dedicated wellness room this school year, Keeney said.

"Some students have built-in breaks during the day to go do a couple of activities. We've recognized maybe that a student needs to take a 10 minute break. We're trying to be as proactive as we can with students that we know have trouble getting through the day," she said. "It's not a majority of the building population, but their behaviors can really ... take away from teaching time and education time."

Canyon Lake Elementary School added flexible furniture and "chill out zones."

"It's a bean bag chair that's not secluded but is set off. A student has a little bit more control (over) sensory input," Swank said.

The school's classroom walls are painted blue — a color research indicates promotes calmness, focus and productivity. Blue light filters have been installed to mitigate the effects of the school buildings' fluorescent lighting that can trigger increased stress and anxiety, headaches and eye strain.

"We involved students in the redesign process. We asked them what they needed and what they wished the rooms looked like," Swank said.

Simplifying the appearance of classrooms by minimizing the amount of items hanging on the walls also can have a calming effect, Daniel said.

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Rapid Valley Elementary teachers incorporate simple, child-friendly mindfulness activities that are proving beneficial for students and staff. Taking a few minutes to visualize a snowflake falling from the sky, or breathing deeply, or sending a good wish into the world are examples of easy mindfulness tasks that give everyone a chance to pause, focus and reduce their stress, Daniel said.

Next year, Rapid Valley's goal is to develop common vocabulary that all teachers will use to help students identify what they're feeling and manage their emotions, Daniel said.

She believes all the efforts to help students process and regulate their emotions, instead of simply reacting and creating chronic stress, directly contributes to their ability to learn.

"I'm a strong believer (that) we can't be successful at academics if we don't have a regulated little brain in the seat," Daniel said. "We sometimes underestimate how (unregulated) a brain a child can have."

In Rapid City, 16.4% of residents live in poverty, according to Data USA. That's a poverty rate higher than the national average of 14%. The Rapid City Area Schools District estimates 45% of students qualify for free or reduced lunches. Feeding and clothing kids frequently goes hand-in-hand with the district's other efforts to cope with students' trauma and stress.

"We want to make sure they're warm, they're well fed. We're taking away as many anxieties as possible. ... The cumulative effect is that the vast majority of our students (at Canyon Lake Elementary) are happy and feel safe when they're in school," Swank said. "Our counselors (assist) kids to have a plan in place to cope with things they may be facing while they're not under our roof."

Canyon Lake is one of the district's Title 1 schools, meaning a higher number of students come from low-income families and have a greater likelihood of experiencing one or more significant traumas, Swank said.

At Canyon Lake Elementary, Swank said every student can receive free breakfast and lunch during the school year. The school uses the Backpack Program to provide children in need with food on weekends, and last summer Canyon Lake was one of seven Rapid City schools where kids could eat free meals. With the help of the community, Canyon Lake keeps a stash of hats, gloves and coats available for children who lack winter clothing.

"If you aren't addressing (basic needs), no significant learning can take place," Swank said. "Some of our third, fourth and fifth graders are taking care of younger siblings (after school). ... If you've got a kid who's worried about who's going to be home, or if there's food for the weekend, those could be things taking up the limited amount of currency our kids have (for learning)."

Thanks to community support, there are some resources to aid middle school and high school students, too. For example, Rapid City High School partnered with Feeding South Dakota to provide a food pantry at school twice a month. It's open to any family that has a student in the Rapid City school district.

A free clothes closet for students, and another for the public, are open at Rapid City High School on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, at the same time the food pantry is open. During the holiday season, Rapid City Area Schools teamed up with local radio stations and First Interstate Bank to provide gift cards to homeless middle school and high school students.

Swank said anyone who wants to donate items to Canyon Lake or the school of their choice, should contact that school to find out how to help. Community support is essential so that schools can continue meeting students' needs.

"What you think education is or should be really expands by a huge magnitude," said Swank, who has worked in public education since 2000 and has been a principal for 10 years. "You are facilitating more than just the instructional side of things."

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

South Dakota trio launches meat processing plant

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

FREEMAN, S.D. (AP) — From the Schmeckfest bratwurst to the South Dakota Chislic Festival, mouth-

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watering meat draws great crowds to the Freeman community.

Now, this Hutchinson County town of 1,300 residents has gained a business providing an outlet for both livestock producers and meat aficionados.

Prairie-to-Plate Enterprises Inc. will establish a butcher shop and meat processing facility along U.S. Highway 81, the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan reported.

In addition, the building will house "The Chislic House," a restaurant specializing in chislic — cubes of fried meat, usually lamb, served on small skewers — and craft beers.

Will Ortman, Nate Preheim and Tim Kautz will operate as equal partners in the new venture, they told the Press & Dakotan. They recently acquired the former Katie's Malt Shoppe.

"Purchasing the building completes our set of cornerstone assets," Ortman said, "and will enable us to begin USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture)-inspected meat processing by late summer. Our aim is to serve local small to mid-size livestock producers by providing them access to processing capacity."

The partners plan to expand their business into a building constructed in the newly-annexed Freeman industrial park, Preheim said. The current building and future processing plant will be located on neighboring property.

"(The industrial park) is more or less directly across 81 to the east, and north just a few steps, within a stone's throw of the Chislic House," he said. "One of our strategic goals was to have a presence on both sides of (Highway 81)."

All of the operations will be initially housed under one roof, Preheim said.

"The meat-processing facility will in the back of the house and will act as a temporary facility until the main facility is ready to go live in fourth quarter of 2020," he said. "Our mobile slaughter unit will marry up to the Chislic House building with an overhead rail system."

While one part of the building will be used for meat processing, the other part will feature a favorite local snack for diners.

"The Chislic House guests will be able to enjoy local chislic and craft beer in the dining area," Preheim said.

The parent company will be the same for both enterprises.

"It will be the same entity; however our main butchery operation will simply be moved to the new facility," Preheim said. "We plan to keep some meat operations, mainly chislic, active at the Chislic House once we get moved to the new building. Also, we plan to have the Chislic House also function as a retail shop where customers can buy local grass fed meats."

The Prairie-to-Plate partners outlined their plans in a press release.

"The marketing plan will open doors for local and regional producers to see more value-chain dollars," they said. "The company is investing in professional branding and marketing to access regional markets."

The group will harvest animals on area farms with a mobile slaughter unit, according to the news release. Offal — the animals' entrails and internal organs — will be composted far from the city limits as part of the company's regenerative approach.

Value-added butchery will take place at the processing facility. Prairie-to-Plate has also lined up an experienced head butcher, a marketing specialist and a retired USDA food safety inspector to facilitate USDA regulatory compliance.

Prairie-to-Plate is planning to build an expansion facility in Freeman's newly-annexed industrial park. Paperwork is underway to complete the purchase of the industrial-park site from the Freeman Community Development Corporation.

"The FCDC has been very supportive of our plans," Ortman said. "We see their decision as a strong validation of our approach."

The innovative approach has required a great deal of planning, Ortman said in the press release.

"The business is geared toward creating opportunity for livestock producers to access the consumer more directly," the partners said. "Additionally, the company will roll out an incentive program for local producers who wish to raise animals to be sold to the plant on-the-rail."

The company will sell directly through several marketing channels including retail, e-commerce, wholesale and through the Chislic House.

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"The name Prairie-to-Plate symbolizes the vertical integration — from the prairie to the plate of customers — that will keep all dollars flowing to the local community," the partners said in the news release.

The announcement of the new businesses comes on the heels of outstanding recent visibility and public response to chislic.

The cubed meat — often served with garlic salt and saltine crackers, and enjoyed with a beer — has long been tied to the German-Russian settlers in Freeman and the surrounding region.

However, chislic — considered a South Dakota delicacy unknown to most people outside the state — has gained national attention in the past year.

The Meridian Cafe, located north of Yankton, was featured at the "Flavored Nation" food expo in Columbus, Ohio.

The popularity of the meat treat struck again last summer when the inaugural South Dakota Chislic Festival in Freeman debuted to a huge response.

Organizers were hoping 1,500-2,000 people would attend the festival. They became overwhelmed when more than 10,000 people arrived and food ran out quickly.

South Dakota Chislic Festival founder Josh Hofer said he and the event have no connection to the Prairie-to-Plate operation. However, he believes the arrival of the new business firmly entrenches the popularity and availability of chislic, in turn boosting the regional agricultural economy.

"We're really excited for what Prairie-to-Plate is going to bring to the table," he said. "For the South Dakota Chislic Festival, it represents the creation of another vibrant organization capitalizing on the Freeman area's strengths in food, heritage, the arts and agriculture."

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

South Dakota State University expands performance venue

By JEREMY FUGLEBERG Argus Leader

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — A newly expanded performance complex at South Dakota State University in Brookings is setting the standard as an arts venue in the region, university and state arts leaders said.

The university recently completed a \$49 million expansion of the Performing Arts Center on its campus, boosting the size of the complex from 60,000 to 150,000 square feet, and is currently in the middle of its reopening celebration, the Argus Leader reported.

The expansion includes renovations of existing spaces and adds a recital hall and proscenium theater and is the home of the newly created School of Performing Arts, combining the university's music, dance and theater programs.

The university has come a long way since its dependence on the dated Doner Auditorium in Morrill Hall, said David Reynolds, director of the SDSU School of Performing Arts.

"To go from Doner Auditorium, which to be perfectly honest, had outlived its worth in the 1940s, to a state-of-the-art facility like we've built, is a game changer for our region," he said. "It truly is."

The newly expanded facility will become an "anchor performing arts destination in Eastern South Dakota," said Jim Speirs, executive director of Arts South Dakota.

The nonprofit arts advocacy organization regularly calculates the economic value of the arts in the state. In southeast South Dakota, audiences spend an average of \$30.35 per person in concert-related expenses and out-of-town attendees spend even more.

"The new PAC is bound to bring audiences from far and wide," Speirs said. "Investing in a new state-of-art performing arts center is a sound investment for the community of Brookings."

The Performing Arts Center's Larson Concert Hall has already built a reputation that's drawn top-shelf talent, Reynolds said.

"Now, with these other two venues, we're going to be able to invite even more varied guest artists to campus, shows, touring shows, those kinds of things," he said.

The reopening celebration features Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Postmodern Jukebox and a touring per-

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formance of Broadway's "Chicago, The Musical."

The new professional-caliber proscenium theater seats 850 and the recital hall seats 125. The Performing Arts Center's Larson Concert Hall seats 1,000. With no curtains or other features, it isn't designed for theater productions.

The proscenium theater adds a new, previously unavailable type of venue to the complex for productions from both students and touring groups, Reynolds said.

"Essentially, the Performing Arts Center puts Brookings 'on the map' in terms of top-rated touring ensembles," Speirs said.

The expanded Performing Arts Center is now home to technology, Reynolds said.

"We have an acoustical engineer who was part of this process, so every space where music can be made or studied or reproduced, or theatrical space, has been designed acoustically to make it as state of the art as any space that is being built in the United States right now," he said.

Another example of the facility's approach: The PAC now includes both new LED lighting, including some invented in the last year, as well as more traditional lighting — that typically found in local school districts.

"Public schools aren't going to have that kind of equipment, so we also have duplicates of the more traditional lighting, so students will have experience, depending on which direction they go," Reynolds said.

The school's programs were formerly spread across five buildings, including some not designed specifically for the arts. Putting the programs under the same roof will spark even more creativity, he said.

"So now we have all these creative people in the same building and they're talking to each other about how they can create new works with each other's support," he said.

Reynolds said there were some compromises made to keep the project on budget, but said a visitor working through the facility wouldn't notice what they were. His faculty and staff are pleased with the newly created spaces.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me. A lot of people who are in my kind of work will go their entire career without being able to work on a project this significant," Reynolds said. "I'm so proud of all the staff and all the hard work and extra meetings and the compromise and the patience that went into seeing the project to fruition."

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

Suspended jail sentence in animal abuse case

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A Spink County man charged with neglecting his cows has been given a suspended jail sentence.

Court documents say four dead cows were found on Rex Spear's Ashton property in June of 2017. Spear was charged with felony animal abuse and misdemeanor animal neglect.

Aberdeen News says Spear pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor in an agreement with prosecutors. Spear was ordered not to own livestock for two years.

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

Man rescued from icy lake in Deuel County

CLEAR LAKE, S.D. (AP) — A rescue crew help pull a stranded boater off the ice on a Deuel County lake. Sheriff's officials say the man was in a small boat on Lake Coteau Sunday and after started out in open water, had engine trouble and became stranded on the ice about 350 yards from shore near Clear Lake. Codington County Search and Rescue was called to assist. The man was not injured.

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Inside 12 days of turmoil that shook Homeland Security

By JILL COLVIN and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump had had it.

The flow of migrants at the southern border was surging. Another caravan appeared to be forming. And his government had run out of holding space, forcing the release of tens of thousands of families apprehended at the border.

During a meeting with senior aides on the last Thursday in March, Trump demanded drastic action to make good on the threat he'd tweeted that morning: Shut the southern border. Curbing illegal immigration was his signature issue, he railed. Why couldn't he deliver?

Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen urged the president to reconsider. Her agency had already diverted hundreds of border agents away from certain crossings to process migrant families elsewhere, creating what would soon become considerable bottlenecks. Closing ports completely, she reasoned, would only encourage migrants to cross elsewhere — illegally.

Trump wasn't having it. Shut the ports at El Paso, Texas, at noon tomorrow, he ordered. End of meeting.

The directive set off a frantic behind-the-scenes push to get Trump to change his mind, and he ultimately relented. But the episode launched a turbulent 12-day stretch that would lead to the eventual resignation of Nielsen, the potential dismissal of much of her agency's top leadership and the beginning of a new phase in which immigration hard-liners at the White House are determined to wield considerably more influence over Homeland Security.

This account is based on interviews with 20 administration officials, congressional aides and people familiar with the events, many of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal deliberations.

ON BORROWED TIME

Trump and Nielsen's relationship was never especially close. Nielsen had been picked for the top Homeland Security job at the urging of her predecessor, John Kelly, who left to become Trump's White House chief of staff. Trump had always been suspicious of her, in part because she'd worked for former President George W. Bush. She had been widely expected to leave the department last fall after Kelly's departure from the White House, but she appeared to get back on Trump's good side during the government shut-down, when she served as one of the top defenders of his push to build a southern border wall.

But Nielsen took the brunt of Trump's fury over rising border crossing numbers, and the situation was only getting worse. Aides spent months desperately trying to come up with new solutions, and some tried to steer Trump away from more drastic measures, including his talk of reinstating the family separation policy that prompted international outrage.

While Nielsen had doubts at times, she had dutifully carried out Trump's orders, taking ownership of his most divisive policies, including the family separations, and spending months trying to broker arrangements with Central American countries, including Mexico. But it also fell to Nielsen to explain to Trump the legal limits of things he wanted to do. And he didn't like it.

It didn't help that Kelly had been critical of Trump in appearances since he left the White House — something Trump held against Nielsen. Or that John Bolton, Trump's national security adviser, had been pushing for Nielsen's ouster since last fall, telling Trump he didn't think her leadership or policies were effective.

A TRIP CUT SHORT

Nielsen had just landed in Europe last week for her first time as secretary when she decided to rush back to Washington, landing early Tuesday morning.

Though aides had succeeded in talking Trump down from his border closure threat the week before, he had continued to crank up his rhetoric, warning by tweet that if Mexico didn't "immediately stop ALL illegal immigration coming into the United States through our Southern Border," he would be "CLOSING" the border, or large sections of it within a week.

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By Wednesday, Nielsen was at the border, overseeing efforts to keep asylum seekers in Mexico and preparing for the president's Friday visit to Calexico, California.

But the night before Trump's visit, a puzzling notice arrived on Capitol Hill: Trump was withdrawing his nomination of Ron Vitiello to permanently lead the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. It had to be a mistake, staffers reasoned. Why would Trump be spiking his own nominee, a well-respected and longtime border official who appeared to be cruising to confirmation?

Vitiello got a call that night from senior Trump aide Stephen Miller informing him that he wouldn't be joining the president on his trip to the border the next morning. There was no explanation.

Nielsen had received no heads-up.

But word began to spread that his nomination was being yanked.

"We want to go in a tougher direction" was all Trump told reporters as he left the White House on Friday morning.

It was Step One of the plot to purge DHS leadership.

Nielsen joined Trump at the border, echoing his words at a roundtable with border officers and local law enforcement and standing by Trump's side as they toured a section of newly rebuilt border fencing, introducing him to local officials.

But inside she was fuming.

DUSTING OFF A LETTER

Nielsen returned to Washington on a Coast Guard Gulfstream as Trump continued onto California and Nevada to do some fundraising. By that night, murmurs were swirling that Vitiello's removal wasn't a one-off and that Miller was orchestrating a wholesale leadership overhaul of her department.

Already frustrated by what she saw as insufficient help from departments like Justice and Health and Human Services, with clear signs that White House hard-liners were on the ascent, Nielsen pulled up the resignation letter she'd written months before — just in case.

She went into a Sunday White House meeting with Trump that she'd requested not sure if she'd be fired, resign or stay to fight another day.

It was, by all accounts, a cordial conversation in the Yellow Oval Room of the White House residence, with acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney in attendance. Nielsen had come prepared with a list of ideas to share with the president. But the two quickly agreed the arrangement was no longer working. Trump wanted to go in a different direction.

Nielsen resigned on the spot. Trump tweeted the news before she could get her letter out.

THE PURGE

Standing outside her home in Alexandria, Virginia, on Monday, Nielsen sounded just as loyal to Trump as she had at the border.

"I will continue to support all efforts to address the humanitarian and security crisis," she said, thanking the president "for the tremendous opportunity to serve this country."

By the end of the day, the department she had led appeared to be on the cusp of being dismantled, with the head of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the department's general counsel among those expected to be pushed out.

"It's time to do things a little differently," White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said on Fox News Channel. "And so the president's looking around to reshape his team so he can have the people in place to carry out his agenda."

