

Groton Daily Independent

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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Only surround
yourself with
people who lift
you higher.

-Oprah

ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR WANTED

We are looking for someone with a creative mind and a passion for the elderly. If that is you, here is a great opportunity for YOU!

➤ Interview and assess all residents prior to the initial Care Plan Conference; document this information in the medical record, develop an individual recreation plan based on the assessment and participate in Interdisciplinary Care Plan meetings

➤ Update assessments and plans as needed and required by state or federal regulations

➤ Develop monthly recreation program calendars that reflect and meet the needs of facility residents

➤ Communicate facility programs to residents, staff, family and volunteers

➤ Manage facility Volunteer Program

➤ Maintain departmental documentation that reflects services provided and resident progress towards goals

➤ In coordination with social services facilitate the residents in the organization and continued development of a Resident's Council

➤ Make job assignments and set priorities

➤ Serve as member of QAA committee

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

Death Notice: Clara Barondeau

Clara Barondeau, 96, of Aberdeen and formerly of Conde passed away May 8, 2019 at Avera Mother Joseph Manor, Aberdeen. Services are pending for Tuesday with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Thursday, May 9, 2019

7:00pm- 9:00pm: All-School Play at GHS Gymnasium

Friday, May 10, 2019

11:00am: Northeast Conference Varsity Track Meet @ Hamlin High School

Saturday, May 11, 2019

7:00pm- 9:00pm: All-School Play at GHS Gymnasium

Monday, May 13, 2019

10:00am: Girls Varsity Northeast Conference Golf Meet at the Olive Grove Golf Course, Groton. (Aberdeen Roncalli, Milbank, Redfield-Doland, Sisseton)

10:00am: Northeast Conference Junior High Track Meet at Webster

7:00pm- 10:00pm: School Board Meeting at Groton Area High School

Thursday, May 16, 2019

10:00am: Golf: Girls Varsity Meet@ Sisseton Golf Course

12:00pm: Track: Varsity Regions @ Redfield High School

Friday, May 17, 2019

12:30pm- 3:00pm: Elementary Track and Field Day at Doney Field

Sunday, May 19, 2019

2:00pm: Graduation at Groton Area High School

Tuesday, May 21, 2019

2:00pm: DARE Graduation at GHS Gymnasium

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting at the Groton Community Center

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

End of 4th Quarter - Final Day of School
12:00pm: Golf: Girls Varsity Meet @ Milbank Golf Course

Thursday, May 23, 2019

Faculty Inservice
10:00am: Golf: Girls Varsity Regions @ Milbank Golf Course

Noem Names Jones as Permanent Secretary of Education

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem today announced that Dr. Ben Jones has been appointed as the permanent Secretary of Education. Jones has been serving as Interim Secretary of Education since January 2019.

“I’ve been impressed with Ben’s work in the first four months we’ve served together, and I’m pleased he’s on board moving forward,” said Noem. “Ben shares my desire to ensure every South Dakota student has access to a quality education.”

“I appreciate the confidence Governor Noem has in me to lead this department and the dedicated professionals who make it their work to help our students, teachers and administrators,” said Jones. “It’s bittersweet to be leaving my position at DSU, but the opportunity to help Governor Noem enhance the lives of the next generation of South Dakotans is something I couldn’t pass up.”

Jones holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Kansas. He previously served as the Dean of Dakota State University’s College of Arts and Sciences where he oversaw more than 50 full-time and adjunct faculty members. At DSU, he revitalized numerous programs to better equip students for modernized careers, launch innovative programming, and improve course content through interdepartmental collaboration. As Interim Secretary of Education, Jones has been key in developing the “Week of Work” program – an initiative to expose high school students to in-demand jobs.

Dandelion Season SDSU Extension Has Some Tips to Help with Control

BROOKINGS, S.D. – Throughout the state, dandelions are running a couple of weeks behind normal, but they are starting to show. If herbicide wasn’t applied last fall, there are still a few things South Dakotans can do to control the yellow-flowered weed said Paul Johnson, SDSU Extension Weed Science Coordinator.

“Dandelions thrive on cool damp weather. Dandelion is a perennial that can produce multiple flowers. With a large plant more than 50 flowers have been found to be produced with several seeds per flower,” Johnson said.

He explained although spring treatments are not as effective as fall, they can be used to stop the yellow flowers from producing viable seed.

Application tips

1. Read and follow all directions and wear proper protective clothing.
2. Herbicide treatments can be used either as a weed and feed type granule or as a liquid spray.
3. The chemicals must enter through the leaves.
4. Spray products can be applied with a variety of equipment.
5. Keep sprays coarse and use low pressure to reduce the chance of spray going on non-target sensitive plants.

“Remember the older the dandelion the harder it will be to kill. Scattered plants can be dug but be sure to cut the root off below the ground so the crown is killed to avoid the plant coming back as a new plant,” Johnson said.

Make a note on the calendar for fall to control the plants after the first frost so you do not need to be one of the people with a yellow lawn next spring.

“Remember even if the lawn looks good this year seedlings can be back next year,” he said.

To gain more lawn and garden tips, visit extension.sdstate.edu.

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Today in Weather History

May 9, 1999: Torrential rains of two to five inches fell in Lyman County during the late evening hours which caused flash flooding on Medicine Creek. The KOA Campgrounds near Kennebec were flooded including the main facility. Several roads were also flooded and damaged along Medicine Creek. Storm total rainfall in Kennebec was 3.40 inches. Also, a weak F0 tornado touched down briefly three miles south of Reliance with no damage reported. Winds gusting to 70 mph knocked over a 4000-bushel holding bin near Revillo.

1918: An F4 tornado moved across Floyd, Chickasaw, and Winneshiek Counties in northeast Iowa from two miles north of Pearl Rock to Calmar. Two people died east of Calmar when the tornado was a mile wide. Losses in and near Calmar totaled \$250,000. Overall, this tornado killed seven people and injured 15 others.

1933: An estimated F4 tornado moved through Monroe, Cumberland, and Russell Counties in Kentucky along a 60-mile path. The town of Tompkinsville, KY was the hardest hit with 18 people killed. Overall, 36 people lost their lives.

1966: Record snows fell in the northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, including 3.1 inches at Pittsburgh and 5.4 inches at Youngstown Ohio. Snow also extended across parts of New York State with eight inches reported in the southern Adirondacks.

1990: The 1990 Machilipatnam Cyclone was the worst disaster to affect Southern India since the 1977 Andhra Pradesh cyclone. This category four on the Saffir-Simpson scale had a severe impact on India, with over 967 people reported having been killed. Over 100,000 animals also died in the cyclone with the total cost of damages to crops estimated at over \$600 million (1990 USD).

1995: An F3 tornado produced \$10 million in damages along its 40-mile path across central Illinois. The tornado caused significant damage in Cantrall where three homes were destroyed, 10 had significant damage, and 11 had minor damage. The roof and interior of a grade school suffered extensive damage. The tornado passed about 2 miles southeast of the new NWS Office in Lincoln, Illinois.

1966 - Record snows fell in the northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, including 3.1 inches at Pittsburgh PA and 5.4 inches at Youngstown OH. Snow also extended across parts of New York State, with eight inches reported in the southern Adirondacks. (The Weather Channel)

1977 - A late season snowstorm hit parts of Pennsylvania, New York State, and southern and central New England. Heavier snowfall totals included 27 inches at Slide Mountain NY and 20 inches at Norwalk CT. At Boston it was the first May snow in 107 years of records. The heavy wet snow caused extensive damage to trees and power lines. The homes of half a million persons were without power following the storm. (9th-10th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1985 - Lightning struck some trees about 150 yards away from a home in Alabama, and followed the driveway to the home. The charge went through the house and burned all the electrical outlets, ruined appliances, and blasted a hole in the concrete floor of the basement. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Unseasonably warm weather spread from the Pacific Northwest to the Upper Mississippi Valley. Fifteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. It was the fourth day of record warmth for Eugene OR and Salem OR. (The National Weather Summary)





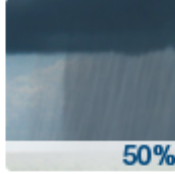
1988 - A massive cyclone in the central U.S. produced severe thunderstorms from eastern Texas to the Upper Ohio Valley. A strong (F-3) tornado ripped through Middleboro KY causing more than 22 million dollars damage. Thunderstorms in east central Texas produced hail three and a half inches in diameter at Groesbeck, and near Fairfield. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front in the south central U.S. produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 62 mph at Mira LA, and during the morning hours drenched Stuttgart AR with five inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the central U.S. during the evening hours, mainly from southeastern Missouri to southwestern Indiana. Severe thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes, including two strong (F-2) tornadoes in southern Illinois. Strong thunderstorm winds gusted to 85 mph at Orient IL, and to 100 mph at West Salem. Thunderstorms drenched northeastern Illinois with up to 4.50 inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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| Today | Tonight | Friday | Friday Night | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Mostly Sunny | Mostly Clear | Sunny | Partly Cloudy then Slight Chance Showers | Chance Showers and Breezy |
| High: 56 °F | Low: 30 °F | High: 64 °F | Low: 44 °F | High: 60 °F |

NWS ABERDEEN

WARMING & DRYING

| | |
|--|---|
| TODAY Decreasing Clouds  HIGHS: 52 to 56° | FRIDAY Partly Cloudy  HIGHS: 59 to 66° |
|--|---|

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
Aberdeen, SD 5/9/2019 4:52 AM

WEATHER.GOV/ABR

Published on: 05/09/2019 at 5:56AM

High pressure builds in today bringing drier and somewhat warmer weather through Friday.

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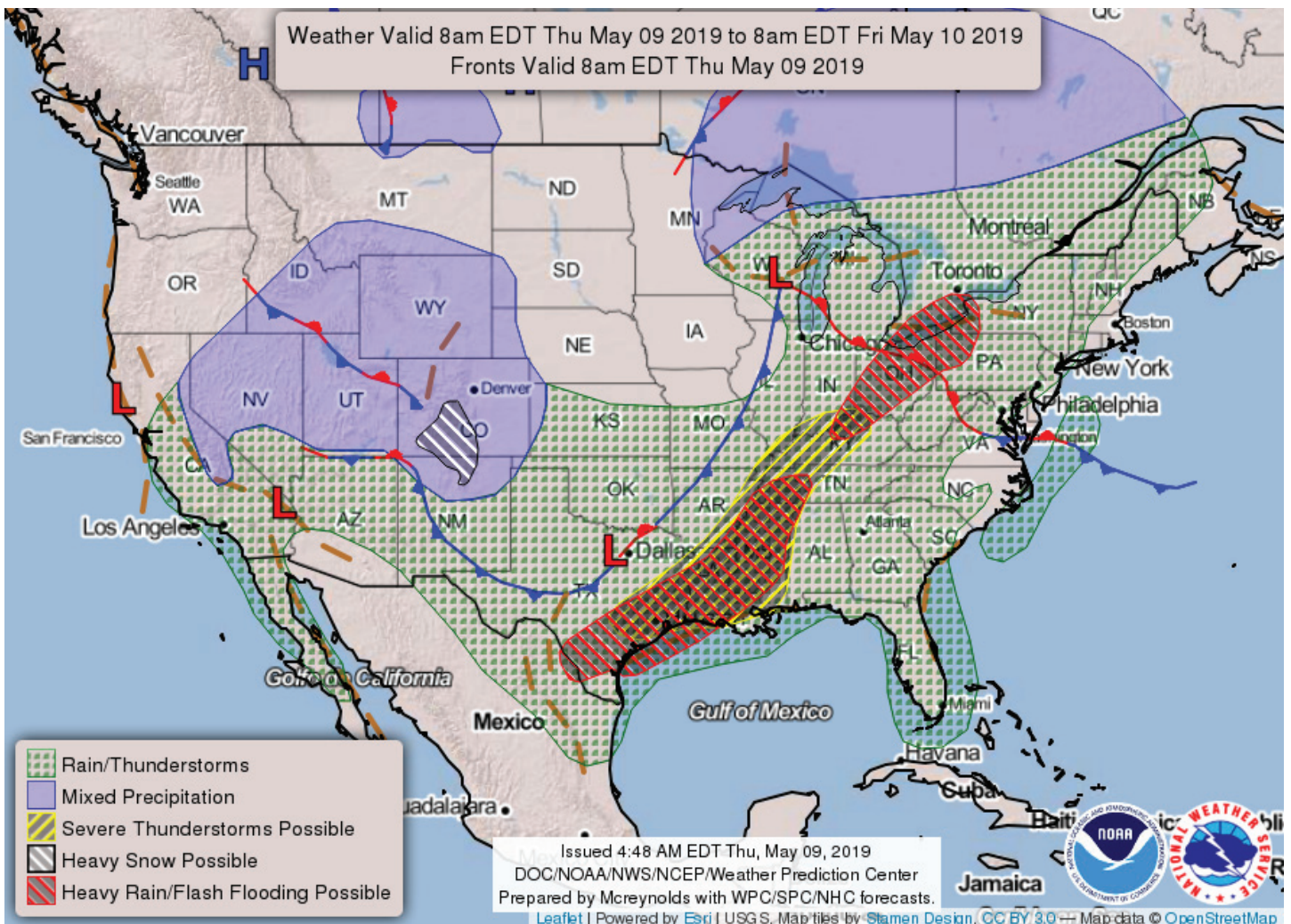
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 46
Low Outside Temp: 42
High Gust: 19
Precip: 0.17

Today's Info

Record High: 93° in 1992
Record Low: 21° in 1966
Average High: 67°F
Average Low: 42°F
Average Precip in May.: 0.81
Precip to date in May.: 0.45
Average Precip to date: 4.84
Precip Year to Date: 5.14
Sunset Tonight: 8:50 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:10 a.m.