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

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White House steps up attacks as Mueller report release nears

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ZEKE MILLER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump took a victory lap after special counsel Robert Mueller concluded his Russia investigation. It may have been premature.

The scramble to frame the investigation's findings in the best political light is sure to be renewed in coming days when Mueller's report is expected to be released in redacted form. Now that the American public will get a look at details beyond the four-page investigation summary written by Attorney General William Barr, some Trump allies are concerned that the president was too quick to declare complete triumph and they're pushing the White House to launch a pre-emptive attack.

Trump seems to be of the same mind.

"The Democrats will never be satisfied, no matter what they get, how much they get, or how many pages they get," Trump tweeted Monday, two days after he blasted "Bob Mueller's team of 13 Trump Haters & Angry Democrats."

With the goal to discredit what's coming, Trump and his allies have unleashed a series of broadsides against Mueller's team and the Democrats pushing for full release of the final report. No longer is the president agreeing that Mueller acted honorably, as he did the day after the special counsel's conclusions were released. Instead, he's joining his allies in trying to undermine the integrity of the investigators and the credibility of their probe.

"You're darn right I'm going after them again," Rudy Giuliani, one of Trump's attorneys, told The Associated Press. "I never thought they did their job in a professional manner. ... Only because there is overwhelming evidence that the president didn't do anything wrong, they were forced to admit they couldn't find anything on him. They sure tried."

After Washington waited nearly two years for Mueller to conduct his investigation, Barr released a letter last month stating that the special counsel found no evidence the Trump campaign "conspired or coordinated" with the Russian government to influence the 2016 election. Moreover, while Mueller did not reach a conclusion as to whether Trump obstructed justice, Barr and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein determined that the president did not.

Mueller's team, which was barely quoted in Barr's letter, has made clear that it did not exonerate the president. And Democrats immediately called for Mueller to testify and for his entire 400-page report to be released.

That didn't stop the president's allies from declaring victory.

They falsely claimed Mueller had exonerated Trump, painted House Democrats' investigations as partisan overreach and planned to target news outlets and individual reporters they believe promoted the collusion story. The president himself seethed at a Michigan rally that the whole thing was an attempt "to tear up the fabric of our great democracy."

While the president unleashed his personal grievances, his team seized on any exculpatory information in Barr's letter, hoping to swiftly define the conversation, according to six White House officials and outside advisers who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss private deliberations.

Those officials and advisers acknowledged that the victory lap was deliberately premature.

Trump's inner circle knows there will likely be further releases of embarrassing or politically damaging information. Barr's letter, for instance, hinted that there would be at least one unknown action by the president that Mueller examined as a possible act of obstruction. A number of White House aides have privately said they are eager for Russia stories, good or bad, to fade from the headlines. And there is fear among some presidential confidants that the rush to spike the football could backfire if bombshell new information emerged.

"I think they did what they had to do. Regardless of what Barr reported, they needed to claim vindication," said Republican strategist Alex Conant, who worked on Sen. Marco Rubio's 2016 presidential campaign. "First impressions are important. And the first impression of the Mueller report was very good for Trump."

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Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, suggested the full report may raise new questions for Trump but would not contain anything that would threaten the presidency.

"I personally believe not all of it is going to be great for the White House," Burr said. He added that he didn't know what's in the Mueller report, "but there are going to be things that maybe cause some people to say, 'Oh, gosh, I didn't know that existed.' Now, does it reach a threshold? Apparently not."

Trump's GOP allies in Congress are also hedging their bets by continuing to cast doubt on the origins of Mueller's investigation.

The top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, California Rep. Devin Nunes, told Fox News on Sunday that he was sending eight criminal referrals to the Justice Department, apparently linked to investigations he started in the last Congress about the beginnings of the Russia probe.

The host of the Fox News program, Maria Bartiromo, told Nunes that he "ought to be taking a victory lap here" after Barr's memo said there was no evidence of Russian collusion. But, in a signal that Trump's allies planned to remain on the offensive, Nunes responded: "There's no really time for victory laps because people have to be held accountable for this nonsense that happened."

Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Catherine Lucey and Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report from Washington.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire> , Miller at <http://twitter.com/@zekejmiller> and Jalonick at <http://twitter.com/@MCJalonick> .

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. TRUMP'S VICTORY LAP MAY BE PREMATURE

The scramble to frame the Russia investigation's findings in the best political light is sure to be renewed in coming days when Mueller's report is expected to be released in redacted form.

2. 12 DAYS OF TURMOIL SHOOK HOMELAND SECURITY

Trump's anger over the situation on the U.S.-Mexico border led to a turbulent 12-day stretch that would lead to the eventual resignation of Kirstjen Nielsen.

3. ISRAELI VOTERS HEAD TO THE POLLS

Scandal-plagued Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking a fifth term in office, which would make him Israel's longest-serving leader ever.

4. WHAT GERMANY, FRANCE ARE SAYING ABOUT BREXIT EXTENSION

Officials insist that any further delay to Britain's withdrawal from the 28-nation bloc must come with strings attached and assurances from the U.K.

5. IN MOZAMBIQUE, A QUEST TO FIND AND NAME THE DEAD

If a final toll ever emerges for a devastating cyclone — now above 600 in Mozambique alone — it will be strongly informed by a forensic specialist's work, AP learns.

6. US-FUNDED HOUSING FOR POOR DIRE

An AP analysis shows a long decline in health and safety inspection scores at apartments assigned to low-income tenants.

7. DEMOCRATIC ACTIVISTS HAVE BROADER 2020 FOCUS

Indivisible in 2017 plans to outline its vision for the future of liberal organizing that goes beyond simply fighting Trump. It aims to zero in on issues such as reforms to Senate rules.

8. GHOST OF TOYS R US STILL LINGERS

A year after the iconic toy chain imploded, toy makers are still readjusting to the big loss of shelf space.

9. TAYLOR SWIFT DONATES TO LGBTQ ADVOCACY GROUP

The pop superstar donated \$113,000 to fight a handful of contentious bills moving inside Tennessee's

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Republican-controlled assembly.

10. A YEAR AFTER PAIN, VIRGINIA GETS ITS TITLE

The Cavaliers, the only top seed to fall to a No. 16 in the history of the NCAA Tournament last year, defeat Texas Tech 85-77 in overtime to capture the men's basketball title this season.

PM Netanyahu urges Israelis to vote, says it's 'sacred act'

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli voters were deciding Tuesday whether Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains in office after a decade in power as they cast ballots in a national election that has become a referendum of sorts on their longtime leader.

Clouded by a series of looming corruption indictments, Netanyahu is seeking a fourth consecutive and a fifth overall term in office, which would make him Israel's longest-ever serving leader, surpassing founding father David Ben-Gurion.

He faces a stiff challenge from retired military chief Benny Gantz, whose Blue and White party has inched ahead of Netanyahu's Likud in polls. Netanyahu still appears to have the best chance of forming a coalition, though, with a smattering of small nationalist parties backing him.

Gantz voted in his hometown of Rosh Haayin in central Israel alongside his wife, Revital, calling on Israelis to vote and "take responsibility" for their democracy.

"Go to vote. Choose whoever you believe in. Respect each other and let us all wake up for a new dawn, a new history," he said.

Netanyahu cast his ballot shortly after in Jerusalem, alongside his wife Sara, urging all Israelis to vote and saying it is a "sacred act."

The election has emerged as a referendum on Netanyahu and his 13 years overall in power, with the existential questions facing Israel rarely being discussed in the campaign. The 69-year-old prime minister has been the dominant force in Israeli politics for the past two decades and its face to the world.

But his various corruption scandals have created some voter fatigue, and in recent days he's vowed to annex Jewish West Bank settlements if re-elected — a prospect that could doom the already slim hopes of establishing a Palestinian state alongside Israel, which Netanyahu has previously wavered on.

"It's about time for a change," said Barry Rifkin, a Jerusalem resident.

Polling stations opened at 7 a.m., with exit polls expected at the end of the voting day, at 10 p.m. Some 6.4 million eligible voters will be able to cast their ballots at more than 10,000 stations. Some 40 parties are running, but no more than a dozen are expected to make it into parliament. Election day in Israel is a national holiday, with turnout expected to be high in good weather.

Official results will begin streaming in early Wednesday, but it may take far longer for a final verdict to come through, given the fragmented state of Israeli politics.

As many as a half-dozen parties are teetering along the threshold for entering the Knesset, or parliament. A failure by any of these parties to get the required 3.25 percent of total votes cast could have a dramatic impact on who ultimately forms the next coalition. The Israeli government needs a parliamentary majority to rule, and since no party has ever earned more than half of the 120 seats in the Knesset, a coalition is required.

Netanyahu and Gantz have ruled out sitting together in government, so the next prime minister will likely come down to how many supporters each candidate can recruit.

Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin, could play an important role. Though largely a ceremonial post, the president is responsible for choosing the candidate with the best chance of building a stable coalition government as prime minister.

Rivlin told voters as he cast his ballot in Jerusalem that "the only ones that will determine who will be prime minister, and what the next government will be, are you."

"And in order for you to influence, you must vote," he said.

In the campaign's final days, Netanyahu has veered to the right and embarked on a media blitz in which

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he portrays himself as the underdog and frantically warns that "the right-wing government is in danger."

His nationalist allies, however, see the move as a repeat of his 2015 election tactic to draw away their voters as he did four years ago when on election day, he warned of Arabs turning out in "droves." The scare tactics were seen as helping him seal a come-from-behind victory.

Arab turnout will be a major issue this time as well. Netanyahu's campaign against Arab politicians, together with the new alliance with anti-Arab extremists and the passage of last year's contentious nation-state law, which enshrined Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people alone, have deepened calls for a ballot boycott in Arab communities.

But some hope these blows will have the opposite effect, fueling enough frustration to drive up the Arab participation rate, which is typically lower than that of Israeli Jews. A big Arab turnout could push smaller right-wing parties into the margins and even threaten Netanyahu's long rule.

The leftist Meretz even put out a video urging Arabs to vote. "Bibi is counting on you. Because if you don't vote, Bibi wins," it said, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname.

The Palestinian issue has been largely sidelined in the election campaign that has been long on scandal and short on substance. But in a reminder, the military says it imposed a 24-hour closure on the West Bank and Gaza throughout election day, based on its security assessments.

Even if he is re-elected, Netanyahu could have a difficult time governing. Some of his allies have indicated they will no longer back him if formal charges are filed.

Israel's attorney general has recommended indicting him on bribery and breach of trust charges in three separate cases. Rivals have also begun to question a deal in which Netanyahu reportedly earned \$4 million on a German submarine sale to Egypt by owning shares in one of the German manufacturer's suppliers.

Netanyahu denies any wrongdoing and claims the accusations are part of a liberal media's orchestrated witch hunt against him.

Netanyahu has generated much of his popularity from projecting a tough image in the face of Iran's rising power and for keeping Israel safe and prosperous in a hostile region.

But in Gantz he has encountered the rare opponent who can match his security credentials. Along with two other former military chiefs on his ticket, Gantz has attacked Netanyahu for failing to halt rocket fire from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. The telegenic Gantz, who has been vague on key policy fronts, has presented himself as a clean, scandal-free alternative to Netanyahu and has vowed to heal the rifts the longtime leader has created in Israeli society.

Follow Heller at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap

25 years later, TCM still abides (so movie lovers pray)

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There is always an asteroid, real or imagined, bearing down on Turner Classic Movies . Fears that something might befall the commercial-less bastion of classic Hollywood films aren't always justified. But there's an instinctual understanding that keeping anything good and pure alive in this dark, dark world is against the odds. By now, the hosts and executives of TCM are quite accustomed to fretful, agitated fans coming to them for reassurance that, yes, Turner Classic is OK, and, no, commercials aren't coming.

"I've had the good fortune to get to know Paul Thomas Anderson a little bit and let me just put it this way: He never asks how I'm doing," says Ben Mankiewicz, who in 2003 became only the second TCM host after Robert Osborne.

Almost everything in cable television and film has changed since Ted Turner launched the network in 1994. But through endless technological upheavals, four U.S. presidents and three Spider-men, Turner Classic humbly, persistently, improbably abides. On Sunday, TCM will turn 25, celebrating a quarter of a century as a lighthouse of classic cinema; a never-stopping, flickering beacon of Buster Keaton and Doris Day, Barbara Stanwyck and Ernst Lubitsch.

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"We view ourselves as the keeper of the flame," says Jennifer Dorian, general manager of TCM. "We're stronger than ever."

That will be good news to the TCM fans whose heart rates quickened after AT&T's takeover of Time Warner, which had bought Turner Broadcasting back in 1996. That led to restructuring, announced last month, that placed TCM in WarnerMedia's "global kids and young adults" subdivision, along with Cartoon Network and Adult Swim. WarnerMedia also shut down TCM's nascent streaming service, FilmStruck, last November after deeming it a "niche service." WarnerMedia is to launch a larger streaming platform later this year.

The demise of FilmStruck prompted an outcry from the likes of Steven Spielberg, Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan who petitioned WarnerMedia for its preservation. Some of the biggest names in Hollywood had TCM's back. One privately told Mankiewicz: "If you think we're mad about FilmStruck, wait 'til you see what we do if anyone messes with the network."

Yet the shuttering of FilmStruck (its streaming partner, Criterion Collection, relaunched as a stand-alone service on Monday) reinforced concerns that amid all the juggling and bundling of merging conglomerates, TCM might slip through the digital cracks.

"The fact that there are really passionate, vocal people out there helps us sort of stay the course. I think our corporate bosses don't want to upset those people," says Charlie Tabesh, TCM's programming chief and a 21-year veteran at the network. "While you can never promise anything, I've been through it enough that I'd be surprised if they changed it."

Change can be a dirty word around TCM. "Lower case 'c,' please," says Mankiewicz. "Evolve" is more preferable. TCM is, after all, a place where time nearly stops. In the 25 years since its founding, its focus remains overwhelmingly the golden age of Hollywood. Movies from the '30s, '40s and '50s, Tabesh says, make up approximately 70 percent of its programming.

"That's our bread and butter," says Mankiewicz. "Who doesn't like bread and butter?"

To mark its 25th anniversary, TCM will on Sunday again air "Gone With the Wind," the film that it first transmitted on April 14, 1994. Since then, the 1939 epic has aired more than 60 times on the network. The 10th annual TCM Classic Film Festival also kicks off Thursday in Los Angeles with "When Harry Met Sally..."

Fans of Turner Classic are as varied as Martha Stewart, Evander Holyfield, Alex Trebek and Kermit the Frog — all of whom have been guest programmers. Scorsese famously keeps it playing in his editing suite. Keith Richards is rumored to be a devotee. Even Donald Trump once stopped by to talk about, among other titles, "Citizen Kane." "Although I'm not sure he'd actually watched the movies he talked about, to be honest," says Tabesh.

Contemporary films have made only hesitant, much-considered inroads. (The newest films to air on TCM are "Hugo" and "The Artist," both from 2011.) More international films have slowly, cautiously been added, too. Over the years, TCM has expanded well beyond the Turner library (some 4,700 films from MGM, RKO and pre-1950 Warner Bros.) via deals with virtually every studio.

Dorian views coming under Warner control as a homecoming.

"We've moving closer to the library. We're going to a part of the company that's steeped in film history and values the culture heritage of film," says Dorian. "We absolutely intend to still be multi-studio."

The cult of TCM has grown over the years. The network's sixth cruise is to set sail in October. There is also a TCM Wine Club and a fan club, TCM Backlot. To celebrate its 25th anniversary, 25 fans will get to introduce a film with Mankiewicz. Turner Classic will also play further homage to Osbourne, who for most of its history was its friendly, welcoming face. He died in 2017 after 62,851 appearances on the network.

New hosts have joined, including Eddie Muller, Dave Karger and Alicia Malone, a film writer and podcaster who grew up in Australia dreaming of being Marilyn Monroe. She has been proud to remind viewers of women's place in film history on TCM, which, she notes, is programmed by people, not algorithms.

"I felt like I found my tribe," Malone says of coming to the network last year. "This is part of preserving film history. What TCM does best is tell these stories."

Yet asteroid or not, there's an unmistakable whiff of that "c" word in the air. "Obviously, we feel a sea

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change coming," says Mankiewicz. WarnerMedia declined to comment for this article, but Dorian said the message from above so far is only supportive.

"The large stroke is they want us to keep doing what we're doing," says Dorian.

As far as TCM's place in the rapidly changing streaming world, Dorian says that's "TBD." "There's a world of opportunity in front of us with streaming. I do not know the right approach for TCM at this moment," she says. "At our company, we're developing our new plan right now."

But predicting the future is not in TCM's nature. For a network that has always fixed its eyes firmly on the past, the present moment is one to savor.

"It feels momentous. It feels like we really accomplished something. It's a quarter of a century," says Mankiewicz. "If you asked me what I'd like to be doing in another 25 years, I hope to be introducing movies on TCM, having debates about whether you should remake the 'The Thin Man' and listening to those who say, 'You're showing too many modern movies!'"

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

Barr faces Congress as he readies Mueller report for release

By ERIC TUCKER and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William Barr is facing members of Congress on Tuesday for the first time since taking office — and amid intense speculation over his review of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia report.

Barr isn't coming to Congress to talk about the report, but lawmakers are expected to ask about it anyway as they anxiously wait to see it in the coming days. The topic of the House appropriations subcommittee hearing is the Justice Department's budget, and Barr's prepared remarks sent to the committee on Monday focused on funding requests for immigration enforcement and to combat violent crime and opioid addiction, not mentioning Mueller's report at all.

Mueller sent his final report to Barr on March 22, ending his almost two-year investigation into potential ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. Barr released a four-page letter summarizing the report two days later and said he would release a redacted version of the full report by mid-April, "if not sooner."

The new attorney general's budget testimony — traditionally a dry affair, and often addressing the parochial concerns of lawmakers — comes as Democrats are enraged that Barr is redacting material from the report and frustrated that his summary framed a narrative about President Donald Trump before they were able to see the full version. The Democrats are demanding that they see the full report and all its underlying evidence as Trump and his Republican allies are pushing back.

In excerpts from her opening statement released Monday night, House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., said that Barr's summary letter "raises more questions than it answers."

The chairman of the subcommittee, Democratic Rep. Jose Serrano of New York, also said there were unanswered questions, including "serious concerns about the process by which you formulated your letter; and uncertainty about when we can expect to see the full report."

Barr said in the summary released last month that Mueller didn't find a criminal conspiracy between the campaign and the Kremlin. He has also said that Mueller did not reach a conclusion on whether the president obstructed justice, instead presenting evidence on both sides of the question. Barr said he and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein decided that the evidence was insufficient to establish obstruction.

Facing the intensifying concerns from Democrats that he may have whitewashed Mueller's findings, Barr has twice moved to defend, or at least explain, his handling of the process since receiving the special counsel's report. He has said that he did not intend for his four-page summary of Mueller's main conclusions to be an "exhaustive recounting" of his work and that he could not immediately release the entire report because it included grand jury material and other sensitive information that needed to first be redacted.

He will likely be asked to further explain himself at the hearing Tuesday and at a Senate appropriations

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subcommittee hearing Wednesday that is also on the budget.

Barr is scheduled to testify on the report itself at separate hearings before the Senate and House judiciary committees on May 1 and May 2. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, a New York Democrat and chairman of the House judiciary panel, confirmed the May 2 date on Twitter and said he would like Mueller to testify.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., has said he would be satisfied hearing only from Barr and not Mueller.

3 American soldiers, 1 US contractor killed in Afghanistan

By RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Three American service members and a U.S. contractor were killed when their convoy hit a roadside bomb on Monday near the main U.S. base in Afghanistan, the U.S. forces said. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.

The U.S. and NATO Resolute Support mission said the four Americans were killed near the Bagram Air Base, north of Kabul, while three others were wounded in the explosion. The base in Bagram district is located in northern Parwan province and serves as the main U.S. air facility in the country.

The wounded were evacuated and are receiving medical care, the statement said. It added that in accordance with U.S. Department of Defense policy, the names of service members killed in action were being withheld until after the notification of next of kin.

In their claim of responsibility, the Taliban said they launched the attack and that one of their suicide bombers detonated his explosives-laden vehicle near the NATO base. The conflicting accounts could not be immediately reconciled.

On Tuesday, local officials said at least five Afghan civilians were wounded in the commotion after the attack on the American convoy. Four were passers-by and the fifth was a driver of a car going down the road, said Abdul Raqib Kohistani, the Bagram district police chief. Abdul Shakor Qudosi, the district administrative chief in Bagram, said American soldiers opened fire immediately after their convoy was bombed.

Monday's U.S. fatalities bring to seven the number of U.S. soldiers killed so far this year in Afghanistan, underscoring the difficulties in bringing peace to the war-wrecked country even as Washington has stepped up efforts to find a way to end the 17-year war, America's longest.

There are about 14,000 U.S. forces in Afghanistan, supporting embattled Afghan forces as they struggle on two fronts — facing a resurgent Taliban who now hold sway over almost half the country and also the Islamic State affiliate, which has sought to expand its footprint in Afghanistan even as its self-proclaimed "caliphate" has crumbled in Syria and Iraq.

Last year, 13 U.S. service members were killed in Afghanistan.

The Taliban have continued to carry out daily attacks on Afghan security forces despite holding several rounds of peace talks with the United States in recent months. The Taliban have refused to meet with the Afghan government, which they view as a U.S. puppet.

Meanwhile, the Taliban have agreed to take part in an all-Afghan gathering later this month in Qatar, where the insurgents maintain a political office. But the Taliban say they will not recognize any government official attending the gathering as a representative of the Kabul government, only as an individual Afghan participant.

NCAA Latest: Virginia's clutch tourney goes down in history

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Latest on the NCAA Tournament championship game between Virginia and Texas Tech (all times local)

11:26 p.m.

Virginia's nail-biting trip through the NCAA Tournament will go down in history as one of the most clutch performances from game-to-game by any championship team.

The Cavaliers' overtime victory over Texas Tech made them just the sixth title team to win multiple-OT games in a tournament, and the first since Arizona accomplished the feat in 1997.

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They outscored their opponents by a scant 45 points, the third-lowest margin of victory by a championship team since the field expanded to 64 teams in 1985.

The only comfortable game was their opening win over No. 16 seed Gardner-Webb, and that came after falling into an early hole. Virginia beat Oklahoma 63-51 in the second round, edged Oregon 53-49 in the regional semifinals and needed a last-second floater to force OT in a win over Purdue.

"We have a saying: The most faithful win," Virginia coach Tony Bennett said. "These guys were so faithful. Obviously we had some amazing plays."

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

11:14 p.m.

As Virginia's players were busy cutting the nets down following their first national title win over Texas Tech, congratulations were pouring in across social media.

One of them came from the UMBC basketball team, which tweeted: "What an incredible season for UVA. That was truly a turnaround for the ages. Congratulations, champs!"

It was UMBC that beat Virginia in the first round of last year's tournament, the first time a No. 16 had ever defeated a No. 1 seed. And it was that historic upset that fueled the Cavaliers all season and right into the Final Four, where they dispatched the Red Raiders in overtime.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

11:05 p.m.

Kyle Guy has been voted the Final Four's most outstanding player after his crucial foul shots sent Virginia to the national title game, and his 24 points against Texas Tech helped the Cavaliers win their first national title.

Guy was joined on the all-tournament team by teammates Ty Jerome and De'Andre Hunter, who had a career-high 27 points and nine rebounds against the Red Raiders.

Texas Tech standout Jarrett Culver and Matt Mooney completed the five-man team.

But it was Guy whose performance shined brightest. He made three free throws with 0.6 seconds left to beat Auburn in the national semifinals before his starring turn Monday night.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

10:48 p.m.

Virginia has won the first men's basketball championship in school history, getting a career-high 27 points from De'Andre Hunter and clutch play from Kyle Guy to beat Texas Tech 85-77 in overtime.

The first No. 1 seed out a year ago is the last one standing this year.

Hunter drained a 3-pointer with 12.9 seconds left to force the first overtime since 2008, when Mario Chalmers' miracle helped Kansas top Memphis in San Antonio. The big forward continued to make plays in the extra session, including another 3 during an 11-0 run that put the game away.

Go ahead, Virginia fans: Time to yell "Wahoo!"

Guy finished with 24 points and Ty Jerome had 16 for the Cavaliers, who like the Red Raiders were appearing in the title game for the first time. Braxton Key added six points and 10 boards.

Brandone Francis had 17 points to lead five players in double-figures scoring for Texas Tech. Jarrett Culver and Davide Moretti scored 15 apiece and Kyler Edwards had 12.

The teams matched a championship game record with 21 combined 3-pointers.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

10:32 p.m.

Texas Tech and Virginia are headed to overtime in the national title game, the first time it will be decided in an extra session since Kansas beat Memphis in 2008 in San Antonio.

The Red Raiders trailed 65-64 when Jarrett Culver hit a go-ahead basket, and Norense Odiase—a 61 percent foul shooter—added two free throws to extend the lead with 22.5 seconds to go.

Rather than call timeout, the Cavaliers' Ty Jerome rushed up the left side of the floor and kicked it across to De'Andre Hunter, whose 3-pointer knotted the game 68-all with 12.98 seconds left.

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Texas Tech had a couple chances to win the game in regulation, but Jarrett Culver missed the first attempt. Virginia got the rebound but threw the ball out of bounds with a single second left, and Culver missed his second try on the in-bound.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

10:10 p.m.

Texas Tech's bench is keeping coach Chris Beard's team alive against Virginia.

Brandone Francis has 15 points and Kyler Edwards has 10, helping to make up for off games from star guard Jarrett Culver and forward Tariq Owens. All told, the Texas Tech bench has outscored Virginia's backups 25-2 with just under 5 minutes left in the national title game.

The Red Raiders will need their backups to overcome a six-point deficit down the stretch.

Owens, who was trying to play through a sprained ankle, has already fouled out. He finished with just three points and five rebounds.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

10:00 p.m.

Virginia is closing in on the school's first national title in basketball, and sharpshooter Kyle Guy is almost certainly closing in on the Final Four MVP award.

Guy, whose three foul shots with 0.6 seconds left beat Auburn in the semifinals, has hit four 3-pointers and has a game-high 18 points as Virginia leads 55-47 with 7:23 to go at U.S. Bank Stadium.

The Red Raiders haven't made it easy, though.

Jarrett Culver has started to come alive in the second half, though he had a layup wiped away by a charging foul that would have made it 53-49. Ty Jerome beat the shot clock at the other end with a tough jumper, giving Virginia what amounted to a four-point shift.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

9:45 p.m.

Virginia gets plenty of credit for its tight, aggressive man-to-man defense, but the Cavaliers have pulled ahead in the national title game in part because Texas Tech can't make a shot.

The Red Raiders missed their first five shots of the second half, and a couple of them were wide open looks. They've found some space on the perimeter against the Cav's pack-line defense, but so far the only one taking advantage of it has been Brandone Francis.

Matt Mooney, the hero of the Red Raiders' semifinal win with his barrage of 3-pointers, is 1 for 4 from the field and 0 for 2 from beyond the arc. And star guard Jarrett Culver missed his first eight shots before getting a pair of buckets in the lane.

Kyle Guy continues to pace Virginia with 15 points and it's 42-35 with 14:15 to play.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

9:10 p.m.

Ty Jerome's buzzer-beating 3-pointer has Virginia 20 minutes away from a national title.

The Cavaliers and Texas Tech played to a stalemate most of the first half before Jerome buried a dead-on 3 to send coach Tony Bennett's team into the locker room with a 32-29 lead.

The second half could be decided by which star shows up.

Virginia's best NBA prospect, DeAndre Hunter, missed his first seven shots before getting a nifty up-and-under to go with 90 seconds left in the half. Tech counterpart Jarrett Culver, a projected lottery pick, is 0 for 6 from the field and has just three points in 17 minutes.

Kyle Guy leads the Cavs with 10 points. Davide Morretti and Brandone Francis have eight apiece for the Red Raiders.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis

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9:01 p.m.

The tortillas are flying at U.S. Bank Stadium.

One of them even landed on the floor.

Texas Tech fans typically fling tortillas around at football games, but a whole bunch of them were smuggled into the student section at the national title game. The one that landed on the floor came after Texas Tech ripped off a 19-4 run to take a 25-21 lead in the game.

Most of them were being tossed into the air, but the one that hit the elevated floor caused a stoppage in play and a reminder from the public address announcer not to throw things on the court.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

8:53 p.m.

Texas Tech's Brandone Francis is playing inspired for his late friend Nipsey Hussle.

Francis has come off the bench to hit a pair of 3-pointers, packed around another 3 from teammate Kyler Edwards, to help the Red Raiders shake off a poor shooting start against Virginia in the national title game.

Francis's family was close friends with Hussle, a well-known rapper who was shot and killed outside of his Los Angeles clothing store last Sunday.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

8:40 p.m.

The first salvo of the national title game has been thrown by Virginia.

The Cavaliers have been pounding the offensive boards to create second-chance opportunities, and Ty Jerome's 3-pointer and a dunk by Braxton Key forced Texas Tech's Chris Beard to call timeout.

Then, the Red Raiders' coach lit into star guard Jarrett Culver.

Culver has struggled throughout the tournament, and he still hasn't found his range at U.S. Bank Stadium. He's missed his first three shots, including a dunk that was swatted away, and clanked a free throw while struggling against Virginia's stingy defense.

The Cavaliers lead 11-6 midway through the first half.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

8:30 p.m.

The national title game between Texas Tech and Virginia is underway.

If the rest of the game goes like the first four minutes, good luck staying awake.

The two defensive-minded teams are putting on a clinic at that end of the floor, each forcing the other into using the entire 30-second shot clock before throwing up off-balance heaves.

Virginia is 1 of 5 from the floor. Texas Tech is 0 for 4. Tech led 3-2.

As a result, the team that wins might just need to do something that is exceedingly rare for them: run. Texas Tech has already started to push the tempo off misses, trying to create open shots against the Cavs' pack-line defense before it has a chance to set up.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

8:17 p.m.

Texas Tech has Patrick Mahomes. Virginia has Katie Couric.

There are probably a whole bunch of other notable alumni inside U.S. Bank Stadium to see the Red Raiders and Cavaliers play for the national championship, too. Neither school has ever been on this stage, so it makes sense that some of their most famous fans would want to see the game.

Virginia standout Ralph Sampson was in the crowd, though he typically follows the Cavaliers pretty closely. So was longtime coach Dick Bennett, whose son Tony Bennett had led Virginia to within one victory over the program's first basketball title.

Dick Bennett, who brought Wisconsin to the Final Four in 2000, often does not attend his son's games because he gets too antsy. But he was sitting right behind the bench Monday night. The Bennetts are

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the second father-son combo to lead teams to the Final Four joining former Georgetown coaches John Thompson and John Thompson III.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

8:08 p.m.

Tariq Owens is in the starting lineup for Texas Tech after spraining his right ankle in Texas Tech's national semifinal victory over Michigan State.

Owens landed on teammate Norensse Odiase underneath the basket and left that game, only to return briefly in the second half. He did not practice Sunday while wearing a walking boot, and he was still in the boot when he arrived at U.S. Bank Stadium on Monday night.

He shed the boot and warmed up with his teammates before tipoff against Virginia.

— Dave Skretta reporting from Minneapolis.

6:45 p.m.

Texas Tech forward Tariq Owens had a protective boot on his injured right foot when the Red Raiders arrived at U.S. Bank Stadium for the NCAA championship game Monday night against Virginia.

The 6-foot-10 senior rolled an ankle in the second half against Michigan State in the Final Four. The team's leading shot blocker was confident he would play in the title game after that win, talking to reporters at his locker about how a new tape job on his ankle allowed him to go back in against the Spartans.

But Owens was not made available to the media on Sunday and coach Chris Beard declined to update the St. John's transfer's status during his news conference. It was a curious move given that Owens finished the semifinal.

CBS reporter Tracy Wolfson tweeted about two hours before tip-off that she spoke with Beard, who says Owens probably would not play under normal circumstances but will be out there against the Cavaliers.

6:05 p.m.

It's difficult to overstate De'Andre Hunter's importance to Virginia in the title game of the NCAA Tournament.

The 6-foot-7 redshirt sophomore is second on the team in scoring at 14.9 points to go with 5.0 rebounds per game. He's efficient offensively, shooting 52% from the field, 42% from 3-point range and 78% from the foul line.

And of course, there's the defensive side of the ball, where Hunter is versatile enough to chase guards or tussle with big men inside.

With Hunter in the lineup, Virginia has won 65 of 70 games over the past two seasons. That's a 92.9% winning percentage.

Of the five losses, two came last year against West Virginia and Virginia Tech. Hunter was sidelined last year with an injury when the Cavaliers lost in stunning fashion to UMBC, the first 16-over-1 upset since the tournament expanded.

This year, Virginia lost twice to Duke in the regular season and to Florida State in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament semifinals.

— Aaron Beard reporting from Minneapolis

5:10 p.m.

A Texas Tech victory against Virginia in the NCAA Tournament championship game would mark an odd first: The Red Raiders would become the first team to win the title after losing their first conference tournament game.

The Red Raiders were the No. 1 seed in the Big 12 Tournament and were bounced by last-place West Virginia on March 13 in what was probably the most surprising result from the major conference tournaments.

Texas Tech could also on Monday night become the first team since Connecticut in 1999 to win a title the same year it makes its first Final Four. This breakthrough by the Red Raiders would be even more sudden.

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UConn had reached the Elite Eight three times in the previous nine tournaments, and had three other Sweet 16 appearances before winning it all in 1999 by beating Duke. The Red Raiders had never been to an Elite Eight before last season and had only three Sweet 16 appearances in the previous 40 years. From 2008-15, Tech didn't even make the NCAA Tournament.

4:25 p.m.

Virginia's road to this national championship game hit quite the pothole last year with the historic loss to No. 16 seed UMBC in the first round. The Cavaliers endured yet more turbulence over the summer, in the form of a team-building whitewater rafting trip on the New River organized by coach Tony Bennett.

"Some of our guys were scared to death," Bennett said, singling out guard De'Andre Hunter.

Center Mamadi Diakite fell in that category, too, when Bennett sneaked under water and grabbed his leg, uncertain what lurked beneath the surface.

After the previous season ended so startlingly, the Cavaliers brought into the fall a strong bond from such a painful experience. The rafting trip further strengthened those ties.

"The coaches looked sort of like players. We could interact and have fun. That hierarchy wasn't here," Diakite said. "We were just playing around."

When Bennett addressed the team before the Purdue game in the South regional final, pondering the journey that took them to the verge of the Final Four, he teared up as he spoke. Bennett thought back to that summer day when he wondered what the coming year would bring.

"It was the most beautiful setting just floating down the river with these guys," Bennett said.

— Dave Campbell reporting from Minneapolis

2:30 p.m.

A look at advanced statistics for the NCAA Tournament shows that Virginia's offense has been more efficient than Texas Tech, but the Red Raiders are locking down on opponents at a tougher rate.

The Cavaliers have scored an average of nearly 1.14 points per possession while scoring on a little better than 50% of their possessions in the tournament. That was slightly better than the Red Raiders, who averaged 1.08 points per possession while scoring on about 48% of their tournament possessions.

Virginia continues to play slower-paced games overall by averaging 57.8 possessions per game in the tournament. Texas Tech averages 64.4 possessions.

Yet while Virginia's offense has been more efficient in the tournament, the Red Raiders' defense has been tougher statistically. Texas Tech has held all five of its tournament opponents to less than a point per possession.