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CHOOSE WISELY!

God created us to live in relationships with others. In fact, it is difficult for many to go through a day without speaking to someone about something. Friends are very important and can bring good things to life. However, the opposite can also be true. Some friendships bring healing, help and hope into our lives while others bring us trouble, turmoil and tragedy.

No doubt Solomon had his share of friendships that were not what he expected and brought the unwanted and unexpected into his life. So, he issued us a warning: A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Righteous in the Old Testament always refers to meeting Gods standards of what is right and just. If our relationship with God is as He wants it to be, then we must be cautious about our relationships with others. Unfortunately, being close friends with a person whom we admire and respect, but who has no time or concern for godly things is very dangerous. The influence that person has on our life can lead us astray and destroy us. That is why we must be cautious. Our relationship with God is more important than any relationship with any other person.

But how cautious are we to be? Very! The meaning of that word includes duties like instigate, spy out or search out. How foolish, some might say. Not really. If we want the best God has to offer us, we must be cautious.

Prayer: Lord, may we guard our relationship with You and strengthen it through reading Your Word and prayer. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 12:26 A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

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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 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

Shots fired into Sioux Falls house; no one injured

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police are investigating an incident in which shots were fired into a house near a middle school.

Officers responded to the scene about 1 a.m. Thursday and found several bullet holes in the home. Authorities didn't say if anyone had been inside at the time, but they did say no one had been injured. The investigation is continuing.

Spring planting well behind average pace in South Dakota

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Spring planting is about one-fifth done in South Dakota but still well behind the average pace.

The Agriculture Department says in its weekly crop report that 19% of the spring wheat crop is seeded, and 16% of oats are planted. The five-year average for both crops is 76%.

Topsoil moisture supplies statewide remain rated 100% adequate to surplus, and subsoil moisture is still 99% in those categories.

The state's winter wheat crop is rated 4% poor, 39% fair, 53% good and 4% excellent. Pasture and range conditions are rated mostly fair to good.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

09-15-18-32-34

(nine, fifteen, eighteen, thirty-two, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$355,000

Lotto America

14-17-19-25-34, Star Ball: 4, ASB: 5

(fourteen, seventeen, nineteen, twenty-five, thirty-four; Star Ball: four; ASB: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$19.48 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$295 million

Powerball

01-45-53-64-66, Powerball: 3, Power Play: 3

(one, forty-five, fifty-three, sixty-four, sixty-six; Powerball: three; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$215 million

Pence coming to Minnesota to plug trade with Mexico, Canada

By DAVE KOLPACK Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence is rolling into the Midwest to tout the administration's new North American trade agreement, while back in Washington President Donald Trump tries to salvage a transformative trade deal with China.

Pence was scheduled Thursday to visit a Minnesota farmstead near Fargo, where Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Papp will be among agriculture leaders participating in a discussion about the agreement that awaits action in Congress. Papp says his first question will be whether Pence can help close the deal, which he believes will require the Trump administration to lift steel and aluminum tariffs on U.S. allies.

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"Tariffs are no more than a tax at the border," Papp said. "It's killing us in agriculture."

When Pence wraps up his meeting at R & J Johnson Farms in Glyndon, he will head to St. Paul and give a speech to workers at Gerdau Ameristeel, one of the mills that Trump's tariffs are meant to help. Papp, for one, realizes the dichotomy.

"We're a unique state," he said, referring to Minnesota's agriculture and mining industries. "We're going to have to work together and get this done as soon as possible."

U.S. Rep. Pete Stauber, a Republican whose district includes northeast Minnesota's Iron Range, said the steel tariffs have stopped countries like China from dumping steel into the market, noting that U.S. shipments went up 5 percent last year while steel imports dropped by 4 million tons. At the same time, he said the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, will allow farmers to export more products to Canada.

"President Trump and his administration is not trying to pit the farmers against the steel workers or the manufacturers against the steel workers at all," Stauber said. "Our Minnesota farmers not only feed our Minnesotans and this country, they also feed the world and we want to make sure that we give them the opportunity to move their products across this globe in a free and fair way."

Robert Kudrle, an international trade specialist at the University of Minnesota, said it's "tricky business" for Pence to be selling a package that includes a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum. The Mexicans and Canadians don't like it, nor do most Republicans in Congress, Kudrle said.

"The fact that it is still there is something (Pence) can talk to the steelworkers about," said Kudrle, who added that some of his audiences have no clue about tariffs because they were "kind of a thing of the past until a few years ago."

Oddly enough, Kudrle said, most of the USMCA is "really not very different" from the original NAFTA deal that "the president said was the worst agreement ever signed."

Brandon Wipf, a soybean farmer from Huron, South Dakota, said he's happy the administration is continuing to push passage of the USMCA. However, he said the steel and aluminum tariffs are bad for farmers because they have stalled the deal in Congress and artificially inflated prices on farm equipment, grain bins and other agricultural products.

"Farmers are really getting it on both ends, both in terms of our trade markets and the expenses incurred trying to produce them," Wipf said. "Trump is not eager to change that."

Randy Richards, a farmer in Hope, North Dakota, and member of a local bank board, said because of the administration's trade policy many producers can't pay for day-to-day operations so they're borrowing more money, carrying a larger debt load and paying more interest.

"How it affects me and how it affects my neighbors is everybody's pushing the limit on what they can afford to borrow," Richards said.

Nevada senators, energy chief to see plutonium holding site

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Nevada's U.S. senators and Energy Secretary Rick Perry plan to visit a site where the federal government is handling weapons-grade plutonium shipped to the state from South Carolina.

A Nevada National Security Site spokesman said Wednesday the Friday tour of the Device Assembly Facility and briefings involving Democratic Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen will be closed to the media and public.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reports Nuclear National Security Administration chief Lisa Gordon-Hagerty will also be on the tour.

Cortez Masto announced the visit last week when she said Perry pledged the federal government would begin in 2021 to remove the highly radioactive material from the former national nuclear proving ground 100 miles (161 kilometers) north of Las Vegas.

Cortez Masto says Perry also promised no more plutonium from the Savannah River Site would be moved into Nevada.

Security forces at Ellsworth take on challenges at the base

By ARIELLE ZIONTS Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Service members are trained to follow strict rules and act with honor. But like civilians, they too can make mistakes.

"You're going to have people that do unfortunately break the law," federal officer Robert Rybak told the Rapid City Journal as he recently drove his patrol car around Ellsworth Air Force Base.

When crimes happen at Ellsworth, people are cited or arrested by officers like Rybak who are specifically assigned to the base. About 160 military police (MPs) and civilian federal officers — jointly called security forces — have jurisdiction not just over airmen, but all of the approximately 7,500 people who live and work at Ellsworth and any visitors.

MPs can serve on U.S. bases or overseas ones while federal officers can only work in the U.S., said Rybak, a 47-year-old Rapid City resident. Having both kinds of police ensures "there's never a gap or a lapse, if you will, in the protection of Ellsworth Air Force Base."

Security forces on the base do "the same exact thing" a police officer in Rapid City might do, such as conducting traffic stops, dealing with loud noise complaints, and responding to crimes such as shoplifting and domestic violence, Rybak said. "There's no boundaries here, we get subjected to the same kinds of things that off-base does."

Some crimes are unique to military bases, such as unauthorized people entering, damaging or taking items from secure areas, Rybak said. People also sometimes steal military-related items such as an airplane part. If someone steals a computer in Rapid City, Rybak said, it's treated as a theft, but on base, it's also treated as a security threat since it could contain classified information.

Security forces also have access to different technology than other police officers. When officers or deputies in Rapid city chase after a suspect, they have to rely on cornering the suspect, hitting them or laying down spikes in the direction the car is traveling in. On base, people fleeing in cars are confined by fences and can be stopped by guards deploying yellow metal barriers at the entrances.

A major difference between policing on and off base is that federal rather than state law is the primary law on base, Rybak said. Civilians arrested on base are tried at the federal court while airmen go through the military court on base. The airmen are provided a defense lawyer by the base or can hire a private attorney. They can be detained at the base's jail before trial and serve their sentence there if it's less than a year. Those with longer punishments are sent to a federal prison. Airmen convicted of crimes are usually not allowed to return to work.

The security forces headquarters at Ellsworth looks much like any other public safety complex with a dispatch center, offices, technology for fingerprinting and conducting background checks, interview rooms, lockers, arms and ammunition storage and the jail.

Three men — one in pre-trial detention and others serving sentences for drug possession and stealing military property — sat in the small jail watching TV. The jail, which Rybak said is never at its maximum capacity of eight people, also has cards and workout equipment for the inmates.

A unique part of the headquarters is its supply room, which has gear for officers and MPs serving on base, but also special protective equipment for MPs deploying overseas. Some MPs from Ellsworth are currently serving six-month deployments in the Middle East, said Jordan Giliam, an airman who oversees equipment and vehicles.

To become an MP, service members complete basic training and attend security forces school for eight weeks, Rybak said. There, they learn how to police on U.S. bases but also how to prepare for policing in overseas combat zones. Civilian officers must pass a background check and physical test before attending a federal police academy, also for eight weeks. Once security forces are assigned to a base, they receive local training and undergo yearly drills and evaluations.

Most of the training is similar to off-base police training, Rybak said, but security forces also study scenarios that are more likely to occur on a military base, such as car bombs like the one that targeted Travis Air Force Base in California last year.

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Rybak has experience as a federal officer, MP and off-base officer. After joining the Air Force in 1989, he served three years as an MP canine handler at Ellsworth before serving 10 more years in other states and South Korea. After leaving the military, he was an officer with the Las Vegas Police Department and then a trooper with South Dakota Highway Patrol. He became a federal officer two years ago after retiring from Highway Patrol.

"The biggest thrill is that in a way, I'm kind of back in the Air Force serving my country," Rybak said. "I mean to me that's kind of cool. I may not be active duty, but I'm basically back on Ellsworth assisting my previous brothers."

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

4 face charges in alleged riot at North Dakota youth prison

MANDAN, N.D. (AP) — Authorities have charged four teenagers with multiple felonies in adult court for what they described as a riot last year at North Dakota's youth prison.

The four are accused of assaulting staff while trying to escape on Jan. 28, 2018, from the Youth Correctional Center outside of Mandan. Five male workers in supervisory or security roles received medical attention for minor injuries and did not miss any work.

Charges against the youths range from assault to terrorizing to escape.

Elijah Barse, of Rapid City, South Dakota, appeared in court Tuesday and had bond set at \$100,000, in part because he is considered a flight risk, The Bismarck Tribune reported. Court documents don't list an attorney for him.

Gavin Johnson and Starson Buckles, both of Mandan, pleaded not guilty earlier and are set for trial July 10. Julian Wolf, of Bismarck, pleaded guilty in March and awaits sentencing.

All of the boys are in their upper teens, according to court documents. They were residents of a housing unit for male juveniles considered high risk or high maintenance, according to the state Corrections Department.

This story has been corrected to show that Barse appeared in court Tuesday, not Monday, and that the incident happened in 2018, not 2019.

Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

Brown County Jail inmate's death apparent suicide

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — An official of the South Dakota attorney general's office says a Brown County Jail inmate apparently killed himself.

Twenty-eight-year-old Mitchell Morrison of Aberdeen was found unresponsive in the jail in Aberdeen with a noose around his neck Thursday night. Morrison died three days later at a Sioux Falls hospital.

Tim Bormann, chief of staff for South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg, told the Aberdeen News that the death appears to have been a suicide.

The state Division of Criminal Investigation is investigating. Autopsy results are pending. No foul play was suspected in the death.

Morrison pleaded guilty in Day County in April to a felony drug crime and was sentenced to serve two months in jail.

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

Brown County Jail inmate's death apparent suicide

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — An official of the South Dakota attorney general's office says a Brown County Jail inmate apparently killed himself.

Twenty-eight-year-old Mitchell Morrison of Aberdeen was found unresponsive in the jail in Aberdeen with a noose around his neck Thursday night. Morrison died three days later at a Sioux Falls hospital.