— Aaron Beard reporting from Minneapolis

2 p.m.

Texas Tech and Virginia are each going for their first national titles backed by hard-nosed defenses that were among the best in the nation.

Virginia (34-3) the standard-bearer in lockdown basketball. The Cavaliers are going against the new kids on the defensive block, the Texas Tech Red Raiders (31-6).

The over/under for points is 118. The over/under on bruises may be higher.

The result will give the NCAA Tournament its first first-time champion since coach Billy Donovan won it all with Florida in 2006.

Texas Tech reached the Elite Eight for the first time last season and Virginia lost its previous two trips to the Final Four, in 1981 and 1984.

The last time two teams who had never won a championship played in the title game was Michigan State against Indiana State in 1979. That's right, Magic Johnson vs. Larry Bird.

The game Monday night tips at 8:20 p.m. Central time (9:20 p.m. Eastern).

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

Comeback Cavs! A year after pain, Virginia gets its title

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — It was an easy question to ask, even if the answer was tough to absorb. “Why?”

It dogged Virginia for a year and three weeks — following the Cavaliers through sweat-soaked practices, hostile arenas up and down the East Coast, on talk radio and pundit-driven TV, and in their own, doubt-filled, uncertain minds.

The only truly satisfying answer to “Why?” came Monday night — and with the confetti falling and the nets dangling around their necks, it all seemed so clear.

That humbling, history-making loss last season to Maryland-Baltimore County happened so the Cavaliers could stand at center court and celebrate this time around.

The only top seed to fall to a No. 16 in the history of the NCAA Tournament is now the only team to come back from such a loss and win a championship the very next season. Virginia did it the hard way, squandering a 10-point lead against a tenacious Texas Tech team, only to pull away for an 85-77 victory in overtime.

And now, there are no more questions.

“We’ve all had our own battles,” said Virginia guard Kyle Guy, who was named the Final Four’s most valuable player. “I said earlier, it’s a really special group because we all had the same ‘Why?’ among other ‘whys.’ But to share the same one, and to battle everything we battled through, and come out on top, it’s a fantastic feeling.”

It’s tempting to call Virginia a team of destiny, but that would undermine what the Cavaliers accomplished this season. It would give short shrift to the way they overcame so many close calls in this tournament, including an entertaining, back-and-forth final against an opponent that simply would not go away.

Lottery-pick-in-waiting De’Andre Hunter scored a career-high 27 points after starting the game 0 for 7 from the floor. Going mano-a-mano against another likely NBA-bound star, Jarrett Culver, Hunter saved the Cavaliers (35-3) with a game-tying 3 with 12 seconds left in regulation, then helped them win it with a go-ahead 3 with 2:07 left in the overtime.

Hunter’s game-tying shot came on a play that Texas Tech doesn’t usually allow: Ty Jerome dribbled into the middle, then skipped a pass down the baseline to Hunter, who spotted up from the corner. The nation’s best defense hardly ever leaves someone that wide-open.

“With a 3-point lead ... we’re trying to play really sound defense with three objectives: No 3-point shots, no ‘and-ones,’ and we’ve got to secure the defensive rebounds,” Texas Tech coach Chris Beard said. “We just came up a little bit short, but give Virginia credit. They have a really, really good team. So much poise, and just have a lot of respect for them.”

The poise showed up earlier in the tournament, too.

First, when the Cavaliers, a 1 seed again, fell behind by 14 early to No. 16 Gardner-Webb in what seemed like a repeat of the nightmare from the year before. They won 71-56.

Next, against Purdue, when, trailing by 2, the Cavaliers intentionally missed a free throw, got the ball back and fed to Mamadi Diakite, who beat the buzzer to send the game into overtime. They won 80-75.

And then in the semifinal Saturday against Auburn, when Guy got fouled while shooting a 3 with 0.6 seconds left, and calmly sank all three free throws. They won 63-62.

“I hope that it’s a message for some people out there that there can be hope and joy and resiliency,” said Virginia coach Tony Bennett, whose father Dick, the coach who wrote the book on stifling man-to-man defense, was in the crowd. “I’m thankful for what happened.”

All Virginia fans are.

This is a program that has lived a tortured existence, starting around Christmastime in 1982, when 7-foot-4 Ralph Sampson — as good as they came back in his day — was headlining the top-ranked Cavaliers on

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a stopover trip in Hawaii, only to get shocked by tiny, NAIA Chaminade. It still goes down as one of the greatest upsets in sports.

Thirty years later, Bennett turned the Cavaliers into contenders again, but they always underachieved once the calendar turned to March.

Then, last year.

That loss to UMBC could've wrecked a lesser program.

Somehow, this one got stronger.

Has the pain gone completely away?

"You have a scar, and it reminds you of that, but it's a memory," Bennett said. "Does it go away completely? No. I wish it wouldn't have happened in some ways. But now I say, 'Well, it bought us a ticket here. So be it.'"

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

Opening statements expected in ex-Minneapolis cop's trial

By AMY FORLITI Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — With a jury in place, opening statements were scheduled Tuesday in the trial of a former Minneapolis police officer who shot and killed an unarmed woman after she called 911 to report a possible rape in the alley behind her home.

Mohamed Noor, 33, who is Somali American, is charged with murder and manslaughter in the July 2017 death of Justine Ruszcyk Damond, a 40-year-old dual Australian-American citizen who was shot when she approached his squad car.

It took a week to select a jury. After 75 prospective jurors answered questions about their views on Somalis and police officers, as well as their experiences with firearms, on-the-job training and other issues, 12 men and four women were selected Monday to hear the case. In the end, only 12 will deliberate and four will serve as alternates. The jurors include a firefighter and paramedic, an obstetrician-gynecologist, a civil engineer, a grocery store manager, a restaurant host, a carpenter and a Homeland Security immigration officer.

Six jurors are people of color, including two Filipino men, an Ethiopian man and a Pakistani woman.

Damond, who was white, was a life coach and set to be married the month after her death. The night she was shot, she had called 911 twice before Noor and his partner, Officer Matthew Harrity, arrived.

Harrity told investigators he was driving a police SUV when he heard a voice and a thump and caught a glimpse of someone outside his window. Harrity said he was startled and thought his life was in danger. He said he then heard a noise and turned to see that Noor, in the passenger seat, had fired his gun and hit Damond, who was in her pajamas.

Noor refused to talk to investigators. The officers did not turn on their body cameras until after the shooting, and there was no squad car video.

Prosecutors charged Noor with second-degree intentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter, saying there is no evidence he faced a threat that justified deadly force. They must prove he acted unreasonably when he shot Damond.

Minnesota law allows police officers to use deadly force to protect themselves or their partners from death or great bodily harm; Noor's attorneys have said they plan to argue he used reasonable force and acted in self-defense.

Noor's attorneys haven't said whether he will testify. If he does, prosecutors may be able to introduce some evidence that the defense wanted to keep out of the state's case, including that he has refused to talk to investigators. They also could bring up a 2015 psychological test that showed Noor disliked being around people and had difficulty confronting others. Despite that test, a psychiatrist found him fit to be a cadet officer.

The shooting, which got international attention, raised questions about Noor's training. The police chief

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defended Noor's training, but the chief was forced to resign days later. The shooting also led to changes in the department's policy on use of body cameras.

Follow Amy Forliti on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/amyforliti>

Check out the AP's complete coverage of Mohamed Noor's trial.

Game of Thrones: Why Sansa could win it all

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, JOSH BOAK and PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Where most "Game of Thrones" fans were horrified by the beheading of the beloved Ned Stark and blamed it on a ruthless king, Columbia University business professor Bruce Craven saw a lesson in failed leadership.

The northerner Stark was simply too proud to adjust to the cutthroat nature of King's Landing as it became mired in a scramble over royal succession. His execution set into motion battles, intrigues, romances and resurrections that will culminate this Sunday with the show's highly-anticipated final season.

In the AP's weekly "Wealth of Westeros" series, we'll be delving into the latest plot twists and analyzing the economic and business forces driving the story. We examine the show's central question in Part 1: Who will win the Iron Throne?

The judgment of Craven and other academic minds may surprise you: Sansa Stark, Ned's eldest daughter. Sansa has grown from a once-helpless princess with dreams of lemon cakes into a wily strategist. She has endured marriages that were degrading and abusive, finding ways to adapt and survive that her late father could never manage.

"She's had probably the closest involvement with the widest array of different leaders," said Craven, who has written a new business book, "Win or Die: Leadership Secrets from Game of Thrones."

Sansa has learned from Littlefinger's manipulations. She's seen the pitfalls from what Craven calls Cersei's "transactional" approach to leadership. And she's seen her kinsman Jon Snow's idealism transform him from a brooding teenager into a military commander capable of challenging the zombie army of the Night King.

This education might be the ultimate advantage, even if she lacks the firepower of Daenerys Targaryen's dragons or the Valyrian steel sword wielded by Jon Snow.

"She doesn't have dragons. She didn't learn to become an assassin," added Craven, who admits his prediction is just a hunch. "Everything she's gone through, part of me wants to see her leverage that in some unpredictable way."

Sansa does enjoy a major edge in terms of resources, said Mark Wright, research director at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. From the U.S. Civil War to World War II, victorious armies have often gained a decisive edge by having the best equipment, stable supply lines and multitudes of soldiers. Her perceived rivals for the throne are running close to empty militarily and economically.

Thanks to her feeble cousin Robin Arryn, the Knights of the Vale are under her command. Her troops are the freshest and arguably best provisioned, given the Vale's rich soil that provides for wheat, corn, barley and enviously large pumpkins.

Her rivals have suffered the destruction of their farmland and the depletion of their armies after years of warfare and the occasional scorched-earth dragon attack.

"I think it was Napoleon who said an army marches on its stomach," Wright said.

Not everyone, however, is convinced that Sansa will rule.

The betting markets have picked Bran Stark, her mystical and disabled brother.

He might also seem like an unexpected pick. Bran has the ability to journey through time. This gives him an oracular power, but it has extinguished his former emotional warmth for cold prophecies. He seems too detached from humanity to sit on the Iron Throne or establish the personal connections that a ruler would need to rally a weary populace.

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But to economists, his popularity on the betting markets matters a lot.

The market is the closest thing the public has to a three-eyed raven. It can forecast the future by distilling the wisdom of the crowds. The stock and bond markets do this daily.

He has no charisma and can't fight, and the show suggested last season that he's no longer even a Stark. But Boyle Sports gives him 4/5 odds. He's the top pick on Bovada, too. And on Oddschecker. And Gambling.com.

But of course, markets can be wrong. So can experts.

Carolynne Larrington, a professor of medieval European literature at Oxford and author of "Winter is Coming: The Medieval World of Game of Thrones," doesn't think Sansa wants to sit on the Iron Throne, any more than her father did.

Instead, she sees Daenerys as the most likely choice, with her dragons and Dothraki hordes.

Larrington said the show, once known for its moral shades of gray, has become more clearly a fight of good vs. evil as it nears its end.

"I think that's why they'll play it safe, and give it to Daenerys," she said.

Craven credits Daenerys with having developed superior leadership skills: She inspires people by walking into flames and surviving. She frees slaves and tries to rule for the benefit of others. Plus, she has dragons.

She is "the queen we chose," in the words of her interpreter and adviser, Missandei.

It's a surprisingly positive lesson from a show that has relentlessly crushed so many beloved characters.

"All the leadership that goes forward successfully against the odds — with the exception of Cersei — involves leaders that are motivated by helping other people," Craven says. "Their leadership isn't strictly about their own achievement or standing at the top of the org chart."

Let's hope that leadership style works against the army of the Night King.

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Ghost of Toys R Us still haunts toy makers

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — This year, children will have a hard time finding Uncle Milton's glow-in-the-dark ant farm, or the gel and ant village version. Basic Fun, the parent company behind the brand, has stopped producing them and now makes just three versions — basic, giant and retro.

Who's to blame? Toys R Us.

A year after Toys R Us imploded, toy makers are still readjusting to the big loss of shelf space. That means slashing the number of styles they carry, re-evaluating how they sell large toys like playhouses and cars, and changing their packaging to squeeze into smaller retail spaces.

It's a jolt for toy companies. They had already been trying to reinvent themselves amid an onslaught of changes, including kids' evolving tastes toward gadgets, as well as the rise of Amazon and online shopping. They never expected the iconic chain to liquidate its 800 U.S. stores six months after it filed for Chapter 11 reorganization in 2017. Some companies depended on the chain for as much as 40 percent of overall sales.

A slew of retailers like Walmart, Target and Party City rushed to expand their toy aisles to capitalize on Toys R Us's demise, but toy companies say they aren't able to fill the void. The stores devoted big sections to toys year round and served as incubators of new trends. They also say that Toys R Us' massive orders of tens of thousands of units offset the cost of production.

All this has led to fewer options for kids.

"Maybe the world only needs one kind of ant farm, but in the day, you had a choice," said Jay Foreman, president and CEO of Basic Fun, a Boca Raton, Florida-based company that purchased the assets of Uncle

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Milton, K'Nex and Playhut over the past year. He is now evaluating his overall lineup.

With K'Nex construction sets, shoppers will only see 20 playsets, instead of the 60 it had last year, Foreman said.

Many parents have taken note.

Stephen Desch of Keyport, N.J., said when his now 3-year-old daughter wanted a crab-shaped sandbox, he found it at Toys R Us. But he can't find certain items now, like a plush toy inspired by the Jay character from the Netflix show "Beat Bugs."

"It's definitely annoying," Desch said.

Vanessa Myers of Bristol, Virginia, cites too many choices in some categories, like light up toys for the tub. But she does worry about the dwindling selection of dolls and bikes.

"I really want dolls that are diverse," in hair color and ethnicity, she added.

Nearly \$3 billion in 2018 was left on the table by Toys R Us, or 12 percent of the U.S. toy market, according to market research group NPD Group Inc. Jim Silver, editor-in-chief of TTPM, an online toy review site, estimates that 40 percent of Toys R Us business wasn't scooped up. Even as the former investors of Toys R Us try to resurrect the business in the U.S. in time for the holidays, many expect it to be a shell of what it was.

The effort follows a 2 percent drop to \$21.6 billion in toy sales for last year, with demand weakening during the second half of the year with the loss of Toys R Us. That reversed four straight years of sales growth, NPD says.

Mattel's annual sales last year fell 8 percent, reflecting a negative 6 percent impact from the toy retailer's liquidation. At Hasbro, annual sales dropped 12 percent, dragged down by the loss of Toys R Us. Mattel had been struggling for several years, but it had been starting to see a turnaround.

Toy makers have been expanding online, but that isn't the panacea, says Marc Rosenberg, strategic marketing adviser who was behind the success of Hasbro's furry hit Furby. Physical stores still drive the toy business and profitability since companies don't incur shipping costs, Rosenberg says.

Foreman agrees, saying his new line of Cutetitos — beanie babies wrapped up in a burrito blanket and launched for the holidays — would have fared even better if Toys R Us was around. Typically, Toys R Us would have devoted a 3-foot-by-16 inch display in a highly visible spot to a hot item. Instead, stores gave Cutetitos an area that measured 18-inches wide by 5-inches deep.

Isaac Larian, CEO of privately held MGA Entertainment, has seen overall sales triple last year because of its popular LOL toys. But its Little Tikes division, which makes toy cars and playhouses that need big areas for display, suffered a 12 percent sales drop because of the loss of Toys R Us even as his business with Amazon rose 50 percent. Overall, 27 percent of its overall business stemmed from Toys R Us, but at Little Tikes, that figure was 40 percent.

Larian's Little Tikes toy factory — the largest U.S. toy factory — based in Hudson, Ohio, is running at 25 percent capacity. Larian says he's cutting the number of Little Tikes toys it produces mainly because of the loss of Toys R Us. He's now expanding into housewares to keep the factory busier.

"Every day we are reinventing ourselves," he said.

Follow Anne D'Innocenzio: <http://twitter.com/ADInnocenzio>

Nielsen exit comes amid larger shake-up at Homeland Security

By COLLEEN LONG and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and White House allies pressing for a harder line on immigration sped up their campaign to clean house at the Department of Homeland Security with a mission far wider than just the departure of Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen.

The dismantling of the government's immigration leadership is being orchestrated by Trump adviser Stephen Miller, the impetus behind some of the administration's most controversial policies, according to three people familiar with the matter. Beyond changing names and faces, Trump is considering separat-

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ing migrant families at the border again, resuming the practice that drew so much outrage last year, the same people said.

The shake-up is a result of Trump's frustration with the increasing number of migrants at the border and his diminishing options for action. Court challenges, immigration laws and his own advisers have blocked several of his proposals as his re-election campaign looms. The White House has lashed out by demanding new leadership, although a new team is likely to face the same obstacles.

The head of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, L. Francis Cissna, and Homeland Security General Counsel John M. Mitnick are expected to be pushed out of their positions, the officials said. Nielsen submitted her resignation Sunday after meeting with Trump at the White House, and three days earlier, the administration withdrew the nomination of Ron Vitiello to lead Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Other longtime civil servants in agency posts are also on the chopping block, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

Adding to the turmoil, the director of the Secret Service is being forced out of his job, but that departure is said to be unrelated to the immigration upheaval.

Leading senators from both parties were displeased.

"The purge of senior leadership at the Department of Homeland Security is unprecedented and a threat to our national security," declared Democrat Dianne Feinstein of California. "President Trump is trying to remake DHS into his own personal anti-immigration agency."

Republican Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, criticized Congress for a crisis at the border but also said, "I am concerned with a growing leadership void within the department tasked with addressing some of the most significant problems facing the nation."

Nielsen has dutifully carried out the administration's orders but often had to explain to Trump the legal limits of what he wanted to do. And he didn't like it.

She did months of diplomatic work with Central America and Mexico and brokered an arrangement in which asylum seekers were to wait in Mexico for their asylum cases to play out, an effort meant in part to discourage false claims. She moved to abandon long-standing regulations that dictate how long children are allowed to be held in immigration detention and was working to find space to detain all families who cross the border. She limited what public benefits migrants can receive and put regulations in place to circumvent immigration law and deny asylum to anyone caught crossing the border illegally.

And she took ownership over the most divisive of all the decisions, the separation of families at the border.

Nearly everything has been challenged or watered down by the courts. Just Monday, a judge blocked the administration from forcing asylum seekers to wait in Mexico, giving lawyers a few days before putting the block into effect.

"So unfair to the U.S.," Trump tweeted of the ruling. "OUT OF CONTROL!"

There are some options not yet exhausted by Trump, including giving judges more deference in asylum cases and allocating more resources to diminish backlogs, she said. But the White House has shown little interest in those ideas because they conflict with its assessment that those seeking refuge are trying to cheat the system.

Nielsen finally had enough and resigned Sunday, in part because she hadn't been informed about the sudden decision to withdraw Vitiello's nomination, according to people familiar with her decision.

She was also pushing back at an effort to house an "immigration" or "border czar" within Homeland Security, they said. She wanted the person to be based at the White House and help coordinate immigration policy between the Justice Department, Health and Human Services and DHS, all of which have a piece of the complex puzzle. But the people said Miller was pushing to house the czar at DHS, in part over frustration with the rising number of migrants. There were more than 100,000 expected in March, border officials said, the highest tally in 12 years.

Trump announced Sunday that Kevin McAleenan, commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, would take over for Nielsen at Homeland Security on an acting basis. McAleenan had impressed Trump's inner circle, specifically son-in-law Jared Kushner, with his extensive border knowledge.

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Trump spokesman Hogan Gidley expressed hope that McAleenan's experience would lead to "massive changes" at the border.

But McAleenan is not an ideologue or politician. He refers to migrants as "vulnerable families" who need more humanitarian treatment, not as beefy dudes with tattoos trying to game the system, as Trump suggests. He's pushed for asylum changes to make screenings faster and cases decided more rapidly.

Democrats said McAleenan should have told them about the death of a child in U.S. custody in December, but he largely has escaped the ire over family separations even though it was his agency that separated the children.

Gil Kerlikowske, who led Customs and Border Protection from 2014 to 2017, said illegal crossings can go up and down on a number of factors that are difficult to predict. He noted that stepped-up Mexican enforcement helped end a surge of Central American families coming to the U.S. in 2014.

"I don't envy anybody in that position because these are policies that are White House policies, not DHS," said Kerlikowske, who promoted McAleenan to be his top deputy. "I couldn't have been more disappointed" to see Vitiello's nomination pulled, he said, describing Vitiello as "a 30-year Border Patrol, deputy chief and you're saying, 'Well, you're not really tough enough?' I find that kind of amazing."

Trump has seemed to be grasping at anything to stem the tide of migrants. That includes reinstating family separations, a policy that previously prompted international outrage and could mean he would have to violate his own executive order and possibly run afoul of a federal judge overseeing reunifications. The government just said in court filings it would take up to two years to reunify all the children already separated from their families.

"The administration has been well beyond the bounds of the law for some time with respect to asylum and family separation. There's no place for them to go that won't continue to break the law," said Lee Gelernt, the American Civil Liberties Union official whose lawsuit on behalf of a separated mother led to the reunifications.

Nielsen's departure threw into sharp focus just how few full-time leaders are at the sprawling department of more than 240,000 people. There's no confirmed secretary, no deputy secretary, no head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, no formal head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, no head of Customs and Border Protection once McAleenan moves over, and no head of the science and technology branch. In addition, the deputy undersecretary for management at the agency, Claire Grady, will have to be moved aside for Trump to install McAleenan as acting secretary.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro, Zeke Miller, Catherine Lucey in Washington and Elliot Spagat in El Paso, Texas, contributed to this report.

Vaccines blocked as deadly cholera raged across Yemen

By MAGGIE MICHAEL Associated Press

ADEN, Yemen (AP) — In the summer of 2017, a plane chartered by the United Nations idled on the tarmac at an airport in the Horn of Africa as officials waited for final clearance to deliver half a million doses of cholera vaccine to Yemen. Amid the country's ruinous war, the disease was spiraling out of control, with thousands of new cases reported each day.

The green light for the plane to head to northern Yemen never came. The U.N. wasn't able to distribute cholera vaccines to Yemen until May 2018 and the outbreak ultimately produced more than 1 million suspected cholera cases — the worst cholera epidemic recorded in modern times and a calamity that medical researchers say may have been avoided if vaccines had been deployed sooner.

U.N. officials blamed the canceled flight on the difficulties in distributing vaccines during an armed conflict. But officials with knowledge of the episode told The Associated Press that the real reason was that the Houthi rebels who control northern Yemen refused to allow the vaccines to be delivered, after spending months demanding that the U.N. send ambulances and other medical equipment for their military forces as a condition for accepting the shipment.

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The cancellation of the shipment was just one of the setbacks that aid agencies faced in battling the cholera epidemic, which has killed nearly 3,000 Yemenis.

Relief workers and government officials said they have seen repeated indications that insiders in both the Houthi government in the north and the U.S.-backed government in the south have skimmed off money and supplies for cholera vaccination and treatment and sold them on the black market. In some cases, treatment centers for people who had contracted cholera existed only on paper even though the U.N. had disbursed money to bankroll their operations, according to two aid officials familiar with the centers.

The AP's examination of the efforts to fight the disease in Yemen drew on confidential documents and interviews with 29 people, including aid officials previously based in the country and officials from health ministries run by both the Houthi rebels and the internationally recognized government in the south. Almost all of these individuals — including six relief and health officials who say the Houthis were responsible for cancellation of the 2017 vaccine shipment — spoke on condition of anonymity because of fear of retaliation.

"Both the Houthis and the government of Yemen were trying to politicize cholera," an aid official told the AP.

"The Houthis are taking advantage of U.N. weakness," the official said. "Corruption or aid diversion and all of this are because of the U.N.'s weak position." Relief workers know that if the U.N. speaks out, the official said, "their visas will be denied and they would not be allowed back in the country."

Cholera spread across Yemen in late 2016 and throughout much of 2017 and 2018. It ebbed late last year, but has again picked up in 2019. A new surge in the disease has produced roughly 150,000 reported cholera cases and nearly 300 deaths since the start of this year. The first cholera vaccine drives in Yemen didn't start until May 2018 in the south and August 2018 in the north, aid and health officials told the AP.

Ali al-Walidi, the deputy health minister in southern Yemen, and Youssef al-Hadri, the spokesman of the Houthi-run Health Ministry in the north, both deny there were delays in getting cholera vaccines into Yemen at the start of the outbreak.

Al-Hadri said claims that the Houthis blocked the shipment of vaccines into Yemen are false.

"This is all baseless, and I challenge the agencies to say this officially," he said.

Geert Cappelaere, the Middle East director for UNICEF, the U.N. children's relief agency, declined to blame any particular group for halting the 2017 shipment.

"What is important is that the vaccines that needed to get in have ultimately gone in and have reached the people who needed to be vaccinated," he said. "Has this been simple and easy? Absolutely not. Each shipment has been problematic to get in because of the long approval time" and because of "skepticism among the authorities on both sides" about the value of cholera vaccines.

A RAVAGED LAND

More than half of Yemen's hospitals and other health facilities have been damaged or destroyed since the war began in 2015, after Houthi forces overran much of the country and Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations, with backing from the United States, launched airstrikes and imposed blockades on rebel-held territory.

The conflict has killed more than 60,000 people and much of Yemen has been on the edge of famine. An AP investigation published in December revealed that factions on all sides of Yemen's war have blocked food aid from going to groups suspected of disloyalty, diverted it to front-line combat units or sold it for profit on the black market.

More than 19 million of Yemen's 29 million people don't have access to adequate health care, and more than 17 million don't have clean water, according to the U.N. Those are prime conditions for the spread of cholera, a disease caused by feces-tainted water and food. Cholera can kill swiftly if untreated, its victims drained by diarrhea, vomiting and fever.

The first significant cholera outbreak came in late 2016, leading to more than 25,000 suspected cases and killing at least 129. Soon after, in April 2017, the disease erupted again, this time spreading at an even more furious pace. Within two months, more than 185,000 suspected cases and 1,200 deaths were reported. One local aid worker in northern Yemen recalls house after house with dying children, their small

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bodies racked by severe diarrhea.

When U.N. officials tried to rush in oral vaccines to halt the spread, some Houthi officials claimed vaccines were ineffective. A few circulated messages on social media asserting that vaccines could be harmful to children. Four aid officials and a former Houthi health official said that some rebel leaders suggested that the vaccination plan was a plot by the U.S. and Israel to use Yemenis as guinea pigs.

A former senior official in the Houthi Health Ministry said the concerns over the vaccines' safety were a pretext. Rebel leaders had a list of demands and tried to bargain with U.N. officials for money and equipment, he said.

During weeks of negotiations over the vaccine program, the rebels demanded that U.N. officials send X-ray machines and other items they could use to treat their wounded fighters on the front lines, according to the former health ministry official and three aid officials.

Al-Hadri, the spokesman for the Houthi-run Health Ministry, denied that Houthi authorities demanded medicine and medical equipment to be used in treating front-line soldiers. Cappelaere, UNICEF's Middle East chief, said he had no knowledge of aid officials bargaining with authorities in Yemen in the effort to import cholera vaccines.

THE SHIPMENT

Finally, in July 2017, U.N. officials believed they had the go-ahead to bring in cholera vaccines. Half a million doses were loaded onto a plane in the tiny African republic of Djibouti.

At the last minute, hard-liners in the Houthi-controlled Health Ministry told the U.N. they would not allow the plane to land.

Publicly, the U.N. blamed the change of plans on security and logistical challenges involved in delivering immunizations across Yemen's conflict-torn landscape. A spokesman for the U.N.'s World Health Organization said at the time that delivering vaccines "has to make sense" in terms of the conditions on the ground, adding that the vaccine doses intended for Yemen would likely be re-routed to places that "might need them more urgently."

U.N. officials sent the shipment to South Sudan in central Africa, where the disease had recently erupted. The cholera outbreak in South Sudan left 436 dead but was declared over by early 2018, largely due to the introduction of vaccines during the outbreak's early stages.

The outbreak in Yemen went on unabated.

Hager Taher, a 27-year old mother of two, was one of hundreds who died from cholera in the months after the vaccine delivery into the country had been called off. Taher was in the last days of pregnancy, living in the village of al-Ghareb, an impoverished area in the Houthi-controlled northern province of Hajjah, when she began vomiting and showing cholera-like symptoms.

The only health center in the village of nearly 1,200 people was a building with two rooms and few beds. As the number of suspected cholera cases grew, local authorities used a school to receive patients, who had to lie on the floor in the empty classrooms.

Taher was sent to a hospital run by Doctors Without Borders in the city of Abs. She soon developed complications and was moved to another hospital nearby. It was there, in September 2017, that she died. Her child was born alive but died four days later.

"It's God's will," her husband, Mohammed Hassan, told the AP. "There's nothing to do."

Taher was one of 16 people reported to have died from cholera in her district in Hajjah. Hundreds more were infected.

"The district was gulped up by cholera," said Ibrahim al-Masrahi, a health worker in charge of gathering epidemic surveillance reports.

By the end of 2017, the number of reported cholera cases in Yemen had surged past 1 million, with more than 2,200 deaths. The spread of the disease waned for a time, but rebounded again in the spring and summer of 2018, adding another 370,000 reported cases and 500 more deaths.

U.N. officials continued struggling to find a way to get cholera vaccines into the country.

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Houthi officials held a succession of meetings throughout much of 2017 and into 2018 to consider the science and policy questions relating to vaccines. In the spring of 2018, after science panels approved bringing cholera vaccines into rebel territory, Health Minister Mohammed Salem bin Hafez gave U.N. officials the go-ahead to bring in nearly 900,000 doses of cholera vaccine, according to documents obtained by the AP.

Then two of his deputies, both of them well-connected within the Houthi leadership, said the shipment couldn't proceed, asserting that there were still more bureaucratic hurdles before the vaccines' "safety and security" could be assured, according to the documents.

As a non-Houthi, bin Hafez didn't have the power to overrule the decisions of the two deputies who supposedly were working under him. He wrote a letter to the prime minister of the Houthi-controlled government, Abdel-Aziz bin Habtour, detailing how the delivery of vaccines had been once again been put off.

"I am washing my hands of the consequences of these irresponsible actions," bin Hafez's letter said. He told the prime minister that he was "putting the matter between your hands" in the hope the government would "take the necessary measures to use aid in a proper way and create proper work conditions for international and local aid agencies."

A month later, bin Hafez left his post and fled Houthi territory.

Abdel-Aziz al-Daylami, one of the Health Ministry deputies that bin Hafez blamed for holding up the delivery of vaccines, denied that he had stopped the shipment.

"No, there was no rejection, but we had reservations," he told the AP. "We thought that the vaccines would be useless" if they were deployed without more efforts to ensure clean water and reliable sanitation systems.

"We worried that if the vaccine campaigns failed, people would turn against the use of vaccines and that would be disastrous," he said.

ONLY ON PAPER

As Houthi authorities debated the use of vaccines in the north, the U.N. was also working to get cholera vaccines into the country via the government in the south.

But this plan was also marred by delays — and by questions about possible corruption.

After the U.N. was able to get a shipment of vaccines into the southern city of Aden in May 2018, the Health Ministry for the U.S.- and Saudi-backed government there put together teams to raise awareness and administer the vaccines.

But some of the vaccination teams existed only on paper and many workers on the teams never received the full stipends budgeted for them under the program, two aid officials told the AP. The two officials said authorities in the south prevented aid workers from visiting the districts where immunization campaigns were taking place, making it impossible for them to monitor what was happening on the ground and verify how aid money was being used.

In the wake the vaccination campaign in the south, the Houthis broke the logjam in the north. They agreed to allow cholera vaccines into some areas under their control. Immunization drives were launched in three rebel-held districts in August and September 2018.

A senior official who worked with the Houthi-run Health Ministry at the time noted the U.N. had agreed to some of the rebels' wish list of additional medical supplies and equipment, including the purchase of 45 ambulances for the ministry. The ambulances were then sent to the front lines for the military's use, the ex-official said.

Beyond vaccine drives, concerns emerged in both the north and south about whether patients who had already contracted the disease were getting medical treatment targeted for them.

Some centers set up to treat cholera victims weren't functional even though UNICEF and the WHO had provided funding to government authorities and nongovernmental groups to cover costs of setting them up and running them, according to two aid officials familiar with the centers.

One of those two aid officials said he was told there were nine cholera treatment centers in Aden. He could find only two. "The rest didn't exist," he said.

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Another concern in north and south was whether relief organizations were getting accurate counts of the number of people sickened with cholera in various parts of the country. Two aid officials and a former official with the Houthi-controlled Health Ministry said authorities exaggerated the number of cholera cases to increase the amount of international aid money.

A December 2018 study of the Yemen outbreak by researchers at Johns Hopkins University found that some overreporting was likely due to health workers whose livelihoods depended on money paid by the U.N. Many of the workers hadn't received their government salaries in years and believed that the cholera centers where they worked would be closed and aid money stopped if they didn't report enough suspected cases.

Still, even with overreporting, the outbreak of cholera was "massive," Paul B. Spiegel, the lead author of the study and director of the university's Center for Humanitarian Health, told the AP.

Another study, published in December 2018 in the journal BMC Public Health, called the epidemic "the largest cholera outbreak in epidemiologically recorded history."

The report said the scale of Yemen's outbreak "most likely" could have been avoided or managed if enough cholera vaccines had been deployed earlier in the conflict. It added that even if a large shipment had come into the country early enough, getting the vaccine to those who needed it might not have been possible, given the "deeply chaotic situation" across war-torn Yemen.

More than 2.5 million doses of the cholera vaccine have been transported into Yemen by the U.N. since mid-2018. It's unclear how many of them have been administered to people in target populations. Two Houthi officials confirmed to the AP that nearly 1.2 million doses remain stored in warehouses in Sanaa, the rebels' capital. The Health Ministry there plans to distribute those doses soon in two northern districts, one of the officials said.

A senior aid official said the continuing cholera crisis remains a way for the Houthis rebels to cultivate global sympathy for their struggle against the U.S.-backed and Saudi-led coalition, whose bombing campaign has been blamed for helping to create the conditions that caused the outbreak.

"If you resolve cholera, what are the headlines?" he said. "They managed to control the narrative because it's easy to blame the coalition and not them and they always show up as victims."

Al-Hadri, the spokesman for the Houthi-controlled Health Ministry in Sanaa, called that nonsense. It is international aid officials, he said, who are raking in donations and benefiting from disease and suffering inside the Middle East's poorest country.

"They are profiting from the Yemen crisis and begging in the name of Yemen," he said. "They need the Yemeni crisis more than we need them."

The AP's reporting on the war in Yemen is supported by a grant from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

Secret Service head Alles leaving, career official tapped

By ZEKE MILLER, COLLEEN LONG and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Secret Service Director Randolph "Tex" Alles has been pushed out of the Trump administration, amid a burgeoning shake-up in the upper echelon of the Department of Homeland Security.

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said Monday that President Donald Trump had selected career Secret Service official James Murray to lead the agency, saying he will assume the role next month. She added Alles will be "leaving shortly," though the agency later said he would leave in May.

Alles' departure stems from a personality conflict within the agency, three officials said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss the personnel matter. The officials said it was unrelated to the resignation of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen and a recent security breach at the president's private club in Florida.

Still, it comes amid a spate of turnover across DHS that began last week when Trump withdrew his Im-

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migration and Customs Enforcement director's nomination to stay on permanently.

After Nielsen's departure, an empowered Stephen Miller, the immigration hawk and White House senior adviser, is also eyeing the removal of Lee Francis Cissna, according to two of the people. Cissna is director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which runs the legal immigration system.