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

Ag census finds number of South Dakota farms dropping

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — The latest federal census of agriculture finds the number of farms in South Dakota has dropped.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2017 census, South Dakota's farmland was worked by fewer farming operations from 2012 to 2017. The census is conducted every five years.

Statewide, more than 43 million acres were operated as farms. But there were 2,000 fewer farming operations in the state in 2017 than in 2012.

The Aberdeen News reports the biggest drop came from farms operating between 10 and 1,000 acres. That number dropped by 1,850 over those five years.

Nate Franzen, president of the Ag Banking Division at First Dakota National Bank based in Yankton, cites several reasons why farming operations are going out of business, including retirement, financial struggles and other business opportunities.

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

Sioux Falls day care worker accused of assaulting 2-year-old

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls day care worker faces assault charges for allegedly hitting a 2-year-old in the face with her knee.

Twenty-six-year-old Alysha Marie Lewis is charged with aggravated assault and abuse or cruelty to a minor under 7.

The Argus Leader reports Lewis was arrested on a warrant. She's been in jail since late April on a \$25,000 cash-only bond.

According to an affidavit, the Department of Social Services notified police on April 25 of an injury to a child at the day care.

The boy had a "deep laceration" on his face. The affidavit says a manager at the day care identified Lewis as the person who "caused the victim's injury."

Lewis is due back in court in August. A message for her attorney was not immediately returned Wednesday.

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

Feds, tribes meet after abuse probe of reservation doctor

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A White House task force is holding a consultation meeting with tribal leaders in New Mexico to address systematic breakdowns within the federal Indian Health Service to prevent child sex abuse.

A U.S. Attorney's Office spokeswoman says the meeting is planned for Wednesday afternoon in Albuquerque. It follows the Trump administration's announcement of the task force, which officials say was established to investigate how federal workers failed in preventing Stanley Patrick Weber from sexually abusing Native American children.

Weber was an IHS pediatrician for more than 20 years.

A federal jury in Montana found Weber guilty last year of sexually abusing two boys on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in the 1990s.

He also has been accused of abusing four boys after he was assigned to South Dakota's Pine Ridge Reservation in 1995.

Bella Pregnancy Center director reflects on 30-year career

By KAIJA SWISHER Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — During her tenure, the organization has been housed at four different locations and changed its name three times. The work, however, remains just as rewarding for Roxie Johnson, executive director of Bella Pregnancy Resource Center in Spearfish, as when she started more than 30 years ago.

"I love working with the women here at Bella, with my co-workers and the staff and volunteers, but the clients are really what keep me here. Everyone's unique; everyone has their own story," she told the Black Hills Pioneer, describing that it was the compassion of the organization that drew her to become a volunteer client advocate in 1988, before becoming the executive director of the organization the next year. "They (clients) have great value, they have great worth, that's how we view them when they come in: We just want to be loving and compassionate when they come in and educate them and give them tools so that they can be good moms and dads if that's what they choose to do."

Johnson, who grew up in Wyoming, moved with her family to the Black Hills during her senior year of high school, and after getting married, she and her husband, John, moved to Spearfish in 1979. The couple has four grown children and nine grandchildren, and Johnson said that her connection to Bella began when she was babysitting for the former director of the organization who encouraged her to get involved. She took the volunteer training and said she was "hooked" from the first night. After serving as a volunteer for a year, she became the executive director in 1989.

"Women have unplanned pregnancies all the time. Thirty years ago, it was more of a stigma," Johnson said.

The faith-based organization's mission is "Empowering women in unplanned pregnancies to make informed decisions." Originally, the organization was called Northern Hills Crisis Pregnancy Center, but those involved wanted women to know the organization serves anyone who has a pregnancy need — not just people in crisis — so the name was changed to Northern Hills Pregnancy Care Center, Johnson said, and eventually to Bella, which means "beautiful" in Italian. The organization's website states, "At Bella, we believe that every woman is a woman of beauty and great worth. No matter what your circumstances are, we believe you are a woman of value who is capable of making your own decisions. Bella exists to be a resource for women and men with pregnancy related needs."

Johnson said that initially, the name was to be just the one word, Bella, but they found that when answering the telephone with, "Hello, this is Bella," people on the other end would assume that was the name of the person answering and would say "Hi, Bella!" so "pregnancy resource center" was added to the name.

Over 30 years, the organization's crisis intervention services have basically stayed the same, Johnson said. What has changed is that since 2008, Bella is now an early pregnancy medical facility, which means it offers pregnancy testing and ultrasound confirmation. Johnson explained that the organization does not take the place of a family physician or OB-GYN, who provide prenatal care; Bella is a place to start.

All services at Bella are free of charge, and in addition to crisis intervention and early pregnancy medical services, Bella offers "Earn While You Learn," a comprehensive parenting program that teaches about everything from pregnancy/pregnancy care, labor and delivery, how to care for the baby, etc., with lessons

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for parenting children up to age 12. Johnson said that not only do clients learn how to bathe a baby, they are also learning how to meet the needs — spiritual, emotional, and physical — of their children.

"It's an excellent program," she said.

As they work through the program, clients earn credit that they can redeem for the things that they need, such as clothing, diapers, wipes, cribs, strollers, car seats — almost anything baby-related.

The organization is staffed by five part-time employees and 12-15 volunteers at any one time, and clients come from around the area to find resources that can include medical providers to financial aid and beyond.

"We're a resource center, so this is a good place to start," Johnson said. "Bella's a good place to start for anyone who thinks they might be pregnant, whether they're in crisis or not. We serve all."

She added that the organization is locally supported; all of its funding comes from local sources, and its services are free of charge. Johnson said that Bella accepts donations and is always in need of things baby and maternity related. While they do accept some used items, they should be in like-new condition, and because of government regulations/etc., they are not able to take used cribs or car seats. Johnson said that diapers and wipes are the number-one item the organization goes through, and she added that while all diaper sizes are accepted, it is generally the larger sizes — size 3 and up — that they most often run out of.

Johnson offered the following advice to future parents: "Relax. Take it a day at a time," she said.

"We're here. We love serving the women of our community," she added, encouraging anyone in need of pregnancy services to check out Bella Pregnancy Center. "It's a place to start."

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

No thought for their own safety: Hero students disarm gunman

By KATHLEEN FOODY, P. SOLOMON BANDA and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

HIGHLANDS RANCH, Colo. (AP) — The three students who disarmed a gunman in a Colorado school shooting leapt up from their desks without a word and with no thought for their own safety when they spotted the gun, recounted one of the young men.

They slammed the teenager, a classmate of theirs, against the wall and struggled with him when shots rang out. Kendrick Castillo, who led the charge, slumped to the ground.

His close friend, Brendan Bialy, wrestled the gun away and called out to Castillo. There was no response, Bialy told a roomful of reporters on Wednesday as he recalled what happened the previous day at STEM School Highlands Ranch.

"Kendrick went out as a hero," Bialy said. "He was a foot away from the shooter and instead of running the opposite direction he ran toward it."

Authorities said the actions of Castillo, Bialy and Joshua Jones minimized the bloodshed from Tuesday's attack at the school south of Denver that wounded eight students along with killing the 18-year-old Castillo.

The injured includes Jones, who was shot twice, according to a statement released by his family.

Bialy acknowledged that he was scared, but he said he wasn't going to cower for shooters he repeatedly called cowards.

"They lost," he said of the shooters. "They completely and utterly lost to good people."

The attackers were identified by law enforcement officials as 18-year-old Devon Erickson and a 16-year-old who prosecutors identified as Maya McKinney but whose attorney said uses male pronouns and the name Alec. The two allegedly walked into the STEM School Highlands Ranch through an entrance without metal detectors and opened fire in two classrooms.

Because the attack happened only miles from Columbine High School and just weeks after the shooting's 20th anniversary, questions quickly arose about whether it was inspired by the 1999 massacre. But investigators offered no immediate motive.

A member of the school's robotics club and a relentless tinkerer, Castillo had an infectious smile and gentle sense of humor, according to friends. He worked part-time at a local manufacturing company that

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had offered him a job after an internship because he was such a standout employee.

"To find he went down as a hero, I'm not surprised. That's exactly who Kendrick was," said Rachel Short, president of the company, Baccara.

Cecilia Bedard, 19, had known Castillo since elementary school and said he was always friendly, modest and excited to help people. He made a point of always joining his father at Knights of Columbus fundraisers and bingo nights.

"He was amazing," Bedard said. "He was honestly the sweetest kid I ever met. Never said a mean joke."

The security guard who detained the second armed suspect was employed by Boss High Level Protection, a company started by a former SWAT team leader who responded to the Columbine shooting. The owner, Grant Whitus, told The Associated Press the security guard is a former Marine who ran to the area of the shootings and confronted one of the armed students in a hallway.

The guard drew his weapon and apprehended the person, Whitus said.

"He doesn't even realize how many lives he saved by stopping a school shooting," Whitus said.

Both suspects were students at the school, and they were not previously known to authorities, Spurlock said.

Erickson made his first court appearance Wednesday and kept his head down. His black hair, streaked with purple dye, covered his face as he nodded in response to most of District Court Judge Theresa Slade's questions. At one point, the judge requested a verbal answer to whether he had any questions about the proceedings. Erickson simply replied "No."

McKinney, who has a short brown haircut, made eye contact with the judge and answered questions in a clear but quiet voice, saying "Yes, your honor" and "No, your honor."

District attorney George Brauchler said he has not decided whether to file adult charges but added that McKinney is old enough to be charged as an adult without a judge's review.

Formal charges were expected to be filed by Friday. Brauchler said he could not discuss any motive or weapons used in the attack.

Brauchler said the community remains resilient in the face of multiple shootings, including the 1999 Columbine school massacre, the 2012 theater shooting in the Denver suburb of Aurora and the 2013 shooting at Arapahoe High School.

The attacks are "aberrant acts" although they might seem otherwise to the rest of the world, he said. "Who we are is a kind, compassionate, caring people, and this does not define us."

Riccardi reported from Denver. Associated Press writers Dan Elliott and Colleen Slevin in Denver and AP researchers Monika Mathur in Washington and Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

N. Korea fires 2 suspected missiles in possible new warning

By KIM TONG-HYUNG, HYUNG-JIN KIM and FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea fired two suspected short-range missiles on Thursday, South Korea's military said, its second weapons launch in five days and a possible warning that nuclear disarmament talks with Washington could be in danger.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the weapons flew 420 kilometers (260 miles) and 270 kilometers (167 miles), respectively. It said it is working with the United States to determine more details, such as the type of weapon that was fired.

South Korea's military said earlier that at least one projectile was launched from the Sino-ri area of North Pyongan province, an area known to have one of North Korea's oldest missile bases where a brigade operates mid-range Rodong missiles. It later said the launch was from the nearby town of Kusong, where North Korea conducted its first successful flight test of its Hwasong-12 intermediate range missile in May 2017.

Kusong is also home to missile test facilities that were critical to the development of North Korea's solid-fuel Pukguksong-2, which was successfully flight-tested for the first time in February 2017, in the North's first missile test after President Donald Trump took office.

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The launch came as U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun is visiting South Korea, and hours after the North described its firing of rocket artillery and an apparent short-range ballistic missile on Saturday as a regular and defensive military exercise. North Korea also ridiculed South Korea for criticizing those launches.

South Korea's presidential Blue House said in a statement that the North Korean launch on Thursday was "very concerning" and detrimental to efforts to improve inter-Korean ties and ease military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

There was no immediate comment from the United States.

Some analysts have said that if North Korea resumes testing the kind of longer-range banned ballistic weapons that it fired in unusually large numbers in 2017 — when many feared a U.S.-North Korea standoff could end in war — it may signal that North Korea is turning away from diplomacy.

The tensions in 2017 were followed by a surprising diplomatic outreach by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in 2018, when he attended summits with the South Korean and Chinese presidents and with Trump. But North Korea has not received what it wants most from its summitry: relief from punitive sanctions imposed over its nuclear and missile programs.

A summit earlier this year between Trump and Kim ended in failure, with the United States saying that North Korea was not offering to take enough disarmament steps in return for the widespread sanctions relief it sought.

Just ahead of the Thursday launch, senior defense officials from South Korea, the United States and Japan met in Seoul to discuss North Korea's earlier launches on Saturday and other security issues. Details from the meeting weren't immediately announced.

Experts who analyzed photos from North Korean state media say it's clear that the North tested a new solid-fuel missile on Saturday that appears to be modeled after Russia's Iskander short-range ballistic missile system.

With the consecutive weapons launches, North Korea is pressuring South Korea to turn away from the United States and support North Korea's position more strongly, said Du Hyeogn Cha, a visiting scholar at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Following the collapse of the Trump-Kim meeting, North Korea demanded that South Korea proceed with joint economic projects that have been held back by U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

By firing weapons that directly threaten South Korea but not the U.S. mainland or its Pacific territories, North Korea also appears to be testing how far Washington will tolerate its bellicosity without actually causing the nuclear negotiations to collapse, Cha said.