Alles, a former Marine general who had no prior ties to the Secret Service, was recommended to the post by former White House chief of staff John Kelly. He had been the acting deputy commissioner of Customs and Border Protection.

In a message to the agency's workforce, Alles said he was not fired, but said Trump had "directed an orderly transition in leadership for this agency." He expressed "regret" he was not able to address the department before the news broke.

Nielsen — still in her official capacity as Homeland Security secretary — released a statement Monday night calling Alles "a true patriot, stepping up again and again to serve his country."

Confirmed in 2017, Alles inherited an agency that had been dealing with a series of security and personnel issues. Weeks before he was nominated, a man jumped the White House fence and spent 15 minutes roaming the grounds.

His appointment was set to fulfill the recommendations of a group of former senior government officials that reviewed the Secret Service in 2014 and found that it was an "insular agency" in need of an outsider to lead it. But Alles' unfamiliarity with the agency led to conflicts, said the officials.

Murray, the assistant director of the office of protective operations, had served as the special agent in charge of the agency's Washington field office.

Sanders said Alles "has done a great job at the agency over the last two years," and said Trump is thankful for his service.

Huffman, 12 other parents to plead guilty in college scheme

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — "Desperate Housewives" star Felicity Huffman and a dozen other prominent parents have agreed to plead guilty in the college admissions bribery scam that ensnared wealthy families and athletic coaches at some of the nation's most selective universities, federal authorities said Monday.

The actress and the other parents were charged last month in the scheme, which authorities say involved rigging standardized test scores and bribing coaches at such prestigious schools as Yale and Georgetown.

Huffman, 56, was accused of paying a consultant \$15,000 disguised as a charitable donation to boost her daughter's SAT score. Authorities say the actress also discussed going through with the same plan for her younger daughter but ultimately decided not to.

She will plead guilty to a single charge of conspiracy and fraud, according to court documents. Those charges are punishable by up to 20 years in prison, but the plea agreement indicates prosecutors will seek a sentence of four to 10 months.

Experts have said they expect some parents will avoid prison time if they quickly accept responsibility. All of the defendants will have to return to Boston to enter formal guilty pleas, but no new court dates were set.

Other parents charged in the scheme include prominent figures in law, finance, fashion, the food and beverage industry and other fields.

It's the biggest college admissions case ever prosecuted by the Justice Department. The scandal embroiled elite universities across the country and laid bare the lengths to which status-seeking parents will go to secure their children a coveted spot.

The consultant, Rick Singer, met with Huffman and her husband, 69-year-old actor William H. Macy, at their Los Angeles home and explained to them that he "controlled" a testing center and could have somebody secretly change their daughter's answers, authorities said. Singer told investigators Huffman and her husband agreed to the plan.

Macy was not charged. Authorities have not said why.

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In a statement offering her first public comments since her arrest, Huffman apologized, took responsibility for her actions and said she would accept the consequences.

"My daughter knew absolutely nothing about my actions, and in my misguided and profoundly wrong way, I have betrayed her. This transgression toward her and the public I will carry for the rest of my life. My desire to help my daughter is no excuse to break the law or engage in dishonesty," she said.

The streaming service Netflix said Monday that the April 26 release date of a film starring Huffman, called "Otherhood," will be moved with a new release date to be determined.

Michael Center, the former men's tennis coach at the University of Texas at Austin, has also agreed to plead guilty, prosecutors said Monday. Center was accused of accepting nearly \$100,000 to help a non-tennis playing applicant get admitted as a recruit.

California real estate developer Bruce Isackson and his wife, Davina Isackson, who are pleading guilty to participating in both the athletic recruitment and exam rigging schemes, are cooperating with prosecutors for a chance at a lighter sentence.

"We have worked cooperatively with the prosecutors and will continue to do so as we take full responsibility for our bad judgment," they said in a statement.

Actress Lori Loughlin, who played Aunt Becky on the sitcom "Full House," and her fashion designer husband, Mossimo Giannulli, are charged with paying \$500,000 in bribes to get their two daughters admitted to the University of Southern California as rowing recruits, even though neither participated in the sport. They were not among those who agreed to plead guilty, and they have not publicly addressed the allegations.

Loughlin and Giannulli may be hoping they can get a better deal once the media attention dies down, said former prosecutor Adam Citron. They are also accused of paying much more than Huffman and some other parents, which would call for stiffer penalties under the sentencing guidelines.

Prosecutors "are likely trying to hold her out as an example, so I would assume the plea deal was not the same plea deal as the other defendants," said Citron, an attorney at New York's Davidoff Hutcher & Citron LLP.

Singer, the consultant, pleaded guilty to charges including racketeering conspiracy on March 12, the same day the allegations against the parents and coaches were made public in the so-called Operations Varsity Blues investigation. Singer secretly recorded his conversations with the parents, helping to build the case against them, after agreeing to work with investigators in the hopes of getting a lesser sentence.

Several coaches have also been charged, including longtime tennis coach Gordon Ernst who's accused of getting \$2.7 million in bribes to designate at least 12 applicants as recruits to Georgetown. Ernst, who was also the personal tennis coach for former first lady Michelle Obama and her daughters, and other coaches have pleaded not guilty.

Former Yale University women's soccer coach Rudy Meredith has pleaded guilty to accepting bribes to help students get admitted and has been cooperating with authorities. Stanford's former sailing coach John Vandemoer also pleaded guilty to accepting \$270,000 in contributions to the program for agreeing to recommend two prospective students for admission.

Stanford University expelled a student who lied about her sailing credentials in her application, which was linked to the scandal. The university quietly announced it had rescinded the student's admission in a short statement posted on its website April 2 after determining "some of the material in the student's application is false."

University officials previously said the student was admitted without the recommendation of Vandemoer.

Associated Press Writer Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Follow Alanna Durkin Richer at <http://www.twitter.com/aedurkinricher> .

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Global warming is shrinking glaciers faster than thought

By SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Earth's glaciers are melting much faster than scientists thought. A new study shows they are losing 369 billion tons of snow and ice each year, more than half of that in North America.

The most comprehensive measurement of glaciers worldwide found that thousands of inland masses of snow compressed into ice are shrinking 18 percent faster than an international panel of scientists calculated in 2013.

The world's glaciers are shrinking five times faster now than they were in the 1960s. Their melt is accelerating due to global warming, and adding more water to already rising seas, the study found.

"Over 30 years suddenly almost all regions started losing mass at the same time," said lead author Michael Zemp, director of the World Glacier Monitoring Service at the University of Zurich. "That's clearly climate change if you look at the global picture."

The glaciers shrinking fastest are in central Europe, the Caucasus region, western Canada, the U.S. Lower 48 states, New Zealand and near the tropics. Glaciers in these places on average are losing more than 1 percent of their mass each year, according to a study in Monday's journal *Nature*.

"In these regions, at the current glacier loss rate, the glaciers will not survive the century," Zemp said.

Zemp's team used ground and satellite measurements to look at 19,000 glaciers, far more than previous studies. They determined that southwestern Asia is the only region of 19 where glaciers are not shrinking, which Zemp said is due to local climate conditions.

Since 1961, the world has lost 10.6 trillion tons of ice and snow (9.6 trillion metric tons), the study found. That's enough to cover the lower 48 U.S. states in about 4 feet of ice.

Scientists have known for a long time that global warming caused by human activities like burning coal, gasoline and diesel for electricity and transportation is making Earth lose its ice. They have been especially concerned with the large ice sheets covering Greenland and Antarctica.

This study, "is telling us there's much more to the story," said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, Colorado, who wasn't part of the study. "The influence of glaciers on sea level is bigger than we thought."

A number of factors are making sea levels rise. The biggest cause is that oceans are getting warmer, which makes water expand. The new figures show glacier melt is a bigger contributor than thought, responsible for about 25% to 30% of the yearly rise in oceans, Zemp said.

Rising seas threaten coastal cities around the world and put more people at risk of flooding during storms.

Glaciers grow in winter and shrink in summer, but as the Earth has warmed, they are growing less and shrinking more. Zemp said warmer summer temperatures are the main reason glaciers are shrinking faster.

While people think of glaciers as polar issues, shrinking mountain glaciers closer to the equator can cause serious problems for people who depend on them, said Twila Moon, a snow and ice data center scientist who also wasn't part of the study. She said people in the Andes, for example, rely on the glaciers for drinking and irrigation water each summer.

A separate study Monday in *Environmental Research Letters* confirmed faster melting and other changes in the Arctic. It found that in winter, the Arctic is warming 2.8 times faster than the rest of the Northern Hemisphere. Overall, the region is getting more humid, cloudier and wetter.

"It's on steroids, it's hyperactive," said lead author Jason Box, a scientist for the Danish Meteorological Institute.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears .

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Facebook, Google face widening crackdown over online content

By **DANICA KIRKA and KELVIN CHAN** Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Tech giants like Facebook and Google came under increasing pressure in Europe on Monday when countries proposed stricter rules to force them to block extreme material such as terrorist propaganda and child porn.

Britain called for a first-of-its-kind watchdog for social media that could fine executives and even ban companies. And a European Union parliamentary committee approved a bill giving internet companies an hour to remove terror-related material or face fines that could reach into the billions.

"We are forcing these firms to clean up their act once and for all," said British Home Secretary Sajid Javid, whose department collaborated on Britain's proposal.

Opponents warned the British and EU measures could stifle innovation and strengthen the dominance of technology giants because smaller companies won't have the money to comply. That, in turn, could turn Google and Facebook into the web's censors, they said.

The push to make the big companies responsible for the torrent of material they carry has largely been driven by Europeans. But it picked up momentum after the March 15 mosque shootings in New Zealand that killed 50 people and were livestreamed for 17 minutes. Facebook said it removed 1.5 million videos of the attacks in the 24 hours afterward.

The U.S., where government action is constrained by the First Amendment right to free speech and freedom of the press, has taken a more hands-off approach, though on Tuesday, a House committee will press Google and Facebook executives on whether they are doing enough to curb the spread of hate crimes and white nationalism.

Australia last week made it a crime for social media platforms not to quickly remove "abhorrent violent material." The offense would be punishable by three years in prison and a fine of 10.5 million Australian dollars (\$7.5 million), or 10% of the platform's annual revenue, whichever is larger. New Zealand's Privacy Commissioner wants his country to do the same.

The British plan would require social media companies such as Facebook and Twitter to protect people who use their sites from "harmful content." The plan, which includes the creation of an independent regulator funded by a tax on internet companies, will be subject to public comment for three months before the government publishes draft legislation.

"No one in the world has done this before, and it's important that we get it right," Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright told the BBC.

Facebook's head of public policy in Britain, Rebecca Stimson, said the goal of the new rules should be to protect society while also supporting innovation and freedom of speech.

"These are complex issues to get right, and we look forward to working with the government and Parliament to ensure new regulations are effective," she said.

Britain will consider imposing financial penalties similar to those under the EU's online data privacy law, which permits fines of up to 4% of a company's annual worldwide revenue, Wright said. In extreme cases, the government may also seek to fine individual company directors and prevent companies from operating in Britain.

Under the EU legislation that cleared an initial hurdle in Brussels, any internet companies that fail to remove terrorist content within an hour of being notified by authorities would face similar 4% penalties. EU authorities came up with the idea last year after attacks highlighted the growing trend of online radicalization.

The bill would apply to companies providing services to EU citizens, whether or not those businesses are based in the EU's 28 member countries. It still needs further approval, including from the full European Parliament.

It faces heavy opposition from digital rights organizations, tech industry groups and some lawmakers, who said the 60-minute deadline is impractical and would lead companies to go too far and remove even lawful material.

"Instead, we call for a more pragmatic approach with removals happening 'as soon as possible,' to pro-

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protect citizens' rights and competitiveness," said EDIMA, a European trade group for new media and internet companies.

Opponents said the measure also places a bigger burden on smaller internet companies than on giants like Facebook and Google, which already have automated content filters. To help smaller web companies, the bill was modified to give them an extra 12 hours for their first offense, a measure opponents said didn't go far enough.

Mark Skilton, a professor at England's Warwick Business School, urged regulators to pursue new methods such as artificial intelligence that could do a better job of tackling the problem.

"Issuing large fines and hitting companies with bigger legal threats is taking a 20th-century bullwhip approach to a problem that requires a nuanced solution," he said. "It needs machine learning tools to manage the 21st-century problems of the internet."

Wright said Britain's proposed social-media regulator would be expected to take freedom of speech into account while trying to prevent harm.

"What we're talking about here is user-generated content, what people put online, and companies that facilitate access to that kind of material," he said. "So this is not about journalism. This is about an unregulated space that we need to control better to keep people safer."

US labels elite Iran force a foreign terrorist organization

BY MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States on Monday designated Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps a foreign terrorist organization, an unprecedented declaration against a foreign government that may prompt retaliation and make it harder for American diplomats and military officers to work with allies in the region.

It is the first time that the U.S. has designated an entity of another government as a terrorist organization, placing a group with vast economic resources that answers only to Iran's supreme leader in the same category as al-Qaida and the Islamic State.

"This unprecedented step, led by the Department of State, recognizes the reality that Iran is not only a state sponsor of terrorism, but that the IRGC actively participates in, finances and promotes terrorism as a tool of statecraft," President Donald Trump said in announcing the measure.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the designation is intended to increase pressure on Iran, isolating it further and diverting some of the financial resources it uses to fund terrorism and militant activity in the Middle East and beyond. But, in addition to the potential for Iranian retaliation, it complicates a delicate balance for U.S. personnel in at least two key countries.

The administration went ahead with the designation despite expressions of "serious" concern by senior defense and intelligence officials about the possibility of retaliation, as well as the effectiveness against an organization already subject to sanctions, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the decision.

Pompeo said the move is part of an effort to put "maximum pressure" on Iran to end its support for terrorist plots and militant activity that destabilizes the Middle East. Speaking to reporters, he rattled off a list of attacks dating to the 1980s for which the U.S. holds Iran and the IRGC responsible, beginning with the attacks on the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon in 1983.

No waivers or exceptions to the sanctions were announced, meaning U.S. troops and diplomats could be barred from speaking with Iraqi or Lebanese authorities who have dealings with Guard officials or surrogates. Such contact occurs now between U.S. officials in Iraq who deal with Iranian-affiliated Shiite militias and in Lebanon, where the Iran-backed Hezbollah movement is in parliament and the government.

The Pentagon and U.S. intelligence agencies had raised concerns about the impact of the designation if the move did not allow contact with other foreign officials who may have met with or communicated with Guard personnel. Those concerns have in part dissuaded previous administrations from taking the step, which has been considered for more than a decade.

The Justice Department said Monday it would prosecute violations but officials declined to say how broadly

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they would interpret the provision barring "material support" to the IRGC. A strict interpretation would leave hundreds of European companies and executives at risk for U.S. travel bans or criminal penalties in addition to limiting American officials' ability to deal with foreign counterparts who have links to the guard.

The designation "raises the question of whether a non-U.S. company or individual could be prosecuted for engaging in commercial transactions with an Iranian company controlled by the IRGC," said Anthony Rapa, an international trade and national security attorney with Kirkland and Ellis.

Critics of the hardline policy also see it as a prelude to conflict.

"This move closes yet another potential door for peacefully resolving tensions with Iran," said Trita Parsi, the founder of the National Iranian American Council. "Once all doors are closed, and diplomacy is rendered impossible, war will essentially become inevitable."

National Security Action, a group made up of mainly former Obama administration officials, said it would put U.S. troops at risk while jeopardizing the 2015 nuclear accord with which Iran is still complying.

"We need to call out today's move for what it is: another dangerous and self-defeating tactic that endangers our troops and serves nothing but the Trump administration's goal of destroying the Iran deal," it said.

The designation could also open hundreds of foreign companies and business executives to U.S. travel bans and possible prosecution for sanctions violations.

The IRGC is a paramilitary organization formed in the wake of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution to defend the government. The force answers only to Iran's supreme leader, operates independently of the regular military and has vast economic interests across the country. The U.S. estimates it may control or have a significant influence over up to 50% of the Iranian economy, including non-military sectors like banking and shipping.

Iran has long been designated a "state sponsor of terrorism" by the U.S. and the State Department currently designates more than 60 organizations as "foreign terrorist organizations." But none of them is a state-run military.

Iran immediately responded to the designation with its Supreme National Security Council designating the U.S. Central Command, also known as CENTCOM, and all its forces as terrorist, and labeling the U.S. a "supporter of terrorism."

The Council denounced the U.S. decision as "illegal and dangerous" and said the U.S. government would be responsible for all "dangerous repercussions" of its decision. It defended the IRGC, which has fought Islamic State fighters, as being a force against terrorism.

American military commanders were planning to warn U.S. troops remaining in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere in the region of the possibility of retaliation. Aside from Iraq, where some 5,200 American troops are stationed, and Syria, where some U.S. 2,000 troops remain, the U.S. 5th Fleet, which operates in the Persian Gulf from its base in Bahrain, and the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, are potentially at risk.

The U.S. special envoy for Iran, Brian Hook, and the State Department's counterterrorism coordinator, Nathan Sales, said the decision was reached after consultation with agencies throughout the government but would not say in a news conference if the military or intelligence concerns had been addressed.

"Doing this will not impede our diplomacy," Hook said, without elaborating. He noted that the U.S. has at various times had contact or even formal negotiations with members of groups that are subject to sanctions.

Reaction from those who favor tougher engagement with Iran was quick and welcoming.

"Thank you, my dear friend, US President Donald Trump," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a tweet, a day before what could be a close election. "Thank you for answering another of my important requests that serves the interests of our countries and of countries in the region."

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, called the action an "overdue" but essential step that should be followed by additional sanctions.

Rep. Michael McCaul of Texas, top Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the designation "ends the facade that the IRGC is part of a normal military."

And, the Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, called it "an imperative for Middle East security, peace, and stability, and an urgent and necessary step to end war and terrorism throughout the region and the world."

Susannah George in Washington; Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran and Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates contributed to this report.

Attorney: Mar-a-Lago infiltrator had hidden-camera detector

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A Chinese woman recently arrested at President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago club lied repeatedly to Secret Service agents while carrying computer malware unlike anything a government analyst had ever seen and had more than \$8,000 in cash at her hotel room, along with an electronic device that detects hidden cameras, federal authorities told a judge Monday.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Rolando Garcia told Magistrate Judge William Matthewman during a bond hearing that "there are a lot of questions that remain" about 32-year-old Yujing Zhang.

He said the FBI is still investigating whether Zhang is a spy.

Zhang was arrested March 30 after Secret Service agents said she lied to gain admission to the president's Palm Beach resort and was found to be carrying two Chinese passports, four cellphones, a laptop computer, an external hard drive and a thumb drive containing the malware.

Matthewman adjourned the hearing until next Monday as Zhang's public defender said he's still gathering evidence that could justify her release on bail on charges of lying to federal agents and illegal entry to a restricted area. Garcia said he expects Zhang will be indicted by a federal grand jury this week on those charges.

He said Zhang would be a "serious risk of flight" if she were released while awaiting trial, as she has no ties to the United States. The State Department revoked her visa last week, he said, so even if released on bond, she would be detained by immigration officials. She arrived in the U.S. on a flight from Shanghai to Newark, New Jersey, two days before her arrest.

Zhang sat quietly at the defense table during the two-hour hearing, scribbling notes in Chinese characters as she listened to a translator through headphones. She wore a blue jail jumpsuit and her wrists were shackled.

"She lies to everyone she encounters," Garcia told the judge. He said that not only did Zhang falsely tell a Secret Service agent at a Mar-a-Lago checkpoint that she was a member there to use the pool, even though she had no swimsuit, she told agents she was carrying her computer gear because she was afraid the items would be stolen if she left them in her hotel room.

But when agents searched it, they found \$7,620 in U.S. currency, another \$663 worth of Chinese currency, numerous U.S. credit and debit cards, the device used to find hidden electronics and other computer gear, he said.

Secret Service agent Samuel Ivanovich told the judge that when an agency analyst uploaded the malware found on Zhang's thumb drive, it immediately began installing on the analyst's computer and corrupting its files.

"That was something that had never happened before," Ivanovich told the judge. He said the analyst immediately shut down the computer to protect it. He said the malware's ultimate purpose remains unknown.

When agents analyze suspicious devices that might contain malicious software, it is done in a controlled environment and not performed on a computer connected to any government networks, according to Secret Service officials.

While questioning Ivanovich, public defender Robert Adler presented Zhang as not fluent in English and suggested she may not have been lying, but misunderstanding agents' questions. He pointed out that Zhang made no attempt to hide her electronic gear while entering Mar-a-Lago and agreed to be interviewed for almost nine hours.

Adler asked that the hearing be adjourned as he believes he can present evidence next week that would justify her release on bail while assuring she wouldn't flee.

Zhang's arrest has raised questions about Mar-a-Lago's security during the president's visits. There's no evidence Zhang ever approached the president and it is believed he was at his nearby golf course when

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she arrived.

Agents say she wasn't on the membership list, but a club manager thought Zhang was a member's daughter. Agents say that when they asked Zhang if the member was her father, she did not answer definitively but they thought it might be a language barrier and admitted her. Zhang is a common Chinese name -- about 7% of the country's population carries it.

Ivanovich told the judge Zhang later told him she was there for a Chinese American event that didn't exist, contradicting her checkpoint statement. She showed him an invitation in Chinese he could not read.

After being questioned for about 90 minutes at a property neighboring Mar-a-Lago, Zhang was taken to the local Secret Service office for questioning that lasted about seven hours. It was not recorded.

There, Ivanovich said, it became clear Zhang speaks and reads English well. He said Zhang said an acquaintance named "Charles" had invited her to the nonexistent event.

Adler said wire records show Zhang paid \$20,000 in February to Charles Lee, a Chinese national, for admission to the event. Lee ran the United Nations Chinese Friendship Association and was photographed at least twice with Cindy Yang, a Republican donor and former Florida massage parlor owner. She recently made news after it was learned she was promising Chinese business leaders that her consulting firm could get them access to Mar-a-Lago and mingle with the president.

Yang previously owned a spa where New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft was charged with soliciting prostitution.

Associated Press reporter Colleen Long in Washington contributed to this story.

Theresa May woos UK opponents and EU leaders over Brexit

By JILL LAWLESS and RAF CASERT Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister Theresa May wooed domestic political opponents and European leaders Monday as she sought to break Britain's Brexit impasse and secure a delay to the country's departure from the European Union.

May's Conservative government and the main opposition Labour Party were clinging to hope of finding a compromise Brexit deal, two days before EU leaders decide whether to grant an extension to the U.K.'s departure from the bloc. If they refuse, Britain faces a sudden and chaotic departure on Friday, the Brexit deadline previously set by the EU.

May has asked for a new delay until June 30, to give Britain's divided politicians time to agree, approve and implement a withdrawal agreement. The bloc's leaders are due to meet Wednesday in Brussels to consider the request.

An extension requires unanimous approval from all 27 EU national leaders, some of whom are fed up with Brexit uncertainty and reluctant to prolong it further. French President Emmanuel Macron has been particularly resistant to the idea of further delaying Brexit, saying the EU can't be held "hostage" to Britain's political crisis.

May's office said the prime minister spoke to multiple European leaders by phone Monday and will dash Tuesday to Berlin and Paris for face-to-face talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Macron.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt urged European leaders to be cooperative, saying May "is totally and utterly determined to deliver Brexit."

"They want Brexit to be resolved as quickly as possible," Hunt said of the other 27 EU leaders. "So do we."

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said he was "open to extending the deadline."

"There will be different views, but I am confident that we will reach agreement," he said after meeting chief EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier in Dublin.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, however, said May would have to convince EU leaders that Britain would continue "sincere cooperation" with the bloc if granted a delay. Some pro-Brexit British politicians have suggested the U.K. could try to disrupt EU policymaking if it remains a member much longer.

Almost three years after Britons voted by 52% to 48% to leave the EU, the country remains divided and

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the political process deadlocked.

May and the EU agreed late last year on divorce terms, but the agreement has been rejected by Parliament three times. In desperation, May last week sought talks with the left-of-center Labour Party.

Labour favors a softer Brexit than the government has proposed and seeks a close economic relationship with the bloc through a customs union — a trading area that sets common tariffs on imports while allowing free trade in goods moving between member states.

So far, the cross-party talks have failed to yield a breakthrough, but Labour politicians and government ministers were due to continue negotiations Tuesday.

"The government doesn't seem to be moving off its original red lines," Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said. "We are looking for movement."

The EU would welcome a move by Britain to keep close post-Brexit economic ties. Barnier said Monday that the bloc was willing to be "much more ambitious in our future relationship" and would agree to a customs union arrangement.

The alternative of a no-deal Brexit threatens huge disruptions to trade and travel, with tariffs and customs checks causing gridlock at British ports and possible shortages of goods in the U.K.

It would also be tough for Ireland, the only EU member state to share a land border with the U.K. Any customs checks or other obstacles along the currently invisible frontier would hammer the Irish economy, and could undermine Northern Ireland's peace process.

Barnier said the EU would remain "fully behind Ireland."

"If the U.K. were to leave the EU without a deal, we would not discuss anything with the U.K. until there is an agreement for Ireland and Northern Ireland," he said.

It was unclear whether the cross-party talks in London would succeed. May's reach for compromise left her caught between angry Conservatives who accused her of throwing away Brexit, and Labour opponents mistrustful of her sudden change of heart.

Suggestions she might back a customs union infuriated pro-Brexit Conservatives, who say Britain must cut ties to the EU in order to forge an independent economic policy.

Former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, a leading Brexiteer, said a customs union would "enslave" the U.K. He tweeted that it "cannot, must not and will not happen."

But others say May has little choice but to change her long-held Brexit positions, after lawmakers rejected her deal and also repeatedly ruled out leaving the bloc without an agreement.

Late Monday, Parliament passed a fast-tracked law that compels the government to seek a delay to Brexit rather than leave without a deal. May has already committed to doing that, but many lawmakers don't trust the government and passed the bill as an insurance policy.

While the government still intends for Britain to leave the EU in the next few months, it is also making plans to participate in European Parliament elections taking place across the bloc May 22-26.

The government announced Monday it had taken the legal step required to start preparations and set a May 23 date for the poll. It said the measure "does not make these elections inevitable as leaving the EU before the date of election automatically removes our obligation to take part."

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright said both Conservatives and Labour should compromise to make Brexit happen.

"There's some urgency to it, but I do think it's important for everyone to take their responsibilities seriously, whatever party they come from, and try and get to a point where we leave the EU, as people have said they wish to do, and to do it on the best possible terms," he told the BBC. "I think that's achievable."

Associated Press writer Jill Lawless reported this story in London and AP writer Raf Casert reported from Brussels. AP writer Danica Kirka in London contributed to this report.

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

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'Smallville' actress pleads guilty in sex-trafficking case

By TOM HAYS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — TV actress Allison Mack pleaded guilty Monday to charges she was involved in a scheme to turn women into sex slaves for the spiritual leader of a cult-like upstate New York group, a development that came on the same day jury selection began for a federal trial in the case.

Mack, 36, wept as she admitted her crimes and apologized to the women who prosecutors say were exploited by Keith Raniere and the purported self-help group called NXIVM.

"I believed Keith Raniere's intentions were to help people, and I was wrong," Mack told a Brooklyn judge.

Mack - best known for her role as a young Superman's close friend on the series "Smallville" - said that after months of reflection since her arrest, "I know I can and will be a better person."

The actress is to be sentenced Sept. 11 on two racketeering counts that each carry maximum terms of 20 years in prison. However, it's likely she would face far less time under sentencing guidelines.

The plea means Mack will avoid going to trial with Raniere, wealthy heiress Clare Bronfman and another member of Raniere's inner circle, Kathy Russell. All have pleaded not guilty and denied any wrongdoing.

About two hours after Mack's guilty plea, potential jurors got their first glimpse of the jailed Raniere at a proceeding where they were instructed on questionnaires to be filled out as a first step in the selection process. Opening statements are scheduled for April 29 for a trial that is expected to last up to six weeks.

The question of who would be seated at the defense table that day had remained unanswered in the wake of new allegations that Raniere exploited a teenage girl. The accusations gave his co-defendants even further incentive to seek separate trials and engage in plea negotiations.

Court papers allege NXIVM formed a secret society of women who were branded with Raniere's initials and forced to have sex with him. Defense attorneys have insisted any relationship between Raniere and the alleged victims, including an unidentified actress and other women expected to testify against him at trial, was consensual.

On Monday, Mack said that at Raniere's direction, she obtained compromising information and images of two unidentified women - called "collateral" within the group - that she threatened to make public if they didn't perform "so-called acts of love."

The jury questionnaire covers several topics, including asking candidates for their opinions about "rich individuals" and people who "engage in relationships with multiple sexual partners" and whether they "believe that people under the age of 17 should be able to consent to sex with adults."

Trump avoids 'you're hired' with acting appointments

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump looks to reshape the executive branch, he's avoiding the words "you're hired."

Trump's choice of Kevin McAleenan as acting replacement for Homeland Security secretary Kirstjen Nielsen spotlights the president's increasing reliance on a once-obscure federal statute that governs how to fill vacant federal posts. It also raises fresh questions about his reliance on temporary appointments for key security roles.

The reality-star president, who once made staff churn into prime-time television, has overseen massive turnover in just two years in office. But he's shown little concern over creating uncertainty about the leadership of some of the country's most important agencies.

Pinterest sets conservative pricing after Lyft drop

By MAE ANDERSON and MICHELLE CHAPMAN AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Pinterest, among the gaggle of tech companies hoping to go public this year, set a conservative price range Monday for its initial public offering. It hopes to raise as much as \$1.5 billion in its initial offering of shares.

The digital scrapbooking site said in a regulatory filing that it will put about 75 million shares up for sale

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at a price between \$15 and \$17 each.

That, at the higher end, could put the value of the company at around \$9 billion. But it falls below the estimated \$12 billion value from earlier sales of shares to private investors, according to reports two years ago.

Companies set their price range for an initial public offering with a tricky calculus set by investment banks and underwriters. They don't want to set the bar too low, but going too high can lead to a sell-off.

And those tech companies still planning to go public this year may be treading more carefully following the debut of Lyft 11 days ago. After a much ballyhooed debut, the stock slumped for two days. While its shares bounced back from their lows last week, they remain far below the heights reached in the flurry of first-day trading, and they closed down nearly 6% Monday, again dipping under the initial offering price.

The Lyft drop was a "major gut check time for Lyft and the tech IPO world to see how this stock trades given it was the first one out of the box," said Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives after Lyft shares tumbled.

Pinterest could raise the share price before it begins trading. Lyft, for example set a range of \$62 to \$68 per share and opened trading at \$72 per share.

Other tech companies pushing to go public this year include Uber, Lyft's rival; the messaging app Slack; and the video conferencing company Zoom.

Pinterest claims more than 250 million active monthly users and more than 2 billion monthly searches. The platform allows people to search for and "pin" images that interest them, whether it's fashion, sports, pets or travel.

Pinterest has long shunned the label of being a social network. It doesn't push users to add friends or build connections. That means it's avoided the privacy tangles that have ensnared companies like Facebook. Pinterest makes advertising revenue when businesses promote pins in users' feeds.

The San Francisco company had revenue of \$756 million last year, a 60% bump from 2017. It had a loss of \$63 million in 2018, compared with a loss of \$130 million in 2017.

Pinterest was founded in 2010 by Ben Silbermann and Evan Sharp, who are the company's CEO and chief product officer, respectively.

The company has been working on developing its artificial intelligence search, which allows people to take a photo or upload a screenshot of an item and find similar products on Pinterest.

Pinterest's stock will list on the New York Stock Exchange under the "PINS" ticker symbol.

AP Business Writer Michelle Chapman reported from in Newark, New Jersey.

Big Tech feels the heat as US moves to protect consumer data

By MARCY GORDON AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Momentum is gaining in Washington for a privacy law that could sharply rein in the ability of the largest technology companies to collect and make money off people's personal data.

A national law, the first of its kind in the U.S., could allow people to see or prohibit the use of their data. Companies would need permission to release such information. If it takes effect, a law would also likely shrink Big Tech's profits from its lucrative business of making personal data available to advertisers so they can pinpoint specific consumers to target.

Behind the drive for a law is rising concern over the compromise of private data held by Facebook, Google and other tech giants that have earned riches by aggregating consumer information. The industry traditionally has been lightly regulated and has resisted closer oversight as a threat to its culture of free-wheeling innovation.

Support for a privacy law is part of a broader effort by regulators and lawmakers to lessen the domination of companies like Facebook, Google and Amazon. Some, including Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democratic presidential candidate, have called for the tech giants to be split up.

The Trump White House has said in the past that it could endorse a broad data privacy law.

The big tech companies have been nervously eyeing a tough privacy law taking effect next year in Cali-

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fornia. That measure will allow Californians to see the personal data being collected on them and where it's being distributed and to forbid the sale of it. With some exceptions, consumers could also request that their personal information be deleted entirely.

Whatever federal privacy law eventually emerges is expected to be less stringent than the California measure and to supersede it. As a result, the tech industry is trying to help shape any national restrictions.

"This is the first time ever that the industry wants legislation," said Jeffrey Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy, a privacy advocacy group. "The industry is terrified."

On Tuesday, a House committee will press Google and Facebook executives about another urgent concern involving Big Tech: Whether they're doing enough to curb the spread of hate crimes and white nationalism through online platforms. The Judiciary Committee hearing follows a series of violent incidents fueled in part by online communication.

Facebook, used by 2-billion-plus people including over 200 million in the U.S., has been a particular lightning rod for industry critics. Having had its reputation tarnished over data privacy lapses, a tide of hate speech and a spread of disinformation that allowed Russian agents to target propaganda campaigns, Facebook appears ready to embrace a national privacy law.

Facebook's founder and CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, published a column last month in the Washington Post calling for tighter regulations to protect consumer data, control harmful content and ensure election integrity and data portability.

"The internet," Zuckerberg wrote, "needs new rules."

Amazon says it has built its business on protecting people's information, "and we have been working with policymakers on how best to do that."

"There is real momentum to develop baseline rules of the road for data protection," Google's chief privacy officer, Keith Enright, has said in a policy paper. "Google welcomes this and supports comprehensive, baseline privacy regulation."

A sweeping "privacy shield" law in the European Union, covering how tech companies handle personal data in the 28-country bloc, should be a model, Zuckerberg wrote. EU regulators recently fined Google \$1.7 billion for freezing out rivals in the online ad business — their third penalty against the search giant in two years. The EU watchdogs have also ordered Apple and Amazon to pay back taxes and fined Facebook for providing misleading information in its acquisition of WhatsApp.

On Monday, Britain unveiled plans to vastly increase government oversight of social media companies, with a watchdog that could fine executives or even ban companies that fail to block such content as terrorist propaganda and images of child abuse.

The entire debate cuts to the heart of Big Tech's hugely profitable commerce in online users' personal data. The companies gather vast data on what users read and like and leverage it to help advertisers target their messages to the individuals they want to reach. Facebook drew 99% of its revenue from advertising last year. For Google's parent Alphabet, it was 85%, according to Scott Kessler of the research firm CFRA.

Amazon, too, doesn't just sell products online; it provides ad space, too. The company doesn't say how much but has said that the "other" revenue in its financial reports is mainly from ads. Its "other" revenue topped \$10 billion last year, more than double what it was in 2017.

The tech giants' problematic relationship with advertisers was spotlighted by action regulators took last month. The Department of Housing and Urban Development filed civil charges against Facebook, accusing it of allowing landlords and real estate brokers to exclude certain racial or ethnic groups from seeing ads for houses and apartments. Facebook could face penalties.