"To the United States, the North is saying 'don't push me into a corner.' To South Korea, the North is saying the inter-Korean peace agreements could become nothing if Seoul fails to coax major concessions from the United States on behalf of the North," Cha said.

South Korean and U.S. officials have described what North Korea fired Saturday as "projectiles," a broader term that includes both missiles and artillery pieces. This could be an effort to keep diplomacy alive as U.N. sanctions bar North Korea from engaging in any ballistic activity.

Some observers say North Korea may fire more missiles, including medium-range ones, to increase the pressure on the United States. Cha said North Korea isn't likely to fire longer-range missiles, such as its Hwasong-12 intermediate-range missiles and Hwasong-14 and 15 intercontinental ballistic missiles, unless it intends to completely abandon diplomacy since it is certain to invite new U.N. sanctions.

North Korea last conducted a major missile test in November 2017 when it flight-tested the Hwasong-15 and demonstrated the potential capability to reach deep into the U.S. mainland. Experts think North Korea still needs more tests to make its ICBMs viable.

Kim in a New Year's speech said he hopes to continue his nuclear summitry with Trump, but would seek a "new way" if the United States persists with sanctions and pressure against North Korea.

Following the collapse of his second summit with Trump in February, Kim said he is open to a third meeting, but set the end of the year as a deadline for Washington to offer mutually acceptable terms for

an agreement.

US, China wield threats going into high-stakes trade talks

By PAUL WISEMAN and JOE McDONALD AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. and Chinese negotiators are to resume trade talks Thursday just hours before the United States is set to raise tariffs on Chinese imports in a dramatic escalation of tensions between the world's two biggest economies.

In Beijing, Chinese officials said they will retaliate if President Donald Trump goes ahead with more tariff hikes, adding to the heated rhetoric from both sides that was shaking stock markets around the world.

The talks starting up again in Washington were thrown into disarray this week after top U.S. trade negotiator Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin accused the Chinese of reneging on commitments they'd made earlier. In response to the alleged backsliding, the United States is raising tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports from 10% to 25% at 12:01 a.m. Eastern time Friday.

The two countries are sparring over U.S. allegations that China steals technology and pressures American companies into handing over trade secrets, part of an aggressive campaign to turn Chinese companies into world leaders in robotics, electric cars and other advanced industries.

The setback was unexpected. Through late last week, Trump administration officials were suggesting that negotiators were making steady progress.

U.S. officials say they got an inkling of China's second thoughts about prior commitments in talks last week in Beijing, but that the backsliding became even more apparent in exchanges over the weekend. They wouldn't identify the specific issues involved.

On Sunday, President Donald Trump took to Twitter to express frustration with the pace of the talks. "The Trade Deal with China continues, but too slowly, as they attempt to renegotiate. No!" Trump tweeted, threatening to raise the tariffs. He also said he'd go further and slap 25% tariffs on another \$325 billion in Chinese imports, covering everything China sells the United States.

U.S. officials are insisting that any deal be strictly enforced so that China lives up to its promises — something they say Beijing has repeatedly failed to do in the past. Also unclear is what would happen to the U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports. China wants them lifted; the U.S. wants to keep tariffs as leverage to pressure the Chinese to comply with any agreement.

Hours before the talks were set to resume in Washington, the Chinese government said it would retaliate if the U.S. tariff increases take effect. It did not provide details, but said it had made "all necessary preparations," suggesting it might be bracing for worsening conflict.

"If the U.S. tariff measures are carried out, China will have to take necessary countermeasures," said a Commerce Ministry statement. The spokesman, Gao Feng, said China has the "determination and ability to defend its own interests."

The volley of threats reignited jitters about global economic growth, prompting another round of losses on world stock markets.

If tariff hikes go ahead, "risks of a financial market collapse, extreme risk aversion, and sharp slowdown in global growth will spike," said Philip Wee of DBS Group in a report.

In early trading, London's benchmark FTSE 100 index dropped 0.5% and France's CAC 40 lost 1.3%. Hong Kong's main benchmark skidded 2.4% and the Shanghai Composite Index lost 1.5%. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.9%

Chinese authorities already have extended retaliation beyond imports by targeting operations of American companies in China. Regulators have slowed down customs clearance for their shipments and delayed issuing licenses in finance and other industries.

The Chinese government has an array of other weapons including launching tax, anti-monopoly or other investigations that can hamper company operations.

Chinese leaders see industry development directed by the Communist Party as a path to prosperity and global influence. They deny their plans violate Beijing's trade commitments but have offered to change

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details that provoke the most foreign opposition.

"China is not afraid of conflict," said the Global Times, a newspaper published by the ruling Communist Party's People's Daily that is known for its nationalist tone. It said Beijing has measures in place to "minimize losses" for its companies.

"Mentally and materially, China is much better prepared than its U.S. counterpart," the newspaper said.

Despite such bluster, factories in Chinese coastal regions that serve the U.S. market have been devastated. Industries including electronics that the Communist Party is promoting as China's economic future have suffered declines of up to 40% in sales to the United States.

That has increased pressure on President Xi Jinping, who political analysts say faces criticism within the ruling party that he has failed to manage Trump.

Chinese exports to the United States plunged 13% from a year ago in April and are off 9.7% since the start of 2019. Total Chinese exports sank 2.7% in April, far weaker than forecasts for growth in low single digits. Imports of American goods, meanwhile, tumbled 26%.

McDonald reported from Beijing.

Matters of politics, race accompany Red Sox to White House

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — For decades, championship teams have visited the White House in a moment of ritual and tradition. Athletic excellence is celebrated, lame jokes are told and the president is given yet another jersey bearing his name. Under President Donald Trump, though, the visits often have become politicized, featuring athlete protests and, in the case of the Boston Red Sox, raising questions about a racial divide.

The Red Sox, who steamrolled to a World Series crown last October, are poised to visit the White House on Thursday. Team manager Alex Cora announced last week he would not attend, citing his frustration with the administration's efforts to help his native Puerto Rico recover from a devastating hurricane. Nearly a dozen players, including American League MVP Mookie Betts, have said they will also skip the ceremony.

All those bypassing the White House are players of color. Every white player on the team — as well as J.D. Martinez, who is of Cuban descent — was expected to attend.

The Red Sox have stressed that the clubhouse has not been divided on the issue; no player or coach was pressured to go, and players who have chosen not to attend have stressed there is no ill will toward those who will shake Trump's hand.

Pitcher Eduardo Rodriguez, a Venezuelan native, offered his perspective before the team's game Wednesday in Baltimore: "For me, it's not a big deal. It's your decision. Make a choice. I'll respect it. I don't think that's a big deal. If you want to go or you don't want to go, that's your decision."

A championship team's coach rarely, if ever, misses the White House visit, a tradition that began in earnest in 1924 when Calvin Coolidge invited the Washington Senators. Cora had considered attending Thursday's White House event to call attention to the plight of those in Puerto Rico, where it is estimated that Hurricane Maria caused nearly 3,000 deaths. But in the end, he opted not to go.

"Unfortunately, we are still struggling, still fighting," Cora said in a statement. "Some people still lack basic necessities, others remain without electricity and many homes and schools are in pretty bad shape almost a year and a half after Hurricane Maria struck. I've used my voice on many occasions so that Puerto Ricans are not forgotten, and my absence is no different. As such, at this moment, I don't feel comfortable celebrating in the White House."

The racial disparity between the players who are attending and staying away received attention after a tweet from pitcher David Price, an African American who said he would not attend. Price retweeted long-time Boston sports columnist Steve Buckley, who had noted, "Basically, it's the white Sox who'll be going."

Price, who has nearly 1.8 million followers on Twitter, added, "I just feel like more than 38k should see this tweet," a reference to Buckley's Twitter following of roughly 38,000. But while the retweet set off

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speculation that Price was angry about the players attending, the pitcher later said he was calling out Buckley's observation, telling the Boston Globe that the columnist's post "was an insensitive tweet that needs to be seen by more people."

Those around the Red Sox locker room stressed that a player's decision to attend was a personal choice and not, in many cases, political.

"Politically, it didn't matter who was in the White House. If I have an opportunity to go to the White House and meet the president, I'm going to go," relief pitcher Heath Hembree said Wednesday. "Nobody tried to persuade me. They have their reasons why not to go."

For some players, it may be their only chance for a White House invite. It also reflects a larger trend across baseball: A number of players hail from Trump-friendly states like Texas and Florida, while the sport has also seen a surge in Latino players and a decline in African Americans.

Having also won World Series titles in 2004, 2007 and 2013, the Red Sox — who will also visit wounded veterans at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Thursday — have been honored at the White House under both Republican and Democratic presidents. And players on previous teams in all major sports have skipped White House visits under previous administrations. Basketball legend Larry Bird, famously, missed the Boston Celtics' White House visit in 1984 by saying of Ronald Reagan, "If the president wants to see me, he knows where to find me."

But the events have taken on sharp political overtones since Trump took office.

When the New England Patriots visited in 2017, Trump's first year in office, far fewer players attended than when the franchise won a title under Barack Obama. After several players on the Philadelphia Eagles and Golden State Warriors publicly declared that they would skip White House ceremonies, Trump disin-vited the teams. Trump has also instituted a new tradition for the ceremonies, scrapping gourmet meals in favor of offering plates of fast food to the athletes.

Moreover, the optics of the Red Sox visit are certain to receive additional scrutiny due to the history of racially charged moments for both the team and the city it calls home.

The Red Sox, infamously, held a failed tryout for Jackie Robinson before he broke the sport's color barrier. They were the last team in the major leagues to integrate. And an Elks Club in the team's former spring training home of Winter Haven, Florida, invited only white players to events, a practice that stopped only in the 1980s when black players complained.

Associated Press sports writers Jimmy Golen in Boston and David Ginsburg in Baltimore contributed to this report.

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Some House members considering taking a pay raise this year

By **ANDREW TAYLOR** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some senior House lawmakers, frustrated by a decade of frozen congressional salaries, are quietly exploring whether to accept an annual pay raise that they've shunned since Barack Obama was first president.

It's a longshot at best, requiring comity that's in short supply in a Capitol riven with partisanship.

More than two-thirds of House members have never gotten a pay raise as Congress has voted each year since 2009 to reject an annual cost-of-living adjustment that's due them under a 30-year-old reform measure. The optics for Democrats of restoring the COLA after Republican leaders killed it each year for eight years running are bad politically.

And President Donald Trump, feuding with Democratic lawmakers, could crush any effort to revive the pay raise by attacking Congress with a single tweet.

Still, housing costs in the Washington area are skyrocketing — most lawmakers maintain two homes — and the annual salary of \$174,000 doesn't go so far in the face of 10 years of inflation, not to speak of

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soaring college tuition and other costs. Concern is rising that some members are struggling to keep up. Had members taken the pay raises over the past decade, salaries would be in the range of \$208,000 or so.

"It's been more than a decade," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif. "I've got members who are leaving over this."

McCarthy says he's open to the idea but hasn't given it much attention.

But many rank-and-file lawmakers recoil when asked about taking their pay hike. The most recent foregone raise would have been \$4,000, and the estimated raise for next year would be in that ballpark.

"A salary increase for us? It's not very high on my radar and it'd be as popular as the plague," said Rep. Doug LaMalfa, R-Calif. "It'd show kind of a disconnect with the people."

A key force exploring the idea of reviving the member's COLA is No. 2 House Democrat Steny Hoyer of Maryland. It's been a pet issue of Hoyer's dating back to his involvement in an almost forgotten fight in the mid-1990s, and he played a central role in smoothing several pay hikes in the late 1990s and in the 2000s. He's discussed it with top Republicans, including McCarthy.

In a statement, Hoyer stressed that the pay freeze for lawmakers also caps top salaries for congressional staff.

"Congressional salaries should not limit those who can serve their country, either as a member of Congress or as congressional staff," Hoyer said. "After 10 consecutive years of pay freezes, staff from diverse backgrounds are increasingly shut out, leading Congress to lose bright, dedicated staffers who would like to continue in public service but have difficulty making ends meet."

The pay raise has come to light now because the annual appropriations process, which is usually the means of killing the COLA, is underway. The pay raise is delivered annually, based on inflation, unless lawmakers vote to overturn it. Democrats opted not to try to kill the pay raise in drafting the legislative branch spending bill, the vehicle addressing the topic in recent years, but aides say the pay raise could be nixed later on or in a different bill.

Leaving the issue out of the pending legislative funding bill "leaves the option open for a little bit longer to let discussions with members continue in case it materializes," said a senior House aide, who requested anonymity because the topic is so sensitive.