The company has separately agreed to overhaul its ad targeting system and end some of the practices noted by HUD to prevent discrimination in housing listings as well as credit and employment ads. That move was part of a settlement with the American Civil Liberties Union and other activists.

Besides crafting a bipartisan data-privacy measure in Congress, lawmakers are considering restoring Obama-era rules that formerly barred internet providers — like AT&T, Verizon and Comcast — from discriminating against certain technologies and services.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., has proposed fines and jail time for executives of companies guilty of data

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breaches.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable, representing CEOs of major companies, have presented their own proposals to curb privacy abuses. At the same time, President Donald Trump has echoed complaints from some conservative lawmakers and commentators that the big tech platforms are politically tilted against them.

"Facebook, Twitter and Google are so biased toward the Dems it is ridiculous!" he has tweeted. And he told a rally crowd, "We're not going to let them control what we can and cannot see, read and learn from."

Tech executives and many Democrats have rejected those assertions as themselves politically biased. Still, Trump has threatened to push regulators to investigate whether Google has abused its role as an internet gateway to stifle competition. And referring to Amazon, Facebook and Google, Trump told Bloomberg News, "Many people think it is a very antitrust situation, the three of them."

Among the tech giants that are trying to shape any final restrictions is the chipmaker Intel, which has developed its own legislative proposal.

"I think it's likely we are going to pass a national privacy law by the end of 2020," David Hoffman, Intel's associate general counsel and global privacy officer, said in an interview.

By then, the privacy measure emerging in California will have taken effect.

"The California bill is responsible for 90% of the lobbying and political pressure to pass a national law," said Robert Atkinson of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, whose board includes tech executives.

Four senators — Republicans Roger Wicker of Mississippi and Jerry Moran of Kansas and Democrats Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Brian Schatz of Hawaii — are working on a national measure. They say it would protect consumers from the abuse of their data and provide legal certainty to ensure that tech companies continue to hire and innovate.

"It would be nice," said Wicker, who leads the key Senate Commerce Committee, "to have it on the president's desk this year."

AP Technology Writer Anick Jesdanun in New York contributed to this report.

AP Explains: Long reach of Iran's Revolutionary Guard

By AYA BATRAWY and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's Revolutionary Guard, designated a "foreign terrorist organization" by the Trump administration on Monday, evolved from a paramilitary, domestic security force with origins in the 1979 Islamic Revolution to a transnational force that has come to the aid of Tehran's allies in the Mideast, from Syria and Lebanon to Iraq.

The force answers only to Iran's supreme leader, operates independently of the regular military and has vast economic interests across the country.

Here are key things to know about the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC:

ORIGINS:

The Revolutionary Guard was created in parallel to the country's existing armed forces to consolidate power under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The following year, it was called upon to defend Iran and its clerical leadership in a ruinous war with Iraq that would last eight years and strengthen the guard's ideological, economic and security footprint at home.

The group is estimated to have between 125,000 and 150,000 members today, but it's unclear how many of those include the Quds Force, an elite wing of the IRGC that oversees foreign operations. The group, enshrined in the constitution, answers only to Iran's supreme leader.

DOMESTIC GRIP:

The IRGC oversees the country's ballistic missile program and has conducted several tests since the landmark 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers. While the accord does not specifically ban

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those tests, U.S. officials have said they violate the spirit of the deal. President Donald Trump last year pulled America out of the deal and re-imposed tough economic sanctions on Iran.

Additionally, the guard runs a massive construction company called Khatam al-Anbia, with 135,000 employees handling civil development, the oil industry and defense issues. Firms operated by the IRGC also build roads, man ports, run telecommunication networks and even offer laser eye surgery. The IRGC has deployed in rescue efforts during Iran's recent devastating floods, which killed at least 70 people across the country.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last year ordered the guard to loosen its hold on the economy and privatize some of its vast economic holdings. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has tried unsuccessfully to further restrict the group's expansive powers at home.

FOREIGN REACH:

The Revolutionary Guard recruits and trains thousands of fighters abroad through its Quds Force, headed by Gen. Qassem Soleimani, a shadowy but prominent figure whose fighters have fought alongside Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces and against Islamic State militants who view Shiites as heretics.

U.S. officials say the IRGC under Soleimani taught Iraqi militants how to manufacture and use deadly roadside bombs against American troops after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, a charge Iran denies.

The group also oversees the Basij, a volunteer force of several million that draws its members from among the poor, uneducated young men from rural areas and city outskirts. The Basij model has been exported abroad, with tens of thousands of Shiites recruited from countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon and Iraq to fight in Tehran's proxy wars in Syria and elsewhere.

One of those young Shiite men, who joined a wave of Afghans recruited and trained to fight in support of Assad's government in Syria, recently spoke with The Associated Press about the experience, saying he was driven by poverty and not by ideology or loyalty to Iran.

MIDEAST MILITIAS:

The IRGC backs a number of Shiite militias across the Middle East, as well as the Fatimiyoun Brigade in Afghanistan. Chief among them is Hezbollah, the IRGC's oldest and most experienced force in the region, established following Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The militia, led by Hassan Nasrallah, publicly joined Syria's civil war in mid-2013, securing a string of hard-won victories in defense of Syria's Iranian-backed government.

IRGC-backed Iraqi militias also fought in Syria in support of Assad's forces and against the Islamic State group in northern and central Iraq. Some of the armed groups in Iraq backed by Iran include the powerful Kataeb Hezbollah, Haraket Hezbollah al-Nujaba and Asaib Ahl al-Haq.

In Pakistan, the Zeinabiyoun Brigade is mostly comprised of Shiite fighters who have also fought in Syria. Many of the group's fighters are trained and funded by IRGC.

Yemen's Houthi rebels are also allied with Iran. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and other countries have accused the guard of supplying the Houthis with long-range missiles, a charge it denies. A Saudi-led coalition, backed by the U.S. and Britain, has been at war with the Houthis since March 2015.

Mroue reported from Beirut.

Rhino poacher killed by elephant and eaten by lions

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A rhinoceros poacher was stomped to death by an elephant and eaten by lions in a South Africa wildlife preserve, and rangers found just his skull and trousers, authorities said.

The man and two others were hunting illegally at Kruger National Park last week when the elephant surprised them, park spokesman Isaac Phaahla said. The hunter's companions dragged his body to a spot

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near a road and told the man's family what happened. It took two days for rangers to find his remains.

South Africans weighed in on social media, with many celebrating the poacher's death, calling it justice or applauding the animals for "restoring law and order in the jungle." But others blamed the economic desperation that leads people to become poachers, and the international criminal syndicates they work for.

Julian Rademeyer, a project leader for TRAFFIC, which monitors the international trade in wildlife, said effective measures are needed to attack the global rings that deal in rhino horn and elephant ivory.

"The rage and anger of many people at the rampant poaching that is endangering rhinos and elephants is understandable. But the joy and gloating over the death of a poacher is crass and misguided," Rademeyer said. "Killing poachers will not stop poaching. Poachers are just the foot soldiers of international criminal syndicates."

The world's rhinos are in danger of being hunted to extinction. They are prized for their horns, which are ground up and used in traditional Chinese medicine as a supposed cure for a variety of ailments.

South Africa, which has about 80% of the world's remaining rhinos, has seen aggressive poaching of the animals in recent years. Last year 769 rhinos were killed illegally, down from more than 1,000 annually since 2013, according to Save the Rhino.

"Poaching is a serious, ongoing problem in the park," Phaahla said of Kruger, which covers 7,500 square miles in southeastern South Africa, making it about the size of the U.S. state of New Jersey.

After the death of the poacher, whose name and nationality were not released, relatives asked park officials to help recover the body. Rangers searched on the ground and by air but did not find the remains before it got dark, Phaahla said. The two surviving hunters gave officials a more precise description of where they left the dead man. Police arrested them on suspicion of poaching.

"The next day, our field rangers searched in the bush and made the gruesome discovery," Phaahla said. "There was a pride of lion nearby which apparently had devoured his body."

Police said they seized guns and ammunition from the surviving men. They were charged with illegal possession of firearms, trespassing and conspiracy to poach.

"On most days, we have close to 15 poaching groups of three individuals each who are hunting illegally for rhinos," Phaahla said. "Our rangers are well-trained and making progress in controlling the poaching."

Rademeyer, the author of "Killing for Profit," a book about the illegal trade in rhino horn, blamed "the appalling socio-economic conditions in South Africa that drive young men to take risks to hunt rhinos and elephants."

In addition to fighting international criminal syndicates, "what is also needed is to win support in rural communities for conservation. People living around parks must see the value of wildlife," Rademeyer said. "They must see the economic benefits of wildlife. We need a national pride, of all South Africans, in our wildlife."

S&P 500 ekes out gain, enough to extend winning streak

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stock indexes took a round trip Monday, erasing their early-morning losses to end the day close to where they started.

The S&P 500 eked out a small gain, enough to prolong its winning streak to eight days, its longest in a year and a half. But the Dow Jones Industrial Average ended lower due to another big loss for Boeing.

Most stock movements were only modest, and the market was nearly evenly split between winners and losers as investors looked ahead to a busy week for markets with updates scheduled for corporate earnings, the U.S. economy and global trade.

The S&P 500 rose 3.03 points, or 0.1%, to 2,895.77. It climbed to within 1.2% of its record, which was set in September, and had been down as much as 0.4% in morning trading.

The Dow slipped 83.97, or 0.3%, to 26,341.02, and the Nasdaq gained 15.19, or 0.2%, to 7,953.88. The Russell 2000 index of small-cap stocks fell 3.55, or 0.2%, to 1,579.00.

Boeing was one of the biggest movers on the quiet Monday, slumping 4.4% after saying late Friday that

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it will cut production of its 737 Max plane. Regulators around the world grounded the jet model after it was involved in two separate fatal crashes that occurred within weeks of each other.

Boeing's struggles have dragged on other stocks, including its customers and its suppliers. Spirit Aero-Systems Holdings, an aerospace supplier, fell 5.1%, and Southwest Airlines lost 2.5%.

On the winning side were energy stocks, which benefited from yet another climb for the price of oil.

Since hitting a bottom below \$43 per barrel in December, benchmark U.S. crude has gained more than \$20. It rose \$1.32 to settle at \$64.40 per barrel Monday. Brent crude rose 76 cents to \$71.10 per barrel.

The gains helped send energy stocks in the S&P 500 index 0.5% higher, the biggest gain among the 11 sectors that make up the index.

The market's trend has been decidedly upward in recent weeks as stocks have grinded higher, mostly in small increments. It follows a torrid start to the year, after the Federal Reserve eased fears about a recession by saying it may not raise interest rates at all in 2019.

Later this week, investors will get more clues about the Fed's intentions. The central bank will release the minutes from its last policy meeting on Wednesday, and a report on consumer prices the same day will show whether inflation remains modest, which would give the Fed more leeway to keep interest rates low.

Earnings reporting season will begin in earnest at the end of this week, with JPMorgan Chase and other big banks set to tell investors how much they earned during the first three months of the year. Expectations are low for the market broadly, and analysts are forecasting the first drop in S&P 500 profits in years.

That puts more focus on what CEOs say about their profit prospects for the rest of the year. Analysts are expecting profit growth to resume after the weak first quarter, and if CEOs undercut those beliefs, it would put downward pressure on stock prices.

"We're watching the earnings and the drivers of earnings," said Doug Ramsey, chief investment officer of Leuthold Group. He's paying particular attention to how much in profit companies are able to hold onto from each \$1 in revenue, as wages and interest expenses on their debts rise.

Investors are also watching across the Atlantic, as the U.K. prime minister prepares to meet continental European leaders ahead of a Friday deadline, when the United Kingdom is scheduled to depart the European Union. Economists worry about the drag on trade and the economy if the departure happens without a withdrawal agreement.

All this comes against a backdrop of heightened worries about global economic growth and a global trade war. Growth has slowed, and investors are debating how much last week's stronger-than-expected report on U.S. jobs changes the picture.

China's official news agency said Sunday that trade talks with the U.S. in Washington last week "achieved new progress" but did not elaborate on where or when further discussions will happen. Beijing and Washington are working to end a standoff over Beijing's industrial and technology policies that has shaken financial markets and darkened the world economic outlook.

Overseas markets were mixed Monday. The FTSE 100 in London rose 0.1%, while France's CAC 40 slipped 0.1% and Germany's DAX lost 0.4%. Japan's Nikkei 225 slipped 0.2%, the Hang Seng in Hong Kong rose 0.5% and the Kospi in South Korea was virtually flat.

The dollar slipped to 111.53 Japanese yen from 111.71 yen late Friday. The euro rose to \$1.1261 from \$1.1218, and the British pound climbed to \$1.3066 from \$1.3029.

In commodities markets, gold rose \$6.30 to \$1,301.90 per ounce, silver gained 13 cents to \$15.22 per ounce and copper rose 4 cents to \$2.93 per pound. Natural gas rose 4 cents to \$2.71 per 1,000 cubic feet, heating oil gained 1 cent to \$2.06 per gallon and wholesale gasoline rose 2 cents to \$1.99 per gallon.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note ticked up to 2.52% from 2.50% late Friday.

AP Business Writer Elaine Kurtenbach contributed from Bangkok.

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Today in History **By The Associated Press**

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, April 9, the 99th day of 2019. There are 266 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 9, 1968, funeral services, private and public, were held for Martin Luther King Jr. at the Ebenezer Baptist Church and Morehouse College in Atlanta, five days after the civil rights leader was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.

On this date:

In 1865, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

In 1913, the first game was played at Ebbets Field, the newly built home of the Brooklyn Dodgers, who lost to the Philadelphia Phillies, 1-0.

In 1939, singer Marian Anderson performed a concert at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., after being denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1940, during World War II, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.

In 1942, during World War II, some 75,000 Philippine and American defenders on Bataan surrendered to Japanese troops, who forced the prisoners into what became known as the Bataan Death March; thousands died or were killed en route.

In 1959, NASA presented its first seven astronauts: Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Gus Grissom, Wally Schirra, Alan Shepard and Donald Slayton. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright, 91, died in Phoenix, Arizona.

In 1965, the newly built Astrodome in Houston featured its first baseball game, an exhibition between the Astros and the New York Yankees, with President Lyndon B. Johnson in attendance. (The Astros won, 2-1, in 12 innings.)

In 1979, officials declared an end to the crisis involving the Three Mile Island Unit 2 nuclear reactor in Pennsylvania, 12 days after a partial core meltdown.

In 1983, the space shuttle Challenger ended its first mission with a safe landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

In 1984, "Terms of Endearment" won five Academy Awards, including best picture, best actress for Shirley MacLaine and best supporting actor for Jack Nicholson.

In 1992, former Panamanian ruler Manuel Noriega was convicted in Miami of eight drug and racketeering charges; he served a 17-year U.S. prison sentence.

In 2003, jubilant Iraqis celebrated the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime, beheading a toppled statue of their longtime ruler in downtown Baghdad and embracing American troops as liberators.

Ten years ago: North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament appointed Kim Jong Il to a third term as leader. Los Angeles Angels pitcher Nick Adenhart, 22, and two others were killed in a car crash by a suspected drunken driver. (Andrew Thomas Gallo was convicted of three counts of second-degree murder and sentenced to 51 years to life in prison.)

Five years ago: A 16-year-old boy armed with two knives went on a rampage at Franklin Regional High School in Murrysville, Pennsylvania, stabbing 20 students and a security guard (all of whom survived). President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, visited Fort Hood, Texas, the scene of a shooting a week earlier in which three U.S. Army soldiers were killed by a fellow soldier who then took his own life.

One year ago: Federal agents raided the office of President Donald Trump's personal attorney, Michael Cohen, seizing records on matters including a \$130,000 payment made to porn actress Stormy Daniels. Trump denounced Robert Mueller's Russia investigation as "an attack on our country," prompting new speculation that he might seek the removal of the Justice Department's special counsel. Opening statements began in the retrial of Bill Cosby, charged with drugging and molesting Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia home. (Cosby was convicted and sentenced to three to 10 years in prison.) Facebook

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began alerting some users that their data had been swept up in the Cambridge Analytica privacy scandal. Fleetwood Mac announced that singer-guitarist Lindsey Buckingham would not be part of the band's new tour. (The tour began in October with Mike Campbell and Neil Finn replacing Buckingham.)

Today's Birthdays: Satirical songwriter and mathematician Tom Lehrer is 91. Naturalist Jim Fowler is 89. Actor Jean-Paul Belmondo is 86. Actress Michael Learned is 80. Country singer Margo Smith is 77. Country singer Hal Ketchum is 66. Actor Dennis Quaid is 65. Comedian Jimmy Tingle is 64. Country musician Dave Innis (Restless Heart) is 60. Talk show host Joe Scarborough is 56. Actress-sports reporter Lisa Guerrero is 55. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey is 55. Actor Mark Pellegrino is 54. Actress-model Paulina Porizkova is 54. Actress Cynthia Nixon is 53. Rock singer Kevin Martin (Candlebox) is 50. TV personality Sunny Anderson is 44. Rock singer Gerard Way (My Chemical Romance) is 42. Actress Keshia Knight Pulliam is 40. Rock musician Albert Hammond Jr. (The Strokes) is 39. Actor Charlie Hunnam is 39. Actor Ryan Northcott is 39. Actor Arlen Escarpeta is 38. Actor Jay Baruchel is 37. Actress Annie Funke is 34. Actor Jordan Masterson is 33. Actress Leighton Meester is 33. Actor-singer Jesse McCartney is 32. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jazmine Sullivan is 32. Actress Kristen Stewart is 29. Actress Elle Fanning is 21. Actor Isaac Hempstead Wright is 20. Classical crossover singer Jackie Evancho (ee-VAYN'-koh) is 19.

Thought for Today: "The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children."
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945).