Hoyer says most Republicans fear the politics of the pay raise. The GOP wing men for his prior efforts, insiders like now-Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., have all moved on. He says he's mentioned the idea to House GOP Whip Steve Scalise of Louisiana, though Scalise demurred when approached by The Associated Press about the pay hike.

The COLA was established in a 1989 measure in which lawmakers gave up outside income from speeches for a big pay hike and the annual increase. Supporters included Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., then a new member of GOP leadership. But it soon unraveled in the 1990s in an arcane fight involving the Treasury Department appropriations bill that Hoyer then managed.

In the past, efforts to revive the COLA involved a nonaggression pact in which both parties agreed to not weaponize the issue. That required professional handling by top leaders in both parties and help from "old bull" lawmakers to orchestrate. Both sides would pony up the votes to defeat a procedural motion offered by a pay raise opponent, usually a politically endangered junior lawmaker, and the issue would soon disappear.

But Republicans with long memories still harbor hard feelings about a 2006 episode in which Democrats attacked Republicans over the pay raise in their successful campaign to take over the House.

The last pay raise occurred before tea party forces came to dominate GOP ranks. Twitter was in its infancy. It's also an issue that Democratic freshmen facing their first reelection might like to avoid.

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. US-CHINA TRADE TALKS IN 11TH HOUR

An increase in American tariffs on Chinese imports looms as the U.S. and China — the world's two biggest economies — continue sparring over trade.

2. POPE ISSUES A GROUNDBREAKING LAW

Francis will require all Catholic priests and nuns around the world to report clergy sexual abuse and cover-up by their superiors to church authorities.

3. CONTEMPT CITATION AGAINST BARR DEEPENS DISPUTE

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, whose House committee voted to hold the attorney general in contempt of Congress, denounces Trump's claim of executive privilege regarding the Mueller report.

4. NORTH KOREA FIRES 2 SUSPECTED MISSILES

Two suspected short-range missiles were fired from the country's western area, the second weapons launch in a week and a possible warning that nuclear disarmament talks could be in peril.

5. 'KENDRICK WENT OUT AS A HERO'

One of the three students who disarmed a gunman in a Colorado school shooting says they slammed the teenager against the wall and struggled with him. Kendrick Castillo, who led the charge, was killed.

6. WHAT IS SLIPPING THROUGH FACEBOOK'S WEB

A whistleblower's complaint to the U.S. government obtained by the AP alleges the social media company is exaggerating its success in removing extremist content.

7. ANTI-KURDISH PROTESTS IN SYRIA COULD ENDANGER US PLANS

Arab tribesmen in Deir el-Zour province are demanding better services, jobs and a bigger role in taking decisions in the predominantly Arab oil-rich and fertile region.

8. SALT BATTERY COULD HELP UTILITIES STORE HEAT

A German company and a Swedish startup are testing the use of salt to store heat, which accounts for more than half the power consumed in Germany, AP learns.

9. FTC URGED TO INVESTIGATE AMAZON'S ALEXA

A kids' version of the popular voice assistant won't forget what children tell it, even after parents try to delete the conversations, consumer advocates say.

10. WHO WON'T BE COMING TO WASHINGTON

Red Sox manager Alex Cora and nearly a dozen players will be skipping a White House visit to commemorate Boston's World Series victory.

Facebook auto-generates videos celebrating extremist images

By **DESMOND BUTLER** and **BARBARA ORTUTAY** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The animated video begins with a photo of the black flags of jihad. Seconds later, it flashes highlights of a year of social media posts: plaques of anti-Semitic verses, talk of retribution and a photo of two men carrying more jihadi flags while they burn the stars and stripes.

It wasn't produced by extremists; it was created by Facebook. In a clever bit of self-promotion, the social media giant takes a year of a user's content and auto-generates a celebratory video. In this case, the user called himself "Abdel-Rahim Moussa, the Caliphate."

"Thanks for being here, from Facebook," the video concludes in a cartoon bubble before flashing the company's famous "thumbs up."

Facebook likes to give the impression that it's staying ahead of extremists by taking down their posts, often before users even see them. But a confidential whistleblower's complaint to the Securities and Exchange Commission obtained by The Associated Press alleges the social media company has exaggerated its success. Even worse, it shows that the company is inadvertently making use of propaganda by militant groups to auto-generate videos and pages that could be used for networking by extremists.

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According to the complaint, over a five-month period last year, researchers monitored pages by users who affiliated themselves with groups the U.S. State Department has designated as terrorist organizations. In that period, 38% of the posts with prominent symbols of extremist groups were removed. In its own review, the AP found that as of this month, much of the banned content cited in the study — an execution video, images of severed heads, propaganda honoring martyred militants — slipped through the algorithmic web and remained easy to find on Facebook.

The complaint is landing as Facebook tries to stay ahead of a growing array of criticism over its privacy practices and its ability to keep hate speech, live-streamed murders and suicides off its service. In the face of criticism, CEO Mark Zuckerberg has spoken of his pride in the company's ability to weed out violent posts automatically through artificial intelligence. During an earnings call last month, for instance, he repeated a carefully worded formulation that Facebook has been employing.

"In areas like terrorism, for al-Qaida and ISIS-related content, now 99 percent of the content that we take down in the category our systems flag proactively before anyone sees it," he said. Then he added: "That's what really good looks like."

Zuckerberg did not offer an estimate of how much of total prohibited material is being removed.

The research behind the SEC complaint is aimed at spotlighting glaring flaws in the company's approach. Last year, researchers began monitoring users who explicitly identified themselves as members of extremist groups. It wasn't hard to document. Some of these people even list the extremist groups as their employers. One profile heralded by the black flag of an al-Qaida affiliated group listed his employer, perhaps facetiously, as Facebook. The profile that included the auto-generated video with the flag burning also had a video of al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri urging jihadi groups not to fight among themselves.

While the study is far from comprehensive — in part because Facebook rarely makes much of its data publicly available — researchers involved in the project say the ease of identifying these profiles using a basic keyword search and the fact that so few of them have been removed suggest that Facebook's claims that its systems catch most extremist content are not accurate.

"I mean, that's just stretching the imagination to beyond incredulity," says Amr Al Azm, one of the researchers involved in the project. "If a small group of researchers can find hundreds of pages of content by simple searches, why can't a giant company with all its resources do it?"

Al Azm, a professor of history and anthropology at Shawnee State University in Ohio, has also directed a group in Syria documenting the looting and smuggling of antiquities.

Facebook concedes that its systems are not perfect, but says it's making improvements.

"After making heavy investments, we are detecting and removing terrorism content at a far higher success rate than even two years ago," the company said in a statement. "We don't claim to find everything and we remain vigilant in our efforts against terrorist groups around the world."

But as a stark indication of how easily users can evade Facebook, one page from a user called "Nawan al-Farancia" has a header whose white lettering against a black background says in English "The Islamic State." The banner is punctuated with a photo of an explosive mushroom cloud rising from a city.

The profile should have caught the attention of Facebook — as well as counter-intelligence agencies. It was created in June 2018, lists the user as coming from Chechnya, once a militant hotspot. It says he lived in Heidelberg, Germany, and studied at a university in Indonesia. Some of the user's friends also posted militant content.

The page, still up in recent days, apparently escaped Facebook's systems, because of an obvious and long-running evasion of moderation that Facebook should be adept at recognizing: The letters were not searchable text but embedded in a graphic block. But the company says its technology scans audio, video and text — including when it is embedded — for images that reflect violence, weapons or logos of prohibited groups.

The social networking giant has endured a rough two years beginning in 2016, when Russia's use of social media to meddle with the U.S. presidential elections came into focus. Zuckerberg initially downplayed the role Facebook played in the influence operation by Russian intelligence, but the company later apologized.

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Facebook says it now employs 30,000 people who work on its safety and security practices, reviewing potentially harmful material and anything else that might not belong on the site. Still, the company is putting a lot of its faith in artificial intelligence and its systems' ability to eventually weed out bad stuff without the help of humans. The new research suggests that goal is a long way away and some critics allege that the company is not making a sincere effort.

When the material isn't removed, it's treated the same as anything else posted by Facebook's 2.4 billion users — celebrated in animated videos, linked and categorized and recommended by algorithms.

But it's not just the algorithms that are to blame. The researchers found that some extremists are using Facebook's "Frame Studio" to post militant propaganda. The tool lets people decorate their profile photos within graphic frames — to support causes or celebrate birthdays, for instance. Facebook says that those framed images must be approved by the company before they are posted.

Hany Farid, a digital forensics expert at the University of California, Berkeley, who advises the Counter-Extremism Project, a New York and London-based group focused on combatting extremist messaging, says that Facebook's artificial intelligence system is failing. He says the company is not motivated to tackle the problem because it would be expensive.

"The whole infrastructure is fundamentally flawed," he said. "And there's very little appetite to fix it because what Facebook and the other social media companies know is that once they start being responsible for material on their platforms it opens up a whole can of worms."

Another Facebook auto-generation function gone awry scrapes employment information from user's pages to create business pages. The function is supposed to produce pages meant to help companies network, but in many cases they are serving as a branded landing space for extremist groups. The function allows Facebook users to like pages for extremist organizations, including al-Qaida, the Islamic State group and the Somali-based al-Shabab, effectively providing a list of sympathizers for recruiters.

At the top of an auto-generated page for al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, the AP found a photo of the damaged hull of the USS Cole, which was bombed by al-Qaida in a 2000 attack off the coast of Yemen that killed 17 U.S. Navy sailors. It's the defining image in AQAP's own propaganda. The page includes the Wikipedia entry for the group and had been liked by 277 people when last viewed this week.

As part of the investigation for the complaint, Al Azm's researchers in Syria looked closely at the profiles of 63 accounts that liked the auto-generated page for Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, a group that merged from militant groups in Syria, including the al-Qaida affiliated al-Nusra Front. The researchers were able to confirm that 31 of the profiles matched real people in Syria. Some of them turned out to be the same individuals Al Azm's team was monitoring in a separate project to document the financing of militant groups through antiquities smuggling.

Facebook also faces a challenge with U.S. hate groups. In March, the company announced that it was expanding its prohibited content to also include white nationalist and white separatist content— previously it only took action with white supremacist content. It says that it has banned more than 200 white supremacist groups. But it's still easy to find symbols of supremacy and racial hatred.

The researchers in the SEC complaint identified over 30 auto-generated pages for white supremacist groups, whose content Facebook prohibits. They include "The American Nazi Party" and the "New Aryan Empire." A page created for the "Aryan Brotherhood Headquarters" marks the office on a map and asks whether users recommend it. One endorser posted a question: "How can a brother get in the house."

Even supremacists flagged by law enforcement are slipping through the net. Following a sweep of arrests beginning in October, federal prosecutors in Arkansas indicted dozens of members of a drug trafficking ring linked to the New Aryan Empire. A legal document from February paints a brutal picture of the group, alleging murder, kidnapping and intimidation of witnesses that in one instance involved using a searing-hot knife to scar someone's face. It also alleges the group used Facebook to discuss New Aryan Empire business.

But many of the individuals named in the indictment have Facebook pages that were still up in recent days. They leave no doubt of the users' white supremacist affiliation, posting images of Hitler, swastikas

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and a numerical symbol of the New Aryan Empire slogan, "To The Dirt" — the members' pledge to remain loyal to the end. One of the group's indicted leaders, Jeffrey Knox, listed his job as "stomp down Honky." Facebook then auto-generated a "stomp down Honky" business page.

Social media companies have broad protection in U.S. law from liability stemming from the content that users post on their sites. But Facebook's role in generating videos and pages from extremist content raises questions about exposure. Legal analysts contacted by the AP differed on whether the discovery could open the company up to lawsuits.

At a minimum, the research behind the SEC complaint illustrates the company's limited approach to combatting online extremism. The U.S. State Department lists dozens of groups as "designated foreign terrorist organizations" but Facebook in its public statements says it focuses its efforts on two, the Islamic State group and al-Qaida. But even with those two targets, Facebook's algorithms often miss the names of affiliated groups. Al Azm says Facebook's method seems to be less effective with Arabic script.

For instance, a search in Arabic for "Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula" turns up not only posts, but an auto-generated business page. One user listed his occupation as "Former Sniper" at "Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula" written in Arabic. Another user evaded Facebook's cull by reversing the order of the countries in the Arabic for ISIS or "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria."

John Kostyack, a lawyer with the National Whistleblower Center in Washington who represents the anonymous plaintiff behind the complaint, said the goal is to make Facebook take a more robust approach to counteracting extremist propaganda.

"Right now we're hearing stories of what happened in New Zealand and Sri Lanka — just heartbreaking massacres where the groups that came forward were clearly openly recruiting and networking on Facebook and other social media," he said. "That's not going to stop unless we develop a public policy to deal with it, unless we create some kind of sense of corporate social responsibility."

Farid, the digital forensics expert, says that Facebook built its infrastructure without thinking through the dangers stemming from content and is now trying to retrofit solutions.

"The policy of this platform has been: 'Move fast and break things.' I actually think that for once their motto was actually accurate," he says. "The strategy was grow, grow, grow, profit, profit, profit and then go back and try to deal with whatever problems there are."

Barbara Ortutay reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writer Maggie Michael contributed to this report.

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Vatican law: Priests, nuns must report sex abuse, cover-up

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis issued a groundbreaking law Thursday requiring all Catholic priests and nuns around the world to report clergy sexual abuse and cover-up by their superiors to church authorities, in an important new effort to hold the Catholic hierarchy accountable for failing to protect their flocks.

The new church law provides whistle-blower protections for anyone making a report and requires all dioceses around the world to have a system in place to receive the claims confidentially. And it outlines procedures for conducting preliminary investigations when the accused is a bishop, cardinal or religious superior.

It's the latest effort by Francis to respond to the global eruption of the sex abuse and cover-up scandal that has devastated the credibility of the Catholic hierarchy and his own papacy. And it provides a new legal framework for U.S. bishops to use as they prepare to adopt accountability measures next month to respond to the scandal there.

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"We have said for years that priests must conform to certain strict rules, so why shouldn't bishops and others in the hierarchy do the same?" said Cardinal Marc Ouellet, head of the Vatican office for bishops. "It's not just a law, but a profound responsibility."

The law makes the world's 415,000 Catholic priests and 660,000 religious sisters mandated reporters. That means they are required to inform church authorities when they learn or have "well-founded motives to believe" that a cleric or sister has engaged in sexual abuse of a minor, sexual misconduct with an adult, possession of child pornography — or that a superior has covered up any of those crimes.

The law doesn't require them to report to police. The Vatican has long argued that doing so could endanger the church in places where Catholics are a persecuted minority. But it does for the first time put into universal church law that they must obey civil reporting requirements where they live, and that their obligation to report to the church in no way interferes with that.

If it is implemented fully, the Vatican could well see an avalanche of abuse and cover-up reports in the coming years. Since the law is procedural and not criminal in nature, it can be applied retroactively, meaning priests and nuns are now required to report even old cases of sexual wrongdoing and cover-ups — and enjoy whistleblower protections for doing so.

Previously such reporting was left up to the conscience of individual priests and nuns. Now it is church law. There are no punitive measures foreseen if they fail to report, and similarly there are no sanctions foreseen if dioceses, for example, fail to comply. But bishops and religious superiors could be accused of cover-up or negligence if they fail to implement the provisions, or retaliate against priests and nuns who make reports.

The law defines the crimes that must be reported as: performing sexual acts with a minor or vulnerable person; forcing an adult "by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts," and the production, possession or distribution of child pornography. Cover-up is defined as "actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid" civil or canonical investigations.

Ouellet said the inclusion of sex crimes involving adults was a clear reference to cases of sexual abuse of nuns and seminarians by their superiors — a scandal that has exploded in recent months following reports, including by The Associated Press and the Vatican's own women's magazine, of sisters being sexually assaulted by priests.

In another legal first for the Vatican, the pope mandated that victims reporting abuse must be welcomed, listened to and supported by the hierarchy, as well as offered spiritual, medical and psychological assistance. It doesn't mandate financial reparations, however.

But the key point of the law is to decree that the church's own priests and nuns are mandated reporters and require every diocese around the world create an accessible, confidential reporting system to receive claims of sexual abuse and cover-up. The other key element outlines the preliminary investigation procedures to be used when the accused predator is a member of the church hierarchy.

Victims and their advocates have long complained that bishops and religious superiors have escaped justice for having engaged in sexual misconduct themselves, or failed to protect their flocks from predator priests. Bishops and religious superiors are accountable only to the pope, and only a handful have ever been sanctioned or removed for sex abuse or cover-up, and usually only after particularly egregious misbehavior became public.

Last summer, the scandal over ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick epitomized the trend: McCarrick rose to the heights of the Catholic hierarchy even though he had credible allegations of sexual misconduct against him that the Vatican had received. Francis ultimately defrocked McCarrick earlier this year after a U.S. church investigation determined he sexually abused minors as well as adult seminarians.

The new procedures call for any claim of sexual misconduct or cover-up against a bishop, religious superior or eastern rite patriarch to be reported to the Holy See and the metropolitan bishop, who is a regular diocesan bishop also responsible for a broader geographic area than his dioceses alone.

Unless the metropolitan bishop finds the claim "manifestly unfounded," he must immediately ask permission from the Vatican to open a preliminary investigation and must hear back from Rome within 30 days — a remarkably fast turnaround for the lethargic Holy See. The metropolitan then has an initial 90

days to conduct the investigation, though extensions are possible.

The law makes clear he can use lay experts to help, a key provision that is already used in many dioceses to give bishops expert advice on handling cases from people with law enforcement or medical backgrounds.

Once the investigation is completed, the metropolitan sends the results to the Vatican for a decision on how to proceed. The new law effectively stops there; existing procedures are in place for further investigation and possible sanction of bishops, though legal experts have said those procedures too require an overhaul since they are far from clear or efficient.

The new law does, however, require Vatican offices to share information throughout the process, since an untold number of cases have fallen through the cracks thanks to the silo-like nature of the Holy See bureaucracy, where each congregation zealously guards its own turf and files.

The law is a clear outgrowth of years of pressure building on the Vatican to hold bishops accountable; the tipping point apparently came with the 2018 McCarrick scandal, coupled with the eruption of the abuse crisis in Chile and criminal trials against cardinals in Australia and France.

With a wretched 2018 behind him, Francis convened church leaders to a summit at the Vatican in February to try to emphasize to the global church that sex abuse and cover-ups aren't just a Western problem, but a problem for the universal church.

He called for concrete action to combat it, and the new law is a clear first step imposing new global reporting and investigation procedures.

The use of the metropolitan bishop to conduct the preliminary investigation was first publicly proposed by Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich at a meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in November. Cupich elaborated on it when he addressed the February abuse summit and the procedures are likely then to form a key legal framework for U.S. bishops when they meet in Baltimore June 11-13 to adopt accountability procedures.

The U.S. hierarchy has been under immense public pressure to hold one another accountable for sexual misconduct and cover-up stemming from both the McCarrick scandal and the release of the Pennsylvania grand jury report. It was apparently an open secret that McCarrick slept with seminarians, and yet his brother bishops allowed him to become their spokesman when they first adopted measures to combat child sex abuse in 2002.

The law goes into effect June 1 for an initial three years. Dioceses must establish the reporting system and confirm it is in place to the local Vatican embassy by June 1, 2020.

Contempt citation against Barr heats up Trump-House dispute

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK, LISA MASCARO and JONATHAN LEMIRE** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee voted to hold Attorney General William Barr in contempt of Congress, escalating the Democrats' extraordinary legal battle with the Trump administration over access to special counsel Robert Mueller's Trump-Russia report .

The vote Wednesday capped a day of ever-deepening dispute between congressional Democrats and President Donald Trump, who for the first time invoked the principle of executive privilege, claiming the right to block lawmakers from the full report on Mueller's probe of Russian interference to help Trump in the 2016 election.

Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler of New York declared the action by Trump's Justice Department a clear new sign of the president's "blanket defiance" of Congress' constitutional rights to conduct oversight.

"We did not relish doing this, but we have no choice," Nadler said after the vote.

The White House's blockade, he said, "is an attack on the ability of the American people to know what the executive branch is doing." He said, "This cannot be."

But Justice Department spokeswoman Kerri Kupec said it was disappointing that members of Congress "have chosen to engage in such inappropriate political theatrics."

Barr made "extraordinary efforts" to provide Congress and the public with information about Mueller's work, she said.

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White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said neither the White House nor Barr "will comply with Chairman Nadler's unlawful and reckless demands."

Late Wednesday the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee issued his own subpoena to the Justice Department for the full Mueller report, as the confrontation intensifies.

Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff of California, whose committee had previously requested the documents, said he has "no choice" but to compel the department's compliance. He warned that if it continues to "ignore or rejects our requests," the panel could take legal action.

Kupec declined to comment.

Though the White House initially hesitated on invoking privilege, Trump told his staff and political advisers in recent weeks to refuse to cooperate with Democrats, believing the party's goal was simply to damage him politically going into his reelection campaign. The coming legal battle could stretch to 2020, and the White House is aiming to tie up congressional probes until Election Day.

Executive privilege is the president's power to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of the Oval Office decision-making process.

The president's decision was weeks in the making, the next inevitable escalation between the White House and Congress over a number of probes. The White House has rejected all efforts to probe Trump's business dealings or tax returns as well as the West Wing's security clearance procedure.

The committee voted along party lines, 24-16, to recommend the full House hold Barr in contempt, but only after some five hours of heated and, at times, emotional testimony.

Democrats made their case that Congress was at a historic juncture as it confronts what they consider Trump's stonewalling of lawmakers' ability to conduct oversight of the administration. Republicans portrayed the majority as angry and lashing out at Barr after the special counsel did not find that Trump colluded with Russia to swing the 2016 election.

Said Democrat Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas: "The president now seeks to take a wrecking ball to the Constitution of the United States."

And Rep. Cedric Richmond of Louisiana said the road ahead may be "messy" but Democrats must fight to "protect our democracy." Other Democrats called the standoff a "serious" and "grave" moment.

However, the panel's top Republican, Doug Collins of Georgia, said Democrats were manufacturing a crisis and rushing the process to "sully Bill Barr's good name."

Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida, a Trump ally, said the Democrats were trying to "delegitimize" the president and biding time before they try to impeach him.

"Get over it," Gaetz said.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said the next step will be consideration by the full House. Nadler said that will happen soon.

If approved by the House, where the Democrats hold a solid majority, the contempt resolution would almost certainly move to an unusual, and potentially protracted, multi-pronged court battle with the Trump administration.

The contempt finding could be referred to the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, a Justice Department official who would be likely to defend rather than oppose Barr. Democratic House leaders could also file a lawsuit, though the case could take months or even years to resolve. Some committee members have suggested they also could fine Barr as he withholds information.

Nadler said Wednesday the Trump administration's refusal to provide the special counsel's full Russia report to Congress presents a "constitutional crisis."

In a letter Wednesday to Trump, Barr explained that the special counsel's files contain millions of pages of classified and unclassified information. He said it was the committee's "abrupt resort to a contempt vote" that "has not allowed sufficient time for you to consider fully whether to make a conclusive assertion of executive privilege."

Barr told Trump he should assert privilege now, "pending a full decision on the matter."

Talks with the Justice Department broke down over the committee's subpoena for an unredacted ver-

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sion of the report.

Barr released a redacted version of Mueller's 400-plus-page report to the public last month, but Democrats subpoenaed the full document, along with underlying evidence.

The department has rejected that demand, while allowing a few top lawmakers from the House and Senate to view a version with fewer redactions. That version blacks out grand jury information, which needs a judge's approval for release, and it doesn't include the report's underlying evidence. Democrats have said they won't view that version until they get broader access.

Almost half the report's pages contain some type of redaction including those around the Russian influence campaign, presidential pardons and other topics.

Barr has refused to testify in public to the committee after a disagreement over the Democrats' demand that he answer questions from a staff attorney in addition to lawmakers. The committee is in talks for Mueller himself to appear May 15, but there is no agreement yet, and Trump has said Mueller should not testify.

Nadler also has threatened to hold former White House Counsel Don McGahn in contempt of Congress if he doesn't testify before the committee later this month. Nadler rejected a White House claim that documents McGahn refused to provide despite a subpoena are controlled by the White House and thus McGahn has no legal right to them.

Pelosi, who has tamped down calls from her liberal flank to launch impeachment proceedings against Trump, said in a Washington Post interview Wednesday that the president, by obstructing Congress was becoming "self-impeachable."

Mueller, in his report, said he could not establish a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia, but he did not reach a conclusion on whether Trump obstructed justice. Barr said he and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein decided there were not grounds to charge Trump with obstruction.

Jonathan Lemire reported from New York. Associated Press writers Mike Balsamo and Laurie Kellman in Washington contributed.

China vows retaliation if Trump raises tariffs

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Ratcheting up tension ahead of talks in Washington, China vowed Thursday to defend its own interests and retaliate if President Donald Trump goes ahead with more tariff hikes in a dispute over trade and technology.

Beijing will impose "necessary countermeasures" if the increases take effect Friday as planned, the Commerce Ministry said. It gave no details but a ministry spokesman said Beijing has made "all necessary preparations," suggesting it might be bracing for worsening conflict.

Trump threw global financial markets into turmoil with Sunday's threat to raise import duties on \$200 billion of Chinese goods from 10% to 25%. Trump complained Beijing was trying to backtrack on earlier agreements.

"If the U.S. tariff measures are carried out, China will have to take necessary countermeasures," said a Commerce Ministry statement. The spokesman, Gao Feng, said later that Beijing has the "determination and ability to defend its own interests."

The volley of threats reignited jitters about global economic growth, prompting another round of losses on world stock markets.

If tariff hikes go ahead, "risks of a financial market collapse, extreme risk aversion, and sharp slowdown in global growth will spike," said Philip Wee of DBS Group in a report.

In early trading, London's benchmark FTSE 100 index dropped 0.5% and France's CAC 40 lost 1.3%. Hong Kong's main benchmark skidded 2.4% and the Shanghai Composite Index lost 1.5%. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.9%.

Before this week's acrimony, both sides said negotiations were making progress, which helped to stabilize

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financial markets. But economists warned a deal might be further away than investors hoped.

Trump raised duties on \$250 billion of Chinese imports starting in July over complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. That includes a 25% charge on \$50 billion of goods and 10% on \$200 billion.

Washington is pressing Beijing to roll back plans for government-led creation of Chinese global competitors in robotics, electric cars and other technologies. The United States, Europe, Japan and other trading partners say those violate Beijing's market-opening commitments.

American officials also want Beijing to reduce subsidies they say violate Chinese free-trade pledges and to narrow its multibillion-dollar trade surplus with the United States.

Beijing responded with penalties on \$110 billion of American imports, but is running out of goods for tariff hikes due to their lopsided trade balance.

China's economy czar, Vice Premier Liu He, was leaving Thursday for Washington, according to Gao, the government spokesman.

Liu expressed hope the two sides will "meet each other halfway and care for each other's concerns," Gao said. However, he added, "at the same time, China has made all possible preparations."

Chinese authorities already have extended retaliation beyond imports by targeting operations of American companies in China. Regulators have slowed down customs clearance for their shipments and delayed issuing licenses in finance and other industries.

Beijing has an array of other weapons including launching tax, anti-monopoly or other investigations that can hamper company operations.

Chinese leaders see industry development directed by the Communist Party as a path to prosperity and global influence. They deny their plans violate Beijing's trade commitments but have offered to change details that provoke the most foreign opposition.

"China is not afraid of conflict," said the Global Times, a newspaper published by the ruling Communist Party's People's Daily that is known for its nationalist tone. It said Beijing has measures in place to "minimize losses" for its companies.

"Mentally and materially, China is much better prepared than its U.S. counterpart," the newspaper said.

Despite such bluster, factories in Chinese coastal regions that serve the U.S. market have been devastated. Industries including electronics that the Communist Party is promoting as China's economic future have suffered declines of up to 40% in sales to the United States.

That has increased pressure on President Xi Jinping, who political analysts say faces criticism within the ruling party that he has failed to manage Trump.

Chinese exports to the United States plunged 13% from a year ago in April and are off 9.7% since the start of 2019. Total Chinese exports sank 2.7% in April, well below forecasts of growth in low single digits.

Imports of American goods tumbled 26%.

Trump promises more hurricane relief for Florida Panhandle

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump promised a swift infusion of federal aid to the Florida Panhandle seven months after devastating Hurricane Michael as he rallied supporters Wednesday for his re-election.

Trump addressed a crowd of thousands at an outdoor amphitheater, looking to rally loyalists in the reliably Republican corner of the swing state as he kicks his 2020 efforts into high gear. Federal emergency funds to the area hit by the Category 5 hurricane and elsewhere have been caught up in a Washington standoff over Trump's opposition to more hurricane aid for Puerto Rico.

"You're getting your money one way or another," Trump promised supporters in Panama City Beach, holding up a chart showing federal emergency aid to Florida, Texas and the island territory, "And we're not going to let anybody hold it up."

Trump took a victory lap after last week's jobs report showing the nation's unemployment at a genera-

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tional low, crediting his cuts to taxes and regulations.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, who accompanied the president to Florida on Air Force One, said the 2020 election was a referendum on whether to allow Democrats to undo Trump policies like tax reform.

"This election is about reversing all of that," he said. "It's about going backward on all of that."

Trump also told his supporters not to worry about this week's talks between U.S. and Chinese negotiators, including his threat to increase tariffs on nearly all Chinese imports at the end of the week. "They broke the deal" in talks meant to de-escalate a year-long trade war, he said.

"We won't back down until China stops," Trump said. "The era of economic surrender is over."

Trump earlier surveyed recovery efforts and lingering damage from last year's storm, and he announced that the Department of Housing and Urban Development would be granting \$448 million to the state for hurricane response.

"We've already given you billions and billions of dollars and there's a lot more coming," Trump said.

Trump was greeted by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis and local elected officials as he arrived at Tyndall Air Force Base, which was severely affected by the storm. Almost every building appeared damaged in some way, including a collapsed hangar.

The White House said almost all 700 structures on the base were damaged, roughly one-third were destroyed, and 11,000 base personnel were evacuated. The White House blamed "Democrat obstruction" for a stoppage in recovery work, with about 120 projects being deferred.

After touring the base, Trump took credit for rebuffing some who wanted to close the base as a result of the damage, promising officials it will be rebuilt "better than ever."

The area has received about \$1.1 billion in federal disaster aid through mid-April, but disagreements in Washington have left many still struggling to recover from the storm.

Trump repeated his claim that \$91 billion has been spent in Puerto Rico, and said falsely it was the largest-ever federal disaster program. According to the White House, Trump's \$91 billion figure includes about \$50 billion in expected future disaster disbursements that could span decades, along with \$41 billion already approved. Actual aid to Puerto Rico has flowed more slowly from federal coffers — about \$11 billion so far.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said House Democrats were once again taking up a \$17.2 billion disaster relief package this week, with added money for Midwestern and Southern states hit by recent storms. But she said Senate Republicans have been more committed to "hurting our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico than healing communities everywhere."

"Meanwhile, the president has doubled down on Republicans' callousness" by delaying assistance payments to the island, she said.

The campaign rally comes as Trump and congressional Democrats are locked in a bitter fight over constitutional powers related to special counsel Robert Mueller's report and probes into the president's tax returns.

Trump called on Democrats to stop the investigations and work with his administration to boost infrastructure spending, predicting their efforts would boost his re-election chances.

"They want to do investigations instead of investments," said Trump. "I think it drives us right on to victory in 2020."

Analysis: No call in sports is above being picked apart

By EDDIE PELLIS AP National Writer

The replays stream onto our sets in high-definition on a practically endless loop, with no detail too small, or too big, to ignore: fingernails nicking basketballs, horses veering out of line, baseball gloves grazing runners as they slide into second.

About the only irrefutable evidence to come from any of it is that nobody agrees on what they saw.

Instead of offering clarity, technology has transformed the sports we watch into fodder for a nonstop debate, while the growingly divisive American culture these sports are part of has handcuffed the country's ability to find common ground in the aftermath of the calls.

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What used to be one of society's great distractions has become simply another cog in the spin cycle. What used to be the domain of talk radio has now found a home on the president's Twitter account.

Social media, endless cable talk programs and the lack of any "neutral" arbiter for any of it has turned some of our debates about sports officiating as toxic as those about politics.

"In this world of the internet and the 24-hour news cycle, it's the ways we take opinion and exacerbate that opinion and elevate anyone who shares those opinions into a sort of sainthood if we agree with that opinion," said Dan Lebowitz, the executive director for Northeastern's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. "We've gotten ourselves into a little bit of a conundrum. What do we accept as truth? Truth about the call, or truth about the White House or truth about anything else?"

These days, every call is vulnerable to spin.

Every whistle is subject to its own facts — along with a set of alternative facts and potential conspiracy theories.

Given the information overload brought on by replay — a piece of technology developed to eliminate officiating errors — it follows that somebody must be right, and wrong, about every close call. Pick a side, either side. There is less room — if any — for shades of gray.

Sound familiar?

"When political leaders are saying that the system is rigged and question the fundamental fairness of the institutions that are at the core of our society," said NBA commissioner Adam Silver, "then I don't think anybody should be surprised that people come into the arena and look at yet another long-term institution, the NBA, and say this must not be on the level, either."

A number of close games during this spring's NBA playoffs have hinged on one or two potentially game-changing calls that have been subject to replay, with no definitive conclusion as to exactly what happened, or what should've been done about it.

The issue came into sharp focus when the Houston Rockets, after a close loss to Golden State filled with tough calls in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals, said they had conducted a report about last year's Game 7 loss to the Warriors in the conference finals. The report concluded there were 81 calls and non-calls that cost them the game and, thus, the series.

The study underscored a long-standing reality of replay in all sports: Only some, not all, plays are re-viewable. Many of those come at the end of games.

Does the "right" team end up winning these games? That's subject to many different interpretations.

"I don't think anyone wakes up and says, 'We're going to rig the system,'" said Bob Malekoff, who studies sports' role in society at University of North Carolina. "But people are human, and decisions and calls get made that not everyone gets. And it's totally natural to see what goes on in Washington or other parts of the world and look at something that happens in sports, and say, 'Well, that's just the way the world works.'"

The NBA isn't the only league that gets caught up into this kind of thinking.

Last weekend, the winner of America's biggest horse race was decided by an historic judgment call.

Replay clearly shows the horse that finished first in the Kentucky Derby, Maximum Security, veering into the path of others. A 22-minute "inquiry" into the matter resulted in the scrubbing of Maximum Security's victory. Horse racing, the sport that essentially invented the use of cameras to adjudicate results on the track (the photo finish dates to the 1930s), found itself thrust into a less-than-civil conversation about rulebooks, fairness and officiating — bitten by the very technology it helped create.

The reaction was, not surprisingly, virtually void of gray area .

—President Donald Trump on Twitter: "The Kentucky Derby decision was not a good one."

—Maximum Security's owners appealed the decision and said they wouldn't run their horse in the second leg of the Triple Crown, the Preakness.

—The sports-punditry class — a group that turned its back to horse racing much as America has over the past several decades — suddenly became experts on the sport and was obliged to take a side.

—And then, the inevitable second-day, "fresh-take" game started, and went something like this: "It's really the fault of Churchill Downs for crowding the track with too many horses." Never mind that that's been going on for decades and nobody has paid much attention.

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Only a month earlier, back on the hardwood, two sequences helped define the Final Four. The first was the last-second foul called on Auburn in the national semifinal that sent Virginia's Kyle Guy to the free throw line, where he made all three shots to lift the Cavaliers to a one-point win.

In the final, the course of overtime changed when a Virginia player knocked the ball out of Texas Tech guard Davide Moretti's hands and propelled the ball out of bounds. But the call was reversed when replay showed Moretti's finger had barely grazed the ball on its way out.

The question posed on Deadspin that night: "Is it worth it to trade instantaneous, wholly satisfying, and functionally correct calls for long, momentum killing delays, and endless replays of a second or two of action for the sake of a tyrannical "accuracy" that is only possible by consulting the machines?"

It didn't take a machine, however, to parse through the very worst call of 2019. The non-call on the play involving Los Angeles Rams defender Nickell Robey-Coleman in the NFC championship game cost the New Orleans Saints a trip to the Super Bowl. (Or, at least that's how they see it in New Orleans.)

After taking tons of flak, then admitting the call was wrong, but doing nothing to alter the outcome of the game, the NFL rule-makers met a few months later and declared pass interference would now be reviewable. It's a move that will open up a host of unintended consequences — the latest bit of rulebook gymnastics that attempts to bypass the one explanation that seemingly no one wants to hear anymore: The ref made a mistake.

"Now, no one believes human failure is human failure anymore," Lebowitz said. "It's got to be a conspiracy, or whatever people want to believe. It makes the officiating job incredibly difficult, and it's already difficult to begin with."

FTC urged by child advocates to investigate Amazon's Alexa

By MATT O'BRIEN AP Technology Writer

Amazon met with skepticism from some privacy advocates and members of Congress last year when it introduced its first kid-oriented voice assistant, along with brightly colored models of its Echo Dot speaker designed for children.

Now those advocates say the kids' version of Amazon's Alexa won't forget what children tell it, even after parents try to delete the conversations. For that and other alleged privacy flaws they found while testing the service, they're now asking the Federal Trade Commission on Thursday to investigate whether it violates children's privacy laws.

"These are children talking in their own homes about anything and everything," said Josh Golin, who directs the Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood. "Why is Amazon keeping these voice recordings?"

A coalition of groups led by Golin's organization and Georgetown University's Institute for Public Representation is filing a formal complaint with the FTC alleging that Amazon is violating the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, known as COPPA, by holding onto a child's personal information longer than is reasonably necessary.

Amazon said in a statement that its Echo Dot Kids Edition is compliant with COPPA.

In one example the advocates captured on video, a child asks the device to remember some personal information, including her walnut allergy.

An adult later tries to delete all that information, which includes the voice recordings and written transcripts associated with them. But then, when the child asks what Alexa remembers, it still recalls that she's allergic to walnuts.

"This suggests that Amazon has designed the Echo Dot Kids Edition so that it can never forget what the child has said to it," the complaint says.

It also says that about 85% of the more than 2,000 games, quizzes and other Alexa "skills" aimed at kids did not have privacy policies posted. Such skills are generally produced by independent software developers or other third parties, not Amazon.

It's unclear whether the FTC will take up the complaint, since its investigations are rarely public. But the agency has been enforcing children's privacy rules more seriously in the past year, said Allison Fitzpatrick,

a lawyer who helps companies comply with COPPA requirements and was not involved in the complaint.

That was the case earlier this week, when the agency issued a warning to a Ukrainian firm that its three dating apps appeared to violate COPPA because they were accessible to children, which led Google and Apple to pull them from their app stores. Earlier this year, the FTC imposed a \$5.7 million fine on popular video-sharing app TikTok, the largest COPPA-related penalty since the law was enacted two decades ago.

For the FTC to take notice, however, Fitzpatrick said there usually needs to be evidence of "real, actual harm," not just the theoretical harm she said advocacy groups often outline.

But Fitzpatrick said that, on their face, the new allegations against Amazon appear troubling. She said the FTC provides an exemption that enables a business to collect a child's voice recording without parental consent, but that's only for a temporary and specific purpose — such as to perform an online search or fulfill a verbal command.

AP Business Writer Joseph Pisani contributed to this report.

Police tow No. 2 leader of Venezuela congress to jail in car

By SCOTT SMITH Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Security forces arrested the No. 2 leader of Venezuela's opposition-controlled congress Wednesday as President Nicolás Maduro's government began going after foes tied to a failed attempt to stir up a military uprising last week.

National Assembly Vice President Edgar Zambrano was leaving his Democratic Action party's headquarters when he was surprised by a commando unit from the feared SEBIN intelligence agency who surrounded his car.

A half hour later, the officers towed the vehicle away with the lawmaker still inside, at the same that Maduro was speaking live on state TV inaugurating an agricultural project. Neighbors looking on shouted "assassins" as the heavily armed agents pulled away.

"We democrats we will keep fighting!" Zambrano tweeted as he was hauled off.

The arrest was the first following the opposition's fizzled uprising that started early on April 30 outside a Caracas air base. It was led by Juan Guaidó, head of the National Assembly who is leading the U.S.-backed effort to end what he calls Maduro's dictatorship.

Zambrano, 63, was one of the first opposition leaders to answer Guaidó's call for an insurrection, going to the bridge in Caracas where the opposition leader had appeared at dawn with a small cadre of soldiers ready to rebel against Maduro.

On the highway overpass, Zambrano embraced popular opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, who broke house arrest to take part. Zambrano also thanked the handful of rebel National Guardsmen, who wore blue armbands as symbols of their allegiance to Guaidó's movement.

A lawyer by training, Zambrano is seen as a conciliatory figure within the opposition who is close to Henry Ramos, the former head of congress who has been accused of taking part in an earlier alleged conspiracy to oust Maduro. He took up his role as Guaidó's deputy as part of a power-sharing arrangement among the biggest parties.

Government officials had announced that Zambrano and eight other opposition lawmakers faced investigation on charges of "betraying the homeland" and "instigating an insurrection," for their roles in last week's unrest.

Two hours before his arrest, Zambrano had told The Associated Press in a phone interview that he was not going to hide because "I have not committed any crime."

Government supporters have been pushing Maduro to order arrests in the aftermath of the failed uprising, which is the closest the opposition has ever come to ousting the president. But analysts say there are limits to how far Maduro can crack down, and that any attempt to arrest Guaidó risks inviting a strong response from the U.S., which has warned of "grave consequences" should the opposition leader be harmed.

Earlier Wednesday, Maduro and the head of Venezuela's top court rejected a U.S. threat to apply sanc-

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tions to all its judges. They accused the Trump administration of trying to manipulate the crisis-wracked nation's justice system and foment a coup.

Maikel Moreno, president of the Supreme Tribunal of Justice, pushed back at comments by Vice President Mike Pence, who said the U.S. would extend sanctions to all members of the Venezuelan high court if they continued to be a "political tool" of Maduro.

"This unlawful, despicable and intolerable action violates the norms and principles of international law that govern relations between civilized nations," Moreno, a political ally of the Maduro, said in a nationally broadcast TV appearance. Moreno already faces U.S. sanctions.

There is little sign that tension will break between Maduro and Guaidó, who is backed by the United States and more than 50 other nations.

Guaidó on Wednesday took to the streets of at least two coastal communities outside the capital, pushing to keep up the opposition's rejuvenated momentum. He met with supporters in his hometown of La Guaira and surrounding communities, where he was greeted by cheers, hugs and fist bumps.

More than 3 million Venezuelans have left their homeland in recent years amid skyrocketing inflation and severe shortages of food and medicine. Pence and other Trump administration officials blame Maduro's socialist policies and government mismanagement for Venezuela's economic crunch, warning that 2 million more people are expected to flee by the end of the year if the crisis continues.

The U.S. lifted sanctions on a top Venezuelan general who broke ranks with Maduro last week. Pence said the immediate lifting of financial sanctions for Gen. Manuel Figuera, who was Venezuela's spy chief, is intended to encourage others in the military to abandon their support for Maduro.

Figuera was the sole regime insider to defy Maduro during the uprising, although the White House contends several others, including Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino, had been in talks for weeks with the opposition to oust Maduro but backed away from the plan at the last minute.

On Wednesday, Maduro discharged Figuera from service along with 55 other soldiers accused of taking part in Guaidó's uprising.

Among them was National Guard Lt. Col. Illich Sanchez, who oversaw protection to the opposition-controlled National Assembly and accompanied Guaidó during the uprising last week.

Maduro has fallen under increasing international pressure since winning a second six-year term in an election last May that critics say was rigged. Russia, China and Cuba, among other countries, support Maduro.

Maduro says he is the target of a U.S.-engineered coup plot. He harshly criticized the Trump administration in his speech Wednesday, saying its offer to lift sanctions against members of the armed forces who turn against his government is an "assault on their honor and dignity."

"Donald Trump is racist and surrounded by crazies," Maduro said.

Associated Press writers Fabiola Sanchez and Jorge Rueda contributed to this report.

Asian shares mostly lower amid jitters ahead of trade talks

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were mostly lower Thursday amid investor jitters ahead of the latest round of trade talks between the U.S. and China.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 was down 1.3% in early trading to 21,333.22. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.4% to 6,291.60. South Korea's KOSPI dropped 1.0% to 2,145.82. Hong Kong's Hang Seng lost 1.6% to 28,549.70, while the Shanghai Composite shed 1.0% to 2,862.98.

On Wall Street, a late-afternoon reversal added to the market's losses following a steep sell-off a day earlier as investors worry that the costly trade dispute between the world's two biggest economies will escalate.

Financial markets turned volatile this week after President Donald Trump threatened to impose more tariffs on Chinese goods, a threat that is set to become reality early Friday. Negotiations between the U.S. and China are scheduled to continue in Washington on Thursday, and will include China's top trade official.

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The S&P 500 index fell 4.63 points, or 0.2%, to 2,879.42. The benchmark index had been up 0.5%. The Dow Jones Industrial Average inched up 2.24 points, or less than 0.1%, to 25,967.33. The Nasdaq composite dropped 20.44 points, or 0.3%, to 7,943.32. The Russell 2000 index of small company stocks slid 7.34 points, or 0.5% to 1,574.97.

"The pressure looks to continue amid the trade concerns found within the market with heightened volatility a new normal this week," said Jingyi Pan, market strategist with IG in Singapore.

The U.S. and China have raised tariffs on tens of billions of dollars of each other's goods in their dispute over U.S. complaints about China's technology ambitions and practices.

Investors have been anticipating a deal throughout this year, which contributed to double-digit gains in all the major indexes. But the latest tough talk is raising anxiety on Wall Street and casting more doubt about a resolution.

The U.S. government has filed plans to raise tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports from 10% to 25% Friday. If it follows through on those plans, it would mark a sharp escalation in the yearlong trade dispute that has raised prices on goods for consumers and companies.

The Trump administration also has threatened to extend 25% tariffs to another \$325 billion in Chinese imports, covering everything China ships to the United States.

The possibility that the trade dispute could escalate represents a marked shift from just a few weeks ago, when talks between the U.S. and China appeared to be on track for an agreement.

ENERGY:

Benchmark U.S. crude fell 63 cents to \$61.49 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 69 cents to \$69.69.

CURRENCIES:

The dollar slipped to 109.89 yen from 110.06 yen. The euro fell to \$1.1187 from \$1.1202.

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Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Thursday, May 9, the 129th day of 2019. There are 236 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 9, 1980, 35 people were killed when a freighter rammed the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay in Florida, causing a 1,400-foot section of the southbound span to collapse.

On this date:

In 1712, the Carolina Colony was officially divided into two entities: North Carolina and South Carolina.

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson, acting on a joint congressional resolution, signed a proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

In 1926, Americans Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett supposedly became the first men to fly over the North Pole. (However, U.S. scholars announced in 1996 that their examination of Byrd's flight diary suggested he had turned back 150 miles short of his goal.)

In 1945, with World War II in Europe at an end, Soviet forces liberated Czechoslovakia from Nazi occupation. U.S. officials announced that a midnight entertainment curfew was being lifted immediately.

In 1958, "Vertigo," Alfred Hitchcock's eerie thriller starring James Stewart and Kim Novak, premiered in San Francisco, the movie's setting.

In 1961, in a speech to the National Association of Broadcasters, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Newton N. Minow decried the majority of television programming as a "vast wasteland."

In 1962, scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology succeeded in reflecting a laser beam off the surface of the moon.

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In 1970, President Richard Nixon made a surprise and impromptu pre-dawn visit to the Lincoln Memorial, where he chatted with a group of protesters who'd been resting on the Memorial steps after protests against the Vietnam War and the Kent State shootings.

In 1994, South Africa's newly elected parliament chose Nelson Mandela to be the country's first black president.

In 2008, jury selection began in the Chicago trial of R&B superstar R. Kelly, accused of videotaping himself having sex with a girl as young as 13. (Kelly was later acquitted on all counts.)

In 2012, President Barack Obama declared his unequivocal support for same-sex marriage in a historic announcement that came three days after Vice President Joe Biden spoke in favor of such unions on NBC's "Meet the Press."

In 2017, President Donald Trump abruptly fired FBI Director James Comey, ousting the nation's top law enforcement official in the midst of an FBI investigation into whether Trump's campaign had ties to Russia's meddling in the election that sent him to the White House.

Ten years ago: The top religious adviser to Jordan's king thanked visiting Pope Benedict XVI for expressing regret after a 2006 speech that many Muslims deemed insulting to the Prophet Muhammad. Pakistani warplanes pounded the Taliban-held Swat Valley in what the country's prime minister called a "war of the country's survival."

Five years ago: Russian President Vladimir Putin made his first trip to Crimea since its annexation, calling it "historic justice" during a Victory Day display of military pomp and patriotism. A judge struck down Arkansas' ban on same-sex marriage, saying the state had "no rational reason" for preventing gay couples from marrying.

One year ago: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived in North Korea to finalize plans for a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Three Americans who had spent more than a year in prison in North Korea were freed during his visit and left North Korea aboard Pompeo's plane.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-writer Alan Bennett is 85. Actress-turned-politician Glenda Jackson is 83. Producer-director James L. Brooks is 82. Musician Sonny Curtis (Buddy Holly and the Crickets) is 82. Singer Tommy Roe is 77. Singer-musician Richie Furay (Buffalo Springfield and Poco) is 75. Actress Candice Bergen is 73. Pop singer Clint Holmes is 73. Actor Anthony Higgins is 72. Singer Billy Joel is 70. Blues singer-musician Bob Margolin is 70. Rock singer-musician Tom Petersson (Cheap Trick) is 69. Actress Alley Mills is 68. Actress Amy Hill is 66. Actress Wendy Crewson is 63. Actor John Corbett is 58. Singer Dave Gahan (GAHN) (Depeche Mode) is 57. Actress Sonja Sohn is 55. Rapper Ghostface Killah is 49. Country musician Mike Myerson (Heartland) is 48. Actor Chris Diamantopoulos (dy-uh-MAN'-toh-POO'-lehs) is 44. Rhythm-and-blues singer Tamia (tuh-MEE'-ah) is 44. Rock musician Dan Regan (Reel Big Fish) is 42. Actor Daniel Franzese is 41. Rock singer Pierre Bouvier (Simple Plan) is 40. Actress Rosario Dawson is 40. Rock singer Andrew W.K. is 40. Figure skater Angela Nikodinov is 39. Actress Rachel Boston is 37. TV personality Audrina Patridge is 34. Actress Grace Gummer is 33.

Thought for Today: "Television has changed the American child from an irresistible force into an immovable object." — Laurence J. Peter, Canadian-born educator (1919-1990).